



No Longer at Ease

Chinua Achebe



MACMILLAN READERS

MACMILLAN READERS
INTERMEDIATE LEVEL

CHINUA ACHEBE

No Longer at Ease

Retold by John Milne



 MACMILLAN

Founding Editor: John Milne

The Macmillan Readers provide a choice of enjoyable reading materials for learners of English. The series is published at six levels – Starter, Beginner, Elementary, Pre-intermediate, Intermediate and Upper.

Level control

Information, structure and vocabulary are controlled to suit the students' ability at each level.

The number of words at each level:

Starter	about 300 basic words
Beginner	about 600 basic words
Elementary	about 1100 basic words
Pre-intermediate	about 1400 basic words
Intermediate	about 1600 basic words
Upper	about 2200 basic words

Vocabulary

Some difficult words and phrases in this book are important for understanding the story. Some of these words are explained in the story and some are shown in the pictures. From Pre-intermediate level upwards, words are marked with a number like this: ...³. These words are explained in the Glossary at the end of the book.

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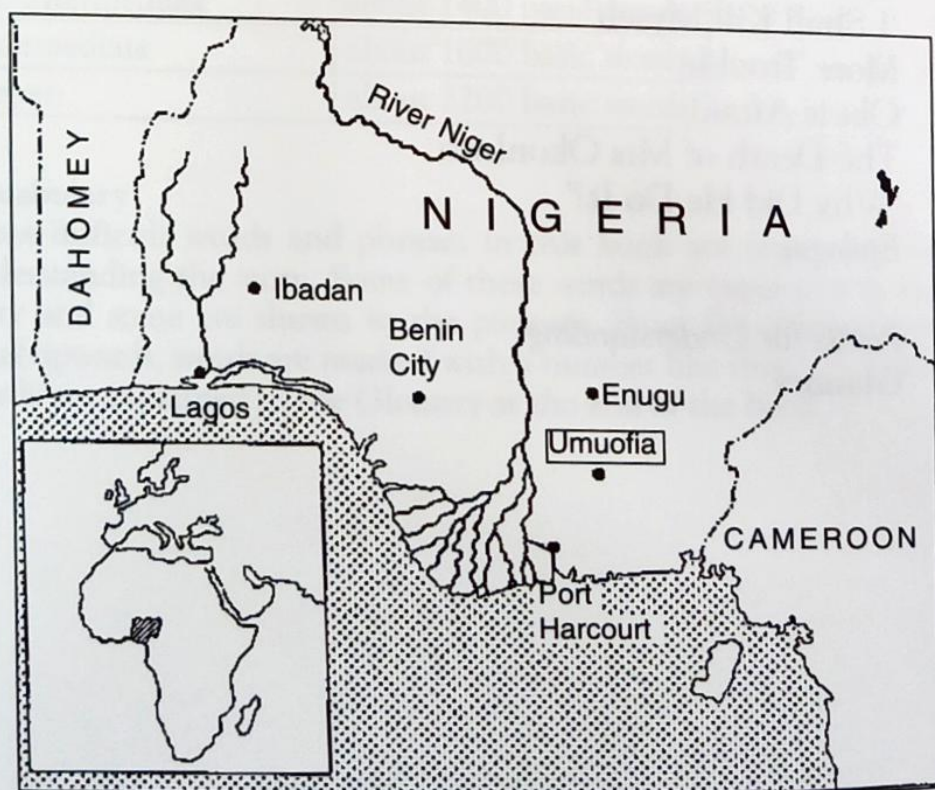
Preliminary Notes

Nigerian English

In his novel, *No Longer at Ease*, Chinua Achebe gives examples of the many different kinds of English spoken in Nigeria. However, in this retold version, the re-writer has shown some differences in the way people speak and has used language which the reader will understand. See Glossary no 31, page 16.

Historical

Nigeria became an independent country on 1st October, 1960. This story is set in Eastern Nigeria in the 1950s. At the time, the British ruled Nigeria, but they were getting ready to leave the country. Nigerians were given higher positions in the Civil Service.



Prologue

In the Courtroom

Everyone in Lagos was talking about the trial¹. On the last day of the trial, the courtroom was full.

The young man on trial was Obi Okonkwo, a Senior Civil Servant². Obi Okonkwo was accused of taking a bribe³. After Okonkwo was found guilty, the Judge spoke to him.

'I cannot understand why you took this bribe,' said the Judge. 'You are an educated young man. You are a young man of great promise⁴. I cannot understand why you did this.'

When Obi heard these words – a young man of great promise – tears suddenly came into his eyes. The tears began to run down his cheeks. He quickly took out a handkerchief and wiped his face. He did not want anyone to see that he was crying.

Obi had lost everything. He had lost his mother. She was dead. And he had lost Clara – the woman he loved. She had left him, for ever. Obi Okonkwo had nothing more to lose.

But when Obi heard these words – a man of great promise – he started to cry.

At the Officials' Club

There were many Europeans at the Officials' Club⁵ that evening. Mr Green was there. Mr Green was Obi Okonkwo's boss⁶ in the Civil Service. Mr Green had been in Nigeria for many years.

The man from the British Council was there too. He had not been in Nigeria very long. He and Mr Green were having a drink together.

'I can't understand why he took the bribe,' said the man from the British Council.

'I can,' said Mr Green in a loud voice. 'I know why he took the bribe. The truth is that all Africans take bribes.'

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