

## **CRITIQUE AND CHALLENGES IN TRANSLATING BUCHI EMECHETA FOR THE FRANCOPHONES AND CROSS-CULTURAL APPRECIATION**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Buchi Emecheta was a renowned author. On Google doodle, her 75<sup>th</sup> birthday was celebrated, though she transited on 25<sup>th</sup> January, 2017 in London. She wrote many novels with a major theme that relates to the survival of the human race from the African perspective. The African perspective could not be said to be one-sided or partial as communal concern pervades in most African ways of life; hence both genders in a conjugal relationship seem to obey larger communal dictates for a better human survival. The patriarchal dominance seems to be what is in contest in most parts of the world. Some oppositions to that dominance, however, seem to be the driver of most feminist movements. In Emecheta's works, the female gender seems to bear the worst of the human emotional burden laced in seeing the female as the 'make or mar' of any communal survival; and the community expects a greater discipline from that gender. Emecheta's female characters, who express this burden, mostly end up uncelebrated with all the sacrifices they seem to have made to see that the society relearn the ever changing circumstances of life that call for the cooperation of the genders without which self-destruction sets in. In this paper, Emecheta is compared with other female writers in the Francophone world so as to highlight her own distinct approach on how women are seen and what it translates to, in both divides – Anglophone, Francophone. The approach adopted is basically, testing some socio-critique tendencies in both the Anglo and Franco divides, and to agree or disagree with such theoretical or critique postulations, for a better understanding of Emecheta's works. In effect, it is also to guard against a mistranslation of any of her works, as this paper identifies items that could lead to mistranslation; for, most colonial translations tended that way. The findings are that Emecheta's works are not quite in agreement with her counterparts in the Francophone world; though she shares with them the same trait of quasi altruism posturing of most womenfolk that relates to motherhood. However, she does not share the quasi-hedonistic posturing of most Francophone women writers in the West, compared with her in this paper. Finally, this paper highlights the need for a format of translation of cultural issues that must be placed in proper localisation portfolios for proper comparative prospects that would not lead to "non-sens" or "contre-sens", in other languages; and also, to serve for better appreciation of Emecheta's views of how women could be treated for a better and sustainable human society. A clear finding of this paper is that factors that unite or intersect to give meaning to concepts like love, desire, marriage, sacrifice, pleasure, and courage respectively, lack consensus in Emecheta's works and those compared with hers.

**Key words:** translation, mistranslation, Anglophone, Francophone, cultural issues.

## **Introduction**

Buchi Emecheta expresses, through her novels, the expectations of motherhood that transcend individuality to greater entities like the mother continent (Africa) and Nature—as mother as against maid—and how such expectations when ignored take a ricochet effects on humanity. As we explore those expectations in her selected novels – *The Slave Girl* (1977), *The Joys of Motherhood* (1979), *Destination Biafra* (1983) and *The Rape of Shavi* (1985), we intend also to critique some aspects as they compare with Francophone African authors like Mariama Bâ –a Peul (Fulani), Agnes Martin-Lugard –a French and Apostolska *Aline* a Canadian French. Some utterances or key phrases are of interest to this exploration, as it is known now that translation has evolved into digital discipline, as tools like Terminology and Localisation and their derivable softwares are what translation relies on. In effect, for each phrase as a cultural item, it is worth knowing whether it carries the same semantic value or whether it is a mere adaptation of what exist in the Francophone world. Some theoretical frameworks are purviewed here as well as the adopted method of analysis, to make this presentation digital friendly prone.

## **Theoretical Framework and Review**

Linking, partially, socio-critique framework with comparative literature and translation as transcultural disciplines out of which Terminology discipline finds validity in documentation of words, phrases and discourses for localization, as digital humanities' concurrent platforms, they are briefly reviewed here. Indeed it is a plurinominal approach for creative distinctiveness, novel approach if found useful, in the new digital approach to literary critique.

Translation in the digital era finds its theoretical background in some of the works of L'Homme (2008). First, the notion of Translation and Localisation: recognising the software to use for translating a document then applying “Adaptation rules” for it. Both in specialised texts (Pragmatics obliges) and in Literary texts (discourse Analysis obliges), imprevisibility exists though greater in literary texts. Previsibility is the

possibility of some constant or similar structures or sentence patterns as professional language use entails as against imprevisibility which is seen more in literary texts like lexical inventions, styles of different authors, creativity, metaphors, etc. Second: reducing the polysemic words or phrases to their specific context as the civilization/ culture of the author is identified, and producing a documentation and digital process for a particular software to create a localization platform for them if possible. Third: applying a critic method that so much so makes the literary work either a text viewed from psychocritic context, sociocritique context, mythocritique context, etc. In effect, Buchi Emecheta's works are viewed in their sociocritique perspectives for the expected translation that could be fair, and of comparative literature dimension, as Buchi Emecheta works operate in both Africa and Europe. They show what social canons dictate for male or female in both continents.

So, some aspects of sociocritique analysis of her works could be viewed in how some comparative literature critics like Irele, Kesteloot, Aire, Mokwenye, Echenim, Ohaegbu, Ojo etc, tackle texts of African origin for a better worldview of what they encapsulate. In effect Ojo (in Ariole 2001: 248) summarises it as the quest for the cultural exposure of a critique to pan human level—combining racial, ethnic, scientific and mythic dimensions as well as creative bias of the author. For example, within Africa, there are up to five levels in contention that could be seen in their patriarchal, matriarchal, nomadic levels (nomadic level that tends to be uncle-driven as the uncle matters in bringing up the child), pygmiac level – though, it is a fading tendency, where the bush protects; and the exotic mixture level that encourages what others could see as incestuous or anti cisgender. Dadié in Edebiri (1992) presents a classical example of matriarchal system in *La Dot*, where marrying a woman is like aspiring to be the in-law of God, as the dowry expected is in knowledge form, which only Kacou Ananze – the spider – is expected to provide. It is even seen in the current evolution of WWW. While Emecheta exhibits patriarchal tendencies in her novels, Francophone African writers like Bernard Dadié and Mariama Bâ provide distinct female holds on the African civilisation process. Kesteloot (2004: 282), sees Mariama Bâ's heroine in *So Long a Letter* as a responsible wife compared to “drianke”, a Senegalese brand of female that feeds on serving as mistress for her uncles, and makes money out of it. “Consacrer à ses enfants” – bringing up her children—not

minding her husband's debilitating physique as a result of polygamous living, is another aspect of remaining responsible for nature's expectation. (cf Aire 2003: 14). It also, follows the critique made by Marie N'diaye by Mokwenye (2009: 57), which craves that the female character deserves not to get to anti-heroine performance – so much excluded from human reality that she becomes an outsider [...].

In effect, some of the characters in Buchi Emecheta's works tend to live that way, though very much inclined toward what Soyinka (2013: 98-100) sees as:

Do not commit beyond your capability [...] Altruism, self-abnegation, even patriotism etc, are mere alternative modes of expression for that instinct of service to one's kind [...]. Poor Mrs. Kako (like Kacou Ananze) she picked the wrong man [...] the wrong moment to wrap her arms around the self-immersed hero [...].

