

# Transnational Social Fields of the Yoruba in Toronto

A thesis presented to the Faculty of Graduate Studies of the University of Guelph in partial fulfilment of requirements for the degree of Master of Arts, February, 2000

**Charles T. Adeyanju**  
Faculty of Graduate Studies  
University of Guelph

## Abstract

Until very recently, the word "immigrant" had evoked images of people who had come to stay, having been transplanted from their original home in order to make for themselves a new home to which they would pay allegiance. This thesis questions the assumptions that minorities and migrants demonstrate an exclusive loyalty to one nation-state. This is examined by exploring the mode of social connections and frequency by which one of the most salient African ethnic communities in Toronto, the Yoruba (the pedigrees of *Oduduwa* from the Federal Republic of Nigeria), maintain ties on various levels with their "home community" in this period of globalization.

Yoruba migration is linked to their enmeshment in global capitalism, beginning with colonialism which extracted natural resources for the development of the European industrialism, and later neocolonialism which caused the pervasive penetration of global capital in the form of loans, and the collusion of internal social forces with the Western transnational corporations, leading to the pauperization of the mass of the Nigerian population.

It is argued that the crass material exploitation of Nigeria, both in the colonial and postcolonial periods is not enough to explain the Yoruba migration and their transnational practices but should be viewed in conjunction with the "dependency complex" caused by the colonial and neocolonial domination of their "psyche".

It is evident that most of the early Yoruba came to Canada for prestige and status, which they gained from their kith and kin back home in Nigeria who considered them the community heroes. Conversely, those who have been coming since the mid-80s, when the Nigerian economy failed to cater to the needs of the vast majority owing to the neoliberal Structural Adjustment Program (SAP), are coming for economic reasons. In response to the harsh economic situation in Nigeria, the Yoruba are now being driven by the "cargo cult mentality".

In Canada, the neoliberal philosophy of both the Provincial and the Federal Governments do not augur well for the immigrants, dashing the hopes and aspirations of many of them.

Overall, the present Yoruba immigrants in Toronto are caught in "two worlds" which they find insatiable as their aspirations are not being met. To surmount the socio-economic problems of both "worlds", loyalties become divided into more than one nation-state.

Six factors inducing the transnational practices of the Yoruba immigrants in Toronto are critically examined in this thesis. One, the socio-economic problems of the mid-80s and the corrupt military predatory rule of the time combined with the maximal clamp-down on the opposition in the 1990s made Nigeria an "unattractive" place to live for a vast majority of the people. Two, the experience and perception of racism by the Yoruba immigrants in Toronto draws them closer to their roots and home country, as racism is perceived as a sign of rejection. Three, the value attached to the kinship system. The kinship system is based on reciprocity and obligation, as is embedded in the Yoruba culture. Four, the voluntary associations membership, which not only rewards members psychologically, but helps support home-town development projects. Five, the incorporative practices of the nation-state of origin and the traditional elements within it which still claim immigrants as one of their own. And finally, the political situation in Nigeria which creates the forum for the Yoruba abroad to be involved in transnational political engagement.

It is suggested that the Yoruba immigrants could improve their transnational social fields by exploring ways of accumulating capital through the development of their social capital. In order to achieve this, efforts should be made to improve their social, economic and political conditions in both of their major localities-Nigeria and Canada.

### Acknowledgments

The Yoruba believe that a stream that forgets its source will in no time dry up. With this I would begin my acknowledgments by thanking my parents—Pa Patrick Oso Baranje-Adeyanju and Chief Victoria Oluremi Adeyanju for giving me the first, and the most important form of education—eko ile which stressed honesty, hardwork and self-pride. Without all these qualities instilled in me early in life, I would never have accomplished this educational height. Special eulogy goes to my mother for her prayers and supports throughout the program. Thank you mum, I am proud to be your son, and indeed very grateful for allowing me to come to this world through you! There were those who brought me up in conjunction with my parents and contributed to my early informal education. They are my sisters—Mrs. Stella Bola Akinduyo, Mrs. Mercy Adenike Fajana; my brother Gerald Oso Adebajji Adeyanju; My uncles—Messrs George Alonge and Gabriel Alonge, Bishop Francis Alonge and Chief BOB Alonge; and my aunts—Mrs. Aduni Kolade and Dr. Bisi Olujoungbe. Special thanks to my younger sisters whose lives I was a part of as kids, and ever since they have been supportive—Olubunmi Adeyanju, Adejoke Amodi in Nigeria and Omowande Osidein in Toronto, Canada. I cannot but specially thank Omowande and her husband, Mr. Olayinka Osidein, because without their encouraging, supporting and sharing jokes with me always, and in using their apartment for the collection of the data in Toronto, the project would have taken longer time to complete. Of course, I will never forget Omowande's usual sumptuous "mongele

pounded yam with egunsi soup". My thanks also go to all my nephews and nieces in Nigeria, who persistently remember me in their prayers and look up to me as one of their role models.

Particular thanks to my assiduous advisor, Dr. Frans Schryer for all the assistance, including suggestions, encouragements, discussions and comments which no doubt has contributed to the success of the project. Other committee members—Dr. Rozena Maart and Dr. Glen C. Filson contributed immensely through their constant guidance. Rozena not only helped with the development of a particular section in the project but also supported me morally. Thank you Rozena! Glen was a great help from the beginning to the end of the project. His meticulous examination of facts, comments, painstaking corrections, suggestions and discussions were very helpful and the constructive criticisms quite challenging!

I cannot but thank the following faculty members: Dr. Belinda Leach and Dr. Marta Rohatynskij for starting me with the project but could not take me through to the end due to their sabbaticals. Their contributions in the beginning guided me through the whole project. Also thanks to Professor Stan Barrett for his support, time and interest throughout the program. A big "thank you" to the office staff, especially Millie MacQueen who usually answered my "too many" questions with patience; and Leo Keating for assisting with computing the data.

My childhood friend has never stopped showing interest in me and being concerned about my progress, Olabode Steven Ojo, who has furnished me with some of the reading materials for the project, to whom I say a big "thank you"! Rev. Fr. (Dr.) James Olaogun has always been concerned about my progress prior to my migration, and since my arrival in North America, has graciously provided me with some of the reading materials for this project, to which I am eternally grateful! Thanks to Rev. Fr. (Dr.) Peter Olawunmi Obawale for the prayer and encouragement. My thanks also go to Mr. Kabu Samuel Asante for his support ever since my arrival in Canada. Without all your prayers and the cumulus of your good wishes, the success of this project would have not been achieved.

Living and studying in North America would have been boring and meaningless without all the wonderful friends and acquaintances that I have gained over the years—they are not only friends, but brothers and sisters. Ms. Janet Ngo not only took pains to proofread the entire manuscripts for this project for common errors but was constructively critical of certain positions, and has always been morally supportive. Janet, you are a rare gem and a good friend indeed, thank you! Michael Aregbesola, a.k.a. Aworawo (Ph.D. Candidate) and Tayo Alabi (Ph.D.) are not only supportive in terms of my being able to bounce ideas off them, but they are also my great inspirations in the "academy". Saburi Babalola, Victor Aruna, Symonds Botchey, Sherifat Fasasi, Hakeem Fasasi and Mr. Femi Solaja are friends that I have known over the years. Thanks for still being my friends.

This research has been made possible through the collaboration of the Yoruba men and women who agreed to be interviewed for the project. Not only did they give me their

valuable time, they also prayed for me and wished me well. Words are not enough to express my appreciation for your help. I doff my hat and say "thanks so much"; I hope I have done some of what you had asked me to do. Particularly, I would like to specially thank the following members of the Yoruba community in Toronto: Mrs. Ester Opadiran (erstwhile President of the Yoruba Community Association) for helping me "gain entry" into the community; Mr. Biyi Opaleye (current President of the Yoruba Community Association) who volunteered information to me about the community; Mr. Segun Adebajo who took me as a brother and selflessly assisted in introducing me to people in the community; Mrs. Margaret Adenike Olarinmoye (mama Seye) did not take the matters concerning the research with levity, and has also acted like a sister to me ever since; and last but not the least, Dr. Adebunola Onayemi for his encouragement and interest in a project of this nature.

It is the Ogberis who solely rely on their extra-sensory perceptions alone. I am not one of them, because I believe that those "in the great beyond", my ancestors, have always been with me, without them, the project would have been a fiasco—thanks to Pa Oso Baranje-Adedipe (of Ejigbo family in Ado-Ekiti) and Madam Oja Adetunbi Baranje-Adedipe; Pa Peter Fadahunsi Alonge (of Omu family in Ise-Ekiti); and Madam Julianah Ajayi Alonge. My ancestors gave me the metal capability and physical dexterity to carry on with my day-to-day activities. Please, continue to watch over me!

I cannot mention all the names of those who have helped owing to lack of space, but I humbly express my appreciation to them all, wherever they are.

### Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to all the children of common Nigerians, who are born innocent victims, their souls upon generation, sacrificed by the greedy, reckless and larcenous postcolonial Nigerian ruling elites.

### Table of Contents

Acknowledgments.....	-i-
Dedication.....	-v-
Table of Contents.....	-vi-
Preface.....	-vii-
Introduction.....	-1-
Chapter One	
Approaches On Transnationalism.....	-11-

Chapter Two

2.1 Yoruba Nation Before and After Contact With Other Cultures.....-35-

2.2 The Nigerian Factor.....-75-

Chapter Three

3.1 Theoretical Perspective.....-93- 3.2

Internal Transformation.....-121-

Chapter Four

Methodology.....-135-

Chapter Five

What is the Yoruba Transnational Community?.....-161-

Chapter Six

The Yoruba Voluntary Organizations.....-239-

Conclusion: Assessment, Recommendation and Suggestion..... -260-

Bibliography.....-291-

Glossary.....-301-

Appendix A: Survey-Interview Questionnaire.....-304-

Appendix B: Letter to the Community Leaders.....-315-

Appendix C: Homogenization (Fusion) and Hegemonization (Fission).....-316-

Preface

The idea to write on the contribution of Africans to the world was conceived years before I undertook graduate study in sociology. But the idea to write on this particular topic was brought up by my first advisor, Professor Belinda Leach. She suggested this topic, transnationalism within the labyrinth of globalization, while I was scratching my head, exploring and deciding on what particular aspect of African place in world history to write on. In part some of the ideas broached in this thesis developed from my personal quest for answers to some sociological questions, particularly the ones that have to do with global inequalities, black consciousness and identities. I cannot but acknowledge the roles played by my relatives, friends and colleagues way back while I was growing up

and studying in Nigeria and also colleagues, friends and acquaintances in Canada who have of course perennially engaged me in arguments, debates, discussion and often shouting matches about the plights, ups and downs of black people both in their original home in Africa and in the Diaspora around the world. It was all these panoramas that kept me thinking more about understanding myself and the place of black people within the global capitalist development--their contributions, failures and some achievements. It was all this that led to my final decision to narrow my focus to Yoruba transnationals in Toronto. This is in hope that an ethnographic study of this nature that you are about to read will shed lights on some important issues pertaining to immigrants of color from underdeveloped or developing parts of the world residing in the industrial/post industrial capitalist countries of the West. Having said the above, I would now add that my personal experience cannot be overlooked in view of the overall research. In other words, it would be hypocritical to divest my identity as a Yoruba person who is an immigrant in Canada having some measure of influence in the plannin

g and the outcome of the research. However, this is not to posit that the research itself is riddled with bias, but to say that in most social science research personal experience must be acknowledged rather than to be implicitly or tactfully left incognito. This issue of "personal experience" as it relates to the "issue of objectivity" has been discussed elsewhere in this thesis. It is there I argue that being whom I am makes the undertaking of the research taxing--attainment of objectivity seems very difficult but still possible. So, I will leave this issue for now.

In addition to the above, some people will find this research disappointing because it will not meet their expectations. One, the amebos of the community looking for some gossip to read and talk about and then to make some victims out of this will be highly disappointed because all the major characteristics of interviewees and some events observed for this research have been altered. Two, those who believe that our shortcomings as a people should not be mentioned in this research but be hidden because they say "we do not have to wash our dirty linen in the public" will as well be disappointed. I will not only talk about some of the serious internal and external problems facing us at home and abroad, but also look for how they can be ameliorated. Three, those ethnocentric elements and their collaborators who believe that nothing good can come out of a traditional cultural system will not only be disappointed but in the end will be petrified by the truth and may eventually come to the conclusion that they were wrong. And lastly, there are those who will be disappointed and may inveigh against me for pitching my tent with the common people because I will not justify any form of inequality in this thesis.

## Introduction

Each THING that goes away returns and nothing in the end is lost. The great friend throws all things apart and brings all things together again. That is the way everything goes and turns round. That is how all living things come back after long absences, and in the whole great world all things are living things. All that goes returns. He will return.

