

must be paid before death. Unoka had not paid his debts before death, so his son Okonkwo felt ashamed of him. In that society bravery and prowess was given weight. There used to be inter-tribal wars and the prowess of a man of title was tested in those wars. Inside the clan, wrestling matches were awarded. But even a man of title was not exempted from punishment if he committed a crime. The cultural theme of the novel reveals many other customs, rites and rituals of the Igbo tribe of Nigeria. In that society a man could marry as many wives as he could support. When a woman died, she was sent to her father's village to be buried with the members of her father's family.

The encounter theme is presented in the second and third parts of the novel. It is an encounter between

the white colonizers with their superior technology and the African natives with their native thinking and their superstitious beliefs. The missionaries built their church in the evil forest and remained untouched by the evil spirits. It was a matter of surprise for the natives who were gradually tempted to be converted into Christianity. The killing of a white man makes the atmosphere tense and several events of strife between the two groups have been narrated. Gradually the people knew that the missionaries had not only brought a religion but also a government.

The encounter there results in the victory of the white missionaries and their government and the defeat and subjugation of the African people. However, the native dignity of the African culture is revealed in the novel through the anger and rigid resistance of men like Okonkwo.