

Quote	Notes	Themes
1. “And when she returned he beat her very heavily. In his anger he had forgotten that it was the Week of Peace” P23-24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Violent nature of Okonkwo (“whenever he was angry and ... he would use his fists” P3) - Obedience and inferiority of the wives - Foreshadowing of an event, or something that might happen to Okonkwo – breaking with the gods (during the Week of Peace, one is not supposed to be violence) - Will there be any reaction from the wives side? 	Violence Men vs women Religion Justice
2. “Do you think you are cutting up yams for cooking?” P26 Said by Okonkwo to his son while they prepared the Yams for seeding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Shows the importance of Yams in the life of the village (“king of crops” P27) - Idea that he wants his son (and Ikemefuna) to be able to do the seeding - Show of affection in the only way possible for Okonkwo (by taking care that they will be able to support themselves) - Still not making them feel better (“knew how to kill a soul/spirit”) - Cooking portrayed negatively – seeding yams more important than the most basic chore 	Culture Affection
3. First real introduction of Ikemefuna’s character: “He was by nature a very lively boy and he gradually became popular in Okonkwo’s household” P22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Characterisation opposite to Okonkwo - Lively, pleasant to be around, knows a lot of stories etc – all in all very often positively described (opposing the more negative description of Okonkwo) - Intention of the author to oppose the two characters? - Seems to be a positive influence on the son and the whole family (“Nwoye...became quite inseparable from him” P22) - Unquestioned leader of Okonkwo’s children (“Ikemefuna looked at them sternly and they held their peace” P35) - Character that is described so positively leaves the story so early - Authors intention to make Ibo culture look violent? – that would not make sense in the context that he is trying to explain it to the other people - Appeal to the audience – unanswered question why this young man had to die 	Fate Affection
4. About Ekwefi, 2 nd wife: “But a few years later she ran away from her husband and came to live with Okonkwo” P32	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gets beaten now – does she regret the choice she has taken? - Was her other husband worse? – Is beating normal behaviour of a husband towards his wife? - Obviously Okonkwo had some appeal to her (“won her heart by throwing the Cat”P32) - Strong women to have taken this choice – can she be as strong with Okonkwo? 	Men vs women Strength Culture Affection
5. Okonkwo about Ezinma (only daughter of Ekwefi): “She should have been a boy” P50, when she made him eat after the two days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strength of women present, but different (she is certainly a strong woman, at the age of 10) - More of a subtle strength of women, not as obvious as a men’s strength - Okonkwo admires strength (she does not fear him) - Despite above, idea that boys are worth more 	Men vs women Strength Affection

<p>6. “Among the Ibo the art of conversation is regarded very highly, and proverbs are the palm-oil with which words are eaten.” P6</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Idea of acceptance, love in Okonkwo (only way of him to show his affection) - Shows a lot about Ibo culture, talking is important - Unoka was good in conversation = maybe would have been regarded higher if not for the depths - Idea that not only strength is a feature of men (Ezeudu regarded highly for his skills of a narrator) - Does Okonkwo respect this feature as that of a man, or does he only let strength be a characteristic of it? - Is Okonkwo good in this art of conversation? (“he had a slight stammer” P3) 	<p>Culture</p>
<p>7. “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. He was afraid of being thought weak” P49</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Turning point – before it seemed as if the life of family was good and everyone (including Okonkwo and Nwoye) was happy - Disbelieve of Ikemefuna that they would kill him – tragic - Okonkwo was told not to “bear a hand in his death” P45 - Ikemefuna called him “father” – “could hardly imagine that Okonkwo was not his real father” P48 – close relationship - “Dazed with fear” - shows Okonkwo’s innermost fear, feelings – prepared to kill his own son (or as good as his son) in order not to be considered weak!!! - Sadness afterwards (did not eat or sleep for two days) shows that in fact he did love Ikemefuna - Major theme: Idea of weakness/ not being able to see blood – kill another person and even if that person is as good as his own son - Interesting that everyone knew about the death, but of the family, no one spoke about it – acceptance of elders + their decisions (or other authority) - Was killed because the Oracle has said so – shows the obedience and fear for the gods 	<p>Violence Religion Strength Fear</p>
<p>8. “Chielo was not a woman that night.” P86 – when carrying Ezima to the caves</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Acceptance of supernatural – spirits + gods taking a human body - Idea that there are people with two lives, one normal and one supernatural - Shows the belief in spirits and gods - Even a mother does no dare to interfere with the gods, that have taken her child – acceptance of thinks such as the taking of a child 	<p>Supernatural</p>
<p>9. “But the Ibo people have a proverb that when a man says yes his <i>chi</i> says yes also.” P21</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Chi</i> is the very specific to a person, their soul or their destiny - Again, believe in spirits and gods - Also believe that a person has to want something in order to get it - A personal god – spirit for each person (rather than one god) - So is the <i>chi</i> responsible for the life of a person (karma) or is it the person? - Do they believe that the destiny is written, or does it change? - Can <i>chi</i> change? 	<p>Religion Fate</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What is this? 	<p>Supernatural</p>