(Armah, Ayi Kwei)

The notion that immigrants will pay allegiance to more than one nation-state is now being given prominence in academic sociological parlance. Until this began, the word "immigrant" had evoked images of people who had come to stay, having been uprooted from their old society in order to make for themselves a new home and country to which they will pledge allegiance. The on-going research and projects in social sciences are rendering this notion superficial and are providing us with works that show that immigrants now develop networks, activities, patterns of living and ideologies that cut across the territorial boundaries of their home countries and host societies. It is in the belief of many in the West that an average migrant from black Africa in this hemisphere is a crude, but willing peasant, attracted by Western technology, eager to prove himself, save money to acquire livestock and land, and on his return marry and start a family. It is true that modern migrants from Third World countries come to the materially advanced countries in pursuit of better living condition, but to see them in the light of this statement *in toto* is highly arbitrary and pedantic. It is high time we see immigrants from this part of the world as social actors who are sustaining multi-stranded social relations that link together their societies of origin and settlement.

The high level of migration from the underdeveloped countries to the developed part of the world confirms the high volume of written literature on the unequal distribution of global resources which is historical in nature. While the current trend of globalization tends to homogenize the world on the one hand, it also fragments it in terms of creating two antagonistic classes in the world. The argument on how the industrial capitalist countries of the West exploited and continue to exploit countries of Africa, Asia and Latin-America has been long settled by the dependency theory school of thought. What I therefore need to add at this stage is that the out-migration of able bodied-men and women from the underdeveloped to the developed countries is largely caused by the nature of the relationship between the latter and the former. In other words, labor migration is not a fortuitous phenomenon; it serves some specific functions such as job enrichment for the developed economy and further pauperization of the underdeveloped societies. Perhaps, we should go beyond the doom and gloom stories of this relationship as perennially espoused by those on the left (even though, their arguments are laudable) and focus a bit more on how ordinary people are social actors, not passive and are involved in various emancipatory activities that make them sidetrack the global capitalist oppression.

Women and men that are involved in these activities have been referred to as "transnational immigrants" in this project. These are ordinary men and women that leave their societies everyday in search of a greener pasture in the industrial/postindustrial capitalist countries of the West and Japan. They develop a multiplicity of involvement sustained both at their original home and host societies. They make decisions, take actions and reproduce the subjective and objective aspects of their culture in the society of settlement. The emergence of these immigrant pools has been considered a protest against the domineering role of the powerful multinational elitist class, the "transnational class from above" who are homeless and mobile, with no country as home but the whole

planet as property. In opposition to this class are the socio-economically disadvantaged class who are displaced and unable to meet their daily needs, constituting the "transnational movement from below" (Mahler, 1998: 67).

Of course, people have always moved and carried their language and culture and have maintained contacts with those they left behind. But of late, as a result of globalization, communication has been made more efficient with the telephone, fax machine, satellite links, videotape, telex, E.mail, etc. These developments have prevented ethnic identity from being less dependent on a territorial community or on formal organizations and thus have allowed it to thrive. Ironically, while the revolutionization of technology in the era of globalization tends toward homogenizing the societies of the world, it nevertheless fragments them. What we notice in the major capital cities of the industrial developed countries of the West are different ethnic groups from different regions of the world constituting themselves into "ethnic colonies".

#### Aims and Objectives:

This research will focus on one of the most salient components of Canada's vibrant African population in Toronto--the Yoruba. Why the Yoruba and not the African or Nigerian population of Toronto? The choice of Yoruba as a case study is to enable the research have a focus. Focusing on Africa will definitely water-down the major argument and the important issues raised in the research. For those who do not know, or know little about Africa, Africa is a continent of different "races", cultures, religions, geography and traditions. To study the whole of Africans residing in Toronto in a predominantly ethnographic study of this nature is to do a disservice to the people of Africa and their cultures. The same argument applies to studying Nigeria from a cultural perspective. As will be revealed later in Chapter three, Nigeria is nothing but a mere geographical expression--it harbors more than 250 ethnic groups. God did not create Nigeria, colonialism did! I would however say that while the focus is Yoruba, the experience of this group in its struggle to construct and reconstruct its identities in the face of global capitalist hegemony applies to other economically disadvantaged groups from the Third World countries. Whenever necessary, other immigrant groups from the Third World countries will be alluded to. This project thus has three central aims. One, it will examine the impact of Western capitalist mode of accumulation, (also known as globalization) on the Yoruba society from the historical period. This entails, but not limited to, the colonial capitalist extraction of resources and the simultaneous penetration of Western culture. The impacts of all this on the migration to the West, most especially to Canada will be given consideration. Two, it will look into various modes by which ethnic groups maintain and perpetuate their culture while in the countries of settlement. Specifically, the research will examine how the Yoruba in Toronto reproduce some aspects of their cultural complexes. And three, it will account for why that linkage with the home country still continues in the form of the multi-stranded relations that span across two or more countries. This will document their contributions to the Toronto ethnic mosaic. These three aims are not mutually exclusive of one another.

To elaborate, it is the transnational practices of the Yoruba in Toronto, Canada that will be a focus of this thesis. Some literature on international migration has examined the relationship between the uneven development of regions/countries of the world and migration. As if this is not enough, some "academic shamans" in this field easily point out that this uneven development induces migration which is beneficial to the developed part of the world on the one hand, and further underdevelops the already poor countries on the other hand. This project will then look at the impacts of globalization on the less developed countries as they relate to international migration; specifically, the impact of globalization on the Yoruba society from the historical period, and the current response to this impact in the form of transnational practices will be thoroughly examined. In the course of doing this, it will be brought to the fore that material deprivation caused by the unequal distribution of global resources is not enough to account for their migration to the West and for their transnational practices, but also involved their encounter with colonialism which conditioned their minds and the psyche, and alluring them to the West.

Various issues will be brought to the fore at the conclusion of this project: One, it will become apparent in this research that "economic determinism" alone cannot explain the migration from the developing countries to the developed ones. The historical experiences of immigrants have to be put into consideration as well, as they highly influence the individual migrant's decision to move; two, the dominant ideology prevalent in the Western industrial capitalist countries that immigrants from the materially disadvantaged societies are a burden rather than a resource will have to be reconsidered. Immigration is more of a resource than a liability for the society of settlement and immigrants "enrich" their host society; three, it will be discovered that the current state of affairs in the world considered fascinating by the postmodernist scholars do not reflect the realities of many people in the world--for example, the historically weak groups, men and women of color, the Aborigines are still powerless--while the transnational corporations wield so much power economically and even politically, and control the world; and four, transnational immigrants are engaged in what is called the "transnationalism from below" (Smith & Guarnizo, 1998), which is the terrain of the ordinary people sidetracking the oppressive capitalist regime.

#### Methodology:

Both qualitative and quantitative methods have been employed to collect data for this research. The quantitative method used is the survey-interviews of fifty Yoruba individuals in the megalopolis of Toronto (including Brampton, Mississauga, Barrie, etc.). This method is used to find out about the characteristics of the population, the beliefs, habits, attitudes, ideologies, compare responses, experiences, etc. This method is confined to descriptive statistical analysis and is not intended for any inferential statistical purposes. The qualitative method makes use of participant observation, unstructured in-depth interviews and semi-structured interviews. This complements, elaborates and corroborates the quantitative method. This approach gives the individual immigrants being studied an opportunity to express their perspectives and personal experiences, without being subjected to the "strict rules" of the quantitative method.

### Limitations of the Study:

This research project is not without some limitations. One, as previously stated, the findings, especially the quantitative methodology cannot be generalized to the entire population in Toronto, this is because subjects were selected non-randomly. Two, only one side of the picture is revealed. The field work was conducted only in Toronto, which is a small part of the social fields. And three, not all events were observed for the research owing to time constraints and money. These inhibitions and more have been discussed in detail in Chapter 4.

### Academic and Policy Implications:

Apart from its contribution to theoretical discussions in academic contexts, this research will also have some much more practical applications. This will include:

- Recommendations and perspectives on the ways in which this immigrant group might be encouraged to see importance in their "cultural capital" and be aware of their specific problems and solutions, so enabling them to emulate achievements of their more successful ethnic counterparts and be able to compete well with other successful groups such as the Chinese and Taiwanese, and also the dominant group.
- Being a source of well informed ethnographic insight of relevance to all those responsible in the delivery of public services to immigrant groups from the developing countries.
- Direction of attention as to how transnational members might make *more effective* use of their available resources for the development of the sending country and the country of settlement.
- Contributing to a much more sharply informed understanding of Africa, its peoples and cultures, by focusing on one segment of the African population.

### Organization of Thesis:

The research is in six chapters and the conclusions:

In chapter one, various approaches on transnationalism will be examined and made into five typologies based on the available literature perused for the research, viz., transnationalism as: social morphology; mode of cultural reproduction; arena of capital and material resources; site of political opportunism and engagement; and (re) construction of "place" or locality. Chapter Two will discuss the Yoruba nation, its people and the history before and after contact with the "outside world". A detailed exposition corroborated with historical writings of eminent scholars of Yoruba history will be employed. The second section of this chapter will account for the current unfavorable conditions that make Nigeria "an unattractive" place to live. It will be argued that one of the major problems confronting Nigeria is corruption—Nigeria is a fertile ground for corruption to grow because of its colonial experience which transmutes into neocolonialism. This chapter will help readers understand the remaining parts of the

thesis. Chapter three elucidates the theoretical orientation informing this research. In the first section, a theoretical approach to globalization, transnationalism and labor migration constitute the central themes, explicating the place of the Yoruba within the historical global capitalism. The second part of this chapter explains the interaction of the Yoruba society with the West. The analysis goes beyond explaining the material deprivation and dependency of the people; it privileges the psychological dependency on the "white race" as the superior people as also being a factor inducing migration. In chapter four, I will discuss the methodology adopted to collect data for the thesis. Here, the necessity of employing both the qualitative and quantitative methods will be justified. Also, my "personal experience" as it relates to the conduct and collection of the data and the field work experience will be given consideration. Chapter five analyzes the data collected—a look at the evolution of the Yoruba in Toronto, the characteristics of the population, activities, experiences and transnational practices, and the reaffirmation and reconfiguration of power in the social fields. Chapter six continues on the analysis but focuses on the roles of the Yoruba transnational voluntary organizations as the resource for the members in Toronto and in Nigeria. Lastly, the conclusion summarizes the main themes of the research, assesses the transnational social fields—strength and weakness, recommends the necessary improvement, and suggests areas for future research potentials.

## Chapter One

### Approaches on Transnationalism

1.1 Preamble Globalization and transnationalism are not new phenomena. These developments have always existed somewhat in *pari passu* in the context of international migration (Cohen, 1996; Mintz, 1998). In spite of its age-long existence, its academic scholarship was ignored until the 1980s for a number of reasons. Winland (1998) gives three reasons for this. One, the dominant view had always been that immigrants were those uprooted from their countries of origin to settle in a new land. It was therefore not until the dawn of globalization and its impact on the societies that the attention of scholars began to be drawn to the fact that transnational immigrants were capable of forming ethnic identities that were both local and global. Two, there had always existed a widespread assumption that the formation of ethnic communities often entailed a gradual shift in culture to that of the host societies, also known as assimilation. Hence, no cognizance was given to the fact that immigrants continued their culture in Diaspora. And lastly, the policies of multiculturalism often led to more essentialized identification of ethnic groups in host societies. In other words, multiculturalism as a cultural policy did not resonate the diverse histories, cultures and experiences of immigrants with disparate origins.

Considering the relative newness of this area in academic studies, it is amazing the number of works that have been produced in this field. While literature has been produced on transnational social spaces of immigrants from Europe, Latin America, the Caribbean, Central America, and Asia in North America, none has been written on any group from Africa. Could the lacuna in the availability of literature based on regionality have anything to do with the extension of low expectation of progression from the people

of Africa? The dominant discourse is that African immigrants are refugees fleeing from war, famine, devastation and miserable conditions. Nevertheless, this notion becomes superficial when the available literature has the same relevance to the observed performances of some African population in Diaspora.

In the 1980s, several scholars were challenged by their observations of transnational activities practiced by migrant groups that they were studying from the perspective of the "host" societies. They looked at various activities which connected both host and home countries but which were fraught with problems relating to a lack of framework for systematic discussion and analysis. In May 1990, some researchers organized a workshop in hopes of conceptualizing and analyzing transnational migration (Mahler, 1998: 74). Other scholars were involved in this task and the aftermath was a publication of the workshop papers in a book. In this publication, they came up with a definition of transnationalism "as the process by which immigrants build social fields that link together their country of origin and their country of settlement". Immigrants who build those social fields are designated "transmigrants". They are so called "transmigrants" because they "develop and maintain networks which are familial, economic, political, religious, and organizational that span national borders" (Schiller *et al.*, 1992). Furthermore, in the footnote, the scholars explain the reason why they use the term "transnational", which they claim has long been used to describe corporations that have major financial investments in more than one country and a significant organizational presence in many countries simultaneously. This term is therefore deemed appropriate as a description for migrating populations that are involved in activities that span borders of two or more societies (Schiller, *et al.*, 1992). This phenomenon has been used elsewhere as "transnationalism from above" and "transnationalism from below" respectively (see Smith & Guarnizo, 1998).

