

# Things fall apart: inevitable changes

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



In the novel by Chinua Achebe, *Things Fall Apart*, there is a debate between whether Okonkwo's demise was a result of his going against the will of the gods, or that the new changes were inevitable. The second group argues that Okonkwo's acts do not destroy the tribe, but it is the tribe's lack of adaptability that brings it to an end. Firstly, the title, *Things Fall Apart*, seems like a statement, a universal truth. This can only further accentuate the idea that the changing of the Ibo tribe was inevitable, and that it was not due to Okonkwo's actions or the arrival of the missionaries. The Ibo had followed certain traditions for centuries, following their own religion and believing in many gods. Thus, when the emersion of Christianity coincided with the downfall of their system, the villagers began to blame the missionaries. Secondly, the character of Obierika foreshadows this unavoidable collapse of their traditions. Obierika predicts the beginning of new traditions in the Ibo way of life. His rethinking of the Ibo methods unconsciously foresees the idea of change. When Obierika questions the village's way of punishment, he anticipates that there are defects in their system that will ultimately need to be altered. Lastly, Okonkwo's character seems to embody the inescapable deterioration of Umuofia's system. He adheres so strictly to the rules that he plainly points out the flaws in the village's system. His suicide in the end symbolizes the noose which strangled the Ibo's religion and philosophies. Okonkwo had been so attached to the traditions of his village and unwilling to face change that, similar to the fate of the tribe, he fell apart. Achebe's book is mostly centered on Okonkwo and his development throughout the story, yet his downfall is merely a branch of the tribe's destruction and the loss of its ideals. The novel is in reality about

the future bringing inevitable changes and how people adapt. The Ibo tribe is an example of a group unwilling to adjust and collapsing because of that reluctance.