

The Symbolism of Malcolm's Nicknames and Names in *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*

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ABSTRACT

This paper deals with the symbolism of Malcolm's nicknames and names in *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* (Malcolm X & Haley, 2015). The scrutiny of these nicknames and names stands for an outstanding attempt to surface a good understanding of the most ambiguous and changeable figure of the civil rights movement of the 1960s. Nicknames such as Homeboy, Red, and Satan are very evocative in his life story because they reveal dark and nightmarish stereotypes and episodes of his depravity process in ghettos and in prison during his childhood and adolescence. This trilogy of nicknames shows how he is involved in illegal and immoral activities such as gambling, gang life, drug dealings, and housebreakings. Therefore, names such as Malcolm X, El-Hajj Malik El-Shabazz, and Omowale, on their behalf, introduce the reader to the protagonist's rebirth process under Islamic influences with the perspective of quest of true identity on American soil and in Africa. They show how he becomes a radical Black Muslim, how he adopts orthodox Islam in Mecca, and how he ties a strong attachment to Africa.

Keywords: African Americans' identity, nicknames and names, religions, symbolism.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Throughout the world, nicknames or names are charged with a prominent and profound sense because they are precious, meaningful, and symbolic devices that tell about an individual's personality. They allow him to pride himself either on his existential fundamentals like his historical and cultural identity or on his social achievements. For Americans from different horizons such as African Americans, nicknames or names have been and still are a marker of a profound expression of their life experience in the United States or their strong attachment to mother Africa. In this connection, they refer to the communal experience of the black ethnic group through reminiscence of its historical and cultural heritage. Such identifiable strains around the power of the name are better illustrated by Paul Kivel who writes:

People use two-part names to indicate cultural and social connections that they feel to the countries or continents from which their foreparents emigrated. These names can indicate feelings of connection to distinct cultural communities, especially in response to the strong pressure in the US to give up one's culture. Such naming can also be a call to a collective political identity. (Kivel, 2017, p. 121).

Apart from the communal experience, nicknames or names appear additionally as a determinant means to delve into an iconic figure's life story. As the most ambiguous and changeable figure of the civil rights struggle, Malcolm reveals different shades of his personality from the ghettos, and the prison to his commitment against injustice imposed on him and on his African American counterparts. That is why he confesses how the waves and the weight of change have impacted his life when he says: *"My life in particular never has stayed fixed in one position for very long. You have seen how throughout my life, I have often known unexpected drastic changes"* (Malcolm X & Haley, 2015, p. 385). The change of nicknames and names corroborates the fact that he never remains the same because through them the reader discovers different serial episodes of the protagonist's life. Obviously, they are at the nub of his depravity and commitment.

The narrator shows how he is victimized by the segregated system and how he opposes this racist system that aims at maintaining a status quo in which the African American is inferior to the white American. In other words, this system is not only a sign of African American's subjection, abjection, alienation, and rejection but is also a great defender of white supremacy which considers members of the black ethnic group as submen or second zone citizens. Consequently, the author's rejection from the American society of the mainstream is the major cause of all the uncomfortable and unpleasant realities he encounters. Of

course, beset with segregation, discrimination, and racism, these nicknames and names give this autobiographical narrative a profound and symbolic dimension that draws my attention in this paper. This raises the following interrogation: What is the sense of Malcolm's nicknames and names in *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*?

This paper purports to scrutinize the profound and symbolic sense of Malcolm's nicknames and names. First, I analyze his nicknames such as Homeboy, Red, and Satan that all refer to his depravity process from the ghettos to prison. I also deal with his motivations to change Malcolm Little, his born name in favor of other names such as Malcolm X, El-Hajj Malik El-Shabazz, and Omowale which he thinks rehabilitate his African American's pride, dignity, and self-respect in the United States.

In terms of review of literature, as not very exploited autobiography, I deal with any work that can provide me with information for conducting my demonstration. I refer to Benjamin Evayoulou's "Le Pouvoir de Destruction de la ville dans *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*" that deals with Malcolm's experience in the ghettos in this narrative. Then, I resort to Oba T'Shamba's *The Political Legacy of Malcolm X* that deals with his activism. Both works help me have insight into this protagonist's life experience.

For methodology, I resort to the psychological approach that helps me sink into Malcolm's psychological universe in order to understand the shades of his ambiguous and changeable personality through nicknames and names. It also helps me analyze the parameters of the paradoxical pressures generated by his depravity in ghettos and in prison, his commitment to improve African Americans' living conditions in the United States, and his excitement to be in contact with his African brothers and sisters.

II. THE SENSE OF MALCOLM'S NICKNAMES

Nicknames are very important in Malcolm's life story because they illustrate Malcolm's childhood and adolescence made of dark and nightmarish stereotypes on the American soil. A series of hideous events that generates what Sigmund Freud calls "*souffrance*" ('suffering') that he considers as "*la reaction propre à la perte de l'objet*" ('the righteous reaction to the loss of the object') (Freud as cited in Bonnet, 1990, p. 78). Malcolm's loss, here, is the collapse of his family stability caused by the killing of his activist father when he was six, his mother's mental instability that leads her in the State Mental Hospital at Kalamazoo, the utter split of his family by the Social Welfare. All these misfortunes in accordance with his disillusion to have a good education in the South of the United States because of his black skin color help shape his ominous childhood and adolescence.

For example, as an African American boy, Malcolm learns that even though he is clever, the southern boards of education only reserve a bad and short education for him and for children of his race. Consequently, his dream to become a lawyer is thus doomed to failure because he discovers that the segregated system wants black children's education to remain inferior to that of white children. For, one of his teachers explains it clearly to him when he argues that prestigious careers in the South of the United States are for white children:

"Malcolm, one of life's first needs is for us to be realistic. Don't misunderstand me, now. We all here like you, you know that. But you've got to be realistic about being a nigger. A lawyer, that's no realistic goal for a nigger [...] Why don't you plan on carpentry" (Malcolm X & Haley, 2015, p. 38).

This rejection from the American mainstream education shows how his hideous experience in the segregated school system worsens and catalyzes bitterness, despair, distraught, and trauma. Then, one may clearly notice that this rejection resorts merely to the pernicious doctrine of "separate but equal", which applied to education shed light on the way white children's and black children's education must not be the same. In this context, the good education is for white children and the bad one is for black children. This truth and disillusionment result in a physical and psychological shock that compels him not only to be realistic about his being black, but mainly about his being a product of a kind of prototypical American cast system placing the African Americans of all ages in the lowest scale of the American society.

