



**Sudan University of Science and Technology**  
**College of Graduate Studies**  
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**The Differences Between Fate and Freewill Themes  
in the Novel (Things Fall Apart)**

**الفرق بين مفهومي القدر والارادة في رواية ( الاشياء تتداعى )**

**A Research Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the  
Requirements of M.A degree in Literature**

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# **DEDICATION**

**To my parents  
And dear husband.**

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## **ABSTRACT**

This study aims to analyze the differences between fate and freewill themes in Chinua Achebe's (Things Fall Apart) through arguing the reasons of the heroes' tragic failure and the consequences of this unexpected downfall as it caused the downfall of the whole society.

This study focus on how the will of the Nigerian society members and hero's will especially is contacted with the tragic fate which is caused by god.

The research ends consider the hero's tragic failure as a victory, as his history was great he chooses not to end defeated by his enemy. Although things fall apart, but he revenged for his greatness.

## مستخلص البحث

تهدف هذه الدراسة لتحليل الفرق بين مفهومي القدر والارادة في رائعة الكاتب جينوا اجيبي ( الاشياء تتداعى ) من خلال مناقشة الاسباب حول السقوط المؤسف الغير متوقع لبطل القصة مما تسبب في سقوط المجتمع بأكمله وماهي الاسباب وراء ذلك.

تركز الدراسة على ارادة افراد المجتمع النيجيري وعلى وجه الخصوص بطل القصة وكيف انها متعلقة بالقدر المأساوي الذي تسبب به الرب .

وتنتهي الدراسة اخيرا الى ان سقوط البطل ليس نهاية مأساوية بل تعتبره انتصارا من البطل لتاريخه العظيم وانتقاما منه لحياته الحافلة بالانتصارات والتي لم يرد ان تنتهي بالهزيمة.

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# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **INTRODUCTION**



# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### **1.0: Overview:**

The situation is not simple, defining free will is complicated. As an operational definition; Free will is the ability to make one's own choices. But many neuroscientists consider freewill to be an illusion.

Sam Harris, 2012, in his study (The Illusion of Freewill); for example, wrote a short book arguing this case and his conclusion comes from a series of experiments that have revealed something remarkable:” Our brains decide a course of action before we know it. The motor region is responsible for making a motion in response to a question fired up before the subject was aware of it. The brain seems to be deciding before the mind knows about it.”

The course of free will has been researched and defined over the course of time, generally; free will is the ability of agents to make choices unimpeded by certain factors. Yet it has also other definitions:

-In religious; Free will implies that individual's will and choices can coexist with omnipotent and omniscient divinity that raises moral obligations for the man.

-In law: It affects considerations of punishment and rehabilitation.

-In ethics: It may hold amplifications for whether individuals can be held morally accountable for their actions.

In science: Neuroscientists find that free will suggests different ways of predicting human behavior. Since science aims to tract the cause of every

possible event or phenomenon, it's always close to the absolute and the assumption that there is no freedom and that's everything happens must inevitably be caused by directly preceding events.

It seems that the question of freewill is not simply black or white, or yes or no kind of questions; this question embraces the full complexity of what it means to be human.

Fate is the result of the past, freewill is the result of the present; when we look backward we see fate, when we look forward we see freewill.

The question of whether our lives are controlled by fate or freewill has and will be always around. Always believe that our lives are governed by both freewill and fate, because we are all given the chance over the course of our lives to make our own decisions. As have been raised religious, we have believed that god has a plan for each one of us, which is (fate), so our freewill is a part of (God's will), or (fate). We should only allow it to break over the wall of ignorance.

Freewill is revealed in our acceptance to our future which wants to guide us and liberate us from the fear of fate.

### **1.1: Statement of the Study:**

This study discusses the problem of the differences between fate and freewill in (Things Fall Apart), it shows how this different plays an important role in Chinua Achebe's Things Fall Apart. The study improves the concept of Chi related to the destruction of the hero and the downfall of the society.

## **1.2: Questions of the Study:**

The study will discuss the following problems:

- How fate and freewill are presented in the novel (Things Fall Apart)?
- Referring to the action of the funeral and death of Ezeudu, dose it result in Okonkwo's fate?
- Is there any relation between Okonkwo's fate and the down fall of his society?
- Is the story telling about Igbo society's fate or its representative to other colonized groups?

## **1.3: Hypothesis of the Study**

1-Okonkwo's fate may be interrupted as a blind chance and he may be regarded as a victim however, the book supports that he fails to acknowledge the nature of his destiny regards to his chi.

2- The concept of chi hastened the hero's tragic flaw because he could always blame his faults on his chi.

3-The destruction of Okonkwo was caused by the lake of support from his society members.