The female-male relationship is emotionally or materially dependent on each other and when it is not understood that way, it ends up killing something in any of them. In effect, how to avoid killing that vital emotion in the other—seemingly love—are the pervading episodes in the works of Buchi Emecheta which are exposed here in their phrasal or sentential forms for translation and documenting critic processes for eventual digital presentation as a localization project.

Sociocritique wise, restraining human activities and relationships to what one's capability provides is as well acknowledging constraints thrown out by environmental factors like being mindful of not hurting nature which could boomerang as expressed in Ariole (2018: 7). The neurotic strength of humans must be seen in the expressions they emit and they must be put to action for transparency purposes on linguistic bits for mutual interests and well-being; as it must be innately constrained by mindfulness not to hurt their immediate surroundings and environment.

### **Some of Emecheta's phrasal/sentential presentations in bilingual forms as localization items**

It is necessary to summarise the novels for a better knowledge of their socio- cultural background that elicits valid socio-critique processes before stating the sentences or phrases that make the works of Buchi Emecheta peculiar for possible localization “indexing”.

*The Slave Girl* (1977), a story of Ojebata, also the heroine, the only daughter of her parents among boys – her elders. So much loved and cherished by her parents to the extent that her father travelled very far to fetch a juju that could keep her alive as she was seen as Ogbanje, a spirit that always keeps parents in suspense. Quite discomfoting, as their daughter (Ojebata) toes an erratic way of behaviour, even insisting on suckling her mother's breast for years. At her parents' premature death as a result of influenza plague, Ojebata became an orphan and one of the brothers had to sell her off to be with a lady as house help. She survived the tribulations but still entered a second voluntary quagmire—marriage, and she felt it was better than remaining a slave, as house help. Somehow, she remained, emotionally, a battered personality in a life she started as the most cherished daughter, and she entered a phase of choosing between the deep blue sea and the sky—marriage organised by societal exigencies as part of self-actualisation or self-preservation process dictated by the society.

Hear some utterances:

'Umeadi, you'd better get up', [...] 'Your *ogbanje*, this visitor, looks as if she is staying this time. She is crying out with hunger. Why not put her to your breast?' Umeadi did as she was told and, as it became apparent that the child might indeed live, her mind went to all the sacrifices she had made to her *chi*, the personal god to whom every Ibuza individual appealed in time of trouble. Her loss of daughters had continued for so many years, however, that Umeadi had reconciled herself to the fact that maybe that was her lot. Now the new baby suckled with so much force, she was convinced there was some life in this one. (p.10)

*(« Umeadi tu ferais mieux de te lever ». Ton Ogbanje, cette étrangère semble vouloir demeurer cette fois-ci. Elle pleure de faim. Ne vaut-il pas mieux la mettre en position de tes seins pour têter ? Umeadi a fait comme on lui a dit, comme il a paru que l'enfant pourrait vivre ; vu qu'elle s'était souvenue de plusieurs sacrifices qu'elle a faits auprès de son chi, le dieu personnel que tout individu à Ibuza se supplie au moment de ses peines : ayant perdu plusieurs filles accouchées au cours des années [...] Maintenant cette nouvelle fillette suçait avec force de manières qu'elle s'était convaincue qu'il y a de quoi à espérer, qu'elle vivrait)*

This translation is very specific in what it is conveying to the Francophone readers, it could only find equivalence or adaptation in how Kourouma (1970: 52-53) compares it.

Qu'importe qu'après que tout fût tombé, se fût envolé [...] 'une grossesse nerveuse' et les Malinkés, "une grossesse de génie" [...] Salimata avait été heureuse des mois et des mois [...] cela continua des mois et des mois, puis un an sans accouchement...une honte à vouloir fendre le sol pour y terrer.

(And so, at the end all is gone, all has evaporated, "Ectopic pregnancy" and Malinkés call it: 'Witchcraft pregnancy'[...]. Salimata had been happy months upon months and [...] it persisted, months upon months and one year was over and no end to pregnancy [...] And shame set in to the extent that one wished the earth opened up to be buried in.)

A comparative context of how women feel, especially in Africa, in the process of child bearing is indicated by these utterances. It is quite valid for a documentation process for a literary terminology triggering base, which could find Localisation window in digital translation.

Another theme deductible as localisation item is what keeps the heroines of Emecheta on course of societal expectation as part of what motivates women to contribute to the progress of society, as worked out by the collectivity, the people, as socio-critique impressions imply.

Hear Ojebata:

To Ojebata, Clifford looked much younger [...] That she might once have married this handsome man! No, it could never have been possible[...]. She looked at her husband and saw a little untidy man, with his red eyes and his stubborn ttitude to whatever he considered his, this fast ageing husband of hers who had to work so hard for their living [...]. She might belong to Jacob's body and soul, but she loved it. She could think of no other suitable life for herself and for her children. If Clifford was wearing that pitiful expression because he felt he could be sorry for her, he was mistaken. She was satisfied to belong to a man like Jacob, a fellow townsman, one who would never call her a slave, and who gave her a real home, even if it was only one room that served for sitting, eating, sleeping and everything else, she would rather have this than be a slave in a big house in Onitsha. (p.181)

*[Pour Ojebata, Clifford a l'air plus jeune...qu'elle avait été inclinée dans le passé à marier ce beau gars ! Mais non, cela n'aurait pas été possible. [...] Elle jeta un coup d'œil à son mari et trouva un homme un peu mal à l'aise, avec ses yeux rouges et ses comportements rigides envers tout ce qu'il considérait comme le sien, ce mari en train de vieillir vite et qui travaillait dur pour leur ménage ... et elle trouva son cœur complètement voué à Jacob [...] Qu'il se peut qu'elle appartienne corps et esprit à cet*

*homme, Jacob, elle l'aimait... Elle préfèrerait toujours avoir cet homme que de rester esclave dans une grande maison à Onitsha (la maison de Clifford)].*

The expression of being free relates to being equal with a husband in a marriage so as to achieve the aim set by the society, raising a family that promotes respect for all. It is also as expressed by Mariama Bã (1986,129), as stated below.

L'amour si imparfait soit-il dans son contenu et son expression, demeure le joint naturel entre ces deux êtres. S'aimer ! Si chaque partenaire pouvait tendre sincèrement vers l'autre ! S'il essayait de se fondre dans d'autre ! S'il assumait ses réussites et ses échecs ! S'il exhaussait ses qualités au lieu de dénombrer ses défauts ! [...] C'est de l'harmonie du couple que naît la réussite familiale [...] La réussite d'une nation passe donc irrémédiablement par la famille.

(No matter how imperfect love is, either in its form or expression, it remains the link that binds partners. Loving each other! If only each partner could lend sincerely their hands to support each other! If only they could be lauding each other's quality as against orchestrating each other's faults... It is the harmonious living of couples that depends the success of all families [...] The success of a nation is undoubtedly derived from the success of families in the society.)

However, from the perspective of European heroine as seen in Aline (2016,97) and Martin-Lugard (2014: 192), the following obtains respectively:

J'avais vécu trente ans en occultant l'amour, mais avec du désir, du désir, ça oui, au point de le confondre souvent avec l'amour...Et maintenant te voilà incapable d'aimer, et même de désirer... Je n'ai jamais réussi à concilier la femme et la mère en moi. Comme si elles s'étaient toujours annulées l'une l'autre.

