



Element of Violence in ‘*Things Fall Apart*’

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Abstract : Things fall apart by Chinua Achebe a novel that constitute an atmosphere when the colonizer was going to colonize the society that relates to this novel. The novelist depicts Igbo community as the center of the novel, with all its rituals, customs, and traditions and with its culture. The title of the novel suggests the shifting things by depicting village Umuofia as it was beginning of the novel. The title has taken from W.B.

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Yeats’ poem ‘*The Second Coming*’ that suggests the apocalypse is the end of civilization in our world. The protagonist of the novel wants to hold the things that are existed but at present these things are going to change. In this change colonialism play an important role. This clash of natives and The White abrupt in violence. By describing things novelist depict the culture in the first part of the novel the second part of the novel is controversial that shows the conflict between the Christian missionaries and the clansman and mainly the protagonist Okonkwo. In the first part of the novel the violence that reveals in the clansman shows the living culture, it reveals in rituals and custom of the society. After half of the novel nature of violence changes, it becomes protective against the white men who comes here to dominate.

The protagonist who is the representative of the Igbo society Okonkwo who set his career as a wrestler He is totally different to his father Unoka who leads a peaceful life but with laziness and he died unknown. In contrasts with him Okonkwo is a man with anger and has not patience, with violent nature. The community full of violence and favor it when a public meeting is called in market place leader of this clan Ezeugo, pointing the direction of another clan Mbaino and says "**Those sons of wild animals have dared to murder a daughter of Umuofia.**" The clansmen sport him with openness and his violent revenge a single person didn’t deny him rather the crowd respond positively "**the crowd then shouted with anger and thirst for blood.**" (p.11) Okonkwo’s life is in fact full of fear the fear of becoming failure and weak as his father. In fact he is internally not a man with harsh hearted as he shows in novel. But rather he commits violence and represents his clan. Being protagonist of the novel temperament shows the atmosphere of violence.

At the time of death of Unoka we see how people treat him due to his illness. He died due to swelling and it is considered as a loathsome to the Earth of goddess. Here the violence can be seen as a hatred offence. ‘**When a man was afflicted with swelling in the stomach and the limbs he was not allowed to die in the house. He was carried to the Evil Forest and left there to die.**’ In this sequence the violence commits by the representative of the culture Okonkwo, when he breaks the peace that is considered the



holy time in their religion. This is the week of peace and relates according to their religion the priest of the Earth Goddess. This is the time when any type of violence is prohibited. Here the violent anger of Okonkwo is on his youngest wife Ojiugo when he asks about her presence to his second wife. She tells him about her absence. She went to plait her hair to her friend and Okonkwo was waiting for the afternoon meal that had to cook by her. When she comes back to home Okonkwo beats her soundly ‘’ and when she returned he beat her very heavily. In his anger he had forgotten that it was the Week of Peace. ’’ In this regard Ezeani a priestess dejected Okonkwo to disrespect the Gods and ancestors. Breaking peace is an offensive crime in religion an old man explain the punishment for breaking the peace "My father told me that he had been told that in the past a man who broke the peace was dragged on the ground through the village until he died.” On the other hand the week of peace is also a violent one. If during this time a person dies he is considered disgusting. In this way as the custom was they throw away a large number of people in Evil Forest without burial Achebe also depict the custom that is not able to leave. The Igbo society is male dominated society the ruling power is under them. Wrestling is considered as the prominent game in society this game also suggests the violent favor of nature and as well as ruling and power. Fathers of the clan always tells their children stories related to masculine and violence. Okonkwo also one of them who wants his son would able to control over his wives and children. Prosperity of a man considers if he is able to rule over womenfolk. ‘’Okonkwo encouraged the boys to sit with him in his obi, and he told them stories of the land--masculine stories of violence and bloodshed.’’

