

Social Justice and Peace in Navarre Scott Momaday's *House Made of Dawn*

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Abstract

This article analyzes how Navarre Scott Momaday's *House Made of Dawn* outlines the mechanisms to achieve social justice as this contemporary world is confronted to social turmoil. In a world, more and more balkanized in terms of political, social and religious bases, literature purvey strata to solve such a complex equation that aims at bringing people to mutual understanding. In *House Made of Dawn*, an analysis of cultural values, language and religion leads us to discover the mechanisms to achieve peace. We will soon discover that by means of justice, the promotion of social values, cultural cohabitation that inevitably results in hybridity, people of different cultures and origins can befriend themselves and create a better world.

Keywords: social justice – social values – peace - hybridity –pan humanism – unity

Résumé

Cet article analyse comment *House Made of Dawn* de Navarre Scott Momaday décrit les mécanismes pour parvenir à la justice sociale alors que ce monde contemporain est confronté aux bouleversements sociaux. Dans un monde de plus en plus balkanisé en termes de bases politiques, sociales et religieuses, la littérature fournit des strates pour résoudre une équation aussi complexe qui vise à amener les gens à se comprendre. Dans *House Made of Dawn*, une analyse des valeurs culturelles, de la langue et de la religion nous amène à découvrir les mécanismes pour parvenir à la paix. Nous découvrirons bientôt qu'à travers la justice, la promotion des valeurs sociales, la cohabitation culturelle qui aboutit inévitablement à l'hybridité, des personnes de cultures et origines différentes peuvent se lier d'amitié et créer un monde meilleur.

Mots clés: Justice sociale – valeurs sociales – paix - hybridité – pan humanisme - unité

INTRODUCTION

The rapid development of the contemporary world is sometimes contrasted by serious events that compromise the ideal of peace. Almost all spheres of this world are scrutinized, studied and most of the times understood and explained to the public. Technological advancement, military achievements and space explorations have dramatically changed the world, and with it, human perception. However, decades of scientific progress did not contribute in wiping out our basic needs. Worse, those essential needs are sometimes

threatened by human actions. A rapid glance at news all over the world makes one realize two things. The first one is that misunderstandings, conflicts, and wars of all kinds dominate our daily lives. The second one, closely related to the first, is the necessity to attain peace, which is the truest need and at this time the most difficult political and societal challenge.

The contemporary political and social atmosphere in United States of America, the relation between white supremacists' movements, murders of black people (namely George Floyd and Jacob Blake) opposed to other Blacks' movements like "Black Lives Matter", racism, seen and unseen violence, make one realize that peace has either vanished or at best, is an extremely fragile thing.

The present study aims at reading Navarre Scott Momaday's *House Made of Dawn* in order to decipher the mechanisms or strategies to achieve peace. Another objective is to scrutinize justice, be it social or not, as an important layer of achieving peace. The novel depicts how the settlement of the New Land by Europeans was far from being a lovely partnership with local people, Native Americans. After many decades of war between the settlers and their hosts, one can legitimately inquire about the social relationship between Whites and Indian Americans since the end of the war when Indian tribes were all "defeated" by the white colonizer. It is in such a context *House Made of Dawn* describes the conflictual relationship between Whites and Native Americans. The novel also develops many aspects or strategies whereby peace and social justice can be achieved. Thus, in which ways does Scott Momaday's *House Made of Dawn* enhances mechanisms to achieve social justice and peace

In that respect, this study intends to provide a social contribution by enhancing standards that could help the world towards the noble objective peaceful cohabitation between human beings in general, and between Native Americans and White Americans in particular

The present study will make use of postmodernism as a theoretical tool to analyze the ideals of peace. One of the functions of postmodernism is to help cross boundaries between entities previously considered as different or even opposed. As a theoretical tool, not only does it help cross boundaries, but it also establishes bridges between different entities.

Scott Momaday's *House Made of Dawn* dramatizes two conflictual races, people, cultures and ideologies. However, beyond all the rhetorical description of injustices white settlers inflicted to indigenous people, the novel is a plea for peace (verify the structure of the sentence). Three important factors have caught our attention in the narrator's quest for peace.

First, we intend to analyze the mechanisms of social justice and cultural values. The relation between Indians' cultural values and the search for peace is at stake. Second, we intend to analyze how the example of Indian and White cultural cohabitation, though tumultuous at the beginning, can be a model to follow in the contemporary world. Last, the narrator's discourse seems to be another crucial factor for peace seeking.

