

Ìrìnkèrindò: An Idea Whose Time Has Come.

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Human population movements are as old as humanity itself and African migrations are no exception to this trend. In prehistoric times when Africans largely depended on hunting, fishing and gathering food for their livelihood, groups of people migrated or moved continually from location to location to search for food. Even when Africans domesticated crops and livestock through farming and settled into communities, they continued this pattern of moving whenever their sustenance was at stake. Crop failures, overpopulation, pressure from neighbors, diseases and other disasters have often forced communities to move in search of new cultivable lands. The great Bantu Diaspora exemplifies the process of human migrations that emerged from a growing recognition of the inadequacy of the local food supply and the need for the dispossessed members of the community to split off and establish new communities elsewhere. Population movements are stimulated, as much by a pioneering drive as by desperation, the need to avert starvation or to escape danger, oppression and persecution.

In more modern times, movements of Africans from one country to another with the aim of permanent settlement have been on the increase. The major causes of African immigration have included social upheavals, economic calamities, civil warfare, natural catastrophes, political and religious persecutions. The single most compelling motivation leading African people to uproot themselves from their native lands and to emigrate towards foreign shores has been the desire to find greater opportunity and security somewhere else. In the last two decades, the nature and scope of African immigration has changed dramatically due to the processes of globalization and democratization, as underscored by Okome in her two papers.

The quest for security has taken on more urgency, and the popular response in host countries such as the United States reveals much of the limits of globalization as a win-win situation where we all co-mingle in an infinitely permeable and all-embracing global village. In order to emphasize the crucial nature of migration

today, we draw upon the analysis of three notable American scholars, Robert O. Keohane and Joseph S. Nye, and Samuel P. Huntington. All three rightly contend that matters of population movement are considered to all intents and purposes, matters of national security. The old fears of contagion being transported into national boundaries are re-awakened in the fears of new diseases, most of which allegedly originate from Africa. The Ebola virus, Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (HIV/AIDS), and West Nile Virus, are cases in point. In none of these cases have Africans been able to mobilize the effort to research into alternative causal explanations of such dread epidemics.

According to Keohane and Nye, globalization became the new "buzzword" of the 1990s, replacing the ubiquitous "interdependence" of the 1970s, like us, they agree that neither of these phenomena is totally new. Rather, they consider the constant state of flux that is endemic in the world today as under girding contemporary understandings of globalization. Accompanying the state of flux is a growing sense of vulnerability to phenomena, events, and processes that lie outside the borders of the state. Such vulnerability also breeds fears of the unknown, as witnessed by fears of the spread of contagious diseases in the form of newfangled diseases like West Nile Virus. In the summer of 1999, the New York City "press announced that the pathogen might have arrived in the bloodstream of a traveler, in a bird smuggled through customs, or in a mosquito that had flown into a jet. Fears of "bioinvasion" led some environmental groups to call for a reduction in global trade and travel. [\[1\]](#)

For Samuel P. Huntington, immigration is a phenomenon that threatens to dilute American national identity because it engenders constant assault on the national culture. Whereas the values and institutions of the White Anglo Saxon Protestant settlers shaped American consciousness in the foundational stage of the new nation, endorsing the dominance of the English language, the separation of church and state, and idealizing individualism, while only grudgingly and partially assimilating black people, and fully assimilating white European immigrants, today, the ideology of multiculturalism challenges the established cultural order. [\[2\]](#) By threatening American culture, immigration also threatens the American Creed, those "universal ideas and principles articulated in the founding documents by American leaders: liberty, equality, democracy, constitutionalism, liberalism, limited government, private enterprise." [\[3\]](#) This has given the upper hand to "subnational commercial interests and transnational and nonnational ethnic interests in the formulation of foreign policy" and made it impossible for

Americans to clearly define their national interests.

For Huntington, the drive for "heterogeneity, diversity, multiculturalism, and ethnic and racial division" is also very dangerous to the ability to achieve national unity, making it inevitable for America to find "an opposing other" against whom its citizens could unite. [\[4\]](#) Huntington considers immigration a serious problem too, because it reinforces "the disintegrative effects of the end of the Cold War" because it is growing in scope and immigrants are coming from diverse sources. Many of today's immigrants, unlike those of the past are unabashed disciples of multiculturalism. [\[5\]](#) Majority of them are also from Asia and Latin America. Other sources of danger identified by Huntington include the growing numbers of undocumented immigrants, "the high birth rate of some immigrant groups," and the consequent changes in

the racial, religious, and ethnic makeup of the United States. By the middle of the next century, according to the Census Bureau, non-Hispanic whites will have dropped from more than three-quarters of the population to only slightly more than half, and one-quarter of Americans will be Hispanic, 14 percent black, and 8 percent of Asian and Pacific heritage. The religious balance is also shifting, with Muslims already reportedly outnumbering Episcopalians [\[6\]](#)

One senses a note of regret in Huntington's reminiscences of the past when the contract between immigrants and native born Americans is that the immigrants' welcome was conditional upon their assimilation. To the contrary, he laments the obdurate willfulness of today's immigrants' celebration of their difference. The hallmarks of past acceptance of the teeming immigrants on America's shores are that immigrants had to visibly demonstrate their commitment to the idea of English as the national language, as well as their wholehearted embrace of other aspects of American culture and creed.

