

AFRICAN JOURNAL OF LITERATURE AND HUMANITIES

vol.3/Issue 3

October 2022



www.afjoli.com

ISSN 2706-7408

URL: afjoli.com/index.php/2019/09/06/september-2019-issue-1-vol-1/.
Fatcat: fatcat.wiki/con ...Google: www.google.com/...Bing: www.bing.com/se... Yahoo: search.yahoo.co..

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Impact of Crosscultural Identity in Buchi Emecheta's *The New Tribe*

Diarrassouba Youssouf
Université Félix Houphouët Boigny, Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire
diarrayoussouf31@gmail.com

Résumé

L'objectif de cet article est de montrer certains aspects positifs de l'identité transculturelle. En fait, il (article) est axé sur l'importance de la diversité des cultures dans une société donnée ou vivent différents groupes culturels peut aboutir au développement de l'humanité. Cette réalité peut être observée dans *The New Tribe* (2000) de Buchi Emecheta.

Mot-clés : Culture, Identité, Diversité, Ibridité, Adoption

Abstract

The objective of this article is to show some positive aspects of Cross-Cultural Identity. In fact, it is focused on the importance of cultural diversity. Indeed, the diversity of culture in a given society where different cultural groups are living can result in the development of human nature. That reality can be observed in *The New Tribe* (2000).

Key-words: Culture, Identity, Diversity, Ibridity, Adoption

Introduction

The questions of identity and culture are at the core of many debates in literature. The search for one identity has to do with many issues. The quest for human stability in terms of identity and culture can take various forms. Therefore, cross-cultural identity is one of the central theme of African literature. Today, it is not easy to travel through the world. Many people do not care about their roots. The fact that we become aware of our own personality, is enough to the fulfillment of self-realization. Actually, in African literature, especially in post-colonial literature, the loss of identity and the negation of one culture are sources of many conflicts. That is the reason why Buchi Emecheta uses *the New Tribe* to show the danger of discrimination. In this article, we will show to what extent, the study of Cross-Cultural Identity is still relevant for the stability of human development and the emergence of the society.

1- moving the centre

During colonialism, the term “Centre” was at the core of European policies. European civilizations and history were imposed upon the colonized, their education and worldview were regarded as superior than any others. No education or civilization would be compared to the one of the colonizers. African people and their cultures were rejected because they were said to be savage and uncivilized. Thus, the term “Centre,” means that everything should be seen in the view of Europeans because they have civilization and a way of life. This discourse was used by Europeans to dismiss Black people and their culture and then, have control over them. That is why Anand Menon in his book entitled *A Post-Colonial Insight to Chinua Achebe's African trilogy* (Menon, 2015), thinks that discourse is a system of statement by which dominant groups in society constitute the field of truth by imposing specific knowledge discipline and values upon dominated groups with him, it is clear that Europeans had imposed their cultures and values upon Africans during colonial period.

In that perspective, Djiman Kasimi puts: “The presence of the British colonizers distorted the African culture. Things never remained the same” (Kasimi, 2013: 41). He continues by saying “colonialism changed Africans in so many ways. People were treated without respect, especially titled men” (Kasimi, 2013: 41). According to the colonizers, Europe is the only place where progress is possible. For them, there is only one religion: Christianity. Thus, the system of colonization is shown as a system of beliefs and knowledge that puts Europeans at the Centre of everything in the society. They had created the idea of Centre in order to have control over human beings. For Edward Said, “The Orient was almost a European invention, and had been since antiquity, a place of romance, exotic beings, haunting happenings and landscapes, remarkable experience” (Said, 1978 :8). For Edward Said, orientalism is a strategy that Europeans had used only with the objective to dominate the East. Such a notion of “Centre” is at the core of many debates in literature. In their quest for stability and the reconstruction of the identity of their people, many African writers struggled to find strategy to fight against the idea of centrality. For these intellectuals, there should not be a periphery nor a Centre, all cultural values are important in a given society. Their literary works are a response to this reality.

To the light of this ideology of Blacks, it is important to get in mind that African writers in post-colonial era are going against the principle of colonization, which stated that people should put themselves in the shoes of Europeans. For these people, everybody should behave according to western world view. If it is true with Taiye Selasi that “African Literature does not exist” then one should put the question to know why we talk about European literature. In his article entitled *African literature does not exist* (2013), he said:

What do I mean, or not mean? By African literature“ I refer not to the body of written and oral texts produced by storytellers on and from the

continent but rather, to the category. African literature is an empty designation as is Asian literature, European literature, Latin American literature, South American literature, North American literature and so forth. My very basic assertion is that the practice of categorizing literature by the continent from which its creators come is past its prime at best (Selasi, 2013: 1).

