

A PSYCHOANALYTIC ANALYSIS OF OKONKWO IN *THINGS FALL APART*

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A thesis submitted to the faculty of Brac University in partial fulfilment of the
requirements for the degree Bachelor of Arts in English

Department of English and Humanities

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DECLARATION

It is hereby declared that

1. The thesis submitted is my/our own original work while completing a degree at Brac University.
2. The thesis does not contain material previously published or written by a third party, except where this is appropriately cited through full and accurate referencing.
3. The thesis does not contain material which has been accepted, or submitted, for any other degree or diploma at a university or other institution.
4. I have acknowledged all main sources of help.

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ABSTRACT

African literature has a unique aspect of radiating an ancient vibe but at the same time, it's also new and different compared to other types of literature around the world. During the 1700s, many African people who were slaves or used to be slaves started to become writers in European languages. *Things Fall Apart* was written in response to and as a record of the negative impacts of economic colonization by the West. By releasing *Things Fall Apart* and highlighting the importance of indigenous elements in Nigerian and African literature, Achebe was able to fully recover the African identity that had been severely impacted and diminished by the European writers. Achebe shows that how there occurs a pattern of disastrous outcomes by a leader, like Okonkwo, who exhibits an excessive amount of strength and pride. Throughout the novel the protagonist has been seen as intolerant, cruel and aggressive to everyone around him. Upon careful analysis of different viewpoints, this paper aims to analyze the key circumstances that played a significant role in forming or shaping the protagonist's character and to reveal through arguments the underlying causes for his behavioral transformation. Aside from the main text, theories from Jungian anima and Freud's id, ego, and superego have also been utilized to achieve this. According to the research, Okonkwo followed the path of the Freudian ego and repressed his anima from childhood onwards in an effort to fit in with society. However, as the story progressed, he began to see the protagonist's fundamental desires, or Id, as the driving force. The protagonists' failure to grow as characters is a result of these psychological conditions. Using these theories of personality and the text itself, this study argues against other causes that are presumed to be behind Okonkwo's toxic masculine behavior.

Keywords: Masculinity, Psychology, trauma, Freudian theory, Anima theory, Suicide, Greed, Id, Ego, Unconscious mind

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INTRODUCTION

Things Fall Apart is often regarded as a postcolonial literary piece and a metonymic text as through using metaphors it explores the detrimental outcomes of colonisation, specifically through the examination of the dynamics between British colonists and African individuals. Before talking more about this novel, it is necessary to know the historical context of writing this novel. Throughout history, Africa and its people have unfortunately been subjected to various derogatory labels. Africa, the vast and enigmatic continent, is a land filled with captivating mysteries and fascinating issues. The region is filled with natural and human resources. The valuable assets of this region contribute significantly to the region's development and economic growth. Therefore, westerners were drawn to the African continent early on because of its natural resources and human capital. Not only these explorers steal things from there but also treated the people of this continent like animals. Interestingly, these European explorers displayed a peculiar behaviour of either feigning ignorance or genuinely lacking knowledge regarding African customs (Gbaguidi & Ahossougbe 30).

During the 1980s, Western history textbooks did not give much attention to Africa and its people. The mention of Africa was only briefly touched upon in chapters discussing European expansion, with titles like *Discovery, Imperialism, and Decolonization* (Gbaguidi & Ahossougbe 30). Several European expansionists were known to be untruthful and fabricated narratives of their voyages to captivate their audiences back home. According to Edward Said, as quoted by Klages (2012), the Western European explorers embarked on a journey to a land they referred to as the Orient. They carefully recorded their observations and experiences about the Orient and throughout the years, an abundance of imaginative and

derogatory stories has been accumulated. For example, the concept of Orientalism creates the idea of self and other, here while judging the rest of the world, European centrists look to their own culture as the gold standard. At the same time, they look down on other people who are not them. To them they are the civilized ones and others are savage people who are slaves and happily loves to serve the civilized people. The novel, *Heart of Darkness* is a very good example of this, as the text shows, the master-slave dynamic, Europeans' treatment of the colonists and moulded their sense of self as 'others'.

Moreover, scholars in the West had the misconception that Africa was a primitive continent for a long time. As a result, these narratives have consistently distorted the reality of Africa and its people. Some examples of these writings are *Mister Johnson* (1939) by Joyce Cary, *Heart of Darkness* (1899) by Joseph Conrad, and *The Heart of the Matter* (1948) by Graham Greene (Gbaguidi & Ahossougbe 30). Therefore, the novels written by non-Africans presented an inaccurate portrayal of Africa, which understandably provoked the strong reaction of the first wave of dedicated African writers. The students understood the importance of re-appropriating images, as well as the significance of having works that focus on black individuals, written by black authors, and presented from a black point of view. According to Lawal (2009), For quite a while, numerous European writers held the belief that African societies, being predominantly non-literate, were not deserving of scholarly attention. They argued that since these societies lacked a written record, it was impossible to conduct a thorough study of their history. Consequently, they concluded that these societies had no history whatsoever (Gbaguidi & Ahossougbe 32). Therefore, feeling a blow to their self-esteem, the African writers swiftly grabbed their pens and embarked on a valiant quest for personal growth and healing. In 1958, the esteemed author Chinua Achebe graced the literary world with the publication of his renowned novel, *Things Fall Apart*. According to Alam's assertions in 2010, it can be understood that Achebe's primary intention behind writing

Things Fall Apart was to rectify a long-standing history of misinterpretations concerning his people and country within Western discussions (Gbaguidi & Ahossougbe 31).

Chinua Achebe, widely regarded as one of Africa's finest literary figures, was born in the city of Onitsha, located in Nigeria, during the year 1930. *Things Fall Apart* was published in 1958 where Achebe wrote about Okonkwo, a member of Igbo society in Nigeria, Africa, during the moment that society first encountered outside European power. Achebe, as a novelist, benefitted from an early start, which positioned him as a prominent figure for other African authors to admire and seek inspiration from. He is credited for establishing and delineating the Nigerian literary tradition through his book. This tradition draws inspiration from our indigenous folk culture and skilfully incorporates elements such as proverbs, folklore, folktales, and local myths, serving as a means of articulating our collective national identity. Novels like *Things Fall Apart* are widely read around the globe since they vividly depict a well-structured and harmonious societal framework that was disrupted by British people and their cultural domination, right after they came (Nnolim, 40). In the year 2007, Achebe's talents were appropriately honoured through the prestigious Man Booker International Prize, an award that acknowledges a writer's whole career and accomplishments (Boehmer, 337). Achebe's accomplishments were of such significance that they gave rise to a "School of Achebe" (Nnolim, 39). Besides, his role as a social critic is evident in his fictional and non-fictional works, as well as in his interviews and critical writings.

Even the passing of African literary giant Chinua Achebe on March 21, 2013, at the age of eighty-two, will not diminish his standing as one of the most important writers of the twentieth century (Boehmer, 237). The novel portrays the cultural aspects of Africa, including the beliefs, superstitions, and religious practices of the Igbo people. Postcolonial studies undertake a critical examination of the interaction between the coloniser and the colonised, primarily focusing on the interplay between knowledge and power. From this

particular viewpoint point, it might be argued that Chinua Achebe's seminal work, *Things Fall Apart* can be categorised as a postcolonial literary piece. This literary work serves as both a reaction to and documentation of the distressing outcomes of Western economic colonialism on the existing cultural principles and religious establishments of the African populace. Achebe was able to completely restore the African identity, which had been badly influenced and weakened by the rule of the empire, by stressing the relevance of indigenous components in Nigerian and African literature. By portraying a very different viewpoint of African cultures and traditions, Achebe also tried to show his fellow African people that African culture and customs should not be regarded with shame (Singh, 271). Even though the work mainly demonstrates the impact of Orientalism and British Imperialism on many civilizations, it highlights the Eurocentrism of the colonisers and the negative effects of British hegemony on the Igbo people. In light of past portrayals of Africa as "savage," Achebe aimed to showcase the unique sides of Africans and the remarkable accomplishments of a specific African culture. His intention was not only to appeal to European readers but also to engage African audiences (VanZanten, 87).

Consequently, this article will primarily centre on the question of whether Okonkwo's venomous figure and tragic demise in *Things Fall Apart* were caused by his mental illness or by societal and cultural pressures. This thesis statement is broken into three sections. I detailed all of Okonkwo's intimidating and rude actions in the first chapter. Chapter two delves into his childhood and teenage years through the lens of Freud's iceberg theory of the unconscious mind. This is how I learned that Unoka was not to blame for his highly toxic behaviour. Society may have had a role in shaping his personality, as I indicated earlier in this chapter. Part three of my study, on the other hand, offered an argument about the role of society and tried to show, by textual evidence, that his toxic masculinity was not societally formed. Then comes the core of the analysis of this article. Afterwards, drawing on Jungian

anima theory and Freudian concepts of id and ego, I conducted a psychological analysis of the character. By integrating these two ideas, I concluded that Okonkwo's mental illness drove him to act recklessly and that he must bear the consequences of his choices.

AN OVERVIEW

Despite the existence of numerous literary works that offer alternative perspectives on African individuals, *Things Fall Apart* provides a more detailed and critical lens, highlighting the detrimental consequences of colonialism on indigenous cultures and the erosion of personal identity experienced by colonised populations. Many critics have talked about this piece of work and all of them had different point of view to look at the text. Most of them pointed out the aggressive side of the protagonist and how he became a hero by going through lots of hardships. According to Sawant, the book is all about masculinity, gender roles, femininity, the cultural and social standing of men and women, women's historical marginalization, and their lack of political rights (Kiran and Pareek, 8511). The traits traditionally associated with masculinity are aggression, strength, bravery, and endurance, according to Graham Dawson. Accordingly, Okonkwo's exceptional fighting skills are one manner in which he proves his masculinity (Kakarla, 332). Whereas, others talked about his downfall and portrayed him as a tragic hero who failed to protect his own people from the hands of the colonisers.

Some highlighted the condition of women in the text and how gender discrimination was portrayed in the text. While the African feminist movement was at its peak, writer Florence Stratton harshly criticized the continent's literary establishment for being gender insensitive. Earth and Sky, the primary antagonists in Achebe's folktale, represent, according to Donald Weinstock and Cathy Ramadan, the struggle between traditional gender roles and more modern ones (Rahayu, 46). The narrative is also held together by the experiences of women and "marginalized" individuals like Obiako and Unoka, who represent the story's developing framework of resistance and survival. Moreover, according to Dan Izevbaye

(Uko, 116) there are undiscovered tales throughout the book that relate to the central subject. Achebe does not explicitly state why Ekwefi and Anene divorced, according to Izebaye. The fact that Anene abandons his wife and bride price simultaneously without a word of complaint or protest suggests that their narrative comes to a sudden close (Uko, 117).

An ideal synthesis of masculine and feminine traits is shown in the work, according to Diana Akers Rhoads. Given that his community's tribal standards include both masculine and female characteristics, Okonkwo's reluctance to accept the feminine features of his culture might be seen as a defect (Kakarla, 330). The gender binary, as analyzed by Elisabeth Horan, shows that the Igbo community views males as dominant and women as subservient (Ngendahayo 8). *'Fragmenting Culture, Fragmenting Lives'* claims that the distinct divisions between the sexes are an enduring feature of Igbo civilization. They went on to say that from the most fundamental farming techniques to the most complex human emotions and behaviours, *Things Fall Apart* portrays a society where gender inequities persist, both literally and figuratively (Ngendahayo, 6). While others talked about the customs, culture, and richness of African communities. As the text is divided into three parts, there is a broad range of topics that were addressed by Achebe. The father-son relationship was the topic of many of the critics as well. Many critics addressed the text as a perfect African text. Whereas others criticised the author for choosing English to write an African text. Adichie discusses her initial reaction to *Things Fall Apart* as a truly remarkable and eye-opening experience. According to her, she had not realised until that moment that individuals similar to herself could be portrayed in literature. In her perspective, it was a book that freely embraced its African roots, evoking a sense of deep familiarity while also offering an intriguing glimpse into the lives of my ancestors a century ago (VanZanten, 86).

While talking about the novel, Kakarla argues that the Igbo society's failure to protect its cultural traditions and religion from the impact of missionaries and colonization can be

partially attributed to its rigid perception of masculinity (330). Based on Iyasere's introductory remarks, it is suggested that literary critics who possess a deep understanding of the Igbo literary heritage tend to have a greater appreciation and openness towards *Things Fall Apart*. However, this statement seems to contradict the argument that these works have had a significant impact (McLuckie, 182).

However, Okonkwo is still seen by many readers as the archetypal Igbo guy, even though Achebe offers a diverse cast of male characters in *Things Fall Apart*, none of them are similar to him. Some have argued that Okonkwo does not represent the ideal Igbo man, and, understandably, not all readers would share this view (Ejikeme, 314).

After analysing various arguments, it has come to my attention that the psychoanalytical analysis of the protagonist has not been discussed by the critics. Even though numerous writers have focused on his actions and behaviours, little attention has been given to his mental state, but there is a research gap regarding the actual reason behind Okonkwo's aggressiveness. I tried to look at Okonkwo's actions from a very different angle, and came to a conclusion behind his toxic masculinity from the very start of the text, Okonkwo's activities and bravery are celebrated, while also shedding light on the mistreatment he continues. However, the underlying reasons behind his behaviour are not thoroughly explored by anyone. According to several critics, it has been suggested that his relationship with his father played a significant role in shaping his behaviour. They argue that his fear of being perceived as weak may have influenced his current demeanour. In the portrayal of Okonkwo, he is depicted as a character who exhibits rudeness and a lack of compassion. In addition, they attributed the blame on society for establishing flawed norms. Hence, it can be concluded that no work of literature is created solely based on the protagonist's personality or psychological state.