In return, immigrants could be as ethnic as they wished in their homes and local communities. At times, particularly during the great waves of Irish immigration in the 1840s and 1850s and of the southern and eastern European immigration at the turn of the century, immigrants were discriminated against and simultaneously subjected to major programs of "Americanization" to incorporate them into the national culture and society. Overall, however, assimilation American style worked well. Immigration renewed American society; assimilation preserved American

culture. [\[7\]](#)

Huntington laments that whereas the old immigrants came to America because they wanted to become American, and they were resentful if they were kept out of the mainstream of American life, today's immigrants seem to want to come to America in order to remain themselves, and they resent being encouraged to join the mainstream. [\[8\]](#) With the ideologies of multiculturalism and diversity, divisiveness is strengthened and legitimated. The rejection of assimilation also is a rejection of an America that is unified by a common culture and creed, and an America where the primacy of the rights of the individual is recognized. Rather, particularly in the post-civil rights era, there is a new focus on the rights of "groups, defined largely in terms of race, ethnicity, gender, and sexual preference." [\[9\]](#) Huntington sees the immediacy of the danger that if immigration is allowed to go unchecked, and immigrants are permitted to remain aloof from America's melting pot, the nation may well disintegrate into "a tangle of squabbling nationalities" as Theodore Roosevelt, echoing the founding fathers, feared. Contrary to these stellar examples, for Huntington, Bill Clinton encouraged and promoted diversity by not compelling new immigrants to assimilate as was done in the past. [\[10\]](#) Another problem with immigration is that the diversity that it produces also creates Diasporas that maintain an active and enduring interest in their original countries, which inform their preferred foreign policy priorities. This could work in conjunction with the foreign policy priorities of the United States that are determined by its genuine national interests, as with Cuban Americans' opposition against the Castro regime. It may also work contra-US national interest, as with the lobbying of Chinese Americans who call for the extension of most favored nation status to China.

According to Huntington, not only do Diasporas benefit their home countries economically, they also "supply expertise, military recruits, and on occasion political leadership to the homeland. They often pressure their home governments to adopt more nationalist and assertive policies towards neighboring countries. Recent cases in the United States show that they can be a source of spies used to gather information for their homeland governments. Most important, Diasporas can influence the actions and policies of their host country and co-opt its resources and influence to serve the interests of their homeland." [\[11\]](#) Huntington agrees with James R. Schlesinger who sees a great deal of incoherence in American foreign policy. He lays the blame squarely at the foot of activist lobbies of various ethnic

Diasporas. [12] The most significant of the dangers to America from ethnic interests are the domesticization of foreign policy such that in the first place, there is no separation between domestic and foreign policy, and secondly, there is the elimination of the primacy of promoting national interest as the object of foreign policy, third, there is the danger of particularism in US foreign policy. Ultimately for Huntington, this weakens the United States in the comity of nations. [13] In order to correct these problems, Huntington suggests the curbing of the cults of multiculturalism and diversity, putting limits on immigration, while emphasizing Americanization programs to promote immigrant assimilation and challenge the devotion to the politics of ethnic particularism and the consequent "diversion of American resources to the service of particularistic subnational, transnational, and nonnational interests." [14]

It seems then that for Huntington, the immigrant is a transgressive, particularly when she/he subscribes to the philosophy of multiculturalism and diversity, or in Huntington's words, belongs to "the cult of multiculturalism and diversity." What makes the immigrant even more suspect in Huntington's book is the continued concern for the country of origin, and the mobilization of lobbying efforts to ensure that US policymakers pay more attention to their issues. Huntington considers such efforts to be ultimately divisive and destructive to the unity of purpose that should underlay American national interest, and therefore, inform the determination of the nation's foreign policy objectives. We disagree. Immigrants are taxpayers who are quite within their rights in a pluralistic society such as America when they articulate their interests and communicate these to the policy making establishment. That these interests differ from those of other Americans is also to be expected. It is at best, doubtful that there was such a time that all Americans shared a common definition of, and devotion to one overarching set of national interests. We expect that once Africans reach a critical mass in their countries of settlement, they will become more politically active, and that they will make their interests known to policymakers, and lobby for those interests to be recognized as legitimate and worthy of support.

Two immigrant African women, we began writing this editorial in Woodbourne, New York, continued it in Brooklyn, and the Bronx, while in London en route to Nigeria, and in Lagos, Nigeria. The final part was written in Brooklyn and the Bronx in New York City. Clearly, this editorial in and of itself, was put through a substantial amount of Ìrìnkèrindò. Okome was in London by happenstance. She was supposed to be in Lagos, Nigeria, surrounded by natal family, with mother,

sisters, nephews and nieces and brothers in law welcoming her home. Karma dictated otherwise. She missed her flight because she had a rather lengthy stopover in London, and decided to visit a friend. She visited, ate food brought from Nigeria, and met the parents of a newborn who were en route to Lagos, Nigeria, where they are citizens, from Dublin, Ireland, where the woman had just delivered her baby. Incidentally, she had gone to Dublin with the express intention of delivering the baby there. They were full of stories about Nigerians in Ireland. Julius Kómoláfé's paper was brought to mind by their reminiscences.