In the above paragraph the author shows that any distinction should be made between African and European literature. Literature is said to be universal. Then let us give its universal characteristics. If we take this into the context of civilization, it is clear that Taiye Selasi is very critical about western centralism. For him, every cultural group has its importance in the society. The objective here is to negate the idea of “Centre” that has been constructed by the White about the cultures, civilization and education during the colonial era. Buchi Emecheta does not go against this view of post-colonial African writers. All along her book, she tries to demonstrate how far it is important to disregard the notion of centrality and create a peaceful place suitable for man to live.

Also, Emecheta attempts to reconcile Blacks and Whites, she shows that Europe is not the only place where people could find civilization and education. This idea can be seen through her ability to place two places into interaction. In fact, she mentions some African and European towns. As a matter of fact, we have quoted “Liverpool” (p.115), “Freetown” (p.115), and “Takoradi” (p.115). This means that Europe is no more the Centre where everything is said to be rooted rather, a part of human place like any others. The appearance of some African cities in *The New Tribe* demonstrate that Africa is no more the backward place we know, but a place of civilization and knowledge as well. Here, we can see that the notion of “Centre” in terms of space is then casted away.

Moreover, through cultural difference the idea of Centre is analyzed. In fact, cultural difference should be seen as an alternative to cultural diversity, where each culture has an important role to play in social progress. Cultural diversity is the meeting point of many cultural groups. This is observable in *The New Tribe*. Even though Ginny is a white woman, she teaches Chester some African stories. This act shows that the culture of the colonized is not savage rather important. A white can learn even teach African stories. Here also, the “Centre” does not exist anymore. The culture of the Europeans should not be referred to as the referential element of being civilized.

By getting deeply into the text of Emecheta, we could find that some European names are attributed to black people. As a matter of fact, the name “Chester” is far from being an African one. Before the coming of Europeans in Africa, people in African were given traditional names but in the period of colonization, the colonizers looked down those names, they qualified them as savage and barbarian. Since Blacks did not mean something in the society, they could not have the same name with the colonizers. By giving such a name “Chester” to a Black character, Emecheta wants to break the barrier that exists between Black people and white people.

There is no more domination nor discrimination, mankind is only one race, and for that everybody should enjoy the same freedom, opportunity at all levels. Here, Black and white can have the same names. In fact, Catherine is a white name and Mba is an African name. The fact that she holds both names breaks any idea of division between Black people and white people. She holds both a modern and a traditional name. Here, the author turns down the complex that exists between Blacks and Whites. She is forcing whites to accept the new reality of the society. This is a form of resistance that tends to balance blacks and whites without negating whites' power. Homi Bhabha believes that resistance effectively reaffirms originality and does not question or overthrow colonial power. Resistance does not forcibly mean opposition. Buchi Emecheta is giving life to a dead culture that is African one by putting into question the Centre built by Europeans.

Emecheta steps Ngugi Wa Thiong'o. In his quest to celebrate and enlighten traditional values, Ngugi has abandoned his church name "James" and kept the traditional one. This reality in literature is nothing but a claim for one originality. Furthermore, during the colonial period, it was quite unthinkable for a black man to approach a white man, less, to be accepted by them. But, in *The New Tribe*, one can pay attention to the following passage: "The fact that he was black only added to their feelings of having been specially chosen" (p. 7). Through the above passage, a black man can accept a white man or a Black can also see a white man as a brother. This is a reality in *The New Tribe*. The focus is on human race but not on a localized one.

When Chester was qualified as the "King of Orient" (p.12) he could not understand the reason why he has been addressed as the "King of Orient", and he asked Jinny to know the meaning of "Orient". He said: "What's the orient mummy?" And Jinny responded: "It means the East, where the wise men came from" (p.12). Through this passage, Emecheta shows that even white people recognize that wise men come from Africa contrary to the idea of the colonial system. In the history of humanity, the term "Orient" is used by westerners as a savage place where animals live. This part of the globe or the planet was said to be uncivilized. But now this is not the case like the above passage states.