Upon completing the literature review section of this paper, I found myself wondering why Okonkwo did not undergo any changes over time. It is fascinating to look into why he continues to exhibit such toxic, aggressive, and mean behaviour towards others. After careful consideration, I decided to approach the text from a critical perspective to uncover the underlying cause behind all of these occurrences. In this analysis, I will thoroughly examine the factors that significantly contributed to the development of the protagonist's character. As we are aware, the downfall of Okonkwo can be attributed to his preoccupation with upholding a particular set of customs and traditions. For example, Okonkwo was so involved in fights and achievements that bloodshed or violence did not bother him much. For him it was like breathing. He thought and stick with the beliefs he had about the achievements. He considered being violent is the only way of being manly and despised people who does not follow his footsteps (Achebe, 14). In this paper, my main objective is to uncover the underlying reasons for Okonkwo's shift in behaviour. I believe this analysis is very significant as in order to understand a text in depth, it's necessary to have insight about the protagonist. If a reader is not clear about why the hero is acting in a certain way repeatedly and his reasons behind reacting to the people and situations, he will fail to engage in the text and will not be able to enjoy reading the piece of literature. If literature lacks connection, it becomes difficult to get enjoyment from it. Humans are undoubtedly complex, and we frequently act solely in accordance with our natural tendencies, but most of the time we fail to recognize the psychological component of that action. It is very easy and convenient for someone to blame it on other people for his own behavioural actions. Moreover, sometimes readers have a misconception about a particular character if not analyzed psychologically. As we saw many critics have arguments about the text, but most of them had one similar comment which was Unoka as the only reason behind Okonkwo's aggressive actions. Not only that, Unoka, as a father was even criticized for not being there with his son as a support system. Psychological

analysis however, may give an explanation for any human actions. To achieve this, I will mainly rely upon the text itself, while also incorporating relevant theories. The theories that I am using are Anima from Jungian theory and Freudian concept of Id, Ego and Super ego. Therefore, this paper will focus on whether it is societal and cultural enforcement or Okonkwo's psychological condition that turned Okonkwo to become a toxic character and led him towards his tragic demise in *Things Fall Apart*.

To write my paper I have prepared some questions which would be covered while analysing the text. The questions are:

- What are the activities that made Okonkwo a toxic character?
- What are the reasons behind the protagonist's behaviour and how much his father is connected to his parenting?
- When analyzing the protagonist, how will Freudian iceberg theory be used?
- Why do you believe society is not liable for his crimes? Explain with textual analysis.
- In what ways does Okonkwo's character reflect Freud's theory of personality?
- How can a character bursting with manhood fit within the framework of Jungian theory? Explain.

I will be leaning on several theories for guidance in my research and writing process, and the qualitative research approach will allow me to go further into my topic and uncover more interesting details. Both Freudian theory and Jung's conception of the Anima will shape my analysis. My thesis statement will be divided into three parts which I will analyse with the help of these two psychoanalytical theories. First, I will go over all the activities that Okonkwo did and said that were considered aggressive and impolite. Using Freud's Iceberg theory, I shall attempt to understand his actions and motivations in my second half. Moreover, I will also analyse the society's role in shaping his identity. In part three of my

study, I will counter the statement presented in the second part of analysis. The comparisons based on textual evidence will show that his toxic masculinity was not caused by society. Here I will also use Jung's Anima theory and Id, Ego of Freudian theory to back up my arguments. An absence of background on the protagonist's upbringing is, in my opinion, the only limitation of this work. Additional information on his upbringing would have made this paper more interesting.

METHODOLOGY:

Because of the importance of delving into the text's finer points, I intend to use qualitative method in writing this paper. Along with the main text, I have used several secondary sources which not only helped me to structure my paper but also to find a research gap. Moreover, in order to fill that research gap I will use both the main and literary theories. I will also be leaning on Psychoanalysis as a theoretical framework. To provide a more thorough study of the text, I will use a descriptive research technique based on this idea. Freudian and Jung's theories will serve as a framework within which I would more efficiently arrange my thoughts as I form arguments, create connections, and potentially make predictions. Major points of my study in this paper will centre on the Jungian idea of anima and the Freudian concepts of id and ego.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK:

The theory that would help me to analyse the text *Things Fall Apart* is the Psychoanalytic theory. Sigmund Freud's theory of personality, known as psychoanalysis, proposes that people's ideas and actions can be explained in terms of unconscious motivations and conflicts. Additionally, I will also incorporate Carl Jung's theory on anima and animus. This concept refers to the opposing masculine and feminine elements of the mind that exist within the collective unconscious mind (Woodward, 3). Jung's theory of anima/animus can be applied to various types of relationships, not just intimate ones. However, when it comes to heterosexual relationships, Jung's writings mainly focus on discussing anima/animus within the context of this traditional type of relationship. Studies in psychology focus on how people think and act. The field of psychology, which combines elements of biology and philosophy, is vast and diverse. One of the most well-known schools of psychology, psychoanalysis rose to prominence in large part due to Freud's beliefs on dream interpretation and other areas. Psychoanalysis, also known as psychodynamic theory, is a school of thought that emerged in the nineteenth century and analyses one's subconscious through dream interpretation. Psychoanalysis, the pioneering form of psychotherapy, has left a lasting impression on the discipline of psychology and on generations of psychologists who have come after it (Zhang, 229).

In this paper, I will analyse Freud's contribution to the field of psychoanalytic theory, and how it shapes the main character of *'Things Fall Apart'*. I would use concept of unconscious mind from Freud's Ice berg theory and concepts of Id and Ego from Freud's theory of personality. Moreover, I will explore Jungian concepts of anima to identify undeveloped anima/animus. Given the underlying assumption that individuals' behaviours are

influenced by unconscious mechanisms, these theoretical frameworks will be employed to clarify the reasons behind the protagonist's behaviour and ultimate failure. Therefore, these theories are especially useful for explaining that the rise of obsessive, repetitive, and neurotic behaviours results from the ego's inability to manage the immature needs of the unconscious, preconscious, and conscious parts of the self. Some psychoanalytical interpretive methods are used in what Barry calls "psychoanalytical criticism," which is a subgenre of literary criticism (96)". Moreover, I would also apply the concept of Anima and Animas by Carl Jung, to understand the character development of the protagonist. As per Jung's perspective, the anima archetype symbolises the feminine aspect inherent in males. One of the notable contributions made by C. G. Jung is his profound understanding that within the psyches of individuals, regardless of gender, there exists an inherent balance between masculine and feminine principles. This insight has gained significant relevance in contemporary popular culture (Hill, 49). The concept of anima refers to the feminine aspect within males, whereby their egos predominantly embody masculine qualities. This notion suggests that the anima represents an antidote to the masculine traits exhibited by men (Hill, 50). Therefore, I would use this theory to understand the underlying reasons behind Okonkwo's toxic masculinity.

Freudian interpretation of literature, despite its flaws as a scientific theory, is still one of the most effective methods for delving into an individual's subconscious motivations and emotions. Freud used a model of the human psyche with three stages of awareness, the conscious, the preconscious, and the unconscious to explain human behaviour (Hjelle and Zielgler, 85). According to Freud's theory, there are three levels of one's personality, The Id, The Ego, and The Superego. According to Freud, this was the foundation of each person's unique character. The Id was a symbol of primal human instinct. The pleasure principle and primary-process thought that Freud attributed to the Id, signify the rapid gratification of a human need to calm an anxious state of mind. Id is the most natural part of a person, and it

represents their physical desires. The ego relied on the reality principle. It was the act of convincing oneself of anything. Freud occasionally referred to the concept of ego as second-process cognition. Freud drew a connection between the Ego and the Id, saying that the Id is like horses and the Ego is like the charioteer. The Superego was a metaphor for the pre-existing moral compass within each person. The behaviours and social engagements of individuals in society can be understood as reflections of their unique personalities, which are influenced by the dynamic interplay between their id, ego, and superego (Zhang, 229).

Additionally, Freud said, repressed primal impulses lie beyond the realm of consciousness and control large portions of human activity. This unreachable by the conscious psyche material, he claimed, was responsible for most of our actions in the world and included things like childhood trauma, hostility towards a parent, and suppressed sexual impulses. The study of psychoanalysis says that feelings of anguish, guilt, and inferiority stem from an 'ego' that is weak and unable to regulate the irrational urges of the id and/or the superego. The ego is the only component of the mind that can function normally in the real world. Thus, it has to rely on defence mechanisms to keep it safe from anxiety (Feist, Feist 34).

To analyse the toxic masculinity of Okonkwo's character, these theories are going to be helpful. Throughout the first several chapters, Okonkwo's father Unoka is held up as an example of everything the Ibo tribesmen despise. Unoka is described as an unambitious musician who values pleasant company and is attuned to nature's mutable beauty. Thus, the fear of failure and weakness, however, ruled Okonkwo's existence. It was inside, rather than external. It was a fear of being like his father, and that fear came from within himself (Achebe, 11). Therefore, the aforementioned quote could be interpreted as an illustration of the protagonist's unconscious concern and fear. There are many more events to analyse to understand the psyche of the protagonist, through these theories.

LITERATURE REVIEW:

The novel, which is set in Igboland, southern Nigeria, at the turn of the twentieth century was originally published in the United Kingdom in 1958. Since then, *Things Fall Apart* has seen multiple reprintings in English and translation into more than a dozen languages. For millions of people, *Things Fall Apart* may be their first and only serious encounter with Africa's history. Despite being a work of fiction, *Things Fall Apart* is often cited as a historical account of life in Igboland before and during colonial rule. *Things Fall Apart* is a story that incorporates an archaeology of the African past, according to Reading Chinua Achebe and Simon Gikandi. The novel is remarkably true to the historical record according to Kwame Appiah. Achebe has been dubbed a historian of Igboland by Kortenaar (Ejikeme, 313).

Achebe's English is excellent, and he constructed it in a way that accurately conveys the perspectives of Nigeria's indigenous people. Since Umuofia's religious norms and practices had been uncontested for hundreds of years, if not millennia, no defences had developed. Nobody ever expected their sacredness to be questioned, much like the sacred python (MacKenzie, 134). Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* talks about a traditional African village which is full of people who hunt and cultivate the land, at the same time they put a high value on honour and manhood. It is found in an article that, in addition to being a work of fiction *Things Fall Apart* is also a type of historiographic metafiction. Moreover, to understand how Achebe shows the identity dilemma Africans faced under British rule, the novel must be read from this perspective. Therefore, this is why he considers his first book to be the catalyst for his eventual attainment of tranquillity (Kilbert et al. 593). It was important for Achebe to show that the African societies he grew up in were neither indigenous nor

without history, thus he used ethnographic means of representation to counter the writings of colonialists like Joyce Cary and Joseph Conrad (Nyame, 149). According to research findings, *Things Fall Apart* exemplifies psychologist Ruth Cobb Hill's idea of liminal identity (Kilbert et al. 593). The narrative is full of fights to find one's true self and up until the novel's climax every character undergoes a transformation and identity crises towards the conclusion (Kilbert et al. 593). The tale focuses on the reigning wrestling champion of the Ibo villages in Umuofia, Nigeria, Africa as well as his three wives and many offspring. It also shows how the protagonist transforms the narrative makes him unrecognisable to his loved ones and how his sense of self seems to disappear with time (Kilbert et al. 593).

Things Fall Apart's success can be attributed in large part to its insider-outsider perspective on Igbo culture provided by its author, who was raised in a Christian environment while being an Igbo member. Therefore, it is understandable that even after being an Igbo he was forbidden from taking part in any traditional Igbo rituals (Kenalemang, 10). Chimdi Maduagwu (2011) argues that the fictional Umuofia, on which Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* is based, may be any culture in Igboland, in modern-day south eastern Nigeria (Ngendahayo, 7). The novel portrays the initial phases of conflicts in the villages of Umuofia and Mbanta, thus recreating segments of the precolonial and colonial customary framework of African history (Nyame, 150). According to Kakarla, the inability of Igbo society to safeguard its cultural tradition and religion from the influences of missionaries and colonisation can be blamed in some way on its inflexible understanding of masculinity (330). According to Iyasere's introductory remarks, " Literary critics who possess a comprehensive understanding of the Igbo literary heritage tend to exhibit heightened sensitivity and receptiveness towards *Things Fall Apart*, yet this statement contradicts the argument that these pieces have had an impact "(McLuckie, 182).

Ogede believes that the portrayal of Okonkwo's treatment in the book appears to be a construct of a writer, who likely had an appreciation for the complex social dynamics resulting from colonial education (Adéèkó, 102). Achebe's writing, and especially *Things Fall Apart*, has been the subject of extensive criticism. Reviewing this criticism is illuminating since it provides insight into how African literature is often evaluated. This anthropological interpretation of *Things Fall Apart* is generated by Charles Larson, who initially criticises the same trend in early reviews of Achebe's work. Larson continues by saying the novel's first half is anthropologically heavy but develops the seeds that will grow into the second (Quayson, 120). John Mbiti discusses the deeply religious nature of his native Africa in a piece that emphasises the individuality of each person's religious and cultural practices. Also, religion runs through every facet of life to the point where isolation is next to impossible (Mwanjakwa, 166). In ways that have yet to be untangled by criticism, Ogede's careful analysis of the wrestling bout reveals how the story emphasises the performance of males and keeps females as spectators solely (Adéèkó, 102).

Kimmel argues that the definition of being a man changes not only from one culture to another but also through time within a culture, from one person to the next (Kakarla, 334). Iyasere argues that the concept of tragic heroes is deeply rooted in Western literature and Western cultural traditions. (McLuckie, 182) According to Connell,

"The Ibo civilization exhibits similarities to Western society during the pre-feminist era, as both societies structure their social practises based on gendered binaries. Hence, qualities such as daring, bravery, aggression, and activity are commonly associated with masculinity, while softness, gentleness, passivity, and submissiveness are considered feminine virtues, representing a contrasting perspective. According to its concept, masculinity can only emerge within the context of a gendered system. It

holds significant importance inside the narrative, as it carries substantial meaning for the protagonist, Okonkwo". (Kakarla, 330)

Kenalemang said, that most colonized people are torn between adhering to their own culture and the colonizer's culture; as a result, they often mix elements of the two, which can lead to a disorienting feeling of both belonging in the present and past (Kiran and Pareek, 8511). According to Kenalemang, this kind of back-and-forth movement almost always results in a significant misunderstanding and Achebe's creativity was fuelled by this clash of cultures and his portrayal of Okonkwo is remarkably consistent (Kiran and Pareek, 8511). In her paper titled Culture in Chinua Achebe's '*Things Fall Apart*', Diana Akers Rhoads asserts that the novel portrays an exemplary blend of both masculine and feminine qualities.