Over the years, according to Mahler (1998), various metaphors have been developed to describe transnationalism. Some of the terminologies ensuing in the literature have been "transnational social field", "transnational migrant circuit", "binational society", "transnational community", "global ethnoscape", "network" and "socio-cultural system". Even though each and every one of the terms to a reasonable extent describes this phenomenon, Mahler (1998) regrets that the use of many terms tends to obscure, and confuse the field but accepts among the heap of terms, "transnational social field" because it seems to be all encompassing, albeit not perfect (pg. 74).

As a heuristic device, I have made it a task to typologize five meanings of transnationalism based on different approaches in the available literature. These types are not exclusive of one another, some are reliant on others.

- Transnationalism as Social Morphology
- Mode of Cultural Reproduction
- Arena of Capital and Material Resources

- Site of Political Activism and Engagement

- . •(Re) construction of place or locality

### 1.2 As Social Morphology:

The transmutation of ethnic Diasporas from the role of the oppressed to the challengers has come to the fore as a perspective for understanding transnationalism. Transnational social formation emerging in the Diaspora is a child of circumstances. These circumstances often stem out of fear, insecurity and discrimination encountered by these groups in the historical past. Cohen (1996) identifies five groups of Diasporas based on the classical meaning of the word. They are: One, the Jews who suffered from anti-Semitism in Europe and in North America. Two, the African Diaspora, which includes those brought to the Americas in shackles, turned into slaves and coerced into working for the plantation system. Three, the Armenians who experienced massacres in the 19th century and suffered from forceful displacement during 1914-16 under the Turks who deported about two-third of their population. Four, the Irish (1845-52) decimated by famine and who fled to North America--a traumatic experience! And lastly, the Palestinians, rendered homeless after the creation of the state of Israel in 1948 (pp. 512-513). Cohen adds that these days, "Diaspora" has now come to include different categories of people such as political refugees, alien residents, immigrants, expellees, and ethnic and racial minorities. The inclusion of other categories, in the second type of Diaspora, is in part caused by globalization. It is now more possible to re-enact Diaspora through the mind, cultural artifacts and a shared imagination. The challenging aspect of this development is that globalization "has brought about both the universalization and fragmentation and multiplication of identities" (Cohen, 1996: 516). While the classically defined Diasporas--the Jews, Africans, Irish, Armenians and the Palestinians--started as the oppressed and marginalized groups, they eventually rose to be the "challengers", and achievers in their "homes away from homes". The same applies to the second type of Diaspora who are now challenging the current state of affairs in the modern world.

Diasporas now pose a threat to the nation-state. Their demands, expectations and loyalty are not restricted to their place of settlement but are extended to their community of origin and co-ethnic members in other countries. What might be called a "cultural distinctiveness" is rapidly losing face at present. This is because identities are "increasingly coming to be deterritorialized and differently territorialized" (Gupta & Ferguson, 1992: 9). This situation is no more peculiar to the refugees, migrants, displaced and stateless peoples but to the general public, including those who might be considered as having fixed identities--"cultural difference is also present here at home". For example, it is hard to proclaim "Englishness" because England is as complicated and nearly as deterritorialized as ideas of Armenian-ness or Palestinian-ness (Gupta & Ferguson, 1992: 10).

The methodology of Anthropology as a discipline must swing its pendulum by accepting that culture is no longer what once defined it. Culture is no more "homogenous, local, well- bounded, and in clear one-to-one correspondence with distinct social

units"(Wakeman, 1988: 88). Anthropology therefore needs to pay particular attention to the way spaces and places are magnified, contested and enforced, because the orthodox culture as known in the discipline (Anthropology) is no more tenable--the clear demarcation of "Us" and "Others" has become blurred (Gupta & Ferguson, 1992: 9). *Ipsa facto*, both the traditional definitions of state and culture need to be reconsidered as well. As the above writers posit, could we agree in all entirety that their notions of cultural "deterritorialization" and "unboundedness" connote the impotence of nation-states and post national global activities? Is their perspective adequate enough to characterize transnational practices? Guarzino & Smith (1998) hold that the belief in "deterritorialization of the state" is doubtful. They believe that states still exert some control on the activities of their citizens and "alien groups". So, in what ways is the state in control of transnational practices? Guarzino and Smith come up with the following answers. One, historically, states and nations seeking statehood have often kept transnational connections of their Diasporas abroad. Examples are the Jewish, Greek and Armenians who have maintained their social formations abroad. Two, many nation-states with large population abroad are constantly promoting "transnational reincorporation" of their nationals abroad into state-sponsored projects. This practice is in part caused by the negative impact of neo-liberal economic policy that makes the less industrialized countries dependent on foreign investments and reliant on transmigrants' remittances. Three, the agents of "receiving states" still have an active control over people and goods within their borders. It is therefore irrelevant to conceptualize as a "deterritorialization of state" the extension of "states of origin" beyond their national territories. Clear-cut demarcation indeed still exists between the "state of origin" and the "foreign territory". Four, local sites are still an important corollary to the functioning of transnational activities. Transmigrants are not totally disconnected from the local constraints and social moorings, established in their country of origin which is contrary to the concepts of "deterritorialization" and "unboundedness". The locality of migrants and the national contexts abroad must be put into consideration as influencing the possibility of generating, maintaining or giving up transnational ties; and this also dictates the nature of relationships that migrants can have with their place of origin. Certainly class, gender and regional factors within the locality contribute greatly to the critical determinants of migrants' destination, attainment and transnationality (pp. 6-15).

### 1.3 As Mode of Cultural Reproduction:

Transnationalism is associated with a phenomenon that is subject to change in constructed styles, social institutions and everyday practices. These are usually explained in terms of syncretism, creolization, bricolage, hybridity and cultural translation. In this perspective, transnationalism is expressed in fashion, music, film, media information technology and visual arts (Vertotec, 1999: 451).

Immigrants reach out to their kind not only in the home country but in other societies of settlement around the world through the "ethnic media". Also, the "home" societies provide their population outside their borders with information on culture, politics, economics, history and potential opportunities available. Appadurai & Breckenridge (1989) comment that the reproduction of cultural practices and transformation of identity

are being driven by "complex transnational flows of media images and messages" . They add that this is creating a disjuncture for Diasporic communities, because in most cases the electronic media conflict what they call the "politics of desire and imagination" with the "politics of heritage and nostalgia". The former is being fueled by the private enterprise of the market while the latter thrive on the apparatuses of nation-states (pg. iii). It has been discovered that ethnic media stand in opposition or as a challenge to the "globally dominant Eurocentric cultural structures" (Karim, 1998: 4). One of their main preoccupations is to present alternative worldviews to those of the elitist media conglomerates. Karim (1998) examines within the context of globalization three ways by which immigrants connect with one another media-wise. He mentions that trans-border information flows through film and television, digital broadcasting satellite systems and on-line services. For example, the transnational distribution of Indian films has significant consumption in South Asia, South East Asia, the Middle East and East Africa. The main market for this industry is the Indian Diaspora in these regions and in Western countries where cinemas showing Indian films attract audiences in cities with significant populations of South Asian origins (pg. 5). Similarly, the Cairo film and television industry exports to the Arab world and the larger Arab immigrants around the world. The Mexican and Brazil television networks, *Televisa* and *TV Globo*, respectively have been able to capture cross-cultural markets beyond their borders. Furthermore, modern immigrants in the developed countries now transmit programs to their Diasporic populations with the aid of digital broadcasting satellite technology. It is claimed that Diasporic programming using this technology has grown in the last few years, well ahead of many mainstream broadcasters (pg. 9). Diasporic groups are also making use of on-line services like the Internet, Usenet, Listserv and the World Wide Web. These world wide networks enable immigrants to connect with members of communities residing in various continents.

#### 1.4 Arena of Capital and Material Resources:

Foreign capitals penetrate the Third World countries through the operations of the transnational capitalist class (Sklair, 1998). The transnational capitalist class is comprised of people from many countries who operate in different countries around the world as a normal part of their working lives. These people have both global and local perspectives to economic issues of the world. Sklair (1998) identifies four types within this class: (1). Transnational Corporation (TNC) executives and their local affiliates; (2). Globalizing state bureaucrats; (3). Globalizing politicians and professionals; and (4). consumerist elites (merchants, media) (pp. 3-4). They are transnationals in their own right because they are in control of the workplace, have political control in domestic politics and maintain the culture-ideology control in everyday life of the people through global competition and consumerist rhetoric and practice. Also, members are able to lay claims to citizenship of the world as well as their places of birth. This class emerges because of the domination of global economy by the major corporations who are part of the driving forces of globalization. It is a matter of fact that the global economy is dominated by corporations mostly domiciled in North America, Japan and Europe. These corporations are dominating the world in two ways: One, economic globalization involving foreign

direct investment and benchmarking, and two, social globalization by their claim of global corporate citizenship and global vision (Sklair, 1998: 5-7).

It is important to mention that the domination of the world by the transnational corporations is not totally tolerated by the ordinary people, hence their practices are not unencumbered, particularly by people constituting themselves into social movements opposing globalization. In other words, it is not only corporations and some governments that are involved in transnational practices, but also real people. Ironically, it is the same strategies such as foreign direct investment, the global power of the mass media, the "culture ideology of consumerism" and globalization of finance that the multinational corporations use, that the "ordinary people" use to oppose them. For example, Sklair (1998) says that it is not uncommon for local groups that are globally aware to expose exploitation of labor and devastation of the environment. By the same token, people are expressing their antagonism to the global village of the mass media for its lack of taste and educational value; and the cultural ideology of consumerism is frequently being criticized and considered as a sign of depressing evidence of moral bankruptcy that characterizes our present age. One good example of strong opposition to corporate hegemony was the successful campaign against the Multilateral Agreement on Investment (MAI) which was being negotiated at the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) (pg.13), (now appears to be permanently tabled).

Furthermore, states in the underdeveloped and developed countries involve their nationals abroad in their own modernization and development projects. One particular example is India, which started to attract foreign investment and technology transfer from the beginning of the 1970s, after several years of government regulated economic policy. According to Lessinger (1991), the Indian government made it a policy in the 1980s to attract "nonresident Indian" (NRI) investment from North America, Europe, the Middle East, South-East Asia and Africa to come to India and participate in the new economic dispensation. Those Indian immigrant populations in the Caribbean and the Pacific were exempted from this program because they lacked the skills, the wealth and the necessary networks within India which make NRI investment possible. The Indian government decision at this time was a compromise between those who want to rid India of foreign economic influences and those who want to immerse it in global economic dependencies. The government opted for a neutral ground, "third force" because NRIs were neither full Indian nor fully foreign (pp.63-64).

It was the belief of the Indian politicians and policy makers that NRIs are more trustworthy, dependable, and less threatening than foreign investors and "more national"; but more efficient than the local capitalists. They were encouraged to use their foreign skills and capital in India to become shareholders; and to find new industries and resuscitate old ones. NRIs were given concessions not enjoyed by the local entrepreneurs and foreign investors. This economic policy brings about transnational entrepreneurs whose activities occur in several different social arenas as they shuttle between India and their adopted countries (Lessinger, 1991: 64). Their socio-economic involvement with India is no doubt boosted with relatively cheap and readily available telecommunication technology which makes regular contact possible and immediate. It was possible on the

one hand to carry on with their transnational entrepreneurial duties and on the other hand, to be able to make regular contacts with their kith and kin in India, and to provide regular remittances to parents or siblings for social reproductive duties such as schooling, weddings and food.

Apart from organized social movements, ordinary people are "sidetracking" the social and economic disadvantages of globalization. They create communities sustained by informal activities. The restructuring going on in the advanced countries means labor must be cheap and it is the immigrants who are expected to do menial dead-end jobs. They repel this expectation by strengthening their social networks to generate some economic gains. Portes (1997) gives a few examples of buttressing of the economic initiatives embarked upon by transmigrants to avoid the drudgery and exploitation of global corporation. In the Dominican Republic, there are hundreds of small and medium-sized enterprises founded and managed by former immigrants to the US. They include small factories, commercial establishments of different types, and financial agencies (pg. 9). These enterprises are transnational because they depend on continuing ties with the US. In similar vein, members of the Otavalan indigenous community in the highlands of Ecuador have in the last quarter of a century been engaged in traveling to major cities in Europe and the US to market their traditionally produced wares. By doing this, they are able to eradicate the "middleman's" position between the Third World indigenous producers and final consumers. Because of their incessant travels abroad over a long time, they have been able to attract people of foreign descents into their community in Ecuador. Moreover, a semipermanent Otavalan community has begun to appear abroad. What is unique about Otavalan communities abroad is that they neither depend on wage labor for subsistence nor on local self-employment but on the marketization of goods brought from Ecuador. This is made effective by constant communication with their home town to replenish supplies (Kyle, 1999).