Violence comes on its highest peak when the incident of Ikemefuna’s murder occurs in this novel we can clearly see there is not any price of human relationships Ikemefuna brought from Mbaino to Umuofia. After coming Umuofia he hardly adjusted himself. He now begins to feel as a family member of Okonkwo’s family. Now he becomes deeply attached with Nwoye’s mother cared him very well Ikemefuna has feelings towards Okonkwo as he is his father. When people of Umuofia come to take Ikemefuna for slaughter and Okonkwo tells him to go back to him we see a bond of attachment here. Next day they has to go for the slaughter. At first Ikemefuna feels uneasy with the people who were with him but he knows Okonkwo is with him he is comfortable and think about his future at his own home. He could hardly imagine that Okonkwo was not his real father. The relationship is intense here. As the custom was they had to take him out of Umuofia to kill. When the place comes Okonkwo cuts down the boy with his machet. The boy cries and called Okonkwo **“He heard Ikemefuna cry, "My father, they have killed me!" as he ran towards him. Dazed with fear, Okonkwo drew his machete and cut him down.”** At any price Okonkwo does not want him a womanly man on this his friend also condemned him he says if he were there, would not go to the forest. It shows the only thinking of Okonkwo "When did you become a shivering old woman," Okonkwo asked himself, "you, who are known in all the nine



villages for your valour in war? How can a man who has killed five men in battle fall to pieces because he has added a boy to their number? Okonkwo, you have become a woman indeed."

The desire to be a 'man' turns Okonkwo against himself, and this is the violence that makes him a villain. His friend says "If I were you I would have stayed at home. What you have done will not please the Earth. It is the kind of action for which the goddess wipes out whole families." Here by mistake his gun shots a boy at the funeral ceremony it is considered a crime against the earth of Goddess to kill a clansman the person who commits it has to flee from the clan. Okonkwo get exile of seven years.

In the second half of the novel nature of violence moves it becomes protective for the natives but the natives do not understand the things normally and commit murder of a white man. When Obierika comes to meet his friend Okonkwo in his exile he tells him about the changed things. He tells him that a white man came before one day some of the people of a different clan run away to see him but as their elders and oracle told them that they have danger to the strangers and people kill him. They tie his motorcycle with the sacred tree they think it an iron horse. The man is considered the harbinger of the others who were on the way. The Britishers come there to set their empire but this is the foolishness of the clansmen that they commit violence. Later Britishers make a plan to destroy them and kill the men of Abame by shooting them. In this concern Okonkwo's uncle Uchendu says "Never kill a man who says nothing. Those men of Abame were fools. What did they know about the man?"

Violent rituals as 'throw away twins in evil forest 'through after distorting a dead child without burial and the man who has diseases. Clansmen are distressed with the rituals and made them worried about their own religion. These type of violence that forced people to commit. Christian missionary has now situation to set advantage. The missionaries put their God as supreme and the God of clansmen are inferior. They set their good high and spread wrong conception that after death everyone has to go him for judgement "who will protect us from the anger of our neglected gods and ancestors?"

Nwoye the son protagonist becomes a converts of Cristian missionaries the element behind it Okonkwo's violence towards him at first he wants to make him a controller on his family, on women and children like him. Second Okonkwo's rude behavior when Okonkwo's cousin Anikwu tells Okonkwo about Nwoye that he saw him in church Okonkwo became violent on his returning bears up violently. Even "his father, suddenly overcome with fury, sprang to his feet and gripped him by the neck.

"Where have you been?" he stammered. Nwoye struggled to free himself from the choking grip.

Nwoye the first member of Okonkwo's family who is captivated by the rhythm of the new religion. The reason run behind it are the twins crying in the bush and who killed Ikemefuna. He gets answers in the company of new religion. Finally he leaves his father and forever and goes to Umuofia.



Now this is the time when Okonkwo comes back to his own land after exile. Okonkwo encourages his people against the white because he has fear about the younger generation who just yield their selves before the foreigners. The younger who are going to join new religion. Last time of his exile. He thinks his motherland is a womanly clan. Things are deferent in his fatherland now Okonkwo feels sad. When Okonkwo knew he said his children "If you turn against me when I am dead I will visit you and break your neck." A person who had taken two titles now joined Christian religion. Okonkwo became angry when he knew missionaries apart from the church brought a government and they set a court where district commissioner judges cases. He says here **"What is it that has happened to our people? Why have they lost the power to fight?"**

At the last Okonkwo could not bear the things that were changed. He encouraged his peoples violently. They tries to destroy the distinct court. But the commissioner calls them to talk the leader's go there with their matches. He receives them politely. Due to these types of stupidity the leaders After leading from prison they came back to home. They all were distressed about it. When Okonkwo see nobody see or oppose he decide to take revenge himself. In last Okonkwo kills a messenger who comes to stop a meeting. On this violence Okonkwo knows now what will be the result he hangs himself. He finally committee suicide. Finally he does violence with himself.

Works cited

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