The orientalism of Edward Said can be seen as a response to white animalization of people living in this part of the world. The fact that Jinny qualified the "orient" as "the place wise men come from" is meaningful. The author wants to show her readers that knowledge does not come only from Europe, African people are also wise and intelligent. Here, the Centre is broken, it does not exist. She succeeds to put Black people at the same level like the former colonizer. A Black man, when feeling unease in their native country can come to search their missing part in Africa. This is a vibrant reality in her novel *Second-class citizen* even in *The New Tribe*. In this novel, Adah the main character undergoes the Yoke of the patriarchal society. Then, being unable to get her own way in Nigeria, she decided to go to England in order to have a better life.

2-Adoption

Racial discrimination has been for long a major issue since the colonial era. Privileges of all sorts were given to the white though the black were considered as others. The Whites were granted the privileges of education in Africa and in Europe, while the black were suffering from racial discrimination and so many forms of ethnicity. In *The New Tribe*, Buchi Emecheta does struggle this hurting issue that puts down human values and makes the promotion of new relationship between people of different colors, origins and ethnic groups.

These new values are seen through her ability to reconcile human race through the notion of adoption. Adoption can be referred to as the process of adopting someone. It is the establishment of a good relationship between two or many groups of people especially from different backgrounds after a long or short moment of tension. One can see it as an act of celebration of otherness. In *The New Tribe*, this is a reality. In fact, the author, through the idea of adoption, calls for an effective and truthful humanity. The following passage is telling more about that: "This little boy of 18 months could be a brother to Julian" (p.6). Chester and Julia are not biological brother and sister because they are from the same bloodline, or the same racial family, but because they belong to the human race. Putting aside the racial origin, and a common bloodline, the author has succeeded to establish a kinship between Chester and Julia based on human values. The true brotherhood does not refer to the one focused on bloodline nor racial origin. But, it is the one rooted in humanity.

Emecheta is a tireless fighter who is always looking for a universal brotherhood and humanity. For her, people are borned the same no matter the colors, we remain linked to each other. No cultural, identity and racial origin should create difference among human races. By rejecting the idea of difference, Homi Bhabha in the *Location of Culture* says: "What is denied the colonial subject, both as colonizer and colonized, is that form of negation which gives access to the recognition of difference" (Bhabha,1994:75). In the light of this passage, it is clear that people are borned different and are created differently. But this must not be the reason for discriminating unless one turns to be the creator. Yet, God has made all people equal no matter their color as it can be seen in the Bible and the Coran. Despite all sort of humiliations and frustrations, Chester endured or underwent at school from the other students, Julia his sister did not get away from him. She assisted him, and reasserted her support to him. For Emecheta, being Black does not mean that one is out of the human race. That human race is composed of black and white people. Throughout the words of Julia, this comes to light: "Chester's not the devil! He's my brother!" (p.11). Also, Mrs. Miller speech should not be taken for granted. It is full of senses. "Hello love" (p.38).

This voice of Mrs. Miller seems to be analyzed as a poetic rhythm of love. In the narration, the following statement is to be granted much consideration. „„One day burglars will come and all you’ll say is “hello love”. Here the burglars are the African people who were till now considered as others, savage unhuman race. So, say “Hello love” to a former rejected person is a way to show him feeling and love.

Taking the family name “Arlington”, Chester becomes a real member of the Arlington’s family. In fact, no one could get him away from the family of Arthur and Jinny. He is from now on their child. For the matter, it is interesting to underline this brilliant statement that enlightens this reality: „„Chester was Christened Chester Arlington, brother to Julia Arlington” (p.9). Here, Emecheta is in line with her project of creation of a new tribe in a world of permanent mutation. Both adoptive children, Chester and Julia could rely on their parents “Arthur and Jinny”. And this is the most important thing. That is the reason why, Ginny says: “The most important thing is that to us you’re our children, and we love you both very much” (p.15). Throughout this passage, Chester takes advantages from the affection of his adoptive parents. The adoption is a social fact that demonstrates or shows the belonging of Chester to British identity rich in its diversity. Though he is a black child, Chester is from now on a full member of British identity.

3- Hybrid Identity

Hybrid can be seen as fusing different things. It is the mixture of elements from diverse horizons to form one. It is then a myriad of things. When moving into the terrain of identity, one can say that a hybrid identity is a mixture of two or more cultural groups. As an example, one can talk about Black-British or Black-American. It has a strong link in societies with diverse origins. Throughout the portrayal of hybrid identity in literature by post-colonial writers, their aim is to break the barriers that prevent people from different horizons to live harmoniously. This reality is the leading guide of many African writers. Amongst those, Emecheta can be cited. In *The New Tribe*, she creates a strong connection between the black and the white. In this novel, British identity is no more based only on the certitude of white color. She invites them to abandon the spaces of selective identity and give hand to an open one. To her, a black man can claim for his British identity. They can have a good place in what can be referred to as a British identity.

