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**The Representation of Sociocultural
Identity in Mouloud Feraoun's *Le Fils du
Pauvre (1950)* and Chinua Achebe's *Things
Fall Apart (1958)***

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Dedications

I dedicate this humble work to Vava, Yemma, and my siblings.

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First and foremost, praise be to God, by whose grace good deeds are accomplished, and thanks to whom I completed this humble work.

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Abstract

The present dissertation is entitled “The Sociocultural Identity Representation in *Le Fils du Pauvre* (1950) and *Things Fall Apart* (1958)”. Despite the historical and geographical differences that exist between the two selected African novels, they share the same themes. This research is a comparative study that aims to comprehensively analyze the representation and expression of sociocultural identity within the context of postcolonialism. By examining Kabyle and Ibo identity formation and transformation due to colonialism as portrayed by Mouloud Feraoun and Chinua Achebe, this study reveals how postcolonial societies face inherited identities with modernity and how they respond to the globalization imposed by colonialism. Literature serves as a powerful medium for articulating sociocultural realities. Thus, this research explores filiation and affiliation dynamics, investigating the relationship between personal identity and societal structures. Additionally, this dissertation highlights colonialism's impact on individual and shared identities, tracing characters' journeys through ancestral customs and cultural adaptation.

Keywords: Sociocultural identity, African, Filiation, Affiliation, Modernity, Colonialism, Postcolonial, Kabyle, Ibo.

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General Introduction

African literature is a field rich with oral traditions. It has been a basis of cultural expression and knowledge transmission through storytelling, poetry, and songs which serve as channels for knowledge and cultural values for centuries. The 20th century marked a significant evolution with the emergence of written literature, as African writers began to express themselves in European languages, exposing the blend of native cultures and colonial impact and weaving together the threads of indigenous life and colonial legacies.

Simon Gikandi recorded in his *Encyclopedia of African Literature* that African literature is characterized by its diversity. It contains various genres, from the oral forms of folktales and proverbs to written poetry, novels, short stories, plays, and essays. Moreover, it includes prose, drama, and non-fiction, with a strong emphasis on rhythm, and the integration of music, dance, and ritual in theatrical performances. Tracing its development from precolonial oral literature to post-colonial written forms, African literature has gone through many stages, mirroring the complexities of independence, modernity, and identity. Furthermore, it examines themes of colonialism, diaspora, and the tension between tradition and modernity, often reflecting the interaction between local and global influences.

Again, Gikandi added that African literature serves as a mirror. It reflects the continent's experiences, including the quest for identity, the effects of European colonization, social inequalities, political struggles, and the conflicts between modern life and traditional values. Besides, African literature is produced in different languages. Therefore, it reflects the continent's linguistic diversity, including native tongues and colonial languages such as English, French, and Portuguese. Thus, this rich mosaic of African literary expression is an invaluable resource for anyone seeking to investigate the continent's literary legacy.

Gikandi also acknowledged in his *Encyclopedia of African Literature* a range of authors. He mentioned writers and literary figures who have made great literary contributions. Gikandi also highlighted the unique narratives of North African literature, which is steeped in Arab, Berber, and African traditions, mainly in Arabic. The African literature features authors from across Africa including writers like Naguib Mahfouz, who primarily writes in Arabic, and Sub-Saharan writers like Chinua Achebe, who have written works in indigenous and European languages.

Every African literature deals with a certain concern. North African works written in Arabic deal with Arab identity and Islamic culture. Also, North African Literature in French deals with the legacy of French colonialism and the search for identity in a post-colonial world. The latter includes works by authors like Mouloud Feraoun, Mouhamed Dib, and Assia Djébar among many others. Moreover, there is Southern African literature deeply influenced by Apartheid. Authors like Nadine Gordimer and J.M. Coetzee have addressed issues of race, segregation, and the human spirit's resilience in the face of oppression. Besides, East African literature, particularly from countries like Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania, often reflects on the region's colonial past, cultural diversity, and social change. Writers like Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o have been crucial in using literature as a means of cultural and political expression. However, as noticed, they all share the central theme of “identity”.

Accordingly, in this dissertation, we will focus on the comparison of two literary works from two different African areas. *Le Fils du Pauvre* by Mouloud Feraoun, a Kabyle Algerian author and *Things Fall Apart* by Chinua Achebe, an Ibo Nigerian one, are selected in our study to be analyzed through a postcolonial lens. Our analysis centers on the sociocultural identity representation through the concepts of filiation and affiliation since both these novels are classics that deal with the struggles and challenges posed by the clash between traditional values

and the foreign influence imposed by European colonialism. Moreover, both *Le Fils du Pauvre* and *Things Fall Apart* share the same aim of affirming both the Algerian Kabyle and Nigerian Ibo identity.

Le Fils du Pauvre and *Things Fall Apart* are two major works that gained the attention and feedback of researchers from different fields. Due to their literary significance and influence, they have been the subject of critiques and assertions from different perspectives. In the following section, we will deal only with the critics that are related to our topic.

To start with, Mouloud Feraoun's *Le Fils du Pauvre* has received valuable critical acclaim. Dalila Belkacem in her article entitled "*Le Fils du Pauvre* de Mouloud Feraoun: Une Écriture Autobiographique au Service de l'interculturalité" asserted that it is a seminal work that uses autobiographical writing to serve interculturality, reflecting the author's and his society's life. In addition, she explored the autobiographical nature of the novel, which is one of the earliest works in Maghrebian literature of French expression.

Besides, Belkacem argued that the novel serves as a testimony to the social and cultural situation in Algeria during the era of French colonialism, aiming to portray a lived experience in relation to the Kabyle society's state. Furthermore, she affirmed that the novel's linear and simple writing style has long classified it as a "classic" or "traditional" text. She argued that Feraoun constructed his text around his life experiences, navigating between two cultures, languages, and educational systems. She affirmed that:

Mouloud Feraoun a construit son texte autour de sa vie, son texte est l'un des écrits maghrébins -algériens- qui ont connu cet "entre-deux" : entre-deux cultures, entre deux langues, entre-deux éducations. *Le Fils du Pauvre* est, de la sorte, le reflet d'un autobiographe en situation d'interculturalité (Belkacem 53).

Belkacem also denounced that the novel is presented as a testament to the social and dramatic conditions of Algeria during colonial times. Yet, it also serves as a bridge between cultures which demonstrates the author's identity.

As still another piece of criticism is the article written by Martine Mathieu-Job entitled “L’oeuvre de Mouloud Feraoun: Prototype Des OEuvres Postcoloniales”. The latter discusses the work of Feraoun, particularly his narrative *Le Fils du Pauvre*, and its significance in postcolonial literature. Mathieu-Job highlights Feraoun's role as a pioneer in Algerian literature and his contribution to Francophone postcolonial pieces of literature. Also, she adds that Feraoun's work has been universally recognized. In addition to this, she points out that his work, despite its limitations, is exemplary and foundational, especially in its exploration of identity and cultural representation. She states that:

Qu'on en fasse grief à l'écrivain ou qu'on cherche à l'expliquer, la caractéristique de l'écriture feraounienne constamment mise en avant est celle de la prolifération de la description dans la trame narrative ; et la conclusion qui en est assez systématiquement tirée est qu'il y a là une attitude de polarisation vers l'autre pour qui est exposée, traduite en quelque sorte, en tout cas rendue lisible la culture kabyle originelle (Mathieu-Job 16).

Mathieu-Job considered *Le Fils du Pauvre* as a cultural bridge between cultures and generations, seeking to preserve the Kabyle identity in full transformation due to colonization.

She says :

C'est en passeur de cultures que l'écrivain se positionne, faisant passerelle entre l'univers kabyle et l'univers du colonisateur, mais aussi en passeur de générations, soucieux de laisser trace d'un monde destiné à se modifier en profondeur dans le bouleversement du contact de cultures qu'occasionne la colonisation (Mathieu-Job 39).

In the same vein, the article “La Part de l'autre Dans l'oeuvre de Mouloud Feraoun” by Fazia Aitel explores the theme of the ‘other’ in the works of Feraoun, particularly in *le Fils du Pauvre*. Aitel's analysis examines how Feraoun portrays characters from different social and cultural backgrounds and how these interactions reflect broader societal dynamics. She argued that the 'other' in Feraoun's work could represent various elements, from French colonial influence to the diverse communities within Algeria.

Aitel also discussed Feraoun's personal experiences and how they inform his literary depiction of Algerian Kabyle society and identity. She asserts that Mouloud Feraoun is deeply attached to his Kabyle identity and his village, Tizi Hibel, despite a French education and its influence on his life. She stated that:

Ainsi donc, malgré son éducation française qui a sans nul doute eu un effet non négligeable sur sa compréhension du monde, il n'en demeure pas moins que Feraoun se sentait partie intégrante de son village et lorsqu'il s'en absentait, à son retour, il réclamait sa place parmi ses pairs, les villageois de Tizi Hibel (Aitel 39).

Similarly, *Things Fall Apart* has also received a range of criticism from different angles and perspectives. Diana Akers Rhoads' article “Culture in Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*”, published in the *African Studies Review*, examines the representation of Ibo culture and identity in Achebe's novel. She argued that Achebe portrayed and defended the cultural roots of the Ibos not just to affirm their self-confidence but also to align them with universal principles by showing that their traditions are important for everyone.

Moreover, Rhoads affirmed that Achebe's depiction of the picture of Ibo life is similar to a modern, fair society that respects everyone and has good values. She stated that:

Chinua Achebe in *Things Fall Apart* represents the cultural roots of the Ibos in order to provide self-confidence, but at the same time, he refers them to universal principles that

vitiating their destructive potential. Seeing his duty as a writer in a new nation as showing his people the dignity that they lost during the colonial period, he sets out to illustrate that before the European colonial powers entered Africa, the Ibos “had a philosophy of great depth and value and beauty, that they had poetry and, above all, they had dignity(1973, 8) (Rhoads 61).

Furthermore, Rhoads addressed the potential dangers of presenting a Eurocentric view of the novel and emphasized the importance of appreciating cultural differences. In addition to this, she added that Achebe's work goes beyond illustrating the Ibo culture as it also presents a shared human experience under colonialism.

Another article is “Chinua Achebe Writing Culture: Representations of Gender and Tradition in *Things Fall Apart*” by Kwadwo Osei-Nyame. The latter centers on how Achebe skillfully portrays the traditional values and gender roles in Ibo culture. This article emphasizes the importance of understanding Achebe's narratives as active forms of culture and identity expression and resistance, rather than passive reflections of historical events.