1. Justice and Social Values

The will to move from a conflictual position to a peaceful one necessarily needs a kernel of justice: social justice. In the case of Native Americans and the white people, injustices endured by indigenous people need to be repaired. It is the same for any society where peace is an objective, injustices have to be wiped out. Next, there is the promotion of social values, that appear to be universal are important as well.

Social justice is an important foundation in people's quest for peace. Such a noble goal requires the minimum fairness between people of different cultural heritages as that objective is discussed in *House Made of Dawn*. On the one hand, social justice should be established as far as Indians' cultural heritage is concerned. The narrator recalls such injustices Indian communities were victims of: land misappropriation, cultural destruction, stereotypes and worst several situations of homicides and maybe genocides. By denouncing those practices, the narrator pleads for the re-establishment of truth and justice. Like Momaday's *House Made of Dawn*, most Indian writers like Paula Gunn Allen, Leslie Marmon Silko and James Welch have denounced injustices their people suffered from. As a matter of fact, in *Ceremony*, two central characters, Betonie and Tayo discuss the need for justice as far as the hijack of their cultures and land is concerned. By calling the white settlers liars and thieves, they do not seek to verbally abuse their neighbors. However, they simply call "a spade a spade". Achieving social peace undeniably supposes the establishment of truth and justice as well as reparation. In this context, as Native Americans' lands should be restituted as they were unjustly dispossessed from them.

Making people of different cultural heritages work together could create new opportunities and perspectives. Joanna Hearne sees in the filmmaking a chance to bring people to the same ground. She writes:

What sets *House Made of Dawn* apart from other films of its time is that both the story and the circumstances of its production—the location shooting and casting of Native actors—come from tribally specific and cross-cultural perspectives. There is a deep connection between equity in film production and the images on screen; in *House Made of Dawn*, Native actors and writers, working collaboratively with non-Native filmmakers, are activists staging an occupation and reinvention of urban, reservation, and cinematic landscapes. (Hearne, 2005, 3)

That comes as the ultimate objective of the *House Made of Dawn*, which is to bring people together regardless of their origins. Better, people's differences should be the key reason of uniting rather than quarrelling. By establishing equality and equity on cinematographic level, Joanna Hearne believes that the so precious social cohesion will be met.

Pan-humanism is an ideology that can contribute to bringing people together. Indian American cultures play that important function in *House Made of Dawn*. That aspect is seen through the description of deeds of the Eagle Watchers Society to which the protagonist, Abel, belongs. Hospitality is a feature of humanism for welcoming people whatever their origins and social statuses. It denotes a respect for human being. That is what the Eagles Watchers Society do for people, described as strangers and afflicted. The Bahkyush

immigrants face war and despair and are forced to flee their land and possessions. The chief of the Society decides to show his people the way by escorting the visitors himself to a house. The narrative discourse describes how the *patrones* welcome strangers:

These distant relatives [the *patrones*] who took them [the Bahkyush immigrants] in at the risk of their own lives and the lives of their children and grandchildren. It is said that the cacique himself went out and escort the visitors in. The people of the town must have looked narrowly at those stricken souls who walked slowly toward them, wild in their eye with grief and desperation. (Momaday, 1968, 14-5)

The passage describes the openhandedness of the *patrones* because they overlook the risks of hospitality for them and for their offspring. It also shows the community's commitment in ensuring a peaceful sojourn to people in despair. The chief also refers to the immigrants not as strangers but as distant relatives. The point shows an interconnection between all human beings. Thus, superficial differences like physical traits and cultural practices are mere details.

Hospitality is also described as a cultural value leading to peace in Momaday's famous novel. Santiago is a mythical figure in *House Made of Dawn* who achieves heroic and mythic actions. He disguises during his trips to hide his real identity. Santiago appears to a poor family, which barely has enough to eat. However, even in an uncomfortable social condition, the family welcomes him and even offers him their only possession of value: an aged rooster. The narrator describes people whose generosity surpasses their poverty:

They were poor and miserable people, but they were kind and gracious, too, and they bade Santiago welcome. They gave him cold water to slake his thirst and cheerful words to comfort him. There was nothing in the house to eat; but a single aged rooster strutted back and forth in the yard. The rooster was their only possession of value, but the old man and woman killed and cooked it for their guest. That night they gave him their bed while they slept on the cold ground. (Momaday, 1968, 34)

The legend of Santiago helps understand how culture is far beyond individual people and wealth. It also shows that generosity towards other people regardless of their origin and physical appearances is a guarantee to achieving social cohesion and therefore peace. They did not care whether their visitors were well intentioned or not.