10. "Iyi-uwa" P64	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strange idea that the child wants to be reborn and reborn - How is Ezima supposed to remember? - Did she bury it consciously? Or is it something magic (knowledge transmitted magically)? - Shows the high mortality rate, and their desire to understand nature 	
11. "So I shall ask you to come again the way you came before." P98	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Death of Ezeudu, a respected clansman - Idea of rebirth – some more pieces to the puzzle of the religious (vs the religion that the white people are about to bring to them) - Speaking with the dead (ancestors) 	Religion Social recognition Culture
12. "A man's life from birth to death was a series of transition rites which brought him nearer and nearer to his ancestors" P97	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Close relation with the ancestors – they have a VERY high importance to the Ibo - The help + guide of the people - Natural cause of life, when one dies, he goes to the ancestors - A very different perception than in my own culture, but it certainly makes sense to see life as a preparation for death?? - Author uses past tense – because the culture is not there anymore? - This use of tense make is seem that the author is quite detached to the culture himself 	Religion Culture
13. "As soon as the day broke, a large crowd of man from ... His greatest friend, Obierika, was among them." P 99-100 (his best friend also destroying his compound)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - "Only cleansing the clan..." "They had no hatred in their hearts against Okonkwo." P99-100 - Divinity, are destroying the compound of the best friend in order not to anger the gods (earth god) - Like murdering the son – destroying the compound - Okonkwo does not feel angry about this cleansing (and destruction) – welcomed the friend when he came to visit 	Religion Culture Justice
14. "But when there is sorrow and bitterness he finds refuge in his motherland. Your mother is there to protect you." P107	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Shows the role of a mother - Unlike many other things, the second sentence can be understood by nearly every person of every culture – a mother is there to protect the child as well as possible (even when the mother is dead) - Mother represented by her relatives that took Okonkwo and helped him - A clear division between men and women, fathers and mothers – each have their role 	Culture Men vs women
15. "I do not know how to thank you." 'I can tell you,' said Obierika. 'Kill one of your sons for me.'..." P113-114	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Again, this idea that killing the son is not really a lot - A thank you is worth more than a son - On the other hand, sons are important to their fathers - A strange way to thank a friend – "Then kill yourself." P114 - Again, shows the friendship of the two – there is not thank needed - This comparison gives the impression that thanking is something ridiculous (unnecessary) 	Culture

