

Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*: A Case of Postcolonial Discourse Analysis and Reexploration

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Abstract

A plethora of reasons stand behind Achebe's decision to write *Things Fall Apart*, positioning it among the classics of literature. Of these key reasons is his discontent with European representations of Africans in works of fiction. Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* is a marker of the counter-discourse adopted by Achebe to voice his stand on these baseless representations based on the original local contexts' interiority. Achebe's confirmation of writing *Things Fall Apart* is over and above evident in reasserting the African identity as an inseparable part of the growth process of Nigerian nationalism. Utilizing a postcolonial textual discourse analysis of Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*, the paper provides evidence that *Things Fall Apart* is a postcolonial novel exploring the impact of colonialism on Igbo society in Nigeria, being regarded as a seminal work of postcolonial literature, for it efficiently conveys the cultural clashes occurring during the colonial era.

Keywords: Colonialism, discourse, Igbo, postcolonialism, representation, society

1. Introduction

With the 1958 publication of *Things Fall Apart*, Chinua Achebe has been universally acknowledged as the progenitor of the African literary movement. Achebe's writings always establish his dissatisfaction with the baseless statements that Africans are uncultured, mindless, empty-headed, and unlettered. Achebe's passions for the African people are asserted in his words "This theme-put quite simply- is that African peoples did not hear of culture for the first time from Europeans; that their societies were not mindless but frequently had a philosophy of great depth and value and beauty, that they had poetry, and, above all, they had dignity" (Achebe, 1964, p. 8). This conviction encompasses the whole works of Achebe, for they virtuously reveal African culture, value, and dignity. Within this context, Achebe is undoubtedly an authentic novelist whose writings richly mirror his own contextual realism.

Though Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* is not the leading African novel, "It was probably the first work in which the author set out to represent the African experience in a narrative that sought, self-consciously, to be different from the colonial novel" (Gikandi, 2001, p. 17). *Things Fall Apart* by the Nigerian writer Chinua Achebe could show the true face of Africans, confirm that they have a civilization with deep roots, and furnish an image of the structure of African-colonial relationships. *Things Fall Apart* also chronicles how African peoples defend their identity, as it has become a basic school course in the Black Continent and is circulated by all English-speaking countries. *Things Fall Apart* is taught in most universities, especially in Britain. In addition, it has become one of the most famous masterpieces of world and resistance literature and has been translated into 50 languages.

Now that Achebe has become the literary victor of Africa to the entire world, his literary reputation has always been on the rise in Africa and abroad. Nelson Mandela views Achebe as the writer "In whose company the prison walls fell down". Likewise, fellow Nobel laureate, Nadine Gordimer modestly labels Achebe as "The father of African literature". The secret to the success of Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* is that it captures life in its ancient simplicity and original purity. *Things Fall Apart* is a landmark in Nigerian literature as it is the first publication in the modern African writers' series. Achebe's novel paves the way for those who came after Achebe and opens the door for other Africans in general and Nigerians in particular to enter, write, document their feelings, and send messages about their problems.

Things Fall Apart, released in the late fifties, makes a big hit being labeled as a wake-up call not only in Africa but all over the world. It was the first African novel to respond to the colonial challenge and arrogant discourse, especially the literary one, *Heart of Darkness* by Joseph Conrad, which caused widespread controversy with other Western novels distorting African society. *Things Fall Apart* is considered a model of response literature in writing, as Achebe's deep immersion in Western culture enables him to make an integrated strategic plan that takes the tools of the white colonizer as a means to respond to his project.

Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* is a postcolonial novel interwoven with a historical structure, for it can be understood as a decolonization narrative. Set in the colonized African country, Nigeria, the novel digs into the demoralizing effects of colonialism on the African continent, wealth, and culture, ultimately leading to the devastation of the African Igbo community. The deep social and psychological consequences of colonialism are equally exposed to the individual and the community through Okonkwo, the novel's protagonist. In the same vein, the novel draws attention to colonialism's detrimental impact suffered by the Africans, leaving them in a panic-stricken and hysterical state.