(I had lived thirty years not giving clear thought to love, though as if it is a desire, so much desire, yes, almost feeling as if desire is love. So, now, here you are unable to love any more, even to feel a desire... I had never succeeded in reconciling the woman and the mother in me. It is as if both of them dissolved in each other.)

Now, Martin –Lugard :

L'Iris de Pierre. L'Iris de Gabriel. Deux hommes deux amours. Je rirais au nez de quiconque me dirait que l'on ne peut aimer deux personnes à la fois. Si, c'était tout à fait possible. Sauf qu'on n'aimait pas de la même façon. Avec Pierre, c'était un amour

routinier, rassurant. Avec Gabriel un amour explosif, sur le fil, un amour en terre inconnue [...]

(Iris for Pierre. Iris for Gabriel. Two men two types of love. I would have mocked whoever was telling me that two people could not be loved the same way. Well it is possible. Just that the love for each of them is not the same way. With Pierre it was a regular way of loving, quite assuring. With Gabriel, it was explosive, different things lined up, ever new, leading to territories unknown...)

It is evident that desire for self-satisfaction pervades in the European perspective, though it ends up in confusion, at the end, as both motherhood and coquettishness seem lost on the altar of desire. With that, it could fail sociocritique canons. Notwithstanding, embedded in it is still love for oneself which translates to next relay axis of love, love for the society, if motherhood is brought to play. Somehow, when it enters into territories unknown, it could be pleasant or depressive. Here is where the male and female emotions must congregate for oneness in the interest of better society.

Looking at *The Joys of Motherhood* (1979), one acknowledges the worthiness of transiting from slave girl to motherhood. For Emecheta, it is the survival war of remaining human in spite of fellow human's inhumanity to fellow human. Hear some of the related expressions.

If I should become pregnant—hm [...] She stared until she fell into a light sleep. In her exhaustion, she dreamed that her chi was handing her a baby boy, by the banks of the Atakpo stream in Ibuza. But the slave woman had mocking laughter on her lips. [...] « please, » Nnu Ego cried, « please let me have him, please (p.45)

(S'il me serait possible d'être enceinte—hm [...] Elle regarda avec étonnement jusqu'à un léger sommeil la prit [...] Dénuée de sa force, elle rêva que son chi lui donnait un enfant, (petit) garçon, au bord de l'étang d'Ibuza. Mais il y a un sourire de doute que cette *chi*, en forme de femme – maitresse d'escalve – ou celle qui fait assujettir, exhibait ... Je t'en prie, Nnu Ego cria, je t'en prie laisse-moi avoir cet enfant.)

Nnu Ego... Do you remember how sad you were, senior wife, when you had two girls? You would have been happier if they had turned out to be boys instead. Now I had a boy, my only son and he did not live. O God, why did you not take one of the girls and leave me with my male child? My only child. (p.128)

(Nnu Ego... Tu te rappelles comment tu étais mécontente, en tant que première épouse, quand tu as eu tes jumelles ? Tu aurais été heureuse si elles étaient garçons. Me voilà, deuxième (Adaku) épouse, avec le seul garçon que j'ai pu avoir (mon fils unique) et il n'est pas à vie. O' Dieu ! pourquoi n'as-tu pas pris l'une de ces filles et me laisser mon fils, mon seul enfant.)

The expression, here, gives room for collective self-preservation intent that encourages more of the survival of the male than the female; and the bearer of the emotional burden remains a female; and it is to favour, as tradition demands, a male, either as a child or as a father. It goes on.

The following morning Nnu Ego and Adaku were woken by Ubani. [...] "Is Nnaife dead?" She asked, steeling herself for the worst. No, he is not dead...only they have forced him to join the army. For me to be married to a soldier, a plunderer and killer of children [...] There is nothing we can do. The British own us, just like God does." (p.147-148)

*(Le lendemain matin Nnu Ego et Adaku s'étaient levées avec sursaut par Ubani. « Est-ce que Nnaife (leur époux) est mort, demanda-t-elle (Nnu Ego), tout en se calmant pour entendre le pire. Non, il n'est pas mort ...Il l'ont forcé à devenir militaire » comment avoir un mari militaire, un saccageur, un tueur des enfants. On ne peut rien. Nous leur appartenons les Britanniques sont maitres, à même titre que Dieu...]*

The next expression shows how mothers, nay the society, treat children in respect to their positions as siblings; especially the male children.

But, Mother, why? Don't I have help too? Is it my fault that I am a second son, everything in this house is Oshia's. He must have the best of everything. ... sometimes I think we the rest of your children don't exist for you at all. (p.190)

*(Pour ce qui suit il s'agit de traitement des enfants par les mères voire la société vis-à-vis de leur rang).*

*(Mais mère, pourquoi ? Est-ce je n'ai pas droit à être aidé ? Est-ce ma faute d'être deuxième garçon ? Tout ce qui est dans cette maison appartient à Oshia (le premier garçon). Il a droit à tout ce qui est bon [...] Parfois je pense que nous autres, les restes de tes enfants ne comptent pas pour toi du tout.)*

The message relayed in that expression is that of succession plan and self-preservation, the male represents the symbol of the two; and the female admits that; and she is used to actualize it in her total effacement.

Here, under, it is how fathers see their sacrificing roles.

Nnaife pointed out to her that the children were her children. Will they remember me when I am old? No, they will remember only their mother [...] (p.202)

*(Ci-dessous, c'est dire comment les pères se voient comme des bêtes de somme.)*

*(Nnaife la fit savoir que les enfants l'appartiennent en tant que leur mère. Est-ce qu'ils vont être reconnaissants à moi quand je serai vieux ? Ils vont être reconnaissants qu'à leur mère).*

It is like, even, the so-called patriarchal system creates emotional depression in the male, as the male sees the children as future protectors of their mother, never the father.

Hereunder, it is the fate of both father and mother as they retreat from active life and expect children to come to their aid.

[...] But he was a broken man: and his wife Nnu Ego, similarly, was going downhill very fast. It was not because she was physically poor: her daughters sent help once in a while. However, what broke her was, month after month, expecting to hear from her son in America, and from Adim too who later went to Canada, and failing to do so. It was from rumors that she heard Oshia had married and that his bride was a white woman. (p.224)

*(Ci-dessous, il s'agit des sorts des deux parents en retraite.)*

*([...] Mais il était devenu foutu ; et sa femme Nnu Ego, aussi, perdait rapidement connaissance. Ce n'est pas parce qu'elle était pauvre ; ses filles venaient à son aide de temps en temps. Cependant, ce qui l'avait fait toquée était qu'elle espérait entendre au fil des mois, depuis Etats Unis, de son fils, et aussi de son deuxième fils qui finit par aller au Canada, et ils ne lui communiquaient plus. C'est à travers les rumeurs qu'elle apprit que Oshia s'était marié déjà et, qui est plus, à une Blanche [...])*

For a while Nnu Ego bore it all without reaction, until her senses started to give way [...] (p.224)

(Nnu Ego supporta ses rumeurs pour longtemps sans chercher à réagir jusqu'à commencer à perdre connaissance.) It is comparable with how Camara Laye's mother, in « *African Child* » sees it (1953, 197).

.... Ma mère remuait sur sa couche et se lamentait... « est-ce que la vie était ainsi faite, qu'on ne peut rien entreprendre sans payer tribut aux larmes?