When Chester found out that he was different from Arthur and Ginny, though they considered him as their blood son, he decided to search his home and African identity. Then he came to Nigeria leaving his parents in a deep anxiety. Emecheta viewed this long search for his true identity as nonsense. For her, this is a loss of time because the true identity is what has neither color nor origin. It is just the mankind. This is obvious in the words of Chester’s companion Esther. She argues: “No Chester. Africa is no longer our home. We have stayed away in the market too long, as Nigerians say. Our

home is Liverpool!” (p.145). In this passage, Emecheta shows that Liverpool is now the home of Chester. The good relation between Black and white people breaks all barriers between them. An African can now be called English in England. This is what Emecheta is looking for. Though Chester is a Black man, she denied his belonging to Africa and reminds him that his place is in Liverpool. He is a British citizen. For that matter, one can quote the African statement that states that: „„one cannot feel better outside but at home”. Chester belongs to Liverpool and not to Nigeria. Here, the author has succeeded to put light on Chester’s hybrid identity.

British society is in a permanent mutation. It is getting rid of old concepts rooted in racial segregation. England offers more possibilities to Chester as a black child. He is deeply rooted in British culture as an Englishman can do. This is clearly visible with the above statement. „„Culturally, he had to admit, he was more English than anything”” (p.115). More, if we analyze deeply the conversation of Chester and Esther, we can say that cultural communication has saved human race from barbarism. It does not ex-communicate a given culture, but brings mankind to unification.

A Black man can be part of British society in its full sense. The author teaches us this notion of peace and unity throughout Esther’s says to Chester: “You don’t seem ready to accept reality, Chester. We don’t belong to Africa, we’re British. Black British maybe, but this is our home now” (p.113). To the light of this passage, British society does not make difference between black and white people. The most important thing that should be considered is human being and not the color. Again, black men are not seen as passive consumers of British culture but rather participants. Their contribution to the emergence of British culture is observable. No matter the place a black man is, he should be part of the society with no discrimination nor rejection. That is the reason why Homi Bhabha in *The Location of Culture* argues:

The representation of difference must not be hastily read as the reflection of pre-given ethnic or cultural traits set in the fixed table of tradition. The social articulation of difference, from the minority perspective, is a complex ongoing negotiation that seeks to authorize cultural hybridities. (Bhabha, 1994: 2).

The notion of difference is an obstacle to the realization of human race. Hybridity at this level appears to be a bridge that links two cultures. Emecheta demonstrates that British culture is not the only product of the white but also the black. For that we can quote this:

I’m sorry, Chester. I didn’t mean to... it’s just that all that roots stuff is so dated. Look how black people have change the face of British culture. Don’t you want to be part of that? (p.113).

Throughout this passage, one can understand that Emecheta gives a lesson to the whole humanity. This lesson is nothing but reconciliation and the end of racial

discrimination. For her, Ama Atta Aidoo targets the same noble mission. In *The Dilemma of a Ghost* (1965), she portrays “Ato” as an in-between character. He has one leg in African culture and the other in American culture. This reality is telling more. She is giving a lesson to Ghanaians that even though they are Black people, the only thing that should be celebrated is not our way of doing things, our worldview, but the promotion of mankind. That is why the expression Black British in *The New Tribe* is worth quoting.

At last, this part allows us to show that we are engaging in a world full of hope and life.

4-Social Integration

A world torn by hatred, discrimination, racial segregation, and all sorts of disorder is likely to get its stability through a real social relationship. At this level, social integration plays a prominent role. It can be seen as a process in which members of different communities get involved in dialogues in order to achieve real social relations. It is based on people’s ability to move together and create a stable society of justice. It goes against social fragmentation that leads to exclusion and discrimination.

Social integration is a mechanism that strengthens or results in a peaceful social interaction and coexistence. In social integration, individuals communicate beyond their cultural groups and achieve specific relationships. Through social integration, people will learn to see others to their image. In other word, the individual learns to see himself and the society throughout others. Here, it is the celebration of human values that is put forth, and not the individualistic world. Social integration strongly reflects the social cohesion and cultural acceptance that exist between different societies which come to join together as one.