The critic, Kwadwo Osei-Nyame, argued that Achebe's novel serves as a counternarrative to imperialist and colonialist ideologies as it presents an African nationalist tradition that celebrates cultural and ideological production as a form of resistance. He stated that: “Challenging and displacing the narratives of colonialist writers like Joyce Cary and Joseph Conrad meant for Achebe the appropriation of ethnographic modes of representation to prove that the communities of his African past were neither “primitive” nor “without history” (Clifford 10)” (Osei-Nyame 149).

In addition to this, Osei-Nyame asserted that Chinua Achebe's goal in writing is to tell stories that truly reflect African perspectives. These stories are self-explanatory and are rooted in the spoken traditions of the Ibo people, which help to convey the tales of Achebe's own community. Moreover, he highlighted the importance of interpreting these oral narratives in a way that reveals the personal, societal, and cultural elements that influence them, instead of just using them to represent or decode cultural norms as he affirmed:

Writing stories that speak for themselves is central to Achebe's novelistic agenda. In a famous early essay, he wrote: I would be quite satisfied if my novels... did no more than teach my readers that their past... was not one long night of savagery from which the first Europeans acting on God's behalf delivered them (45).

Representing an African world-view through narratives that speak for themselves meant that Achebe would draw upon Ibo oral traditions to narrate the stories of his communities, while bearing in mind Richard Bauman's exhortations that in using oral traditions to engage the “canons of elite” Western literary “traditions and texts”, oral narrative must not be taken merely to be “the reflection of culture” or “the cognitive arena for sorting out the logic of cultural codes” in historical writing: instead, oral narratives must be utilized contextually and ethnographically, in order to discover the individual, social and cultural factors that give it shape and meaning (Osei- Nyame 148-149).

Finally, the article “Chinua Achebe, a Father of Modern African Literature” by Elleke Boehmer is another criticism that is worth mentioning. Boehmer paid tribute to the late Achebe, celebrating his legacy as a crucial figure in African literature. Boehmer argued that Achebe’s works mainly *Things Fall Apart* have shaped anglophone world letters.

Boehmer acknowledged Chinua Achebe's contributions to literature, which were honored with the Man Booker International Prize in 2007. This prize was awarded to recognize the full trajectory of a writer's career and achievements.

Boehmer added that this novel has achieved remarkable success. Selling over ten million copies in fifty languages makes it the most popular African story ever published. Therefore, he asserts that *Things Fall Apart* should be considered a foundational post-colonial novel, much like Salman Rushdie's *Midnight's Children*. In addition, Boehmer highlighted that *Things Fall Apart* is a transformative work that changed perceptions of African culture both on the continent and worldwide. The novel, published in 1958, is recognized for its crucial role in African literature and is the most widely studied and read African novel. He states that:

The second reason for assuming the endurance of Achebe's legacy is that his first novel, *Things Fall Apart* (1958), permanently changed perceptions of African literature on the continent and worldwide. In 1964 a comparable impact was made by *Arrow of God*, many readers' favorite work by Achebe, which explores a similar sensory and mythic space. To date, the tale of how the yam farmer Okonkwo's intransigence fatally comes up against missionary infiltration in Ibo land remains the best-selling African story of all time, ten million copies of which have been sold in fifty languages. To the same degree as Salman Rushdie's perhaps more widely celebrated *Midnight's Children*, *Things Fall Apart* deserves to be regarded as an inaugural post-colonial novel. Though its appearance predated the institutional establishment of the postcolonial and world literary studies fields, it nonetheless helped to determine the protocols whereby the postcolonial novel might be read (Bahri 44). The classical status of Achebe's work, therefore, is undeniable (Boehmer 238).

The purpose of this dissertation is to provide a comprehensive analysis of the representation and expression of sociocultural identity in the context of postcolonialism. It aims to analyze the portrayals of identity formation and transformation as depicted by Feraoun and Achebe. Through a close examination of the protagonists' journeys, the dissertation seeks to reveal the ways in which postcolonial societies face their inherited identities with the pressures of modernity and how they respond to the globalization imposed by colonialism. Accordingly, this study serves as a testament to the power of literature as a medium for understanding and articulating sociocultural realities.

The significance of this dissertation lies in its exploration of sociocultural identity through the lens of postcolonial literature, specifically examining and comparing Mouloud Feraoun's *Le Fils du Pauvre* and Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*. By examining the dynamics of filiation and affiliation within these narratives, the dissertation investigates the relationship between personal identity and societal structures. It identifies first in which way filiation and affiliation in both novels similarize and contrast. Then, it highlights how colonialism has shaped both individual and shared identities. This work not only contributes to the academic discourse on postcolonial studies but also offers profound insights into the human condition, engaging a wider audience outside the scholarly community.

In order to conduct this comparative study, the dissertation is structured into a comprehensive framework. It is divided into three chapters. The first one presents the literary groundwork, beginning with an introduction to the authors, Mouloud Feraoun and Chinua Achebe, and providing a sociohistorical background for their respective works. It offers a summary of each book, setting the stage for a deeper exploration of postcolonial theory.

Chapter Two deals with the theoretical framework. It begins with an overview of the postcolonial theory. It provides the main ideas and the conceptual background of this theory. It offers as well a biography of Edward Said for he is a main figure in this domain. Moreover, this chapter offers a definition of key concepts of filiation and affiliation through which we will analyze the two novels, concluding with a summary of the chapter's key points.

Chapter three is a comparative postcolonial study of the two novels. It focuses on the inheritance of sociocultural identity. It examines how filiation is depicted in *Le Fils du Pauvre* and *Things Fall Apart*, as well as the defiance of tradition and the development of new affiliations in both narratives. The chapter concludes by tying together the findings from this analysis.

The dissertation ends with a general conclusion that synthesizes the insights gained from the comparative study, followed by a bibliography that lists all the sources referenced throughout the research. This structure aims to provide an understanding of the dynamics of identity within a postcolonial context as portrayed by Feraoun and Achebe.

Chapter One : Literary Background

Chapter One: Literary Background

Introduction

Under colonialism, Africa endured profound exploitation and cultural disruption, particularly in Nigeria and Algeria, where the British and French have asserted their dominance from the late 19th century. This era of conquest birthed a significant literary response, with Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* and Mouloud Feraoun's *Le Fils du Pauvre*. They have emerged as influential works, reflecting the mid-20th century's cultural and social changes in Africa. As Algeria and Nigeria approached independence, these novels addressed the impacts of European colonialism.

Since both these literary works under study reflect their realities, this chapter will focus on offering insights into their socio-historical context. We will first introduce the authors by adding their biographies as these elements help to illuminate their perspectives and influences. Then, we will provide the backgrounds of the novels as they offer essential context for understanding the narratives and their significance. We will familiarize the reader with the historical, social, and cultural aspects of the respective societies. Moreover, we will add the novels' summary, highlighting the stories' main events and themes as a guide for further analysis.

In a nutshell, this chapter serves as an in-depth examination of the interaction between colonial history and literary expression in Nigeria and Algeria. By digging into the biographies of Chinua Achebe and Mouloud Feraoun, we expose the personal experiences that shaped their storytelling. Moreover, providing the socio-historical backgrounds of *Things Fall Apart* and *Le Fils du Pauvre* offers crucial context to understand how these narratives reflect their societies' struggles and transformations. Through this chapter, we not only explore the main events and

themes of the novels but also get a deeper appreciation of the profound cultural and social impact of European colonialism on African literature and identity.

1. Mouloud Feraoun's *Le Fils du Pauvre*

1.1 Mouloud Feraoun's Biography:

In the gallery of literary legends, there emerges a figure whose words echo through the corridors of time. He is a man who illuminates the path of literature. On March 08th, 1913, in the village of Tizi Hibel in Tizi Ouzou, his first cries rose. Mouloud Feraoun is an Algerian teacher, writer and essayist of French expression. He was born Mouloud "Ait Chaabane" as at that époque, people's names were traditionally referred to their clans. The family name "Feraoun" was imposed on his family by French officers of the Indigenous Affairs. (Thénault 65) Although he wrote in French, he was always faithful to his Kabyle identity and culture which he represents exclusively in his works.

Feraoun began his educational journey at seven. Then, it led him to a scholarship at Tizi Ouzou and later, to the teacher's training school in Algiers, where he befriended Emmanuel Roblès and encountered Albert Camus. As a teacher in various Kabyle villages, he married and had seven children. Eventually, he became a director at Fort-National in 1952, then a headmaster of the Nador School in Clos-Salembier, Algiers in 1957. Finally, an inspector at Château-Royal in 1960, marking the start of his literary career.

Mouloud Feraoun has a fertile literary production of articles, essays, and novels which have been translated into many languages. He points to the Kabyle identity and culture as an inspiration and a central theme for his works. He began his journey with *Le Fils Du Pauvre* in 1950, a novel that became a classic. It narrates the story of a Kabyle boy who defies poverty and fate to realize his dream of becoming a teacher. His other works include *La Terre et Le Sang* awarded the Prix Eugène-Dabit du Roman Populiste in 1953, and *Les Chemins Qui Montent*

(1957) which depict a Kabyle emigrant's return to his village with his French wife which leads to a tragic family saga marked by authority, misfortune, and loss. *Jours De Kabylie* (1954) offers narratives dealing with the customs and resilience of the inhabitants of a Kabyle village during French rule. In 1960, Feraoun preserved Kabyle orature with *Les Poèmes de Si Mouhand*. His *Journal* (1955-1962), a major testimony of the Algerian War, is published posthumously alongside *L'Anniversaire* (1972) and *La Cité Des Roses* (2007).

Four days before the ceasefire in Algeria, Mouloud Feraoun reaches the last chapter of his life. He was assassinated on Sunday, March 15, 1962, by the French OAS (Secret Army Organization) with his colleagues Max Marchand, Ali Hammoutène, Marcel Basset, Robert Aimard, and Salah Ould Aoudia during a work meeting. His tragic destiny made his pen laid to rest, but its ink left an eternal literary heritage and legacy for generations.

1.2 Socio-Historical Background of *Le Fils du Pauvre*:

Le Fils du Pauvre is a semi-autobiographical novel written by the author and poet Mouloud Feraoun in 1950. Although it is Feraoun's first literary work, it has marked a new era in the francophone Maghrebine literature and has become a classic. It actually reflects the personal life story of the author as it narrates his own journey toward fulfilling his dreams and aspirations. Through the eyes of the protagonist, Feraoun depicts the rural Kabyle society, culture, traditions, and values in addition to the harsh circumstances of life during the French colonization.

Mouloud Feraoun was born during the French rule in Algeria. In this era, the Algerian people are miserable, especially those who live in the countryside. Most of them are peasants, poor and illiterate. The title *Le Fils Du Pauvre* itself mirrors that situation. Mouloud is the third child and the first male of a poor typical Kabyle family. His father has emigrated intermittently to France for work since 1910 but gets injured in a work accident, which forces him to return

home after getting a disability payment. Therefore, his future is predictable. Feraoun is supposed to become a peasant like his father and peers. However, his destiny takes him through another path as he challenges the expectations and the financial issues by attending school, succeeding in his studies, and eventually becoming a teacher.