([...] My mother was turning uncontrollably on her bed and was lamenting. Is it the way of life, that any undertaking seems a risk and must pay tribute to tears?)

She is lamenting the absence of her son for further studies and she is feeling that it is leading to a loss. However, in European circles, it sounds different.

Hear Aline (216 : 22) :

Mes fils sont mon monde. Ils sont devenus des êtres hors traditions. Mais pas hors balises. Mon fils cadet me dit : « seuls cinq pour cent des gens pensent et agissent comme toi ». Je suis désormais seule chez moi avec mon chat...seule à tourner en rond...ce n'est pas désagréable, mais ce n'est pas agréable non plus. C'est juste bizarre. J'ai perdu mes repères [...]

(My sons are my world. They have become human beings without traditional boundaries. Though they are not without a compass[...] The younger one tells me: "only five percent of people think and behave like you" [...] I am now alone in my house with my cat...Lonely, turning on myself [...] it is not uncomfortable, it is also not comfortable. It is like being queer. I have lost my bearings [...])

When you relate it with Aline, a white lady, not knowing the boundary of love and desire, and that of Nnu Ego, who knows less of desire than love and sacrifice, sustainability of human life seems lacking unanimity from the two ladies.

The heroines of Emecheta find themselves in such situations. They seem to carry it far, and get to the point of embarking on how to reclaim humanity from the precipice. Reading the next novel, *Destination Biafra*, one sees it in Miss Ogedengbe.

*Destination Biafra* (1982) seems to have the heroine who intended to carry family matters to a larger scale, an entire people or a collectivity of people as a country. The heroine, Debbie Ogedengbe whose father was killed as one of those serving in a

government that was seen as corrupt and who indeed despised her father for that , took it upon herself to face the direction of Biafra, a dissenting part of that country so as to persuade Abosi, the leader of the dissenting part that took up arms against the country , to abort his plans.

Emecheta paints in *Destination Biafra*, the likelihood of a destination to collective suicide for any society that sticks to a rigid or debasing culture, unmindful of restoring human dignity, as the requirement of dynamics of change obliges.

I had no choice. Did you know your father had to order that car just for today? Poor man! If he dies tomorrow, it 'll be his wealth that's killed him. I thought things would have changed. But no, even though the crowd today came in their best clothes, I saw that three-quarters of them had no proper shoes. While my father bought a car costing almost ten thousand pounds just to drive through that crowd. Do you know what I kept thinking? Suppose those people had decided to mob us? Oh, I feel so guilty about it all. (p.40)

*(Je n'avais aucun choix. Tu te rends compte, mon père a commandé cette voiture juste pour l'évènement d'aujourd'hui. Pauvre gars ! S'il meurt demain, ça sera sa richesse qui l'a occasionnée. J'ai cru que les choses auraient dû changer. Mais non, quoi que la foule présente aujourd'hui était bien habillée, j'ai vu que trois quart de cette foule manque des chaussures comme il se devait. Alors que mon père a acheté une voiture presque dix mille livre-sterling, pour rien que se faire apprécier par la foule, en passant en cortège. Tu sais ce qui se passait en moi ? Si par chance ces gens décident à nous lapider ? Oh, je sens si coupable dans tout cela) (p.40)*

The same disdain towards corrupt people, somehow condoned by the society which needed to change, is expressed by the heroine of Adichie (2013:76-79).

We also present the French version as translated by a French lady Anne Damour(2017: 117-123) in order to show a biased perspective of the original theme.

During the week, Auntu Uju hurried home to shower and wait for The General and on weekends, she lounged in her night-dress, reading or cooking and watching television, because The General was in Abuja with his wife and children[...] The first time Ifemelu saw Auntu Uju's house in Dolphin Estate, she did not want to leave[...] The General brought more than I needed in the house[...] Ifemelu stared, Auntu Uju in her big pink house with wide satellite dish blooming with diesel, her freezer stocked with meat and she did not have money in her bank account[...] You know, we live in an ass-licking

economy. The biggest problem in this country is not corruption. The problem is that there are many qualified people who are not where they supposed to be because they won't lick anybody's ass, or they don't know which ass to lick or they don't even know how to lick ass. I'm lucky to be licking the right ass. She smiled [...] I was attracted to him even with teeth like Dracula. I was attracted to his power [...]

*(Pendant la semaine , Tante Uju se dépêchait de rentrer à la maison pour prendre une douche et attendre le General, et le week-end elle trainait en chemise de nuit, lisait ou faisait la cuisine ou regardait la télévision, parce que le General était à Abuja avec sa femme et ses enfants [...] La première fois qu'Ifemelu vit la maison de Tante Uju à Dolphin Estate, elle ne voulut plus en repartir [...] Le Général a acheté plus qu'il n'en fallait à la maison[...] Ifemelu regarda Tante Uju, dans sa grande maison rose avec la grosse antenne parabolique qui sortait du toit, son générateur plein à ras bord de diesel, son congélateur rempli de viande et elle n'avait pas d'argent sur son compte en banque. [...] Tu sais, nous vivons dans une économie de lèche-culs. Le plus gros problème dans ce pays n'est pas la corruption. C'est qu'il y a une quantité des gens qualifiés qui ne sont pas là où ils devraient être ; parce qu'ils refusent de lécher le cul de qui que ce soit, ou qu'ils ne savent pas quel cul lécher, ou encore qu'ils ne sachent pas lécher un cul. J'ai la chance de lécher le cul qu'il faut. Elle sourit [...] J'étais attiré par lui, même avec ses dents de Dracula. (J'étais attiré par le pouvoir qu'il detient).*

The last sentence is a biased one in French. It shows how the translator, being a French lady, could not align her thought pattern to it; as the appropriate translation is the one we put in bracket. The tenses are not also used in their anteriority or posteriority agreement alignment; though that is not our interest here. In effect, they all show some sociological divergence of the theme and the version. Translation opens one's eyes to cross-cultural issues and the need for expected "adaptation" to fit structural social concerns—adaptation is a good technique used to create affinity among cultures. The eurocentric translator finds it difficult to clearly relate the scene – the underlined ones lead to “non-sens”.

The second expression from *Destination Biafra* reveals how multiple cultural interests clash in a war situation and gives impression of a frustrated heroine as well as brainwashed leadership manners seen in Africa.

