



# **Achebe the Orator: The Art of Persuasion in Chinua Achebe's Novels (Contributions in American History)**

*Chinwe Okechukwu*

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Taken together, Chinua Achebe's five novels--*Things Fall Apart* (1958), *No Longer at Ease* (1960), *A Man of the People* (1966), *Arrow of God* (1967), and *Anthills of the Savannah* (1988)--encompass the entire social, historical, and political experiences of Nigeria, from precolonial times to the close of the 20th century. Central to these experiences is the clash of Igbo culture with the ways of the West. The novels show a society that has been fragmented and a people who are striving to reconstruct a world that they lost during their encounter with colonialism. Achebe has stated that his main purpose for writing is to reveal the truth about his people and their culture. This book examines his use of rhetoric to accomplish that objective.

Achebe's writings are fraught with rhetorical devices, and he has harnessed the power of oratory to show how his society has responded to the African colonial encounter and its aftermath. He uses oratory and rhetoric to both educate and persuade his readers and to delineate his characters. Because of the central role of language in his novels, his writings illustrate the nature of discourse among the Igbo as well as the larger Nigerian community. This volume presents a broad overview of rhetoric throughout Achebe's works and demonstrates how he uses the novel genre for persuasive purposes.

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