In social integration, the promotion of inclusive values is made to reduce discrimination and poverty. The concept of social integration being introduced in this paper is well stated by Buchi Emecheta in *The New Tribe*. Black people are integrated in British culture in the way that they have changed its image. We learnt this reality with Emecheta. Indeed, the following statement of Esther tells more about that: “Look how black people have changed the face of British culture” (p. 113). In this passage, the author shows that African people are accepted in England as British citizens. Moreover, they participate to the development of British society. This reality was not accepted in colonial times. Through the above sentence, Emecheta demonstrates that social harmony exists between Black and white people.

Moreover, social integration gives birth to love and acceptance among communities. For that purpose, they see one another as belonging to the same family that is mankind. Black people see white people as brothers, vice-versa. Ngugi Wa

thiong'o is a prominent figure in the struggle for African integration in a predominant white society. In moving the Centre, he said:

The long wage and literatures of the peoples of Africa, Asia and South America are not peripheral to the twentieth century. They are central to the mainstream of what has made the world what it is today (Ngugi, 1993: 28).

In this paragraph, he shows that instead of being regarded backward, savage and uncivilized, Black people are part of the world. They can claim their identity everywhere they are in the world. Social integration brings people together as one and for them to act freely. In *The New Tribe*, Esther is so integrated in British culture that she claims to be British. She told Chester that Africa is no longer their home. In this perspective, Emecheta puts:

My mother, Ginny, used silence to divide and conquer in the household. My dad thought he was in control, but she was really. With her silence she could heal as well. [...] Well, she is the only mother you have. And if you don't settle with her, you may never trust any woman in your life (p.106).

In the above paragraph, Chester recognizes that Arlington is his family. He calls Ginny „„my mother““ and Arthur „„my father““ “In fact, he presents himself as the legitimate son of Ginny and Arthur. In addition, Mr. Ugwu asks him to go and see his mother sometimes because she is his only mother. Through this passage, we can see no difference between Chester and Arlington. This truthful world is what Emecheta dreams of. Maria Amparo Cruz-Saco in her article *Promoting social integration: economic, social and political dimensions with a focus on Latin America* defined social integration as follows:

Social integration is the process of creating unity, inclusion and participation at all levels of society within the diversity of personal attributes so that every person is free to be the person she wants to be (Cruz-Saco, 2008:1).

Through this definition, social integration aims to put people together and facilitate their interaction. The inclusion that Maria is talking about in her definition of social integration is obvious in *The New Tribe*. Chester is free and feels at ease in Arlington's family. Even though he is Black, one cannot make a distinction between him and the other members of the family. He is a full member of the white family. Arthur, the adoptive father of Chester before dying left the great part of his estate to Chester even though he had been in Nigeria looking for his true family. Through the following conversation between Julia and Chester, we are informed about this fact: “He left the greater part of his estate to you... you're inheriting £ 50,000 P” (p. 150). In doing so, Emecheta informs her readers what is important in life is not race nor colors rather our ability to get together.

Emecheta, teaches us a great lesson of human interaction. Once more, she shows her divorce vis-à-vis the colonial discourse that claims the division of human race. The author's great ability to make Chester enjoy the same opportunities as the other members of the Arlington family is a proof that lets someone accept that integration is real in her novel. For Emecheta, since we are in a world of unity, rich in its diversity, even though Black people are in minority in Europe, and they differ from the mainstream populations they should not be seen as a threat to the English community. Yet, in order to achieve her dream of social interaction, the author gives Chester his full sense of English citizen. From now on, Chester is part of the British society. How come that a Black becomes king in an English community? Well, this is the program of Emecheta's social integration that seeks to put Black and White into interaction. She is about to make a legislation that makes a Black inherit a white. This is the case of Chester. Taking into account, the heritage Chester received from Arthur, it is clear that social integration is one of the key notions Emecheta puts forth in order to reach her goal of struggling against discrimination.

5-Cultural Authenticity

Authenticity can be defined as the status of something that has revealed to be true or real. The issue of cultural authenticity has been subject to many debates in the field of literature. Indeed, during the colonial period, the culture of the Blacks was seen as something savage. African people were said to have no culture. Colonizers came to African people with the idea that they were uncivilized. They came then to civilize African people. The church played an important role in that process of Black animalization. To justify their evil act of slavery, Europeans claimed to be at the rescue of the Black by showing them ways to live and behave. Having come to get consciousness of their subordination position, many African writers through their literary productions, give sense to their identity. Through their literary productions, they demonstrated the authenticity of their origin. In that context, Ngugi Wa Thiong'o has emerged as a leading figure in the claim for indigenous culture in African literature.