We are in the bush, “Debbie began, “some of the children are dying... What is happening? - Nigerian soldiers and everyone here dancing? The old nun was joined by another nun, and for a while they listened to Debbie speaking. They had seldom heard Africans speak English that way. « Look you are not Ibo, what are you doing here?” the old woman asked. I was originally going to see Abosi...” But as she said it Debbie knew it sounded insane even to her own ears. The nun calmed her, gave her some water and told her that three days earlier the Biafran soldiers had fled, (with some convent girls and others who believe in Biafra). But the majority had stayed. After a while they had known that they could not hold Asaba and that it was a question of time the Nigerian soldiers came and bombarded the town [...] Anger which Debbie found difficult to control was fighting inside her. How could a foreigner ask her what she was doing in her own country? Because she was well-educated these do-gooders obviously did not expect her to soil fingers helping her own people. What hypocrisy! what a sham! Debbie could see about eight nuns milling about in their white habits—did these women really believe in what they were doing or did they still subscribe to the old idea of helping savages? [...] I must cross to Biafra”, Debbie told the mother superior. (p.222)

(Nous sommes dans la brousse, dit Debbie, des enfants meurent... Et qu'est ce qui se passe —les soldats nigériens ici sont en train de danser et tout le monde les joint ?La religieuse âgée a été joint par une autre et elles avaient écouté Debbie parler durant un moment. Elles avaient rarement entendu des Africains parler anglais de telle manière. Ecoutez, vous n'êtes pas Ibo, et que faites -vous ici ? demanda la femme âgée. « Au début, j'allais voir Abosi... » Mais en le disant Debbie reconnaissait qu'il semblait stupide, même à ses oreilles. La religieuse la fait calmer, lui donna de l'eau à boire et lui dit qu'il y a trois jours que les soldats biafrais s'étaient enfuis. Ceux qui croyaient toujours en Biafra s'en étaient allés avec eux y compris plusieurs filles de couvant. La majorité s'était restée. Au bout de temps ils étaient convaincus qu'ils ne pourraient pas retenir Asaba et qu'il était question de peu de temps et les soldats nigériens viendraient bombarder la ville [...] La colère que Debbie résistait en elle continuait à la hanter. Comment est-ce qu'une étrangère lui posait de question pour savoir ce qu'elle faisait dans son propre pays? Est-ce parce qu'elle était bien éduquée que ces soi-disant bienfaites se soient convaincues qu'on ne s'attendait pas d'elle de se souiller les mains pour secourir ses co-citoyens ? Quelle hypocrisie ! Quelle imposture! Debbie voyait au moins huit religieuses se promenaient en va et vient dans leurs robes blanches — croyaient-elles vraiment au service qu'elles rendaient ou encore nourrissaient—elles toujours l'idée d'autan à savoir: apporter d'aide aux sauvages ? Je dois rentrer au Biafra; dit Debbie à la mère supérieure...)

Trying to prove how cultures could be unfriendly to themselves if expressions are not adapted to suit their idiosyncrasies, the following expression shows it.

What annoys me most is that Momoh denies the fact that his soldiers are killing innocent civilians. The whole world knows that is not so. Are you sure the whole world knows?" Abosi asked Dr. Eze. « If they did know they couldn't be this indifferent." "They aren't indifferent. The Red Cross have units in the Mid-Western Ibo towns. I understand that our friend Grey is helping as well." Abosi smiled, fingering his beard which was beginning to have strands of grey in it. When he spoke, he spoke for all of them, "Alan Grey... Alan Grey. He is England in this war. He arranges mercenaries and arms to be sent to Momoh, then comes to Red Cross our people. He wants to fatten us up for the slaughter." He shook his head. "Some people have no conscience. This war is Britain's greatest shame. I hope the world never forgets that. (pp.228-229)

The encounter of Debbie and the Nuns shows how two cultural backgrounds are interpreted by the meeting of their people and how motherhood traits seem to unite in both Debbie and the Nuns quest for survival.

*(Ce qui m'énerve est que Momoh nie le fait que les soldats tuent les civils, innocents. Pourtant le monde entier sait qu'il n'est pas ainsi ? Es-tu sûr que le monde entier sait ? Abosi demanda à Dr. Eze. Si vraiment il sait il ne pourrait pas être si indifférent [...] Ils ne sont pas indifférents. La Croix Rouge a ses petits bureaux dans mi-ouest dans les villes des Ibos. J'ai appris que notre ami Grey nous aide aussi[...] Abosi sourit en caressant ses barbes qui commençaient à y avoir des blanches parsemées. Quand il parle, il parle pour tous. « Alan Grey...Alan Grey. Il est l'Angleterre à propos de cette guerre. Il fait l'arrangement des mercenaires et l'achat des armes qu'on envoie à Momoh, et puis la Croix Rouge pour nous. Il essaie de nous faire grossir pour la tuerie », il secoua sa tête. Des gens n'ont pas la conscience. Cette guerre est la plus grande honte de Grande Bretagne. Que le monde continue à se faire rappeler pour longtemps telle honte)*

The heroine shows her frustration in the expression below.

I see now that Abosi and his like are still colonized. They need to be decolonized. I am not like him, a black white man; I am a woman and a woman from Africa. I am a daughter of Nigeria and if she is in shame, I shall stay and mourn with her in shame. No, I am not ready yet to become the wife of an exploiter of my nation. You are mad, Debbie [...] Goodbye Alan [...] Oh, Abosi, I wish I had succeeded in killing you [...] A larger bomb exploded and Debbie swallowed more debris. (pp.258-259)

*La frustration de l'héroïne se manifeste à travers l'expression ci-dessous.*

*(Je vois maintenant que Abosi et ses consorts sont encore colonisés. Il en faut les décoloniser. Je ne suis pas comme lui. Un noir blanc, je suis femme et femme d’Afrique. Je suis une fille du Nigeria et reste telle, même si le Nigeria subit la honte je resterai pour essuyer et partager telle honte avec lui. [...] Non je ne suis pas prête à marier un exploitateur de ma nation. » ‘Tu es folle ; Debbie’ [...] Au revoir Alan [...] Oh, Abosi, si seulement mon souhait de te tuer aurait dû réussir [...] Plus grande bombe explosa et Debbie fut brouillée davantage des débris de bombe...)*

Getting to Biafra the heroine of Emecheta, Debbie, feels disappointed as she discovers that colonial past is still present in Biafra, as experience there turned an eye opener that should make her people rethink their stupidity—inviting strangers to help them supply materials to Nigeria nay Africa. King-Aribisala (2019:77) paints such social ills of African leaders, still leaning to the past and creating stupidity, as she narrates the attitude of Chief Oshodi, as well as the cultural references that needed to be reviewed for a better adaptation processes – either cultural or thought pattern processes.

There is a family in Lagos —Chief Oshodi, his wife and three children. They’ve been asking us to send an au-pair someone who will teach their children English... And English is your native tongue wince at the accident of it all. Columbus thought the Islands he saw with his mind’s eye was India. And so, he voiced his claim on them and called them the West Indies. And we are still living with the lie of a name on us. And speaking in our master’s voice.

This leads us to the survey of *The Rape of Shavi* (1983). It is also the exploitative expedition of the colonialists and as Emecheta paints it, leadership alter-ego, women, had to take position for the survival battle. In *The Rape of Shavi*, Emecheta seems to be narrating human beings in their stupid approach to nature. Like King-Aribisala says of Christopher Columbus claiming to have discovered the Islands in the Caribbean as if people there never existed before his arrival, so also the supposed leper creatures by Africans’ mind’s eyes landed in Shavi as they were running from the nuclear disaster they created in their own space. They landed as if their incubator—the airplane they fabricated to beat infection—hatched them when it was not due and so they crash-landed in Shavi. The hospitable Shavi people seem imbeciles to them while the Shavi people see them as leper creatures. The narrator in this novel attributes everything that happens to Shavi people to the goddesses of the lakes that bind the Shavi people as if in Caribbean

Islands, separated by lands in the Atlantic Ocean. Here, indeed, it is like other novels of Emecheta – the goddesses are female and they cause good or evil to happen, and the executors of their orders are male.