In the paper, "In Search of Fortune" Julius Kómoláfé conceptualizes Nigerian immigration to Ireland as a quest, an endless search for better socio-economic circumstances. He contends that Nigerians are like the Israelites of yore because they range far and wide, sometimes initially settling in other European countries where some are undocumented. Others have struggling African goods and food stores in these countries. Yet others graduate from Nigerian Universities, are unable to find employment, and see in Ireland, a land of opportunities. Some are medical doctors and nurses. These are recruited directly from Nigeria. They have no problems securing residency. For all these Nigerians, moving in this manner would be unnecessary if the country were not in the throes of a long-term economic downturn that is being combated with International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank designed Structural Adjustment Programs.

Indeed, Nigerians went to Ireland before the 1981 date from which Kómoláfé's study began. The difference between those Nigerian immigrants and the contemporary ones is that today's immigrants are not overwhelmingly students who are in the country for a short-term stay, but numerous permanent residents and naturalized Irish citizens for whom the country is a new home. Is Ireland indeed the land flowing with milk and honey, the Promised Land, the land of opportunities? Ireland became a thriving center for the reduction of high technology and information technology goods from the end of the 1980s. While the Nigerian economy continued its downward spiral, Ireland, a country that had been a net exporter of its citizens to the UK and US for economic reasons now has returning Irish immigrants. While the UK and US were traditional recruiters of Irish labor, Ireland now is a net importer of workers from both countries as well as other European countries. The country has also attracted its share of refugees from Eastern Europe and Africa, particularly Nigeria. The Nigerian refugee inflow began during the period of the Babangida regime and intensified during General Abacha's dictatorial rule.

From the perspective of those for whom the possibility of upward mobility is foreclosed, being able to get into Ireland may be considered an opportunity of a lifetime. Such individuals may have left the UK, Germany, Spain, Holland, and Switzerland because life in those countries proved to be more of a struggle than recognized, prior to emigrating from Nigeria. For these, Ireland offers another opportunity to secure gainful employment, revive struggling or moribund businesses, even to employ technicalities that ensure Irish citizenship for offspring who then sponsor their parents for citizenship. At the very least, bearing Nigerian Irish citizens ensures that the parents of such children cannot be deported from Ireland once they have out-stayed the period authorized in their visas.

But there are Nigerian women who also go to Dublin, have their babies, secure an Irish passport, and leave. The family that Okome encountered in London is an example. It is a consequence of the antinomies of globalization that they, being affluent, can afford to pay cash for six months of residence in Dublin, hospitalization, and doctors' fees. In addition, they left Ireland loaded down with huge suitcases of "necessities" for the baby that majority of Nigerians resident in Ireland could probably not afford. Another set of antinomies is presented by counter-posing the experience of the Nigerian doctors and nurses in Dublin against that of those who fled Nigeria for Germany, Spain, Holland, the UK, and Switzerland for example, and now leave those countries for more fertile pastures in Ireland. Some of these economic refugees present themselves as political refugees. The medical professionals are desired. The "refugees" are not. Kómoláfé also noted that the economic and political integration of Europe influenced the calculus of Nigerian immigrants who calculated that through securing Irish citizenship, they become European citizens by default. By doing this, they are able to travel freely throughout Europe, and also to the United States. They can also travel back home when necessary.

"The Antinomies of Globalization: Causes of Contemporary African Immigration to the United States of America," and "The Antinomies of Globalization: Consequences of Contemporary African Immigration to the United States of America," by Mojúbàolú Olúfúnké Okome are two inter-related papers. The first posits that globalization is the primary motive force that controls population movements. The second that population movements in turn shape nature of globalization in a manner that touches the communities of settlement of the immigrants, their home countries, and the nature of the world's political economy

as well as the social relations in the global system. These two papers provide a framework that is relevant to Kómoláfé's paper, although Kómoláfé wrote about the only experiences of Nigerians in another country, Ireland.

Okome begins the first paper, the one on the causes of African immigration with a discussion of some of the changes in the nature of African immigration. In this paper, and the related one on the Consequences of African Immigration to the United States, she adroitly presents the manner in which globalization tends to produce diametrically opposing consequences, such as bounty and want, economic crisis and buoyancy, immigration and out-migration, cutting edge technology and the lack thereof, in a manner that divides one region of a country or the world from another, privileging the gainers, while penalizing the losers. Drawing upon scholarly literature, which she criticizes as inadequate in the study of African immigration, and of phenomena that relate to the study of Africa and Africans are grossly inadequate she argues that globalization is not a new development, and identifies several phases of the phenomenon. She also advocates the utilization of methodologies derived from interdisciplinary approaches to the study of African immigration to the US.