Spoiled and disappointed, Malcolm winds up in dropping out his education and is then prompted to experience life in the ghettos where he undergoes a depravity process. The sentence "*When I had finished the eighth grade back in Mason, Michigan, that was the last time I'd thought of studying anything that didn't have some hustle purpose*" (Malcolm X & Haley, 2015, p. 157) is, without any doubt, the sign of his engagement to drop out education and to invest all his energy to learn the ghetto dealings, manners, and conducts in order to integrate successfully the hustlers' world. Thus, three nicknames better describe Malcolm's depravity process in the ghettos and in prison such as Homeboy, Red, and Satan.

As for Homeboy, it symbolizes the starting point of the depravity of this boy rejected by the segregated system, whose ultimate struggle is now to survive in the ghettos. The first ghetto that welcomes him is Roxbury ghetto in Boston where he discovers a typical linguistic code:

“These children threw around swear words I’d never heard before, even, and slang expressions that were just as new to me, such as ‘stud’ and ‘cat’ and ‘chick’ and ‘cool’ and ‘hip’. Every night as I lay in bed I turned these new words over in my mind” (Malcolm X & Haley, 2015, p. 45).

This passage shows how Homeboy is strongly convinced that the language is the key of communication and the best way to achieve a successful integration in the Roxbery ghetto. Actually, this is the proof of his will and determination to speak like Roxbery boys, because it appears as the price of an eventual acceptance in this new environment. Viewed from this perspective, the sentence “Every night as I lay in bed I turned these new words over in my mind.” can be regarded as a chief evidence showing how deeply involved in learning he is, because I decipher in his mind a prominent and underlying endeavor and eagerness to be a quick learner.

It is in Roxbery ghetto that Homeboy has its real symbolism when Malcolm encounters Shorty who like him is from Lansing, Michigan. Indeed, this nickname expresses the depth and the degree of brotherhood that strengthen the relationship between Malcolm and Shorty who are from the same hometown and are convinced to have in common a solid attachment that brings tightly together their destinies. Like a real brother, Shorty gives him his first ghetto job of shoeshiner and lets him join his club of hustlers. It is under their guidance that he discovers and apprehends background and useful artifices and practical arcanum of hustles in the risky, awful, and sordid world of the ghetto, as this statement testifies: *“Some hustles you’re too new for. Cats will ask you for liquor, some will want reefers. But you don’t need to have nothing except rubbers – until you can dig who’s a cop”* (Malcolm X & Haley, 2015, p. 51).

Homeboy uncovers how lucrative hustles can be: *“You can make ten, twelve dollars a dance for yourself if you work everything right. The main thing you got to remember is that everything in the world is a hustle”* (Malcolm X & Haley, 2015, p. 51). As a quick learner, he also tackles his addiction process to gambling, to alcohol, and to illicit substances such as reefers and shooting craps. This is an indication demonstrating and confirming his new status of ghetto hustler:

“The first liquor I drank, my first cigarettes even my first reefers, I can’t specifically remember. But I know they were all mixed together with my first shooting craps, all playing cards and betting my dollar a day on the numbers, as I started hanging out at night with Shorty and his friends” (Malcolm X & Haley, 2015, p. 53).

Homeboy thus tells the story of this young boy who struggles to pave his own destiny and who does whatever is essential for his survival. Obviously, the Roxbery ghetto succeeds in destroying his innocence and in rising his impetus towards misconducts or misbehaviors, and sees him becoming a good and skillful hustler, as illustrated through this utterance: *“Dès l’instant où nous entrons avec Malcolm dans le monde crapuleux des ghettos, une atmosphère désagréable éveille en nous les soupçons de quelques futures tragédies”* (‘Right at the moment we enter with Malcolm in the sordid world of the ghettos, a disagreeable atmosphere arouses in us the suspicions of some coming tragedies’) (Evayoulou, 2002, p. 150). In the same connection, Malcolm’s transformation into Homeboy and his adoption of unconventional and wild rules, laws, attitudes, and behaviors show how naughty he has become. I may, however, ascertain on the psychological angle that the mindset of people like Homeboy who involves in such illegal and immoral trends and dealings, envision the future with the principle of easy and quick money making.

Concerning Red, it originates symbolically from Malcolm’s skin color made of a mixture of blood of black and white individuals. About the genesis of this complexion, it appears that instead of a completely black skin color, he is a kind of red-complexioned African American whose mother has drops of white man’s blood in her veins. For him, Red as color of skin is thus a cryptic and haunting sign of self-hate that spoils his mind because he thinks that he has lost his black race purity: *“If I could drain away his blood that pollutes my body, and pollutes my complexion, I’d do it! because I hate every drop of the rapist’s blood that’s in me!”* (Malcolm X & Haley, 2015, p. 206). When the latter is reminiscent of the white blood in him and the white man who infused it, he argues: *“That raping, red-headed devil, my grandfather”* or *“my mother’s father! [...] His blood that pollutes my body, and pollutes my complexion”* (Malcolm X & Haley, 2015, p. 206). Here, the narrator’s intention when he refers to the word “rapist” is to shed light on how historically female slaves used to be raped by slave masters. It was such a traumatic act that generated sorrow, bitterness, dismay, and distraught amidst people of black race in the country, especially in southern plantations. Otherwise, Red remains a reminder of the gruesome and shameful secular history of female slaves who were turned into sex toys, because deprived of respect, honor, and dignity by their masters.

According to the protagonist’s life story, Red is voraciously an ambitious and calculating young hustler who engages to increase the efficiency of his hustles for earning more money in Harlem, viewed as the paradise of gangsters. His major concern is to develop his Roxbery, Boston background skills in Harlem, New York because he endeavors to struggle to become a big and known Harlemites hustler: *“On that night*

I had started on my way to become a Harlemit. I was going to become one of the most depraved parasitical hustlers among New York's eight million people." (Malcolm X & Haley, 2015, p. 78). Here, the remarkable phrase "one of the most depraved parasitical hustlers" indicates precisely that the kind of individual he wants to become is an outlaw or a lawbreaker.

For achieving this goal, Red gives credit to adept hustlers to help him shape his hustler's renown. This sounds like a pedagogical approach, since he knows that being trained by these talented and experimented hustlers is an investment towards success. What he emphasizes on is that the notoriety in the ghetto guarantees power: *"I heard the old timers reminisce about all those great times. I was thus schooled well, by experts in such hustles as the numbers, pimping, con games of many kinds, peddling dope, and thievery of all sorts, including armed robbery"* (Malcolm X & Haley, 2015, p. 86). These lines contain different types of activities of the hustler's world whose key and chief principle remains an attraction toward illegality, immorality, and depravity. The first person singular "I" in this passage draws the reader's attention to the narrator's will and determination to learn whatever is essential in order to be as skillful as possible. The combination of the word "experts" in accordance with the phrases "old timers" and "old heads" deals with the apologia of ghetto veterans and shows how Red is proud to be taught by people of good and big experience.

