

A man with power

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



In the book *Things Fall Apart* written by Chinua Achebe, there is a very powerful character named Okonkwo. Okonkwo was a very strong and fearless man but that all changes while a huge cultural collision was happening in his village. Europeans were pushing Christianity on the Ibo people and were trying to change their culture. Missionaries were being pushed into their community and as many could imagine Okonkwo wasn't too happy. Through Okonkwo, Achebe is trying to show how people during that time were dealing with it, some more positive while others not too well.

Okonkwo was a man with power. He was the strongest in the village and many knew him as tough, strong, and basically fearless. In the village he was a self-made man. Unlike his father he had wealth, supported his three wives and their children. Although he was scared to become like his father, he would work hard to not get anywhere near as low as his father. ...he was not afraid of war. He was a man of action, a man of war. Unlike his father he could stand the look of blood. In Umuofia's latest war he was the first to bring home a human head (Achebe, 10). He was fearless unlike his dad, he was relentless and was highly respected throughout the village. This is who Okonkwo was before the British came to the tribe seeking for converts to Christianity.

First, when the missionaries showed up the Ibo people took them as a joke. They didn't really comprehend what they were trying to do. They offered them the evil forest as a piece of land hoping that would end them, but when nothing happened to them they were astonished at first. The village people didn't care after they let them be but as soon as villagers started converting Okonkwo wanted to get rid of them more and more. In the text it

states He seized a heavy stick and it hit him two or three savage blows (Achebe, 152). When Okonkwo found out Nwoye converted, his anger took over and he beat him. He also started trash talking the missionaries and their people. Okonkwo started hating the missionaries even more.

After Okonkwo had to deal with the missionaries' influence on Nwoye, he was not willing to change. One thing that did change was his dignity; he wasn't the man he once was. In a way Okonkwo felt defeated, weak and betrayed by his own son. The betrayal he felt was because Nwoye converted to Christianity. He felt defeated because more and more clan members were turning to Christianity, like the women. Women were changing because they weren't willing to kill their twins for much longer. Okonkwo was quickly losing power over the people and becoming like his father, weaker and weaker. He wasn't willing to adapt to Christianity and missionaries.

All in all, *Things Fall Apart* is about the reality of cultural colonization.

Okonkwo was a big part of the story; he showed how many reacted in such a negative way that in the end he was willing to kill himself. Okonkwo showed how men like him, powerful, wealthy, and full of the people's respect could've fallen weak over cultural colonization. With Okonkwo and the Ibo people, Achebe was showing the effects of Europeans colonizing villages like those and how many things were forgotten. This was a way for Achebe to show his people how their culture really was before colonization.