The New Tribe
by Buchi Emecheta
Buchi Emecheta is an Englishwoman who was born in Nigeria, and is thus well-qualified to comment on cross-cultural aspects of English life.
The New Tribe is set in a country town in England, probably in a period ranging from the late 1960s to the early 1980s.
Characters
Arthur Arlington, the vicar of a church in an English country town
Ginny Arlington, Arthur’s wife, who is unable to bear children
Julia, their adopted daughter
Chester, their adopted son, who was born of Nigerian parents
Other Characters
Julian, the newspaper delivery boy
Victoria and Robert, Ginny’s relatives in Australia
Catherine Mda, Chester’s biological mother
Miss Slatterly, Chester’s Sub A (grade 1) teacher
Ray Miller, Chester’s friend and classmate
Pamela, Julia’s school-friend
Mrs Miller, Ray’s mother
Plot
A young childless couple, of high standing in their community, suddenly find themselves as the adoptive parents of a new-born baby girl.

After a very thorough screening process, their status as the child’s parents is officially confirmed.
Two years later the couple is again approached by the adoption authorities, who ask them if they are prepared to adopt another child, an eighteen-month-old boy who is black. They accept the responsibility, and become model parents to their children.
As he grows older, the boy starts to become aware that he is different from all the other children in the community; eventually he becomes unwilling to take a leading role in the school’s cultural activities any longer, but he always remains loyal to his parents.
Themes
The viability of mixed-race families
The problems of adoption
Cultural sensitivity