Hospitality is also perceived in Welch's novel *Winter in the Blood*. The novel describes two Indian bands coming together as they decide to share the same living place for a winter long. In order to celebrate their meeting and new friendship, they would name the place of their encounter as "Little Badger" for the future generation to remember. The narrator shows that Indians hold friendship in a high esteem:

The two bands had decided to winter together and settled in to wait for the first wind out of the north. The days remained hot but nights came colder. Fires dotted the campsite, and in the middle, around a larger fire, men sat and talked and played stick game late into the night. A feast celebrated their coming together, and for three days the old lady, then a girl, wailed with the women around the perimeter of jogging hunters. (Welch, 2008, 29)

People are described in their maturity to make decisions that serve the interests of their respective communities as they decided to come together. They stick to each other in order to

efficiently face natural adversity like “hot suns” and “cold nights” both on the figurative and proper meanings. Remembrance, which is direct consequence of friendship, therefore appears to be another factor that brings people together.

Indian cultures are based on social cohesion. Peace is one of the most important factors of development. It guarantees the well-being of people. Indians understand that nothing sustainable can be built without the minimum of peace between people. Feasts are methods many Indian communities use to gather people notwithstanding of their differences. The Feast of Santiago is one of those methods in *House Made of Dawn*. The feast of Santiago makes no distinction as some characters of white ancestry like Father Olguin and Angela are invited. Sharing the same geographical space, eating together, chatting and laughing reinforces social relations between people. Therefore, beyond the celebration of Santiago for his heroism, people create new affinities for their own benefit. Betty E. S. Duran posits: “tribal ritual and ceremonial practices provide a code for ethical behavior and social organization which contribute to a meaning of life. It also provides a means for intervening in individual or social dysfunction” (Duran, 2002, 2). To her, traditional ceremonies permit to create harmony and solve possible problems between people.

Unity is one of the direct consequences of hospitality and social cohesion. The Kiowa in *House Made of Dawn* are in perfect relation with other tribes and even races thanks to traditional meetings and celebration they hold together. Tosamah describes the house of his mother as one made of joy and hospitality:

My grandmother lived in a house near the place where Rainy Mountain Creek runs into the Washita River. Once there was a lot of sound in the house, a lot of coming and going, feasting and talk. The summers were full of excitement and reunion. The Kiowas are a summer people; they abide the cold and keep to themselves, but when the season turns and the land becomes warm and vital they cannot hold still. (Momaday, 1968, 118)

The Kiowas welcome people from their outside world. Those people have seen war, they are compassionate with the victims. They help them cope with their pain by preparing “meals that were banquets” (Momaday, 1968, 35). Beyond the literal meaning of a house, it is the conception of the society as a house that is highlighted. People are considered as living in the same house and thus belonging to the same family.

Prayers are means whereby social and universal cohesion is achieved. To attain that noble objective, Native Americans organize prayer meetings. In *House Made of Dawn*, Tosamah remembers that during his childhood, “there were frequent prayer meetings, and great nocturnal feasts.” (Momaday, 1968, 119) That brings the notion of joining forces for the same objective. Principally, prayer meetings create unity between people of the community. Tarrell A. A. Portmana and Michael T. Garrett mention how prayer meetings create harmony between people and with the universe. To Indians, people must be united with one another and with the universe. They are part of a system they refer to as “relation”. To them, meetings go beyond creating concord between human beings only. It also concerns animals and deities. They write:

Central to Native traditions is the importance of “relation” as a total way of existing in the world and in community. The concept of family extends to brothers and sisters in the animal world, the plant world, the mineral world, Mother Earth, Father Sky, and so on. The power of relation is symbolised by the Circle of Life (sometimes also referred to as the Web of Life), which is commonly represented through the customs, traditions, and art forms of Native people. The Circle is considered by Native Americans to reflect the interrelationship of all living beings and the natural progression or growth of life itself. (Portmana, 2006, 461)

Religion or spirituality helps create and preserve social cohesion. Coreligionists are more likely to develop stronger relations and in abiding by religious principles, they are likely to accept and respect different religious principles for a nonviolent society.