4-Okonkwo is used as a symbol for his society; his destruction caused the society to fall apart.

## **1.4: Significance of the Study**

Despite the exhaustive critical attention paid to Chinua Achebe's Things Fall Apart, the aspect of fate of Okonkwo is still unresolved.

The heart of the problem is; what is the reason of Okonkwo's downfall, or (Fate)? And why this fate is considered a downfall for whole Igbo society? This study will answer all these questions.

### **1.5: Method of the Study**

Through descriptive analysis school of criticism, the theme of freewill and fate will be analyzed to find out the effect of each on the destiny of the hero and Ibo members.

Trough New historicism and pre-colonial criticism a detailed study for the history of Nigeria pre and after the colonization will be given, the costumes and traditions- and how they have been affected by the colonizer.

### **1.6: Limits of the Study**

This study be limited to the analysis of differences between fate and freewill in the novel (Things Fall Apart).

**CHAPTER TWO**  
**LITERAL REVIEW**

# CHAPTER TWO

## LITERAL REVIEW

### **2.0: Historical background**

Things Fall Apart is an English language novel written by Chinua Achebe, Nigerian author. It chronicles pre-colonial life in south eastern Nigeria and the arrival of Europeans during the 19 century. It's seen as the archetypal modern African novel in English. Example of wealth and authority starts hard working and respected, alert to challenges, to authority and violent, which led him to poor decisions in his life.

As Achebe was acclaimed as "The founding father of the modern novel in English", hailed Things Fall Apart as (The African novelists' novel). Yet despite the novel's status and the critical material which it has inspired, some fundamental questions about the actual meaning of the novel remain unresolved. At the heart of the problem lies the issue of how to interrupt the reason of Okonkwo' downfall, or in more richly word (Fate), is it a combination of personal misfortune, or dose the book suggests more deep explanations! If this was true, is the nature of this explanation psychological or sociological?

**Simplified taxonomy of philosophical positions regarding freewill and determinism:**

Physical determinism is true:	Hard Determinism	Compatibles
Physical determinism is false:	Hard Incompatibles	Libertarianism

Though its common held that we have freewill, but the question is: How the will must be free? And what exactly the will must be free from?

Those who define freewill as the freedom from determinism are called (In compatibilist). They hold determinism to be incompatible with freewill. The claim that determinism is false and though freewill is possible and hard determinism. The other claims that determinism is true and though freewill is not possible. Hard incompatibles posit that indeterminism is also incompatible with freewill, and thus freewill is not possible.

**2.1: Nigeria tribes; Traditions, believes and costumes**

The tragic Chinua Achebe's Things Fall Apart offers many examples of Igbo believes regarding fate and freewill. It's great master piece which described the ironic relationship between the Igbo people and their fate. The Ibo did believe in fate; that nothing happens by chance, and every happen stance was the result of god's will. Yet the Ibo also believed that their ancestors and chi (personal god) also influenced their lives, thus, if an individual lived in

harmony with his god and ancestors he will be blessed with good fortune, if however, lived in disharmony, misfortune would result.

Though, it's not totally about fate and chi but freewill is also affected in the individual's life.

It's important to acknowledge that the primary motive cause of Okonkwo's destruction must be located in the fact of British colonization of Igbo land. If the British has not come to Umofia, the clan would not have fallen apart and Okonkwo would not have been led to commit suicide, maybe even if Okonkwo was available in Umofia at the arrival of the white man, he would not permit them to establish in the clan. The absence of Okonkwo's opinion enabled the colonizer to establish.

Of course there are flaws and contradictors in Umofia clan traditions which give rise to internal tensions and which alienate certain members of society. These include such specific instances; as the throwing away of twins, the irrational Taboo of the Osu, as well as the apparently senses decrees of the gods and oracle which produce fear and uncertainty rather than stability in society. More generally, there is the societal privileging of masculine warrior qualities which lead to the marginalization of the gentile, and the weakness such as Unoka and Nwoye of the unsuccessful who are labeled worthless men. Also women who are everywhere render subordinate to patriarchal domination. We see also the instance banishment of Okonkwo for seven years exiled from the clan which seems an overly harsh penalty for an in advert crime, and which causes Obierka to question the fitness of the punishment.



For instance, Ogbuefi Ezeundo reveals that Umofia at some time in the past repealed the death penalty for breaking the peace of Ani, and further it has rejected the practice of neighboring clans such as Obodoani of regarding a man dying during the week of peace as an abomination.