Postcolonial writing is of use to remind the colonized peoples of the importance of their freedoms and the necessity to defend them. Therefore, Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* is an authentic example of postcolonial literature as it uncovers the relevant themes of freedom, justice, equality, and independence. *Things Fall Apart* is also a work of art that winds together different examples of colonial discourse, meta-narrative, and decolonization struggle throughout the novel. Moreover, the writing style adopted in *Things Fall Apart* is a testament to Achebe's ability to undermine the European colonizers of Africa (Hamidish & Arewat, 2021). Achebe's use of these literary techniques is also an influential tool to demonstrate the struggles of those marginalized, oppressed, and downtrodden Africans.

As previously gleaned, Achebe is one of the celebrated names that attempt to draw on the African environment and context, being the beacon to shed light on the deep-rooted tradition and culture of Africans and lifting the spirit of young Africans (Roshan, 2024). Together with "The African Trilogy", *Things Fall Apart* (1958), *No Longer at Ease* (1961), and *Arrow of God* (1964), he wrote *A Man of the People* (1966) and *Anthills of the Savannah* (1987). Taken together, "This paper aims to answer the following question: How does Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* serve as a postcolonial counter-discourse to Western literary portrayals of Africa?" The remainder of the paper is structured to provide literature review in the second section. while Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*'s Postcolonial discourse is provided in the third section. Subsequently, the conclusion is articulated in the last section.

2. Literature Review

This section has documented the Western and Arab-related studies and literature exploring Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* from various perspectives, issues, and arguments they used to examine its key themes. However, they still differ in the objectives that are considered when studying Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*. Based on the far-reaching review of present studies, it is evident that most of the studies were done from Western multifaceted perspectives. For example, Foley (2001) asserted that Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* is an open venue that is inundated with several issues, arguments, and themes that need further investigation. Among the arguments that remain unaddressed is the fate and downfall of the protagonist under the worldview of Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*. The study concluded that though "The whole perspective of Achebe's novel is extremely complex, it does not necessarily follow that the actual meaning of the novel itself is either illogical or self-contradictory" (Foley, 2001, p. 1).

Using a historical perspective, Gosling (2013) studied Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*, demonstrating the unexpected world transformation brought about by the white arrival and unjustifiable colonial rule of the African people. The study found that Achebe's novel is a confirmation of the unimaginable change that the novel adds to the deformed picture created by the colonial whites about the Africans' culture and tradition. It was also found that *Things Fall Apart* painted an enthralling image of life in the Nigerian village Umuofia as it had the genuine and most speaking dramas of people striving to stand shoulder to shoulder to make their own way under the eyes of tribe elders to handle the injustices and crimes of the whites.

Utilizing a sociological angle, Gosling's work (2016) proved that Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* is constructed on a conflicted and dynamic transformation of the natives' traditions and cultures. Of the themes discussed in relation to *Things Fall Apart*'s protagonist were identity, masculinity, virtue, change, justice, authority, and otherness. The study showed that the Nigerian protagonist experienced psychological, cultural, political, and colonial changes affecting the process of framing his leadership.

With an adoption of a cultural standpoint, Mull (2017) showed that Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* is nearly a documentary description of the daily life, traditions, cultures, and beliefs of the oppressed people without romanticizing or evasion. The study also found that as Achebe is frustrated with the distortions of Africa and the Africans in the Western writings, "He revealed how Christianity and Western colonialism confronted an animist tribal system in Nigeria in its full complexity" (Mull, 2017, p. 1). Moreover, the study found that while targeting the Western audience, Achebe showed that the culture of the Igbo people is also balanced, lenient, democratic, and open to progress as they already had effective belief and justice systems before the arrival of the colonial whites.

From a literary lens, Casimir (2020) found that Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* is of great influence and significance in modern African literature for several reasons, namely: it is a novel penned to place the African culture and tradition in their right place in the contemporary world literature. Other reasons for considering *Things Fall Apart* lie in the fact that "It is a narrative about where things went wrong with Africans and a prose text which contributed to Achebe's worldwide recognition" (Casimir, 2020, p. 1). It is also found influential for depicting Achebe's denial of the humiliating representation of Africans by white writers, bringing fame to Achebe dubbed as the "founding father of African fiction".