As Fazia Aitel, a professor in the Modern Languages department at Claremont McKenna College, mentions in “La part de l’autre dans l’oeuvre de Mouloud Feraoun”: “Mouloud Feraoun est souvent cité comme le premier romancier francophone significatif”. (Aitel 37) He takes out of his environment during the French colonialism an inspiration and a center theme. He writes *Le Fils du Pauvre* four years before the outbreak of the Algerian revolution. Yet, Ouerdia Yermèche affirmed in her article entitled “Mouloud Feraoun et la Guerre de Libération Nationale : Sa réflexion et Sa Position à Travers son Journal”, that Feraoun is a controversial writer. Contrary to many prominent Algerian writers of the French colonial period such as Mouloud Maameri, Mohamed Dib, and Kateb Yacine, he took a neutral position towards the Algerian war at first (Yermèche 73). However, by the beginning of the 1954 events, he denounced the oppression, humiliation, and marginalization of the French colonial toward the indigenous population in his *Journal* and showed a non-violent support for the Algerian independence (Yermèche 74).

Yermèche added that Feraoun’s cultural and religious identity is a mixture of Kabyle traditions and secular morality as a result of the French schooling and acculturation he has been exposed. Therefore, his experience at home and French school has impacted his literary works as seen in *Le Fils Du Pauvre*.

Dans le Dictionnaire Petit Robert 2, Mouloud Feraoun est présenté de manière laconique, comme un “écrivain algérien de langue française”. Cette présentation met l'accent sur son

identité hybride, fondée sur une double composante identitaire, l'une algérienne (kabyle) héritée et l'autre française acquise à l'école de la colonisation.(Yermeche 73–79).

Accordingly, *Le Fils Du Pauvre* mirrors Mouloud Feraoun's life and the Kabyle society's culture and struggle under French colonization. He is influenced by his personal journey in life. Thus, this novel is the result of Feraoun's persistence and resilience.

1.3 Summary of *Le Fils du Pauvre* :

Le Fils du Pauvre follows the story of a young ambitious Kabyle boy called Fouroulou Menrad who challenges poverty and societal expectations in his quest for education to become a teacher. The plot is set in a Kabyle village in Tizi-Ouzou, Algeria in the 1920s. The events occurred during the French colonization where the indigenous population was marginalized and put through social and economic daily struggles.

The story revolves around Fouroulou, a boy from an illiterate poor family in a typical Kabyle village. It begins with the protagonist's childhood which he spends in his neighborhood. Fouroulou who lives with his large family members to which he is deeply connected, has a unique status at home as the only male child in the house. His familial relationships range from the love and care of his parents, grandmother, and aunts to the hatred and jealousy of his uncle's wife and her daughters.

Fouroulou who is expected to become a shepherd stands at the crossroads of destiny on the day he first attends school. It is in this environment that he discovers passion and inspiration to become a teacher, a dream that takes root in his second year, setting him apart from his peers. Thus, he challenges the expectations and decides to become a self-made man. For him, School is the bridge that takes him from pessimism and poverty into hope and financial stability.

As the story advances, Fouroulou's life is marked by a series of painful events. He suffers the death of his beloved cousin Chabha followed by the tragic loss of his tender aunts. Yet, the death of his grandmother has the greatest impact, leading to significant changes at home, including the separation of his father Ramdane and his uncle Lounis. They begin working independently, taking on their respective responsibilities alone.

Ramdane's financial situation gets strained, particularly after the birth of Fouroulou's brother, Dadar. Consequently, he can no longer afford Fouroulou's educational fees, putting his schooling and aspirations at risk. As Fouroulou reaches eleven, Ramdane falls ill, but after recovering, he travels to France for work. Unfortunately, he returns home due to a work accident and receives a disability payment, which is still insufficient to meet his family's needs.

Again, as Fouroulou grows, his dream intensifies. Despite the odds, his desperate father spares no effort to fund his education. Overcoming all obstacles, Fouroulou succeeds academically, leaving his home for Tizi-Ouzou City where his obsession with studies leads to further success.

Financial struggles and envy of his fellow villagers persist. Still, Fouroulou transforms this envy into motivation, facing it with dignity. Eventually, he passes an examination in Algiers, a decisive step towards achieving his ambition to become a teacher, based on his selection for advanced studies.

2. Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*

2.1 Chinua Achebe's Biography:

In the symphony of African literature, there exists a maestro whose compositions resonate with depth and emotion. Chinua Achebe, considered the father of African literature,

was born on 16 November 1930, in Ogidi, Nigeria. A professor, poet, essayist, novelist, and critic. His Christian family initially gave him the name Albert Chinualumogu Achebe.

However, as recounted in his essay “Named for Victoria, Queen of England”, he renounced his Christian name, 'Albert,' reflecting his belief in the interconnection between literature and society. Through this personal journey, Achebe challenges preconceptions and advocates for an authentic understanding of African reality (Ezenwa-Ohaeto 177).

Achebe studied English at University College. He briefly taught before working at the Nigerian Broadcasting Corporation in Lagos. In 1967, he co-founded a publishing company in Enugu with poet Christopher Okigbo, who tragically died in the Nigerian civil war. Achebe supported Biafran independence and moved to The United States in 1969, lecturing at universities. He later became a professor at the University of Nigeria and held various publishing roles. After a car accident in 1990, which left him partially paralyzed, he moved to the U.S. to taught at Bard College. He later joined Brown University's faculty in 2009.

Chinua Achebe is influenced by Ibo traditions and European colonialism which distorted the real image of not only Nigeria but Africa as a whole. He produced various works that quickly spread throughout the world as they are translated into several languages. Achebe's novels, starting with *Things Fall Apart* (1958), explore the cultural uprising in Ibo society due to colonialism and Christianity. His characters often face conflicts between traditional values and modern challenges, as seen in *No Longer at Ease* (1960) and *Arrow of God* (1964). Achebe also critiques post-independence issues in *A Man of the People* (1966) and *Anthills of the Savannah* (1987). His literary collection, spanning short stories, children's books, poetry, and essays, culminates in his personal narrative of the *Biafran War*, earning him the Man Booker International Prize in 2007 for his contributions to literature in addition to other literary awards including Commonwealth Poetry Price 1972 and the National Nigerian Order of Merit 1979.

At the age of eighty-two, Chinua Achebe died after an illness on 21 March 2013. Following his passing, Achebe is laid to rest in Ogidi, Anambra State, Nigeria, after national and university memorial services that celebrated his profound impact on Nigeria's self-perception and his significant influence on English literature globally. Eventually, he is honored posthumously in Nigeria (Boehmer 1). Chinua Achebe, the towering figure of African literature, passes away but his heritage and legacy remain alive to illuminate the path of the coming generations.

2.2 Socio-Historical Background of *Things Fall Apart*:

Things Fall Apart is the first novel written by Chinua Achebe in 1958. This influential classic centers on the early contact of the traditional African culture and identity with the colonial European ones. Through the eyes of the protagonist Okonkwo, Achebe, the father of African modern literature, highlights the Ibo community's confrontation with the British influence and changes.

Things Fall Apart was written two years before the Nigerian independence from the British colonizer. The latter breaks down the Ibo's social structure, culture, tradition, and values, under the guise of introducing Christianity and a so-called civilization. By setting up churches, imposing new governance systems, and instilling Western ideologies, the British effectively subjugated the Nigerian people. Therefore, this fact raised a wave of resistance and anti-colonial sentiment within the indigenous population who are extremely attached to their ancestors' traditional lifestyle, land, beliefs, customs, and rituals. Prominent among those voicing this resistance is Chinua Achebe, whose works reflect a strong anti-colonial persistence.

Bruce Gilley stated in the abstract of his "Chinua Achebe on the Positive Legacies of Colonialism" that: "The late Nigerian writer Chinua Achebe was a key figure in the rise and

persistence of anticolonial ideology in Africa. Hence, his ideology is depicted in *Things Fall Apart* with the protagonist Okonkwo who rebels against the European colonizers” (Gilley 646).

The European agenda in Africa extends beyond conquest and exploitation, it also seeks to manipulate the continent's global perception. Western literature portrays racist depictions of Africa and its people by perpetuating stereotypes. The belief in their own racial superiority due to their “whiteness” is deeply ingrained. Diana A. Rhoads affirmed in her Article “Culture in Chinua Achebe’s *Things Fall Apart*” that European writers like Joseph Conrad depicted Africans as brutish and savages. Therefore, Chinua Achebe wrote *Things Fall Apart* as a response to these works, especially to Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness*. Accordingly, Achebe’s novel serves to challenge western preconceptions and provides an authentic, anthropological, pure, and typical image of Africa.

In *Things Fall Apart*, Achebe challenges the Western portrayal of Africa by presenting it authentically. It is further highlighted through the novel's title which is adopted from William Butler Yeats’s poem *The Second Coming*. The latter is written in 1919, in the aftermath of World War I, depicting the chaos of that period. Achebe himself acknowledged this influence by selecting lines from Yeats' poem as epigraph for the novel. “Things fall apart; the center cannot hold” symbolizes the fragmentation of Ibo society under colonial pressures. The novel reflects the poem's portrayal of a world in mess, with the Ibo community's disconnection from its heritage leading to its downfall. This line not only refers to the story within but also highlights the extensive impact of colonial dominance on native cultures.

Things Fall Apart stands as a testament to the struggles of African identity in the face of colonialism. It defies the Western misrepresentations and asserts the dignity of African societies. This novel serves as a reminder of African’s enduring courage and spirit.

2.3 Summary of *Things Fall Apart*:

Things Fall Apart is a Nigerian novel that deals with the conflict between traditions and change in Africa. The plot is set in a fictional Ibo village called Umuofia, Nigeria in the 1890s. The events take place prior to and during the early arrival of European colonialism in Nigeria which tears apart the native society, culture and, foundations that are depicted throughout the novel.

The novel revolves around the protagonist Okonkwo, a wrestler revered for his unwavering principles, reputation, honor, and masculinity. The first chapter starts by describing him as a strong, well-known and well-appreciated fighter, alongside being a hardworking rich farmer and a family provider. He is totally unlike his father Unoka who lives and dies poor, leaving no title nor heritage. Driven by the fear of reproducing his failures and shame, Okonkwo is determined to forge a path opposed to that of his father.

As the story progresses, Ikemefuna, a boy from a nearby tribe, is taken in by Okonkwo's family as part of a peace deal after an Ibo woman is killed. Ikemefuna becomes like family, bonding with Okonkwo's son, Nwoye, and seeing Okonkwo as a father. When the village's Oracle says Ikemefuna must be killed, Okonkwo helps do it, even though he is advised not to. Yet, he does not want to seem weak. This decision affects Okonkwo deeply and leads to many sad events.