Patriarchy, according to several theorists is characterized by patriarchal male leadership within the family (Kiran & Pareek, 8519). Kiran and Pareek also argue that men and the tenets of hyper-masculinity are shaped by the patriarchy's excessive provision of masculine entitlements. Therefore, it is clear that patriarchy restricts men to a set of dispositions that prevents them from freely expressing their sentiments and emotions, which threatens their dehumanization (Kiran & Pareek, 8510). Nnolim says that the novel "*Things Fall Apart*" depicts Nigeria as a civilization that has undergone significant transformation, resulting in the loss and disappearance of its traditional ways of life (40). The protagonist Okonkwo has been concerned with proving his manliness from an early age in the novel. Okonkwo faces challenges as he struggles to succeed in a society that places so much importance on masculinity (Ngendahayo 5). Throughout Umuofia, the portrayal of male ideology is performed, both in praise of and criticism of the city's traditional masculine practices. The most prominent way in which this is shown is via the famous Okonkwo and his narcissistic quest for individual glory and status within the clan (Nyame, 151). One of the standards of Igbo culture, according to the authors of '*Fragmenting Culture, Fragmenting Lives*', is the

clear delineation between the genders. They added, that *Things Fall Apart* depicts a world where real and metaphorical gender disparities exist, from the most basic agricultural practices to the most nuanced human actions and emotions (Ngendahayo, 6). Azodo notes that Okonkwo's father Unoka did not take any title for indeed in the eyes of the community, he was nothing more than an agbala. But Unoka was a good flautist who enthralled audiences and served as an ambassador at both joyful and sorrowful family gatherings (Jr. 32). This is a demonstration of artistic prowess for Azodo, one that stems from the application of specialised expertise in fields like oral literature and music. In doing so, Unoka maintains his status as a masculine figure in society, though one who occupies the lowest social rank among males. Furthermore, Unoka is often mistaken for Achebe because of his artistic abilities and a life well wasted is how Unoka is portrayed in the narrative (Jr. 32).

According to Derek Wright, the social order of Umuofia is threatened by Okonkwo's uncompromising individualism and his notion that he must erase his father's legacy by excelling in everything his father failed at (Nyame, 151). Because Umuofia is known for its ability to find a social compromise, and men are judged on their own merits rather than those of their fathers. "Okonkwo's faith in masculinity, according to Wright, is problematic because it misunderstands the nature of courage and considers compassion to be a sign of weakness, thereby upsetting the delicate balance between male and female and maternal ideals" (Nyame, 152). Therefore, the stories of "marginalised" people like Obiako and Unoka, as well as the stories of women, serve as the narrative's unifying thread since they symbolise the story's evolving resistance and survival framework.

The author's primary objective in crafting this book is to emancipate the African continent from the oppressive influence of patriarchal power structures (Joseph, 122). According to Ogede, the demands of the yam borrowing ritual in Okonkwo's case serve to feminise him to such an extent that he becomes virtually indistinguishable from the wives of

the lender. Ogede says that the incident leads to a big drop in Okonkwo's mental health, which hurts his pride, makes him even less interested in his father's customs, and fuels the snobbishness and rudeness that define the rest of his life. According to Adéèkó (103). Lastly, according to Joseph's analysis, the historical suppression of black masculinity and the tension between vulnerable black masculinity and dominating white masculinity become evident upon closer examination of Okonkwo's demise. According to his assertion, Okonkwo's suicide was motivated by a profound sense of shame (122). Furthermore, it has been argued by numerous critics that Okonkwo's idea of masculinity is not universally embraced by all members of the clan. The reason for this is that the protagonist's brutalist characteristics are more prominent compared to those of any other character in the story (Joseph, 120). Graham Dawson believes that military values including aggression, power, courage and endurance have consistently been ascribed as essential and fundamental attributes of masculinity. Therefore, one of the ways Okonkwo demonstrates his manhood is through his superiority as a warrior (Kakarla, 332). In both *Things Fall Apart* and *Arrow of God*, polygyny is the preferred style of marriage for the men of the pre-colonial Igbo communities (Powell, 168).

Okonkwo's refusal to embrace the feminine aspects of his society can be seen as a flaw, given the tribal norms of his community consist of both male and female elements (Kakarla, 330). Ideas of what constitutes masculinity and femininity are socially created and the disagreement is not between men or women but rather between different cultural conceptions of what it means to be a man (Kakarla, 334). Women in certain African countries have no moral standing to challenge the widespread belief that men are superior and they are the ones who should be in charge of power and society. In Africa, if someone makes a bad decision his action is seen as feminine ((Ngendahayo 5). According to Elisabeth Horan's analysis, an examination of the masculine and feminine binary reveals that men dominate in

Igbo society and women are seen as submissive (Ngendahayo 8). Nwapa complained that male authors have severely let us down by failing to portray female characters accurately (Ejikeme, 307). Women in *Things Fall Apart* and other works by Achebe are generally illiterate and without any sense of self-awareness, pride in oneself or agency. They are weak and inconsequential even in their illiteracy, whereas males dominate every aspect of society. These are merely a colonial imagination (Uko, 120). The sexuality of women is avoided at key moments in *Things Fall Apart*. Dan Izevbaye points out some of the novel's untold stories which are parallel to the novel's main theme (Uko, 116). A different version of male and female characteristics is also visible in the novel. Despite being married to Anene, Ekwefi is seen to have romantic feelings for Okonkwo. Even Okonkwo does not reject her when she gives herself to him. Moreover, Ekwefi's decision to leave her marriage to Anene and begin living with Okonkwo marks the beginning of a significant period of self-reinvention on her part. Izevbaye claims that the reasons for Ekwefi and Anene's divorce are not made clear by Achebe. Anene also gives up on his wife at the same time his bride price without complaining or moving a muscle, which indicates the abrupt end of their story (Uko, 117).

Many critics, both women and men have pointed out that women are often relegated to the background in works by African male authors. Biodun Jeyifo and Kweadwo Osei Nyame are just two of the most prominent male critics who have noted the novel's relegated status of its female characters. Anthropologist Merun Nasser writes harshly about Achebe and his female characters in an essay titled "Achebe and his Women" from 1980. Nasser believes that Achebe uses his female characters as plot devices and that his portrayal of African women in his fiction is little more than "Chattel" (Ejikeme, 315). Andrea Powell criticises Achebe for failing to make a feminist gesture in his novel, arguing that the author should have used his work to draw attention to the 'inherently destructive' nature of polygyny

for women (Ejikeme, 316). Since most of the women in *Things Fall Apart* do not have significant roles or lines, they are easily stereotyped as being subservient or even oppressed due to this (Ejikeme, 319).

Ogede's explanations for the book's unfortunate outcomes involving stereotypes of women fall flat. The ladies are praised excessively and they hold power over some aspects of community life, both in private and in public. Ogede adds that Okonkwo's women are not quarrelsome or self-centred, instead, they are cooperative and helpful to one another (Adéèkó, 103). Yet they face a bad fate throughout the novel. At the height of the feminist movement on the African continent, feminist writer Florence Stratton wrote a harsh critique of how insensitive African writing was to gender issues. Stratton argues that Achebe's depiction of women in his seminal work mirrors the prevailing sexism of his era because of the author's male perspective. According to her account of Umuofia culture, men and women played completely separate roles. By the time Stratton wrote this, everyone knew that Achebe's writing had lost its freshness (Mwanjakwa, 159).

Mezu claims that the absence of a calming female presence is a major cause of the bloody confrontations shown in *Things Fall Apart*. As an illustration of this lack, consider Achebe's use of the folktale in which, the Earth symbolises fertility or the female principle, and Sky symbolises the male principle, are at odds with one another. The first conflict in the folktale between Earth and Sky, according to Donald Weinstock and Cathy Ramadan symbolises the battle between masculine and feminine powers and ideals (Rahayu, 46). Moreover, Women, efulefus, osus, agbalas, and other members of the community are oppressed due to Umuofia's selected traditions and Okonkwo's masculinist statements. The Umuofia's have a unique term for attitudes like gentleness and idleness. Women may also use it to describe males who are passive and easy to take advantage of, like Okonkwo's dad, Unoka. However, this authoritative discourse neglects to acknowledge other significant

values and ideals that are indicative of the community, as well as Okonkwo's absence from this particular vision.

One noteworthy point to consider is how Diop's proposition on matriarchy is recontextualized inside Achebe's chapter detailing Okonkwo's banishment to Mbatha. Despite the persistent attempts by numerous individuals to discredit it as a work of fiction, this literary piece encompasses a narrative that aligns with Marxist ideology. Culturally, Igbo men consider their wealth to increase proportionally with the number of wives they have according to Kiran and Pareek (8511). Thus, in *Things Fall Apart*, we initially observe the subjugation of women and the admiration of women embodied in the deity Agadinwayi. Sawant succinctly articulates that the emphasis is placed on gender roles, masculinity, the social standing of males and females, the historical marginalisation of women, and the denial of women's political rights. (Kiran and Pareek, 8511) Achebe's depiction of women in *Things Fall Apart* has received a lot of critical attention but scholars have paid less attention to the novel's treatment of polygyny (Powell, 171). Even though this novel does not focus on female rivalry I believe that the practice of polygyny has significant and often harmful effects on the lives of women. The nature of polygyny put women in a position of subordination to men to ensure the survival of patrilineal culture (Powell, 171).

The central idea in prescriptive or norm-based masculinity as stated by Thompson, E.H., Pleck, J.H., & Ferrera, is that males behave in certain ways not solely due to their male role identity but rather as a result of the cultural notion of masculinity that they absorb (Kakarla, 332). Kimmel says that caring is an important part of raising children and if it is not seen as a masculine trait, it might end up being connected to women. Therefore, it is understandable that Okonkwo does not immediately consider caring for his son Nwoye or his foster daughter Ikemefuna to protect his masculine achievement. However, we see by the end when Nwoye abandons the clan's ways to follow Christ, Okonkwo feels like a failure and an

inadequate person (Kakarla, 333). Okoro highlights the clear appearance of physical expressions that contradict the culturally built standards within the culture when analysing the character of Okonkwo. Certain utterances, despite their physical nature, exceed the realm of the physical and possess a spiritual essence (Kakarla, 333). Okonkwo was detached from all emotions and affections too. Joakim Pars writes that despite Ikemefuna considering and calling Okonkwo his father, he and Nwoye were nonetheless friends. Okonkwo is displeased to see the strong bond shared by the two lads and to calm their furious father, they are pressured to act more manly (Ngendahayo 9).

Over more than a decade of teaching *Things Fall Apart*, Ejiekeme has observed that his students consistently uphold Okonkwo's status as the Igbo masculine ideal type. Despite Achebe's thorough depiction of a wide range of men in *Things Fall Apart*, none of whom resemble Okonkwo, many readers remain convinced that Okonkwo represents the ideal Igbo male. Of course, not all readers will agree with this interpretation and several critics have pointed out that Okonkwo cannot be understood to embody the Igbo male ideal (Ejikeme, 314). Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* was published only two years before Nigeria was declared independent and both Harry Nii Koney Odamtten and Achebe himself have noted the importance of situating the novel within its historical context (Ejikeme, 315).

The feminist theory is one of the more practical ways, where the theory's primary focus should be on examining the ways in which we think about and, just as importantly, don't think about gender relations. For example, to better understand women's rights and an examination of male dominance. A major advantage of Feminist theories is to examine the ways in which we think about gender or fail to think about it (Flax, 626). Feminist theory's goal can only be grasped by examining its primary focus: women and men (Flax, 627). Men and women are formed differently as a result of gender roles. This theory is particularly useful in studying the supposition of men and women as mutually exclusive groups.

Scholars have only begun to entertain the idea that every civilization probably has three different histories: his, hers, and ours. In general, "his" and "ours" are assumed to be synonymous; however, in contemporary literature, that deviant-woman may be acknowledged (Flax 629). Therefore, Feminist thinkers have come up with a number of interesting explanations for which things happen the way they do, such as the "sex/gender system," the organisation of production or sexual division of labour, child-rearing practices, and language or sign-making processes. All of these theories are useful for studying how men and women interact in specific societies, but each explanation is highly flawed, insufficient, and too deterministic (Flax, 630). Yet another factor that cannot be the origin of gender roles is the institutionalised nature of child rearing. According to popular belief, men have the tendency to be aggressive and militaristic, to value the use of abstract reason (thought), and to seek dominion over nature (including bodies) (Flax, 637). Catherine MacKinnon says, "Gender socialisation is the process by which women come to see themselves as sexual beings, as beings that exist for men" (Flax, 639). The feminist theory covers a number of attractive issues among which the fact that why women bear the bulk of childcare responsibilities is simply one of several issues. A term that is closely related to colonialism is Orientalism and Hegemony, which is connected with the idea of double colonisation of women, even in the text *Things Fall Apart*. Not only does postcolonial feminist theory criticise colonial powers, but also the hegemonic power formed by local men after the Empire (Wajedi, 156). However, in postcolonial feminist theory, the Third World women and the positionality of First World (Western) women are at the centre of the East vs. West binaries and cultural hierarchy dispute. (Wajedi 159).

The animus, or masculine awareness, contrasts sharply to the anima, or feminine mind (C. Stupak and J. Stupak, 268). The reader may get disheartened, insecure, and uninterested by the difficulty of understanding anima/animus is not immediately apparent. To fully

understand anima/animus, one has to study Jung and those wholly absorbed in Jungian theory. Moreover, Jung never made a conclusive claim on anima or animus, and he did not restrict his writings on a single subject (Sanford, 1980). This is something that James Astor, a modern Jungian analyst stresses, stating that Jung's use of several languages to describe archetypes makes it very difficult to comprehend his notion of them (Astor, 2000). Verena Kast, a modern Jungian analyst, says Jungians have different understandings of the archetype and anima, which makes the task much harder (Kast, 2000).

Because of its focus on biological determinism, Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory has long been a contentious and divisive topic. Some have argued that Freud's theory overlooks the social, cultural, and developmental aspects that shape how people see and experience gender and sexuality (Hegarty & Pratto, 2001). As a result of its foundation in a patriarchal framework, Freud's theory fails to account for the multifaceted nature of gender and the consequences it has for psychosexual development (Ahmed, 2012). While some argue that the artist's reality is more genuine than Freud's, others argue that art is more than a delusion and belongs to a greater truth, to use the term proposed by the romantic critics (Donnelly, 156). According to Donnelly, Aristotle's concept of catharsis is similar to Freud's view of literature as a means of balancing conflicting tensions (156). "The wonderful work of Freud" is the only way to tackle deeper difficulties, according to Kurt Lewin (Bartlett, 64). Although Freudianism did evolve from experimental foundations, its detractors argue that the theory is still in its early stages and cannot, as of yet, provide acceptable experimental settings (Bartlett, 65). Bartlett also stated, Freud's ideas have evolved and been updated in response to the needs of ongoing therapeutic practice; they sprang from the challenging task of trying to help neurotics. The results Luria got from experiment; psychoanalysis supported Freud's ideas. Finally, the experiment prove that there are both conscious and unconscious mental processes; that these processes stay unconscious because of a mechanism of

repression that shows up as resistance in the form of the cure's contradictory nature; and that the subject's secret complexes affect and are partly based on the free flow of associations (Barlett, 69). Conversely, the nineteenth-century depression mechanism is the root cause of Freud's major flaws in his psychoanalytic theory formulations (Barlett, 69).