Moreover, Arab studies and research work in Morocco and Syria have addressed Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* from a historical, political, and cultural lens, in a row. Baazizi (2015) explored Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* to show the problem of using the language and the path from orature to literature in the Black continent, Africa. Within the analysis, it is found that orature as a fiction enabled African writers to revoice their oral tradition and use it to strongly show their decolonizing and emancipating project. It is also shown that the fiction of orature also played a role in adding justice to their colonized culture in the Arab and African countries.

Likewise, Al-Omar and Abdul Muttalib (2017) utilized Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* as a world-renowned novel to manifest the discourse of the colonized people and indicate the methods utilized by the British colonizers against the colonized Nigerians. As gleaned from the thorough analysis conducted in this paper, the colonizers used these methods to deconstruct religious, cultural, and social elements of the tribal society so that the process of controlling the colonized Nigerians is completely facilitated. That said, it is noticed that most previous studies and research have highlighted Chinua Achebe's Nigerian novel, **Things Fall Apart** from various Western lenses and perspectives, i.e. historical, sociological, cultural, and literary. The current research, however, differs from the previous research and studies

in that it uses a postcolonial approach to furnish evidence that Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* is a postcolonial novel demonstrating the impact of colonialism on the cultures, traditions, and beliefs of the Igbo society in Nigeria, being regarded as a pivotal work of postcolonial literature. In other words, this work effectively reveals the cultural clashes occurring during the colonial era, alongside the oppression and marginalization experienced by the oppressed from the oppressor.

3. Research Significance

The significance of the current paper is articulated in the adoption of the postcolonial approach as a key approach to accentuate that Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* is a living novel proving the impact of colonialism on the cultures, traditions, and beliefs of the Igbo society in Nigeria in particular and other colonized nations in general; therefore, it is still viewed as a fundamental work of postcolonial literature. Another key point justifying the significance and originality of this work from previous ones is that this research uses a postcolonial approach to analyze Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* from an Eastern perspective, unlike previous studies. Importantly, little to no studies have been done to speak of Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* in the Arab region, chiefly in Jordan.

Further, what is new and refreshing about this paper is that this paper enriches the Jordanian library as a Middle Eastern country with original literary contributions and scholarship to knowledge about the African literary works and masterpieces that enlighten the current and new generations about the postcolonial epoch, its aspects, and its consequences. More notably, speaking of the pedagogical, cultural and literary role of literature in providing learners with thorough readings and analyses about the previous literary movements and epochs, it is hoped that the paper will contribute to assisting decision-makers and officials at the Ministry of Education and Culture in Jordan, the Arab world countries, Asian countries, and African countries to incorporate a collection of novels, plays, short stories, and poems that enlighten the learners about writings, features, and figures pertaining to postcolonialism.

In the context of the Arab regional world, Asian countries, and African countries, it is expected that this paper will open up new venues for several learners, scholars, and authors to take advantage of the postcolonial concepts, arguments, and issues raised in this paper to conduct similar pieces of research to highlight the cultural, social, economic, and political problems happening in countries that are still partially colonized or completely colonized, and the countries that remain living under a postcolonial era.

4. Methodology

When we talk about postcolonial literature, we are invoking a political term that became popular in the last third of the twentieth century. It addresses the crisis of countries that were abandoned by Western colonialism, leaving them politically and economically floundering, suffering conflicts and crises. The empires established by major European powers collapsed over the past three centuries, with the fall of great ancient empires such as the Ottoman Empire and other states and kingdoms in Africa and Asia under the yoke of Western colonial powers, which siphoned off the wealth of these peoples until opposition national movements grew stronger.

What followed was a change in geographic maps, with the subsequent withdrawal of foreign occupiers from dozens of countries across the world, and the transfer of power to national governments, most of whom came from military backgrounds and established totalitarian regimes. As a result, they mismanaged the national economy, which remained structurally linked to the foreign occupier. In addition to the explosive border issues created by the occupation through the arbitrary mapping and division of countries, this fragmented the geographic, ethnic, and cultural unity of these countries, planting time bombs whose explosions continue to this day.

The most specific definition of the term "post-colonialism" refers to the historical period following the independence of occupied countries. This is a temporal and spatial definition because it links it to the withdrawal of the occupiers from the colonized countries, reflecting on their progress and the current situation (Ammari & Salman, 2025). However, there is an intellectual wave rejecting what happened during the colonial era in these countries, called anti-colonialism, referring to the cultural movement that filled the space of independent countries culturally and intellectually against the practices of the occupier. When they gained independence, this shifted to a desire for modernization, renaissance, and healing from the effects of colonialism.

