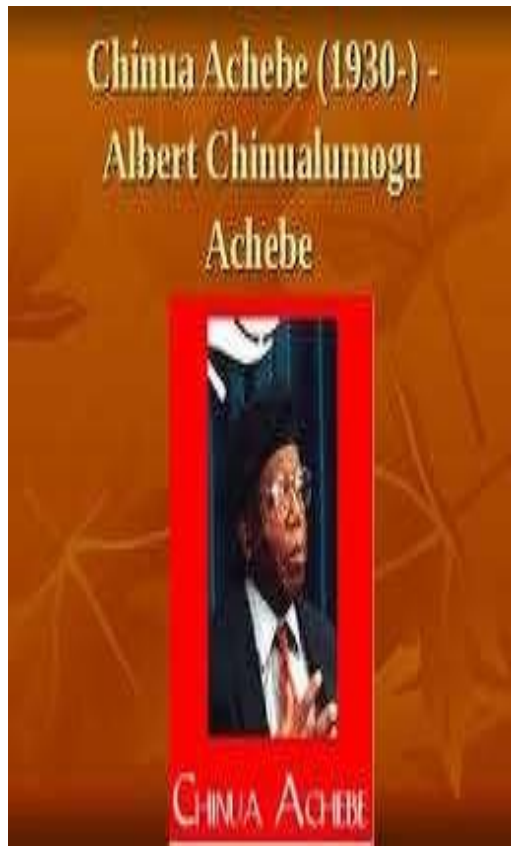


IDHAYA COLLEGE FOR WOMEN, KUMBAKONAM



SEMESTER : VI
SUBJECT : COMMON WEALTH LITERATURE
SUBJECT CODE : 16ACCEN14
CLASS : III BA ENGLISH
TITLE OF THE PAPER : THINGS FALL APART
NAME OF THE FACULTY : MRS. S. RAMYA


Chinua Achebe- “The Father of Modern African Literature”



Chinua Achebe – since “Things Fall Apart”

- He became involved in politics and actively crusaded for help for those in his country suffering. He left his career in radio in 1966 as a result of the political conflicts which would lead to Nigerian civil war, Biafran War, in 1967. The predominantly Igbo people of the area called Biafra felt discriminated by the Yoruba majority and seceded. The war ended in 1970 when Biafra surrendered.
- A paraplegic from the waist down after a 1990 automobile accident, Achebe has lived in the United States since, teaching first at Bard College and, from 2009 until his death, at Brown University
- He wrote five novels, of which *Things Fall Apart* is the most famous. He received the Nigerian National merit in 1987 and has been awarded over 25 honorary doctorates from Universities throughout the world. In addition, has written extensively, including articles, short stories, essays, and children's books
- By 1995 over 8 million copies of *Things Fall Apart* had been sold and the book had been translated into more than 45 languages

SOURCE OF THE TITLE



*"Turning and turning in the widening
gyre The falcon cannot hear the falconer;
Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;
Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world"*

W B Yeats

STRUCTURE

The structure of *Things Fall Apart*

- The first part sets the scene:
 - Okonkwo's humble beginnings and his rise to power through hard work.
 - the ways of the Ibo people.
 - Each chapter reflects some part of Ibo life and either supports or questions it.
- The second part:
 - Okonkwo's exile from his tribe
 - the influence of the missionaries and the intrusion of the European government into the African culture.
- The final part: Okonkwo's return



The Igbo Culture

- Story takes place in the Igbo village of Umoufia in the late 1880's prior to English colonization
- Substances of farmers- raise their own crops:
Yam, cassava, corn etc. Palm trees for oil and fiber
- Crafts and manual labour also provide income

BACKGROUND

- Men grew Yams and women grew other crops.

BRIDE PRICE

- Common in many African cultures; the bridegroom's family pays in cash or goods for the privilege of marrying a young woman.

OBI (HUTS)

- Large living quarters for the head of the family

COWRIE SHELLS

- A sea shell used as a form of money. The villages distance from the sea makes them rare enough to use as money

Igbo Customs in “Things Fall Apart”

- Week of peace: In Umoufia, a sacred week in which violence is prohibited
- Polygamay: A man can marry more than one wife .
- Eating habits: The man of the house eats seperately in his central hut

OBI



Ibo Huts

PREMISES

Things Fall Apart

PREMISES

- Customs and traditions are undone, partly b/c of the Ibo's cavalier attitude about the white Christians and also due to the limited views of the whites.
- Choices, both direct and indirect play a significant role for Okonkwo as well as the tribe.
- Alienation—How does this evergreen fit in?