When it comes to explaining the existence of moral conscience, Freud's theory of the super-ego falls short (Jones, 35). It is also interesting to note that while Freud's ideas have received praise and admiration, they have also been heavily questioned by several empirical scientific studies (Ahmed, 4). As a result, Freud's Oedipus complex becomes a contentious issue, and any work based on it continues to cause readers to question their assumptions and worldviews (Ahmed, 5). When everyone assumed that men and women had fixed roles dictated by God or nature, Dr. C. Boeree notes that Freud demonstrated how much these roles were influenced by family dynamics (Boeree, 2006). Also, regarding Freud's theory of the Id, the issue arises as to how an innocent kid may have complicated sexual desires that lead them to be envious of their father and even wish for his murder (Ahmed, 6). While other theorists choose not to employ the idea at all, the majority of contemporary psychologists see the unconscious as everything we do not require (Boeree, 2006). Moreover, Carl Jung, another well-known psychologist, claims that the idea of the unconscious has reduced Freud to a pitiful figure (Ahmed, 8). Despite popular belief, Boeree commented, the brain does not have distinct regions for the conscious, unconscious, and preconscious minds (2006). According to Dalpon, Freud's theory of the unconscious mind is no better than Hoodman's since it has no scientific merit. In addition, he claims that Freud's theory of the unconscious is a complete fabrication (Rahim, 2002).

The purpose of this literature review part is to draw attention to the criticisms levelled against the text and the theories, to identify any points that the critics may have overlooked. For me to incorporate those neglected parts into my research, is the main purpose. Upon

reviewing the arguments, I have seen that critics have neglected to address the protagonist's psychoanalytical analysis, despite the numerous theories used to evaluate the book. There is a lack of study on the real root cause of Okonkwo's aggression, despite the fact that many authors have concentrated on his habits and deeds but have paid little attention to his mental condition. The reason that had been addressed by the critics was based on assumptions only and no psychological analysis was used to prove their claims. I attempted to see Okonkwo's actions from a very different perspective and discovered that from the very beginning of the text, Okonkwo's actions and bravery are praised while also shining light on the abuse he keeps on giving. Moreover, they held society responsible for the establishment of incorrect standards. We may thus say that the protagonist's character or mental health do not provide the exclusive basis for any literary work.

In order to better comprehend the gender norms between men and women, I have gone over some of the criticisms levelled against feminist philosophy. I will not be using feminist theory in my analysis, but I am interested in it because of the gender gap and the oppression, inequality women face commonly in society. As *Things Fall Apart* is highly male oriented text, this theory actually helped me to better understand women's perspectives and experiences, from transforming its assumptions and thematic focus from men to women's. Although Freudian theory has been criticised by many critics, it is necessary to consider it to comprehend psychological conditions. To examine how Okonkwo's character changes, I will be drawing on a few ideas from Freudian philosophy. I shall combine the theories of Freud and Jung to conclude my analysis since Jung also made remarks on Freud. To avoid getting tangled down in Jung's supposedly extensive theory as per critics' comments, I will analyse my protagonist using the lens of the Anima theory only.

CHAPTER 1:

Revealing Okonkwo's Toxic Personality:

The first part of my analysis will talk about all the heinous crimes and toxic activities of our protagonist. It will cover how he was mean to everyone around him and how much arrogance he had among himself because of his achievements. With time because of his physical strength and capabilities, Okonkwo became famous within the society and that created pride within him. This is the reason why, along with the crimes I will also highlight the achievements of Okonkwo that made him a successful and arrogant man. Hence, these successes drove him towards the path he walked in. These accomplishments turned him into a person with various toxic traits, including toxic masculinity, misogyny and being cold-hearted. In this chapter, I will be disclosing all the things that Okonkwo did, which turned him into a toxic character.

Although Okonkwo is the story's primary character, Achebe decided to present the audience with a flawed protagonist. The life of the protagonist is inherently entangled with masculinity, a factor that contributes to his flaws and ultimately leads him towards a tragic demise (Achebe, 167). In the final section of the novel, the protagonist's ultimate act of committing suicide is portrayed following his profound realisation (Achebe, 167).

Before talking in detail about the toxic characteristics of our protagonist, it is important to give an introduction to him. Okonkwo's introduction was given in the text in a way that every protagonist deserves to get. The text starts with talking about Okonkwo's accomplishments. He was shown as a hardworking, courageous, and outspoken individual. He is frequently characterised using metaphors related to fire and flames, to the extent that he has acquired the nickname Roaring Flame (Achebe, 8). Okonkwo's reputation extended beyond the nine settlements and drew recognition from neighbouring communities. The

individual's reputation was established based on substantial personal accomplishments. At the tender age of eighteen, he achieved great distinction for his village through his remarkable feat of overpowering Amalinze the Cat who was undefeated for over seven years (Achebe, 8). To give an idea about what Okonkwo looks like Achebe gave information so detailed. The narrative opens with a description of Okonkwo's powerful physical attributes, which give us a sense of his manliness. Achebe appears to express admiration and glorification for the qualities possessed by Okonkwo, which are characterised by their strength and allure (Achebe, 12). Detailed information is provided regarding his height, physique size, as well as the appearance of his eyebrows and nose. The individual had pronounced breathing patterns, with reports suggesting that his inhalations and exhalations were audible to his spouses and offspring within their dwellings during times of sleep (Achebe, 8). In addition to his physical attributes, he possesses firm ideas regarding conventional masculinity that are regarded as representative of manliness (Achebe, 8).

Okonkwo was stuck to the belief he had about masculinity till his last breath. All his life he tried to maintain his image within the society by showing his so-called manhood through hard work and violence. We see in *Things Fall Apart*, Okonkwo's movement was characterized by little interaction between his heels and the ground, giving the impression of a spring-like movement hinting at an immediate pouncing act (Achebe, 8). Furthermore, he frequently indicated a tendency to aggressively approach individuals and displays a little trouble with speech characterized by a slight stammer (Achebe, 8). In cases where Okonkwo felt anger and encountered difficulty in expressing himself verbally, he turned to physical aggression using his fists (Achebe, 8). This indicates how violent he is in nature, that when he is unable to express his thoughts with words because of his shortcomings, he gets more aggressive and to hide his weakness he does something worse. He probably thinks that this way people will be still scared of him and won't pay much attention to his stammering.

Hiding insecurities with aggression and anger. Okonkwo was characterised as a remarkably powerful individual who experienced infrequent sensations of exhaustion. However, throughout the novel how his spouses and young offspring, lacking comparable strength, endured negative effects and treatments as a result from Okonkwo.

Despite his youth, Okonkwo had already achieved a prominent status as one of the most esteemed individuals of his era. At a remarkably young age, he had already acquired his fifth head, and during the solemn events, he would engage in the consumption of palm wine, utilising his initial acquisition, which happened to be a human skull (Achebe, 14). In addition to his renowned wrestling abilities, he has achieved two titles and demonstrated remarkable skill in two inter-tribal conflicts (Achebe, 12). He is the earliest individual in the community of Umuofia to successfully preserve a human skull as a trophy of warfare (Achebe, 14). The material comforts of Okonkwo's home spoke to his success and accomplishments. A high wall of red soil surrounded his expansive compound. Each wife had a little coop attached to her cottage, and the goats had their shed across the compound (Achebe, 16).

According to traditional wisdom, it was believed that a child who cleaned their hands would be deemed worthy of dining with royalty (Achebe, 12). He was so confident and proud of himself that while asking for help from Nwakibie he said he learnt to take care of himself at an age when other children were still sucking their mother's milk (Achebe, 22). Okonkwo had cleansed his hands, therefore enabling him to take part in meals with esteemed individuals such as monarchs and elders (Achebe, 12). And thus, he got the responsibility of caring for the ill-fated young individual, Ikemefuna who was destined to be sacrificed (Achebe, 12). This responsibility was given to Okonkwo as people of his tribe respected him and had faith in him. After getting all this attention slowly he started getting greedier for power and wealth and a sense of pride was created within him. Upon Okonkwo's arrival in Mbaino as a powerful ambassador of war, representing the Umuofia community he was

received with utmost reverence and deference (Achebe, 15). Okonkwo was given the responsibility to look after Ikemefuna for almost three years. Upon getting this much love and respect from his society Okonkwo understood that to get the same love and attention he needed to carry this personality all his life. Therefore, he remains toxic and aggressive in greed for power and wealth. We also see Okonkwo going through a sad year with farming when he did not lose hope and chose to embrace positivity instead of breaking down. That year was enough to break the heart of Okonkwo and he knew he was a tough warrior and as he survived it, he believed he would survive anything (Achebe, 24). Their constant dedication to traditional notions of masculinity allowed his acquisition of numerous material possessions, which in turn created a sense of pride within him.

Achebe lets us know on the second page of the novel how much Okonkwo despise his father. From the start of the narrative and the early stages of Okonkwo's life, it becomes evident that he possesses an intense preoccupation with notions of manhood or masculinity, mixed with significant anxiety about failure and the prospect of resembling his father (Kakarla, 331). Okonkwo also had a lack of tolerance towards individuals who were not successful and exhibited a lack of empathy for his father (Achebe, 8). His father was Unoka, who passed away a decade prior. During his era, he exhibited a lack of effort and insight, demonstrating an inability to consider future circumstances (Achebe, 9). He lived his life as he wished and there are so many dissimilarities between the father and son. If any money was acquired by Unoka, which is also a rare occurrence in itself, he promptly utilized those funds to get containers of palm wine, thereafter reaching out to his acquaintances in the area and engaging in joyful activities (Achebe, 9). He consistently expressed the belief that observing the lips of a deceased individual served as an important reminder of the foolishness associated with neglecting to consume during one's life (Achebe, 9). Unoka, had his own beliefs and way of looking at life. This individual had a tall stature, accompanied by a skinny

physique and a subtle inclination of the upper body. He displayed exceptional proficiency in playing the flute, and experienced great joy during the three lunar cycles following the harvest, when the local musicians descended upon the village, bearing their instruments that were previously suspended over the fireplace (Achebe, 9). Unoka would engage in playful activities with them, exhibiting an aura radiating with a sense of divine favour and tranquillity (Achebe, 9). Therefore, starting from his physical features to hobbies and activities everything is different from his son, Okonkwo. Okonkwo hated his father for being the way he was. Thus, we can say that Okonkwo worked hard not to look and be like his father.

Upon Unoka's demise, it was evident that he had not acquired any form of social or professional recognition, as he had not attained any title. Additionally, his financial situation was burdened by substantial debts. Therefore, it is not surprising that Okonkwo hated his father more than anyone else. Fortunately, in Igbo society, individuals were evaluated based on their merit rather than being assessed solely based on the social standing of their fathers (Achebe, 11). Furthermore, Okonkwo made great use of this opportunity and showed his talent for achieving remarkable accomplishments. Despite his youth, he achieved fame as the best wrestler within the nine settlements and also became a rich farmer with two barns abounding with yams. Additionally, he entered into wedlock for the third time, acquired two prestigious titles and demonstrated exceptional skill and ability in two conflicts between different tribes (Achebe, 12). He gained all these only to make himself detach and separated from the identity of his father. When there was a call for a meeting Okonkwo assumed if there is going to be a war in neighbour clan or not. He was then satisfied and felt proud by saying he did not exhibit fear towards warfare. He showed an attraction for decisive action and demonstrated a strong belief towards engaging in battles. He believes and feels good that

it contrasts with his father that Okonkwo possesses the capacity to tolerate the sight of blood (Achebe, 14).

Okonkwo enforced strict authority within his household. The woman, particularly the youngest spouse, experienced a constant state of apprehension due to his violent temperament, which also affected his small offspring. It is possible that Okonkwo, deep within his being, did not possess inherent cruelty. However, an overwhelming feeling of anxiety held influence over every facet of his existence (Achebe, 16). During the planting season, Okonkwo tirelessly laboured on his agricultural plots, commencing his work at the break of dawn and persisting until dusk when the chickens returned to their roosts. He had exceptional physical strength and experienced occasional sensations of exhaustion. However, the wives and small children of the individual in question showed a lack of resilience, resulting in their experience of hardship. but they refrained from overtly expressing their displeasure to him out of fear (Achebe, 16).

His harsh treatment of wives is evident in the text. The day when Okonkwo brought Ikemefuna home and handed him to his eldest wife. Out of curiosity when his wife asked a few questions Okonkwo got angry. He shouted and stutteringly commanded 'Do as you are told, woman. When did you start counting yourself among Umuofia's ndichie'? (Achebe, 17). Without questioning further his wife left with Ikemefuna, which shows the ill-treatment of women in their household by Okonkwo. Another incident happened during the week of peace. Okonkwo had disturbed the tranquilly and so Ezeani, the priest of the soil goddess, had him chastised. Okonkwo's youngest wife went out to her friend's place and she did not return before the midday dinner. Okonkwo had no idea she wasn't there at first and he went to her hut after waiting in vain for her to prepare a meal. To wait until Ojiugo's return, he retreated to his obi. And when she did finally come back, he gave her a severe beating (Achebe, 28). He was so enraged that he failed to remember that it was Peace Week. His first

two wives, fearing for their safety during the holy week, screamed and ran out to him. Even the fear of a goddess couldn't make Okonkwo stop pounding someone in the middle of the fight. When Okonkwo's neighbours heard his wife sobbing, they yelled over the walls of the compound to find out what was wrong. Some of them even came over to check it out personally (Achebe, 28).

Another day before the Yam Festival Okonkwo was roaming around in his house compound with a sense of purposeless frustration and unexpectedly discovered an opportunity to release his anger. He started shouting and asking "Who killed the banana tree? Are you completely deaf and mute" (Achebe, 35)? The tree was in a state of vitality and his second wife only removed a few leaves off the plant to use them as a wrapping material for meals. But Okonkwo did not care about the explanation and without any additional justification Okonkwo administered a severe physical punishment to her. Both of the other wives refrained from intervening, only occasionally and hesitantly doing so. Okonkwo argued from a reasonable distance, expressing his belief that the current situation had reached a satisfactory conclusion. After experiencing a sense of appeasement, Okonkwo decided to engage in a hunting expedition. (Achebe, 35) This shows how he never feels bad or regrets how he treats his wives.