All the above constituted "postcolonial literature," which is linked to the same theory and scientifically defined as the period of the end of Western colonialism in Third World countries and the dawn of a new historical phase. The postcolonial movement remains an expression of a historical era with its own unique characteristics, helping us to more clearly understand the consequences of Western imperial expansion. The term "post-colonialism," like all terms that include "post," does not necessarily imply opposition to or resistance to what came before it. Rather, it signifies awareness of other cultures that existed in the colonies, as well as of identities, trends, histories, and documents that are vulnerable to extinction.

Moreover, the term "postcolonialism", like all terms, also encompasses the celebration of various creative works and writings produced by the colonized or otherwise, as they are written in response to the discourse of the center/foreign occupier, and as a consolidation of the identity of cultures that have suffered from denial and marginalization. The issue is to reclaim the role of the margins within the dominant colonial central discourse. With this in mind, it is of high significance to incorporate the postcolonial approach into the critical discourse analysis of Achebe's novel *Things Fall Apart*.

5. Analysis

Postcolonial literature's key focus is on writing back to the center and actively engaging in a process of misleading, deforming, and questioning colonial discourses and perspectives (McLeod, 2007). Getting profounder in a postcolonial text demonstrates the writer's knowledge and awareness of intrinsic key pillars, i.e. the adoption of indigenous traditions and cultures, English language, the social,

psychological, cultural, political, and economic impact of colonial powers and discourse and their consequences (O'Reilly, 2007). Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* has proficiently and thoroughly handled the three said primary pillars. With the structure of Achebe's novel, the indigenous Igbo's cultural traditions are illustrated in a writing style bespeaking of psychological, cultural, and political effects of colonialism on the Igbo community. Achebe adopts the English language as the medium of communication to confirm the success of the previous arguments related to postcolonial discourse (Al-Ghalith & Shalabi, 2021).

Now that O'Reilly's postcolonial text is constructed on the three pillars previously shown, the adoption of indigenous traditions and cultures is now ranked first, for it is consistent with key issue raised by this research. As argued by Said in *Orientalism* (2001, p. 2), "The [fabricated] Orient was a European invention, and had been since antiquity a place of romance, exotic beings, haunting memories and landscapes, remarkable experiences and yet none of this Orient is merely imaginative". In a related move, Abd-Rabbo (2019) asserted that the tourists arriving at impassable African countries are used to concluding that cannibals still live in the African countries as they expected. It is proved that this belief is baseless and totally wrong as uncivilized countries are inundated with restricted regulations and rules in the whole life aspects.

Pertinent to the same baseless image of the Europeans on the African countries, another confirmation is publicized by Fanon's words (2001), "For colonialism, this vast continent "Africa" was the haunt of savages, a country riddled with superstitions and fanaticism, destined for contempt, weighed down by the curse of God, a country of cannibals- in short, the negro country" (p. 170). Given what has been said, Achebe and Said are along the same lines. Thanks to the authentic portrayal of the life in the Igbo community, Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* is positioned as an "anti-orientalist discourse". Europeans, for example, spares no time to avoid looking at the life of the Igbo through rose-colored glasses. O'Reilly (2007), however, shows that Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* regains African history relying on an African perspective by viewing the pre-colonial Igbo society. Despite being initially educated in English, Achebe grows up encircled by the complex mixture of Igbo cultures and traditions and the colonial discourse and legacy.

History narration and the invention of tradition are among the fundamental pillars of any nation (Qutami, 2022). The African nation is featured with its historical narrative speaking of its individual disposition, history, and origins (McLeod, 2007). Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* is an assertion of his people's historical narratives through a deep adherence to the oral rituals and traditions. "Named for Victoria, Queen of England", for example, is Achebe's self-confession of the ethical responsibility to reaffirm the African past, saying that *Things Fall Apart* "Was an act of atonement with my past, a ritual return and homage of a prodigal son" (1995, p. 103).