In the groundswell of Harlem ghetto tumults and influences, Red becomes a great drug addict whose life depends on illicit substances, as phrased by this passage: *"Opium had me drowsy. I had a bottle of Benzedrine tablets in my bathroom; I swallowed some of them to perk up. The two drugs working in me had my head going in opposite directions at the time"* (Malcolm X & Haley, 2015, p. 134). Not only does Red's drug consumption grow worse and worse, but he also develops a lucrative business around drugs trade. For, his dexterity to further efficient strategies in order to increase income of this business is evidenced through this passage:

"I kept turning over my profit, increasing my supplies, and I sold reefers like a wild man. I scarcely slept; I was wherever musicians congregated. A roll of money was in my pocket. Every day, I cleared at least fifty or sixty dollars. In those days, this was a fortune to a seventeen-year-old" (Malcolm X & Haley, 2015, p. 102).

It is, I suppose, a straightforward proof mirroring motivations and focusing on easy and quick money making. In so doing, gaining more money thus becomes the leitmotiv of whatever Red handles because when sinking into the marrow of Red's mindset, one may notice how money stands for the key word in it. The evocation of the phrase "a seventeen-year-old" testifies to the precociousness with which he integrates successfully the Harlemit club of gangsters and drug dealers, whereas the phrase "at least fifty or sixty dollars" can be viewed as an incontestable proof of his capacity to adapt to this environment and to make money among the greatest and the most skillful hustlers. Yet, the phrase "a wild man" is for the narrator a way to confess and show the high range of depravity that gangrenes his self because evil deeds are at the center of his life.

From the standpoint of hostility and dangerousness of Harlem ghetto, Red is compelled not only to safeguard and protect his business, but mainly to protect his own life. Such a compulsion imposes on him a close attachment to weapons, as shown through the description of the kind of gun he carries that is *"a 32-20 a funny kind of gun. It's bigger than a 32. But it's not as big as a 38"* (Malcolm X & Haley, 2015, p. 129). What the narrator pinpoints through this evocation is one of the realities of the gangsters' world that is guns are persuasive tools that help consolidate influence. They also tell noticeably about the predictable side of life in the ghetto where danger, risk, and death always haunt and trouble the gangsters' mind.

In the context of hideous, illegal, and immoral perpetrations, the reader may uncover that Red is a member of a gang of housebreakers which sows seeds of terror in Harlem. When reminiscing the efficiency of their perpetrations, he does not hesitate to explain how he and his gangmates are used to breaking into houses for robbing:

"If the people weren't at home, we'd use a passkey on a common door lock. On a patent lock, we'd use a jimmy, as it is called, or a lockpick. Or sometimes we would enter by windows from a fire-escape, or roof. Moving swiftly, like shadows, we would lift clothes, wallets, handbags and jewelry boxes" (Malcolm X & Haley, 2015, p. 147).

It is worth pointing out that housebreakings stand for the climax of Malcolm's depravity process in the ghettos. Not only does Red tell about excesses in terms of misbehaviors and misconducts, but he also tells about his depravity progress on the physical and psychological angles from bad to worse. That is to say it goes from ill-mannered hustles such as gambling, drug dealings to more ill-mannered hustles such as gang activities and housebreakings. In short, Red is a well accomplished shade of the Malcolm's personality that has fully conquered Harlem by becoming a true social parasite. It is clear that with such a dreadful lifestyle

and for representing a danger for other Americans, Red cannot escape from imprisonment. He is thus arrested and sentenced to ten years imprisonment.

When referring symbolically to Satan, it is a nickname that Malcolm acquires in prison and it refers to a young African American who has lost faith in God. He is convinced that the would-be almighty God has not cared about him and his family. Such a skepticism and pessimism are generated by a series of dark occurrences or happenings such as the killing of his father, his mother's mental instability, the spilt of his family, his disillusionment of a better education, his ominous experience in the ghettos and his imprisonment that have negatively impacted on him and his family. In his mind, this strengthens and corroborates his imagery of God's powerlessness, since he has hardly seen any love, any generosity, and any protection from him. That is why the utterance: *"I considered myself beyond atheism – I was Satan"* (Malcolm X & Haley, 2015, p. 157) is his way to denigrate God's mighty holiness and power by denying his omnipresence, his omniscience, and omnipotence. His atheist posture really echoes his disappointment, bitterness, and disillusionment because instead of happiness the would-be almighty Lord has only brought misfortune and unhappiness in his family. When contextualizing the sense of this nickname, it appears that Satan, the atheist has tied willingly an attachment to Satan, the angel of evil who parted with God. This pushes him to consider himself more than an atheist.

Obviously, far were bygone years of his childhood during which he and his whole family vibrated to the Baptist church warmth under the guidance of a father who was a Baptist minister: *"I would sit goggled-eyed at my father jumping and shouting as he preached, with the congregation jumping and shouting behind him"* (Malcolm X & Haley, 2015, p. 5). Yet, this shaping of Christian identity faded because of the malevolent episodes that have succeeded in building and developing a brand new depraved individual through Homeboy, Red, and Satan. Now, Satan identifies his main characteristic as an *"antireligious attitude"* (Malcolm X & Haley, 2015, p. 156) and wants it to monitor his life: *"I preferred the solidarity that this behavior brought to me. I would pace for hours like a caged leopard, viciously cursing aloud to myself. And my favorite targets were the Bible and God"* (Malcolm X & Haley, 2015, p. 156). These words are intended as a vigorous defiance, denial, and rejection of the Christian fundamentals such as the "Bible" and "God", strengthening aesthetically the sense of Satan. Here, the loss of faith in God can be viewed as an engine for the latter because it is central to decipher bitterness and distraught in his state of mind.

Satan also recalls how prison is prisoners' nightmare, especially for African American ones who populate more these institutions in the United States. It is, therefore, clear that prison is a place where he and other inmates lose their self-esteem because between its four walls they are considered as useless individuals who no longer deserve respect and dignity. As their lives are associated with numbers regarded as new underlying identifications, they look more like labeled specimen: *"Your number in prison became part of you. You never heard your name, only your number. On all of your clothing, every item, was your number, stenciled. It grew stenciled on your brain"* (Malcolm X & Haley, 2015, p. 152). Through the term "number", the author's intent is to help us notice that prison is not a place where life is rosy because self-hate is what he and many other inmates develop on psychological angel. In many cases, they are regarded as social outsiders.