Nevertheless, Achebe is pains in the first part of the novel to establish that Umofian society is generally stable and coherent and that such flaws are insufficient to cause the implosion of the clan. Thus it seems likely if had the British not come to Umofia the clan would simply had continued such as it had done in the past, and that Okonkwo would have returned from exile to largely unchanged situation in which he would have been able to strive once more for a place of eminence in clan.

## **2.2: Nigeria During the Colony**

Colonialism is defined by: ‘the policy of acquiring full or partial political control over another country occupying it with settlers and exploiting it economically’. Therefore, post colonialism refer to after independence, is defined as: ‘the wide range of social, cultural and political events arising from the decline of the fall of European colonialism after the World War II’.

Achebe wrote *Things Fall Apart* in response to European novels that depicted Africans as savages who needed to enlighten by Europeans. Achebe presents to the reader his people’s history with both strengths and imperfections by describing Igbo festivals , the worship of their gods , the practices in their ritual ceremonies their rich culture and other social practices , the colonial era that was both stopping Igbo culture and also brought in some benefits in their culture. *Things Fall Apart* there for directs the misleading of European novels that depict Africans as savages into a

whole new light within portrayal of Igbo society, and examines the effect of European colonialism on Igbo society from an African perspective. Hence, this part argues that the interaction between the whites and Igbo people had both negative and positive consequences, It's evident in Achebe's novel that Europeans greatly influenced by the life style in Igbo society.

Towards the 19 century most Europeans migrated to Africa and other parts of the world where they established colonies. Nigeria was amongst other African nations that received visitors who were on colonizing mission, introducing their religion and culture that imposed on Igbo, Igbo culture is immensely threatened by this change.

Due to the unexpected arrival of white missionaries into their land, the villagers do not know how to react to the sudden cultural changes that the missionaries threaten to change with their new political structure and institutions.

Achebe's primary purpose of writing the novel is to educate the reader about the value of his culture as an African. *Things Fall Apart* provides the reader with an insight of Igbo society right before the white missionaries' invasion on their land. The invasion of the colonizing force threatens to change almost every aspect of Igbo society from religion, tradition, gender roles, relations and family structure to trade.

Before Achebe wrote *Things Fall Apart*, all the novels that had been written about Africa and Africans were written by Europeans, mostly the European writings described Africans as uncivil and uneducated persons. The Europeans seeing themselves as more advanced than Africans, and they were determined to help Africans from the old era to the modern era of

civilization and education. As so, Achebe writes *Things Fall Apart* to encourage his countrymen to take advantage of the educational system that the missionaries introduced so as to better their lives. He is determined to take the modern African literature genre to greater heights as well as to prove to Europeans the value of African culture. Through the book, Achebe describes the history of Igbo by describing both the perfections and imperfections of their culture and traditions that made them different from western culture. For example, he believes in the power of their ancestral gods, the sacrifice of young boys, and the throwing of twins. By the novel, the reader is aware of the coming of the white man to Umuofia as well as the reaction of Igbo to their arrival. Although the arrival of missionaries had some benefits to Igbo, also there were a number of challenges that faced the future of Igbo.

Through literature, we understand the focus of Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* which is a novel written by (an individual) who grew up under colonial rule in response to the effects of colonialism on his culture. A colonized individual is usually forced to follow the culture of his colony regardless if he is against it or not.

Proverbs also are present in the book. Proverb is a brief common statement that is usually adopted by culture to teach its people about the principles of right and wrong using as few words as possible. The use of proverbs is very important in conversations, as the Igbo believe them to be a fountain of wisdom and respect.

Achebe is successful in fully detailing the life of Okonkwo who represents the African society as a whole, who was a very famous man- at the beginning of the novel- in all the nine villages of Umuofia, however, as the

novel develops and the white missionaries arrive in Umofia long with their government and institutions , Okonkwo who tries to protest the change is in the end failed by his people and buried with no respect and his fame is soon forgotten because of the greatest sin that he commits in Igbo society by taking his own life.

The difference between Achebe's novel and other colonial novels is that, his novel is that his novel thoroughly examines Igbo society as he portrays them in a manner in which shows all aspects of Igbo culture, not only the desirable aspect of their culture, he also predicted the future of Igbo and where are they headed if the white missionaries are to be successful in taking control of Umofia.

## 2.3 Previous Studies

1-The author Raisa Simola- 1995-Concerning to (Worldview) of Things Fall Apart it will attempt to clarify the key issue of the reasons for Okonkwo's fate; there are four areas of explanations for his downfall:

First: The British colonization of Igbo land and the consequent disintegration of Okonkwo to Umofia clan.

Second: Achebe's deployment of the tragic mode whether Okonkwo fit the role of the tragic hero.

Third: The possibility of Okonkwo being the victim of blind fate, or is it pre-ordained destiny.