Remittances is another means being adopted by transmigrants to counteract the domineering role of global capitalist power. Transmigrants send money to their home countries to set up firms and small businesses to serve the manifold needs of the immigrant communities and their counterparts at home. Remittances then contribute immensely to the local and national economies. For example, El Salvadorans in the US annually remit between \$700 million to over \$1 billion to El Salvador, their home country (Mahler, 1998: 70-71; also see Portes, 1997: 11). Investments are not mainly channeled to the underdeveloped countries from the developed countries by the immigrants but also goes vice-versa. For example, immigrants also bring monies into their "host society". Entrepreneurs from Taiwan, China and Hong Kong invest profitably in the US and Canada and become part of transnational community. The activities of these investors are not limited to the monetary benefit derived from their business, but there is a social ramification to this; for example, the birth of a child on American or Canadian soil guarantees US or Canadian citizenship and consolidates their stay. Hence, in their successful investments, coupled with citizenship rights, these immigrants have social mobility (Portes, 1997: 13-14).

Portes (1997), adds that while the initial motive of these immigrants may be economic, subsequent activities encompass political, social and cultural pursuits. Politically, governments and political parties establish offices abroad to seek financial and electoral support. By the same token, groups of immigrants organize politically to lobby the home government and influence the local municipality on various issues. Socially, churches and private charities partake in development projects to help their people "at home". Culturally, performers and artists use the expatriate communities in the developed countries to better themselves and thereby popularize their performances. The overall effect of this process is the transformation of the initial economic ventures into transnational communities, characterized by dense networks across space and a rise in the number of people who live dual lives (pg.14).

### 1.5 Site of Political Activism and Engagement:

There are emerging agents of global change which are as transnational as transnational corporations. These agents of change are Transnational Social Movements (TSMs). Cohen (1998) asserts that contrary to many existing definitions confining transnational communities to basically ethnic or religious movements, TSMs are also transnational communities in their operations. He adds that the principal TSMs are human rights, women's, peace, labor, green or student movements. Others considered are Amnesty International, the Peace Brigades International, the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, etc. (pg. 2). Furthermore, Kriesberg (1997) considers TSMs as a more loosely transnational operative that encompasses the transnational social movement organizations (TSMOs) (pg.1).

Social movements underwent some changes from the late 1960s onwards, caused by the shift from industrialization to post-industrialization in the developed countries of the West. The emerging social movements in the 1960s were different from the "old" labor and political movements before then because they began to represent the interests of those working in emerging post-industrial occupations (Cohen, 1998: 4). In recent years, the *modus operandi* of social movements have changed from being constrained to local and national affairs to global matters. Cohen (1998), gives five reasons for this change. One, many issues confronted by the Transnational Social Movements (TSMs) have become inherently transboundary in nature; for example, states cannot act alone in protecting their citizens from environmental damage. Two, economic globalization, global communications networks and cultural diffusions around the world have shrunk the world and made the peoples of the world closer than ever. Three, opposing the activities of Transnational Corporations (TNCs) requires transnational approaches that involve bypassing state structures of power. One good example is the destruction of Ogoniland in Nigeria by Shell which led to the consumer boycotts of Shell in Europe. Four, those in poor countries who are considered to lack a democratic system of government need TSMs. And fifthly, during the 1980s, most supporters of western social movements began to realize that they could not merely localize and nationalize their concerns without going global because what they had fought for within their own communities were in fact tied to much wider global structures (pg. 6).

Transnational social movement organizations are different from some non-governmental international organizations that fight for the rights of common citizens around the world. TSMOs are different from many International Non-governmental Organizations (INGOs) because the latter reinforce and reflect the status quo, while TSMOs such as Greenpeace and Amnesty International seek to bring change in the status quo (Kriesberg, 1997: 12). TSMOs are the harbinger of information transmission and dissemination of ideas and practices to different socially informed and active groups around the world, thus facilitating mobilization for movement agenda.

Looking at this paradigm from another dimension, members of transnational communities engage in "politics of homeland", orchestrated by the political actors of the "home country". In Haiti in 1990, President Aristide appealed to the support of Haitians abroad for his political campaigns when he launched a *Lavalas For Home*. It was this group based in North America and Western Europe, mostly composed of Haitian migrants in Miami, Montreal, New York, Chicago and Paris, who financed his campaign. It was these immigrant groups around the world that made it possible for him to have 67% of the vote in the 12 party contest on December 12, 1990 (Richman, 1992: 190). In addition, Basch *et al.* (1994) discuss "deterritorialized" nation-states and how this relates to the politics of recognition, citing the case of Haiti. President Aristide's government in Haiti created the "Tenth Department" comprising the overseas Haitians to the already existing nine departments in Haiti. In another but rare case of transnational politics, the government of El Salvador is providing legal assistance to their nationals seeking refugee status in the United States, a political move geared toward realizing some monetary support for the Salvadoran economy (Mahler, 1998).

Apart from using immigrants' supports in winning national political leadership tussle in the "home country" as explained above in the case of Haitian leadership launching *Lavalas For Home*, transmigrants also use their presence in the host society to politically repel the hegemonic practices prevalent there. For example, in 1990, the Haitians in the US protested against the Food and Drug Administration barring the Haitians from donating blood, the policy stemming from the perceived notion that an average Haitian was a potential carrier of Human Immunodeficiency Virus--the virus believed to be causing AIDS. They held demonstrations in New York, Miami, Boston and Chicago, and also at the US embassy in Port-au-Prince condemning this social construction of AIDS as evident in the Haitianization of the disease (Richman, 1992: 192).

#### 1.6 (Re) construction of "Place" or Locality:

In this perspective, attention is diverted to reinterpretation of the idea of locality--special attention is being given to the fact that "locality" is a *mutatis mutandis*. The incessant and high level of social, economic and political interactions of peoples around the world made possible by the advancement in technology, especially telecommunications, films, video, satellite TV and the Internet have called for a new look on "place" and "locality". Apart from making human mobility more reliable and easy, modern technology has also made the transfer of information and ideas from one historical and geographical point to another more realistic. As a result of this, communication technology has contributed to

translocal understandings (Vertotoc, 1999: 455). We currently experience the movement of populations from one locality in the periphery to another locality in the metropolitan centers of the West. According to Appadurai (1995), locals are being transformed by the mass media in the electronic forms, in creating new sorts of disjuncture between spatial and virtual neighborhoods. Virtual neighborhoods are not bounded by territory, passports, taxes and elections but by access to international computer networks (pg. 219). Schiller *et al.* (1992); Goldring (1998) and Kearney (1995) propose that transnationalism has changed peoples relation and perception to space particularly by creating "social fields" that connect and situate actors in more than one country. Schiller *et al.* (1992), consider the "static models" employed by the social sciences to view immigrant populations within the theories that analyze each society as "a discrete and bounded entity with its own separate economy, culture, and historical trajectory" as being irrelevant today (pg. 6). The 19th and the 20th century incursion of the Europeans and the Americans to the populations variously designated as "tribes", "peoples", "natives", "ethnic groups" and "natural", resulted in migration, urbanization and acculturation; the development which has rendered the whole notion of "cultural boundedness" a nullity. And scholars in anthropology and sociology have called for a deconstruction of culture and a look toward "world systems theory" of Wallerstein (1974) and the concept of "interconnections" espoused by Wolf as part of the constituting guide to a global level of analysis. This is important to take note of because the local worlds of the so-called "tribes" and the global "world of systems" are becoming radically blurred (Schiller *et al.*, 1992: 7). Transmigrants are creating fluid and multiple identities grounded both in their society of origin and in the host societies. By maintaining many different racial, national, and ethnic identities, transmigrants are expressing their resistance and shaking off their subordination within the global capitalist system, the situation Kearney calls the "implosion of periphery into the center" (1995: 554).

Transnationalism provides the avenues for people to contest for local status. In other words, localities of origin provide opportunities for people to improve their social position and acquire power. Goldring (1998) asserts that transmigrants are drawn into their local base because of the "social rewards" they gain from their peers who share claims to community membership (pg.174). Transmigrants get involved in their local communities by regular visits to their hometown for festival celebration, holidays, weddings, courtship and marriage proposals and donations of money and material goods because there are social meanings attached to these activities. These social meanings come in the form of valorization of individual and family members' status (Goldring, 1998).

### 1.7 General Consensus and Lacunae:

By way of concluding this chapter, I will recap by drawing attention to matters that are common to all the approaches examined above and then point out the areas that need further consideration, in order to fill the missing gap.

In this chapter, five approaches based on typology of the available literature will have illuminated the various paradigms produced on transnational social fields. What is

common to all these approaches are: One, that the dichotomization of the world into binary categories is very problematic in the current state of affairs in the world, and is no more necessary. Two, the ubiquity of technology and its empowering influence have called for a new understanding and conceptualization of globalization, community, nation and culture. The impact that technology has on social change cannot be underestimated. And three, global capitalism or late capitalism has become a powerful force to reckon with. It is thus serving an antithetical function. On the one hand, it is crusading around the world homogenizing different cultures through the penetration of foreign capitals by the transnational corporations and the simultaneous intermingling of cultures creating a "global ecumene"; the macro-economic approach of neoliberalism is being zealously pursued in various parts of the world. On the other hand, it is fragmenting the world into different categories of people who share things such as language, history, oppression, primordial sentiments and so on in a common-- "imagined community". How this has come to emerge will be discussed in detail in the next chapter, "Theoretical Framework". Until then, I will leave this analysis as it is presently.

There are areas that are still understudied or not studied at all in transnational research projects. There should be more literature and research conducted on gendered aspects of transnationalism. What are the roles of women in making transnational activities possible? How does gender fit into decision making in the transnational social fields? How does gender become renegotiated in the "host" country? How does this compare with the gender ideology in the community of origin? What is the nature of power within the transnational community? Is power reaffirmed or reconfigured? These questions could lead us to further research on this phenomenon. And other issues need to be addressed. If we talk about "global ecumene" (apology to Mahler, 1998: 64; Hannerz, 1989: 66), the Anthropological methodology that pitches "Us" against the "Other" then becomes obsolete; why is it that some parts of the world are more able to manufacture transnationals and develop transnational circuits than some other regions, such as Africa? Portes *et al.* (1999) attempt to answer this question, their explanation is not convincing enough. They point out that investigation of necessary conditions for "the rise of a phenomenon is helpful as a guide for empirical research". According to them, given technology as an example of a harbinger of grass-roots transnationalism, it follows then that the greater the access of an immigrant group to space and time compressing technology, the greater the scope and frequency in participation in transnational activity. Similarly, the closer the distance of nation of origin, the denser the set of transnational enterprises. While this explanation can explain part of the reasons for this omission, it does not explain it all. Distance is an issue, but there are groups from farther away that still maintain their transnational networks. By the same token, there are groups with high technological innovations that are never involved in transnational activities.

Some scholars such as (Schiller *et al.*, 1992; and Portes *et al.*, 1999) insist on "delimiting the transnational phenomenon". By this they caution us to be aware of the differences between ordinary activities being carried out by immigrants, from regular and sustained social contacts over time and across space. This is because it is important to manage the scope of transnationalism to contain activities that involve perennial flows of exchanges and the multiplication of activities that require "*cross-border travel and contacts on a*

*sustained basis*" (emphasis mine). If all experiences of immigrants and all that they do are considered "transnational" (Portes *et al.*, 1999: 219), they claim, then the concept becomes redundant and even spurious. How do we delineate between transnational and non-transnational immigrants? This single question has become multi-barreled when asked by Mahler (1998). She asks whether transmigrants can be "bifocal" if they do not oscillate between the "home" and "host societies". What about the flow of things and not physical bodies, such as letters, videos, films, photos, cassettes, etc.? How are these two conditions different from those who travel across borders perennially? Which is more important--the oscillation of bodies or perpetuation of non-living things such as remittances and consumer goods sent to kith and kin in far away lands (pg. 79)? These questions call for some, but more important areas of transnational social fields that need further investigation. Lastly, Portes *et al.*, assert that "high intensity of exchanges, the new modes of transacting, and the multiplication of activities" that involve crossing national boundaries constitute "original transnationalism" (1999: 219). How can this be possible? This task cannot be accomplished easily without a sense of scale and some common indicators to determine the weight, frequency as well as the intensity of transnational relations that are prevalent in the communities involved. In order to do this, both qualitative and quantitative analyses are necessary to elucidate a question of this nature (see Guarnizo & Smith, 1998: 28-29).