Hear some expressions:

Women! When they are angered, they forget how deeply they have loved. They throw all caution and reason into the empty air. They don't mind who they hurt in their search for justice. Patayon, who had loved Shoshovi, was suffering; Asogba, the son who would supersede him and who was borne to him by Shoshovi too. All for what? Simply because he wanted to celebrate the end of a long drought the way any ruler he knew would, by taking a new queen. Now troublesome Shoshovi wanted a cow [...] King Patayon gathered his loose body cloth and his wobbly body and ran. He ran in among the egbo trees, the tall cacti. [...] There he knelt; his face distorted with fear as he prayerfully addressed the lake [...]. Mother Ogene and all you goddesses of the lakes? [...]. I will give Shoshovi a cow. (pp.8-9)

*(Les femmes ! quand on les fait facher elles oublient comment elles ont eu à aimer autrefois. Elles s'en foutent ; et raison et prudence ne comptent plus. Elles s'en foutent de qui elles font du mal dans leur quête pour la justice. Patayon , qui a eu à aimer Shoshovi, en souffrait ; Asobga, le fils héritier et le fils né de Shoshovi , en souffrait aussi. Tout, pourquoi ? Simplement par ce qu'il (Patayon le roi) voulait célébrer la fin d'une longue sècheresse comme tout autre roi qu'il avait connu en aurait fait, en se convolant avec une nouvelle reine. Alors , trouble-fête Shoshovi voulait un bœuf.... Roi Patayon se leva en ramassant ses couvertures d'habille et son corps fatigué, et se mit à courir [...] vers le plus grand arbre de tous les lacs—le plus grand cacti[...] Là, il se mit à genoux, son visage tordu avec peur et avec prière, supplia au lac[...] mère Ogene et toutes les déesses de ces lacs... Je donnerai à Shoshovi un beouf... )*

That is the power women exercise in the society where Emecheta draws her décor. However, in Shavi's case, the peak of women's impatience is seen when strangers in the midst of Shavians mistake the hospitality of Shavians for that of imbecility. The strangers, in their confused minds, express that.

I know our problem; we simply find it difficult to accept kindness, Ista declared, looking unexpectedly happy. As Flip left, though he didn't know where they were going, and despite all the doubts, he felt he trusted the humanity of the people of Shavi. They had not acquired the art of superficial kindness. Their kindness was humane and genuine. (p.60)

*(Je connais notre problème, il nous est difficile d'apprécier la gentillesse, dit Ista , qui regardait avec joie, à bouche bée » [...] Comme Flip partait, et ne sachant pas où ils (avec des Shaviens) allaient , et pourtant avec beaucoup de doute , il pensait qu'il fallait quand -même avoir confiance en l'humanité de peuple de Shavi. Ce peuple ne feint pas la gentillesse. Leur gentillesse est humaine et sincère...)*

The hospitality of the Shavians was abused as one of the strangers could not control his sexual urge, in the midst of those the strangers perceived to be imbeciles, especially the female.

The girl turned, exposing her front and the blackness of her nipples, which stood out straight as if pointing at him, the effect of the cold water she had been pouring on herself. Ronje's eyes grew wide [...] The girl ran for the piece of cloth she had spread to cool in the dew and tied it around her waist. Then she saw who it was and laughed. Ronje laughed too[...] Ayoko should not have laughed, displaying his teeth so innocently, but she'd never been taught that this kind of teasing could be taken seriously. There had been no need to protect Ayoko, for since her birth she'd been chosen to be Asogba's wife, the next Queen Mother of Shavi. Shavi people gave of their best to visitors, so she and Shoshovi, the present Queen Mother, had looked after the albinos when they arrived (p.93)

*(La fille tourna, exposant son front et les points noirs de ses mamelons qui restèrent bien pointus comme visant Ronje, en réaction à l'eau froide qu'elle se faisait verser sur son corps. Les yeux de Ronje s'élargirent [...] La fille se précipita pour prendre le pagne qu'elle avait laissé étaler dans la rosée et le prit pour couvrir sa taille : en voyant qui, il s'agit, elle rit. Ronje rit aussi de retour[...] Ayoko (la fille) n'aurait pas dû rire, exposant ses dents toute innocente, mais elle n'avait jamais reçu des leçons qui devaient lui dire que tel amusement ne devait être pris au sérieux. Aucune raison de songer à protéger Ayoko car depuis sa naissance elle fut choisie pour être la femme de Asogba, la prochaine Mère-Reine de Shavi. Les gens de Shavi donnent toujours leurs meilleurs aux étrangers, alors elle et Shoshovi l'actuelle Mère -Reine, avaient eu à s'occuper de ces Albinos à leur arrivée.)*

The naïve or natural way of feeling free among fellow humans, especially by the female folks who are very helpful and always willing to help their kinds in need, failed to apprehend the difficult nature of libidinal surge that could lead to animalistic behaviours.

It is also unthinkable that a human being that perceives another human being as imbecile could ever think of having sexual relationship with an imbecile. Well, the current world where sexual orientations of people are to be regarded as personal to them, especially in the West, queer or fetish sexual behaviours seem to be overlooked.

[...] Ronje fell on her and, in less than ten minutes, took from the future Queen of Shavi what the whole of Shavi stood for. [...] Ayoko did not look back. She walked straight to her mother's house, for this problem was one that was beyond her and she suspected that, despite all her father's authority, this was a problem that would be beyond him as well. In cases of this kind, women should stick together (pp.94-95)

*L'hospitalité a été bafouée, car ces étrangers ne trouvent pas les manières hospitalières des Shaviens comme normales. Or, l'un d'eux croyant en face d'imbécile n'arrivait pas à contrôler ses désirs sexuels; et pourtant comment stimuler un désir sexuel, devant quelqu'une vue comme imbécile reste impensable. Le monde connaît mieux, autrement, à présent, avec des penchants sexuels dits bizarres ou fétiches.*

This expression and its decor make Emecheta's work more of a nature sustainability minded work than feminist work. First, the albinos were running away from the problems they created in their own natural abode (maybe climate problem). Second, they find solace in Shavi's protection. Third, they needed to respect nature's disposition towards the Shavians and they failed to do that; and, so, women rose to the occasion to protect theirs – the males and the land, feeling that the males cannot handle it.

*([...] Ronje plonge sur elle et à moins de dix minutes, déroba la future Reine de Shavi tout ce que les gens de Shavi respectaient [...] Ayoko n'est pas à regarder derrière. Elle marcha tout droit à la maison de sa mère ; car ce problème était énorme pour elle et elle soupçonna aussi que l'autorité de son père n'empêche, ce problème le dépassait aussi. Dans des cas comme celui là, les femmes en valaient mieux rester solidaire...)*

The war of women, especially when they see abomination in the land they work hard to keep safe of all spiritual or human destruction for their progenitors, is ignited here.