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I assume that this is a translation – author’s choice to include this in English - since it sounds bizarre in English (maybe a phrase used in the Ibo language?) 	
16. “He was not an albino. He was quite different.’ He sipped his wine. ‘And he was riding an iron horse” P110	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Idea of different – being different (threatening) “The first people who saw him ran away” - Iron horse? – When is the story set? What is this iron horse? – bicycle - Choice of words really showing the different cultures (bicycle very commonly known) - Author making the actions seem a bit ridiculous (tying a bicycle to a tree) - Showing that the villages are very remote - Next conflict in Okonkwo’s life - Story of the white people starts with destruction (“Have you heard...That Abame is no more?” P110) 	Culture (and their differences) Fear
17. “But somehow he knew that he was not going to see them.” P46 – when Ikemefuna was taken to be killed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Everyone knows that something will happen; even Nwoye’s mother (“Even the very little children seemed to know.” P 46 – but not specifying what they knew) - Seems like a taboo theme – not to be talked about - He himself, even though probably not consciously, was suspicious (“Ikemefuna heard a whisper close behind him and turned around sharply.” P47) - Still this idea of joy – to be taken home to his mother and his sister - Is this book now for or against the old traditions? 	Culture Fear Religion
18. “It was only on his fourth trip that he had found Ekwefi, and by then he had become gravely worried.” P90	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Showing that he does care - He was prepared to walk there four times because he worried about his wife and his daughter - Shows the he does have a softer core (characterisation more positive the more one reads – because he does not show feelings openly: author expresses this by releasing the information only slowly) - Idea that he would hide this concern – does not want to be thought to be weak - Would he have gone to find Nwoye? 	Affection Supernatural Fear
19. “They did not really want them in their clan, and so they made them that offer which nobody in his right sense would accept.” P119 About giving the priests a piece of the ‘evil forest’	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Believe that there were dark, dangerous powers and spirits in the forest - Rejection (since they believed that the dark powers would destroy the priests, they wouldn’t have to get rid of them) - On the other hand they did not expect them to take it (“nobody in his right sense”) - Difference in minds / what is right and wrong to do - Different perception about the dangers (and the beliefs) 	Supernatural Fear Different Cultures
20. First woman joining the Christians: “Nneka had had four previous pregnancies and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Good reason for joining (trying to get rid of some of the aspects of culture) - Lost 8 (!) children because they were twins - With the love of a mother, she would want to keep some children = thus joining the missionaries 	Religion Supernatural Violence

20. First woman joining the Christians: “Nneka had had four previous pregnancies and childbirth. But each time she had borne twins, and they had been immediately thrown away.” P121	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Good reason for joining (trying to get rid of some of the aspects of culture) - Lost 8 (!!) children because they were twins - With the love of a mother, she would want to keep some children = thus joining the missionaries - Lost confidence in traditional ways because of the loss she has lived through? - Prepared to take what it takes to keep the children 	Religion Supernatural Violence
21. “The hymn about brothers who sat in darkness and in fear seemed to answer a vague and persistent question that haunted his young soul – the question of the twins crying in the bush and the question of Ikemefuna who was killed.” P118	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Many unanswered questions for young Nwoye - A kind of comfort in the hymns - Especially because the missionaries do not have anything to do with the culture he lives in (and the culture and society that did both of the things mentioned in the quote) - Dislike of the culture (his father’s culture) and the violence - Personally, I find both practises strange, especially the one where one is “throwing away” twins 	Religion Violence
22. “But stories were already gaining ground that the white man had not only brought religion but also government.” P124	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Probably the problem that will arise (especially with the leaders of the clans) - Idea of modernisation, westernisation - Bringing a way of life (and believing that it is superior to every other way of life, and that only the western way is the best, and should be followed) - That is when they interfered not only in the religious and spiritual life, but everyday life and justice (interfered with the power of the leaders of the clan) 	Different Culture Justice Change
23. “and was even allowed to go wherever it chose, even into people’s beds.” P126 the sacred python, emanation of the god of water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Really describing the sacredness of the snake – could go everywhere - Idea that some animals have a mind like humans – or are superior to humans - Again talking about the spiritual way of life of the Ibo culture - What would one be expected to do if the snake came into one’s bed (or one’s child’s bed) – kill it or take the risk of being killed? - Again, slight criticism of the old way of life (like with Ikemefuna’s death) 	Religion
24. “He trembled with the desire to conquer and subdue. It was like the desire for woman.” P34 – before the wrestling game	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conquer and subdue – war - Sexual reference – idea that male strength is shown by sleeping with a woman - This connection between war, wrestling and male strength 	Violence Strength
25. “and much money flowed into Umoufia” P142	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - English bringing economic – idea of money - Again English people probably thinking that they brought something positive - Money often destroying a culture – a native culture - Did they have the concept of money before the English came? 	Change
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Interesting to compare the religions – seem so different, but appear to be quite 	Religion