In *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*, the narrator explores and raises the issue of drug dealing in American prisons. He reveals how guards are very often involved in the ill-mannered practice by partaking in drug traffic in these institutions. Worse, the latter dramatizes the impact of such a traffic when judging guards who instead of preventing inmates to continue their depravity, facilitate actively the growth of this illegal business in prisons:

"I was finally able to buy stuff for better highs from guards in prison. I got reefers, nembutal, and benzedrine. Smuggling to prisoners was the guards' sideline; every prison's inmates know that's how guards make most of their living" (Malcolm X & Haley, 2015, p. 156).

It is clear that dropping drug addiction is a difficult thing for Satan whose life depends on drugs and who for years has developed a total dependence to them. It is essential to outline that the weight of such a physical and psychological addiction often catches the victim in a kind of pitfall of dependence. The juxtaposition of different drugs he takes in prison such as "reefers", "nembutal", and "benzedrine" attests how deeply dependent to them he has been and still is. The phrase "better highs" stand for the main objective of his drug consumption, since it is a kind of state of evasion from reality that most of drug addicts are fond of. As drugs are inherent in his body, the slightest lack troubles and jeopardizes his health, as he says it himself: *"I was physically miserable and as evil-tempered as a snake, being suddenly without drugs"* (Malcolm X & Haley, 2015, p. 155). Of course, one sees without difficulty Satan's high degree of dependence to drugs, for without them he loses his physical and mental strength.

Therefore, Satan's *"antireligious attitude"* (Malcolm X & Haley, 2015, p. 156) ends up when he discovers the *"natural religion for the black man"* (Malcolm X & Haley, 2015, p. 158) called the Nation of Islam. Thanks to this religious confession, he learns about Allah and the Honorable Elijah Muhammad,

the spearheader of this organization whose followers are the Black Muslims. In fact, the first Black Muslims' principle he encounters in his transformation from a depraved man to a Black Muslim says *"Going without pork and smoking no cigarettes"* (Malcolm X & Haley, 2015, p. 155). This foremost principle looks like an indication of real interest on the behalf of his liberation from depravity. In the same spirit, Satan's influence also ends up when he resolves to resume with education through *"the prison correspondence courses"* (Malcolm X & Haley, 2015, p. 156). The discovery of Islam faith and his eager interest in education become the path for his liberation from illiteracy and ignorance.

The three nicknames namely Homeboy, Red, and Satan thus testify what Bonnet considers as effects of grisly episodes, affecting someone's mind, as he refers to phrases such as *"douleur physique"* ('physical harm') and *"souffrance morale"* ('moral suffering') (Bonnet, 1990, p. 78). The first phrase refers to physical sufferings caused by gang brutality and lack of drug in his body whereas the second one resorts to psychological drawbacks of the killing of his father, his mother's mental instability, the split of the family, his rejection from the American mainstream education because of racial prejudices, and his depravity in ghettos and in prison. That is why the passage: *"Through all this time of my life, I really was dead, mentally dead. I just didn't know that I was"* (Malcolm X & Haley, 2015, p. 125) deals with Malcolm's introspection or self-examination of his ominous childhood and adolescence during which he has been "mentally dead" because out of control of his own destiny in good, fair, and conscious manner.

In presenting us the trilogy of his nicknames such as Homeboy, Red, and Satan, Malcolm circumscribes his childhood and adolescence mostly oriented towards his degradation process in three stages. The starting point is symbolized by homeboy, the development is embodied by Red, and the climax and end of the degradation process are a reference to Satan. However, the end of this dark period opens another during which Malcolm's life changes positively because he is redeemed from the parasitical life experience of ghettos and prison and is given chance to pave his way to militancy for struggling for the African Americans' citizenship.

III. THE REJECTION OF THE SLAVE NAME

When we deal with a retrospective glimpse into the slavery history, one may remember the impact of the slave name in the slaves' alienation process. Toni Morrison raises and clarifies the ambiguity about the sense of this typical name when he explains that it is a kind of alien name: *Black people as slaves, acquired names that were not their own. They had no tribe, no identity because they lost their real names.*" (Morrison, 1977, p. 10). The evocation of "real name" in this passage is emblematic because it suggests that an African American who has been given or who has a slave name has lost an important part of his identity. Noticeably, when the latter is cut off his roots, especially from the sacred African naming process, he becomes a stranger to himself. It is what Alex Haley's *Roots* depicts:

"Give it up. You ain't goin' nowhere, so you might's well face facks an' start fittin' in, Toby, you hear? Kunta's face flashed with anger. "Kunta Kinte!" he blurted, astonished at himself [...] Looka here, he can talk! But I'm tellin' you, boy, you got to forgit all dat African talk. Make white folks mad an' scare nigger. Yo' name Toby." (Haley, 1991, p. 255).

As we explore this passage, we come through the tenor of the naming of slaves during the slavery system. It is clear that there are two names, having paradoxical understandings. First, Kunta Kinte that is a sacred name for the protagonist because named after an illustrious grandfather, Kairaba Kunta Kinte who was a kind of powerful oracle of Mandinga community in Gambia. Then, Toby that is an alien or slave name without any sense which is imposed on him by the slave master. Likewise, Toni Morrison's *Beloved* dramatizes this tragic destiny of slaves who were forced to assume labels at the place of names: *"And so they were: Paul D Garner, Paul F Garner, Paul A Garner, Halle Suggs and Sixo, the wild man."* (Morrison, 1987, p. 11). From an alienation point of view, Toni Morrison through slaves of Mr. Garner's plantation revisits the foolish and nonsensical manner slaves were named in southern plantations. She thus uses a prototypical naming process, combining "Garver" the slave name with the alphabet letters, such as "A", "D" and "F" for getting Paul A Garner, Paul D Garner, and Paul F Garner. Her concern has been to show how alien names are deprived of sense and have participated in the destruction of slaves' true African roots, identity and history.

Like his forefathers, Malcolm is also caught in the same vicious spiral of ignorance based on alienation and brainwash that he refers to when he confesses: *"My image of Africa, at that time, was of naked savages, cannibals, monkeys and tigers and steaming jungles"* (Malcolm X & Haley, 2015, p. 7). This brand misleading image of Tarzan's jungle is unavoidably a marker of ignorance of Africa that ruins many African Americans' mind because they have been deprived of their heritage when *"stripped and robbed of our background; we wind up with nothing [...] We just don't know anymore about ourselves than the names that the slave owners gave us, and you know that was a real crime"* (Brooks & Houck, 2011, p. 160). This

bitter reality is what haunts many of them when they are unable to talk of their own history and culture because such incapacity has favored and increased the “*symbol of ignorance and self-hate on so many Negroes’ heads*” (Malcolm X & Haley, 2015, p. 264). For, the slave name is one of the outstanding elements that has contributed in the calculating secular plan of alienating and brainwashing African Americans.

