



Class Notes on
Ibo Society's Believes
in
Things Fall Apart

PART - 3

FOR
B A
ENGLISH
SEM - VI
ENGL3016

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THE NOVEL PROVIDES THE
DETAILED DESCRIPTIONS OF...

- ❖ The justice codes and the trial process
- ❖ The social and family rituals
- ❖ The marriage customs, food production and preparation processes
- ❖ Religious beliefs and practices
- ❖ Every man has an opportunity to climb the clan's ladder of success through his own efforts



GODDESS EARTH

- ❖ The goddess of earth punishes a person who take part in killing another human being
- ❖ Eg. Okonkwo's friend, Obierika, reminds him that the goddess of earth might punish him for taking part in Ikemefuna's killing.

MAN SLAUGHTERING: CRIME AGAINST THE EARTH GODDESS

- ❖ Man slaughter was a major crime against the earth goddess in Ibo society
- ❖ The accused had to flee from his home and clan along with his family
- ❖ Eg. Okonkwo fled to Mbanta, a nearby village of his mother's kinsmen.
- ❖ His house was then ransacked and burnt as a part of the ritual of revenge for the earth goddess
- ❖ Okonkwo's crime was inadvertent so he could return after seven years of exile



URI/ENGAGEMENT CEREMONY

- ❖ Uri is a kind of engagement ceremony
- ❖ Eg. Obierika, Okonkwo's friend celebrates his daughter's Uri.
- ❖ A lot of cooking for the feast
- ❖ Pots full of palm-wine
- ❖ The ceremony would end with a lot of eating, drinking and singing and also a dance by the bride