Moreover, when he wanted to go hunting, upon asking Ikemefuna to retrieve his firearm, the wife, who had just endured physical abuse, uttered a remark regarding the ineffectiveness of guns. Regrettably, the noise reached Okonkwo's ears, prompting him to hastily retreat into his chamber to retrieve a firearm, directing his aim towards her (Achebe, 35). Okonkwo pulled the trigger, and the sound was followed by the screams of his family. He later dropped the rifle and ran into the barn, where he saw the terrified woman lying on the floor. Despite the unfortunate turn of events, Okonkwo's family nonetheless enthusiastically celebrated the New Yam Festival. Offering a sacrifice of young yam and

palm oil to his forefathers first thing that morning, he prayed for their continued protection over him, his family, and their mothers in the next year (Achebe, 35). But little did he know the only protection his family needed was from Okonkwo himself.

Even the people of the village knew about his ill-treatment and even asked his wife once they got a chance. The village woman asked whether it is true that Okonkwo shot at her and came very close to killing her. In response to that Okonkwo's second wife says 'it is true my close friend and there is no word coming out of my mouth right now to tell you something' (Achebe, 43). When Ezinma got sick suddenly while pouring the water into the bowl, Ekwefi asked Okonkwo if it was enough or not. He screamed at her and said, "I said to add a little more, do you not hear me" (Achebe, 72). Therefore, kind behaviour and softness within Okonkwo, seems invisible in the text.

At the time, Okonkwo's eldest offspring, Nwoye, was twelve years of age and had already become a source of significant concern for his father due to his emerging indolence. In any case, this was the perspective held by his father, who tried to rectify it through persistent admonishment and physical punishment. Consequently, Nwoye was maturing into an individual characterised by a melancholic countenance (Achebe, 16). After arriving at Okonkwo's house Ikemefuna was initially filled with fear. He used to miss his mother and sister even after getting much love from Okonkwo's wife. He even made a couple of attempts to flee but always ended up back where he started. But Okonkwo was always harsh to this little boy. Okonkwo used to stand with a large stick in his hand after learning that he refused to eat, stood over him while he gulped down his yams, shaking with fear. The boy used to go to the hut's back corner and began violently vomiting. Later with time he adjusted with the family and started having a good bond with everyone. Naturally, Okonkwo also developed an emotion for Ikemefuna but he never showed it. Except for wrath, he never showed any outward displays of feeling. Affection was a sign of weakness and strength was all that

mattered to Okonkwo and this was the reason why he used the same harsh treatment on Ikemefuna that he does with everyone else. (Achebe, 27).

One day Okonkwo was getting his seed yams ready and Nwoye and Ikemefuna were there to help him. Okonkwo would occasionally give them some yams to cook. But no matter how hard they tried, he always found something to criticise and he did so in a very menacing way (Achebe, 31). He threatened Nwoye by saying, "I will smash your jaw if you try to cut another yam this big. At about your age, I got my first farm" (Achebe, 31). He even behaves harshly with Ikemefuna and reminds him that he does not belong to this place. Even after knowing deep down that his sons were too young, he was making it difficult for them. Okonkwo had high hopes for his son, whom he raised to be a successful farmer and a respected adult (Achebe, 31). No words of appreciation and encouragement were there, instead, he said, "I refuse to raise a son who will embarrass me at family reunions, I'd rather just strangle him myself " He added, "Madiora will break your head for you if you stand there staring at me like that!" (Achebe, 31).

Moreover, before the Yam Festival when Okonkwo got mad only because of a banana tree, he beat his second wife for this silly reason resulting in both her and her sole daughter expressing their distress via tears (Achebe, 35). For several times we see Okonkwo creating a barrier for his daughters only because of gender. He not only expected Nwoye to act like a man, but the same expectation was from Ezinma as well. When she sat in front of him one day, Okonkwo told her to maintain a posture typically associated with femininity. He not only said this but yelled angrily at her. And Ezinma right after that aligned her lower limbs and extended them forward (Achebe, 40). Even when Ezinma was trying to be nice to her father he showed Ezinma her place by saying "That task is associated with males, it is not your job" (Achebe, 40). Many times, he wished his ten-year-old daughter to be a boy because he loved her so dearly (Achebe, 54). He could not love her the way she was. Gender

discrimination was very evident in his actions and there is no way that it could be considered as a father's way of expressing love.

Okonkwo secretly liked Ikemefuna even though he never showed it. Okonkwo secretly admired his son's progress, which he attributed to Ikemefuna's influence. Okonkwo hoped that Nwoye would grow wealthy enough to offer regular sacrifices to the forefathers. That's why it made him happy whenever he overheard him complaining about women. According to Okonkwo, this demonstrated his eventual mastery over the ladies of his tribe. No matter how wealthy a man was, he was not a man if he could not control the women and children in his life (Achebe, 46). Okonkwo also used to tell his sons stories related to manhood, war and destruction, even though Nwoye liked the ones that his mother used to tell him (Achebe, 47).

After staying three years with Okonkwo, there comes a time when the decision to kill Ikemefuna was taken. Okonkwo was told not to take responsibility for his death as Ikemefuna now considered him a father but Okonkwo did not listen to any of this. When Ikemefuna saw men standing with arms to kill him, he immediately hid himself behind Okonkwo. Little did he hope that Okonkwo would save him.

"Okonkwo turned his head aside as the man who had cleared his throat came up and readied his machete. The sound of the strike reached his ears. The broken pot was found in the sand. As Ikemefuna hurried towards him, he yelled, "My father, they have killed me!" Okonkwo, frozen with terror, pulled his machete and killed him. The idea of appearing helpless terrified him." (Achebe, 53)

This is how without thinking twice about the bond he had with Ikemefuna for the last three years, he brutally killed him. Any possibility of an improvement in the bond between Okonkwo and Nwoye is destroyed by the passing of Ikemefuna (Jr, 33). He also never gave recognition to anything which does not match his traits. He felt ashamed of his son, Nwoye,

because he was not what he wanted him to be like and he criticised him in front of other village members (Achebe, 56). His treatment towards Nwoye never changed which led Nwoye to go and join a Christian missionary. One day after coming back home late afternoon an angry outburst caused Okonkwo to stand up and grab Nwoye by the throat, grab a thick stick give him a few vicious strikes while making death threats (Achebe, 124). He could not believe that Nwoye was his blood and started doubting his wife and already was making plans to punish her for that (Achebe, 126). Okonkwo's pride and toxic masculinity could not let him believe that he could give birth to a child who does not resemble him at all. He told his sons,

"You have all witnessed your brother's huge abomination. Neither my son nor your sibling anymore. Only a manly son will do; he must be able to carry his weight among his people. While I am still alive, I will curse whomever among you would rather be a woman by following Nwoye. If you betray me in my grave, I will come back and break your neck". (Achebe, 140)

An elderly man from the village commented that Okonkwo looks like someone who never drunk his mother's milk. He praised Okonkwo by saying this and he didn't dislike Okonkwo at all. He had a great deal of admiration for his drive and achievement. However, he, like many others, was shocked by Okonkwo's brusqueness towards persons of lesser accomplishment (Achebe, 26). Okonkwo said to a man who contradicted him "This meeting is for men" without even looking at him. As the man who had just spoken out against him was untitled, that was the reason why he referred to him as a 'woman'. Okonkwo was skilled in snuffing out a man's inner fire (Achebe, 26). He even called his clan women, when they were stepping back from taking action against Christian missionaries (Achebe, 130).

Okonkwo is an example of how destructive toxic masculinity can be when it enters into interpersonal interactions. He murdered because he regarded being masculine means

being violent and aggressive without considering the circumstances (Achebe, 165).

Moreover, right after killing the messenger, he took his own life on the day he was about to get punishment from the British. The fact of hanging himself can somehow display his machoism. His toxic masculinity was responsible for the death of others in addition to his own. As I described all the heinous crimes and activities of our protagonist in this chapter, in the next chapter I will analyse the reasons behind his toxic behaviours and activities. What role society and Okonkwo's father played in his development, would be marked in the second part of my analysis. Moreover, I will shortly talk about the Freud's Ice berg theory, different layers of human minds and how it is connected to Okonkwo.

CHAPTER 2:

Underlying Causes of Okonkwo's Behaviour:

As I mentioned in the first part, Okonkwo behaved in a way with people close to him which is not normal at all. All his weird activities with his wife, children, neighbours, and community people have been discussed there. At the same time, we see his thoughts and perspective about certain individuals such as his dad. Most of the time toxic people treat at least their loved ones nicely but we see a different case here with Okonkwo. Now In this section, I will get deeper into the events and try to find out why our protagonist became this way. What are the reasons behind his character development and what leads to his ultimate demise will be my main focus of this part. To uncover these, I shall be utilizing Freud's iceberg theory. To understand our protagonist's poisonous conduct, I will first explain the three levels of consciousness and then apply this understanding to his actions. Since this section of the study would be controversial, I will focus on Okonkwo's father and society to clarify what drives him. Furthermore, I will do my best to demonstrate whether or not they are genuinely influencing our protagonist's life.

As we are analysing Okonkwo and trying to discover the reason behind his toxic behaviour, it will be necessary to look at his early life first, at the same time think about the incidents from a psychoanalytical point of view. Because most of the time it is our childhood that plays the most significant role in the formation of one's personality. Psychologist Sigmund Freud said, "The development of behaviour and personality may be caused by the perpetual and distinct interplay of conflicting psychological forces that manifest across three distinct levels of consciousness: the preconscious, conscious, and unconscious minds (Cherry, 2023)". The individual held the belief that each of these cognitive components of the psyche had a significant influence on human behaviour. It is necessary to initially grasp

Freud's explanation of the functions, mechanisms, and interplay of each component of the human psyche, which collectively shape the human experience.

Even though multiple levels of consciousness contribute to the formation of human conduct and mental processes, the unconscious mind is the one that could be appropriate for the character analysis of Okonkwo. But before going deeper into the analysis of our protagonist's childhood, let us look at what Freud said about unconscious mind. The unconscious mind can be defined as a reservoir containing a multitude of emotions, thoughts, impulses, and memories that lie beyond the grasp of our conscious awareness. As the unconscious mind includes elements that are deemed unwanted or unpleasant, such as experiences of distress, apprehension, or chaos (Cherry, 2022). Even though the unconscious mind is something that isn't consciously accessible, it still affects one's actions. Some of the examples are having bad thoughts, reckless actions and negative thoughts, anger and obsessive behaviour, problematic behaviour in children, complicated social interactions, unsettling tendencies in intimate partnerships, negative worldviews unhealthy lifestyle choices, stereotypical views and discrimination etc (Cherry, 2022). Among these characteristics most of them are visible in Okonkwo's character as mentioned in the first chapter. We have seen him behaving recklessly, always reacting aggressively, he has a sense of obsession towards violence, how he fails to socialize and treat his family kindly, how he had very fixed stereotypical beliefs about masculinity and femininity which he uses in order to discriminate people.

We see in the first part that whenever Okonkwo's father, Unoka received money, which wasn't often, he would buy gourds of palm wine, visit his neighbours, and celebrate. Not only he was in debt to his entire community, but he owed everyone from a few cowries to a considerable sum of money. The moments that he played flutes with others, were the happiest times for him (Achebe, 9). Unoka was so destitute that he could hardly provide for

his family. Because of his reputation as a slacker, no one would ever trust him with money again after he repeatedly failed to repay previous loans. However, Unoka was the type of man who could never resist taking on additional debt. The overall impact was upbeat and joyful, yet upon closer inspection, one could hear the sadness and regret in the flute as it swelled and dwindled (Achebe, 10). Therefore, this is a short description of Okonkwo's father who somehow left an impact on his child's life, affecting his psychological health.

As there is very limited story told about Okonkwo's childhood and his father was shown as a lazy man who could not think forward and live to life without any plans, we can assume, Okonkwo had a difficult childhood as we see him having a very negative approach towards his father. One of the reasons behind his toxic personality could be that, Okonkwo grew up seeing people making fun of his father, which was embarrassing for him and we also can see that Unoka could not provide for his family as well. It has been indicated so many times in the text that, his father was the reason behind his painful childhood, where he had to suffer to get the basic needs. Therefore, this is how gradually he started hating his father from a very young age. As a reader we have been told that Unoka was the only person who could have given Okonkwo a better childhood and a secure future. Unfortunately, he could not and this made the younger Okonkwo furious and hurt to some point that making him into a person who will never turn out to be like his own father. It took a long time for Okonkwo, to save enough money through sharecropping to buy a barn (Achebe, 20). Moreover, it is more difficult for a family who doesn't have any yams just like Okonkwo. The fact that Okonkwo had to provide for his mother and two sisters from his small harvest only made things worse (Achebe, 23). Okonkwo was forced to take care of his father's home and his siblings at a young age when he began sharecropping in an attempt to fund the construction of a barn. It was like trying to get corn kernels into a sock. His mom and sisters put in plenty of hours, to grow crops too (Achebe, 24). Thereby, as Okonkwo took responsibility from a very young

age, it became a burden to him and made him emotionally unavailable too. Because of the age at which children need extra love and care, Okonkwo used years to earn bread for his family. Therefore, we can assume that, as Okonkwo never got the love, he does not even know how to raise a child with love, or how to treat one's wife, thus turning into a heartless human being. Moreover, in his unconscious mind all these childhood experiences created a sense of trauma and fear that followed him throughout his life.

Fortunately, the people of Umuofia judge a person based on one's own capability and do not care about generational wealth or respect. This became an advantage for Okonkwo to keep going and to do something better than his father. Accordingly, he started fighting battles, winning over people's hearts by gaining victory. He even acquired some physical features that are so unlike his father. He hated anything related to being weak or lazy and did not like wasting time on things that did not bring any productivity. Therefore, his obsession towards hard work and distaste towards idleness was sparked by his father. Whenever anyone in the text makes fun of anyone's father, Okonkwo immediately gets attacked and feels uneasy (Achebe, 21). He was very insecure about his father because people in his community made fun of him.

The text is written in such a way that, a reader will surely blame Okonkwo's father, for Okonkwo's character development. Moreover, it is even said by most of the critics that Unoka played a vital role in shaping his son's personality. As mentioned in the first part we see how Okonkwo was intolerant about Unoka and how he had this obsession towards notions of manhood and masculinity, mixed with a significant anxiety about failure and the prospect of resembling his father. If we look at it as per Freudian theory, it can be said that the painful thoughts and memories that stored in Okonkwo's unconscious mind from early childhood, created a sense of fear within him (Cherry, 2022). Therefore, his psychological condition in unconscious mind is one of the reasons behind Okonkwo's aggressive behaviour.