Okome's second paper examines some of the consequences of African immigration to the United States. Frederick Douglass' and Booker T. Washington's responses to deluge of 19th Century European immigration into the US and their analyses of the effects of these population movements on African Americans shows us that many of today's debates and analysis of immigration and its impact on American political economy have their origins from past discourse on the phenomenon. It is clear from both Douglass' and Washington's statements that there are antinomies that arise from globalization-spurred immigration. The investment in the development of skills among African American workers was short-circuited by the lack of employment that enabled the deployment of skills. Instead, competition from skilled European laborers drove African American laborers into desperate exploitation in the cotton fields.

For Douglass, it is clear that white skin privilege and discrimination against blacks as being less entitled to employment contributed to dispossessing African Americans while investing white immigrant workmen with the right to employment and the right to become full citizens and to enjoy the consequent benefits. Douglass goes further to advocate not the retaliatory discrimination against European laborers, but the establishment of standards and rules about their

absorption into the body politics. One of his recommendations is that those who learn the language, and commit themselves to the observance of the duties of citizenship should be welcomed with open arms and given refuge.

Okome also draws upon contemporary analysis and data to show that Douglass' and Washington's analysis are still very relevant today. The whole world must grapple with the solution to the population problem. The problem as Okome indicates is more complex than just a matter of numbers. In "Causes of Contemporary African Immigration to the United States," she shows that the linkage of economic, political, social, and demographic factors is deployed in such a manner as to produce population movements from struggling to buoyant economies. Although host countries choose to combat undocumented immigration as law and order problems, their tools are considerably blunted by the immigrants' determination and the devastating economic, political, and social processes that have become the norm under the regime of contemporary globalization. These countries also gain substantially from the presence of immigrants in their societies. The United States definitely benefits from the knowledge and know-how that is infused into its society from those classified as PTK (Professional, Technical, and Kindred) immigrants. These immigrants are not trained with US resources, having become skilled in their home countries.

The gain of the US is the loss of the immigrants' home countries. Immigrants who come to take jobs in the informal economy also provide much needed labor at affordable prices in the service economies. Those who establish niche businesses that sell African goods introduce innovative business practices as well as new goods and social practices that are not derived from the White Anglo Saxon Protestant mainstream culture of the United States, but are equally devoted to hard work, thrift, and other hallmarks of classic Protestant ethics. Okome also sees as consequences of immigration to the US, growing evidence of virulent nativism and the related anti-immigrant philosophies, and particularly in times of economic downturn, heightened fears that the presence of immigrants in significant numbers will have a negative effect on the chances of native-born Americans to find and keep jobs. In addition, there is rampant mistrust of given groups of immigrants. First generation immigrants also produce second and subsequent generation Africans, and African immigration has profound effects on the production of knowledge in the academy, and within the professions. These final effects may not necessarily be clearly observable, since the African immigrants producing the effects are not as clearly identifiable as those in the informal economy, and those

who service the niche markets.

The countries of origin of immigrants see out-migration as a boon, a source of remittances of substantial financial investments and monetary gifts into their economies. Some countries also see out-migration as a means of ridding their societies of harsh critics of government policies, of unemployed and under-employed, and therefore, restive youth, and of all manner of "troublemakers." However, the immigrants' countries of origin are affected negatively by the out-migration of the young, strong, and skilled. The effects of out-migration identified by Okome include the 'brain drain,' deleterious consequences of immigration on the economic growth, and democratization of African countries, and the development of increased interest in issues that formerly lay within the domestic purview of African countries, but have now become politicized as international.

Okome's papers also identify some of the specificities of the current experience of globalization and how the world we live in is being constantly transformed. Free trade is an intrinsic element of the ideology of globalization. If there is popular support for the free trade in goods, and the free acquisition of needed skills across vast geographical boundaries, such freedom is not a part of population movement, particularly by the poor, dispossessed, and unskilled. It is likely that the debate will continue between the orthodox free traders who enthusiastically embrace the globalization of finances and goods and the anti globalization activists who argue that the same standards ought to be applied to the movement of individuals across international borders as are applied to goods and services by the free-traders. These debates will be resolved in a manner that favors the interests of whatever historical bloc emerges to control the world's political economy. It is unlikely that the anti-globalization activists will dominate this bloc in the near future. Thus, immigration will continue to be regulated to give unrestricted entry to desired sectors of labor, driven by the political intervention of economic actors who benefit from the recruitment, deployment and use of such labor. Unlike other groups of immigrants in the US, Africans have not mobilized politically to influence government policy on African immigration.