With regard to such alienation, brainwash, and injustice that we may understand as follows: “*If you’re black, you were born in jail*” (Malcolm X as cited in Coates, 2017, p. 36) and “*Never forget that for 250 years black people were born into chains*” (Coates, 2017, p. 70). Malcolm, however, urges to break walls of this physical, moral, and psychological prison in order to rehabilitate his pride, dignity, and self-respect. Seen from this standpoint, he finds out that as son of Earl Little and himself born Malcolm Little, the slave name transmitted in his family from generation to generation is Little. For him, this slave name is a remarkable mark to be foremostly destroyed because charged with dishonor, disgrace, and abjection. That is why his rebirth into a Muslim is of paramount importance, since its interpretive symbolism and profoundness shows the emerging of a new individual under Allah’s guidance. Such a convert’s feeling and transformation is descriptively rendered in these terms:

“It was a great process accepting Islam, it was beautiful, almost like a transformation, like a caterpillar turning into a butterfly. You start slowly changing and doing different things, you thought process changes” (Taj as cited in Kane, 2016, p.30).

This statement does not escape from the specified presence of the individual’s psychic characteristics in relation to religion, as Jung explains: “*Religion means dependence on and submission to the traditional facts of experience. These do not refer directly to social and physical conditions; they concern far more the individual’s psychic attitude*” (Jung, 2005, p. 13). The reason why the phrase “a caterpillar turning into a butterfly” prompts us metaphorically in the notion of transformation that proves the power of religions like Islam to change even the worst individual into a good person or an atheist into a Muslim. In other words, what appears conspicuously evocative is that becoming a Muslim is an engagement to a series of changes for the protagonist. Not surprisingly, Malcolm’s denial of his slave name and the adoption of three different names such as Malcolm X, El-Hajj Malik El-shabazz, and Omowale widely contribute in implementing the evolution of his state of mind through Islamic inclinations.

About Malcolm X, it is symbolically the starting point of the protagonist’s quest of pride, dignity and self-respect because it is obviously a direct marker of the transition from his depravity to his positive rebirth. It also echoes the process through which a convert acquires the Nation of Islam membership:

“My application had, of course, been made and during this time I received from Chicago my ‘X’. The Muslim’s ‘X’ symbolized the true African family name that he never could know [...] The receipt of my ‘X’ meant that forever after the Nation of Islam I would be known as Malcolm X” (Malcolm X & Haley, 2015, p. 203).

As it can be seen, this is an identifiably common practice of the Nation of Islam that shows clearly the transformation of Malcolm Little into Malcolm X, the Black Muslim. It also attracts the reader’s attention to the non-orthodox dimension of this naming process that is exclusively for members of this organization. The symbolic “X” praised by the Black Muslims is not only a reference to the mathematical “X” standing for the unknown, but accordingly to their unknown African family names. Likewise, when questioned about the prominence and potency of this “X”: “*What does X mean?*” Muhammad Ali declared: “*I am a member of the Nation of Islam and that we rejected the names handed to us by former slave masters and X took the place of our real but unknown back names*” (Ali, 2015, p. 128). Actually, “X” bears significantly a full sense of a name with its sacred dimension that is central to Black Muslims, since it replaces the true African family name they lost amidst the secular vicious circle of alienation and brainwash. It is a constant and vibrant proof of their spiritual attachment to Africa, the land where all African Americans truly originate.

Malcolm X’s symbolism is strongly tied to radicalism and defiance against the white supremacy when he dramatizes the white man’s hegemonic impact on non-white people of the world that he considers as submen or second zone citizens. This white man’s image of evildoer is evidenced by phenomena such as colonization, slavery, segregation, discrimination, and racism that he has often displayed to alienate and to control their destiny. That is why he and all Black Muslims think: “*The white man was created a devil, to bring chaos upon this earth*” (Malcolm X & Haley, 2015, p. 208). The narrator’s intent is to specify how the white man has used brutality, violence, and cruelty towards non-white people he has conquered, colonized, or enslaved throughout the world.

Referring to American domestic evils perpetrated against non-white like African Americans, Malcolm X, for instance, revisits the slavery institution with a view to telling things like they were done. He brings the reader at the hub of one the most chocking perpetrations of the slave master that is rape. The

phenomenon spoiled not only the female slave's dignity, honor, and self-esteem, but also the slave's family moral fiber. Indeed, the latter portrays the phenomenon with a melodramatic tune in his autobiography:

"Think of it – think of that black slave man filled with fear and dread, hearing the screams of his wife, his mother, his daughter being taken – in the barn, the kitchen, in the bushes! Think of it, my dear brothers and sisters! Think of hearing wives, mothers, daughters, being raped! And you were too filled with fear of the rapist to do anything about it" (Malcolm X & Haley, 2015, p. 206).

One may see here the narrator's effort to reconstruct American history, especially the African American one through the depiction of a typical episode of the slaves' physical and psychological dismay, bitterness, and trauma in southern plantations. He lays emphasis on how inner personality of a victim of dehumanization can physically, emotionally and psychologically be spoiled. Such an approach relapsing straightforwardly into historical wrongs is, for sure, an attempt to raise the American collective memory towards change. This passage thus mirrors the protagonist's unflagging determination to twine his own and his African American counterparts' frustration in front of rapes of women of their race. Besides, Malcolm X as the spokesman or the number two of the Black Muslims symbolizes a substantial energy that furthers radical activism on the American soil. His voice endeavors to tell all Americans what he and his organization think of the African Americans' plight. He, for example, targets the American Christian Church which according to him has failed to consolidate unity between all Americans because promoting a racial cast system in such a way we have the White Christian Church and the Black Christian Church. The sentence *"The Christian religion is incompatible with the Negro's aspirations for dignity and equality in America"* (Malcolm X & Haley, 2015, p. 240) stands for a call specifying the reason why Black Muslims deny the Christian Church that separate its members under the basis of race, segregation, and discrimination. Thus, the Black Muslims' purpose is to undo the damaging involvement of Christianity in the African American communities because they are strongly convinced that it is used by the white dominant group as an artifice to maintain African American ignorant, blind, dreamy and needy:

"The white man has taught us to shout and sing and pray until we die, to wait until death, for some dreamy heaven-in-the-hereafter, when we're dead, while this white man has his milk and honey in the streets paved with golden dollars right here on this earth!" (Malcolm X & Haley, 2015, p. 224).