But what part of childhood actually caused this trauma, whether we should wholly blame Unoka or not is still a matter to look into. From the first page of the text, we see two things, one that is Okonkwo is very conscious about his reputation in public and his father is the main reason behind this. In the text, a very hateful relationship is shown towards Unoka. Unoka was also somehow held responsible for Okonkwo's mental health condition or traumatic childhood. By reading all the given details, anyone would assume that because of Unoka, Okonkwo was deprived of love, and care from his family and maybe Unoka was very indifferent about the existence of Okonkwo, which probably increases the hate towards Unoka. One might assume, Okonkwo became a violent person because Unoka was ineffective as a care giver. But by looking deep into the text, we could see that even though Unoka was different from other men in the community and liked to live a different life than usual, his love towards Okonkwo was inseparable. We see in the text where Unoka is consoling Okonkwo and telling him not to lose hope and give up (Achebe, 24). He also encouraged him by praising his manliness and a heart full of goodness and gratitude. Unoka added, that a proud heart can endure a general failure since it does not harm its sense of pride (Achebe, 24). Despite his son's vindictive attacks, to me it does not seem to be the voice of an angry father or an enemy who was indifferent about his son and his achievements; rather, it is the voice of a dad who is offering his child a loving, guiding, and supportive hand, who is pushing him towards his goal and passion, even though his sons have very different hobbies and goals than him. Surely, Okonkwo had a difficult past but we cannot say that he did not get love from his father. The reasons for the trauma building might be different, probably it was only because of the financial crisis and bullying. Because end of the day Unoka loved his son and expressed it too. When Okonkwo saw people make fun of Unoka, it would have been disastrous for the child Okonkwo's mental state to learn of this regarding his father. There was probably too little parental guidance as Unoka was busy doing his things. In addition to

struggling to make a living, Okonkwo was probably teased and bullied by his peers, leading to frequent conflicts. Therefore, Okonkwo has been traumatised by his constant awareness of the societal narrative of Igbo society, and his actions are guided by his desire to avoid being seen as a failure like Unoka. Okonkwo could have understood and looked at his dad differently, he could have shown empathy towards him but instead, he chooses to reject his father's existence and chose to protect his own reputation.

As written, the human mind, according to Freud, is divided into two parts, that is conscious and unconscious. Things that people are aware of are part of the conscious mind. Whereas, the unconscious mind contains things that people aren't intentionally aware of, for example wish, desire, memories, hopes etc. The aforementioned discussion gave us some insight about Okonkwo's childhood memories stored in unconscious mind. Moreover, for more deeper analysis, other psychological sections of Freudian theory are significant too, which will be discussed as a counter argument in the next part. However, Unoka alone is not the reason behind his complex personality and ill mentality. According to the textual evidence, it may seem like society played a major role in case of shaping Okonkwo's behaviour and acts. We see the comparison of Unoka and Okoye where Achebe made it clear what the Umuofia society appreciates (Achebe, 11). We see that like Unoka, Okoye was also talented at music. However, in contrast to Unoka, he was successful. His yam barn was enormous, and he was married to three different women. The Idemili title was categorically in third position in the land, and now it was his to gain (Achebe, 11). Consequently, by looking at the sharp contrast between the characters, it can be said that titles, money, power, and physical strength are considered acceptable as many characteristics in Igbo society. Moreover, people's reputations and social standing used to depend on these things.

Through this novel, we get introduced to an African worldview which also exposes certain underlying paradoxes within a well-structured societal framework. We also get to see

how the same society has a mechanism that makes a man fall from grace, almost as quickly as his rise to power. Thereupon, as I mentioned in the first part, how Okonkwo made history by bringing home the first human head from one of Umuofia's lately concluded conflicts. He actually saved that first human head for special events, like the funeral of the village's most famous resident (Achebe,14). He used to drink from that human head in those events, which is kind of showing off one's achievement. In addition, we see after the murder of a girl, the Umuofian crowd suddenly erupted in a roar of wrath and a desire for revenge and blood (Achebe, 14). The Mbaino were given a choice between going to war and accepting the compensation offer of a young boy and girl (Achebe, 14), which indicates how much they crave things similar to war and bloodshed. These talk about the Umuofia people's traits and behaviours. Moreover, everyone in the neighbourhood was terrified of Umuofia. All the people in the area feared its priests and medicine men because they were strong in both war and magic. Therefore, these events show that Umuofia had its own determined rules, belief system and preferences. It's also important to remember that Umuofia was never into violence or war unless it was ordered by the Oracle. When Unoka was having a bad time with his luck and went to the priestess for suggestions, her words echoed dreadfully through the gloom, "Hold your peace!" She added,

"The success or failure of a man's harvest depends on whether or not he has made peace with his gods and ancestors. Unoka, your machete and hoe have a reputation for being the weakest in the clan. You stay put and make sacrifices to uncooperative soil while they ford seven rivers to get to their farms. Get back to work like a man."

(Achebe, 19)

The point here is, that even the priestess of his clan is setting the binary of man and woman here. She is dividing gender-based activities here and indicating that weakness is a womanly thing to have. Likewise, discrimination towards women and how disrespectful Igbo

people are towards women are also shown. Thereby, it can be assumed that Okonkwo had this obsession towards masculinity and hatred towards anything womanly. Society was guiding him to the path of aggression and violence.

Patriarchy is one of these structural forces in Umuofia, which is representative of Nigeria as a whole. Because of patriarchy, men are empowered to treat women as property and exercise totalitarian control over them. As mentioned in the first part that how Okonkwo makes improper use of this structural power by recklessly striking his second wife at the joyous New Yam Festival is evidence of his tendency to abuse his wives at the least provocation (Achebe, 36). There are more incidents where he treats his wives and children poorly. Following the abovementioned points, we see that among the people of Umuofia, harsh masculinity is expected and enforced. Okonkwo kills Ikemefuna, the youngster who calls him father, despite the opposition of his buddy Obierika, because he is afraid of meeting the same fate as his father and does not want to be seen as a coward in front of the entire society (Achebe, 53). Therefore, it can be said that the attitude of Okonkwo is influenced by the institutional forces present in his society, and he willingly embraces these forces as a means to mask his feelings of insecurity.

One of the biggest sins that Okonkwo ever committed was killing Ikemefuna after the Oracle ordered the murder of this boy. Even though it was not wholly Okonkwo's responsibility to fulfil it but yet he felt a pull towards fulfilling his obligation to the clan. To prove his loyalty and bravery towards the clan, he holds onto his toxic masculinity and decides to kill Ikemefuna, but deep down he truly cares about the boy. As a result, Okonkwo has been at odds with both his culture and his own identity for the entirety of his existence. Moreover, the tragic end is something that Okonkwo invited upon himself as he could not maintain a good balance between his private and public life. Moreover, Okonkwo's suicide should not be viewed as a tragic deed, but rather as his final attempt to develop cultural pride

in the Igbo people in the midst of looming colonialism, as we see in the text that Okonkwo was so happy to see his people's unity (Achebe, 155). To encourage his people to fight back against their colonial rulers, Okonkwo was willing to give up his own life. His luck was not working against him when he killed the messenger, rather he did it to protect his people's traditions from their upcoming colonisation by whites and their collaborators. Therefore, by seeing these abovementioned points it can be assumed that behind taking his own life and committing all the heinous crimes, Okonkwo had a big purpose, a purpose of proving his loyalty and patriotism.

Moreover, there could be another point of view of his suicide, where society is responsible behind it. When Okonkwo got to know from Obierika how the traditional Igbo community underwent a shift towards the Christian faith. After coming back from exile, Okonkwo finds himself unable to tolerate such alterations inside his society. To uphold his commitment to his community and religious beliefs, and to sustain his active participation in patriotic missions, we have seen that he willingly gave up numerous significant aspects of his personal life. He even expresses a desire to resist the influence of white men who introduced a perceived irrational religious belief system and a governing authority. He said, it would be best for everyone if Umuofia just went to war but if they decide to be cowards, he'd take matters into his own hands and exact revenge (Achebe, 145). In this context, the act of suicide has already been determined. Later when Okonkwo killed the white messenger, he did not receive any support from anyone. Instead, there is a curiosity as to why he chose to eliminate the messenger who had requested an urgent suspension of the gathering (Achebe, 165). Thus, Okonkwo experiences an intense downfall, not because of the arrival of the colonisers, but because of the actions of his fellow community members during a period of societal breakdown. He took his own life after discovering that his people had given up on

their culture and religion and there was no unity among them like in earlier days (Achebe, 165).

Thus, in this investigation section, I discovered that Okonkwo's character analysis could be examined through the unconscious mind. Meanwhile, Okonkwo had to take care of his family during his boyhood, therefore he missed out on enjoying those days since Unoka was too lazy. Although that was a contributing factor, Okonkwo's heart was wounded more deeply by the societal remarks made about Unoka. As a parent, we witness Unoka's love for Okonkwo in the text, thus it's hard to hold him responsible for his son's toxicity and rudeness. The financial crisis certainly had a role, but the real culprit behind Okonkwo's traumatic experiences as a youngster was society's treatment of Unoka. Additionally, it emphasized how Okonkwo was socially pressured to become violent. Here again, the norms demonstrated how deeply patriarchal the culture was and how it encouraged rudeness towards women. So, in this section, Okonkwo's deeds were examined through the lens of his reputation as a devoted slave who fearlessly gave his life for his nation. In the third and last section of my study, however, I shall present grounds in opposition to this assertion. I shall do my best to cite texts that show how Okonkwo's actions were not society's fault. I will use textual evidence in addition to theories from Freud and Jungian psychology to support my claim.

CHAPTER 3:

Whether It Is Society or Psychological Conditions:

In this final part of my analysis I will counter the statement that was stated about society in the previous part. My focus will be to analyse and come to conclusion on, whether it is the societal pressure/patriotism or his psychological condition that was behind his toxic personality. To establish that Okonkwo's personality was not shaped by society, this study will begin with a counterargument. To back up my claim, I will be exploring a few of masculine figures from Igbo culture who exhibit a kind and caring type of masculinity while still earning the admiration and affection of those around them. Moreover, Anima and the Freudian concepts of Id and Ego, will serve as the foundation for the whole discussion, along with the primary source.

As mentioned in the second chapter, Okonkwo killed a messenger which might look in the first instance that he did out of his loyalty to his community. Many times, in the text, his chi was blamed for the things that was happening by him. But it was neither his luck that was conspiring against him when he murdered the white man nor he was trying to protect his people's traditions from the coming colonisation. Therefore, this part of the essay will discuss whether it is the societal pressure/patriotism or his psychological battles and traumas that led him towards a toxic life. I will be focusing on why it is not society to be blamed for his character development. In the first part, I already addressed the toxic qualities of Okonkwo and how he treats people around him, which surely means that Okonkwo had a misconception about masculinity. From the readers' perspective, I felt at my first read of this novel that the standard for men is set for Igbo society and to get the respect one must have to match it. However, it became clear towards the end that in Umuofia, being a hero is not just about being brave.

This community also has heroes who show admiration for all people in society, including those who may be considered less strong, unlike Okonkwo. Okonkwo believes that being a hero means only doing great things, being brave, strong, and having exceptional courage. This means he could not understand what his society wanted him to be. Other than being brave and strong, society wanted a hero who is soft, kind and most importantly someone who has the skill to amaze and persuade people when things occur. However, we believe that Okonkwo lacks many of the attributes needed to be a genuine and accomplished hero. As he shows traits of aggression and violence, hastiness, irrationality, pride, egotism, and lack of deliberation. However, if the people in this society understood, expected or supported Okonkwo's ways, they would not have seen his death as something terrible and criticised him. Self-harm is an abhorrent act; it is an offence against the planet; the individual's body becomes malevolent; only an outsider should be permitted to contact him (Achebe, 167). Unfortunately, Okonkwo has little control over either his surroundings or his personality. He was struggling on the inside and was seeing holes in his community as a result. The accomplishments he has attained in his life can be attributed to the fact that he faced numerous challenges and obstacles from a young age. He could not understand that a person does not have to deliberately kill innocent people and beat up harmless individuals just because they are bold or fearless. But no other person but him could be blamed for his aggressiveness. As we already see Okonkwo's judgement of Unoka is very unfavourable. He despised everything that his father cherished, such as gentleness and idleness. Unoka, as he was commonly referred to, embodies a flawed representation of masculinity in the eyes of his son. Okonkwo had this insecurity within him as his friends reminded him that his father was Agbala, a physically weak guy with no rank in the village. Therefore, in addition to attempting to masculinize himself, Okonkwo is also effeminizing other men (Achebe, 26). In one meeting, Okonkwo ridiculed a guy in attendance because he did not possess a formal

title; the other attendees were quick to call him out on it, showing that they were not as willing to detest the man as Okonkwo had been (Achebe, 26). Consequently, in Igbo culture, it was observed that there existed a designated space for individuals who were considered fragile, similar to the protagonist's father. Despite being described as lazy and solely indulging in music, Unoka managed to avoid being harmed by his creditors and did not face complete rejection from those he owed. Surprisingly, Unoka still maintained his position within the community and lived a life that was no different from others. Therefore, in the Igbo community, there were places for soft men like Unoka, which contradicts Okonkwo's fixed masculine beliefs.

Some other characters of *Things Fall Apart* serve as a constant reminder of the many male qualities beyond bravery that more fully characterise masculinity beyond our assumption. Obierika, who happens to be Okonkwo's closest companion, possesses a unique blend of strength and vulnerability, displaying both bravery and tenderness, while also exhibiting thoughtfulness (Achebe, 59). Obierika possesses a greater number of titles within the community compared to Okonkwo, yet he remains kind in his behaviour. He felt guilty and regretted having received the ozo titles that required the cutting down of palm palms (Achebe, 59). Moreover, Obierika shows disapproval of Okonkwo's actions and expresses his disagreement with the killing of Ikemefuna, who is Okonkwo's adopted son (Achebe, 56). Moreover, he states that if the Oracle had decreed the death of his son, he would neither question nor be the one to carry out the act (Achebe, 57). Here, this character, Obierika, can be seen as the advocate for change within his culture, speaking out against acts of cruelty. His disapproval and Okonkwo's heinous crime of rejecting Obierika's suggestion prove that Oracle did not force Okonkwo to kill his son. Rather it was his own decision which was unacceptable. Moreover, through the character of Obierika, we can observe how there are characters in the novel, who strongly disapproved of the excessive display of brutal

masculinity and openly criticised it without ignoring its negative consequences. Therefore, it clearly shows that a society has no control over men here, it is one's personal choice to be kind or cruel.