Fourth: The sense of divine justice being melted out to Okonkwo.

2- In a world journal of educational research, 2016 by varadharajan and ramesh, included in their article that the novel mainly deals with the fall of Igbo culture where Okonkwo has played the sheet anchor role in the novel Things Fall Apart at the time of the British establishment in Nigeria, it is established that the Igbo society which refuses to change itself could be one of the reasons of the fall. However, it is very clear that the changes should take place spontaneously and not by force which the Igbo society has been the victim and preventative, and Okonkwo was just its escape goat.

3- In a paper written by Ian Glenn from the book of English in Africa, 1985; The paper argued that the pattern of tragic failure in Things Fall Apart doesn't allow any easy judgment about that fate of the heroic individual is more initially and more linked to the process of social change that critics has allowed. Added that Achebe's (Man of the People) resolves the problem posted by his earlier novel; (Things Fall Apart).

4-In a study for Patrich Noromele in 2000; he reached to the point that all what happened to Okonkwo was the function of Igbo's conception of a hero although the question of why did Achebe let the hero fail among those people who have experienced hard face of colonialism.

# **CHAPTER THREE**

## **METHODOLOGY**

# CHAPTER THREE

## METHODOLOGY

### **3.0: About (Things Fall Apart)**

(Things Fall Apart) is a novel written by the Nigerian author Chinua Achebe published in 1958. It chronicles the pre-colonial life and the time of the arrival of the Europeans of the 19 century. The novel takes its title from the poem (The second coming) by the Irish poet W.B. Yeats.

### **3.1: Introduction**

Although There are many critics given to Chinua Achebe's Things Fall Apart is still poor of the reasons of the hero's tragic downfall even though there are many critics tend to regard the opposition between the tragic failure and the inflexible nature of the hero.

This study tends to argue against the pattern failure of the tragic hero and to detail that the fate of the hero as an individual is more linked to the societal failure and so most linked to the societal change. The discussed portray of Okonkwo's fate in this study is neither innocent nor neutral to one side. It may be argued that his fate has nothing to do with justice of goddess but simply a chance of the events of the universe or a victim of the accidents of history, also his end might be the result of his psychological determinism or his own freewill, referring to the table in chapter one in this study.



### **3.2: Okonkwo Character**

Okonkwo is the novel's main character and his clan leader. He fears of becoming weak man like his father Unoka and so he becomes aggressive and hard working. He gains fame and wealth at the begin of the novel, the same fear caused Okonkwo to be impatient and violent which leads to his downfall because he couldn't adjust to changes after the colonization.

### **3.3: Analysis from a critical point of view**

- Relative wealth plays an important role in Umofia society, but sometimes a man with freewill can change his stars through hard work and smattering of luck. One of the main conflicts in Things Fall Apart is the clash between Okonkwo's will to succeed and his unexpected fate.

This study somehow proves through the tragic end of Okonkwo that the hero is –fate- imaged by the writer to show a moral lesson, and to prove that the man is a –play doll- in hands of his god, this is definitely related to the - tragic heroes- and the relation between their societies and their gods. However, Okonkwo's will have played a major factor in determining his future. He chooses to kill Ikemefuna with his own hands, he chooses to kill the government official, and he chooses to end his own life. Whether or not, negative events in his live are tied to these three crimes, if they are just a result of chance or fate, they are debatable.

In chapter three in Things Fall Apart, Achebe writes: “Unoka was an ill-fated man, he has bad chi or personal god and evil fortune followed him to the grave, or rather to his death for he has no grave”; Ibo tribes used fate by way of chi instead of term of freewill. In other words, Unoka- Okonkwo's father – from the view of Ibo tribes—is an ill-fated man with no chi, how?

He seems to be lazy for doom, he is lazy and therefore unsuccessful, not because of the way of life he chooses, but because he is a man with bad chi, for that his life was shameful and his death was shameful too. From the point of view, Unoka had freewill because he chooses his own way of life and did not follow the Ibo's traditions.

In the other hand – Okonkwo tries to determine his own fate, he chooses his fate by beheading the missionary, and chooses to be placed in a situation that allows him to be violent so as to cause his own self destruction or (suicide).

Overall, characters in tragedy have no freewill, even though ironically they fight to preserve it, but actually tragic heroes are victims of tragic fate which is uncombined to their personal choices. Okonkwo's move from bad fortune to bad fortune is a reversal of fate; this reverse result from crisis befalling the hero, leading to his tragic downfall;

Okonkwo grew up not wanting to be like his father, he worked hard to own respect and masculinity, and he has no patient with unsuccessful men as though with his father. Okonkwo owns three wives and eleven children, he works hard in his farm and his wives fear him, he was masculine and very violent personal. His violence is clear at the time he chooses to share hand in the murder of Ikemefuna's his adopted son. His life was going very good. His fortune starts to go down when he beat his wife during the week of peace. His fortune continued befalling when he decided to sacrifice his adopted son, Okonkwo does not want to kill him but the feel of masculinity overcome, fate meets freewill here; if he didn't kill Ikemefuna he would be seen as famine, though to kill the boy was our hero's freewill.