After this, during a funeral ceremony for one of the village elders, Okonkwo accidentally kills a clansman's son. Therefore, this act leads him and his family into exile for seven years to his mother's village as punishment. During this period, Okonkwo thinks of his miserable circumstances and plans his return home. While Okonkwo is in exile, white missionaries and colonial administrators start to arrive in Umuofia, bringing Christianity and new government structures. These changes challenge the traditional Ibo lifestyle and deny

evidence of their cultural beliefs. Therefore, Okonkwo's son Nwoye is influenced and drawn to the new religion, further deepening the rift between him and his father.

When Okonkwo returns to Umuofia, he finds his village changed by the presence of the colonizers. Umuofia's leaders led by Okonkwo rebel against the whites after getting tricked and imprisoned by the District Commissioner, imposing a collective fine for their release. Upon leaving prison, Okonkwo kills a court messenger during a clan meeting, expecting to incite war, but his clan does not support further violence. Eventually, Okonkwo tragically commits suicide, a taboo act, leaving his clan in a dilemma as they cannot touch his body. His tragic death symbolizes the fall of the traditional Ibo society.

Conclusion

In this first chapter, I have dealt with the socio-historical contexts that shaped the two seminal novels Mouloud Feraoun's *Le Fils du Pauvre* and Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*. Then, we have explored the biographies of these two influential authors, examining their personal histories and the cultural landscapes that influenced their writing. Moreover, we have provided a summary that captures the essence of both novels. Through this lens, we not only explored the main events and themes of the novels but also got a deeper appreciation of the profound cultural and social impact of European colonialism on African literature and identity.

Accordingly, this chapter aims to provide the reader with a comprehensive background of *Things Fall Apart* and *Le Fils Du Pauvre*. Furthermore, it aims to establish a foundational understanding of the novels' significance in their local cultures and the international literary world.

Chapter Two : Theoretical Framework

Chapter Two: Theoretical Framework

Introduction

Postcolonial theory offers a critical framework for the analysis of the deep impacts of colonialism on colonized societies, cultures, and individuals. In the context of Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* and Mouloud Feraoun's *Le Fils du Pauvre*, this theory helps to dissect the dynamics of identity, culture and power depicted in these novels. Both works provide a deep exploration of the cultural upheaval and socio-political changes caused by colonial rule. Achebe's novel depicts the Ibo society's struggle to preserve its cultural identity during British colonization, while Feraoun's narrative mirrors the social and economic struggles besides the cultural displacement experienced in colonial Algeria. Accordingly, these novels become a rich field for examining cultural alienation and the quest for identity in the face of colonial domination under the lenses of postcolonial theory.

I have selected the postcolonial theory to conduct this study. The latter offers a clear understanding of the characters' interactions with their own cultures and the colonial influence. Edward Said's concepts of filiation and affiliation are crucial for this analysis, as they provide insights into how individuals relate to their indigenous identity and culture and the imposed colonial structures. Said's contributions emphasize the significance of examining the individual and collective identities shaped by colonial experiences.

Accordingly, postcolonial theory and specifically Edward Said's concepts of filiation and affiliation, are chosen to analyze these novels. They help explain our focus which is the characters' connections to their own culture and the broader world during colonialism. Moreover, it is crucial to mention Edward Said since he is a foundational thinker and critic of postcolonial theory. Thus, we will briefly introduce him to the reader by summarizing his life and career. Therefore, a brief overview of postcolonialism in addition to the definitions of Filiation and Affiliation will be provided.

1. Postcolonial Theory

1.1 Overview of Postcolonialism

Since both Mouloud Feraoun's *Le Fils du Pauvre* and Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* are seminal works of literature that emerge from the context of colonialism, they offer valuable insights into the postcolonial discourse. In our analysis, we will analyze these narratives through postcolonial lenses. Emerging from the shadows of a complex history, postcolonial theory presents a critical framework for understanding the legacies of colonialism.

According to *The Cambridge Introduction to Postcolonial Literatures in English*, Colonialism is: "The extension of a nation's power over territory beyond its borders by the establishment of either settler colonies" and/or administrative control through which the indigenous populations are directly or indirectly ruled or displaced."

Colonizers not only take control of the resources, trade, and labor in the territories they occupy but also generally impose, to varying degrees, cultural, religious and linguistic structures on the conquered population" (Innes 234). Thus, postcolonial theory interrogates the sociocultural impacts of colonial rule and its aftermath, exploring themes of identity and resistance. Furthermore, this theoretical approach stresses the importance of narrative as a means of reclaiming agency and rewriting history from the perspective of those once silenced.

Once again, postcolonial theory emerged as a critical framework in the late 20th century. It is primarily concerned with the impacts of European colonial rule and the ways in which formerly colonized societies engage with the legacy of imperialism. It originated from anticolonial thought in South Asia and Africa and became prominent in academia during the 1980s.

The Cambridge Introduction of Postcolonial Literature in English focuses on the importance of understanding the terminology and theories, particularly the terms "postcolonial"

and “post-colonial”. Their application differs and creates much debate. For historians, the term with a hyphen denotes the era following a nation's liberation from colonial rulers like Britain or France, marking the start of self-governance. For instance, India and Pakistan transitioned to a “post-colonial” status after gaining independence on 15 August 1947. However, in Postcolonial Studies which is a field encompassing literary, cultural, and anthropological research, the term often refers to the impacts of colonialism starting from the initial colonization phase (Innes 2).

Again, The Cambridge Introduction to Postcolonial Literature in English states the difference between “Postcolonial” and “Post-colonial”:

Postcolonial/ Post-colonial the hyphenated and non-hyphenated terms are not always used consistently, but in general the non-hyphenated ‘postcolonial’ refers to the consequences of colonialism from the time of its first impact - culturally, politically, and economically. Thus ‘Postcolonial Studies’ takes in colonial literature and history, as well as the literature and art produced after independence has been achieved. ‘Postcolonial’ with a hyphen tends to refer to the historical period after a nation has been officially recognized as independent and is no longer governed as a colony (Innes 239).

However, the term 'postcolonial' is not universally accepted; some argue that it overlooks pre-colonial history and traditions. The application of ‘postcolonial’ is debated, especially when comparing European-settled colonies like Australia and Canada with settler colonies like Jamaica and Kenya, where post-independence governance shifted to indigenous peoples. Some suggest that countries with unresolved indigenous self-governance issues, like Australia and Canada, remain ‘colonial’ (Innes 2).

Shehla Burney, as well, states in her “Conceptual Frameworks in Postcolonial Theory: Applications for Educational Critique”, that postcolonial theory is an interdisciplinary framework that uses concepts from various fields to critique the effects of colonialism and imperialism. It emphasizes the role of language, literature, and culture in colonization. Burney adds that the theory critically examines Western cultural imperialism and Eurocentrism, and the ongoing influence of colonial legacies on both former colonies and colonizing nations. Postcolonial critique, as seen in the works of authors like Salman Rushdie, challenges these legacies through narratives that express resistance and empowerment (Burney 173).

Postcolonial theory has a profound influence on various fields, including literature, education, history, anthropology, and political science. It challenges Eurocentric narratives and highlights the voices and experiences of those who have been marginalized. The theory has also impacted contemporary discussions on race, ethnicity, and identity, providing a framework for understanding the complexities of a postcolonial world.

Burney mentions that in education, postcolonial theory can critique the marginalization processes affecting students, races, classes, genders, minorities, and cultures. It can analyze cultural identity and politics, and power hierarchies within the context of Orientalism as a paradigm of power/knowledge. Theoretical frameworks like hybridity, mimicry, colonial discourse offer strategies for educational critique, making postcolonial theory a rich resource for analyzing and improving learners’ educational practices (Burney 175).

Concerning postcolonial concepts, Burney affirms that key terms in postcolonial theory, coined by scholars like Gayatri Spivak and Homi Bhabha, such as othering, ambivalence, mimicry, and hybridity, have specific meanings within the context of postcolonial discourse. Said's concept of 'Orientalism' has become synonymous with the process of 'othering' the East, and the 'Orient' represents a broad spectrum of marginalized groups subjected to objectification

and representation as the “Other”. Therefore, this framework is used to analyze a variety of subjects, including women, children, minorities, indigenous peoples, and others within a critical paradigm (Burney 175).

Postcolonial theory is increasingly being used in innovative ways to analyze subjects that are varied, diasporic, and distinct. Despite the evolving nature of its terminology, which remains a subject of ongoing intellectual discussion, the theory offers a rich array of strategies for critical examination. Thus, these concepts are explained by Burney as follows to help understand them.

Alterity is one of the crucial key terms of postcolonial theory. It signifies the condition of being the ‘Other’. It is a concept used in postcolonial discourse to denote alternatives or variations from the norm. It is similar to the concepts of ‘otherness’ and ‘difference’, offering a rich field for discourse analysis.

Ambivalence, as articulated by Homi Bhabha, captures the conflicting emotions of admiration and contempt that characterize the relationships between colonizers and the colonized. Robert Young interprets this ambivalence as a means to subvert colonial authority, making it a pivotal concept in postcolonial critique across various domains, including geopolitics and cultural representation (Burney 177).

Hybridity, also introduced by Bhabha, describes the complex identities emerging from cultural intermixing, often residing in a 'Third Space' of ambivalence. Critics argue that hybridity challenges traditional power structures and the notion of fixed identities. Mimicry, another of Bhabha's concepts, refers to the colonized adopting the colonizer's cultural traits, a phenomenon that was both a colonial strategy and a form of resistance.

Globalization, a legacy of Western imperialism, shapes power dynamics globally, as Edward Said suggests, replacing British colonialism with American hegemony. While some

view globalization as a positive force for global growth and connectivity, others criticize it for creating inequalities and promoting cultural homogenization, similar to neo-colonialism.

Hegemony, a term derived from Antonio Gramsci's work, denotes a subtle form of domination where the ruling class's interests are presented as universal. Edward Said employs this concept to deconstruct the hegemonic nature of Orientalism.

The concept of the 'Other' is central in Edward Said's theoretical work 'Orientalism', representing those distinct from the Western self. This 'Otherness' is often portrayed through colonial narratives that emphasize perceived inferiority, backwardness, and primitiveness. Gayatri Spivak's notion of 'Othering' involves the marginalization of these groups, a process deeply inserted in colonial discourse. The 'Other' is thus seen through the lens of colonial superiority.

The representation of 'the Other', whether in curriculum, media, or society, can be critically evaluated using Edward Said's discourse analysis techniques from Orientalism. It can also be assessed using Homi Bhabha's theories of ambivalence and stereotyping. These tools help deconstruct the bizarreness of 'the Other' and the complex dynamics between colonizers and the colonized. Moreover, Postcolonial theory encourages the representation of marginalized groups, promoting a counter-discourse that resists cultural domination.

