

Compare okonkwo's character with that of nwoye essay sample

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There has been some saying, such as: like father, like son, or a chip off the old block, which means a child usually looks and behaves like his father. However, *Things fall apart* written by Chinua Achebe has given us the opposite. The two people, Okwonkwo and his son, Nwoye, behave themselves as two very different characters. In this essay, I will further elaborate how different is Nwoye from his father in term of personality.

First of all, let us observe Nwoyes and Okwonkwos attitudes towards their life. Nwoye always seems so fearful, scared and terrified. We can see clearly from the book that Nwoye in the fear of his father. [Nwoye] feigns that he no longer cares for womens stories to please his father so he will not have to suffer from rebuking and beating. Although he is interested in Christianity, he dares not go too near the missionaries for fear of his father. In addition, when he is questioned by Okwonkwo about where he has been, he struggles to free himself from the choking grip. We can see that Nwoye is frightened of confronting his father, as if he is a terrible and arrogant monster and it is what he really is to Nwoye.

Meanwhile, Okwonkwo is fearless. He is a great warrior, a man of war and he has killed five men, which shows that he is not afraid of blood and violence and indeed, he is keen on it. Moreover, Okwonkwos beating his wife in the Week of Peace, as he was not the man to stop beating somebody half-way through, not even for fear of a goddess shows that he is dauntless. He is also very brave when he says if the clan does not want to fight, he will leave them and plan his own revenge.

However, even though Nwoye seems to be fearful and Okwonkwo seems to be fearless, by observing their thoughts in mind, we can see that Nwoye is actually strong and valiant, while Okwonkwo is quite weak and uneasy. Nwoyes preference of womens story to Okwonkwos war experiences and the fact that he dares to leave the family to join Christianity show that Nwoye has his own opinion to live his life. He clearly expresses his feelings and has his own preference.

On the other hand, Okwonkwo is possessed by the fear of his fathers contemptible life and shameful death. He lives for fear of resemble his father. The actual reason for the fact that he killed Ikemefuna and that the only emotion he shows is anger is that he does not want to be considered as weak or feminine. There have been many cases when Okwonkwo feels uneasy because somebody mentions something related to his father. He is also very susceptible to unsuccessful men because they remind him of his late father.

Thirdly, we can see that Nwoye is extrovert as he can express himself, whereas Okwonkwo is quite introvert. Nwoye is easily to be deeply attached to Ikemefuna and he laughs when he listens to Ikemefunas folk tales. When he hears that Ikemefuna is about to go home, he bursts into tears whereupon his father beats him. When he knows Ikemefuna is going to be killed, he sits in his mothers hut and tears stand in his eyes. These two pieces of evidence show that he expresses his emotion freely, even if it is feminine trait. He is sensitive and quite close to Ikemefuna.

In contrast, Okwonkwo never shows any emotion openly, unless it is the emotion of anger. He thinks to show affection was a sign of weakness, the only thing worth demonstrating is strength and he acts what he thinks. He always shows that he is bad-tempered, impatient and violent by beating people or getting angry when something displeases him. Despite the fact that he is fond of Ikemefuna, he still treats him with a heavy hand. Although he likes Ezinma, his fondness only shows on very rare occasions.

Finally, from Nwoyes and Okwonkwos way of life, we could notice that Nwoye is flexible, while Okwonkwo is conservative. Nwoye is affected by Ikemefuna as Ikemefuna has made him feel grown-up and begin to enjoy doing difficult and masculine tasks. The fact that he becomes doubtful about the laws and the traditions of the clan after witnessing the abandoned twins and the death of Ikemefuna shows that he is quite reasonable. Nwoye is immediately attracted to the new faith because in this faith, every living thing is valued in a sensible way, which his society lacks. The faith meets his needs so he joins it.

While on the contrary, Okwonkwo has faithful observance of the custom. He worships his personal god and his ancestral spirits with sacrifices. He kills Ikemefuna because the Oracle says so. He also grieves and mourns for the clan, which he sees breaking up and falling apart, and for the warlike men of Umuofia, who has so unaccountably become soft like women. From the sentence, we can see that Okwonkwo cannot accept the idea that his clan is changing. He wants the clan to remain a society where there are wars and warriors like the good old days, when a warrior was a warrior.

In conclusion, Okwonkwo and Nwoye seem to have nothing in common. Although Okwonkwo is a round character, his trait is far different from his sons. Okwonkwo seems like a typically masculine type: he is strong, brave, and violent. He does not show his affection easily and he opposes to change. Nwoye is in the opposite, he seems to be extrovert, flexible and nonviolent. Nevertheless, it seems to me that Okwonkwo and Nwoye have one thing in common, which is the fact that they are trying not to be like their father. Okwonkwo fears to be like his weak father, while Nwoye fears his fathers unreasonable violence. At any rate, Okwonkwo and Nwoye receive their own fates due to their natures and they are both fair enough.

Bibliographies: Things fall apart - Chinua Achebe