

Colonialism in things fall apart essay



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

This essay is about the effect of Colonialism seen in the book Things Fall Apart. Through out the whole book you can see different impressions on the tribe, many other people, and the relationships between the white man and the black man. “ Does the white man understand our custom about land?” “ How can he when he does not even speak our tongue? But he says that our customs are bad; and our own brothers who have taken up his religion also say that our customs are bad. How do you think we can fight when our own brothers have turned against us? The white man is very clever. He came quietly and peaceably with his religion. We were amused at his foolishness and allowed him to stay. Now he has won our brothers, and our clan can no longer act like one. He has put a knife on the things that held us together and we have fallen apart.” (Achebe, 176) This discussion of the white man not understanding the customs and traditions, comes ever since the arrival of the colonialists, Obierika seems to voice Achebe’s own thoughts on colonialism. Upset by the fact that the white men have come and completely disregarded the Igbo sense of justice, Obierika points out the impossibility of the colonialists understanding anything about the Umuofians without speaking their language. Then he points out the foolishness of belittling unfamiliar customs. Obierika does not lay the whole blame on the white man’s side. He feels also that the Umuofians who have converted to Christianity have wrongly turned their backs on their own “ brothers.” This belief complicates our understanding of the novel, as Achebe prevents us from seeing matters in clear-cut terms of good (black) versus bad (white). Religion and tradition are the things that hold the clan together, and if they are cutting these kind of things out, then the tribe or clan will or have fallen apart. Certainly, Achebe does not blame the villagers. While this quotation

shows his criticism of the colonialists for their lack of respect toward Igbo customs, it also shows his disapproval of some clan members' response to the colonial presence. In chapter 22, the leader Egwugwu of Umuofia. Comes up to the missionary saying that " he would not do any harm to him if he were to just go back to his house and leave us alone but this shrine which he built must be destroyed. We shall no longer allow it in our midst. I t has bred untold abominations and we have to come to put an end to it." (Achebe, 176)This is showing that the people judged and disliked the white men pretty much because of the past and what has happened. In though Mr. Brown seem to start to build some bridges and reach out to the people, here is a new white missionary and they are telling him they will harm him because he is with Mr. Brown, but the church must be destroyed. In addition, the people had even started telling stories that the white man had not only brought a religion but also a government. It was said that they had built a place of judgment in Umuofia to protect the followers of their religion. It was even said that they had hanged one man who killed a missionary. These stereotypes are given to both the white man that colonized them, and to the people that are being colonized. These white missionaries have just came in and settled, and the tribe is already making judgments, false stories, and other statements that are untrue just because they are white man. Another personal experience that I have had in seeing colonialism is a few years ago, I had the opportunity to visit India which was colonized by the British for some 50 years. They have been free for well over 20 years, yet I see saw the effects of them being colonized by the British. I saw it in there culture, their sports, and even them judging me as a white man coming to share a different view or religion. I saw and felt this first hand.