Ngugi Wa Thiong'o's decision to use Gikuyu in literature must not be taken for granted. It should not be seen as a threat to Kenyan national unity, but it is a clear expression of African cultural authenticity that reflects the cultural diversity of the country. Choosing to write in Gikuyu is certainly a strategy that he used to achieve his project of decolonization. As far as Achebe is concerned, he suggested that Africans should write in English and show to English people that they are not English.

In *The New Tribe*, the notion of cultural authenticity is well expressed. Emecheta manipulates English language in a way that it clearly states her African origins. This can be seen throughout the speech of Karimu. The character Karimu has double faces. He sometimes speaks English like English people. As an example, the following sentence

is worth quoting: “We have come to speak with the Oba” (P, 136). To sustain this argument, the narrative voice adds: “Karimu said in his best English surprised that this ill looking young man was so well spoken” (p. 136). He sometimes speaks also English like African people as Achebe suggested that Black people should use English to show Englishmen that they are Africans. Here Karimu said: “We go offer just few, small dash” (p. 135). This ability of Karimu to manipulate English is far from being a simple use of the English language. Emecheta used the character of Karimu to achieve her project, which consists in showing the authenticity of African culture. Here, it is obvious that African languages are dynamic, and rich in its diversity. The author wants to show that black people are not savage nor uncivilized. They have a civilization and knowledge that is vested in their use of language. The language someone can use is inevitably connected with the environment he belongs to. Language cannot stand alone without culture. It takes into account the belief and practices of human life. Language is the key that opens door to the culture. Language is then the home of culture. That is the reason why David Elmes, *quotes Wardhaugh in those terms:*

The structure of a language determines the way in which speakers of that language view the world or, as a weaker view, the structure does not determine the worldview but is still extremely influential in predisposing speakers of a language toward adopting their worldview. The culture of a people finds reflection in the language they employ: because they value certain things and do them in a certain way. They come to use their language in ways that reflect what they value and what they do (Elmes, 2013: 12).

In this passage, the author wants to show that, there is a strong relationship between the language a people employs, and his worldview. Through her use of language in *The New Tribe*, Emecheta gives life to African culture and the authenticity of African language. This is a reality in post-colonial literature. Moreover, the history of African culture is always the product of a divinity. The ancestors are those who are in charge of everything in African tradition. If a cultural group happens to have no divinity, it does not worth calling an African tribe. The kingdom is where the mysterious practices are done. We cannot talk about African culture, its authenticity without referring to the divinities.

This notion of African supernatural forces is obvious in *The New Tribe*. Evoking the name of the “Oba” (p. 138), Emecheta shows the power of African ancestral culture. It is only the “Oba” who protects Black people, rather than the former colonizers. For his part, Thomas Mofolo will evoke “Isanusi” in his novel *Chacka*. To him, the strength of an African warrior is rooted in the will of the supernatural forces. That mention of traditional “gods” in literature should not be taken for granted. It is far from being a simple statement. One must see it as a response to the colonial discourse that states that African people are savage and have no culture and they, white people, have come with

the religion „„church““ to pull Africans out of darkness. Evoking “Oba” here, the author is instructing her readers about the originality of Black culture. For Emecheta, a Nigerian has his own worldview, which is different from that of the Europeans. For that, we can read Mr. Ugwu giving some teachings to Chester about Nigerian way of calling elders. He says: „„well, call me Uncle. Uncle. In my country that’s how a young person addresses someone older but familiar (p. 83). Through this passage again, the author shows the authenticity of African values through their way of calling one another.