1.2 Edward W. Said: Life and Influence:

As noticed, Edward Said's name is often mentioned whenever talking about postcolonial theory. He is a key figure of postcolonialism who is worth to be introduced. Edward W. Said is a scholar, theorist, and activist. He was born in Jerusalem, Palestine in 1935. He later moved to the USA in 1951. He has pursued his education at Princeton University and earned his PhD from Harvard University. His academic journey has led him to Columbia University in New

York, where he has worked as a professor of English and Comparative Literature from 1963 until his passing.

Said's most renowned work, *Orientalism: Western Conceptions of the Orient* (1978) significantly impacted the field of postcolonial studies and remains a foundational text. Beyond academia, he was a passionate advocate for Palestine, actively voicing his support for its independence. From 1977 to 1991, Said held a position on the Palestinian National Council. In addition to his scholarly work, Said wrote extensively on Palestinian issues. His books include *The Question of Palestine* (1979), *The Politics of Dispossession* (1994), and *The End of the Peace Process* (2000). He was also a musician and a pianist. He passed away in 2003 due to leukemia (Innes 259).

Beyond his academic and musical pursuits, Edward W. Said's critical insights and cultural critiques have left an eternal trace. His legacy continues to shape discussions on literature, politics, and cultural dynamics in the Middle East and beyond.

1.3 Filiation and Affiliation:

In the field of postcolonial studies, the terms filiation and affiliation serve as significant concepts for understanding the complex of cultural and historical connections that shape literary texts. Edward Said, a seminal figure in postcolonial theory, introduces these terms in the introduction of *The World, the Text, and the Critic* (1983) which is a collection of essays that argues for understanding literary texts in the context of the real world, rather than viewing them in isolation.

Edward Said brought attention to the concepts of "filiation" and "affiliation". The latter are concepts that explain the shift from traditional ties based on heritage and descent (filiation) to broader cultural, political, and social connections (affiliation), particularly in understanding literature and the relationship between imperial and colonized societies. He argued that

traditional patterns of filiation became harder to sustain in modern society. Instead, these were replaced by patterns of affiliation, which are based on cultural identification rather than lineage.

Said advocates for the concept of affiliation as a broad critical principle because critics see texts in the context of the real world, not just as part of a literary tradition. For example, traditional views often see English literature as self-contained, with each work mainly related to past literature. In contrast, using affiliation allows us to understand literary works within a broader context, recognizing their connections to non-literary, non-canonical, and non-traditional influences. This perspective sees affiliation positively as it opens up a new kind of criticism that goes beyond the narrow focus on European literature.

While filiation suggests that texts are connected like a series. Affiliation, on the other hand, considers the status of the author, historical moment, conditions of publication, diffusion, and reception, values drawn upon, values and ideas assumed, a framework of consensually held tacit assumptions, presumed background, and so on (Said 174-75). Affiliation looks beyond just European literature and sees how texts are part of a broader cultural context. It recreates the affiliative network thus makes visible and gives materiality back to the strands connecting the text to society, author, and culture (175). This focus enables Said to read English literature 'contrapuntally,' showing its involvement in imperialism. The political and social world becomes open to the critic's scrutiny, particularly the non-literary, non-European, and above all, the political dimensions in which all literature and texts exist (21). A text can now be seen as part of the history, culture, and society where it was created and read Instead of just being linked to English literature.

As far as this dissertation is concerned, Said has used the concept to explain how the network of affiliation connects colonized societies to imperial culture. Cultural identities are seen as 'contrapuntal ensembles' (60), and the hidden connections between imperial and colonial cultures can be understood through a "contrapuntal reading". Therefore, the concept

of affiliation portrays how colonized societies replace their filiative ties to indigenous cultural traditions with affiliations to the social, political, and cultural institutions of empire. Affiliation refers to “that implicit network of cultural associations between forms, statements, and other aesthetic elaborations on the one hand and, on the other, institutions, agencies, classes, and amorphous social forces” (174).

Said acknowledges the hegemonic influence of imperial cultures and the complex interaction between empires and their colonies. In colonized societies, there's a process that keeps the colonized connected to the colonizer through shared assumptions and values. This process, called affiliation, makes the colonizer seem like a parent to the colonized (the child). While direct connections (filiation) lead to affiliation due to the interaction and influence between the colonized and the colonizer. This shift shows the power of imperial culture by highlighting the cultural and psychological inheritance and adaptation. It's a way for imperial powers to control and maintain their influence over colonies by creating these connections.

Filiation:

In *Concise Oxford English Dictionary*, the literal meaning of “Filiation” is stated as: “1 the fact of being the child of a particular parent or parents.2 the manner in which a thing is related to another from which it is derived or descended”. However, this term highlights a postcolonial response to tradition as Edward Said states.

Filiation in postcolonialism, is a term that denotes the connections of heritage and descent within traditional societies. It is a unifying force that links individuals to their ancestral lineage and cultural roots. Edward Said affirms that in the modern, complex world, these filiative bonds are challenging to survive, often giving way to affiliative ties. In literary studies, filiation has been used to examine texts through their lineage, focusing on their connections to former works, particularly within English literature.

Affiliation:

Again, the word “Affiliate” in *Concise Oxford English Dictionary* means: “(usu. be affiliated to/with) officially attach or connect to an organization. (of an organization) admit as a member. n. an affiliated person or organization. DERIVATIVES affiliation n. affiliative adj”.

Yet, this term has been used in postcolonial studies also as a response to tradition. Affiliation as a postcolonial concept, refers to the cultural identification process, which is not bound by natural descent but rather by cultural and intellectual connections. Said advocates for an affiliative approach, that widens the focus to include non-traditional influences and contexts. This perspective is particularly relevant in postcolonial studies, where connections between colonized societies and imperial cultures are explored, showing how indigenous cultural filiations are replaced by those imposed by colonial powers. Affiliation also covers the implicit cultural connections between various forms of expression and larger sociopolitical institutions and forces.

In summary, while filiation refers to the lineage and inherited traditions from one's native culture, family, and community; affiliation is the integration into broader societal and global norms beyond one's indigenous socio-cultural identity due to interactions with colonial institutions. Said's concepts of filiation and affiliation encourage a more comprehensive and critical approach to understanding the sociocultural identities represented in texts.

Conclusion

In this second chapter, I have highlighted the relationship between postcolonial theory and the selected novels of Mouloud Feraoun's *Le Fils du Pauvre* and Chinua Achbe's *Things Fall Apart*. The chapter began with an overview of postcolonialism and an introduction to Edward Said, a foundational critic and thinker in this field, to offer a comprehensive background for understanding these critical perspectives. Furthermore, I have explained the reason behind selecting postcolonial theory to study these novels. This theory offers valuable

insights into how characters navigate their indigenous identities and the imposed colonial structures. Edward Said's contributions have been crucial in this study, shedding light on the interaction between personal and collective identities shaped by colonial experiences.

Accordingly, by applying postcolonial theory, this chapter aims to explore the deep significations and implications of the characters' journeys and the narratives' critiques of colonialism. Moreover, by analyzing these works through the lens of Edward Said's concepts of filiation and affiliation, this chapter aims to emphasize the characters' connections to their own cultures and the broader world during colonialism. Therefore, it aims to provide a deeper understanding of the novels' cultural and social contexts.

**Chapter Three : Postcolonial Analysis of
Le Fils du Pauvre and *Things Fall Apart***

Chapter Three: Postcolonial Analysis of *Le Fils du Pauvre* and *Things Fall Apart*

Introduction

Identity is one of the most treated themes in contemporary African literature. African writers from different parts of the continent, like Mouloud Feraoun and Chinua Achebe, focus on this theme in their works as their respective countries have tasted the same bitterness of European colonialism, which aims mainly to deconstruct their society and identity. The latter, according to historians and researchers, is a concept that encompasses the characteristics, feelings, or beliefs that make people different from others. Identity is a dynamic construct shaped by many factors, including historical events, personal growth, and social interactions.

Historians examine identity to understand how a society's collective past informs its present self-perception and influences current social and cultural dynamics. In addition, researchers in social sciences view identity as a fluid concept that goes through transition and development, evolving as people progress through various life stages and adapt to changing environments. In a nutshell, these perspectives show identity as a dynamic element of the human condition, significant in shaping how individuals and communities understand themselves and interact within the broader historical and social context.

It is obvious that identity is influenced by both internal factors like traditions and customs and external societal conditions such as colonialism. Therefore, the concepts of filiation and affiliation become crucial to understanding identity in postcolonial literature, as they relate to the ways individuals and groups connect with their past and present cultural contexts. Thus, the second chapter of this dissertation will be exclusively devoted to the analysis and comparison of the concepts of filiation and affiliation in *Le Fils du Pauvre* and *Things Fall Apart*.

This chapter will include precisely two sections in which we aim to provide answers to the dissertation's questions. The first one will deal with the socio-cultural identity inheritance to reveal the role of family in shaping identity. This section will contain the analysis and comparison of filiation in *Le Fils du Pauvre* and *Things Fall Apart*. The second section will deal with the defiance of tradition. Therefore, it will focus on analyzing and comparing affiliation through which we aim to highlight the influence of colonialism on the individuals' indigenous identity and choices within the society.

1. Sociocultural Inheritance

1.1 Filiation in *Le Fils du Pauvre* and in *Things Fall Apart*:

Le Fils du Pauvre is a story set in a Kabyle village while *Things Fall Apart* is set in a Nigerian Ibo village. Both these settings are lands where history is not just remembered, it is lived. In other words, they are communities where every story, tradition, and family bond defines individuals. The stories of both novels are set during European colonialism in Africa, where the old African lifestyle faces the challenges of colonial rule. Yet, through it all, the protagonists' native culture, customs, and values stand as a source of strength. Therefore, Fouroulou's and Okonkwo's lives are woven with the threads of filiation, those connections to their family, community, and cultural heritage passed down through generations which shape their identity.

On the one hand, filiation in *Le Fils du Pauvre* is exclusively portrayed throughout the story. Mouloud Feraoun illustrates this in his novel through Fouroulou's experiences with his family and society, reflecting the importance of living in a collective traditional community. His attachment to his ancestors' traditions is a testimony of the protagonist's identity inheritance and cultural heritage.

To start, the cover of the book symbolizes the rural Kabyle identity. The cover shows a man wearing a Burnous and a turban with his little son wearing a Gandoura and a turban. Therefore, it portrays the traditional clothing of Kabyle males as depicted in Fouroulou's uncle Kaci who represents the typical Kabyle man.