What is interesting in this utterance is the vigor of the debate raised by Malcolm X when he insinuates that the American Christian Church misleads African Americans by promising them a utopian paradise after death whereas white Americans have America as paradise in which they have hope, wealth, social advantages and fairness. In this regard, amidst African American Christians' tribulations, rejection, and abjection on the American soil, Malcolm X infers: *"White Man's Heaven is Black Man's Hell"* (Malcolm X & Haley, 2015, p. 254) because a religion that discriminates, weakens, and participates in impoverishing some of its believers is an evil for the latter. Consequently, he harbors the magnificence of the Nation of Islam that he considers as the *"natural religion for the black man"* (Malcolm X & Haley, 2015, p. 158), for its holiness and actions are dedicated to improve the African Americans' living conditions. In fact, this religious confession considers the latter as descendants of Shabazz, the tribe of the original man who populated the holy city of Mecca who are truly a kind of Lost Sheep in the United States.

Malcolm X is, moreover, a living symbol of anti-integrationist policy and does not hesitate to raise his voice to oppose publically integration. Accordingly, he criticizes leaders such as Martin Luther King who defends strongly and outstandingly integration as a reasonable solution for the African Americans' plight. Yet, on his behalf Malcolm X considers this approach as an illusion fomented by "bourgeois Negroes", "Uncle Tom" or "black Ph.D" with "liberal white man" for keeping African Americans dreamy and passive. The sentence *"It made me sick in my stomach"* (Malcolm X & Haley, 2015, p. 249) is the expression of his anger to see how African Americans are misled on the path of a virtual integration without any concrete alternative of peace, equality, and true citizenship rights:

"All these intellectual and professional black men could seem to think of was humbling themselves, and begging, trying to 'integrate' with the so-called 'liberal' white man who was telling them, 'In time... everything's going to work out one day . . . just wait and have patience.'" (Malcolm X & Haley, 2015, p. 262).

One may, without any slightest doubt, notice Malcolm X's scepticism and pessimism to view integration as an undeniable solution for African Americans' plight. He is thus shocked by what he considers as a nonsensical approach and does not stand any people, especially any African American leader who supports an eventual integration into the American society.

However, in the throes of a secular deep-rooted racism, segregation, discrimination, and rejection that keep African Americans on the lowest scale of the American society, Malcolm X proposed a separatist policy. In fact, far from integration, he directs his routinely arguments towards the separation of the land between black and white Americans as an approach to eradicate racial exclusion, denigration and minimization of people of his race. For him, an exclusive land in America for African Americans where they can have peace, dignity and justice and where they can also control their political, social and economic growth is the solution. For, they can “*patronize their own kind, hire their own kind, and start in ways to build up the black race’s ability to do for itself*” (Malcolm X & Haley, 2015, p. 281). In doing so, he is strongly convinced that it is the path to the African Americans’ long-standing self-assertion and self-sufficiency in America.

On the religious angle, as spokesman of the nation of Islam, Malcolm X justifies his choice for separatism in these terms:

“Since Western society is deteriorating, it has become overrun with immorality, and God is going to judge it, and destroy it. And the only way the black people caught up in this society can be saved is not to integrate into this corrupt society, but to separate from it, to a land of our own” (Malcolm X & Haley, 2015, p. 250).

For this inflexible and unflagging Minister, the African Americans’ plight can only be exorcized by the acquisition of an exclusive land for this minority group that can be ruled politically, economically, and socially by African Americans themselves. The phrase “a land of our own” suggests that he and his organization opt for the ideal of separatism through the perspective of a state within a state.

Malcolm X is, furthermore, a symbol of misjudgment for not only his radicalism, but mainly his outspokenness because he says what he thinks. Because of his incendiary views on the behalf of the Nation of Islam, some Americans, especially white ones have different types of considerations, aiming at throwing disgrace on him and his organization such as “*hate-messengers*”, “*hate teachers*”, “*threat of the good relations between the races*”, “*violence seekers*”, “*black fascists*”, “*anti-Christian*”, and “*black segregationists*” (Malcolm X & Haley, 2015, p. 243). The above-mentioned misjudgements come as a series of evidences, corroborating the reason why Malcolm X’s radical activism shakes the foundation of the American society. For example, his viewpoint on President Kennedy’s assassination in Dallas, Texas on November 22, 1963, connotes his way to assess the great passivity of America and its federal governments that often see violence, racism and hatred being displayed and promoted by Americans on their fellow Americans:

“I saw it [President Kennedy’s assassination], as case of ‘the chickens coming home to roost.’ I said that the hate in white men had not stopped with the killing of defenceless black people, but that hate, allowed to spread unchecked, finally had stuck down this country’s Chief of State” (Malcolm X & Haley, 2015, p. 307).

The protagonist thinks that the proliferation of these violence, racism and hatred on the American soil has caused the death of this beloved president. Such a radical viewpoint blames not only white American’s violence inflicted on African Americans, but blames mainly the whole American system and its Democracy. In terms of impact of this viewpoint, it hurts the whole American opinion of all races because Kennedy was considered as a great president. With regard to such incendiary statements, Malcolm X is considered by some Americans, especially white Americans as “*the angriest Negro in America*” or “*a teacher, a fomenter of violence*” (Malcolm X & Haley, 2015, p. 373). Therefore, Coates appears as a fervent defender of this iconic figure when he justifies the pragmatism of his religious and political outspokenness:

“Malcolm was the first political pragmatist I knew, the first honest man I’d ever heard. [...] If he was angry, he said so. If he hated, he hated because it was human for the enslaved to hate the enslaver, natural as Prometheus hating the birds. He would not turn the other cheek for you. He would not be your morality. Malcolm spoke like a man who was free” (Coates, 2017, p. 36).

I supposed that Coates’s point of view is relevant because he invites people to go beyond the word “radicalism” in order to better understand Malcolm X’s political and religious convictions. It is clear that under a dominant system, outspokenness and truths from the oppressed may be misjudged, particularly when they target the renown and the stability of the system. What is central here is to put emphasis on the fact that he always feels free to say aloud what he thinks or what Americans, especially what his African American counterparts think without voicing a single word.

Concerning the symbolism of El-Hajj Malik El-Shabazz, it is Malcolm’s name that mirrors his discovery and acquaintance with the orthodox Islam with a view to knowing more about “*Allah, the Lord of all the*

Worlds.” (Malcolm X & Haley, 2015, p. 342). This name bears a wide range of significance because of the Islamic sacred practices of the hajj pilgrimage to Mecca, the holy city of Muslims of the world. Far from the tumult and the doctrinal influences of the Nation of Islam, the protagonist is brought closer together the intrinsic meaning of the hajj spirit by sinking into the holiness of its praiseworthy religious fiber, as pinpointed by this statement: “*The literal meaning of Hajj in Arabic is to set out toward a definite objective. In Islamic law, it means to set out for Ka’ba, the sacred house, and to fulfill pilgrimage rites*” (Malcolm X & Haley, 2015, p. 329).