Okonkwo's fortune starts to rise up again when his daughter Eznima gets ill and he do everything for her to recover which shows us the lovely side of his personality which is rarely seen and which proves us that our tough and masculine hero do has love feelings deep inside.

Okomkow's fate drops when his gun exploded and kills the son of Ezudu in his funeral, the bad fortune continues when Okonkwo and other village members where insulted and prisoner because they burned the church. This action crated a battle between religion and traditions, either to stick with the old ways or to accept changing and to let the white man convert to his religion. But Okonkwo has no flexibility, his inflexibility caused him to kill himself because he is incapable to change and no one of his people give a hand to act vs. Christians. Okonkwo choose to kill himself because it's the only way to be independent. For this sake, it should be noted that the downfall of Okonkwo is not necessarily due to his inflexible character or his departed glories but due to the cultural system believes of Ibo society as a whole. This crisis befalling of our tragic hero must be self-inflicted but ordained by fate.

One of the most related concepts to consider in this research is (Chi)- which remains one of the most puzzling in Igbo faith. Though it's centrality in Ibo believes system is uncountable, it has proved the virtually impossible. Achebe himself proved in this novel in which he explained as personal god, yet there is no scoop in this research for a detailed dissection of Achebe's usage of this concept in the book, but for the purpose of this study it may be noted that the most important meaning attached to this term is that –Chi- functions as the divine agent whereby an individual is created and through which his fate is determined. Okonkwo's fortune has been governed by his –

Chi. The novel reveals that Okonkwo's success has not been a result of luck rather to hard work according to self-affirmation which has positively influenced his chi, and therefore- his chi or personal god was good; Ibo people have a proverb:” When a man says yes his chi says yes also”.

Okonkwo's fate may be interrupted as a blind chance, and he may be regarded as a victim of the accidents of history, however the discussed book supports an alternative view of fate, on in which Okonkwo fail to acknowledge the nature of his destiny in terms of his Chi and so he is destroyed. According to this view the universe is not just random and physical but also governed by spiritual dimension; Cielo is the head of this view, it plays an important role in Umofia village by deciding the fate of the villagers. Once when Agbala demands to take Eznima to the caves at night an Okonkwo refused Agbala warned Okonkwo;” does a man speak when God speaks “chapter 11. And when Agbala arrived, she greets the God; “The owner of the future, the messenger of the earth, the God who cut a man down when his life is sweetest to him” chapter11.

This quotation is contradictory with the famous proverb in Ibo believes: “When a man says yes his chi also says yes”, which proves that Ibo people's fate is governed by their God and not only with their chi or their freewill.

- “In the center of the crowd a boy lay in a pool of blood. It was the man's 16 years old son who with his brothers and half-brothers has been dancing the traditional farewell to their father. Okonkwo's gun had exploded and a piece of iron had pierced the boy's heart”. Chapter13.

Throughout the novel, Okonkwo is presented as being so violent, the novel seems to suggest that the downfall of Okonkwo is not accidental but

suggested to be the judgment of the earth goddess against him in Igbo believes were no suffering occurs without a reason. Okonkwo's destruction is presented not as tragic misfortune but as punishment for moral and religious transgression.

The first manifestation of the goddess wrath occurs when Okonkwo's gun exploded in the inadvertent kill of son of Ezeudu and he was exiled from the clan for seven years. Although it was inadvertent but it was the justice of the earth goddess, later when he finds no support he is forced into the fact that the clan has fallen apart, and the reason of being for him – living a hero- is extinguished, Okonkwo commits suicide, the worst crime against the earth.

Okonkwo kills a boy by accident; he commits a female crime in where he faced exile to his mother clan for seven years. This incident could be read as a whim of fate that has devastating consequences on Okonkwo even though it was inadvertent. We may suppose that this accidental crime is Okonkwo's pay back for his poor choice to kill Ikemefuna – the ill-fated boy.

As the issue of human destiny is bound up with such religious concepts as divine preordination, justice and technology, it's imperative that Okonkwo's fate be investigated also from the perspective of religious philosophy.