The following passage serves as a testimony : "Mon oncle Lounis a les traits fins, le regard moqueur le teint blanc. Il est méticuleux et propre. Je le revois toujours avec une gandoura blanche et un turban soigneusement enroulé. Je l'imagine rarement une pioche à la main, la taille serrée du large ceinturon à clous dorés"(20). Moreover, the cover portrays the filiation of Fouroulou who represents the Kabyle child of that era while showing his attachment and closure to his father.

In addition, the characters' names hold significance that reflects filiation. Fouroulou's family does not have an accurate family name but rather named "Ait Moussa" in tribute to their ancestor's name for in Kabyle tradition, family names referred to their clans. Besides, Ramdane and Kaci inherited their pseudo names "Les Fils de Chabane" from their dead father as a means to revive his name as stated in this passage :

Mon oncle et mon père se nomment l'un Ramdane, l'autre Lounis mais dans le quartier on a pris l'habitude de les appeler "les fils de Chabane", je ne sais trop pourquoi. Ils furent orphelins de si bonne heure que mon père ne connut jamais mon grand-père. On aurait dû les appeler les fils de Tassadit, ma grand-mère. Leurs oncles ou leurs cousins préférèrent, sans doute, perpétuer le nom de Chabane pour bien montrer aux gens que les orphelins avaient de qui tenir et qu'à deux ils remplaçaient en fait et en droit celui qui n'était plus (20).

Moreover, filiation in the novel is also shown through cultural traditions, and practices in addition to moral and ethical values. It is therefore presented in the depiction of the rural

Kabyle patriarchal community, its social classes, structures, power dynamics, and conflicts. The villagers' labor and activities, mainly agriculture for men in addition to pottery and fabric for women, are essential in the community traditions.

Furthermore, Feraoun introduces filiation through the villagers' beliefs and values, all while highlighting their daily lives, characterized by both extreme poverty and profound dignity and generosity. Besides, their daily life is filiated to oral traditions including the use of ancient Kabyle proverbs, idioms, and myths in their daily communication as shown all over the story.

Again, as we dig into Fouroulou's world, we see how his familial bonds and community life play a crucial role in portraying filiation in the novel. Fouroulou's connection to his neighbors is characterized by tolerance, generosity, and conflicts sometimes. Besides, Feraoun portrays filiation through the oscillating familial relationships. The latter range from the deep love and care of his parents, grandmother, and aunts to the hatred and jealousy of his uncle's wife Halima and her daughters which seems logical in Fouroulou's society since the relation of sisters-in-law (Fouroulou's mother and Halima) is always conflictual. Moreover, Fouroulou's unique status as the only male child in the household is noteworthy. His status gives him more love and attention from his family as it is important to have a male in the house in the Kabyle society.

Furthermore, the economic struggle and desire to overcome poverty is another hint of filiation. The title *Le Fils du Pauvre* itself is a testimony that Fouroulou has inherited financial instability from his father. The latter, in turn, has inherited it from his father like almost all of the other villagers. They share the same economic struggle experience and resilience to overcome it. The fact that his father, as well as many other villagers, work hard and still can not afford a decent life, portrays this aspect. Similarly, Fouroulou aims to finish his studies and work to achieve financial stability for his family, as his father always tries to do. This passage reflects the situation :

Les fils de Chabane n'avaient pas un grand héritage et guère de capital. Lorsque nous vivions en commun, ils travaillaient ferme du commencement de l'année à sa fin. Ils réussissaient à sauver les apparences et à faire croire qu'ils étaient dans l'aisance. Ma grand-mère menait la maison avec une grande sûreté et se faisait obéir (63).

Last but not least, there is no doubt that despite all the hard conditions Kabyles face in their village, Fouroulou and the villagers are deeply attached to their land and environment. The villagers are mainly peasants. In addition, Fouroulou's connection to Kabyle heritage reflects his rootedness in his cultural and geographical context. The objective depiction of the village details is proof that Feraoun appreciates his home despite its flaws. This passage summarizes this point :

Le touriste qui ose pénétrer au coeur de la Kabylie admire par conviction ou par devoir des sites qu'il trouve merveilleux, des paysages qui lui semblent pleins de poésie et éprouve toujours une indulgente sympathie pour les moeurs des habitants.

On peut le croire sans difficultés, du moment qu'il retrouve n'importe où les mêmes merveilles, la même poésie et qu'il éprouve chaque fois la même sympathie. Il n'y a aucune raison pour qu'on ne voie pas en Kabylie ce qu'on voit également un peu partout(12).

The villagers are mainly peasants. They work in agriculture even their wealth is evaluated depending on their owning of lands, crops, and livestock as seen in this passage:

Les familles riches ont plusieurs figueraies, quelques olivettes, un hectare de terre à semer, parfois une Source dans l'un de leurs champs. Lorsqu'on évalue à la djema les propriétés de tel fellah à un mois de labour, on lit l'admiration et l'envie dans les yeux. Or, une journée de labour sur nos terrains escarpés avec une paire de boeufs un peu plus gros que des moutons représente

à peine vingt ares. Le gros propriétaire kabyle possède donc six hectares. Il parle fort à la djema, il est maître absolu chez lui. Du moins on le lui laisse croire (16).

Similarly, the postcolonial concept of filiation manifests in several ways as well in *Things Fall Apart*. It clearly appears in Okonkwo's bonds to his native community that is formed through lineage.

In fact, Umuofia is a collective society based on a system of kinship that reflects a strong filiation to ancestry. Therefore, Okonkwo, as well as all the other villagers, respect their patriarchal values and authority which are the modes of social organization within Ibo society. In addition, they are the indigenous forms of governance built on respect for elders, communal solidarity, strong bonds, and social cohesion. Achebe illustrates in this extract, the importance of social unity and the strength of the collective community towards threats to preserve their land and identity:

‘A man who calls his kinsmen to a feast does not do so to save them from starving. They all have food in their own homes. When we gather together in the moonlit village ground, it is not because of the moon. Every man can see it in his own compound. We come together because it is good for kinsmen to do so. You may ask why I am saying all this. I say it because I fear for the younger generation, for you people’. He waved his arm where most of the young men sat. ‘As for me, I have only a short while to live, and so have Uchendu and Unachukwu and Emefo. But I fear for you young people because you do not understand how strong the bond of kinship is. You do not know what it is to speak with one voice’ (122).

Over and above that, filiation in *Things Fall Apart* manifests in Okonkwo's connection to his land and culture. His identity and pride are linked to his cultural heritage. Therefore, he deeply adheres to these traditions passed down through generations. His celebration of

Umuofianm religious beliefs, festivals, and social practices establishes a strong sense of identity. For instance, communal practices and festivals, such as the New Yam Festival, serve as a unifying force, binding the Ibo people together through shared traditions and celebrations of their land and past. This point is illustrated in the following passage: “The Feast of the New Yam was held every year before the harvest began, to honor the earth goddess and the ancestral spirits of the clan” (27).

In addition to that, ancestral worship and rituals, exemplified by the Egwugwu ceremonies, demonstrate the community's ties to their ancestors and spiritual beliefs: “The egwugwu house was now a pandemonium of quavering voices: Am oyim de de de de dei! Filled the air as the spirits of the ancestors, just emerged from the earth, and greeted themselves in their esoteric language” (65).

Again, Okonkwo’s inheritance of his native familial hierarchy and structures is another trace of filiation. These aspects are highly significant in the Ibo society, where the head of the family holds significant power and responsibility. In fact, the familial structure in Umuofia is reflected through the structure of the house. The latter mirrors common practices in Ibo culture like polygamy which is seen as a sign of wealth and social status. For instance, Okonkwo's household portrays the central position of the man's hut (obi) and the organized arrangement of the wives’ huts. This point is illustrated in the following passage: His own hut, or obi, stood immediately behind the only gate in the red walls. Each of his three wives had her own hut, which together formed a half-moon behind the obi (11).

Again, Okonkwo’s family which represents the typical Ibo family is characterized by the dominance of the male head of the house and the submissive roles of the rest of the members as illustrated in this passage: “Okonkwo ruled his household with a heavy hand. His wives, especially the youngest, lived in perpetual fear of his fiery temper, and so did his little children” (Achebe 10).

However, each member of the family has distinct responsibilities and duties within the house and outside it, especially in the field. His mother and sisters worked hard enough, but they grew women's crops, like cocoyams, beans, and cassava. Yam, the king of crops, was a man's crop (17- 18).

Familial bonds are also crucial in Ibo society. They are based on respect for elders among family members. In addition, maternal care and love in addition to emotional support is an important aspect in the story where motherhood has a unique position in their filiative culture as illustrated in the following passage:

Then listen to me,' he said and cleared his throat. 'It's true that a child belongs to its father. But when a father beats his child, it seeks sympathy in its mother's hut. A man belongs to his fatherland when things are good and life is sweet. But when there is sorrow and bitterness, he finds refuge in his motherland. Your mother is there to protect you. She is buried there. And that is why we say that mother is supreme. Is it right that you, Okonkwo, should bring your mother a heavy face and refuse to be comforted? Be careful or you may displease the dead. Your duty is to comfort your wives and children and take them back to your fatherland after seven years. But if you allow sorrow to weigh you down and kill you, they will all die in exile (Achebe 98-99).

Additionally, filiation appears in Okonkwo's fear that he inherited from his father. It is true that the novel starts with describing Okonkwo as a famous successful family head, and an undefeated wrestler. However, he secretly holds an innate fear inherited from his father. Okonkwo has always been anxious about becoming like his lazy, poor weak, and cowardly father Unoka, as explained in this passage:

But his whole life was dominated by fear, the fear of failure and of weakness. It was deeper and more intimate than the fear of evil and capricious gods and of magic, the fear

of the forest, and the forces of nature, malevolent red in tooth and claw. Okonkwo's fear was greater than these. It was not external but lay deep within himself, lest he should be found to resemble his father (10-11).

Anyway, Okonkwo's rejection of his father has turned into a motivation to be totally unlike him. Therefore, Okonkwo was ruled by one passion that is to hate everything that his father Unoka had loved (11).

Since Okonkwo symbolizes the typical pure Ibo man, he deeply adheres to the traditional values of manhood. Masculinity within Ibo society is the measure of manhood. Therefore, Okonkwo has to be hardworking, strong, and fearless to be respected and praised in his clan in addition to earning fame and having a high social status that can be gained only by evident efforts. This fact is stated in: "During the planting season Okonkwo worked daily on his farms from cockcrow until the chickens went to roost. He was a very strong man and rarely felt fatigue" (11). Moreover, he should bring honor to his village. This is the reason why all the leaders of the village are fighters and wrestlers with titles exactly like Okonkwo, the man with the only fear of failure, who challenges every obstacle just not to be seen as weak.