Ronje didn't reckon with the force of the women of Shavi, Shoshovi, Siegbo, Iyalode and the older palace queens, who had all gone to the Ogene lakes to make a pact to silence. A dog that bit a human must be put down. There was only one concession – if Ronje did not appear on the same spot within the next seven days, they would know that he had

repented. Then they would meet again and think of their next strategy. Meanwhile Shoshovi urged everybody to bring their fishing nets. So, early the following morning, the older women of Shavi, with Iyalode the bald priestess of Ogene, went out in the dark, cold morning, to the same spot [...] Ronje felt neither the touch of dew in the air, nor the mist, nor the cold. [...] He jogged, oblivious of the calamity he had caused and the calamity he was soon to face. When he thought he heard something move, he stopped running and started to call gently, “Ayoko, Ayoko, come out of hiding” [...] Ronje turned to go. Then he felt himself falling, hitting his head on one of the protruding rocks. For a few seconds, he lost consciousness. Then pains like needles started to shoot through the whole of his body and he saw himself in a net, and hooded figures dragging behind him. [...] They made sure that the net was tight, so that there was no way for Ronje to escape, without outside help. They didn’t beat him, or club him, or say any word to him, they simply left him there for the desert vultures, turned back mutely and went to their homes.” (pp.106-108)

*C'est de la manière que l'urgence est traitée, parmi les femmes du lieu. Surtout quand il s'agit de garder la santé spirituelle du lieu où elles gardent avec prudence pour que leurs enfants et grands enfants d'avenir se sentent saufs. A travers l'histoire, ce qui pousse les femmes à révolter, surtout les femmes africaines, c'est quand elles sentent l'ignominie à éviter pour sauver la spiritualité de leur ménage, surtout la vie de l'homme et l'enfant.*

*Ronje ne prenait pas au sérieux le pouvoir des femmes de Shavi, Shoshovi, Siegbo, Iyalode et les reines les plus âgées du palais, qui s'étaient allées aux lacs d'Ogene pour nouer un pacte de silence. Un chien qui mord un être humain doit être éliminé. Une seule concession se permet pourtant—que Ronje ne se présente pas au même lieu en sept jours, alors elles sauraient qu'il a repenti. S'il arrive ainsi qu'il soit repenti, elles se réuniraient de nouveau et penseraient à une autre stratégie à suivre. Pour le moment, Shoshovi a demandé à ce que toutes les femmes se présentent avec leurs filets de pêche. [...] Alors, le matin bonheurs du lendemain, les femmes plus âgées de Shavi avec Iyalode la prêtresse chauve d'Ogene prirent le chemin dans la nuit, un matin froid, au même endroit [...] Ronje ne sentait même pas la rosée bourrée dans l'air ni le brouillard ni le froid [...] Il faisait petits trots, sans tenir compte du désastre qu'il a commis et du désastre qui l'attendait ensuite. Quand il croyait avoir entendu quelque chose qui bougeait, il s'était arrêté à courir et avait commencé à appeler à voix douce, « Ayoko, Ayoko, sors de ta cachette » [...] Ronje se tourna pour s'en aller. Puis il sentait qu'il tombait et cognait la tête sur l'un des rochés pointus. Dans quelques secondes il perdit la connaissance.*

*Ensuite, il commença à sentir des douleurs comme des épines de par son corps entier, et il se vit dans un filet de pêche tiré par des gens à capuchon derrière lui [...] Elles s'étaient assurées que le filet de pêche était bien serré pour ne donner aucun moyen à Ronje de s'échapper sans aide venant d'ailleurs. Elles ne l'avaient pas battu ni l'avait matraqué ou même lui avaient dit un mot. Elles l'avaient laissé tout simplement aux vautours du désert de s'en occuper et s'étaient retournées à leurs maisons tranquillement).*

The main female characters in this Shavi kingdom—Shoshovi and Ayoko—had worked hard to sustain the kingdom with great expectations of progress, but it turned out a herculean task; as the abomination caused by the Albino people, or mainly Ronje, remained long in haunting them.

In effect, the plot of *Emecheta* seems to give a pride of place to women in the society as if they are better endowed to see beyond the physical what ought to matter most for the future. It is like the expression of Adichie (2013: 94), to a modern male friend.

You'll say anything now because your brain is between your legs [...] But my brain is always there...

Anne Damour's translation in Adichie (2017 :146) put it thus: Tu dis n'importe quoi en ce moment parce que tu as le cerveau entre les jambes[...] mais mon cerveau est toujours là!

The translation is a mere literal translation as it could be 'non-sens' for young French people. However, it corroborates the point that women are more focused in pursuing their interest than men; even if it is immediate interest with unknown remote consequences; and that they seem to have better state of mind than men when negotiating for sexual act.

The drought went on for another two months and many more people died. Asogba became the king of Shavi, [...] He finally got married to Ayoko since Shoshovi was sure that time had cured the syphilis which she had caught from Ronje. But Shoshovi was wrong, time couldn't eradicate the albino disease. Ayoko passed it to Asogba and though he had two more wives after her none of them had children. (p.177)

*(La sècheresse continua et dura encore deux mois, et beaucoup plus de gens moururent. Asogba devint roi de Shavi[...] il épousa par finir Ayoko car Shoshovi était sure que le temps eut à guérir la syphilis qu'elle souffra émanant de Ronje [...] Il s'était avéré que Shoshovi se trompait et que le temps n'eut pas à réussir à éliminer la maladie émanant d'Albino. Ayoko la passa à Asogba et même quand il eut à épouser deux autres femmes après Ayoko, aucune de ces femmes n'eut à réussir à faire des enfants).*

Like most of Emecheta's heroine, the end had always been tragic. However, studying Mariama Bâ's heroine, Adebayo (2009: 22) sees it as enabled by the "double blind" phenomenon women find themselves in Africa.

The issue of the "double blind" is clearly explicated in the experiences of heroine of the Senegalese, Mariama Bâ's [...]Ramatoulaye's reminiscences are those of the modern educated woman, whose travails are by products of the society's sexist norm. She lives in a society which sees women as the minority without rights, which sees women's work as no work despite the fact that the woman is "first up in the morning, last to go to bed, always working.

To Emecheta, in reality, as modernity proposes, it is a line-up struggle for survival, which in some cases liberates the mind from the intent of societal self-induced or entrapped slavery. As she puts it: "my books are about survival" (2019: 22).

Gabi-Williams (2019: 22) says:

In a recommendation of any of Buchi Emecheta's works, what I would tell a non-African reader or a reader new to Africa, is to look for the way her village born characters are no more at home than the reader is, in the urban Nigerian settings in which she has placed them[...]Africans confronting problems born of colonization with its new and difficult languages(French, English, Spanish, Portuguese), its new and difficult ways of doing virtually everything. See yourself in Africans confronted by the tensions and conflicts of the human condition around race, migration, gender...slavery freedom, oppression all forms of poverty and civil war.

In summary, the heroines of Emecheta admit that from family proceeds the greater society. However, whether the family is to be patriarchal or matriarchal is not necessarily the debate; as both men and women in the family set-up have their limitations and are constrained by the direction of the societal economic values. Though it is seen as the man's world but those who hold the leash—unseen one—

are the women either as goddesses or in connivance with the assured mouthpiece of the society, mostly men.

In general, the society is conscious of how tomorrow will be but the man and woman in it are interested in being enabled by its economic provision to act altruistically or hedonistically depending on either living as couples for loose companionship or living truly as soul-mates in love. Like Balzac (2006: 38) put it: « une mère veut bien penser exclusivement à son enfant, mais elle ne veut pas se le voir préférer » (A mother in deed wants to think completely about her child but she does not want the child to be preferred to her) (life does not start afresh; once started, fill it with pleasurable events; and raising children for responsibility in the society is an enduring pleasure event). To Emecheta's heroines, that pleasure amounts to seeing children live, or seeing the society enjoy freedom; even if at the sacrifice of women; which gives room to thinking that quasi-altruism is the preferred attitude of women, or what Adebayo described as “double blind” disposition.

