

One of the stories's title

[Linguistics](#), [English](#)



Close Reading: Civil Peace “ As soon as the pound s were placed in his palm Jonathan simply closed it tight over them and buried fist and money inside his trouser pocket. He had to be extra careful because he had seen a man a couple of days earlier collapse into near-madness in an instant...” (Achebe 28)

The extract at this point is used as a forecast of what could transpire.

Jonathan at this point shows gratitude after receiving the much awaited grant from the government. The narrator at this point relates war period to post war period. The essence of the government grant was to ensure war victims regain the past life. In this case Jonathan is seen as being careful. This explains the post war atmosphere where threats could arise at any time. The anticipation of the many is obvious once Jonathan receives his token and chooses to hold it in his hand rather than directly pocket it. The narrator at this point carefully explains the active role of Jonathan in that he creates an optimistic atmosphere. The grant in this case is meant to ensure Jonathan regain his social status.

The passage is a link between war period and the post war era. The civil war had taken a toll on lives of common citizens. The author uses Jonathan symbolically. Jonathan represents the common citizens and soldiers who took part in the civil war. The essence of this passage is that it indicates the jovial mood expressed by the characters. The pound note is symbolic as it represents peace and tranquility. The jovial state of Jonathan explains the mood expressed after civil war. The man defined as being in a state of “ near-madness” (28) is a forecast of what will happen to Jonathan’s token. The man explains the exploitative nature of the government, Jonathan on the

other hand represent group of individuals optimistic of the future but still depend on the government.

In the end, the grant money is stolen by a gang of thieves. It is ironic that Jonathan is attacked immediately after receiving the cash. In the final part of the story a gang attacks his house and forces him to hand over the 'egg-rasher' (30). There is a connection between the passage and the events that transpired at the end of the passage. The thieves are satisfied with the 20 pounds they are given perhaps to indicate that they were aware of the exact amount handed to Jonathan. In this case the coal corporation represented could be the same gang leaders. The passage also connects with the title civil peace. The part represents a government which gives and takes from its own citizens. The title of the story is a metaphor and the passage defines this concept. In the passage there is an element of tranquility and peace, however the future is unknown given by the fact that Jonathan shows element of awareness and suspicion.

In conclusion there is a pattern between the passage and the rest of the story. The egg-rasher forms the main theme for the story. The story is characterized by optimism this is shown after Jonathan receives his grant. The passage also acts as a transition from war period and indicates the post war struggles. The grant in this case proves to be a problem rather than solutions to those aiming to rebuilt their lives after the war. In the end of the story, Jonathan loses this money. This highlights the post war effects where people are struggling to survive the effects caused by the war. The author uses Jonathan symbolically to express the war and post war effects.

Work cited

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Achebe, Chinua. "Civil Peace". African short story. Ed. Chinua Achebe, Ed. Catherine Lynette. London: Heinemann, 1985. 28-34. Print.