"Cry My Beloved Ugborodo (Escravos?)" by Oritsegbemi O. Omatete decries the enslavement and humiliation of the people of Ugborodo (the forest in the midst of the waters) who not only had the name of one of their principle towns changed to Escravos (The Slaves) by the Portuguese in the 15th Century but suffer the continued embarrassment of having an independent Nigeria maintain the name,

while raping the land of its abundant petroleum resources, and wreaking chaos, mayhem and devastation with the technological assistance of multinational oil corporations that derive immense profits from the enterprise. Dr. Omatete is a Nigerian immigrant in the US. He visited his hometown, Ugborodo in November 2000 and writes a poignant account of the physical and material devastation that has been inflicted upon the people and their land. Not only did the ruin and desolation that he encountered assault his sensibilities, the enduring nature of the negative environmental consequences of oil production, and of the collusion between the oil producing companies and the Nigerian government to produce oil at all costs is a disheartening reminder of the renaming of Ugborodo as Escravos. The people are enslaved. Although prodigious rent payments accrue to the Nigerian government from the oil producing companies which make tremendous profits from Nigeria's 'sweet crude,' Ugborodo and its people, like most of the surrounding communities in the Niger Delta languish in want. These communities are neglected by the Nigerian government, and treated as just places from which multinational petroleum corporations callously extract wealth.

Two Nigerian communities, the Itsekiri and the Urhobo, published Dr. Omatete's diary of his visit on their websites. This in itself is remarkable, since the Itsekiri and Urhobo are at loggerheads over the distribution of political power and economic resources, and have clashed one with the other in Warri, Sapele, Effurun, and other Niger Delta towns and villages, with tremendous losses of lives and property. Perhaps if more people from both communities focus on their common enemies and or problems as Dr. Omatete has done, they can devote their collective energies to solving the multitudinous problems that have been set in motion as a result of the reckless exploitation of the natural resources in the Niger Delta. As Omatete indicates, the Niger Delta is "home to some of the smaller ethnic groups in Nigeria. Since crude oil production began, their lands and rivers have been polluted and they have lost their means of meager livelihood such as fishing and farming. Yet they have acquired very little benefit from the oil wealth that is derived from their territory.

"(In)Visibility and Duality of the Civil Rights and Yoruba Movements: 1950s-1990s" by Faola Ifagboyede approaches African immigration from another vantage point, that of African Americans, whose experience of enslavement is often described as a forced migration. While this idea has gained significant currency, one wonders if using the concept of forced migration does not de-fang the venomous nature of slavery. Migration implies some degree of volition on the part

of the migrant or immigrant, an element that is totally absent from the chattel slavery of the United States of America.

Ifagboyede's paper focuses upon the efforts of Oba Oseijeman Adéfúnmi I and those of Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King. Adéfúnmi is the first African American born in the U.S. to be initiated into the Yoruba priesthood. He also founded the Yorùbá movement in the U.S. Ifagboyede juxtaposes the rise of the Yoruba movement in the U.S. with the rise of Dr. Martin Luther King's civil rights movement. Both began in the 1950s. Ifagboyede conceptualizes Adéfúnmi and King's efforts as directed at addressing the malady of African American racial and cultural identity identified by sociologist W.E. B. DuBois as double consciousness. This was done in two ways. In the first place, through a civil rights agenda based on King's vision of an inalienable entitlement to the full rights of citizenship. Second, through the re-creation of cultural habits based on Adéfúnmi's vision of a traditional African perspective. For Ifagboyede, the latter is the superior perspective because it is based on an African-centered philosophy that if embraced by the overwhelming numbers of African Americans, will solve the problems caused by double consciousness.

Adétóyèje Y. Oye(yemí's "Nigerian Physical Therapists' Job Satisfaction: A Cross-Continental Comparison" too picks up on themes and issues raised in the Okome paper. It also relates to the Kómoláfé paper. Oye(yemí's paper addresses the contemporary emigration of highly trained health personnel from Nigeria and other developing countries to more fertile pastures abroad. Again, one sees evidence of antinomies. The desertion of skilled manpower causes grave shortages in many developing countries, but it produces a ready pool of skilled, well-qualified job seekers for developed and affluent countries. Given these tendencies, Oye(yemí's study was directed at determining whether there is a linkage between the lack of job satisfaction, and the drive for employment in foreign countries.

Oye(yemí also explores whether the possibility of more rewarding employment opportunities as well as upward mobility for Nigerian Physical Therapists (PTs) is fulfilled when these PTs leave Nigeria to settle and practice in the United States. He concludes that while there are some aspects of job satisfaction in the professional lives of Physical Therapists in Nigeria. These PTs tend to have a great deal of autonomy in decision-making and in the determination of the protocol for patient care. Nigerian PTs in the US are also dissatisfied with aspects of their professional lives in a manner that reflects the displeasure with the amount of time

spent on generating paperwork as compared with patient care and clinical practice. Given this conclusion, it is clear that if it were possible to correct the deficit in job satisfaction experienced by Nigerian PTs in Nigeria, fewer PTs may be attracted to foreign travel and residence to gratify their professional desires.