There is another character Uchendu, who is Okonkwo's uncle and he exemplifies a form of masculinity that is intelligent and encompasses the depth of the matriarchal system. When Okonkwo, the main character, is forced to leave his village of Umuofia and live in exile due to the unintentional killing of a young boy, he seeks refuge with his uncle, Mbatha. During his time in exile, Mbatha imparts valuable lessons to Okonkwo, such as the importance of endurance, patience, and other virtues (Achebe, 111). He teaches him the art of finding strength even in moments of vulnerability, encapsulating the complex nature of life into a single concept. Moreover, Uchendu even reminds Okonkwo that while it is certainly important to strive for success and exhibit strength, it is equally crucial to prioritise peace and love above all else (Achebe, 110). He said when a child is beaten by the father, he seeks sympathy in his mother's hut. This is because of the values that are instilled in the child. On the other hand, Okonkwo was opposite version of Uchendu, who believed women should be abused and controlled to prove their masculinity. According to Okonkwo, "No matter how wealthy a man was, if he could not rule his women and children, especially his women, he was not a man" (Achebe, 53), he was justifying in actions of being cruel to his family.

Moreover, Nwoye represents a different form of masculinity to us, showing the essence of a gentle and sensitive man, much like his grandfather. Everyone in Okonkwo's family admires the boy, except Okonkwo. This admiration is not solely based on his strength, but rather on his well-rounded character, which is shaped by his intelligence and ability to handle multiple tasks. It is another example that Igbo society does not have any fixed standard of masculinity. Additionally, the boy possesses a feminine aspect that adds depth to his masculinity. It is worth noting that Ogbueffi Ndulu, a man who played a significant role

in leading Umuofia to war, heavily relied on his wife for support and guidance (Achebe, 42). These highlight the Igbo society's rejection of rigid distinctions between feminine and masculine principles. The aforementioned masculine identities, with the exception of Okonkwo's, all support the same underlying message: that black masculinity is built upon the foundation of the female principle. Therefore, society is not the reason behind Okonkwo's toxic masculinity and it has no role to play in his suicide.

Now, let's go deeper into the analysis to get to know, what drove him towards his toxic character development and tragic end. To understand that, we have to go through all the actions of Okonkwo once again. Okonkwo has been at odds with both his culture and his own identity for the entirety of his existence. He's made an effort to bury his private personality under his public persona. He's determined to show the world that he's an incredible fighter and a model of masculinity. Because he "feared being thought weak," which was caused by his repressed fear, he killed Ikemefuna. Therefore, the murder of Ikemefuna was unethical conduct not just because he refused Obierika but also because he murdered someone like his son, driven by Id, according to Freudian theory. The intense emotions experienced by Okonkwo, along with his deep-seated fear of being perceived as feeble, drive him to engage in actions that are frequently unnecessary and ultimately lead to negative outcomes. Okonkwo's decision to kill his adopted son Ikemefuna triggers initial chaos, despite all the given suggestions (Achebe, 52).

Moreover, in the opening of Part Three of the novel, Okonkwo and Obierika engage in a conversation that sheds light on the conversion of the traditional Igbo community to Christianity. Okonkwo finds it difficult to accept these alterations within his community because that had something to do with his personal affairs. Okonkwo could not accept that the society was continuously evolving along with its people (Achebe, 115). Moreover, things actually started changing slowly before his banishment. We see when Okonkwo breaks the

peace of week, he gets punishment by the Oracle and had to compensate with some materialistic things (Achebe, 29). But here we see that, the rule was much stricter for people in the earlier times. The text says, a guy who disobeyed the peace was allegedly carried around the village till he died (Achebe, 30). However, this practise was eventually outlawed due to the fact that it disrupted the harmony that had been intended to be maintained (Achebe, 30). It was not the same society Okonkwo grew up in, the rules, regulation and customs of the society were evolving. Those rigid customs even were not applied on Okonkwo after committing a crime, but Okonkwo never noticed it. He always had this fixed belief about his society. Moreover, when he came back from exile it is normal to get a completely changed society with evolved mindset and beliefs. Therefore, there was also a change in mindset about the manhood as well, people with different personalities were welcomed and accepted by the society. But Okonkwo got stick to the incidents that he faced regarding his father and could not get out of the stereotypical thinking. Therefore, he played the role of an Igbo man that according to him is the ideal role but no one expected or forced him to be this way.

Moreover, for get into more depth of the text, it is important to use Freud's theory of Psyche. Therefore, as Kendra Cherry says,

"There are three elements of this theory which are, the id, the ego, and the superego. Id is the most fundamental drive, the most basic aspect of our personalities. The Ego is the part of a person's character that deals with the world as it is, and it plays a key role in fulfilling the need of id, in healthy, safe, and socially appropriate ways.

Moreover, the Superego deals with the values and principles we've internalised from our upbringing and socialisation." (Cherry, 2022)

Therefore, even though at first it seemed like, to uphold the well-being of his community and honour his religious beliefs, Okonkwo made numerous sacrifices that greatly impacted his life. Moreover, the events shared in the second chapter could be used to say that

as Okonkwo did a lot of sacrifices for the community, he was driven by Super ego that time. As he did what the society expected from him to do. However, as we know that part of every person's identity, the superego, is responsible for upholding moral standards (Cherry, 2021). Therefore, Super ego involves everything a person learns from their parents and the community around them, it shapes one's morality, making it the last part of a person's personality to develop. However, throughout the novel, the actions of the protagonist never showed any signs of moral behaviour. Moreover, Superego suppresses Id's desires and resist the temptation to give in to one's basic instincts and instead adhere strictly to one's ideals. In addition, bad, improper, and immoral things trouble superego component and guilt can be a result from violating conscience (Cherry, 2021). However, it can be said that our protagonist no matter what he did throughout the novel, never felt a sense of guilt within himself for committing crimes. In addition, no moral thinking actually stopped him from committing the crimes. Instead he keeps on giving justification for himself and his activities and never thought about what the social conducts are before doing something. Therefore, it can be said that neither Okonkwo's activities can be justified by Super ego, nor his action can be considered as moral actions.

Hence, it can be said that our protagonist is driven by his 'Id' as most of the time in the text, it was his desire and greed for power that controlled him. Despite the limitations of Freud's creation as a theory of science, it continues to be regarded as a highly influential method of contemporary literary analysis for exploring the hidden thoughts and emotions of an individual's subconscious mind. The Id, which is believed to be the most basic and instinctual part of the personality, resides in the unconscious mind and cannot be accessed through conscious belief (Cherry, 2023). Freud, in his hypothesis, stated that the 'Id' is characterised by being "natural, irrational and disorganised." It lacks any sense of laws or rules and remains a fundamental aspect of an individual's psyche throughout their entire life.

Just like a new born baby, the Id has an instinctual urge to fulfil its fundamental desires to prevent anxiety (Cherry, 2023). To put it in simpler terms, the 'Id' only functions according to what Freud called the pleasure principle. And Okonkwo finds pleasure in dominating and proving his masculinity. A driving ambition in his life had been to rise to the ranks of the clan's lords. That was his source of energy. Additionally, 'The Id', being unable to fully grasp the concepts of anxiety, dread, and reality, does not make any effort to engage in rational thinking (Cherry, 2022). This term Id, thus perfectly matches the actions of our protagonist, who is far away from rationale thinking. However, the childhood trauma Okonkwo had, based on societal norms, started giving Okonkwo anxiety from a very early life. According to Freudian theory, the Ego is the component of personality that deals with reality and helps to ensure that the demands of the Id are satisfied in ways that are realistic, safe and socially acceptable (Cherry, 2022). Therefore, the pressure of being labelled a failure was too much for him to handle, so he went to clinging to his Ego for comfort. He started driving himself more towards masculine behaviours, success and achievements that are appreciated by the society. Therefore, by employing this strategy as a protective mechanism to manage the issue in a way that was acceptable to society, he tried to survive and at the same time wanted to fulfil his Id to survive. Moreover, as a defence mechanism against certain pressures or complications, repression is also a component of Freudian Ego, which will be also be discussed in the later part of the analysis. But after growing up, we see how he stopped thinking rationally, was after fulfilling his Id's only and acted like an animal in several chapters of the novel.

Moreover, Sigmund Freud, recognising the potential harm this lack of reason could cause to both the individual and society, deemed it highly perilous. For example, if someone has a prevailing Id, they will find it difficult to ignore the strong desire for pleasure, no matter what the consequences may be. Therefore, we see how without thinking what will happen for

violating the Week of Peace, Okonkwo beats his wife (Achebe, 28). The incident of Peace Week demonstrates how Okonkwo is driven by Id and his lack of control over his unconscious desires led him to harshly discipline his youngest wife, even though it went against the customs of the Ibo people. He did not think once about what people will think of him or society will punish him, he only got driven by his Id, which never thinks about the consequences. As a result, he started to lose connection not only with his loved ones but also with the entire clan due to the wickedness he has displayed towards the goddess of the earth, who is essential for the growth of our crops. Therefore, in analysing the character's behaviour, it is evident that his actions are not simply a hasty and irrational response driven by Id, but also this Id is a response of the Ego that he used to cope with his childhood trauma which a fear of appearing weak (Achebe 44). even though Okonkwo used Ego, as a defence mechanism to save himself and present himself in front of the society, but with time he actually lost control over himself and got driven by his Id or primary instincts only.

Moreover, his desire to fight against the white men was also a part of his personal benefit as they were the reasons behind him losing everything, that he had earned throughout life. During all these years in exile, he missed people praising him and thinking of him as a brave warrior. He was counting the days to get back to these people and rule them once again. He had certain expectations about his return to his village. But, in reality, no one paid attention to him as they were busy with what British people were doing. Not only does Okonkwo get disheartened, his Ego gets hurt and his hatred towards white people increases. Moreover, of the sudden shock of his community people's behaviour towards him, Okonkwo went insane to get back what he had lost. He had been informed that the new religion had gained ground, and he had missed out on the opportunity to lead his aggressive tribe in fighting it. The time he could have used to become the most senior member of his tribe had slipped through his fingers (Achebe, 139). The losses, however, were not all permanent. He

insisted that his people celebrate his homecoming. As we find in the text that, after seven fruitless years, he will come back with a bang (Achebe, 139). However, upon his return from exile, Okonkwo was disheartened to discover that he did not receive the recognition he had anticipated. Here, his desire to get back the long-lost power is a sign of his Id and desire to get power back. His clan had changed so drastically during his banishment that he hardly recognised it. The people's attention was divided between the new religion, the administration, and the trading shops. Many people still held the view that the new institutions were corrupt, but even they discussed nothing else and certainly didn't anticipate Okonkwo's return (Achebe, 147). Therefore, there was a sense of powerlessness, that he wanted to get back. As, the Id's need for control can be interpreted as an indication of its desire for power and authority. Therefore, all the activities that was mentioned with the last two parts of my analysis can be justified with Id. All his actions were only to fulfil his Id and get the power and authority, not to show loyalty towards the society or revenge towards his father.

We see textual evidence that Okonkwo felt something like happiness for the first time in a long time (Achebe, 140). He started believing that things are going back to the way they were before his absence, even though they had changed so suddenly. He expressed his delight by stating, "It felt similar to the glorious past when a warrior truly embodied the essence of bravery" (Achebe, 140). At this point, his idea and plan of acting like a real hero, which he has been pretending on with other people for a long time, seems to make sense. All these were only for fulfilling his own Id or pleasure principle and his desire for dominance. Okonkwo's motif highlights his deep preoccupation with maintaining his aristocratic status and gaining popularity among his clan. He formulated all of the strategies to attain this status in society, which according to psychoanalysis falls under to satisfy the pleasure principle. He possessed the determination and willingness to go to any extent in order to accomplish his

dream. In order to fulfil his desire, he completely ignore the outcomes exactly like the pleasure principles.

When he started giving speech in the market to discuss their strategy against the white people, it brought back memories of a past era when fighters were still fighters (Achebe, 155). Even though they hadn't committed to expelling the Christians, but they had made a significant agreement. Moreover, we see that Okonkwo experienced an overwhelming feeling of joy upon receiving the news about the church's destruction. Since it gave him a little bit of hope to regain all that he had lost. As Id is something which purses short term pleasure, without thinking about the bigger picture. This joy or relief is the evidence of Okonkwo's greed to power and authority indicates towards Id.

He decided to seek vengeance against the white man who insulted him and his community, which is his revenge against the force who tried to stop him towards winning authority (Achebe, 161). Here, his Id, desire for power and dominance is getting prioritized and he does not care about people who are trying to stop him. He without thinking about rationally, takes drastic action by ending the life of one of the messengers, which is an act driven by Id. This act temporarily calms his inner turmoil and fulfils his primary desires.

However, after he decided to kill the white messenger, Okonkwo faced a situation where he was unable to find anyone willing to offer their support and accompany him. He was able to perceive fear during that chaos after killing the messenger. The protagonist was expecting people, to call him a brave warrior for showing such bravery, like old days. But instead, all heard "Why did he do it? (Achebe, 165)". Here, Okonkwo's inability to find support for his violent actions can be understood by looking at individuals' desires, Id and connect it with the Super ego of the community, that followed the moral standard and norms of the community. Unfortunately, he could not find any other defence mechanism to cope up

with the situation, therefore he committed suicide, without thinking about the consequences and social norms, which is example of another pleasure principle or Id.

Tragically, this unfortunate sequence of events concludes with Okonkwo's lifeless body hanging from a tree. The same reason, which is the sense of powerlessness is also responsible for his tragic end of life. In my opinion, I believe that Okonkwo's demise can be attributed to the overwhelming feeling of losing power, that falls under the reality principle or Freudian concept of Ego. Because according to Freudian theory, the sense of powerless comes when the conflict is between the primary desires not getting fulfilled, because of the social reality of world. However, all the activities he did throughout the novel were only to satisfy his own pleasure principle or Id, not for anyone else or society. Therefore, many examples similar to these prove that the actions he had taken in his unconscious mind turned him into a toxic person, were his own individual choice. It was not for pleasing the people of society or community as many times we see him, breaking rules and conducting crimes, by going against all just to fulfil his Id. Therefore, we cannot justify his crimes by blaming it all on the people of the community, nor his father.