CHARACTERS

- Okonkwo - the protagonist of the novel
- Unoka – Okonkwo’s father
- Obierika - his friend
- Ikemefuna –adopted son of Okonkwo
- Chielo - Priestess
- Mr.Brown –theWhite Missionary
- First wife of Okonkwo
- Nwoye- eldest son & the son of the First wife
- Ekwefi-Second wife of Okonkwo
- Ezinma- daughter of Ekwefi
- Ojiugo- Third wife of Okonkwo
- Nkechi- Ojiugo’s daughter

SUMMARY

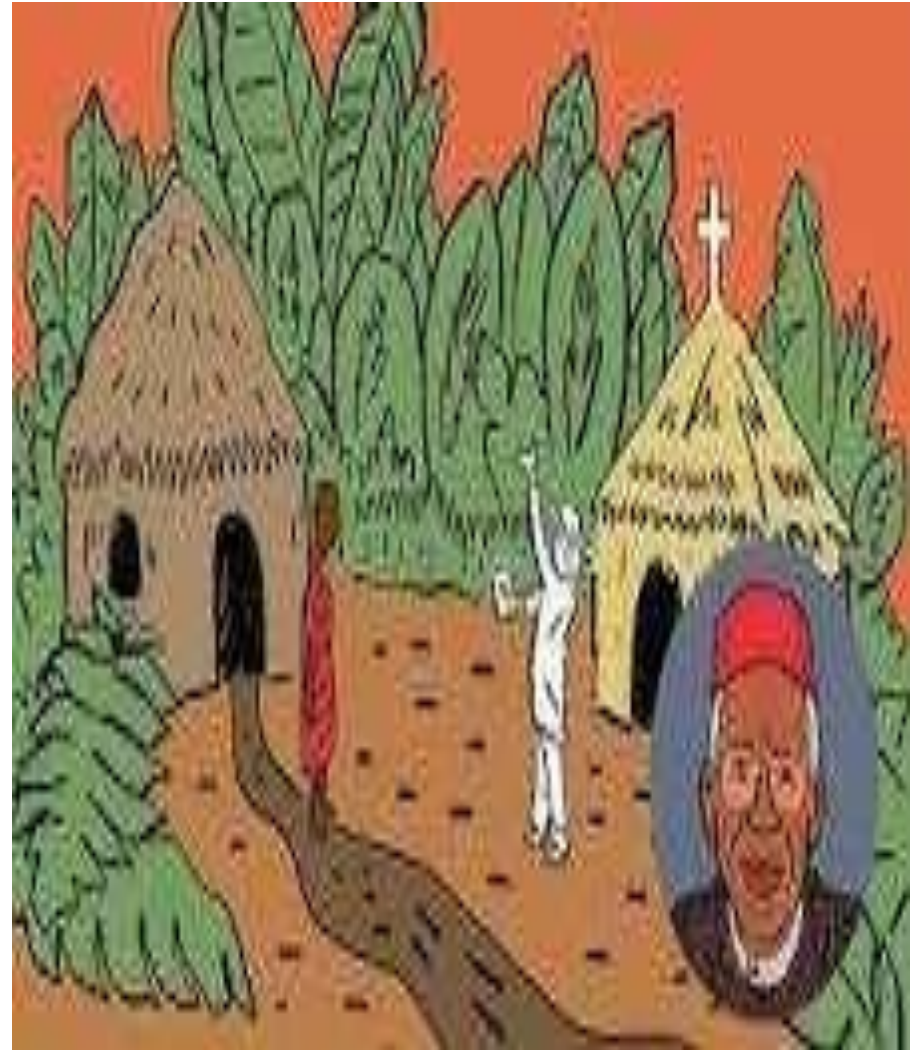


- Okonkwo is a member of the wealthy people in the African country of Nigeria in the late 1800's
- He is a wealthy farmer and well respected in his clan.

- Okonkwo has a big family that follows the traditions of the Igbo people.
- He has three wives;
- A son, Nwoye;
- And two daughters, Obiageli and Ezinma
- He also cares for a young boy, Ikemefuna, who has been brought to the village as a hostage.
- Okonkwo believes the Igbo tradition.
- He values strength and hard work and looks down on gentleness and compassion.
- He will do anything different from his father, who was considered weak and died in disgrace.

▪But Okonkwo's desire to succeed and to stamp out weakness leads him to commit many violent acts... some of which bring him into conflict with his clan.

▪One day a senseless act changes his life. He and his family are sent away from the village.



- While Okonkwo and his family are away, changes begin to take place in their village.
- Christian missionaries arrive-determined to change the Ibo way of life.
- After 7 years, Okonkwo and his family return home
- He couldn't tolerate the invasion of White Missionaries
- He argued with that people and he was put in prison Okonkwo murdered the white messengers and burnt the church.
- He knows his fate that he will be killed by the District Commissioner.
- He has hanged himself .Obierikka explains that the suicide is a grave sin. So none of the clansman would touch Okonkwo's body.
- They told according to their culture the body is evil now. So the final ritual ceremonies were performed by the District Commissioner.

SYMBOLISM & MOTIFS

Things Fall Apart - Symbolism & Motifs



CHINUA ACHEBE

A black and white close-up portrait of Chinua Achebe, looking slightly to the right with a thoughtful expression. The image is the background for the text.

“ We don't just sit and hope that things will work out; we have a role to play to make that come about. That seems to me to be the reason for the existence of the writer. ”

Chinua Achebe

THANK YOU