## Chapter Two

### Yoruba Nation Before and After Contact With Other Cultures

#### 2.1.1 Preamble

Yoruba as a people had existed for hundreds of years before the advent of the Europeans. The Yoruba nation is one of the recipients of the universal spread of modernism which is affecting all peoples around the world. When one looks at African nations today, the urban growth is manifested in population growth, thus making the cities havens for freedom of political, social, moral and cultural expressions and liberation in comparison to the villages where the life style is regimentally controlled by norms and taboos. The development of African cities is not unconnected with their contact with the Western world. The Trans Atlantic Slave Trade and colonialism had a biased notion of development. The areas close to the coast attracted a high population density of rural dwellers, who constituted the proletariat class in the cities, while the rural areas were left to fend for themselves. For example, the early contact of the Yoruba through commerce with the Portuguese merchants in the 15th century opened up a new opportunity for trade with the Portuguese and exposure to European goods and cultural practices (Osuntokun, 1987: 128). This development culminated in Lagos becoming the third most populous city in continental Africa after Cairo and Johannesburg. As Osuntokun (1987) mentions, by the 16th century, exchange of goods had changed to the people themselves, having been purchased by the Europeans. By the end of the 19th century, the West docked the slave ships and replaced them with gun boats which ushered an era of colonialism that lasted for about 75 years. There is no gainsaying that there is no aspect of African culture that was not affected by European contact. Perhaps we should maintain

some decorum and agree with Olaogun (1996) who suggests that academic energy should not be expended on repeating the myth of displacement of indigenous culture by the European values and forms, but to focus academic scholarship on determining and analyzing the extent and mechanism of change and adjustment with each integral social unit (pg. 48).

The chapter is divided into two sections. In the first section, I set out to examine the Yoruba ethnic group with particular reference to their land and culture before and after their contact with European cultures. In this endeavor, I have made use of a historical methodology, employing historical writings of eminent scholars of Yoruba history and culture.

Was it not Herodotus considered the father of Western History, who tells us in the Persian Wars that the mission of his writing is to preserve that which owes its existence to men "lest it be obliterated by time, and to bestow upon the glorious, wondrous deeds of Greeks and barbarians sufficient praise to assure their remembrance by posterity and thus make their glory shine through the centuries"? Mills (1959) talks about the recognition of any society within world history. If Mills is taken seriously, then, the importance of recognizing history enables us to know who these people were, how they had changed and the possibility of using their cultural capital for the development of their transnational practices. Olaogun (1996) writes that historical analysis "provides the most vital approach for understanding the Yoruba institutions and even attitudes, values and behavior...Historical study enables us to see how what is has come to be what it is..." (pg. 49). If historical study truly benefits the understanding of the impact of changes in a society, it will as well illuminate the present; through this we can understand why groups retain some aspects of their culture and why they neglect some and fuse other cultural elements with theirs. Thus, the study of the history, tradition and culture of the Yoruba people will help immeasurably to understand their transnational practices in the Diaspora.

In the second section, I discuss the post colonial social, economic and political situations of Nigeria as a nation-state, highlighting its failure to engineer the economy to take care of its citizens due to the abysmal corruption of its leadership. I argue that the plunder and the larcenous practices in Nigeria is a collusion between the ruling elites and the international capital. The cumulative effect of the predatory state--endemic, structured and degenerative--has a serious implication on the society. Most importantly, it has a contributory impact on brain drain, the migration out of Nigeria of able-bodied men and women, and transnational practices.

### 2.1.2 Yoruba Nation: Their Land and People:

The people now known as Yoruba are comprised of the peoples of Ijebu, Akoko, Ife, Ijesha, Ekiti, Ondo, Egba, Awori, the Egba, Oyo, Ilorin, Idoko, Ikale, the Yagba, the Igbomina. The Yoruba are mostly found in the Federal Republic of Nigeria, but there are pockets of Yoruba in the Federal Republic of Benin, who are known as Nagot, and those of French Togoland are called Ana. Yoruba immigrants in Sierra Leone are known as Aku, while the descendants of Yoruba slaves in Cuba are known as Lukumi (Forde, 1951:

1). Of late, the Yoruba nation has come to include the descendants of slaves of Yoruba descent in Brazil, Cuba, Trinidad and the United States ( (1999)). According to Fadipe (1970), the Yoruba (applicable to those on the core area--in the Federal Republic of Nigeria) speak a language known as Yoruba which is of the Sudanic family. The word Yoruba is more of a linguistic rather than an ethno-cultural group (pg.29). Nevertheless, all the Yoruba make claim to the common ancestry linked to Oduduwa and Ile-Ife which is commonly believed to be their original home. Today, the Yoruba occupy six states in Nigeria, which are Ogun, Lagos, Osun, Ekiti, Ondo and Oyo. There is a large number of them in Kwara and Kogi states as well. My exposition in this section of the chapter is restricted to the core areas of the southwestern part of Nigeria, because it is in this area that the culture thrives most.

According to Forde (1951), the geographical location of Yoruba population starts from the Guinea Coast west to the Niger Delta, 200 miles inland to Niger where it flows southeast to join the Benue, and extending west into Benin Republic and Togoland (pg. 1). Yorubaland is located within the tropics, nearer to the equator than to the Tropic of Cancer. The east-west coastline is estimated to be about 6 degrees 22'North of the equator; the southernmost point is about 6 degrees 0'N, while the northernmost part is about 9 degrees 05'N. Kishi, one of the most northerly Yoruba towns is about 9 degrees 0'North. The longitudinal references are about 2 degrees 40'E., and 6 degrees 0'E. in the north-east (Ojo, 1966: 22).

The geographical location of Yorubaland makes for two major seasons--dry and wet, November to March and April to October respectively. This location is supportive of agriculture, commerce and trade.

### 2.1.3 Creation of Yoruba Nation: The Oduduwa Dynasty:

The origin of Yoruba people is still a fertile ground for debates among scholars of Yoruba history, in part caused by the non-literacy of pre-European Yoruba society. *Ipsa facto*, oral accounts of origin have been relied on. Given the nature and limits of this study, I will confine my exposition to the history of the origin of Yoruba nation to a non-controversial account. There are two different but corroborative accounts which point to the single powerful figure of Oduduwa as the founder of the Yoruba nation. The first account has a cosmogonical explanation of how the nation was created, while the second has a political interpretation of the creation.

#### 2.1.3.1 Cosmogonic Story: Orisanla (Obatala), the arch-divinity was instructed by Olodumare, God the creator to create a solid land from the surface of the earth which was covered with water. Orisanla descended from heaven with a snail shell full of earth, a cock and palm kernels. The content of the snail shell was emptied and the cock spread the earth with his feet. The wide expanse of land became filled up with the earth, and those areas that the cock could not fill with the earth remained as oceans, seas, lagoons and so on until today. The spot on which the earth was poured for the cock to spread is called Ile-Ife—a wide area of land.

The following account is the variant of the above account. Orisanla the arch-divinity, on his way to carry out the instruction of Olodumare to create the world got drunk from drinking palm wine and fell asleep. When he failed to return at the expected time, Olodumare got worried and sent another divinity--Oduduwa to go and find out about the situation of things. Oduduwa came and found him lying in a stupor, but instead of waking him up, decided to take over the task and he completed it. Oduduwa received a eulogy for this mission accomplished and was regarded as the one who completed the task of creation of the universe. Obatala felt very ashamed when he woke, and because of his experience, mandated his followers never to drink palm wine.

2.1.3.2 Political Version: This version is more factually-oriented than the first one. It goes that the Yoruba originated from the children of Canaan, who were of the tribe of Nimrod (known as Lamurudu in Yoruba). They originally dwelled in Upper Egypt, or Nubia, but followed the Egyptian conqueror Nimrod in his wars of conquest as far as Arabia where they settled for some time. They were driven from Arabia because they refused to be converted to Islam from Christianity or paganism. From there, they advanced to the interior of Africa. According to the account of an explorer, Captain Clapperton, "on their way (i.e. to the interior of Africa) they left in every place they stopped at, a tribe of their own people. Thus it is supposed that all tribes of the Soudan who inhabit the mountains are originated from them as also are the inhabitants of Ya-ory..." (Cited in Johnson, 1921: 6). The group led by Oduduwa arrived in Ile-Ife where they fought with the Aborigines and conquered them. Oduduwa was survived by Okanbi, also known as *Idekoseoake* who died in Ile-Ife as well and left behind seven princes and princesses (Johnson, 1921: 7). From these offspring sprang the various tribes of the Yoruba nation which are Olowu of Owu, Alaketu of Ketu, Oba of Benin, Orangun of Ila, Onisabe of Sabe, Olupopo of Popo, and Oranyan, the seventh and the last born who became the ruler of the Yoruba proper, the Oyos (Johnson, 1921: 8). All these princes became kings who wore crowns that differentiated them from those other rulers who did not wear crowns but coronets called *Akoro*.

The latter version seems to be the most credible account of the founding of the Yoruba nation. What is most crucial in both versions is the roles played by Oduduwa; he was both the spiritual and political father of all Yoruba groups, and also, Ile-Ife is considered by all as the cradle of civilization, the sacred home of the Yoruba and the cradle of human race--*Ife o o daye, ibi oju ti n mo wa ile aye*. Accordingly, Yoruba cosmogony validates the beliefs of the people that the earth and all the inhabitants including human beings were created by a supreme being called Olodumare. The Yoruba are strong believers in one absolute transcendental and immanent being, who has power over everything. He is *Oba Aiku, arinu rode olumonran okan* (the most powerful that never dies--an All-Knowing), *Alewilese Olodumare* (the most powerful, whose word is action), and other names to qualify His power.

#### 2.1.4 Traditional Economies:

2.1.4.1 Farming: The Yoruba people as other peoples of the world exploit the natural environment for their sustenance. This practice of exploiting the natural environment for

sustenance is part of human culture. Human practice of exploiting and utilizing the natural environment for basic needs is what Ojo (1966) calls concrete cultural complexes. *Ipsa facto*, farming is one of Yoruba concrete cultural-complexes. Other concrete cultural complexes are fishing, smithing, weaving, wood carving and so on and so forth.

Before the advent of the Europeans, a vast majority of the Yoruba people were farmers. Farming was carried out with simple implements such as hoe and cutlass which were indigenously manufactured. Crops were grown for domestic consumption and some were exchanged for other items based on trade by barter (Johnson, 1921: 117). The indigenous crops grown in this period were yellow Guinea Yam (*dioscorea cayenisis*) and the wild species of *Dioscorea*; certain crops such as plantain, banana, cocoyams and other types of domesticated yams introduced from contact with the East were also grown. Contact with Europeans, especially the Portuguese, introduced more crops namely maize, cassava, sweet potato, groundnuts, capsicums, pawpaw (*carica papaya*), tobacco, para rubber, egg plant, okra, mango and tomato. The Portuguese also brought sugar cane via the Mediterranean and the lime, orange and lemon from India. The kola tree (*cola acumiata*), and the oil palm (*Eleaesis*) were indigenous, but were then not cultivated—they were left to grow wild (Ojo, 1966: 52).

Farming in those days, as a means of subsistence was as important as the social labor involved in carrying it out. The deployment of labor for farming reflected the social structure of Yoruba societies which was based on kinship. Then, people worked the lands in groups and not as individuals. Family or lineage constituted the basic group formation for farm work. Each family group used the land as far as human capabilities could bring it. Farm portions belonged to the users as long as the land was occupied, and unoccupied land belonged to the king who was the custodian for the people. In order to assist one another in clearing forests and as well as for protection from wild animals, related family members farmed close to one another. But as time went by, land ownership evolved, by which certain portions of the land belonged to members of same extended family. And all extended families in the same area gave the power for re-allocation and reapportioning of land to the eldest man in the community.

According to Ojo (1966), there are three types of group farming. One is familial lineage farming involving all male members of a farm-going age and of patrilineal descent working together throughout the farming year under the supervision of the eldest. The produce of labor belonged in all its entirety to the patrilineal group, the female members by birth and by marriage who were included by virtue of their position as the domestic staff. The father of the group provided clothing and even women to marry at the appropriate times by exchanging the farm products through barter. This type of group farming was not only carried out by those related by blood filiation and descent; for example, the head chief organized the labor of many immigrants or strangers within his vicinity for the purposes of group farming. By the same token, warriors absorbed slaves into the manual force of patrilineal group.

The second category of group farming is *aro*, known in some areas as *airo*, *oya* or *abo*. This involves the rotation of communal manual labor by male descendants of the same

forefather. Those of age-group also performed *aro*. In this case, men of same age-group worked on the farms of important members of the community, and their services could be reciprocated in other ways than by farming.

The third type of group farming was *owe* or *ebese*. People of the same male ancestry worked for a day or two to clear a farm in return for food and palm wine. This is the largest mode of labor mobilization for group farming. It involved up to 100 or more people depending on the social standing of the man raising the *owe*. Unlike *aro*, the organization of labor under *owe* or *ebese* was not based on rotational *quid pro quo*. The major rewards were food, palm wine and kolanuts supplied at work, and home at the end of each day's work (pp. 58-61).

2.1.4.2 Commerce and Trade: The Yoruba people also engaged in commerce. Commerce comes next in order of importance to farming. Trade by barter was the dominant mode of carrying out commercial transactions. Cowry shells served as a medium of exchange for local small exchanges. In those days, products of the north were exchanged for those of the south; in most cases, the Yoruba transacted trade with their neighbors through trade by barter. Both men and women engaged in trade but each traded his/her own products.