Again, Okonkwo is proudly attached to his cultural heritage. Therefore, he wants to follow these customs and prove himself, especially since his father has failed to do so. So, Okonkwo is determined to be a model of Ibo values and masculinity. As a result, Okonkwo praises well the significance of titles and personal achievements. In fact, the status of Ibo men in the clan depends on the titles they earn. The more they gain title, the more their status grows. For example, Okonkwo becomes a leader due to his titles. This passage serves as a testimony: "Age was respected among his people, but achievement was revered. As the elders said, if a child washed his hands he could eat with kings. Okonkwo had clearly washed his hands and so he ate with kings and elders" (6-7).

However, men with no title have no principles or value in the clan. They are considered worthless and empty men. They are sometimes called “Efulefu” meaning they are worthless. The Ibo converts to the white man’s religion are an example of being “Efulefu”: “None of his converts was a man whose word was heeded in the assembly of the people. None of them was a man of title. They were mostly the kind of people that were called efulefu, worthless, empty men” (105).

Other times, they are called “Agbala” meaning woman. Unoka is the appropriate example given for this name. Even as a little boy he had resented his father's failure and weakness, and even now he still remembered how he had suffered when a playmate had told him that his father was agbala. That was how Okonkwo first came to know that agbala was not only another name for a woman, it could also mean a man who had taken no title (11).

Finally, the use of oral traditions including ancient idioms, stories, and myths in the novel is a form of filiation to the African culture and identity. The African orature is used in characters’ communication as illustrated throughout the story more precisely in the following passage, which reflects the strong bond of Ibo people including Okonkwo to their ancestors. In addition, it presents the inheritance and transmission of cultural wisdom and values from the ancient generation to the next. “Among the Ibo, the art of conversation is regarded very highly, and proverbs are the palm oil with which words are eaten” (6).

2. Defiance of Tradition

2.1 Affiliation in *Le Fils du Pauvre* and *Things Fall Apart*:

While Mouloud Feraoun’s *Le Fils du Pauvre* and Chinua Achebe’s *Things Fall Apart* explore the filiation to ancestral identity, they simultaneously depict affiliation. The latter is the process of integrating into broader societal and global norms beyond one's indigenous sociocultural identity due to interactions with colonial institutions. Affiliation in both novels

involves the characters seeking new identities or beliefs that are new to their inherited traditions. Therefore, affiliation in *Le Fils du Pauvre* and in *Things Fall Apart* manifests in different ways and for different reasons, reflecting the diverse responses to European colonial influence.

Feraoun's *Le Fils du Pauvre* portrays the disruption of traditional identity by the forces of European imperialism. He depicts the impacts of French colonialism on personal and cultural identity through the protagonist's affiliation with the colonial influence. His pursuit of education represents the first break from traditions. His interaction with the colonial institution and direct exposure to the French language and culture demonstrates affiliation in the novel.

The French school system introduced in Algeria represents a shift from traditional Kabyle education to a colonial one. Fouroulou portrays affiliations through his engagement with this system which reflects the colonial influence and hegemony on indigenous culture. Indeed Fouroulou did not enter school by his own will which is proved by his failure in his first year. However, in his second year, he gained a passion for studies which has motivated him for further educational success. This passage describes this point: "Etant pacifique de naissance, je ne pouvais poser ma candidature ni à la première catégorie ni à la seconde. Avec le consentement de tous mes camarades, je devins donc bon élève" (62).

Furthermore, he has been exposed to French cultural norms that introduce European knowledge and values. Thus, he resonates more with colonial ideologies than his native tradition. This following passage affirms his adaptation of colonial perspectives: "D'abord, il est pour la Démocratie ; ensuite, il a la ferme conviction qu'il n'est pas un génie" (9).

In addition, Fouroulou's educational aspirations have grown from a passion for learning to teaching. Moreover, he is influenced by French thinkers, poets, and writers like la Pléiade (a group of 16th-century French poets), Montaigne and Rousseau as illustrated in these passages:

C'est fait, la décision est prise, la réussite est certaine. A mesure que je savoure une étude élémentaire sur Ronsard et la Pléiade, ma décision s'affermit, l'examen à affronter devient accessible... Mais il a lu Montaigne et Rousseau, il a lu Daudet et Dickens (dans une traduction) (9-10).

Affiliation to French norms extends beyond literature, it expands even to religion. It manifests when Fouroulou is exposed to Christianity. It is firstly portrayed during the Marabouts' traditional diagnosis of Ramdane's condition when he has fallen ill. The expression "Vade Retro, Satanas", Fouroulou is used to recount how Marabouts began the treatment, is extracted from the Bible, demonstrating affiliation to Christianity. As clearly shown in this passage:

Il est manifeste, d'après lui, que les djenouns ont été dérangés pendant la nuit, à côté d'une source, près du séchoir et qu'ils sont entrés dans le corps parce qu'on n'a pas pris la précaution de les conjurer en prononçant la formule habituelle, quelque chose comme "vade retro, Satanas" (109).

Moreover, Fouroulou's affiliation to Christianity increases once he moves to study at TiziOuzou's college. As a poor student who cannot afford the fees of the boarding school, he is received in Mister Lambert's house, which is near the college. The latter is a French missionary who houses poor students seeking education like Fouroulou and his friend Azir. He offers them all the means of mobility and ease for free, provided that they follow the rules. One of these rules is the attendance to religious courses and entering the "Scouts". Thus, Fouroulou and Azir are pleased to join the "Scout" and belong to the "Lambertistes".

In fact, Fouroulou and Azir do not show any interest in the new religion they have been exposed to. Yet, they soon start to appreciate it. Eventually, they have learned the Bible by heart and fulfilled the religious practices as declared in this passage :

Ils adoptèrent la même attitude au cours des réunions du soir, à la salle du culte. Ils y allaient régulièrement, lisaient un verset de la Bible comme tout le monde, chantaient des cantiques avec application, écoutaient respectueusement le commentaire du chef et revenaient dans leur chambre reprendre sans hésitation leur travail interrompu. On ne les voyait jamais demander un éclaircissement sur un verset quelconque, ni aller au salon se faire expliquer tel ou tel point de religion ou demander au pasteur de prier pour eux. Le missionnaire recevait souvent, avec plaisir, des visites de ce genre plus ou moins sincères. Mais, ces deux garçons, il sentait très bien qu'ils lui échappaient. Leurs deux volontés bien unies n'en formaient qu'une, difficile à apprivoiser. Il n'y avait pas moyen de les séparer. Pourtant, ils n'y mettaient aucune malice. Ils n'avaient aucune aversion pour la religion protestante. Au contraire, à la longue, ils se prirent à l'aimer pour sa simplicité et son indulgence. Ils connurent à fond la Bible et le Nouveau Testament. Ils prenaient plaisir à chanter, même seuls, les cantiques qu'ils avaient appris à la gloire du Crucifié. Souvent, dans le secret de leur cœur, ils prièrent comme ils avaient vu prier (138-139).

Affiliation in *Le Fils du Pauvre* also relates to the colonial economic system. The latter provides Fouroulou's family with opportunities for economic and social mobility. Working for a French economic institution ensures financial stability. Therefore, teaching is considered to be prestigious as well as working in France. Yet, working at home is limited in agriculture. Thus, Fouroulou's desire to overcome poverty increases his aspiration for teaching. The following passage summarizes this point :

Ses parents ne pouvaient savoir qu'en cas d'échec il demanderait à partir en France. Cette idée l'avait hanté tout l'été. En France, il trouverait à s'embaucher en usine comme manœuvre. En Algérie il était pris dans cette alternative : ou devenir instituteur, ce qui signifiait l'aisance pour toute sa famille, ou devenir berger (145).

It is crucial to mention that not only Fouroulou aims to work for colonial economic institutions, but even his father and other villagers. Poverty increases and villagers' situation gets strained despite their hard work. Eventually, they decide to travel to France to earn money as there are more opportunities there than in Algeria. Ramdane is one of the villagers who has taken this decision:

Quelque temps après, laissant sa famille aux soins de son frère, Ramdane quitta, un matin, Son village pour aller travailler en France. C'était l'ultime ressource, le dernier espoir, la seule solution. I savait très bien que s'il restait au pays, la dette ferait boule de neige et emporterait bientôt, comme sous une avalanche, le modeste héritage familial (111).

Due to the emigration to France for work, even the concept of wealth in the village has changed from the possession of lands and livestock into the possession of new houses with French features. This passage denounces this fact: "Quelques habitations prétentieuses ont été construite récemment grâce à l'argent rapporté de France. Ces maisons dressent leurs façades impudiques et leurs tuiles trop rouge parmi la vétusté générale. Mais on sent que ce luxe est déplacé dans un cadre pareil" (14).

Anyway, this caused the creation of an Algerian diaspora in France. Generally, most of the people who travel to France, in that era, do not come back home for several reasons. This is illustrated in Nana's husband Omar.

Again, while talking about affiliation, the physical appearances are noteworthy. *Le Fils du Pauvre* has explored through Fouroulou and his father the fact that they have been obliged to change their traditional clothes with the French ones to fit with the colonial imposed social and cultural standards. On the one hand, Fouroulou wears suits at school. As shown in this

passage : “Fouroulou se sent perdu dans une foule d'élèves. Il ne se reconnaît plus. Il est en costume européen comme les autres” (133).

On the other hand, Ramdane puts it on while traveling to France : “Il venait de renvoyer à un ami sa gandoura et son burnous. Il portait dans la veste et le pantalon français que lui avait donnés un cousin et qu'on l'avait vu rapiécer avec application la semaine précédente” (113). Yet, they both have left the traditional Burnus and Gandoura.

Through it all, as Fouroulou navigates between his Berber heritage and the influences of French education, he forms a hybrid identity and cultural hybridity that blends both filial and affiliative elements. This is reflected in his mastery of the French language and his knowledge of French subjects. Feraoun depicts this hybridity through Fouroulou's experiences and ability to move between French and Berber cultures. Besides, his bilingualism and bicultural experiences highlight the blending of his indigenous and colonial affiliations. In a nutshell, this duality reflects the complexities of postcolonial identity as Dalila Belkacem has asserted in the previous article of “*Le Fils du Pauvre* de Mouloud Feraoun: Une Écriture Auto-biographique au Service de l'interculturalité”

On the other side, *Things Fall Apart* portrays the disruption of the Ibo traditional identity. Okonkwo's identity is challenged by the arrival of colonial missionaries and forces with their influence on the Ibo people. Achebe's novel depicts the clash between maintaining traditional identity and adapting to new affiliations established by Westerners. Actually, *Things Fall Apart* serves as a testimony of the early British colonial intrusion into Africa.

The arrival of missionaries to Umuofia marks the first step of the Whites towards colonialism. The Umuofians did not realize the danger of the White men until the latter started to take their lands and establish institutions. In addition to this, they take even the population as Christianity has influenced some of the villagers who finally end up converting it. Therefore,

the introduction of Christianity was a medium used by the colonizers to take over Umuofia. The following passage demonstrates the strategy of the British and their impacts on the traditional Ibo society.

