

reviews....



the book worm

dave macrae

African Awakening - Part II

This week we'll be taking a look at another book by Chinua Achebe, No Longer at Ease, a continuation on the same theme as Things Fall Apart. It

takes place in Nigeria again but this time circa 1955 where it details the struggle of Obi Okonkwo, Okonkwo's grandson, who is a graduate of an English

college and an idealistic young man in a senior position in the civil service (a white post).

Delicate connections are made between the world of the past and that of the present. At times the tribal origins of the people loom large, at times they recede into the background but it is always there.

When compared to Things Fall Apart, the latter novel cannot be called nearly so effective, which by the way is no insult. The good pales in front of the great. Unlike the older book, No Longer at Ease does not evoke its theme so clearly. It is difficult at times to know what its purpose is. Indeed by the end of the book one gets

the feeling that he has been left behind by the plot.

It is a major undertaking to decide what the theme of the novel is. Perhaps that primitive man cannot cope with the modern world or maybe just that the modern world is uncopeable (if you'll pardon the grammar). And yet at the same time the characters are continually applauding their new society and looking forward only to the best of all possible worlds. Almost undoubtedly this is a tongue-in-cheek satire of the author.

Oh yes, at the end, like his grandfather, Obi gets his for his inability to cope with the modern world.



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***** dedication *****

There they are, so far away,
And my thoughts are with them, throughout everyday.
I miss them so: but, that is to be,
They are a part of me.

As a pillar stands, so strong and tall,
So do they; but, above all.
Their hands reach out, their love is here,
To me. . . I find that dear.

They are there, throughout everyday,
And, of course, I am the one to say. . .
That without their strength, and their advice,
My life, might not be so nice.

They worked, so hard, throughout every year,
And again, I can say, that's dear,
But, for this work, I give them respect,
And I will use, this. . . as my prospect.

Through their years, they have gained a lot.
You could say . . . life was self-taught.
They give to me, with their out-stretched hands,
All life's lessons, in their life that stands.

by Nan De Coste

***** SUCCESS *****

It is time for day to break,
A resolution I will make -
To love, to hold, and to cherish
All my dreams that were to perish.

I will hold my spirit high;
All my dreams will not pass by;
Instead - I will strike; I will run -
My life will be mine once again!

In every moment of the day,
The time will be met like the ship in the bay:
By the perilous waves of the sea;
By the perilous hands of only me!

by Nan De Coste