

## 5. CIVIL PEACE

### About the Author

Chinua Achebe(1930-2013) was a Nigerian novelist, poet, professor, and critic. He studied English, history, and theology at University college, the University of Ibadan. His first novel *Things Fall Apart* (1958) is the most widely read book in modern African literature.

His later novels include *No Longer at Ease* (1960), *Arrow of God* (1964), *A Man of the People* (1966), *Anthills of the Savannah* (1987), and his last novel *There was a Country* was published in 2012. He also published a large number of short stories, children's books, and essay collections. Since he was born in the Igbo village of Ogidi in south-eastern Nigeria, his novels focus on the traditions of Igbo society. He wrote about the cultural and political turmoil of Nigeria, from colony to postcolony, and through civil war and beyond.

The story 'Civil Peace' (1971) is set in the aftermath of the Nigerian Civil War. It is about the effects of the Nigerian Civil War on the people, and the "civil peace" that followed. Nigeria became an independent nation from the British colony in 1960. The Nigerian Civil War began in 1967 when the Igbo tried to separate from Nigeria to form the independent Republic of Biafra. After enduring three years of bloody battles, the Ibo were forced to surrender in 1970, ending the war. Biafrans suffered a severe famine due to the effect of war. Nearly a million people died of starvation.

### Summary

The story "Civil Peace" is written by Chinua Achebe. He is a Nigerian novelist, poet, professor and critic. This story is set in the aftermath outcome of the Nigerian Civil War. It is about the effects of that war on the people, and the civil peace' that followed. Nigeria became an independent nation from the British colony in 1960 and this war began after seven years when Igbo village tried to separate from Nigeria to be an independent nation. After enduring three years of

bloody battles, the Ibo were forced to surrender in 1970. Biafrans suffered a severe famine due to the effect of war. Nearly a million people died of starvation.

This story is about Nigerian family who lived in Eastern Nigeria. The family has faced and experienced the devastating Nigerian civil war. Jonathan Iwegbu is the main character of this story. He has been successful to survive from the Nigerian Civil War so that he considers himself as an 'extraordinarily lucky'. He repairs his bicycle after returning home to the capital city of Enugu. To explain both his good and bad fortune to himself and others, he often repeats a phrase: Nothing puzzles God.' He uses his bicycle to start a taxi service to make money. In two weeks he makes 150 pounds. Jonathan then travels to Enugu to search for his home, and to his surprise, it's still standing when other structures around it are ruined. The house needs some repairs, so he gathers all the materials and calls a carpenter to make it good. Then, he moves to his house with his family. The entire family works hard to earn money. After finding that his job as a miner is not a possibility, he decides to run a bar for soldiers out of his house.

One day, after turning over rebel currency, Jonathan is given a reward of 20 pounds. That night, a group of thieves comes to his house and knocks on his door demanding money. The family inform the neighbours and police to come and help but they don't reply to come and help them. Jonathan and his family feel unsecure and helpless. Finding himself helpless, he gives that money to those thieves.

The next morning, he and his family are back at work as the neighbors arrive to review the results of the night's unfortunate trouble. They discover Jonathan and the family are back at work. Jonathan explains them that the loss of money cannot be compared to what he lost in the war. He chooses to focus on his work in the present rather than regret what has happened. Life goes usual for Jonathan.