Through the exploration of the Islamic orthodoxy, El-Hajj Malik El-Shabazz is symbolically Malcolm’s Hajj name because any Muslim who has achieved the Hajj pilgrimage is renamed through the Hajj creativeness. This name thus reflects a new born individual in Mecca, Saudi Arabia amidst the warmth of this sumptuous pilgrimage with a significant sense of humility, honor, and tolerance. Otherwise, this name renders the image of full recognition by the Hajj Committee Court and its Judge, Sheikh Muhammad Harton who “*recorded my name in the holy register of true Muslims*” (Malcolm X & Haley, 2015, p. 342). What can be deciphered from this recognition is that the protagonist is fulfilled and overwhelmed by a surfeit of satisfaction and pleasure after gaining the prestigious true Muslim membership.

Obviously, the Hajj Pilgrimage as “*a religious obligation that every orthodox Muslim fulfills, if humanly able, at least once in his or her lifetime*” (Malcolm X & Haley, 2015, p. 325) and El-Hajj Malik El-Shabazz as the fruition of this experience twine somewhat together to make signs of the contact and the immersion in the spiritual profoundness of Muslims’ beliefs through sacred rites and prayers:

“I knew the prayer to be uttered when the pilgrim’s eyes first perceive the Ka’ba. Translated it is ‘O God, you are peace, and peace derives from you. So greet us, O Lord, with peace.’ Upon entering the Mosque, the pilgrim should try to kiss the Ka’ba if possible, but if the crowds prevent that, he raises his hand and cries out ‘Takbir!’ (God is great!)” (Malcolm X & Haley, 2015, p. 343).

Through this utterance, the narrator shows how engrossing he finds his experience in the holy city. When examining the word “peace” repeatedly used in the aforementioned prayer, I notice that it internalizes the rise of a new consciousness that starts breaking barriers of the haunting hatred and radicalism in his mind. In the same connection, he finds out that the greatness and the depth of “peace” are inherent in Allah’s love and generosity. That is why the terms like “Ka’ba” and “Takbir” together represent the praiseworthy symbols of faith and commitment to the true Islam and its practical and useful rituals:

“At that time, I had learned those prayers phonetically [...] I followed him into the Mosque, just a step behind, watching. He did his prostration, his head to the ground. I did mine. ‘Birmi-llahi-r-Rahmain-Rahim’ (In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful) All Muslim prayers began that way” (Malcolm X & Haley, 2015, p. 335).

From the standpoint of the narrator’s religious involvement and determination to learn whatever is important for a Muslim, he engages a great determination and devotion to raise up his faith and his understanding of the Islamic universe. What he uncovers, in dumbfounded like manner, is that the prayers in Arabic in the holy land of Mecca stand in sharp contrast to those he used to say as a Black Muslim. Clearly, the newer things he learns, the newer individual he gradually becomes, since this new religious horizon surfaces a great deal of transformation in such a way he is no longer the same African American, but El-Hajj Malik El-Shabazz. In other words, this new shade of the protagonist’s personality is molded physically, morally, psychologically, and religiously by what he encounters, discovers, and learns:

“Never have I witnessed such a sincere hospitality and the overwhelming spirit of true brotherhood as is practiced by people of all colors and races here in this Ancient Holy Land, [...] I eaten from the same plate, drunk from the same glass, and slept in the same bed (or on the same rug) – while praying to the same God – with fellow Muslims” (Malcolm X & Haley, 2015, pp. 346-347).

One may notice that there is a considerable presence of strong phrases such as “true brotherhood” and “people of all colors and races” which depict the atmosphere of mutual respect and acceptance prevailing between Muslims of different races, origins, and backgrounds. United around a single Islamic faith, the sentence “I have eaten from the same plate, drunk from the same glass, and slept in the same bed.” is, for sure, one of the most attractive and influential discoveries made by this African American who used to face domestic racism, segregation, and discrimination in the United States.

Besides, the Hajj pilgrimage experience and the Hajj name internalized in the protagonist’s spirit mutually twist together in order to settle a knowledgeable bridge that helps him discover the profound and sacred sense of human race, standing beyond races, origins, and backgrounds. Strong from the pivotal internalization of this Islamic realism, the latter acknowledges that the mankind in its diversity makes the

human race. It is what T'Shaba demonstrates when he delves into the humanly peaceful cohesion and brotherhood in the holy land:

"It is likely that Malcolm was deeply impressed by the equality displayed during the holy pilgrimage. On the Hajj people of different races worshipped together, ate together, lived together. All wore simple dress. It was difficult not to be impressed with such a moving display of devotion and equality" (T'Shaba, 1983, p. 212).

Such occurrences cannot fail to transform and shape the narrator's attitude and conduct. The sentence: *"What I have seen, and experienced, has forced me to re-arrange much of my thought-patterns previously held, and to toss aside some of my previous conclusions"* (Malcolm X & Haley, 2015, p. 347) is a confession of how Mecca has transformed him and has carved out in his mind the power of tolerance and love. As a result, his decision: *"I am going to organize and head a new Mosque in New York city, known as the Muslim Mosque, Inc."* (Malcolm X & Haley, 2015, p. 323) is not only his resolution to part with the Nation of Islam, but mainly his intention to have the Mecca experience of brotherhood and love reified in the United States:

"Since I learned the truth in Mecca, my dearest friends have come to include all kinds – some Christians, Jews, Buddhists, Hindus, agnostics, and even atheists! I have friends who are called capitalists, socialists, and communists! Some of my friends are moderates, conservatives, extremists – some are even Uncle Toms! My friends today are black, brown, red, yellow, and white" (Malcolm X & Haley, 2015, p. 382).

It is crucial for the reader to notice how in terms of social, political, and religious angle, Malcolm X, the radical Black Muslim, is sharply different from El-Hajj Malik El-Shabazz, the true Muslim. Indeed, if the first was unable to love the white man, especially the white American he viewed as a devil, the second therefore has no bounds to extend his love to people of different races, origins, backgrounds, and even to people of different political trends. The secret of such an outlook remains his new apprehension of the importance of the human race: *"The true Islam taught me that it takes all of the religious, political, economic, psychological, and racial ingredients, or characteristics, to make the Human Family and Human Society complete"* (Malcolm X & Haley, 2015, p. 382).