Oye(yemí does not provide the social, political, and economic context that produce job dissatisfaction among Nigerian Physical Therapists. This is outside the purview of his paper. Were he to do so, he would also show that the operation of negative socio-political and economic antinomies of globalization that militate against the material well-being of most salary-earning Nigerians in such a manner as to make them desirous of seeking employment in other countries. This is the focus of Okome's first paper. There are also links between Oye(yemí's paper, Kómoláfé's, and Okome's because all three consider the out-migration of Nigerians (the first two) and Africans (the third) for economic and other reasons. Oye(yemí's Physical Therapists are economic refugees who flock out of Nigeria in search of better pastures. Were Kómoláfé to expand his study, he might well find evidence of Nigerian Physical Therapists in Dublin, some of them students who sought and found employment after completing their education in Ireland, others recruited directly from Nigeria. What are the long term consequences of the movement of skilled professionals from African countries to the US and Europe? Kómoláfé addresses some consequences with reference to Dublin, while Okome considers some as they relate to the US.

"Tutùolá 'Resurfaces' In Italy: An Exegesis of Alessandra di Maio's recent book on Amos Tutùolá" by Jàre Àjàyí is a book review of Alessandra di Maio's Tutùolá at the University: The Italian Voice of a Yorùbá Ancestor. Àjàyí laments the official and institutional indifference to Tutùolá's work and family by the state and the Nigerian academy during his lifetime, and particularly after his death in June 1997, but for the few Nigerian scholars who acknowledge his contributions in books and through some commemorative activities. Added to these modest gestures of appreciation is the book reviewed by Àjàyí, who agrees with of Claudio Gorlier that it is a remarkable tribute by the University of Turin to the memory of the great storyteller, scholar, and Yorùbá literary ancestor, Tutùolá. For Àjàyí, scholars, students and researchers who read the book will be exposed to the beauty and complexity of Tutùolá's world.

Jàre Àjàyí's second contribution is a poem titled: "Crossroads" speaks of a sojourner who must return home to seek guidance, to re-learn what was once

familiar and taken for granted. This is not a carefree return with the promise of unqualified success, but a groping for answers, a tentative seeking after old truths, a re-education a quest for a mentor that could provide the roadmap into the healing and recovery of a near-lost heritage. Juxtaposed with the possibility of spiritual healing through the integration of past with present, travel, linguistic prowess, and powerful oratory all pale in significance. At the crossroads, a wanderer could well become forever lost without guidance, mentorship, and leadership. However, guidance, mentorship, and leadership are neither easily accessible, nor always visible to those that seek them.

Débò Kòtún's "Welcome Back Homeless" speaks of the angst and pain of the immigrant experience. It presents immigration as a life-changing experience that so deeply marks the immigrant that it is impossible to feel at home anywhere. The poem also speaks of the alienation and anomie that attends the immigrant experience by pointing out that even in the land of plenty and amidst the celebration of liberty, discrimination persists, making it impossible for the immigrant to relax and enjoy the bounties of "God's own country. The discrimination is felt in the form of xenophobia; something that divides even the American born Africans from the American African recently emigrated. The immigrant departs from this land; a possibility that is only open to some in fact, for the undocumented dare not leave. However, all immigrants are able to leave, if only in their imagination. Even among Africans, there are tensions that divide. These tensions stem from what Davidson describes as the curse of European style nationalism, from the long-term, enduring effects of Africa's partition at the Berlin West Africa conference in 1884. An African immigrant thus, is not necessarily welcome outside of her/his home country in the continent, as the experience of Nigerians in Ghana and Ghanaians in Nigeria showed in the past, and many Africans' experiences show in today's South Africa. It is inevitable then, that the immigrant again, departs.

Does an African feel at home, even in her/his country of origin? Kòtún raises this question in his third stanza, where he refers to Nigeria's inability thus far, to realize its potential due to the leaders' betrayal of the people. Even here, ethnicity divides, and the resultant rancor, conflict, and discrimination may spur a perpetual wanderlust for the frustrated. It is not only ethnicity that divides, even in cosmopolitan Lagos, some are discriminated against, and their claim of belonging challenged, their efforts to integrate rebuffed, again, producing the urge to depart. The family does not offer relief for the immigrant who in a polygynous family may

become uneasy, feeling unwelcome amidst jubilation and celebration of her/his homecoming. Again, there is no other option but to depart yet again.

Can indigenous African religion unite Africans in the Diaspora? Unlikely says Kòtún, because differences in nationality again interfere, and discrimination again rears its ugly head, stimulating the departure of the rejected. The immigrant's mother acknowledges the intertwined nature of belonging and yet being separate. She it is who understands that someone may be a part of a group, but eventually, separation is inevitable. If the world is our home, we ought to enjoy rather than fear or resent our wanderlust. Indeed, we can wander and range far and wide. Regardless, when we meet again, we can re-connect and enjoy our reunion, even if we must leave to wander yet again.

