Samer Kawak Cultures and Traditions The Joys of Motherhood (Notes) October 1, 2008

## Passage Selections

- o p. 9, paragraph 3, "her chi, her personal god..."
- o p. 13, killing the elephant
- o p. 32, no time to spread "seed"
- o p. 22, killing slave at funnel
- o p. 10, paragraph 1, physical process = role in life
- o p. 36, men's thoughts on relationships
- o p. 20, sex scene
- o p. 60, society
- o p. 107, saving money for education
- o p. 26, names with meaning
- o p. 22, 1<sup>st</sup> wife dies
- o P. 51, paragraph 4, manhood lost
- o P. 106, suit

## • First Chapter Thoughts

- o Book started in the future, and then returned to the present
- o Exciting to realize what was happening in the following chapters

## • Chi

- o Personal god
- Spirit over them that rules their lives
- Malevolent or benevolent
- Slave girl ruled over Nnu Ego
- Similar to Sundiata where two spirits existed
- o Nnu Ego's chi was working against her
- Nwokocha Agbadi (p. 10)
  - Wealthy local chief
  - o Arrogant, dominant, handsome
  - o Wanted a mate who was as arrogant as him for a challenge
  - o Christian women were seen as quiet and timid (p. 10)
- Women in general
  - o The African tribes wanted a powerful, self-reliant women
  - o Christian spread the concept of a submissive woman
- Lost of Manhood (p. 51)
  - o Nnu Ego new husband Nnaife was washing women's underwear
  - Nnu Ego thought it was embarrassing, but Nnaife thought it was an honest living
- Soldier
  - O To be a soldier was looked down upon because they were men who would pillage towns and rape women
- Societal Values of Nigeria (p. 60)

- o "everyone is responsible for the other person"
- Nnu Ego was trying to commit suicide, but they stopped her because in Nigeria everyone belongs to the community.
- o Suicide is condemned in Nigeria
  - Everyone has a job in the community
  - It is unnatural
  - Does it have to do with the introduction of Christianity?
  - Community before self
- Nations of Busy Bodies
  - o A busy body is someone who is interested in other people's business
  - o Is it a bad thing to interfere?
    - They saved Nnu Ego
    - They probably don't see themselves as busy bodies, but rather a communal family
  - o Similar to celebrity status today
  - o Keeps them close as a nation
  - o Even though they saved Nnu Ego, they still agree that she is a failed woman
- Nnaife's reaction to the dead son
  - o He seemed to handle it well at first
  - o He told Nnu Ego, "Remember God giveth and God taketh away..."
    - The influences of
- Lost Manhood II
  - Greed for money
  - o Nnaife, however, was trying to provide for his family
  - Nnaife was washing a woman's underwear
  - o Nnu Ego believes the men were like slaves
  - o The men were working and serving the white man
  - o Nnu Ego was coming from a culture and status with powerful, strong men
- Men vs. Women
  - o Nnaife tells Nnu Ego that without him she would not be able to be pregnant (p. 51)
  - o The importance of pregnancy to a women in this society
  - o A women's worth to the community is the number of children she has
- The Joys of Motherhood
  - o It did not seem Nnu Ego has many joys, but more suffering
  - The joy of getting pregnant
  - o The joy of saving money to educate the child
  - o The joy in the desire to make the men happy