As for Omowale, it is symbolically the expression of Malcolm's spiritual and physical attachment to mother Africa, regarded as the land from which all African Americans originate. In addition, it is symbolically the proof of his adhesion to the Nigerian Muslim Students Society as honorary member under the *"Registration No. M-138"* (Malcolm X & Haley, 2015, p. 357). Actually, this name is filled with a profound and sacred significance when referring to its underlying and remarkable connotation in the Yoruba language that is: *"The son who has come home"* (Malcolm X & Haley, 2015, p. 357). When scrutinizing and contextualizing the meaning of "son", I infer that it refers to Malcolm as a descendant of black slaves, whereas with that of "home" I assert that the narrator alludes to Africa, the true homeland of all African Americans. The correlation of the sense of both words "son" and "home" helps the reader remember and relapse into the sordid history of the triangular trade that favored the kidnapping of many Africans from Africa who were brought to America where they became slaves or victims of servitude and forced labor.

In investing this name with pride, dignity, and self-assertion, Africa brings into the life of this African American leader an interest for a quest of his roots and origins. To rehabilitate actually his attachment to Africa, he urges on a series of trips to African countries such as Nigeria, Ghana, Liberia, Senegal, Morocco and Algeria.

"We didn't realize that as soon as we were made to hate Africa and Africans, we also hated ourselves. You can't hate the roots and not hate the fruit. You can't hate Africa, the land where you and I originated, without ending up hating you and me" (Malcolm X & Breitman, 1965, p. 168).

Obviously, the interconnection of words such as "Africa", "roots", and "fruit" is, I suppose, the way to say that African Americans have to be naturally bound to Africa and to Africans because this land is also theirs.

For better, Omowale succeeds symbolically in establishing a bridge allowing the intersection between Africans and African Americans. It is in the same context that like Omowale, many other African Americans who have visited Africa have been subject to vibrant and magnificent emotions. For example, once in Africa Fannie Lou Hamer confessed: *"I wept like a baby"* (Brooks & Houck, 2011, p. 118) and on his behalf Martin Luther King said: *"I was crying for joy"* (Carson, 2000, p. 112). For these African Americans who have visited their forefathers' land, the physical contact generates a wide range of emotions

through the friendlier manner they exchange with their fellow African brothers and sisters on the African Americans' plight and on Africans' challenges for the advancement of the continent.

It is of interest to put an emphasis on the historical context of Africa that helps shape Omowale's personality. In fact, the Africa of the 1960s is symptomatic of the years implying the wind of pre-independence, independence or post-independence. During this period, many African countries were ruled by Africans themselves and they struggled to implement self-esteem, self-confidence, and self-assertion in their citizens' mind after colonization. These years also reveal Africans' nationalism that sparks off a pretty brand image of Africa paving its own destiny. In the same connection, The Ghanaian Parliament gives an opportunity to the protagonist to talk of African Americans' ominous experience on the American soil: "*An invitation came to me which exceeded my wildest dream. I would never have imagined that I would actually have an opportunity to address the members of the Ghanaian Parliament*" (Malcolm X & Haley, 2015, p. 356). Through the rhetoric of these lines, the reader may decipher a great deal of excitement and enjoyment in the narrator's mind when resorting to his invitation by the Ghanaian Parliament. Likewise, he is once more overwhelmed with the same feelings when he is invited by Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, one of the most influential and illustrious figures of African nationalism and Pan-Africanism, as he explains: "*My highest single honor was an audience at the Castle with Osagyefo Dr. Kwame Nkrumah*" (Malcolm X & Haley, 2015, p. 363).

Not only is Omowale a constant and permanent reminder of his exciting and joyful African experience, but it also suggests that he comes to learn from independent African countries. It is with interest and enthusiasm that he discovers the spirit of the Organization of African Unity (O.A.U) which infuses in his mind much admiration and satisfaction. Through its socio-political role, promoting the visibility and stability of African countries at the continental and international levels, the organization mirrors their force and leadership. It goes without saying that learning about this organization generates an inspiration of utmost importance that boosts Omowale's creative genius. This leads to the foundation of the Organization of Afro-American Unity (OAAU) whose main concern is to unite African Americans and people of other races ready to invest their energy to improve human rights in the United States:

"He told her that 'in about two weeks' he planned to start Southern recruitment for his Harlem-based OAAU. At the church where he would speak Malcolm X was seated on the platform next to Mrs. Martin Luther King, to whom he leaned and whispered that he was 'trying to help,' he told her" (Malcolm X & Haley, 2015, p. 434).

This passage shows the starting point of Malcolm's change of viewpoint by encouraging cohesion between African American leaders and organizations. By attempting to call to unison all African Americans of different religious and political obedience, he envisions a strong religious and political cohesion able to voice hope and love throughout the United States for better impacting the American political arena. In other word, his ambition is, rather, to suggest that a strong unity of all African Americans' leaders and organizations around the Organization of Afro-American Unity should be a must for increasing tenfold all the energy of the black ethnic group activism.

In short, Draper's evocation: "*Malcolm Little, who assumed the names of Malcolm X and El-Hajj Malik El-Shabazz, was perhaps the most remarkable figure as yet produced by the resurgence of black nationalism*" (Draper, 1970, p. 86) is a rendered marker of the capacity and eagerness of this iconic figure to change from worse to good and to struggle for African Americans' citizenship rights. With the same determination, nicknames and names may be viewed as complementary elements in the process of his quest of dignity, self-confidence, and self-esteem because in his mind there is a direct connection between pride for his Blackness and his eager militancy or activism for equality and Justice in America.

IV. CONCLUSION

At the end of this paper, it is worth understanding that *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* draws the readers' attention to Malcolm's ambiguous and changeable personality through nicknames or names that recount different episodes of the protagonist's life story. I have shown that Malcolm's nicknames such as Homeboy, Red, and Satan are not only the result of his rejection from the American society of the mainstream, but also the fact that better illustrate his depravity process in the ghettos and in prison. This trilogy of nicknames shows how he is involved in illegal and immoral activities such as gambling, gang life, drug dealings, and housebreakings. For, Homeboy is the starting point, Red refers to the development, and Satan represents the climax and the end of this depravity process. However, I have also demonstrated how Malcolm is redeemed from the mud of depravity through a symbolic rebirth under the guise of the Islamic faith. After uncovering that Little is his slave name, he rushes to rid it. In so doing, he first becomes Malcolm X, the radical Black Muslim, then El-Hajj Malik El-Shabazz who adopts orthodox Islam in Mecca, and Omowale who tie a strong attachment to Africa.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

As the author of this paper, I declare that there is no conflict of interest related to the publication, to the authenticity, and to the originality of this intellectual child brain, as plagiarism research has revealed.

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