2. From Cultural Cohabitation to Cultural Hybridity

Cultural cohabitation is an important layer that can possibly lead to peace. In fact, white and Indian cultures as presented in *House Made of Dawn* are almost diametrically opposed. On the one hand, white people are mostly concerned with the acquisition of wealth, properties, luxuries, big cars and big houses. The capitalistic European world is easily transposed in the New Land with no regards to the context. On the other hand, Indians are nature-based. Closely connected to their natural environment, they consider it as their mother and most important spiritual being.

Despite limitless conflicts between the two communities, mostly due to cultural misunderstandings, the narrator calls not for war, but for peace. An important character, Napoleon-kill-in-the-Timber summarizes the conflictual situation by putting the blame on the two communities. In so doing, he implicitly recognizes their responsibilities (though unseen) as far as the social unrest is concerned. Instead of blaming it on Whites, though they had their responsibility, he makes a mea culpa. He says:

We been bad long time ‘go, just raise hell an’ kill each others all the time. An’ that’ why you ‘bandon us, turn your back on us. Now we pray to you for help. Help us! We been suffer like hell some time now. Long, long time ago we throw it in the towel. Gee whiz, we want be frens with white mans. Now I talk to you, Great Spirit. Come back to us! (Momaday, 1968, 100)

Napoleon Kills-in-the-Timber reveals the real motives of people’s sufferings. The responsibility is shared as no one is innocent when they started killing each other. By identifying the two communities as responsible of the conflictual situation, he calls them to adopt peaceful behavior. These words have echo in the innumerable wars and genocides the world has been confronted to so far. Thus, the world depicted by the character of Napoleon is one of sorrow, despair and solitude because the spirits abandoned them. They will renew with peace and quietude alliance when friendship is established between all the people.

In addition, religion is one of the major aspects in any culture and religious tolerance is one of the features of social peace. Religious tolerance is perceived through traditional ceremonies. The ceremony Tosamah performed teaches the scholar about the urge to cultural exchange. As Tosamah, Priest of the Sun and Son of Hummingbird wanted to perform his ceremony, his celebrants alongside with him showed signs of cultural and religious tolerance

and peaceful ideas towards their former enemies. Cristóbal Cruz, the firefighter prayed for peace: “I jes’ want to pray out loud for prosper’ty an’ worl’ peace an’ brotherly love. In Jesus’ name. Amen.” (Momaday, 1968, 100) His invocation of the name of Jesus who is the leading figure of the white man’s religion (Christianity) is without equivoque; he is willing to associate the power of the white man’s religion to his own. It is only then, he believes, they can achieve peace and brotherly love he is praying for. Man Keung Ho states that the importance of religion in both Whites’ and Indians’ lives are no more to be demonstrated. He rather emphasizes that Christianity and Indian religious practices have helped Whites and Indians alike. He postulates:

Both American Indian tribal and Christian religions play an important part in the lives of American Indian people. Religion is incorporated into their being from the time of conception, when many tribes perform rites and rituals to ensure the delivery of a healthy baby, to death ceremonies, where great care is taken to promote the return of the person’s spirit to the life after this one. American Indians who speak their native language tend to maintain their religious ceremonies, customs, and traditions. They also have more trust in their native people for physical and mental health needs than in Anglo medical doctors or family therapists. (Ho, 74, 1987)

Man Keung Ho sustains that Christianity and Indian religions do not exclude one another. The existence of one does not suppose the inexistence of the other. Indian Americans are anyway, and naturally, more trustful to their ancestral practices. Ernie Peters brilliantly draws the Indian religious practices and Christianity together. He advances that the Indian Religion has no name because it is part of all Indian life. Before the coming of the New People. He argues: “this was our paradise, right here in America. Everything natural comes from God and is made by Him. God is in you and part of you. The Bible and our own religion are closely related. The only difference is that we practice and live ours every day.” (Qtd in Peters, 1979, 1) Cultural cohabitation, in this case that of religion, appears to be a means whereby people can better understand each other and come to a common ground.

The contemporary issue of religion wars, oppression due to religious affiliation stems from misunderstanding or stereotypes. Religious cohabitation or at least learning about one another’s religion could help smooth out differences. In a globalized world, people from different horizons are bound to meet. Instead of expecting confrontation, people would better expect learning from otherness to get better. As John Donne asserts in MEDITATION XVII Devotions upon Emergent Occasions, “No Man is an Island”. People are just parts of the same entity.

Cultural cohabitation inevitably brings about another concept: hybridity. By sharing their cultural values, the same living place, people finally incorporate external habits into their daily lives. Hybridity therefore appears culturally, racially and linguistically. That is what *House Made of Dawn* somehow describes through some characters.