2.1.4.3 Medicine: Both men and women practiced medicine. Medicine men and women specialized in curing people of ailments. These people are *adahunse* (Johnson, 1921: 121). They usually had inmates in their custody who were suffering from debilitating diseases such as insanity, leprosy, etc. Those who were too poor to pay in either cash or kind remained in the doctor's household and served as his/her servants. Certain clans specialized in medicine and the secret of their practice was not divulged to "outsiders", but passed on from one generation to another. In traditional Yoruba society, anyone could compound herbs if he/she knew the art and could give it to any indisposed members of his/her family.

2.1.4.4 Smithery and Iron Smelting: These were specializations of men. Before the advent of the Europeans, all materials made of iron and steel, such as weapons of war, pins, needles, farm implements and the like were indigenously made. The availability of iron ores in certain parts of Yoruba land made occupations in iron smelting possible. The name "Ilorin" was derived from "ilo irin", meaning iron grinding. Certain parts of Ekiti, such as Okemesi were also famous for their iron ores. Heat for smelting iron was being generated from charcoals made from hard woods. Shells from palm nuts were used to burn those hard woods. Later, the Europeans came to introduce cheap iron rods and bars, which then displaced the indigenous home-made products (Johnson, 1921: 120). Before the arrival of the Europeans, mineral resources, such as Gold, silver, tin, diamond, etc. were not known to the Yoruba.

2.1.4.5 Wood Carving: This was mostly done by men. Household and farming implements are made from wood--handles were made for knives, cutlasses and axes. Other materials made from woods are door handles, lintels, benches, stools, pestle and mortar, trays, dishes and bowls, spoons and ladles undecorated and a part of some drums and boats.

2.1.4.6 Fisheries: Fishing was not an occupation widely practiced by the Yoruba. It was an occupation mostly practiced by those who lived close to the coast.

#### 2.1.4.7 Women's Areas of Specialization:

2.1.4.7.1 Yarning Industry: This was predominantly done by women. They would buy yarn, bleach and dye them in all kinds of colors, and sell them to the weavers. Both males and females partook in weaving, but more women did it than men. The yarn making industry was undertaken by women throughout Yorubaland before the coming of the Europeans. This is because it was part of their reproductive role to clothe the family, as it was men to feed them. Every woman was assisted by her daughters to gin, card and spin.

2.1.4.7.2 Pottery: This is another industry dominated by women, even though men could help with digging out the clay for molding because of the manual labor involved. Pots of different sizes for domestic usages and sales in the market were made by women. Pottery was not devoid of artistic work.

2.1.4.7.3 Bead work: Beads were made from the hard shells of palm nuts, or from cocoa nut shells. It is among female industries.

Other occupations largely practiced by women were beer brewing, palm oil making, rearing of domestic animals, such as goats and chickens; and hair dressing.

Johnson (1921: 125) and Fadipe (1970: 151) note that, in traditional Yoruba society, women were by far more industrious than men. Women and girls were always working both in the homes and outside in the farm, while boys and young men seemed to have more leisure time.

#### 2.1.4.8 Slavery and Iwofa:

According to Fadipe (1970), there are a few different ways by which people became slaves before contact with the Europeans. A person may be enslaved due to debt, crime, capture in battle or conquered towns, kidnaping for sale, being born to slave parents and self-condemnation. Self-condemnation could result from a situation where a person suffered from an ailment and had depleted all her/his resources for a cure with no avail, but found one person who could cure him/her. She therefore submits herself/himself to the curer (pg. 180-181).

Slaves often worked in their master's farm, but were also given their own plots of land (Forde, 1951: 26). A woman slave could help the master's wife (ves) do domestic chores. Slaves were used to fight in wars. Slaves who fought in wars commanded some respects in the society especially if their skills and art of war were superior. Slaves also served as the custodian of shrines. Masters could give female slaves to male slaves to marry, and their offspring automatically became slaves. Slavery in Yoruba society was different from the European concept of slavery which resulted in the transplantation of black Africans to the American plantation and mines via the Atlantic. Even though there seem

to be some similarities, overall, how a slave was treated in a pre-capitalist Yoruba society was far different from what black slaves experienced in the hands of their European captors. Having said that, in Yoruba, an enslaved person did not have the same social and political rights as a free person.

Johnson (1921) points out that the term *iwofa* has no equivalent in English. He defines *iwofa* as "one who serves another periodically in lieu of the interest on money lent" (pg. 126). For a Yoruba-speaking person, you can only "pawn" goods or items but not human beings. The word "pawn" used for "iwofa" is a mistranslation--human beings are not "pawned" by the Yoruba (pg.126). Wolf's (1982) characterization of African slavery is wrong when he equates pawnship with slavery (pp. 207-208); pawnship in African context is totally different from slavery. While a slave had no political and social rights in most cases, a "pawned person" could cease to be under the control of his/her master once the debt had been paid. As a matter of fact, an "iwofa" (translated to pawn in English) did not necessarily have to live in his or her master's household, a married *iwofa* slept in his/her home and came back to work the next morning. Johnson (1921) says, "a man *iwofa* lives in his own house and plies his own trade, but he is required to clean a piece of land equal to 100 yam heaps or an equivalent in his master's farm once a week..." (pg. 127)--the Yoruba week consists of five days. On the other hand, a minor *iwofa* lived and stayed in the master's house who would give him/her food and protection. If a slave died in the master's house, no eyebrows would be raised, but if an *iwofa* died due to mistreatment from the master, the master lost the debt and also got sanctioned by the authority. It is also important to point out that Wolf (1982) is not correct in his exposition when he writes that ".....pawns, criminals and captives....did not become members of domestic groups, but instead were put to work in the chief's gardens, in the royal gold mines..." (pg. 208). Of course

, these groups were being used for productive purposes, but a slave that proved himself/herself, say in the art of war assumed a privileged position (Fadipe, 1970: 182). Moreover, if an unmarried female *iwofa* is sexually abused by the master, he would incur the wrath of her family and that of the person she had been betrothed to; in addition to this he faced the authority and forfeited his money. In Yoruba traditional practice, if the master decided to marry his female slave, he automatically gave her her freedom. And the issues from that relationship had no social or political inhibitions--the children from this relationship had the same rights as other children in the household and in the community.

#### 2.1.5 Birth:

Forde (1951), says that a child is named from 3-9 days after birth (pg. 27). According to Johnson (1921), a male child is named on the 9th and on the 7th if a female; and if they happen to be twins of both sexes, the naming will be on the 8th day (pg. 79). The naming ceremony among the Yoruba is quite elaborate, and is usually performed early in the morning to enable those present to go about their normal activities for the day. At the ceremony would be present principal members of family and friends. Some Yoruba groups consulted the *Ifa* divination to know what kind of person the child would grow up to be, and also to verify if he or she was a redivivus of a particular ancestor. A child

could possibly have as many as four names but did not necessarily have to answer to more than one. The four categories of names are, the amutorunwas, abiso, abiku names and orile/oriki or totem.

(1) Amutorunwa: children were named based on the circumstances by which they were born. This same name can be applicable to those born under similar circumstances. Examples of such names are:

(a) Taiwo--for the first born of twins (considered to be the younger).

(b) Kehinde--for the second set (considered to be the older--based on the myth that he/she sent Taiwo to go and find out about the world).

(c) Dada--curly headed child.

(2) Abiso: A Yoruba proverb says "ile ni a n wo ki a to so omo l'oruko". Names are not given to a child at random. The choice of name for child has to do with the circumstances of the parents at the time of its birth. That is why, there is no Yoruba name without some meaning. Yoruba names are significant of some thing or event. Examples are:

(a ) Ayodele--joy enters the house.

(b) Temitope--I am grateful to God.

(c) Iyapo--Many tribulations.

Another variation of this class of names are the names given to those of royal birth, namely,

(d) Aladesanmi--the crown is to my favor.

(e) Adeyanju--The crown has made peace.

Also, some abiso names are based on the deity worshiped in particular families; examples,

(f) Sangogbemi--Sango (the god of thunder and lightening) is on my side.

(g) Ogundele--Ogun (the god of war) has come home.

(3) Abiku Names: There are children believed to belong to a cult of demons living in the woods. These children are believed to have arranged with their cult members prior to birth to die prematurely so that they could make their parents sad. In fact mortality was indeed high in pre-European contact. Therefore, many Yoruba still believe in abiku, but medical facts have pointed to the fact that the lack of proper medication and sanitation are the major cause of infant mortality rate in most societies. However, based on some beliefs and experiences over a long period of time, the Yoruba have come to know that

certain individuals have some supernatural power which modern science has failed to dispel. Some of the names given to abiku children are,

- (a) Malomo—do not go again.
- (b) Kokumo—shall never die again.
- (c) Kosoko—there is no more hoe (implying that we do not have any hoe to dig your grave again).
- (4) Oriki or Pet names:

This category of names express what the child is, and what it is hoped to become. This is also known as "praise name". There are different pet names for males and females.

Males:

- (a) Ajagbe—one who carries off after a fight.
- (b) Ajani—one who possesses after a fight.

Females:

- (c) Amoke—whom to know is to pet.
- (d) Asabi—one of select birth.

#### 2.1.6 Marriage:

The Yoruba traditional mode of marriage is much different from what is obtaining today. In ancient times, Yoruba were mostly monogamic, albeit, polygyny was not forbidden. But only rich people could meet the responsibilities of having more than one wife (Johnson, 1921: 113). Being a relatively very simple society then, wants were few. Young men married early once they were able to support a family. And once a man reached a marriageable age and had not married, he was referred to as *apon*, a non-favorable term. If the man refused to marry after a protracted period of time, he might have to leave the town or village because the gossip would be too much for him to bear, thus if he had no sexual disability, he would have to marry before he was considered an *apon*. But today, things have changed, although the expectation is still there for a man to marry at the appropriate time (Fadipe, 1970: 65). In the case of women, due to the marriage arrangement, it was easy for her to marry a man who had already had other women.

In those days, a female child could be betrothed before birth. For example, a man could take interest in his neighbor who had, say about three or four wives. He might begin by giving presents to this neighbor. Quite often, these presents were farm produce such as

fresh corn or firewood for the man and her family. As he was doing this, he would be reminding the man that "once one of your wives has a baby girl, it will be my wife"; the response would be, "may we live to that time". Once one of the wives got pregnant, the man would continue to take care of both the man and the pregnant woman. If the woman gave birth to a girl, that meant he was lucky. He would continue to give the family gifts and spend some time helping the to-be parents-in-law on the farm. As the child came of age, she would recognize that man as the fiancée. In traditional Yoruba custom, a child must not refuse who the parents had asked him or her to marry, otherwise he/she would be cursed.

Another way of courting and marrying is closely related to the above but different in the sense that both the male and female were adults of marriageable ages. Parents kept vigil on their marriageable wards to ensure suitability of the partner. Also, the male could look out for a woman to marry. It was the role of *alarina*, or "intermediary", who was usually a woman, to liaise between the man and the woman. Once it was deemed mutually possible for both parties to meet, she organized the meeting, which thus completed her own assignment.

Competition was always involved as many suitors would be visiting when the lady was pretty and of a noble background. Private encounter between the suitor and prospective bride was forbidden. Parents called the lady to meet her suitor if they were at home when he visited. She was not to visit her suitor at his home. In case of competition, special attention was given to one of the suitors based on the parents' advice, causing other suitors to "keep off" and her family members to recognize the preference as the would-be husband. It must be stressed at this juncture that, in both of the ways of courtship, pre-marital sex was forbidden. In the process of courtship between the two, parents on both sides began enquiries into the background of the prospective groom/bride, to be sure that there was no hereditary diseases such as insanity, epilepsy, leprosy and that they were not insolvent debtors. Financial background was not a special consideration. *Ifa* oracle was then consulted, and all things being equal, with the parental approval on both sides, *idana* would follow.

*Idana* is very important because it was then that all family members of both parties meet for the first time. *Idana* could be held very early in the morning or in the evening. For *idana*, goods, palmwine, schnapps, *obi*, *oyin* and other emblems of fruitfulness would be brought to the bride's family, and some of them would be used to entertain the guests and members of the groom's family. *Idana* is equivalent to marriage. Dowry payment was part of *idana*, but contrary to the perception in the West that in traditional marriage Africans exchange their daughters for money, with respect to Yoruba culture, it was not mandatory for the groom to pay money to the bride's family. Most parents now reject the money paid at the *idana* on the ground that their daughter is not for sale. According to Johnson (1921), in ancient times, people paid dowry according to their ability (pg. 114). After *idana*, the date of marriage would be mutually agreed upon between the young man and the parents on the one hand and between them and the father of the girl on the other hand. The day that the woman is led into the husband's house is called *igbeyawo*—carrying the bride.