In addition to the traditional “gods”, we have extraordinary things that appear in African culture. These extraordinary practices cannot be seen anywhere else but in African culture. In *The New Tribe*, we have this reality. In the narrative, we have this statement: “The Oba willed life into his face” (p. 138) to what extent a human being can do so? Only this can be performed in Africa. This reference is an additional proof that demonstrates Emecheta’s project of Black cultural authenticity. Again, a cultural group that deserves quoting should be located in a given place. This reality will be a key to the authenticity of that cultural group. No one can accept a given society without a home. The fact that the author struggles to justify a place for Black people and their culture can be analyzed as her celebration of Black culture. To her, unlike the colonial discourse, Black culture exists and does not suffer from any disorientation from colonizers. She even limits it to a given place which is Africa. Chester’s long quest for his true identity, and his will to find his kingdom are full of meaning. For that, he is a Black man and a Black man should be rooted among his people. That dream of Chester enlightens Emecheta’s ability of creating a place for African culture to be one. Moreover, when Esther told Chester that “I’ve come to take you home” (p. 145). Chester opposed and said: “I am home” (p. 145). Chester’s declaration of being at home in Nigeria is a way of covering African culture with its authenticity. It is worth saying that Buchi Emecheta and Ngugi Wa Thiong’o show the same view in terms of space. His first novel *A Grain of Wheat* (1967) is a claim for African space. In his book *Moving the Centre* (1993), Ngugi says: “A grain of wheat celebrates more than sixty years of Kenyan people’s struggle to claim their own space” (Ngugi, 1993: 21). Here, Kenyan people are a sample that represents all African people.

Despite the dehumanization of African people by Europeans, African intellectuals have succeeded to create a place for themselves to live. This idea is shared by Ngugi Wa Thiong’o through this sentence: “I believe that the question of moving towards a pluralism of cultures, literatures and languages is still important today as the world becomes increasing one.” (Ngugi, 1993:28). The plurality of culture grants African people the authenticity of their culture because it can be accepted by all. All cultures are equal, and they are all part of the new vision of the modern world. That is the reason why Ngugi says that: “The cultures of African, Asia and South America, as much as those of Europe, are an integral part of the modern world.” (Ngugi, 1993:28). At the end of this subtitle, one can say that cultural authenticity is a reality in *The New Tribe*.

African culture is recognized as an integral part of the world. This is what Emecheta means by Cross-Cultural Identity.

6-Relationship

We understand by relationship, the social rapport that exists between the Black and the white. Their ability to get together, their sense of affection, and the way they assist each other mutually. Before one can talk about that relationship, it is worth to recall what was prevailing during the period where the margins were invaded by their master. During that moment, the weaker group, meaning Black people, could not stand in the same place as the white could do. They were submitted to a pure subordination. All the privileges were for the white. Love between Black and white did not exist at that period. Actually, during the deportation of African as goods to America, those who were not feeling well were thrown into the sea. Those who were seen as resisting to free themselves were shot simply like animals. Black people were forced to work without rest, otherwise they were punished. Black women were at the mercy of the master. They were their properties. That is the reason why talking about the fear of Negroes Homi Bhabha in the *Location of Culture* said:

Our women are at the mercy of Negroes... God knows how they make love; the deep cultural fear of the figured in the psychic trembling of western sexuality – it is these signs and symptoms of the colonial condition that drive far on from one conceptual scheme to another, while the colonial relation takes shape in the gaps between them, articulated to the intrepid engagements of his style.” (Bhabha, 1994:41)

To the light of the above quotation, we can understand that the relation between the Black and the white was not easy. It was the theatre of a big nightmare. A black man could not be seen with a white woman if not his soul will be taken from him. Black people were kept in their places. Having experienced all these animalization and ill-treatment, voices raised in Africa and all over the world for those who were in the favor of human race to claim for a good rapport between the black and the white. This period sets new values known as the rising of a new tribe as the title of the book of Emecheta can show *The New Tribe*.

Buchi Emecheta is a prominent literary figure of that trend. In *The New Tribe*, the notion of relationship between the Black and the white is even perceived throughout their contacts. Indeed, she makes the promotion of a world where hatred and discrimination should be banished. For her, a Black man should do something for a white not by force, rather he/she should decide to do it freely. This idea is well perceived in *The New Tribe* through the dream of Chester to work and help his Arlington’s family. Chester wants to work and render Arthur and Ginny proud. For that matter, the following passage is worth quoting: “sometime they come back to St Simon to show off their new devoted positions and to see their families. Chester told himself that he would like to be

like that one day” (p.20). Chester is then free to do so, not because he has been imposed by Ginny or Arthur.