Continuing in the same discourse, African literature refers to having "The complexities of the African scene in material time; otherwise, it is doomed to failure (Achebe, 1964, p.75). In *Things Fall Apart*, Achebe furnishes an all-embracing and thorough description of the pre-colonial Igbo society. The purpose behind writing *Things Fall Apart* is reflected in providing a response to the European colonizers who have formerly misrepresented the African countries through fabricating stories about long-practiced cultures and traditions of the African countries. Of the advocating opinions of Achebe's discourse lies in Alam's words of (2011) announcing that Achebe's goal to write *Things Fall Apart* is to replace the entire history of falsifications of his country, people, and traditions in "Occidental" means generally "western" discourse.

With non-stop calls to assert the deeply rooted identity of the Africans, Fanon's words remind of the fact that "Nothing to be ashamed of in the past, but rather dignity, glory and solemnity. The claim to a national culture in the past does not only rehabilitate that nation and serve as a justification for the hope of a future national culture" (2001, p. 169). This optimism and positivity about the Africans' legacy are reconfirmed by Achebe unearthing the celebrated past of Nigeria using the reliable image of the pre-colonial culture and tradition of Igbo in *Things Fall Apart*, championing the fact that "Nothing to be ashamed of" in Igbo's pre-colonial history. As proved by Nwoye (2011), even though the entire perspectives of the Africans are always received in contempt, the anthropological reports related to the daily lifestyle of the Igbo are achieved amid the blooming days of negative colonial procedures.

With the reliance on the novel's characters and his ability to manage their voices, Achebe has positively relocated the Africans' perspective, which is solely a native perspective. The said characters play a key role in representing their socio-cultural traditions and values toppled and collapsed once European colonizers set off in the lands of the Igbo groups. These characters show their resourceful values which are a blend of accuracy and inaccuracy so that the readers can judge how colonialism cruelly crushed their good values (Majeed, Imtiaz, & Imtiaz, 2021). On a parallel line, the relationship between the religion of the Igbo and the cultural performance has been demonstrated in Okodo's 2012 words "If the dramatic performances of Greek classical culture originated from ritual performances in honor of gods, Dionysus and Appllos, why would the ritual performances of Igbo gods, nay all the gods in Africa, be rejected" (p. 131).

Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* embodies a recreation of a consciousness and an oral culture instilled with an agrarian lifestyle and unveils that Africans did not preliminarily hear of the word "civilization" and its elements from the European colonizers (Ezenweke & Nwadiakor, 2013). At once, Achebe strives for overlooking the depiction of the pre-colonial Africa as a "pastoral idyll" through the rejection of certain aspects, i.e. the "francophone negritude school of writing and the nostalgic evocations of Léopold Senghor" (Innes, 2013, p. 2). The process of defining postcolonial writing grabs hold of the language of the center, to be precise "the colonizer west" and then alternates the language of the western colonizer in a discourse completely in sync with the context of the colonized peoples. Adoption as a process entails taking and preparing the language of the colonizer so that the burdens of a certain party's cultural and social experience can be bearable. More tellingly, Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin (2002) asserted that the language is the first effective tool and weapon used to voice various cultural and social experiences.

Raising awareness about the native traditions and values involves the use of the English language which is a foreign language completely immersed in the colonial discourse as asserted by Achebe in *Things Fall Apart*. The English language can only bear Achebe's burdens to disseminate cultural aspects and experiences. Achebe's "The African writer and the English Language" is an authentic confirmation of the English language's high competence to do the part of Achebe in carrying the weight of the deprived African experience, as shown in his words "but it will have to be a new English, still in full communion with its ancestral home but altered to suit its new African surroundings" (1964, p. 84). The use of the English language is reflected in achieving Achebe's purposes to write back to the center, making it fit for his central project to tell the tale about religion, rituals, and culture of Igbo groups. Achebe's unique use of the English language proves its ability to significantly deliver his message without jeopardizing the value of the English language as a practical medium of worldwide exchange. In *Things Fall Apart*, Achebe mints a novel creative term "English Language Africanization. "In writing counter-narratives to Euro-centric distortions of Africa, the language of the colonizer has been effectively harnessed by Achebe to enable it bear the burden of his native experience" (Abd-Rabbo, 2019),