In Yoruba culture, a woman was expected to enter her husband's place with virginity--*virgo intacta*. A bride found to have had any pre-marital sex was a disgrace to herself and her family and would be severely punished for this, often resulting into flogging by the husband. The man who rendered her non *virgo intacta* would be considered a culprit by the society and would have to pay the bride price back to the husband (Johnson, 1921: 115; Fadipe, 1970: 66). Sex before marriage was against the mores of the society, though carried out covertly. There are ways to get around this rule, for example, a boy or a man could violate the person of the girl betrothed to him prior to marriage. All he had to do afterward was to pay the bride-price. Accordingly, there are two ways of checking or controlling pre-marital sex. One, is the self-discipline on the part of the man by his recognizing the importance that society placed on maidenhead on the bridal night. And on the part of the woman, it was expected that she maintained both physical and psychological separation from the man prior to *igbeyawo*. The second check was the negative consequence of having any sexual relationship with a betrothed woman. A man caught doing this disrepute himself and his kindred, and was liable to damages from the man that the girl had been betrothed to. Another way that a man can have a sexual encounter with a woman against the norm without jeopardizing a woman's virginity was to have sex with a married woman. But the risk of doing this was high, as people were afraid of contracting *magun*—a potentially fatal magical spell that could result in immediate death, which was discreetly put on the woman by a jealous husband. In traditional Yoruba society, pre-marital and loose sexual practices were prohibited.

Having touched on this, it is noteworthy to mention a particular practice that predated both Islam and Christianity, which is female circumcision. As said earlier, *virgo intacta* on the bridal night was a desire for most women, their parents and kindred. In the light of this, a woman's sexual drive must be controlled. Female circumcision is a practice where the prepuce of, or all of the *glans clitoridis* is "peeled". In some cultures, Yoruba exempted, female circumcision is carried out to the extent that the clitoridis is removed and the woman's private part sewn! Two major reasons have been adduced for the practice among the Yoruba. One, to control the sexual drive of the woman as it was believed from the historical past, that it is a guide against promiscuity. In other words, to make a woman "less jumpy" so to speak. Being a patriarchal society, women are expected to focus on the reproductive roles, such as child rearing, cooking, etc., rather than deriving pleasure from sex. Logically, the Yoruba ancestors might consider the "peeling" of the *clitoridis* as a ward against unwanted pregnancies, venereal diseases and infidelity. And secondly, traditional Yoruba society was riddled with all sorts of superstition, and infant mortality was very high. Some people believed that if a child's head touched the *clitoridis* while being delivered, it would die. It is important to add that female circumcision is not being practiced by all Yoruba groups, but to delineate those who do and do not accurately, would be an Herculean task. For example, most Ondo, Ife, Egba and Ekiti do practice it while a vast majority of the Ijebu do not. If an Ijebu woman gets married to an Ife man where it is being practiced, she has no choice other than to abide by the husband's custom.

In traditional Yoruba society, there was no gender equality and women were considered the "weaker sex". A man could "put his wife away" temporarily or permanently without

her consent, but a woman was not supposed to leave the husband's home. A woman that left her husband's place to live with parents or by herself was regarded a *ilemosu*, a disparaging term. In comparison to the colonial and post-colonial eras, women had more power in traditional Yoruba society, in the period preceding the Europeans. Mba (1987), writes that in pre-colonial Yorubaland, it was possible for women to gain wealth as men in trade and they had control over their economic activities (pg. 243). Women were in control of markets, they fixed prices and controlled the movement of goods to and from other markets. Most opportunities enjoyed by women in the pre-colonial Yoruba society were lost with the introduction of wage labor by the Europeans.

#### 2.1.7 Funerals:

The Yoruba had an elaborate form of burying their dead. How a person would be buried depended at the age that he or she died. The Yoruba believed that the dead were still members of the community, especially those who died at a ripe age. Once a person died, having lived a healthy life and had contributed positively to the community, he/she would be accorded a decent burial. But for a sorcerer and an enemy of community, his/her death would be treated with less glamour as it would not command the presence of members of the community. Ignominious treatment of a person after death was to deter anti-social acts. Those who died old and who were known for honesty, valor and respect for the customs and community were considered as ancestors after death. But if a person died prematurely in the course of fighting for the community or carrying out humanitarian acts, or lived a decent life beneficial to the community, he or she could also be considered as an ancestor.

When a person died at a ripe age, the burial ceremony was usually very elaborate. The Yoruba did not use cemeteries and the corpse was not interred in a coffin. In rare cases, a wealthy person could be buried in a coffin (Johnson, 1921: 137). Yoruba buried their dead in the house because they believed that he or she was part of the household. At the death of an old person, the relatives and all the extended family members would be summoned if they were not around. The corpse would thereafter be washed with locally made soap, *ose dudu* by the dead person's siblings. After this, he or she would be laid-in-state. In those days, there were no mortuary services. The burial could be delayed for four to five days, in part to enable all members of the family who were not within the vicinity to arrive and take part in the celebration. The grave for the dead person would be dug without any use of chemicals for preservation. It would be systematically made to give room for a place where the corpse could be kept in such a way that when it decomposed the stench would not come up to pollute the air in the house and the neighborhood.

For the burial/interment, the children and kin members-both paternal and maternal would donate textiles that would be used to wrap the corpse. This was in obligation of their kinship solidarity (Johnson, 1921: 137). Also, every other familial attachment to which the dead offered the same service to in his or her life time must also do the same to him in death. Funeral ceremony engendered a re-union of all the members of the extended family. When it was a "proper death", it called for wining and dining from the day of the death till after interment. On the day of interment, emotion produced tears no matter how

old the person might be. A few days after, a date would be fixed for the funeral ceremony. Throughout the processes, the wife (ves) of the dead became widow(s), staying indoors for as long as three months. If the need arose for her/them to go outside, she/they would appear in black dress and would put on a sober look, and she/they should not participate in social activities for the whole period of mourning. That is that about those who died at a ripe age.

For those who died prematurely, that is, those who still had many older survivors, no ceremony was performed, and the interment was rushed. For a middle-aged man or woman, the younger siblings and relatives took charge while the older ones took no part. If the dead had children that were old enough and had some money to spend to entertain guests, they observed the ceremonial aspect, but without the involvements of those older than the dead. In traditional Yoruba culture, an older person should not mourn the death of younger ones. Feasting at such events was a violation of tradition, a taboo. As was personally told, it is vehemently frowned upon, and nobody does it even now.

### 2.1.8 The Socio-Political Organization:

Yoruba communities have a hierarchical social structure which descends from the ruler--*oba*, who oversees the affairs of the polity; to the council of chiefs. The family units and individuals served as channels for the control of society. In Yoruba culture, the family unit is not autonomous of the larger community which includes the clans and other social and religious organizations. The smaller communities, such as villages establish different forms of socio-economic intercourse beyond the family structure, thus complexities begin to arise, necessitating the need for offence and defense, conflict resolution, exchange of agricultural groups and celebration of traditional festivals. Large or small, the concept of state involved the designation of authority in individuals or groups outside the purview of the family unit for the common interest of the community (Olaogun, 1996: 58). Since the power trickled down from the top to the bottom, it is then pertinent to start discussing the Yoruba socio-political organization from the top down--starting with the institution of Obaship.

2.1.8.1 Yoruba Obaship: Some Yoruba also call their ruler *owa*, especially the Ekiti group. Yoruba tradition regards the Oba as the representative of God on earth. He is regarded as having power over life and death. The perception of Obaship as a symbol of authority and cohesion is still very much held today, and one continues to wonder how it has survived colonialism and infiltration of other cultures. The *Oba* is regarded as divine, and hence is considered as both the political and spiritual leader of his people. He intercedes between the metaphysical world of the ancestor and the physical world of the living. If a Yoruba Oba appears in the public, he is rarely recognized because he is clothed in voluminous spreading gowns and wears a conical beaded crown, he is majestic and gorgeous looking. He wears *ade*, crown which stands him out of any members of the community. Only the *Oba* wears *ade* in Yorubaland. The *Oba* is responsible for the well being of all the inhabitants of his kingdom. Hence the Yoruba have a saying, *Oba to je ti ilu toro, oruko re ko ni pare, oba to je, ti ilu tuka, oruko re ko ni pare* (meaning, an *Oba*

whose rulership is peaceful and prosperous, his name will never be forgotten in history, and if otherwise, people would always remember him for atrocities).

Theoretically, an *Oba* has the final say on all matters, however, practically speaking, he must yield to the advice of his council of chiefs, made up of people from the royal lineage and those given an honorary title. Such lineages include the *afobajes* (king makers) and other traditional title holders who play political, social and religious roles in the kingdom. The chiefs usually meet with those in their jurisdiction, usually their clan members and residents, from time to time. The chiefs let the *Oba* know the wishes of the people before decisions are taken. The females are represented by *Iyalode*—usually a mature woman who has past child rearing age and is wealthy, as she has to avoid rigorous jobs and trading. There are other kinds of women chiefs, from those of hereditary titles to honorary ones. The *Ogboni* comprises of the *aworo*, *balogun*, the *bashorun*, *iya agan* and *iyalode*, who fix the dates of religious festivals, arrange for sacrifices, enforce sanctions and initiate adults into guilds and cults (Olaogun, 1996: 61).

Those villages that are tributary to a principal town, by paying *isakole*, are headed by the *baale*, the village head. The *baale* does not wear a crown, and the wife(ves) is/are not called *olori* (as the *Oba*'s wife(ves) is/are called), but *iya*.

2.1.8.2 The Family: In Yoruba socio-political institutions, the family is the most important group. For Yoruba the family includes parents, children, grandparents, uncles, cousins, brothers and sisters. All these constitute the "extended family". Being a member of a particular family in Yoruba demands much loyalty, responsibility and selflessness.

2.1.8.2.1 Nuclear Family: The Yoruba nuclear family is made up of a man and his wife or wives and their children. The Yoruba traditional resident rule is patrilocal, that is the wife lives with the husband and his agnatic kin members. Nowadays, neolocal seems to be more prevalent, which means couples choose where they want to live away from male parents. This is due to the impacts of formal education and urbanization. In Yoruba culture, matrilocal is not very common.

2.1.8.2.2 Extended Family: The most basic unit of social organization in Yoruba society is the *idile*—the extended family. *Idile* consists of a number of people who claim they are of one descent either from a living or dead common ancestor. Because of their strong link to the spiritual world of the ancestors, the relationship is taken seriously by all members of the extended family system. The person vested with authority in *idile* is called *elerebi*. The appointment of *elerebi* is not based on heredity but on age, wisdom, respect and his contribution to the community.

There is no distinguishing word for cousin or nephew/niece in Yoruba language. One's cousin is considered as one's brother, and nephew or niece could be considered as one's son or daughter. In spite of the adoption of Western culture, those who are one's parents's cousins, are by Western culture, one's cousin as well, are still referred to as "uncles" or "aunts" by the Yoruba. This quite illustrates the importance of the extended family to the Yoruba. However, it is noteworthy that the extended family system as an

epitome of cohesion, support and fulfilment, is becoming threatened in Yorubaland today. The introduction of foreign culture began this change and the harsh economic situation of the day coupled with urbanization constitute the major threat.

According to Olaogun (1996), the methodology of Yoruba traditional education was not elaborate. It was informal as teaching and learning took place anywhere. The child was expected to take instructions from the elder without any questioning. The child was taught how to respect the religion, and taboos controlled behavior. Obedience and respect to elders were highly stressed in Yoruba traditional education. Greetings and salutation are vital symbols of respect for the elders in Yoruba culture. Verbal greeting is followed by a male prostrating to an elderly person, while a female went down on her knees. Children were not supposed to look into the eyes of their elders or talk back while he or she was being scolded (pg. 68). Also, if a child indulged in any acts contrary to the set rules and regulations of the house or behaviors that could tarnish the image of the family or the larger community, he/she could be flogged. This aspect of cultural complexes still exists today, but is being challenged by the present generation who views this aspect as a limitation and physically abusive in certain respects. Yoruba society was very gerontocratic, as the elders have a final say on major decisions. However, if a young person proved himself/herself worthy of recognition, it would be acknowledged. Young but brave warriors, hunters and farmers were given their own respects in the society—a Yoruba adage can corroborate this; *ti omode ba mo owo we, aba agaba jeun*—if a child proves himself/herself worthy, he/she would definitely maintain a parity with the elders.

#### 2.1.9 Religion:

The Yoruba people were highly religious. In all they did, they put the name of God first. The idea of a pantheon of divinities could easily mislead an outside observer to think that the Yoruba had no conception of God—the Absolute, but a thorough understanding of their beliefs about the natural and supernatural world would leave one convinced that the Yoruba traditional religious practice was of monotheism. For the Western ethnocentrists, Africans had no religion because their religious beliefs were not documented. Perhaps, if this religion had embarked on some crusade or jihad, it would have been recognized. The point being made is, if religion has to do with conquering other people and forcing them and/or manipulating them to believe in their religion, it then means, Africans indeed have no religion. But if religion meant maintaining your spiritual attachment to an all powerful, transcendent, but immanent entity and not having to proclaim yourself to the whole world that you were religious, it then meant, Africans had religion. My exposition on Yoruba traditional religious belief will largely be based on Idowu's account, a well-respected authority in African traditional religion, who distinguishes five major levels characterizing the Yoruba traditional religion, namely;

1. Belief in Olodumare
2. Belief in the Divinity
3. Belief in spirit

#### 4. Belief in ancestors

#### 5. Practice of magic and medicine

In the following space, I shall briefly explain each one of them.