In the first place it may be argued that what befalls Okonkwo is the result of nothing more than blind fate. From a purely secular position, Okonkwo's various misfortunes may find their explanations in the events of the universe. His exile, for instance arising out of his inadvertent killing of Ezeudu's son at the funeral, though it's certainly made by Okonkwo's foolishness in carelessly handling his old gun. Similarly, the coming of the missionaries and the formal British colonization of Ibo land. The fact that

this period of time happened to coincidence with Okonkwo's life time, is again simply an accident of history.

However, after the various misfortunes Okonkwo has faced he discovered that "the saying of the elders was not true; that if a man said yea his chi also affirmed, here was a man whose chi said nay despite his own affirmation" chapter 14.

After the great will of Okonkwo and his good -chi-, the later started to turn on him. His life was successful at the beginning, he rose up from nothing: rose with a poor father, he works hard and own respect of his elders, he is disgusted about poor and lazy people. He starts his own way to be at the top of the clan and soon he becomes one of the most respected of his village, been recognized as the greatest warrior in Umofia. But accidentally his exile come, arising out of hamartia., or maybe an accident of history.

Though these accidents could prove that Okonkwo's misfortune is not attributed to his humanity or personality; being violent and masculine, but to his -Chi-and according to these bad events or misfortunes:" His personal god may not be made of great things or great reasons" Chapter12.

Vs. this quotation, god could have a hand in this tragic downfall, as the priest Chiello declared previously in chapter 11:" The owner of the future, the messenger of earth, the god who cuts a man down when his life was sweetest to him "

In any event -however- the fact remains that the influence of traditional religion in the life of Okonkwo and the Umofian people is so pervasive, that it demands to be granted serious consideration within its own frame of reference in any dissection of the possible reasons for Okonkwo's fate. One

of the most important concepts to consider in such dissection is that of –Chi- which remains one of the most puzzling in all Ibo faith. Though it's centrality in Ibo believes system is undoubted, it has proved virtually impossible, even from the perspective of culture and anthropology; because in Ibo system every clan member has personal god or Chi. Bad fortune is often blamed on bad chi, while good fortune is returned to good Chi.

Chi plays an important in this study, not only being the source of internal conflicts of Okonkwo but also being the reasoning for many decisions with both behaves of Okonkwo and the villagers. The concept of chi encouraged our heroes' tragic flaw because every time he could blame his faults on his chi, he was never able to take responsibility for his own actions and overcome his pride -and so, because of the limits of Okonkwo's chi he was tragically descended a flaw led to his eventual downfall.

- Okonkwo's will seem to his ascent in Umofia society. He rises from being the son of a debtor to being one of the leaders of the clan.

Because of his hard work and aggression, Okonkwo becomes known for his wrestling, and sure this cannot be attributed to luck. At the most one that could say that his chi or personal god was good, but the Ibo people have a proverb:" If a man says yes his chi says yes also. Okonkwo said yes very strongly so his chi agreed "

"Obierika who had been gazing steadily at his friend's dangling body, turned suddenly to the district commissioner and said ferociously: That man was one of the greatest men of Umofia, you drove him to kill himself and now h will be buried like a dog" Chapter25.

Okonkwo's death was sad and unexpected, he has lived his entire life trying to live up to his violent and masculine culture's ideas of his society. His father had been such a failure at living up to traditional Ibo values that Okonkwo's entire life's focus was to be what his father couldn't. This focus caused him to be totally inflexible because all he could see is a goal which his society set for him. When that society begins to change, Okonkwo couldn't change with it, he gripped to the old values, and this rigidly causes things in life to fall apart.

This study proves clearly that the death or –downfall- is symbolic for the downfall of the entire culture of Ibo society.

Through his story, Achebe stands for the old ways of his culture by Okonkwo, he follows their philosophies and holds their beliefs. Also their values and traditions. His values of masculinity, violence and bravery are the values of the Ibo people. He also has a great respect for his gods and religion and plays the role in his religion as one of the elders of the clan.

From the very beginning of the white man coming, the elders of the clan suggested that the white man will make destruction to Ibo society “The elders consulted their oracle and it told them that the strange man would break their clan and spread destruction among them” Chapter 15.

They were like locusts; they caused Ibo society destruction moving from one village to another as the locusts cause the harvest destruction. A great evil had come to Mbaino land as the oracle had warned, and the white man had come and killed every one in the village as a result of their own deeds because they killed the white explorer. This was fatal for Mbaino land- to be wiped out-.



When the white man comes with his new religion and the culture begins to change Okonkwo reacts with violence. He couldn't change with the time, couldn't adapt to the new Ibo. When he Okonkwo was in exile, every time Obierika tells him stories about the white man and what he does to other villages he bit on his teeth with bitter and furious, he never accepted the idea of the coming of the white man.