For his part, Albert Memmi thinks that the system of colonialism has broken the relation among human beings (1961). To live as a human being the colonized people have to kill in themselves the system of colonialism. That is what Buchi Emecheta tries to do. The fact of considering Ginny and Arthur as his parents even though they are not considered as the author’s full project of unity. Moreover, the word “mummy” (p.12) should not be taken for granted. It is not stated by chance. The author here again, tries to create a link of motherhood between the Black and the white. This work is a sort of canon that breaks the bridge that has been set in the period of colonialism between Black and white. A Black man can call a white man mother and vice-versa. This reality was a dream that could not come in the mind of the colonized years back. But, with the emergence of human race, we experience the dislocation of colonial discourse to the profit of more humanistic world. Albert Memmi is then right when he says :

Au contraire, parce qu’il a découvert le colonisé, son originalité existentielle parce que soudain le colonisé a cessé d’être un élément d’un rêve exotique pour devenir humanité vivante et souffrante le colonisateur refuse de participer à son écrasement, décide de lui venir en aide. (Portrait du colonisé, (Memmi, 1961:49).

Through the above passage, Albert Memmi, shows that Black and white are not opposed, rather they are brothers and sisters. The white is at the rescue of the Black vice-versa. Edward Said does not fail to put out the importance of getting together to form only one family which is mankind. This takes form only if people accept to go beyond their own identity. For that he said:

Moving beyond nativism does not mean abandoning nationality, but it does mean thinking of local identity as not exhaustive, and therefore not being anxious to confine oneself to one’s own sphere, with its ceremonies of belonging, its built-in chauvinism, and its limiting sense of security, culture and imperialism. (Said, 1993:229)

Through this quotation, claiming good relationship is one of the targets of the advocates of post-colonial writers as Emecheta does not get away from to that perspective. Furthermore, contrary to the colonial discourse built through mimicry, a white man can protect a Black man and ensure him self-confidence. No one can cause trouble to a Black man in the presence a white man. They are henceforth, more brothers and sisters. This strong brotherhood is well-stated in *The New Tribe*. “No one was going to pick on him” (p. 11). This statement of Julia is questioning the historical discrimination that built border between the black and the white with the idea of “master”. No one can put himself at the place of “master”. The master does not exist, we are all human beings and equal from that same basis. Here, Julia the white lady is

perceived as the protector of Chester. This statement is a message to all human beings. It teaches us the sense of belonging to the human race where love, brotherhood and hospitality are at the top of everything.

In addition, the idea of “social workers” (p. 6) is meaningful. The social worker is someone who is concerned with the values of socialization. He struggles to maintain good relationship between members of the community to which he belongs. In this novel, the social workers are the bridge that links white and Black people toward a living place where hatred is banished. These workers construct new identity that Stuart Hall referred to as “new social bloc” (Ngugi, 1993:28). To put his voice in that important mission, Homi Bhabha said: “For Hall, the imperative is to construct a new social bloc of different constituencies, through the production of a form of symbolic identification that would result in a collective will” (Ngugi, 1993:28). The choice of the social workers in this book is pregnant of meaning. The author charged herself with a strong desire of unification of social borders to create the feeling of assistance, help, and communion among people no matter their origins, colors and religions.

The notion of love in the rapport between people is very important. Emecheta shows us that love must be at the core of whatever a human wants to do. This reality is clear in the novel. Mrs. Miller says: „„Oh, Ginny, you must be looking for Chester. He’s a bit upset. He no longer wants to be a king in the play. He wants to be an ordinary shepherd”” (p. 21). Through this passage, the author shows the extent to which Ginny cares about her son Chester. When he feels unease Ginny is the one who consoles him. This is a great lesson to be learnt. Emecheta dreams of a day when love will be everywhere, for that Ray’s communication with his mother is worth quoting: “one day Burglars will come and all you’ll say is “hello love” (p. 38). More, Ginny and Arthur love Chester. We can see that when the author said: “The most important thing is that to us you’re our children and we love you both very much.” (p. 15). For the author, above all, a good relationship between the colonized and the colonizers, the Blacks and the white will be the key to a humanistic world. In sort, to the light of what is said so far, Emecheta has succeeded to demonstrate the existence of social rapport between Black and White people as a positive impact of Cross-Cultural Identity.

Conclusion

The New Tribe of Buchi Emecheta is an extraordinary novel which unfold the story of Chester a Black child adopted by a white family. The tthis book the auther try to reconstruct part of human history that seems to be dismissed by discrimination and hatred. In the novel, Emecheta rejects the historical barriers between people of differents cultures by proposing adoption and cultural interrelationship as solution to the stability of human society. This work permits us to show to what extent cultural dialogue between people from different cultural groups is important for the construction of a peaceful world. This

article offers the opportunity to use cultural negotiation as solution to discrimination among people.

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