The presentation of ours, here, has avoided approaching the analysis from feminist perspective as Emecheta's plot seems to be more of social issues backgrounded, or existential issues backgrounded, than feminist or gender issues; and they agree more with socialist tendency as seen in Woods (2017: 46).

For thousands of years, culture has been the monopoly of a privileged minority, while the great majority of humanity was excluded from knowledge, science, art and government. Even now, this remains the case [...] Life remains a harsh and unrelenting struggle to exist for the great majority [...].

In effect, it is how Emecheta's heroines approach the world and it could not be far from why Adichie, earlier on cited, sees the majority among the majority as all feminists, so as to keep the struggle going and have the world exit from “barbarism”. History had always recorded the “minority” oppressing the “majority”; and that minority calls the majority barbarians.

So, it is a self-restraint society that Emecheta's heroines thrive in. In effect, for their concern for the success of the society, they either serve as “sacrificial lambs”, or operate

in revolt to orchestrate change. In all, it is aimed at repositioning, well, those who must pick the relay baton for the perpetual existence of the society. It is not exactly how most of her Francophone counterparts see it, as those presented in this analysis either care less of who the relay baton falls on, or what the other assumed oppressors—any gender at all—make of the lives of their heroines, as life turns quasi-hedonistic, if not outright hedonism.

See that in the marriage patterns of the French Presidents—Mitterand and his hidden mistress, Sarkozy and his multiple marriages, Holland and Royale in their cohabitation. The women in the lives of these presidents are like Emecheta's heroines. Emecheta sees herself as the “come-back” of her father's mother, the African reincarnation myth obliges. It creates a binding love between father and daughter to an extent that a father expects excellence in her daughter. Just like any woman who has been enabled to succeed by the paternal insistence of “be brave”. For the heroines, accommodating their partners is like love received from father. Hence even in the patriarchal situation, a father still sees in the daughter the hope of continuity. Even when given out for marriage, the daughter still remains mindful of her father's baton relay pursuit; both in flesh and in spirit, it turns out a struggle in “double blind”; father and husband need the daughter or wife to ensure continuity of the clan.

## **Conclusion**

Google put out a doodle to celebrate Buchi Emecheta's (OBE)75<sup>th</sup> birthday on 21<sup>st</sup> July 2019. It goes to show how acknowledged her works are. She was not so celebrated in Nigeria at the time she transited on the 25<sup>th</sup> January 2017. This presentation had attempted to use sociocritique approach to analyse her selected works so as to make further translation of her works be put in better perspective; especially to the Francophonie audience who had mostly appreciated women writers from Africa in their midst on mostly feminist perspective. Our critique of authors like Chimamanda Adichie as translated by Mona Pracontal and Anne Damour shows that, aspect of translation that adopts feminist critique views, somehow, does not receive unanimity of thought patterns from both Anglophone and Francophone societies in Africa. Hence, it is quite necessary

to adopt a socio-critique approach, that is more structural, as per the original themes of the women writers. Indeed, bilingual or even multilingual comparison is necessary, hence the need for comparative literary approach, also, in analysing societal issues; as globalisation does not mean the end of local initiatives or the end of remote and yet unexposed cultures; and they abound in Africa that is yet viewed as “marginal” continent in view of its meagre contribution to the world’s economy—2%; just merely because its resources are taken out in raw forms to be re-packaged and distributed to larger world in presumed “civilised” finished forms. Nigeria, as example, could produce, raw, 3 million barrels of crude oil a day, paid for at a very low price, and the same crude oil could produce a value chain of products that amount to 1000 times the price of the raw crude exported. The same way the views of African writers and artists are wrongly projected, and it is seen in most colonial translation of their works as well as how “elliptic” the translation pattern or critic pattern is. The term elliptic is used here to express how some important messages or imaginary value contents of the African writers are treated with disdain or contempt; either to stop their spread for the benefits of the “oppressor” or to term them barbaric. Translations of Pracontal and Damour show some of these aspects.

Hence, in this digital era, it is necessary to initiate documentary processes that could create awareness of some elliptic features of African writers so as to have them be re-opened for further interactional debates towards adopting them as digitally storable knowledge, and to create localization windows for them. In effect, this presentation identifies in bilingual terms (English and French) sentential or phrasal items that could be configured on platforms for the Digital Humanities’ discipline. Such items are expected from works of African writers towards making human beings read and appreciate the entire human race for an enduring and sustainable peace on earth. For Hugo (2010, vii), « l’aventure romantique c’est bousculer la puissance du verbe (...) les livres sont là pour nous réveiller de notre paresse ». Hugo sees everything in creative writing as capable of re-establishing a new order and new way of thinking, and it has been seen, as the disease of Coronavirus-19 (covid-19) could not have had a better psychological handling process than what the creative literatures had created, in their concerns of the effects of loneliness as well as those portrayed in human inhumanity to human; they abound in literatures of the middle ages to 20<sup>th</sup> century. Translation process makes their consumption very fast

and wide. What is more, it is necessary and enduring to have them in digital forms. The current digitalisation process of knowledge is valuable in helping to know how the heroines of Emecheta find it difficult to create a wedge for societies' self-inflicted pains, hence double-blind disposition of either progress or cautious living, to keep the family life going. In effect, ability to relate expressions in context and in comparative contexts as part of locating expressions in their relative contexts in another languages, as translation adaptation refers in the languages of the world, or languages of wider spread, could lead to the appreciation of the African female and her quest for a better world. Localisation discipline obliges. Even when you speak or read English and French as mother tongue, they have grown beyond mother tongue space and they are used as languages for expressing local and ephemeral conditions beyond Europe.

The survival conundrum as projected by the heroines of Emecheta from childhood till their dawn lives, is instructive for human race survival. Covid-19 just exposed that. *Allez-savoir* (2015: 54) hinted it, as researchers proved, that before antibiotics were produced, virus culturing was the best approach for combating bacteria. Some of African women writers' approach could be seen, one day, as better in combating debauchery. However, just like resistance of diseases to antibiotics is also a survival conundrum between bacteria or virus and their hosts, as they re-adjust for their survival. In effect human survival, as painted by Emecheta, could be painful as well as exhilarating; it is a conundrum involving a dialectic process—pain as well as joy; just like adjusting with mask wearing and physical distancing to survive Covid-19.

Terminology discipline needs to produce a discourse in that line to serve as a tool for Translation to align, effectively, the localisation platforms on such divide so as to project cultural renewal or dynamics that could help humanity come to relative high index of happiness, as other existential issues crop up in the journey to relative happiness of humanity, described in other dialectics as Singularity and Nightfall. Though in Emecheta's world, it is women demanding of men double strength of mind and physique while men demand of women double strength of nurture and nature – mother and comforter. Both of them struggling in the double tragi-comedy of joy and pain so as to sustain humanity. From African proverb's perspective, it is ever conscious disposition of

having the stone to sharpen the knife for ever greater productive performance. However, between the genders, are roles swappable to be either stone or knife as circumstances dictated by epiphenomena, occasioned by changing world, called for?

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