The Europeans moved in and destroyed the dynamics of Ibo tribe. Our tragic hero fought to preserve what was left until he ran out of options. Okonkwo couldn't bear watching his values be stripped away before his eyes so he died, and with died one of the last great men of the old Ibo, he was the epitome of the Ibo people, the symbol of his society, and his death meant the end of the Ibo. His death symbolized the damage that prejudice and disrespect for individual freedoms and beliefs can have upon the Nigerian society and Africa as entire.

Disintegration of Igbo people society is central to Things Fall Apart, the idea of collapse, on both individual and social level is one of the novel's central images where the Christians arrive and bring division to Ibo society. Later what make things get worse when Nowye converts to Christianity, Okonkwo cried bitterly in his heart: "Why should he, of all people be cursed with such a son?" Chapter 17. The great Okonkwo should not have a son like Nowye.

The Christians seek to attack the very Ibo belief, and also the core of Igbo culture as the tribe's religious beliefs are integral to all other aspects of society. The results of the white man come were out of Ibo's hand due that their brothers have turned against them; "The white man was very clever, he has put a knife in the things that held us together and we have fallen apart" Obierika Chapter 20.

Thus Okonkwo himself becomes a symbol of disintegration of his society when he committed suicide upon himself. Okonkwo is one of the few who resist the new religion and culture and he ends up dead. His refusal is a form of resistance to conforming to the ways of the white man as well as a rejection of his own culture as he has made a terrible transgression in committing suicide and will not be buried in the honorable way that he deserves, in way Okonkwo rejected his tribe members for their cowardice and defended to his own tribe thoughts he was met by lack of support. At the end of the book our hero is out of patient when Umofian people had meeting in the market place, the white man foolishly come to end their meeting, and then:” In a flash Okonkwo drew his matchet. Okonkwo’s matchet deduced twice and the man’s head lay beside his uniformed body”. Chapter 24.

Okonkwo acted violently and his patient is ended. He wanted to take revenge to his people, to his traditions, and to his masculinity. But as soon as;” he wiped his matchet on the sand and went away” the time Okonkwo do this, it meant that he will no more resist or act violently; because at the time he was defending his own people and his society traditions and masculinity- this was the exact time he lost the hand of his people. They really disappointed him, instead of acting and being proud of him he just heard voices asking:” Why did he do it?” That was so disappointing, and that why he just wiped his matchet and went away. It was unexpected action by his people. For Okonkwo, throwing his matchet away was deep, it meant that he will not resist any more, no violence and no more actions; his people which he was trying to protect are not supporting him.

This action can translate why do Okonkwo committed suicide upon himself; because his people accepted to be slaves for the white man, a great man like

Okonkwo would never accept that, a great man like our tragic hero would not accept to stand shiftless beyond the colonizer with no resistance. For that, it was a brave action from a brave hero with a great past in violent and masculinity.

This tragedy or this downfall is shared by the entire tribe which has fallen apart by the time Okonkwo committed suicide and ended his life. Great Okonkwo did not deserve to be buried like a dog. He deserved a great funeral as much as he was and seek to be.

Thus, it's a double tragedy due to the weakness and the big mistake of the hero, but also the weakness of the tribe, who are despite their power among the local clans of Nigeria, cannot resist the colonizer.

- When Achebe published the book Nigeria was two years away from independence. Though he chooses a suitable time to write about the past, he did so with romanticizing and challenged style to his readers to help them recognize the truth that they were still far from regaining what they lost, and what they were in danger to lose.

After he published *Things Fall Apart*, Achebe wrote two other novels; *No Longer at Ease* – and – *Arrow of God* tells the story of Okonkwo's descendants, telling the fate of Nigeria itself. These works featured characters who struggle with change and identity, modernization and tradition, and with power underscore the questions Africans were asking about their newly independent nations on an intimate human scale with prose that takes the English language and infuses it with inflections and history that is uniquely Ibo, Nigerian and of course African.

In Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*, the African culture is depicted by following the life of Okonkwo; a great conventional African villager. He intended to write a novel that portray the African society in the mid of 1800s in Nigeria. As a child Achebe spoke the Ibo language, but he was raised in a Christian home. Achebe used the knowledge he gained from the African life to put together history and fiction into a novel that he believes correctly illustrates the African culture before and after the arrival of the Christian missionaries. Thus the reader is given the taste of the "Africanis" of the novel.

*Things Fall Apart* by Achebe is a historical fiction novel describing the life of Africa- Okonkwo in Nigeria village succumbing to European ways in order to portray Achebe's view on imperialism to us and its effect in Ibo villages of Nigeria. It shows also the treatment of natives by the Europeans and how the natives reacted. It's good representation of our current unit because it clearly shows how Africa where ill-treated and eaten up by European countries during the age of imperialism. It shows how countries lost their traditions and ways of life to European ones, and how they are negatively affected by imperialism.