Débò Kòtún's "Abiku: An Excerpt from the Novel" combines elements derived from Nigerian social, political, and economic life in the post independence era, particularly under military rule with elements from the philosophical and spiritual traditions of the Yoruba and elements from late twentieth century American life to tell a story of immigration, healing. Olá Adémólá, a medical doctor who fled from a rapacious military dictatorship in Nigeria is an àbíké, a child that is literally born to die again and again. His coming to America is not accidental, it is fortuitous because only through him will the àbíké child of the McFlatheys be saved. The excerpt demonstrates in part, how Kòtún's novel attempts to weave a seamless connection between the àbíké and children who suffer from Sudden Infant Death Syndrome, (SIDS), by showing that each has elements of recurrence, being manifested in a cycle of willful birth, death, and rebirth. The focus on the suddenness of SIDS is a deflection from what ought to be understood as the crux of the phenomenon - the ability of the child to choose the time, and nature of both birth and death, and to seek either relentlessly, aggressively, and wantonly, regardless of the intervention or intention of parents. The rare àbíké who survives beyond childhood does so either as a result of strong, concerted spiritual intervention that can only be provided by the most skilled babaláwo. Western medicine has no philosophical basis for understanding such a phenomenon, and thus, has no effective treatment.

Paradoxically, the wealthy, influential McFlatheys must depend on Adémólá, new émigré from a developing country and the philosophical and spiritual knowledge of the Yorùbá to save their child from certain death and possible reincarnation as an àbíké. They must not only do this, they must travel to Nigeria, accompanied by

Adémólá who is still sought in Nigeria by his childhood friend turned arch enemy, Major Sakará of the Department of Military Intelligence. Adémólá is in danger of meeting a violent death if Sakará were to know that he came to Nigeria. In essence, Adémólá must ignore all his fears, forsake the natural human feeling of self-preservation, throw all caution to the wind and go like a veritable sacrificial lamb to meet an almost certain death. The McFlartheys must suspend all skepticism and disbelief, forget everything about Western philosophies and medical scientific analysis by all manner of highly qualified doctors, propelled only by the desire to save their child, they must travel to a corruption-ridden, politically unstable, military ruled Nigeria to consult with a babaláwo who holds the only key to their child's survival.

Àbíkú explores many other themes but this excerpt focuses upon optimistically seeking out the best that Nigeria has to offer, both in the knowledge derived from contemporary times, and in the knowledge from ancient times to save a dying child, to foster person-to person cooperation, to educate, convince and enlighten the ignorant, the skeptic, and the uninformed. This excerpt ultimately presents connections that bind people of all kinds together, despite quite radical differences. It also presents the brain drain that afflicts Nigeria and other African countries in dramatic relief. Would Adémólá, having a knowledge base that straddles Yorùbá and Western cosmogony not have been more useful to a developing Nigeria than to the United States? Would he have fled his country without the imminent threat of losing his life? Were there to be a perpetuation of military rule, would there not be thousands of Adémólás, desperately fleeing for their lives, flocking into the more stable, more economically buoyant countries of the world, their potential contribution permanently lost to their countries of birth? Does exile have to be a hopeless, futile experience? To the last question, his excerpt says an emphatic No!

Onípe(dé Hollist's "Going To America" is an excerpt from his novel titled, *So That the Path Does Not Die*. Through his imaginative depiction of Keziah/Kizzy's daydreamed emigration from Sierra Leone, we gain an insight into the palpability of the hankering of African youth after what they believe will be a beautiful, magical experience of immigration. Escape from their home country as seen in this daydream can only be to bigger and better things. We also gain an insight into the cleavages that divide African countries - language, original place of origin, gender, class. Keziah Bacchus considers himself no ordinary Sierra Leonean. He is one of the privileged, one of the select, a descendant of Maroons from Jamaica, which makes him one of the Krio. Being Krio, Bacchus is of course, educated, he

considers himself better than your run of the mill Sierra-Leonean, and he dreams of getting on top of his game as well as the social and economic pecking order by becoming, through further studies in America, Dr. Bacchus. Of course, such a lucky and brilliant fellow would be celebrated by all and sundry who enthusiastically celebrate his good fortune by seeing him off at the airport, amidst dance, song, accompanied by loud protestations and lamentation of his departure.

We gain an insight into the consequence of the generation gap between Keziah's grandmother's cohorts and Keziah and his contemporaries. While for the latter, emigration opens up a vista of endless possibilities and opportunities, for the grandmother's generation, it opens up a can of worms. There is the ever present danger of being morally corrupted through exposure to a sybaritic lifestyle, the specter of becoming a permanent immigrant, lost forever to friends and family. Of course, in his dreams, an important guy like Keziah would have numerous women throwing themselves at him, especially now that his prospects were significantly improved. For these, loud and visible wailing and gnashing of the teeth are indicators of their irreparable loss. These young women differ radically from Kizzy's matronly grandmother who has no use for unrestrained, copulation that is practiced with reckless abandon.

