



Igbo Culture

1. Agricultural Society

They are subsistence farmers who grow their own crops such as yam (type of sweet potato), cassava, taro, corn. Palm trees are grown for oil and fibre, and palm oil is pressed from palm nuts and used for fuel and cooking. Palm wine is also tapped from the tree. The kola, a bean, is a stimulant like tea or coffee. Cowrie shells are seashells, used as a form of money.

2. Religious Beliefs

The priests and priestesses represent the polytheistic worship of the tribe. The will of gods is revealed through oracles. Chukwu, the supreme god and creator of the world, being omnipresent requires no shrines for worship. Each individual has a personal god, or Chi, that can be either malevolent or benevolent. A person's destiny can be influenced through his actions and rituals, but cannot be controlled by his chi. The highly respected Egwugwu, is the ancestral spirits of the clan, represented by masked men at social gatherings, providing the link between the worlds of living and dead.

3. Marriages

Polygamy is practiced. The number of wives a man has will be determined by his prosperity. The Igbo women live in separate houses, cook for themselves, and raise their own children

4. Structure of Society

Society is patriarchal, with decision-making by the men. Clans live in autonomous villages ruled by elders in tribal councils. The oldest, male in the family can be elected as an elder.

5. Social Patterns

- Titles are earned and not inherited. High value is placed on individual achievement.
- Hospitality is very important.
- Some Igbo own slaves captured in war or as payment for debt.
- Large emphasis is on tribal traditions and rituals

6. Igbo Customs in Things Fall Apart

- The Week of Peace in Umuofia, is a sacred week in which violence is prohibited.
- The man of the house eats separately in his central hut.
- Osu is a class of people in Igbo culture considered as outcasts.

Adapted from <https://www.slideshare.net/bobgembey/things-fall-apart-65672924>

<http://www.bookrags.com/biography/chinua-achebe>

<http://www.gradesaver.com/author/chinua-achebe>

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