Father Olguin is an example of this cultural hybridity as he accepts to be taught about Indians communities, their myths and legends. In so doing, he becomes somehow part of the community, as he knows about their habits and sacred symbols. The tribal stories he narrated to Angela and his attendance to cultural ceremonies like the feast of Santiago denote his

commitment to the local people's culture. Father Olguin is the prototype of the white man free of stereotype against Indians and voluntarily willing to learn from them.

Next to Father Olguin's will to learn from other cultures, he plays the role of intermediary between the court and Abel in the subjective trial. Even if he finds it difficult to explain Abel's motivations, the fact remain: the judges and Abel are strangers to each other's worlds, and they have the opportunity to learn from each other. The judges in particular will be acquainted with tribal cultural values to make a fair trial. That will make the judgment fair and establish a connection between people.

Cultural hybridity is also perceived in *House Made of Dawn* with traditional ceremonies. Helen Jaskoski develops that the organization of the feast of Saint James, where Abel killed the Albino, is a proof of Indians' choice of hybridity. She rather refers to hybridity as "synthesis" in the sense that the characters incorporate European folk tale with Indian tradition. Jaskoski writes:

The people of Walatowa have included Christian saints and have enacted a secular European folk tale within the time prescribed for the realization of an indigenous ceremony, and they participate in both. This coincident participation in two separate ceremonies from two different and intact traditions is an example of syncretism, whereas the blending of Christian and Native traditions into a single, new worship in the peyote way constitutes a synthesis. (Jaskoski, 1994, 38)

Traditional ceremonies are hybridized for the sake of creating a new perspective in cultural backgrounds. In fact, the inclusion of white Saints in indigenous ceremonies creates a new practice wherein everyone could feel satisfied for the representation of his/her culture. Cultural hybridity therefore refers to peaceful relation between people where anyone feels at ease in practicing his/her own culture.

People are able to connect with two or more cultures. For many Indians, leaving the reservations seems to be the simplest way. The white man's town is most of the time made of hardships, persecution, and estrangement. As a result, Indians most of the time stumbled in the cities. In their cases, they sometimes do not know how to connect with the western world despite its hostility. Nevertheless, people who know how to do, most often succeed in integrating themselves. Ben Benally makes it in the white world but he never disrupts from his culture. He never forgets or rejects his culture. That connection makes him a stronger man, more lucid in decision-making. He is able to see through the wealth of the city, the treasure of the land:

You can forget about everything up there. We could see all the lights down below, a million lights, I guess, and all the cars moving around, so small and slow and far away. We could see one whole side of the city, all the way to the water, but we couldn't hear anything down there. All we could hear was the drums and the singing. (Momaday, 1968, 128)

One understands that cultural hybridity does not mean the absence of one's culture. It is rather the creation of a new entity, which incorporates elements of different cultures. One can live in big cities and still follow his or her traditions at the image of Ben Benally. That is actually, what many Native Americans are confronted to in the modern world. How to combine culture and modernity? Through Ben Benally, one understands how to deal with

such matters. He lives in peace, because he is neither in conflict with the western culture nor with the Native one.

For Cederstrom, writers at the image of Leslie Silko and Momaday have demonstrated the relevance of Indians' traditions in contemporary world. To her, "These writers demonstrate that alienation and despair can be counteracted by the establishment of a connecting link between the modern world and the transcendent sacred centers of being purveyed by the old culture." (Cederstrom, 1982, 286) Cederstrom believes that a bond can be created between Native cultures and the western world and by extension between many cultures. By doing so, people can be able to find solution to hopelessness.

3. The Narrator and His Discourse

The narrator in *House Made of Dawn* appears to be a true artisan of peace. The struggle for peace is both an individual and collective one. In that respect, the scholar realizes through a thorough reading, that Momaday's novel is hatred-free despite the atrocities endured by Indian tribes. In so doing, the novel reminds us that peace is daily constructed by means of actions and words. In the same way, the central character is an example of conciliation. He is half-breed, half-white, half-Indian though he considers himself Indian. Like the protagonist Tayo in *Ceremony* brilliantly exposes, "I'm half-breed. I'll be the first to say it. I'll speak for both sides." (Silko, 1977, 42)

Broadly seen, the narrator's discourse in *House Made of Dawn* is peaceful and/or calls for peace. Abel's expressiveness in the novel is diversely interpreted. In his exchanges with Angela, a white visitor on the reservation, Abel spoke very few words or none. That silence is sometimes seen as a consequence of posttraumatic stress disorder and other times as "a strategy of caution, resistance and outwaiting". (Bartlet, 2010, 2) though those interpretations are certainly true, it is possible to have a different viewpoint on that verbal inexpressiveness. Abel speaks less or not at all for two main reasons. The first is to listen to his interlocutor. Listening is a highly praised quality in developing one's relations with others. The second reason of Abel's silence is to create confidence and to make Angela at ease in listening to Angela, Abel creates confidence in her, since she has the possibility to freely voice her mind, and by the same token, Abel makes his mind on what Angela's needs and expectations are.

