

"things fall apart": role and treatment of women

[Literature](#), [Novel](#)



" Things Break Down" by Chinua Achebe describes tribal life in the jungles of Africa. In fact, the author discusses Ibo community prior to the arrival of a white guy. Achebe supplies comprehensive summary of Ibo community translating their saying and myths and evaluating the status and role of women in Ibo society and in pre-colonial Africa. From the really starting it is seen that the world in the story is patriarchal, overbearing and hierarchical. Gender discrimination exists in all spheres of life.

Life in community is andocentric meaning that male takes primary positions in society, whereas ladies are dealt with as absolutely nothing essential. In specific, females are thought about as a part of men's acquisitions. As other halves, they " can be found in numerous numbers, sandwiched between yam barns and titles. These 3- partners, yam barns, social titles- are the highest accolades for the effective farmer, warrior, and man of worth". (Achebe, 23) For instance, Nwakibie has 9 spouses and thirty kids and, thus, he is thought about to be of the highest status.

The main character of the story, Okonkwo, is mentioned to dislike whatever dealt with as frail and weak. His reflections about tribal order, relative and social status prove that Ibo society partners strength just with males and weakness with females. For example, Okonkwo's son by his very first better half is referred to as a woman-like being a serious insult.

After Ikemefuna's death primary hero can't understand his sadness asking himself: " When did you end up being a shivering old woman?" (Achebe, 62) In such a method the author specifies that women are oppressed and subordinated. Subsequently, men are privileged enough as they are enabled

to make decisions in contrast to women. As the author composes, ladies remain in the prison of acquiescence, merely due to the fact that of personal weakness which adds to the suppression of females along with since of a mix of community's control.

The next moment to mention is treatment of women in Ibo community. The author notes that beating a wife is rather common practice within society. Actually, the story highlights two examples when the second wife of Okonkwo is beaten simply because of not coming home to prepare meal. However, Okonkwo is punished because of severe beating simply because he has dared to beat his wife during the Week of Peace. Nevertheless, he doesn't stop and beats her again when she refers to him as "guns that never shot". (Achebe, 89) The positive moment is when the mentioned severe beating comes before egwugwu, the decision is made in favor of beaten wife, though a man wonders, "why such a trifle should come before the egwugwu". (Achebe, 89)

Attitudes towards women is rather chauvinistic and men think that women's place is at home, "lumps together women and chillun and chickens and cows and wants to be a big voice" in community affairs. (Achebe, 27)

Treatment of women in Ibo community is strongly by gender discrimination and oppression meaning that women were something like private property being able only to keep house and to bear children. From the very first pages of the a novel the author illustrates that it is a men's world and men are dominating force in the society and, what is more outrageous, in family relationships. The author claims that it is customary for males to think only

they have a right to decide what, when and how to do things and arrange events.

Nonetheless, the author shows that women are assigned important role despite discrimination and oppression. For example, " women painted the houses of the egwugwu". (Achebe, 84) Certain respect is paid to the first wife of Ibo man: " Anasi, Nwakibie's first wife, had not yet arrived and the others could not drink before her". (Achebe, 22) However, real importance of women appears after Okonkwo is exiled to his motherland. His uncle explains how Okonkwo should view his exile: " A man belongs to his fatherland when things are good and life is sweet. But when there is sorrow and bitterness he finds refuge in his motherland". (Achebe, 99) Thus, mothers should always comfort their sons when bad times come because mothers are supreme.

Works Cited

Achebe, Chinua. *Things Fall Apart*. London: Heinemann, 1958