The Nigerian writer's language choice is based on political grounds as *Things Fall Apart* is a reply to earliest accounts and records of the colonial campaigns of Africa. Plenty of African writers go for revitalizing native languages as a resistance tool to oppose colonial rule and culture. Using English to pen *Things Fall Apart*, Achebe had aspired to achieve cultural revival for being knowledgeable of capturing the Igbo language rhythms, alongside their words, folktales, and proverbs. In *Things Fall Apart*, the use of several Igbo words boosts the conveyance of Achebe's message and thus requiring an emphasis on the adopted original words. Regarding the folktales of the Igbos, the represent a vital pillar of the African oral traditions profoundly fixed in the Igbos' daily lives. Last of all, with regard to the proverbs of the Igbos, their native structure is completely reflected in use and character and is inundated with native philosophies and pieces of wisdom (Bollinger, 2002).

With the adoption of the said native contents, Achebe successfully takes advantage of the use of the English language mainly needed to resist the colonial discourse. Of similar kind, apart from using the sophisticated nature, *Things Fall Apart*'s language is eloquent and candid. Now that the adopted English is transparent, Achebe transparently crystalizes the Igbos' life of the Igbo in a style acknowledged by the readers. Simply put, by the adoption of the English language in *Things Fall Apart* enables, Achebe magnificently pictures the pre-colonial Igbo society, demonstrating Achebe's authenticity and objectivity.

Of the key issues is that *Things Fall Apart* is an evident manifestation of the issue of the impacts of colonialism in a postcolonial context. The colonial expeditions sent from the European continent have entirely devastated the traditions and culture of the Igbos which in turn destructing their identity (Al-Ghammaz, 2023; Al-Khayyat & Abu Amrieh, 2023). Expounding the colonial effects shown in Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* necessitates referencing Aime Cesaire, Frantz Fanon, other revolutionary texts' writers, for they richly uncover the influence and nature of colonialism. According to Cesaire, "the root of diversity" was destroyed by the European Bourgeois groups bearing in mind that African communities are always an icon of cultural mixture even before the arrival of the colonialists and their agendas. Cesaire (2010) asserts that for the process of toppling the African diversity under the colonialists' feet to succeed, there shall be organized campaigns to disqualify the Negroes and endlessly silence their voices as a part of colonial domination. The impacts of colonialism on African peoples are reflected in draining communities from their essence, trampling institutions and cultures, confiscating lands or changing its facets, destroying religions, and their related elements (Bhabha, 1996).

Things Fall Apart demonstrates the communal agreement lived and experienced by the Umuofian people prior to the spread of colonial power. The said communal agreement prevails in an organized society featured with full stability in various life aspects, namely: familial cultural, religious, economic, and political (Al-Ghammaz, 2023). The colonial mentality and acts, however, transform the full stability into instability and a scene of chaos and disintegration. The title of the Nigerian literary work itself implies that the supposed pillars of the organized society of Umuofia no longer exist in the must-be order, as colonialists make them disordered. In the pre-colonialism era in Nigeria, Igbos had easily done various cultural events and rituals away from tension and anxiety. Those performances, however, have been hindered by the restrictions imposed (Al-Ghammaz et al., 2023). The colonialists' work to drain the Igbos from their essence is manifested in the suicide of Okonkwo who symbolizes Umuofia's essence. In other words, Okonkwo's suicide resulted from the consequences of colonialism is a marker of the suicide of Umuofian essence. Likewise, colonial operations to wipe out the astonishing possibilities of the Nigerians are seen in Okonkwo who is an authentic manifestation of the astonishing possibilities damaged by his suicide. Besides, of the main examples of the mighty voices entirely silenced by the colonial powers is Okonkwo who is a symbol of these "mighty voices".

Religiously, Christianity's essential role to initiate and consolidate colonial rule is evident throughout the novel. As noted by (Cesaire, 2010, p. 33), "The principal perpetrator is Christian pedantry, which laid down the dishonest equations Christianity=civilization, paganism=savagery, as the coming of Christianity leads to that fact that Millions of men were torn from their gods". As Christianity contradicts with the Igbos's religious beliefs, it frames their religion in a structure of paganism that is baseless, valueless, and a sign of barbarity. *Things Fall Apart* is also another authentic representation of the colonialists' denial of Igbos' religious beliefs, as seen in the following words of two men representing the colonized and colonizer "If we leave our gods and follow your god, who will protect us from the anger of our neglected gods and ancestors? Your gods are not alive and cannot do any harm as they are pieces of wood and stone" (2006, p. 103).

