

APPENDICES

1. Biography of the Author

The writer of *No Longer at Ease* is Chinua Achebe who is one of the foremost Nigerian novelists. He was born on November 16, 1930 at Ogidi in Eastern Nigeria. Chinua Achebe was raised in what was then the Colony of Nigeria under British rule. His father, Isaiah Okafo Achebe, had been one of his village's earliest converts to Christianity and taught the young Achebe to scorn those who held onto the traditional religion of the Igbo people. Achebe felt drawn to the ways of his non-Christian neighbors and attended traditional village festivals despite prohibitions from his father and mother. At the colonial government secondary school, he studied the works of Charles Dickens, Jonathan Swift, and William Shakespeare, as well as a number of "African" books such as *Heart of Darkness* by Joseph Conrad. While he enjoyed these works early in high school, by the time he graduated in 1947 Achebe realized that he was forsaking his African roots by identifying with the white man--not the African, who was portrayed in such literature as a savage. Achebe was thus inspired to destroy such erroneous characterizations of Africa and Africans by writing his own fiction.

Chinua Achebe was educated at a government college in Umuahia, and he graduated from the University College at Ibadan in 1954. Achebe decided to become a writer while attending the University College in Ibadan. Although he entered the university to study medicine, he soon shifted to the liberal arts, an area of greater interest to him. While a student there, Achebe came across the 1939 novel *Mister Johnson*, by British writer Joyce Cary, and was particularly disturbed by the book's entirely superficial and grossly inaccurate depiction of Nigeria. His exasperation at that novel convinced him to try his hand at writing. As an undergraduate, Achebe wrote short stories about Nigeria and published a number of them in the campus newspaper, the *University Herald*. He then began work as a journalist for the Nigerian Broadcasting Corporation in 1954, one year after graduating with a bachelor's degree in literature. It was at this time that

Achebe first imagined the character Okonkwo, who would become the tragic hero of *Things Fall Apart*, which was published four years later.

In his 1966 novel *A Man of the People*, published only six years after Nigeria's independence from British rule, Achebe turned his piercing vision to the cynical failures of Nigerian democratic politics. While *A Man of the People*, Achebe's fourth novel, marks the height of the author's early disillusionment, his second and third novels also reflect a fall from innocence. *No Longer at Ease*, published in 1960, registers the confusion and immediate failure of idealism that came with Nigerian independence. The main character of the book, a fictional political leader, is at first hopeful and idealistic; he then falls through a crisis of cultural confusion into bribery and corruption. The government remains, however, and the corrupt politician is charged and imprisoned for his crimes.

After *No Longer at Ease*, Achebe has written some others well known novels like *Arrow of God* (1964), *A Man of the People* (1966), and *Anthills of the Savannah* (1987).

Some of the awards that Achebe's achieve are Margaret Wrong Memorial Prize, 1959, for *Things Fall Apart*; Nigerian National Trophy, 1961, for *No Longer at Ease*; ; UNESCO fellowship for creative artists for travel to United States and Brazil, 1963; Jock Campbell/ New Statesman Award, 1965, for *Arrow of God*; Commonwealth Poetry Prize, 1972, for *Beware, Soul-Brother, and Other Poems*; Neil Gunn international fellow, Scottish Arts Council, 1975; Lotus Award for Afro-Asian Writers, 1975; Nigerian National Merit Award, 1979; named to the Order of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1979; Commonwealth Foundation senior visiting practitioner award, 1984; *A Man of the People* was cited in Anthony Burgess's 1984 book *Ninety-nine Novels: The Best in England since 1939*; Booker Prize nomination, 1987, for *Anthills of the Savannah*.

2. Synopsis of the Story

Obi is a young African man that has been educated in England. The members of the Umuofia Progressive Union (UPU), a group of Igbo men who have left their villages and live major Nigerian cities, have taken up a collection to send Obi to England to study law, in the hope that he will return to help his people navigate English colonial society. But once there, Obi switches his major to English. Obi returns to Nigeria after four years of studies and lives in Lagos with his friend Joseph.

At the same time, Obi is developing a romantic relationship with Clara, a Nigerian girl who eventually reveals that she is an *osu*, an outcast by her descent, meaning that Obi cannot marry her under the traditional ways of Nigeria. While he remains intent on marrying Clara, even his Christian father opposes it, and his mother begs him on her deathbed not to marry Clara until after her death, threatening to kill herself if Obi disobeys. When Obi informs Clara of these events, Clara breaks the engagement and intimates that she is pregnant. Obi arranges an abortion, which Clara reluctantly undergoes, but she suffers complications and refuses to see Obi afterwards.

All the while, Obi sinks deeper into financial trouble, in part due to poor planning on his end, in part due to the need to repay his loan to the UPU and to pay for his siblings' educations, and in part due to the cost of the illegal abortion.

On top of the entire problem, he receives the news of his mother's death. Obi sinks into a deep depression, and refuses to go home for the funeral.

The novel ends with the story of Obi being arrested because of bribery case. He is all alone without any persons whom he loves.