Kizzy's daydream may seem to be absurd to those more comfortable and secure in their material existence than he. His daydream may be funny to those ensconced in comfort and affluence like Africa's wealthy few. However, this daydream is real for many young Africans who see no way out but to emigrate and seek their fortune in other greener pastures. They may not always have the means to actualize these dreams, they may even escape from unemployment and underemployment, from the lack of decent conditions of service in their places of employ, only to become trapped as members of the struggling masses in the ghettos of the West, neither able to go back home, nor make any appreciable progress toward upward mobility. What hopes lie on the horizon for Africa's youth? The prognosis in this era of globalization is grim for the majority. However, these young people can still dream, even if the dreams are unrealistic, even if they are escapist. The ability to dream under conditions of desperation implies the capacity to hope for a better future. It puts the dreamer beyond the control of her/his oppressors. It lays open the possibility of positive change.

Hollist's excerpt relates to Oye(yemí's in the sense that both examine the environment in which medical care personnel, scientists and technicians work.

There are many reasons why a person laboring under the burdens and tedium of life would desire immediate exit from her/his home country. However, there are as many, or even more reasons to stay home if the opportunity exists because as Oye(yemí argues, there may be more job satisfaction in an African workplace than in an American one. Hollist goes one step further by showing us some of the intangible elements that make for a rich life - friends, family, the familiar routines and activities of daily life, even the predictability of a recognized bully's oppressiveness. To depart is to leave these things behind, a process that could generate a feeling of rootlessness and disconnectedness. In a sense then, to leave is to become homeless as Kòtún indicates, to be condemned to wandering hither and thither, condemned to a perpetual cycle of arrival and departure, all the while not feeling comfortable anywhere.

One more issue that Hollist raises concerns education. Many young Africans hanker after a foreign education, believing it to be of better quality than the home-grown variety. Together with the dreams of accessing such education are grand dreams of "making it." Many firmly believe that such progress can never be found in their own countries. We can see then, future trends toward increased out-migration from the African continent by those more able to do so.

When we started out with the idea of collaborating in producing this journal, the first order of business was the brainstorming that resulted in the following draft thematic outline. We decided to focus upon several themes, including:

- Migration and immigration in Africa: A Background
- Effects of history, culture, economy, resource endowment, environmental factors, and social structure on migration and immigration
- Multidimensionality of African Immigration
- Need to demonstrate the open-endedness of the debate on migration and immigration, and to framework it within the continent over time.
- Defining Concepts and Terms (African Identity/ies, Immigration, Migration, Diaspora, etc. . .)

- Need for conceptual exploration, self-definition, problematization of self definition (who is entitled?)
- Exploration of how identity is lived and the impact thereof on life.
- Dispelling Myths and Stereotypes on Africa, Immigrants, Immigration
- Rationales behind African Immigration (into the USA, into Europe, into Asia)
- Consequences of African Immigration to the communities of settlement (Europe, America, Asia)
- Consequences of immigration to the home countries of immigrants
- Immigration and Family
- Immigration and Political Economy- Labor
- Immigration and Politics
- Immigration and Education
- Immigration and Religion
- Immigration and Culture
- Immigration and Language
- Immigration and Literature
- Immigration and Ethnicity
- Immigration and Nationality
- Immigration and Race

- Immigration and Class
- Immigration and the Arts
- Immigration and Legislation
- Immigration and Health
- Immigration and Housing
- Immigration and Sports
- Immigration and Media
- Immigration and Information Technology
- Immigration and Globalization
- Gender Dimension of African Immigration
- Generational Dimension of African Immigration

Our Editorial and advisory board added to our original list, and one member of the Editorial board, Prof. Jonathan Peters, suggested that expunging immigration from our title, and replacing it with migration would better reflect our agenda. Thus, the name of the Journal was changed to Ìrìnkèrindò: Journal of African Migration. At least one member of our editorial board advised that the first part of the title, being a Yoruba word, might give the impression that this is a Nigerian Journal, and that further, this might dissuade Africans from other countries from contributing. We demurred, believing Africans and Africanists are more sophisticated than all that. If Africans and Africanists contribute to Journals with European names that are written in European languages, it is about time that Africans and Africanists embrace the use of African titles in publications as not signifying boundedness to one geographical location.

We welcome you, one and all to the world of Ìrìnkèrindò, the world of incessant and perpetual wanderings of African peoples. The time is ripe for a journal that

performs our self-appointed task, which is to document, analyze, critique and explicate these migrations both in their contemporary and historical manifestations.

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[1] Robert O. Keohane and Joseph S. Nye "Globalization: What's New? What's Not? (And So What?)." *Foreign Policy*, Spring, 2000, p.1.

[2] Samuel P. Huntington "The Erosion of American National Interests" *Foreign Affairs*, 76(5), Sep/Oct 1997, pp. 28-29.

[3] *Ibid*, p. 29.

[4] *Ibid*, pp. 29-32.

[5] *Ibid*, p. 32.

[6] *Ibid* p. 33.

[7] *Ibid*.

[8] *ibid*.

[9] *ibid*, pp. 33-34.

[10] *Ibid* p. 34.

[11] *Ibid* p. 39.

[12] *Ibid* p. 40.

[13] *ibid*, pp. 40-41.

[14] *Ibid*, pp. 48-49.