

analytical essay

analytical essay

By : divyesh

life in african society

Published on
Booksie

booksie.com/divyesh

Copyright © divyesh, 2015

Publish your writing on Booksie.com.

analytical essay

Life revolves around, If viewed on the surface Chinua Achebe's story line of Things Fall Apart is a tragedy, but when viewed in a wider perspective, Chinua Achebe's story has deeper conflict. The main issue is that the British have come to establish a mission and receive converts, by this Chinua Achebe mean to say that the Ibo are an agrarian people who are a patriarchal and see any sign of weakness as being less than desirable. The protagonist in the story, Okonkwo, is the champion of this thought, as what would happen to him seems to happen to the Ibo. When Okonkwo disagrees he is usually correct and the tribe would suffer the same fate and vice versa. Chi as discussed in this novel is the concept most important to understanding the conflict within the evident is the conflict where intrusion inserts between the Ibo and British; the underlying issue is masculinity versus femininity and the Church accusing their piety.

In the novel Achebe shows the reader that the Chi is a powerful spirit that determines a man's lot in life. One such instance is when Achebe shows that Okonkwo was disband from his home for a Feminine murder; Clearly his personal god or Chi was not made for great things. Achebe states that a man could not rise above the destiny of his Chi, the saying of his elders was not true -that a man who said yes his Chi also affirmed. Here was a man whose Chi said No despite his own affirmations. (p. 131) The Chi then is the most important aspect of Ibo society. Achebe shows the most compelling argument for conflict between the British colonists and the Ibo lies directly within the tribes Chi. Chi, as stated, is the will of a man. The Ibo are guided by this and believe that they can only rise to the level to which their personal God will allow. (p.131) This being the case Achebe said that the Ibo themselves are destined to rise only as far as their cumulative Chi will allow. If the Chi of the British is strong, even if the British do not recognize it, they will prevail over the Ibo. Achebe states that Okonkwo, whose Chi is perceived to be strong, although at times doomed, leads the Ibo into disaster when he forces his will on the Ibo. The greatest evidence Achebe explicate about Okonkwo's Chi is when he kills the messenger from the governor. Achebe tells the reader that this may have been an act of self-preservation resulting from the indignation of being detained, but it was his Chi that said yes.

In that brief moment the world seemed to stand still. In a flash Okonkwo drew his machete and descended twice on the man's head. (p.204) Clearly it was Okonkwo's Chi that outweighed that of his clansmen because the narrator then stated, He knew the Umuofia would not go to war. (P.205)

Foregoing Chi and focusing on obvious conflict Chinua Achebe plots a few stark events come to mind. First Achebe points out the church itself, alters the structure of Ibo society by threatening to dilute the native language through assimilation. Achebe describes the language and the telling of ancient stories is the thread that holds the Ibo together. This is evidence when Chinua Achebe describes a delicate conversation between Okonkwo's father Unoka over the settlement of a debt. Among the Ibo the art of conversation is regarded very highly, and proverbs are the palm-oil with which words are eaten. (P.7) Clearly Achebe states that the Ibo would prefer to speak in reference to common traditional values and respect. The conflict here Achebe plays around is the direct nature with which the western culture speaks, avoiding any reference to an anecdote relevant to the situation, thus separating the two cultures for lack of any common background. This conflict by Achebe is referenced in chapter twenty as Okonkwo speaks with a friend about the division between them.

analytical essay

â Does the white man understand our customs about land?â â How can he when he does not even speak our tongueâ ? (p.176) This lack of common language results in a division in understanding that would impinge on legal, religious and cultural appreciation.

With the arrival of Europeans Achebe explained about the new laws and religion. Consequently, when referring to the beating of Okonkwoâ s wife a disparity exists. (p. 30) Domestic violence was not frowned upon by the British because it occurred during a week of peace, but rather that the crime of beating anyone had occurred at all. Achebe shows it is cultural divisions such as this that separate the two cultures and lead to an ethnocentric approach to dealing with each other. Achebe foreshadows what might appear to be the correct solution by one group is harsh or unequal in another. Achebe compares and contrasts both religions although the tribal law was harsh, the Europeans were no better. Achebe states that a significant argument needs to be made against the radical methods Europeans used in dealing with the aboriginal people, as with the American Indians the Africans were thought to be savages, that because of their animistic rituals and lack of written law they were uncivilized and needed to be converted to a Christian way. Unfortunately this was usually a harsh reality that at times entailed beating them into submission.

Neither society in the novel is idealized. Achebe proves this evident as explained above. Both cultures have their faults; however, it is these faults, which create the biggest problems. One such source of trouble is sacrifice, which was not out of the question for the Ibo if it meant clan survival through the appeasement of the gods. Such was the case for a young man who was surrendered to the Umuofia through a peace agreement between two tribes. This young man was in essence a ward of the tribe, but brought up by Okonkwo, as mentioned this young man was to be sacrificed by the clan to please the Gods. Although Achebe creates a deeply upsetting to Okonkwo he knew it would serve to benefit his people. The missionaryâ s looked down this type of religious sacrifice upon, they believed in one God, and He would never kill another man to placate Him, or at least this is what they preached. This action taken by the Africans would have caused great controversy between the two groups had it occurred while they were in their midstâ s, they were not. However, stories of similar episodes had been told to the pastors when they did arrive and was a reason the missionaryâ s were determined to make good Christians out of the native Africans.

Drawing on comparisons between the white infiltration and Okonkwoâ s struggle to be as different from his deceased father as possible, Achebe explains a vague parallel exists. Okonkwo states clearly that he wants to distance himself as much as possible from his father, Achebe made Okonkwo character believe that his father is weak and lacking any quality of a strong warrior or contributor to the clan, he is effeminate. Therefore, Okonkwo endeavors to be a strong warrior and a powerful elder with many titles. It is then understandable that the Umuofia, and in particular Okonkwo, would disdain the whites for making their young lazy and reliant on the whites. Achebe creates an emotional scene when Okonkwoâ s own son joins the church he must have felt a great sadness that his son was weak in mind, and would become softened by the white culture. Feminine versus masculine traits is the controversy in this instance. Okonkwo has built his whole life on the masculinity of the tribe. The masculinity is what helps the tribe survive.

analytical essay

Chi as discussed in this novel is the concept most important to understanding the conflict within. Okonkwo's Chi is strong, and immersed the Umuofia in a battle with the British. Further underlying conflict resides in the lack of written law in African society, which led the British to assume they were not civilized, and in a constant state of anarchy. These characteristics coupled with an effeminate church led to the tragic end to Okonkwo's life, and eventually the Umuofia culture.

BY DIVYESH

By Divyesh

analytical essay

analytical essay

Created from Booksie.com

Generated: 2015-01-26 20:19:53