In his famous quotation, Obierika said: "That man was one of the greatest men in Umofia, you drove him to kill himself" Chapter 25. This talk supports Okonkwo's representation for the best part of the tribal values in various ways by Chinua Achebe.

Truly, Okonkwo has qualities that prove he is a respected leader in his tribe. Yet he has negative qualities that are greatly supported by some tribe members. Okonkwo's fiery tempers causes him to a troubled life and so on leads him to end his own life and caused falling apart for him and the whole African society.

To know much about Africa at that time, we should take in hand that our great Okonkwo was a man of great personal achievement after he threw the great wrestles of the nine villages at age of 18. And because of his excellence in wrestling he won the heart of Ekwefi the beauty of the village and she becomes one of his three wives. Having many wives and children is an honor in Okonkwo's village. Next he has been successful in his farming, he has many yams filled with yams, and this represents his wealth- or Africa's wealth. His tribal leaders greatly respected him. Okonkwo is also a great warrior; he has many human skulls which prove his bravery. His tribe depends on him to keep his village safe from enemies.

Yet all of this, when the Christians com to the village, Okonkwo tries to get rid of them, but when his clan's men didn't support him in his fight, Okonkwo hangs himself. He wanted to stand like a stupid tree in face of winds by himself, but it was already fated and he cannot now control on it. That results in his suicide which proves us that Okonkwo didn't learn that a single man cannot stand in face of fate.

The suicide was an abomination against the tribal beliefs, Okonkwo himself knew that. Sadly, enough-m all of Okonkwo's great achievements were not enough to save him h died without honor, he did not get the honorable funeral he deserves.

Surely Okonkwo is used as a symbol for the society he represents as strong, powerful land intolerant- cruel, violent and dominated by fear of failure and weakness. All of these qualities are a reflection of the Ibo society itself. They are these qualities which eventually leads Ibo society falling apart, and Okonkwo's downfall the destruction of what held Ibo society together.

When the strengths of society falters or broken it will weaken and loose its identity.

Ibo society was just as proud of its culture and traditions, but once the missionaries started to spread their influence, it in turn eroded the basic principles which held the society together.

Okonkwo refused to be dominated by those he believed had no authority over him and so his pride made him to choose suicide rather than to be humiliated by punishment of those he despises. His death which has seen as an abomination indicates his determinism not to be cowed into submission, his death simplified his masculinity and greatness, so there was more honor in taking his own life- at least for him than to live humiliated by the colonizer.

# **CHAPTER FOUR**

## **CONCLUSION**

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## CONCLUSION

### 4.0: Conclusion

In this study readers are frequently reminded by the theme of fate and its relation to chi as well as its capability to the destiny and also it's relation with the will of clan members and how does it works in contrast with fate.

Okonkwo's fate seems to be coherent within which it may be seen as a part of the justice of the land. He seems destined to self-destruction because his inflexible nature, although the arrival of the colonizer hastened his tragic fate, but he didn't deserve the tragic downfall he ended up because he was a full man worked hard to satisfy his gods –to b deserved this tragic fate- yet at all it might be a part of his ordained destiny worked out in conjunction with his chi.

It's moreover the contention of the conclusion that; Okonkwo who has hunger to heroism was not afraid to the attention given to him by his people when he decided to end up his life. He felt that the only thing left was to commit suicide as an expression to prove his heroism; because a hero would rather die than to be humiliated by his enemy.

### 4.1: Findings and Discussions

1-In spite of the great efforts Okonkwo did to be the hero of his society yet the gods proved that the destiny of the people is still in their hands.



2-The suicide of Okonkwo is a heroic decision because his heroic history didn't prove him to be defeated by the colonizer. This end is more considered than to be just a blind fate.

3-Although the Nigerian society has its own qualities and rooted traditions yet the come of the colonizer caused him to fall apart because the un unity of its members which is clearly seen when they refused their suicide hero at the same time they denied killing the commissioner.

#### **4.2: Recommendations**

The researcher recommends the following:

1-Search about the cultural background and the history of Nigeria to analyze (Things Fall Apart).

2- Teaching (Arrow of God) through seminars considered an evaluation to (Things Fall Apart).

#### **4.3: Suggestions for Further Studies**

The researcher suggests that:

1- Give attention to Africa before and after the colonization – the costumes and the changes.

2- Search on how did the colonizer caused the society fall apart.

3- The affection of racism on the African man after the colonization.

4- The contradiction between feminist and masculinity in Igbo society.

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