By the same token, Uchegbue (2010) supports the view that arrival of Europeans with their Christianity and culture marks the cancellation of various rituals of Igbos as "They are either lost, given up, forgotten or being increasingly neglected while some are being reinterpreted,

partially preserved, and absorbed in or interpolated with Christianity” (p. 164). On the same said issue of the role of Christianity, Achebe (1978) upholds “Tragedy begins when things leave their accustomed place” (p. 05). The Umuofians’ fall and tragedy begin when the core of their religious beliefs, traditions, and culture is displaced from their original place.

With this textual analysis pertaining to Achebe’s *Things Fall Apart*’s postcolonial discourse, it is regarded as a counter novel with a discourse counter to Joseph Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness* (1899) always depicted by Achebe, alongside numerous postcolonial scholars, writers, and critics as a novel with hidden agendas as it is flooded with the dehumanizing and degrading representations and images of the Africans. With that, Achebe asserts that “*Heart of Darkness* structures Africa as the other world, the antithesis of Europe and therefore of civilization, a place where man’s vaunted intelligence and refinement are finally mocked by triumphant bestiality (1975, p. 03). Accordingly, Achebe indicts that Conrad shows “The African world as a metaphysical battlefield devoid of all recognizable humanity, into which the wandering European enters at his peril (09)”. In the same context, Achebe reveals that Conrad has intentionally ignored the original image of the black continent, Africa, demonstrating Conrad’s use of the stereotypical images created by the western mentalities and imaginations.

6. Conclusion

In a word, the current paper contributes to the open debate of the continuous literary and political significance of Achebe’s *Things Fall Apart* among the countries that experienced the colonization era and now live in the postcolonial era utilizing a postcolonial discourse analysis. The Achebean novel plays a key role in toppling the Africa-based stereotypical descriptions fabricated by the Europeans. Recounting the demoralizing and dehumanizing consequences of colonialists’ missions on the Igbo’s lifestyle in *Things Fall Apart* is yet another Achebean success in straightforwardly demarcating the Igbo’s lifestyle and culture from pre-colonial to colonial periods. Besides, the Achebean use of these said contradictory periods unambiguously proves the authenticity and value of the Igbo culture and traditions. Moreover, the Achebean adoption of a two-period comparison strategy of differentiation renders him a true novelist and thinker to rewrite the history of the lost culture, beliefs, and traditions of the Igbo.

More notably, Achebe’s realistic adoption of Africa and its miseries is like an invitation to all Arab and non-Arab readers to read about the colonizers’ missions and agendas in the postcolonial era in other regions, i.e. the Arab world countries and Middle Eastern countries, such as Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, Egypt, Jordan, Syria, Iraq, Lebanon, and Palestine. Importantly, *Things Fall Apart*, Achebean well-known literary work, comes as a wake-up call for Arabs and non-Arabs in the continents of Asia, Africa, and other colonized countries to rethink the cons of the colonizers’ legacy in various sectors of the educational, cultural, economic, and political levels.

More importantly, what makes Achebe’s *Things Fall Apart* still literarily and culturally strong and significant at 66 is the fact that it furnishes a nuanced portrayal of the traditions, customs, and culture of the Igbo. Furthermore, Achebe’s *Things Fall Apart* speaks of complex and rich societies in Africa by demonstrating its strengths and pros and eliminating false stereotypes that previously tarnished the Africans. Accordingly, Achebe’s *Things Fall Apart* can be a wide-ranging platform for cultural identity, originality, and pride, not just for the Igbo in Africa but for all people.

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Saif Al-Deen Al-Ghammaz has been an English Literature faculty member at Al-Zaytoonah University of Jordan since Sep 2021. He holds a Ph.D. in English Literature, majoring in postcolonial literature. His research interests revolve around postcolonial literature, comparative literature, women in Arabic Literature, and postcolonialism theory’s use in novels and plays. The current paper is one of the key examples of using postcolonial theory to reread several novels and plays.

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The data that support the findings of this study are available on request from the corresponding author. The data are not publicly available due to privacy or ethical restrictions.

Data sharing statement

No additional data are available.

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