The white man is very clever. He came quietly and peaceably with his religion. We were amused at his foolishness and allowed him to stay. Now he has won our brothers, and our clan can no longer act like one. He has put a knife on the things that held us together and we have fallen apart (129).

Furthermore, Christian conversion by the Ibos has led to significant cultural and religious shifts. Affiliation in this novel is more illustrated in the character of Nwoye, Okonkwo's son, who gets rid of his predecessor's hold and embraces Christianity. This new religion contrasts with the traditional values of his father and the Ibo community. Therefore, Nwoye presents a direct response to the cultural invasion by the colonizers. The latter's conversion to Christianity illustrates a break from tradition and his father. As proved in this quote: "But he was happy to leave his father. He would return later to his mother and his brothers and sisters and convert them to the new faith" (112).

By the same token, Ibo's affiliation to colonial values, norms, and standards defies the indigenous traditions. The Whites introduce new gender dynamics that challenge traditional notions of masculinity and femininity within Ibo society. Besides, the imposition of colonial rule challenges the authority of elders within the community. Eventually, this transformation has disrupted the balance of power within families and alters the roles and responsibilities of family members.

In a nutshell, the introduction of Christianity and Western beliefs has led to disconnection from the indigenous traditional Ibo customs and heritage. Therefore, the new religion has caused the loss of cultural identity and continuity. Thus, the intrusion of colonialism

has stopped the transmission of cultural knowledge and practices from one generation to the next. Traditional rites of passage, communal rituals in addition to ancestral beliefs and worshipping are subverted by colonial intervention.

Over and above that, affiliation manifests through the Ibo's engagement with Western education. The introduction and the establishment of missionary schools introduce Western knowledge and values that lead to the formation of new educated individuals who align more with colonial ideologies than their native traditions. Therefore, missionary influence extends to challenge the existing culture and create new affiliations for the Ibo people. This passage focuses on that point: "One of the great men of that village was called Akunna and he had given one of his sons to be taught the white man's knowledge in MR. Brown's school" (130).

Affiliation to the new colonial economic system is significant in the social transformation of the Ibo community. The introduction to capitalism demonstrated in the trade of cash crops and market economy, changes the affiliations of the Ibo people from communal to individual and capitalist values. Thus, this shift leads to the economic exploitation of both resources and people. Colonial economic policies increase social disparities and create divisions within Ibo society based on wealth and access to resources. Eventually, this exploitation creates poverty in addition to struggles for Ibo individuals to navigate the inequalities imposed by colonial rule. As stated: "The white man had indeed brought a lunatic religion, but he had also built a trading store and for the first time palm-oil and kernel became things of great price, and much money flowed into Umuofia" (130).

Affiliation in *Things Fall Apart* appears, as well, in Ibo individuals' adaptation to the new governmental and political systems imposed by the Whites. The establishment of these new values has challenged the traditional governance system as this following passage denounces: "The white man had not only brought a religion but also a government" (Achebe 114).

In addition to this, the introduction of colonial administrations has led to the loss of indigenous Ibo governance. It has destroyed traditional kinship systems and modes of social organization within Ibo society. The imposition of colonial laws and institutions has erased the indigenous forms of governance based on communal solidarity. Eventually, it has caused a breakdown in filial bonds and social cohesion within Ibo communities, leading to divisions and conflicts among community members. Thus, the colonial hegemony extends to reshape Ibo's collective identity and even societal roles. The following passage denounces this fact: "He has put a knife on the things that held us together and we have fallen apart"(129).

Some members, like Nwoye, have embraced the new religion and the new sets of beliefs which are totally new and different from the traditional beliefs and values. However, some others hold on to traditional beliefs, like Okonkwo, as they affirm that the conversion has destroyed the traditional Ibo lifestyle. As stressed upon in: "Okonkwo was deeply grieved. And it was not just a personal grief. He mourned for the clan, which he saw breaking up and falling apart" (133).

Okonkwo and his fellows resist the colonial authority to preserve their social and cultural identity. However, this clash of values represented in resistance and adaptation of the new norms, has led to further conflicts and alienation in Ibo society.

Eventually, Ibo's affiliation to the colonial institutions has led to a further sociocultural identity crisis. The colonial influence alienates the younger generation from their familiar traditions and cultural heritage. Characters like Nwoye, abandon their ancestral customs and beliefs in favor of Christianity, creating ruptures in filial relationships and a sense of cultural dislocation. This identity crisis has caused a generational conflict between the older generation, represented by characters like Okonkwo, who adheres to traditional Ibo values, and the younger generation, influenced by colonial institutions and Christian missionaries, like Nwoye.

Ultimately, this conflict ends with the surrender of the older generation. The tragic death of Oknokwo symbolizes the fall of the Ibo tradition and society.

Conclusion

In brief, this chapter has dug into a critical examination of the concepts of filiation and affiliation in *Le Fils du Pauvre* and *Things Fall Apart*. It has shed light on the crucial role of family and the impact of colonialism on individual identity. Through the analysis of filiation, we have discovered the enduring influence of traditional legacies and cultural heritage in shaping one's sense of identity. Meanwhile, the exploration of affiliation has revealed the transformative effects of colonialism on indigenous identities and societal choices.

According to the insights derived from this comparative study, in *Le Fils du Pauvre* and *Things Fall Apart*, the characters share the same experience of colonialism and influence, but they contrast in their response to colonialism. Colonial presence in the rural tribe-system villages has affected positively and negatively the development of the people stressed in the two novels. On the one hand, in Feraoun's novel, the introduction of colonial norms has further encouraged Fouroulou's will to break traditional norms and prove himself and his abilities by becoming an instructor. On the other hand, in Achebe's novel, the introduction of the colonial has ignited the flames of hatred in Nwoye's heart as he defies his tribe, country and deceives his father and marking the fall of Ibo society.

As we conclude this chapter, we are reminded of the connection between the past and the present and tradition and change. These narratives serve as a testament to the resilience of the human within the pressures of colonial influence and their ancestral legacies

General Conclusion

General Conclusion

In conclusion, this study has dealt with the theme of identity as depicted in Mouloud Feraoun's *Le Fils du Pauvre* and Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*. Through the postcolonial lens of filiation and affiliation, we have explored the nature of identity formation within the context of colonialism. The analysis has revealed that identity is not a static construct but a dynamic interplay of familial ties, cultural heritage, and the imposed influence of colonial forces due to their institutions.

The role of family and the inherent traditions of the protagonists' communities have been highlighted as foundational elements of filiation, attaching the characters to their roots and providing a sense of cultural continuity against colonial change. On the other hand, the concept of affiliation has been examined as a force of transformation, often leading to a reconfiguration of personal and collective identities in response to colonialism.

As we have seen, the struggle for identity in the postcolonial narrative is a complex and ongoing process, involving a negotiation between the past and the present, the self and the other. It is a journey marked by resistance and adaptation, loss and rediscovery. The insights gained from Feraoun and Achebe's works offer a profound understanding of the impacts of colonialism on the African identity and demonstrate the struggles of the human spirit in the face of modernization.

Accordingly, the concepts of filiation and affiliation serve as crucial keys to unlocking the deeper meanings of identity in postcolonial literature. They remind us that identity is not a given but something that is actively constructed, contested, and reaffirmed through the stories we tell and the lives we lead.

This dissertation reflects a personal journey of discovery in African literature. As an Algerian Master's student who has recently encountered this rich literary field, the scope is

defined by a passion for exploring one's cultural roots through these seminal works. However, the limitations worth being mentioned: the constraints of academic methodology and the brevity necessitated by the dissertation's length. Time constraints are also a significant challenge. The study is further limited by its reliance on available academic resources and the subjective nature of literary analysis. Yet, despite these challenges, we eventually come to conduct this dissertation through which we aim to contribute to scientific research.

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Résumé

La thèse présente s'intitule La représentation de l'identité socioculturelle dans *Le Fils du Pauvre* (1950) et *Things Fall Apart* (1958). Malgré les différences historiques et géographiques qui existent entre les deux romans africains sélectionnés, ils partagent les mêmes thèmes en commun. Cette recherche est une étude comparative qui vise à analyser de manière exhaustive la représentation et l'expression de l'identité socioculturelle dans le contexte du postcolonialisme. En examinant la formation et la transformation identitaires Kabyle et Ibo dues au colonialisme telles que décrites par Mouloud Feraoun et Chinua Achebe, cette étude révèle comment les sociétés post-coloniales affrontent identités héritées avec la modernité et comment elles répondent à la mondialisation imposé par le colonialisme. La littérature sert de support puissant pour articuler les réalités socioculturelles. Ainsi, cette recherche explore les dynamiques de filiation et d'affiliation, en étudiant la relation entre l'identité personnelle et les structures sociétales. En outre, cette étude met en évidence l'impact du colonialisme sur les identités individuelles et partagées, retraçant les voyages des personnages à travers les coutumes ancestrales et l'adaptation culturelle.

Mots-clés : Identité socioculturelle, Africain, Filiation, Affiliation, Modernité, Colonialisme, Postcolonial, Kabyle, Ibo.

ملخص:

عنوان الأطروحة الحالية هو تمثيل الهوية الاجتماعية والثقافية في رواية ابن الفقيير (1950) وأشياء تتداعى (1958). على الرغم من الاختلافات التاريخية والجغرافية الموجودة بين الروايتين الأفريقيتين المختارتين، إلا أنهما تشتركان في نفس المواضيع. هذا البحث هو دراسة مقارنة تهدف إلى تحليل شامل لتمثيل وتعبير الهوية الاجتماعية والثقافية في سياق ما بعد الاستعمار. من خلال دراسة تشكيل وتحول الهوية القبائلية والإيبوية بسبب الاستعمار كما يصوره مولود فرعون وتشينوا أنشيبى، تكشف هذه الدراسة كيف تواجه المجتمعات ما بعد الاستعمار الهويات الموروثة مع الحداثة وكيف تستجيب للعولمة التي يفرضها الاستعمار. الأدب يعمل كوسيلة قوية للتعبير عن الحقائق الاجتماعية والثقافية. وهكذا، تستكشف هذه الدراسة ديناميكيات النسب والانتماء، وتحقق في العلاقة بين الهوية الشخصية والهيكل الاجتماعية. بالإضافة إلى ذلك، تسلط هذه الأطروحة الضوء على تأثير الاستعمار على الهويات الفردية والمشاركة، متتبعاً رحلات الشخصيات من خلال عادات الأسلاف والتكيف الثقافي خلال فترة الاستعمار.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الهوية الاجتماعية الثقافية، أفريقي، النسب، الانتماء، الحداثة، الاستعمار، ما بعد الاستعمار، القبائلية، الإيبو.