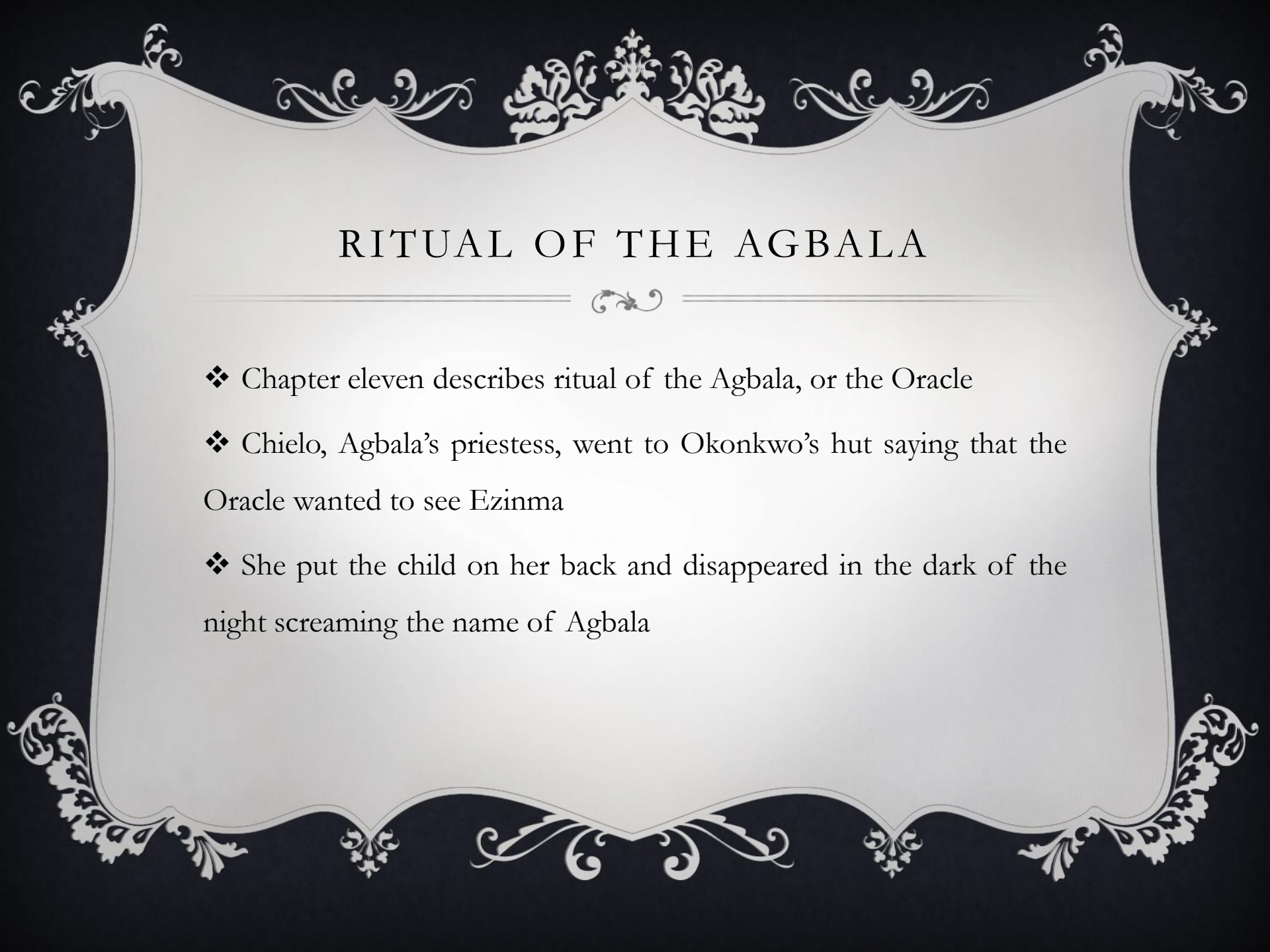


MEDICINAL LEAVES

- ❖ Okonkwo's daughter Ezinma suddenly falls ill with shivering and fever
- ❖ Okonkwo gets some medicinal leaves and Ezinma was given a steam-bath with boiled leaves which cured her of her shivering and fever

A MEDICINE-MAN

- ❖ Ekwefi lost nine of her children in infancy
- ❖ When a woman loses her children one after another. the Ibo people believe that it is the it is the same wicked child entering its mother's womb again and again.
- ❖ The cure lies in the hands of a medicine-man
- ❖ Okogbue, the medicine-man cured the Ekwefi of the curse and the next child, Ezinma, survived



RITUAL OF THE AGBALA

- ❖ Chapter eleven describes ritual of the Agbala, or the Oracle
- ❖ Chielo, Agbala's priestess, went to Okonkwo's hut saying that the Oracle wanted to see Ezinma
- ❖ She put the child on her back and disappeared in the dark of the night screaming the name of Agbala



❖ Ekwefi, Ezinma's mother followed her till the mouth of the cave of the Oracle

❖ Okonkwo also came

❖ Both of them waited outside till Chielo came out of the cave.

❖ Ezinma's visit to the Oracle



GUNS FIRING IN HONOUR OF THE DEAD WARRIOR

- ❖ At his funeral a warrior guns would be fired as an honour to the dead warrior
- ❖ Eg. When Ezeudu, a village elder and warrior, died guns were fired

‘EVIL FOREST’

- ❖ In ‘evil forest’ those who had died of dreadful diseases like leprosy and small pox were buried.
- ❖ The people believed that anyone inhabiting such a place would himself be dead
- ❖ Nothing happened to the missionaries after living there for many days,
- ❖ Villagers started believing that the god of the white men was more powerful than that of the Africans.

SUICIDE

- ❖ Finding himself completely isolated from the villagers, Okonkwo had committed suicide
- ❖ The body of Okonkwo was hanging from a tree when the District Commissioner comes to arrest him
- ❖ His clan members refused to touch his body since it is sinful to touch someone who had taken his own life
- ❖ Not buried as per the normal customs and rituals.

HOW DISPUTES ARE RESOLVED IN IBO

- ❖ Disputes between the people of nine villages of Umuofia are resolved at the hands of a group of nine adjudicators
- ❖ The nine adjudicators represent the spirits of the ancestors collectively and who are called **Egwugwu**,
- ❖ The adjudicators are from amongst the people and are transformed into Egwugwu after performing some rituals including the wearing of masks.



FURTHER READING...

- ❖ Ibo Language
- ❖ Gender Representation
- ❖ Importance of *Chi*



THANK YOU