

Things fall apart is story depicting

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



Things Fall Apart is a story depicting how colonization changed the culture of Igbo villages in the early 19th century through the protagonist, Okonkwo. Although Okonkwo's father was a pauper, Okonkwo was a respected leader of the Umuofia clan, after he defeated Amalinze the Cat in a wrestling contest. To overcome his father's bleak legacy, Okonkwo made sure he maintained the facade of a manly, respectable man. Over some years, the clan leaders make Okonkwo care for a war prisoner, until they decide what to do with him.

Ikemefuna, the war prisoner, becomes more like a son than Okonkwo's actual son, because Ikemefuna was manly like Okonkwo. The clan decided to have Okonkwo kill Ikemefuna. While Okonkwo did not want to kill Ikemefuna, his struggle to maintain respect in his clan caused him to kill Ikemefuna. His son, Nwoye, could never forgive Okonkwo for killing Ikemefuna for no other reason besides to follow the orders of the clansmen.

Afterwards, Okonkwo visits his friend Obierika in the next village. He talks to Obierika about how he has sinned for beating his wife during the Feast of the New Yams and killing Ikemefuna. After speaking about his troubles, Okonkwo seemed to be better-off going back to his village. Until Okonkwo finds out that his favorite daughter, Ezinma, is dying. The ancestors for the clan take Ezinma into a cave to get rid of her sickness. During the same time, Okonkwo's friend, Ezeudu dies. At the funeral for Ezeudu, Okonkwo accidentally fires his gun and shoots Ezeudu's son. The clan members exile his family for seven years for his misjudgment.

During the exile, Okonkwo has to start over in a new village with little to no money. The family deals with low yields of crops and no position in the new village. Due to the in-climate weather, Okonkwo had to become resourceful in the tools to grow his crops and which crops to grow. His entire family blamed him for their misfortune and kept in tune with the Umuofia clan. In the Umuofia clan, the people were beginning to notice European exploration of their land.

European men casually came into the village simply for tourism and learning the customs in the beginning. However, the villagers slaughtered the Europeans based on the ancestors belief that the Europeans were bad for the village. The missionaries came to Mbantu, the place Okonkwo is exiled to, and begins to spread Christianity to the villages. One of the new converts is Nwoye, Okonkwos son. Okonkwo disowns Nwoye for converting to the white mans culture and religious practices.

Once Okonkwo returned back to Umuofia, he did not recognize the village anymore. The people were leaving their religious practices behind and converting to Christianity. The white men became the leaders of the village. The villagers would be put into a prison for disobeying the laws established by the white men. Several men fought back by burning the missionary churches and killing the European leaders. The villagers had a meeting about the men burning the church and killing the Europeans the next day. Okonkwo thought the clansmen would fall to the hands of the Europeans, so he decided to commit suicide to escape colonization.

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The changes from daylight to nighttime and one village to another help the reader recognize a shift in a characters mentality throughout the novel. For instance, Okonkwo did not understand how his fear ruled his life, until he was banished to the neighboring village. The change in settings also reflecting a shift in the spirit of the village. The Igbo villagers believed in spirits and ancestor worship. The clansmen looked to the ancestors to deal with issues, such as droughts and wars between villages. The colonization in the Igbo villages caused the indigenous people to lose their religious and cultural practices over time.

The villagers saw the missionaries as another facet of their religious practices, but the missionaries took the empathy of the villagers as a method of taking over the village. Also, Okonkwos misunderstanding Nwoyes compassion for femininity caused a rift in their relationship. Okonkwo was considered manly, since he provided for his family, did hard work, and could fight other men. On the other hand, Nwoye was sensitive and was found of the arts. The Igbo culture did not see sensitive as an attribute a man should exhibit, so Okonkwo tried to make Nwoye change his ways.

The conflict stems from the Igbo villagers being open to different cultures. The European missionaries were able to slowly take away the Igbo culture from the villagers, because they did not stand firm on their religious practices. The white man represents the African religious practices governing over the Igbo villagers. Since the Igbo people are spiritual, they believed the missionaries were there to help them. The villagers did not recognize that the missionaries were there to take away their land until it was too late. For

Okonkwo, the white man represents the lack of control over his life. He has to listen to the rule of white men not of his culture. Also, the white man represents the end of Igbo culture in Nigeria through beatings, imprisonment, and colonization.

The Africans use spirits and saying to guide them through life. They see everything as a message either from God or the ancestors. To me, the Africans live by a moral code and karma more than a religious text. The villagers take life a step at a time and listen to the elders for wisdom. This book refutes the fight of African people in colonization. Africans did not let the Europeans take over their land easily. The people were manipulated by the missionary work, the presence of Christianity, and their ignorance to European governments. Similarly, the Europeans had more weaponry to take over the land than the Igbo villagers. The villagers lived simple lives and had small wars with neighboring clans over land. They were not equipped to fight European military powers.

In most novels about African people, they are depicted as heartless barbarians. This novel shows how the Africans compassion and faith in the goodness of people made it easy for the Europeans to take over the land. I love this novel as a whole. I have read the novel several times and each time I gain a newfound respect for the African people. Although they were gullible in many ways, the morals of the African people shone through the words. Achebes use of Okonkwo to tell the story of how African villages were colonized was brilliant in my eyes. He showed all facets of each character, so the only villain is the white man. The change in settings from one village to

the next shows how colonization affected everyone in Africa. I would love to read more books where Africans are shown as the victims of oppression instead of the Darwins survival of the fittest narrative.

This novel shows a parallel between how the culture of Africans help and hinder their progression in a modern world. The book shows how the Africans forgiving nature aided the colonizers ability to take over villagers. Although through history, the culture of Africans has helped them regain control over their land in Africa and build countries. Likewise, the book shows the leadership difference between Europeans and African villages. The contrast still exists today. Some African countries still incorporate religious aspects into their government, while European-based countries separate religion and politics.

Other articles and books generalize African countries as models of European countries, but some maintain their African culture. Achebe shows how the Africans were stripped of their culture during colonization and their fight to maintain their culture in the book. While many sources say, Africans became civilized once they assimilated to western ideals. The book related to my belief that Africans were the victims of European intervention.

When Europeans build governments, they establish a military before anything else, while Africans build government and help their constituents first. The difference in cultural practices was the downfall of the Africans, because they assumed the Europeans had a similar culture. However, I did not realize the significance of the African traditional religion in African

society until I read this novel. The religion is incorporated into every part of the African peoples lives.