27. "From the very beginning religion and education went hand in hand." P145	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Something that they whites gave – good or bad? - Certainly created jobs, but also broke some of the traditions - Clear influence into the traditional system in the village - Probably intentional bringing in western ideas and trying to replace the indigenous culture - Was the original idea of bringing education meant in a good or bad way? - Is it needed for a culture to express themselves in the modern world? 	Religion Change Culture
28. "And black was evil." P147	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Implication that black and white are skin colours - Intention of the author to show this idea of racism? - Repetition of this idea more than once – this repetition intensifies the implication - Black is evil – people with black skin colour being evil - Racism, but unfortunately very common with white administrators - idea of white being better - unfortunate that the change in priest made such a difference for the people of Umoufia – and with the change of priest, that the respect given to the people in the village has also changed 	Culture
29. "We say that he is foolish because he does not know our ways, and perhaps he says we are foolish because we do not know his." P152	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Quite a deep insight - Shows somehow that the village people also respect other people – difference between people and cultures - Is also shown by the fact that they respected Mr. Brown P142-146 - It seems that the author is trying to imply that the village people (primitive people often thought to be less open) are in fact more welcoming and more flexible than the English colonists 	Different Culture
30. "They did not know that fifty bags would go to the court messenger, who had increased the fine for that purpose." P157	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clearly wrong (socially wrong), expressed by the author in an indirect way - Court messenger was probably Ibo – idea of people changing sides (people betraying their own)? - Quite a significant amount that this court messenger got from the people - The leaders that were imprisoned were the highest ranking in the whole village – stealing from them 	Change Social Status
31. "Three days later the District Commissioner sent his sweet-tongued messenger to the leaders of Umuofia..." P153	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Immediate action after the destruction of the church - "sweet-tongued" gives the impression of some plan behind the invitation – foreshadowing what will happen (a trap) 	Justice
32. "If any man ill-treats you we shall come to your rescue." P154	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ironic, as they were ill treated as soon as the Commissioner turned his back - They were ill treated (killing of the sacred snake, unmasking of the <i>egwugwu</i> P149) and no one came to their rescue (or even listened to their plea P154) - Clearly a separate justice for Christians and for Ibo - Were also ill-treated in prison (leaders of their people beaten by lower servants) 	Justice

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33. "He wiped his matchet on the sand and went away." P163	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clearly a sign of defeat – he gave up ("He knew that Umuofia would not go to war." P163) - Idea that there is nothing more he can do – he has nothing to say before he walks away and hangs himself - It seems like Okonkwo's story ended here, and the rest of the book is more like a prologue - Author's choice of words really gave the impression of defeat, acceptance, disappointment and also anger (that his people have "become soft as women" P146) - Hanged himself – clear sign of giving up (weakness to give up?) 	Strength (defeat) Justice
34. "He had already chosen the title of the book, after much thought: <i>The Pacification of the Primitive Tribes of the Lower Niger</i> ." P166	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clearly shows how the District Commissioner thought about the Ibo and all tribes in Africa – lower than himself and the British - Does not recognise that other cultures, even though they might be different, deserve some respect - Viewpoint that because of the skin colour and the different gods people are more primitive than others 	Different Culture