Undoubtedly, Okonkwo's life revolved around fear, specifically the fear of being a failure and weak. However, the source of the issue did not originate externally but rather resided within the depths of his being. The Jungian theory of Anima and Animus talks about sexuality and male female principles. According to Achebe, his inner fear originated from the possibility of being discovered as someone who bears a resemblance to his father (Achebe, 14). The citation above could be seen as an illustration of anxieties and fears that reside inside the protagonist's unconscious mind. When we look at his behaviour through psychoanalysis, the concept of repression falls under the concept Ego, as repressed feelings are way of dealing with the anxieties. These theories now provide a very reasonable explanation for Okonkwo's toxic attitude. Okonkwo in his unconscious mind had some

repressed feelings, which was caused by the humiliation his father had faced. After witnessing Unoka's humiliation at the hands of bullies, Okonkwo made the decision to hide his feminine side, Anima (Hill, 53), by submitting to his ego. He feared he would meet the same fate as his father if he revealed his true self. Thus, here we see Okonkwo turned to both Ego and Id from Freudian theory and Anima from Jungian theory in order to cope up with his childhood trauma. At first, it was only the Ego that he turned to in order to survive in this patriarchal world, at the same time Ego made him repress his inner Anima, which actually brings the Jungian theory here. Moreover, with time when he grew up, his inner Anima stayed intact within himself but he no longer could stick with his Ego to function in public, this repression pushed him towards fulfilling primary instincts or Id, without guilt and any rational thinking. This happened because he lost the ability to examine whether his actions were getting socially accepted or not, all his activities have been committed only to satisfy his own pleasure principle which was an outcome of following Reality principle or Ego during childhood.

According to some beliefs, excessive stress causes the individual to split off from the experience, creating "multiple personalities" (Suleiman, 276). In the case of Okonkwo, we can say that, on one hand, he had this repressed emotion, Anima within his unconscious mind that he used as a defence mechanism in order to get socially accepted by applying Ego. This repressed feelings of him was the same thing that pushed him towards these primary desires or Id. On the other hand, he also had these female attributes, called Anima within him that he was unaware of, while trying to hide this inner identity of himself Okonkwo committed many heinous crimes by following his Id. Consequently, Okonkwo himself had multiple personalities, that he failed to balance.

His suppressed feelings are basically Ego which have been deeply rooted within his unconscious mind from his early years of development, this also might be the reasons behind

his aggressiveness, as Ego makes sure the actions are socially acceptable and appropriate according to Cherry. In order to fulfil the Id's desires in a realistic and socially acceptable manner, the Ego functions according to the reality principle. whether acting on primary urges or not, Ego considers the pros and cons of each option (Cherry, 2022). Therefore, when he was young, he thought rationally, did an equation of whether his actions will be granted or rejected and then he decided to use his defence mechanism. Thus, Ego is very evident in Okonkwo's dealing with childhood trauma. We need to remember that the unconscious starts to form when we are young when we ignore or push out of our mind's bad psychological events. Furthermore, it is important to note that the contents of the unconscious mind are not limited solely to childhood experiences, but can encompass any past event an individual has experienced (Nweke, 19). Even in the realm of adulthood, individuals continue to exert deliberate efforts to suppress certain thoughts and desires that conflict with prevailing societal norms and values, which matches the definition of Ego. Therefore, Okonkwo also repressed his inner female attributes, while behaving with his family and neighbours as he knew his Anima will conflict with the Igbo societal norms. Even though his trauma developed by holding a very wrong conception about Igbo society, unlike the community he remained the same old Okonkwo holding toxic masculinity. On the other hand, society was changing constantly, leaving rigid norms behind. Okonkwo acted all his life based on the ideas he had about his own community; and this is the same reason behind pushing himself towards Ego and repression.

Based on Carl Jung's psychoanalytic theory of Anima, it can be argued that Okonkwo's unconscious feminine aspect, known as his Anima, becomes evident during moments of solitude when he withdraws to his hut. This manifestation is observed in certain thoughts and actions related to his family dynamics and the future of his clan. As per Jung's perspective, the conventional understanding of Anima refers to the feminine aspect of a man's

psychology or the internal representation of womanhood that he externalises through his selection of a wife or partner. A more instant and accurate way to describe Anima is as the basic tendency to feel otherness. By otherness means everything that the ego personality can't see as similar to itself (Hill, 53). This would include parts of the shadow personality that aren't allowed or accepted (Hill, 54). A few examples are, how Okonkwo could not accept his soft side, they never allowed his certain characteristics to show up, for example, how after killing Ikemefuna he refused to accept that he was guilty, how he tried to avoid thinking about his mother's memories and how he hesitated to show care at first when Ezinma was taken by a woman etc. He rejected his soft sides as a result of Anima rejection that he followed from childhood.

Moreover, from an early age, he harboured a deep sense of resentment against his father's perceived lack of success and vulnerability. Okonkwo's acknowledgement of the same female attributes that his father has could be another reason, behind his resentment. Presently, he vividly recollects the emotional distress he experienced upon learning from a childhood companion that his father was regarded as Agbala. This incident marked Okonkwo's initial realisation that Agbala denoted not only the designation of a female but also signified an individual who had not attained a title. Thus, Okonkwo's Ego caused him to develop a hatred against everything that his father had valued, as a way of defending himself. Two of the characteristics seen were tenderness and idleness (Achebe, 16). Whenever he felt weak, he could not accept it as a manly feature, anything weak is considered as womanly to him which he taught from Igbo community. After killing Ikemefuna when he was feeling bad, he asked himself why is he acting more like an aged woman when he was well known for his bravery in all nine villages. He even said, "Okonkwo, you have become a woman indeed" (Achebe, 55). Hence, it is evident that Okonkwo trained himself to keep his

suppressed Anima within himself and only present a version of himself that might earn him respect by adopting the Freudian Ego.

Hence, it may be inferred that Okonkwo's toxic masculinity and ultimate downfall in the narrative, particularly concerning his role as a parent, stems from his persistent deceitful endeavours to repress his inherent tender masculine qualities and, consequently, deny the fact that, akin to his father and son, he also possesses feminine attributes. There, the concept of Anima serves to not only analyse the conflicting masculine and hidden feminine aspects of Okonkwo's psyche but also contribute to understanding his complicated patterns of behaviour and conduct as a person (Purrington, 2020). The terror of the woods and the powers of nature were nothing compared to his fear of losing, this fear of losing power here is basically the Ego. As according to cherry, Ego always gives reality check to desires that are impulsive, similarly Okonkwo feels the fear of losing the power as reality is harsh. Here Okonkwo's fear has been associated with his femininity, which he conceals within himself, representing the realm of the unconscious where his female characteristics hold power and influence his behaviour as a man (Achebe, 16). Whenever he felt weak and emotional, he tried to suppress it within himself to match with society and behave as a societal appropriate way, here he is driven by Ego. Therefore, Okonkwo's life is ruled by his efforts to be different from his soft-masculine father, Unoka. Okonkwo exhibits signs of inner turmoil due to the deliberate repression of his Anima, as he perceives femininity as deviating from the norm. Similar attributes could be seen in his son Nwoye, whom he despised only because of having Anima. This is an example of fear and denial of Anima.

We can further characterise Okonkwo's character by his denial of his Anima or female attributes. Hence as he rejects his anima, Okonkwo seems like a complicated person. His rejection of Anima is basically, a way of protecting himself from the painful childhood memories. Therefore, it seems that all of his feelings of love and kindness are internal. He

loves his kids deep down and wants what's best for them. He worries excessively about the well-being of his family (Achebe, 11) and experiences a moment of panic and distress after the death of Ikemefuna. Even though Okonkwo killed Ikemefuna due to toxic masculinity, he truly cared about the youngster. Throughout the novel, we see Okonkwo consistently try to suppress his natural desire towards vulnerability and instead choose to reject and deny his authentic inner nature. Consequently, he suppresses his tender feelings, reserving for display solely inside his thoughts, which is shown after the death of Ikemefuna. After the act of killing Ikemefuna, Okonkwo experiences severe psychological distress, which makes it difficult for him to engage in his social and familial obligations. He could not even sleep properly for days and was talking to himself why is he acting like a woman? (Achebe, 55). However, when sadness creeps up on him, lingering heaviness, he does his best to push it down. Thus, we can say that Okonkwo was suppressing his inner self, he was denying something which already had an existence in his unconscious mind, through this he was also embracing Freudian concept of Ego. A terror of losing and weakness, that he would find to resemble his father, has led to an intolerance of failure and despise for him. Because of denying and rejecting his real self, Okonkwo remains unfinished and unsatisfied as a person, and a complex mindset governs his existence. Therefore, it leads to constant self-doubt and forms an inferiority complex within him and greater isolation from his community. But interestingly, Okonkwo has practically all of the known characteristics of someone with a superiority complex, as shown by a careful analysis of his character. Therefore, everything he does is just a way for him to protect himself from the stress that comes from the pressure, insecurity and fear of his mind. Therefore, it is a defence mechanism of Okonkwo to cope up with the world, means an application Freudian concept of Ego. Behaving rudely, and acting aggressively is what he uses as his defence system. This defence system serves to shield him from criticism. But underneath all his defences lies a fight against the terror of inheriting

female traits similar to his father and son. Because of this, he lacks a well-rounded character and is doomed to repeatedly make the same terrible mistakes. The mistakes get repeated because, with time, Okonkwo loses the power to think rationally and keeps running after fulfilling his primary instincts, or Id. What would be the reaction of society? It no longer remains a matter of concern for him.

Consequently, one may argue that neither Unoka nor society was solely attributed to Okonkwo's actions. It was Okonkwo's suppressed feelings about a traumatic event of life that disappointed him in life. He probably had certain expectations from his father which Unoka failed to fulfil, and consequently Okonkwo turned himself into a psychologically disbalanced person who used Ego as a shield to protect him and later only prioritized his primary desires or Id, other than anything else. The individual's passion to stick to ancient societal norms was driven by an underlying fear residing within his unconscious psyche. Moreover, the individual's concern on the revelation of his internal feminine characteristics had the potential to result in a similar outcome as that of his father. To prove his own survival, at first, he utilised his 'Ego' and later 'Id' to gratify his ambitions and aspirations without taking into account for the potential drawbacks or long-term implications. Okonkwo believed that adopting a persona of toxic masculinity was the sole means by which he could conceal his own identity or female attributes. Since, Igbo society accepts toxic masculinity as per Okonkwo's beliefs, therefore showing this side will be acceptable by the society. Thus, according to this research, Okonkwo's aggressive conduct is rooted in his toxic masculinity, which he developed after rejecting Anima, as a survival mechanism for him in society. Consequently, his submission to his Id and Ego can be characterized as the result of his Anima rejection.

CONCLUSION

To conclude, the novel *Things Fall Apart* is a story of Okonkwo, a yam farmer, resisting the arrival of missionaries in Igboland, has been the most commercially successful African narrative across the continent and beyond. Here the main character, Okonkwo, was shown as a representation of extreme masculinity and patriarchal values. He gets even more furious and resorts to harsher actions when he is unable to verbalize his views due to his limitations or certain flaws. If we look into the novel, perhaps the greatest way to characterise Okonkwo's masculinity is through his brutality against and mastery over females. He was a successful farmer, a skilled wrestler, and a man who showed leadership in two intertribal conflicts; had three wives. But his treatments towards his wives were terrible and abusive. Several times in the text, his wives got beaten by Okonkwo. Therefore, it seems like the expression of manhood is a site of convergence for conflicting discourses on power, wealth, and ambition in the life of this young man. In addition to trying to not feminising himself, he was also in the process of feminising other men. Not only he maintained his toxic masculinity, but also ordered people around him to act like him. People who lacked some of his features, got insulted and criticised by him. But this tough man had a heart-breaking ending of his life, towards the end of the novel. Seeking an explanation for his actions, the psychological viewpoint of this book adds depth to the narrative. His actions throughout the novel is analysed in this paper, through Id, Ego and Super ego from Freudian theory and Jung's theory of Anima. The interaction of what Freud called the Id, Ego and Jung's Anima theory was the primary focus of this analysis, which actually helped me to find an explanation. The protagonist's violent and aggressive sense of self-identification as a father,

husband, and warrior is prominent throughout the story. This paper tried to unveil the reason behind the protagonist's view of patriarchy and masculinity, which is not that simple to understand. The main reason is, he hides himself under the veil of toxic masculinity only to hide his anima features. As humans are complicated, and we often do things just because it's in our nature to do so, without giving any thought to the psychological aspects of it.

Assigning responsibility to other parties is a simple and handy way for an individual to deal with the consequences of his own conduct. By reading the primary and secondary texts, any reader will assume Unoka to be the reasons behind Okonkwo's personality. Therefore, without psychological analysis, readers may have a misunderstanding about the whole text.

These were the reason that pushed me to wonder if the reason behind Okonkwo's behaviour is a result of societal and cultural pressures or a result of his strategies for dealing with traumatic experiences. Due to the complexity of human beings, it is extremely difficult to arrive at a precise evaluation of one's behaviour or personality. However, I attempted to discover the root cause for all the actions carried out by our main character, Okonkwo, in the novel *Things Fall Apart*, which is Anima rejection. But as it would be unjust to solely attribute his behaviour and attitude to a single factor, as Okonkwo faced numerous challenges throughout his life. Therefore, it can be said that his suppressed emotions and traumas are integral to his path, which has compelled him to switch to aggression and inhumanity as his only available choice, specifically towards Ego and then Id. I also found out how societal pressure cannot not behind Okonkwo's condition as the brutality with which the protagonist abuses his wives contrasts sharply with his uncle's reverence and respect for women. In addition, by delving into the world of unconscious mind psychology, I was able to uncover Unoka's admirable qualities towards his son Okonkwo and discovered how society's insensitive remarks about Unoka were the root cause of Okonkwo anxiety. Moreover, Freudian concept of Ego, which is the repression of his anima to cope up was the reason why

Okonkwo's existence revolves around the avoidance of following his paternal figure and the individual consistently manifests this dichotomy across various domains of his existence. As a result of his internal struggles with self-repression, he developed an irrational personality and began to fake them out in order to get socially accepted. Through the years, he transformed into someone who was solely influenced by Id, disregarding any other factors. Thus, I gained a deeper understanding of the text and a stronger connection to the protagonist after adopting a psychoanalytical lens to my analysis. As a result, I was able to approach *Things Fall Apart* with a fresh viewpoint, something I had previously struggled with.

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