Silence is a method of communication with others. Abel is informed about the death of his grandfather through stillness. Silence is a major aspect in many Native cultures. It is far from being a passive status but an effective means of communication. Abel used it to communicate with Angela, at the court, when he was in Los Angeles under the Relocation program and he listened from silence, which communicated him the death of his grandfather.

Verbal inexpressiveness also functions as a sense of good education. Abel shows respect and his good education to the white visitor Angela, to the court men. Ethnographers discovered that "respect and attentiveness are typically demonstrated by avoiding eye contact and by being silent. Thus, in these cases, refraining from speaking clearly functions as a form

of deference and politeness” (Bartlet, 2010, 2-3). Stanley Pargellis wrote in “An Account of the Indians in Virginia” (1959):

When a stranger comes to their house, the chief man in it desires the stranger to sit down; within a little while, he rises and toucheth the stranger with his hand, saying You are welcome; after him, all the rest of the house doe the same. None speaketh to him, or asketh him any questions, till he think fit to speak first (Pargellis, 1959, 241).

Silence is then a Native American value, which is not hostility, but it rather gives the interlocutor the opportunity to feel at ease. Thus, misinterpretation comes from the misunderstanding of their attitude. In cross-cultural contexts, international standards should be valued; if not culture dictates its norms and principles, it creates cultural hegemony and then dialogue and peace are at stake.

To show the importance of positive language in constructing social cohesion, Momaday describes how hostile language negatively affects both human beings and the society. Abel’s failure in the white world can be blamed onto the bad, hostile and aggressive discourse he heard. Verbal utterances can be beneficial or unfavorable to human beings. In the case of Tayo, Tosamah’s provocations combined with the aggression of the Snake had dramatic consequences on the life of Abel. Benally explained that “it was like everything exploded inside of him, and he jumped up from the table and started for Tosamah (...). I got to thinking afterwards that he was hurt by what had happened; he was hurt inside somehow, and pretty bad” (Momaday, 1968, 141).

The search for peace is politically and socially theorized. The contribution of literature to that ideal is inestimable. In its preamble, UNESCO's Constitution proclaims that “since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defenses of peace must be constructed.” Literature appears to be a powerful tool to do so.

CONCLUSION

The present article aimed at surveying on the different mechanisms to achieving social justice and peace that appear in Momaday’s *House Made of Dawn*. Technological and medical advancements, to name just those aspects, do not help this world to be safer since military innovations contrast with the greatest achievements of humanity. As a result, development seems to be a double-edge sword as it can help achieve great performances in health and social life as well as bringing the world into a precipice. In such a situation, what could be the contribution of literature in the attempt to solve people’s religious, ethnic and social differences?

The postmodern analysis, which focusses on cultural cohabitation as Whites and Native American cultures were opposed in the novel, has helped decipher on the one hand, that ignorance and misunderstandings brought Whites and indigenous people to confrontation, human and cultural losses. On the other hand, cultural cohabitation somehow brought White and Indians to learn from each other. As a result, they came to adopt a foreign notion to improve their living modes. Cultural cohabitation is thus a way to achieve peace in these days.

The postmodern framework also helped discover that verbal inexpressiveness, that could be primarily seen as hostility is rather an expression of respect and friendship.

In reading Navarre Scott Momaday's *House Made of Dawn*, one comes to the conclusion that different strategies could be implemented. Native Americans' lifestyles serve as an example. At the image of the Kiowa, some cultural values as pan-humanism, hospitality, friendship and unity are important layers whereby peace and social cohesion can be achieved.

Likewise, people need to promote social and historical justice. Most Indian communities have been spoliated during colonization. That injustice still needs to be repaired. In the modern days, our judicial systems have to be as equitable as possible in order to favor pacific cohabitation. The reader also concludes that people's cohabitation inexorably turns into hybridity in its racial, cultural and linguistic forms. Therefore, the feeling of belonging brings people together.

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