2.1.9.1 Belief in God: In Africa, each people has a local name for God. The Yoruba call God "Olodumare". God is real to the people, and is considered as the creator of everything on this earth. The belief in God is manifested in the names the Yoruba give to their children, names such as "Oluremi"--God has consoled me, "Olutooke"--The Lord deserves to be glorified. Besides, the Yoruba give attribute such as "Olorun"--the owner of Heaven, to show that God is the Living One. God was considered as Almighty who must never be contacted directly, but through lesser gods who were his "ministers with portfolios".

2.1.9.2 Belief in Divinities: The Yoruba distinguish two types of divinities, namely, the divinities from *isalu orun* and deified ancestors. The first category was according to Yoruba belief which came directly from heaven where the Deity resides. According to Idowu (1973), traditions may know when these divinities used to be on earth in human form, but their origins are part of divine mystery (pg.172). Ogun (the god of iron and war), Esu Elegbara, Orunmila baba Ifa (god of divination) and Obatala/Orisanla (the arch-divinity) are examples of this type. The second group is comprised of human beings who were believed to have some supernatural power, and became deified when they died. An example is Shango who used to rule in Oyo. He had a bad temper, and was endowed with some supernatural power which struck people with awe; for example, when he spoke, fire came out of his mouth.

The Yoruba believed that the divinities were ministers of God assigned to different ministries. For example, *Ogun* was in charge of war and all that had to do with the use of iron, while Esu was the minister of justice. The Yoruba believed that God was too powerful to be directly contacted, hence humans had to go through His ministers. This belief in a pantheon tends to make some outside observers think that making supplication to the divinities is an end in itself. This is not so, as Idowu (1973) explained, divinities "constitute only a half-way house which is not meant to be the resting place" (pg. 171). Idowu (1973) believes that African traditional religion is monotheistic based on the fact that the divinities are subservient to the Deity, because they were brought into being because of the existence of God (pp.168-170).

2.1.9.3 Belief in Spirits: Spirits are apparitional entities which are different from class of the divinities discussed above. According to Yoruba traditional beliefs, spirits are ubiquitous, they occupy virtually any area of the earth--they live in trees, rivers, mountains, sky, rocks, forests, hills, etc. Spirits can be described in categories, such as ghost-spirits for those whose dead bodies were not properly buried or victims of ritual murder--they do not go to rest but roam about; and there are *abiku* spirits appealed to by J.P. Clark as

"coming and going these several seasons, do stay out on the baobab tree, follow where you please your

kindred spirits if indoors is not

enough for you".

Abiku spirits are believed to belong to those mischievous class of spirits who enter the women's womb to be born only to die.

One important spirit that the Yoruba hold as an urgent reality is the spirit of the witches. These are spirits that could be very destructive. It still remains a reality within the Yoruba community. The problems of witches are being tackled by different religious sects, including Christianity and Islam.

2.1.9.4 Belief in Ancestors: The Yoruba hold the dead dearly and with respect. They believe that their dead ancestors live in the spirit world, guiding those that they left behind. The Yoruba believe that only those who were good here on earth can qualify as ancestors while bad or wicked people would never enjoy any rest after death but would keep on roaming about. Generally, those who had children and became old before they died become ancestors, however, a person who dies young can qualify as an ancestor provided he/she was survived by offspring. But if a person lived a meaningful life worthy of emulation, died young without offspring, he/she could still be considered as an ancestor. From time to time, they appear to their living members of the family either through dreams or divination. The Yoruba do not worship their ancestors, but worship God either directly or through the divinities. Ancestors are not worshiped as might be thought by some foreign investigators, but are merely venerated. The Yoruba distinguish between Deity, the divinities and the ancestors. Deities and the divinities are of higher realm in the super-sensible world while the ancestors are of the living persons' kith and kin (Idowu, 1973: 184). This is to mean that the deceased are technically part of the families on earth, but in spirit form. Moreover, to a reasonable extent, the ancestors stand as the intermediary between the Deity or the divinities and their children. Symbolically, the ancestors are represented in *egungun* or *oro* by the Yoruba.

2.1.9.5 The practice of magic and medicine: Humans have always been concerned with the power of the environment in which they live, and continue to look for means of dominating it. They are well aware that there is a power out there greater than them. In order to make this power useful for their benefit, humans may either submit themselves to these powerful forces and appeal for help and assistance, or tap those forces based on their own self effort or independent devices. When they opt for the latter, they are plying the road of magic. Religion is different from magic in the sense that, in religious practice, a human enters into a reciprocal relationship with the Deity for things that go beyond material with the belief that the Absolute will provide all the necessary spiritual needs--and its motto is "Thy will be done". On the other hand, a human practices magic when he/she taps those supernatural forces for his or her benefit, the motto, therefore is "My will be done". Magic could either be used for social benefit or for antisocial, licit or illicit

(Idowu, 1973:189-194). Nevertheless, there is no gainsaying that both religion and magic in Yoruba religion intermingle or even become confused with each other in practice. As Idowu puts it, "prayer often becomes so repetitive that efficacy comes to be attached to the correct repetition rather than to the spirit and content of prayer". Similarly, certain aspects of prayers must be repeated under certain conditions, stated a number of times a day at a particular time, and particular divine names be chanted a number of times in a certain order. *In addendum*, in Yoruba religion, the practice of magic is unconnected with cults of certain divinities. The divinity *Esu* could be invoked to perpetrate some terrible magical acts. *Osanyin*, the divinity in charge of health can also be used to cause some dastardly act of magic. It is in admittance that the use of magic in religion is unacceptable. It is a sign of weakness in a human's act. The Yoruba believe that the Deity is the only savior, and they submit themselves to Him when all other efforts have failed.

The purpose of medicine is to heal the body and to restore it to its normal condition. The Yoruba believe that medicine is connected to the Deity, handed down through the divinity or spirits. *Osanyin* is the divinity in charge of medicine in Yoruba. The ancestors are invoked for granting efficacy and potency to their medicine. Those ancestors who practiced medicine before the present practitioners are given their due honors before dispensing medication. This shows how close the practice of medicine is to the spiritual world. There are instances where some medical practitioners have claimed that they got their power to dispense medicine from some spirits.

Finally, medicine and magic intermingle in Yoruba religious practice, for example, both exist under the portfolio of the same divinity, *Osanyin*.

#### 2.1.10 Impacts of Culture Contact on Yoruba Society:

*Aye olaju* is a Yoruba expression for modernization. Modernization liberated people from the rudimentary and strict rules of traditionalism, and thus gave people the options to do what they desired based on their rational calculation. But for many Yoruba men and women, the options that appear to be there today do not really give them the choice they desire--*aye n yi lo an* to, they say--we move along with the flow of things, what can we do? For those who remember or are aware or realize, they still remind their men and women folks of the palmy days of "Yoruba civilization" sustained by the rich cultural complexes. These were the days when the beliefs in *orishas*, the representatives of God on earth were passionately high. Alas! Those days appear to be gone forever, and no person in his or her folly can really turn the wheel of which he or she turns.

By the middle of the 19th century, two popular religions by international standards were vying for the souls of the Yoruba people. These were Islam and Christianity. Islam had been introduced to the Yoruba through contact with the itinerant *malams* from the north before the European missionaries came by the sea in the first half of the 19th century (Osuntokun, 1987: 128-131). These two religions had major impacts on the Yoruba society of the 19th century, but Christianity much more affected the beliefs and the ideas of the people more than its counterparts. This is understandable because it was the religion of the colonizers. The impacts of these two religions are still reflected in the

syncretic tendencies of some Islamic practices such as divination and in African churches today. In fact, many authors believe that the Christian missionaries were the fifth columnists, in that they paved the way for colonialism. According to Osuntokun's historical account, the Christian missionaries were suspected of being the harbinger of the cede of Lagos to the British government by Akintoye in 1861--ten years after his reinstatement. By 1892, the British had consolidated its rule on Lagos, and shortly after, the whole of Yorubaland had come under the British suzerainty (Ajai, 1965: 53-58; Ayandele, 1966: 137-138). Between 1900 and 1960, Yorubaland was ruled by the British colonial government.

In view of the connection between the Christian missionaries and colonialism, the aims of the colonial system can be metaphorically summarized as three G's

"Gold"--acquisition of mineral resources, cheap labor.

"God"--Christianizing the "native" and the "savage" to show them the light of civilization.

"Glory"--Manifesting the rule of the superior race over the "Other".

Western culture was brought to Yorubaland through colonization and missionary enterprise. The performances of the white Christian missionaries, their composure, material goods and money made those who first came in contact with them admire their customs and jettison part of theirs. Overtime, with the introduction of literacy, the Yoruba began to learn English and worked at learning it more than the Europeans. Fadipe, writing as far back as 1970, made this remark, and today, it is even more pronounced. Hardly can a Yoruba person speak without injecting in some English words.

Foreign culture has had terrible impacts on marriage and has resulted in family breakdown. There has ensued more polygynous relationships more than in the past, owing to more prosperity and opportunities. The number of irresponsible fathers has increased because men put women in family ways and fail to cater to the needs of the children and the women. Also, there is the propensity toward commercialization of bride price due to money economy (Fadipe, 1970: 315).

The extended family system has been undermined for various reasons. People now differ in their orientation by virtue of religion, education and class. In some families, Muslim and Christian members look down on those who still believe in the traditional religion; in the same vein, the Christians and the Muslims are at loggerheads based on their religious belief system. The Christian-educated elites find it difficult to cooperate with other kin and kith when it comes to matters involving collective efforts. Cities were developed at the expense of the rural areas, thus perpetuating rural-urban migration, depriving the rural areas of farm hands. Since the development of the cities in the colonial era, those who have been leaving for the cities are rarely coming back to visit members of the extended family, and when they sometimes do, they fault the traditional system.

For administrative purposes, the British colonial government enticed the educated elites and pulled them away from their cultural milieu, thus making it impossible for the kinship system of support to continue. These educated elites constituted a different class opposed to the old elites who were the traditional chiefs, priests, war leaders, business leaders, good hunters and farmers. In particular, the power wielded by the leaders of extended family has been reduced with contacts with foreign culture.

Since the colonial era, the cities have become the places of exploitation. During the colonial period, exploitation of those with less education by those who found work as clerks or with government functionaries of the colonial administration, was rampant. There were frequent fraudulent practices, victimization, seduction of young girls and married ones by clerks and those who worked in the office of colonial administration (Fadipe, 1970: 323).

Contact with foreign culture brought about changes in the land tenure system, now based on individual ownership. Those who cannot have any access to farms move to the cities and constitute part of the urban vagrants. As Fadipe notes, there was no unemployment in Yorubaland until 1920 (1970: 167). Unemployment was impossible in pre-colonial times not only because of the support provided by the kinship system, but also because of the availability of land to farm. The exposure to other cultures, especially Western culture is inimical to Yoruba societies met by the Europeans. Superficial aspects of the Western culture, such as dress, food, music, speech and customs were copied. What makes the "white man" great is lacking: social cohesion is lacking, development is slow, ignorance still rife, and there is an escalation of the already established inequality based on age by class and educational status. And in the dying minutes of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, women are still being treated inferior even more than in ancient times; and criticisms from younger, poorer and non-educated persons are not condoned by the educated elites.

On positive side, colonialism has rid the Yoruba society of slavery, human sacrifice, and judicial murder of witches who were mostly women by prohibiting them. It also integrated Yorubaland to the global economy. The contact with outside cultures brought alternative lifestyles as seen from the heterogeneity of attitudes. For example, in religious practice, there is admixture of traditional, Islamic and Christian beliefs. Overall, people now have more options.

As Aime Cesaire notes, a voluminous exposition of the past of this nature on my part is not an appeal for a revert to those palmy days of the past, as this would be tantamount to retrogression--it is not reasonable to hold the present and the future at ransom for the past. Nevertheless, the past can be used to understand the present and hope for the future. What is most important is how to use that cultural strength to compete with other groups, which can only be possible with cohesion and mutual respect. It is this that will serve as the incidence of hope for the future and for posterity. This I will be returning to in the conclusive part of the project.

## 2.2 The Nigerian Factor:

"help us, we suffer enormously in Africa...we have problems in Africa. We lack rights as children. We have wars and illness, we lack food...we have schools,

but we lack education...we want to study, and we ask you

to help us to study so we can be like you, in Africa".

(Washington Post, August 22, 1999: pg. B07).

The plight of Africa was summarized by these two African boys--Yaguine Koita, 14 years and Fode Tounkara, 15 years who sneaked into the landing gear bay of an airliner destined for Brussels in Conakry to escape the poverty and misery that has descended across Africa. They died under the temperature of 55 degrees below zero, but being aware of the potential risk of their escapade, they hid the above written statement in their jackets which was read after their death. Their death, under such a melancholic condition captures the failure of the dominant Western economic power and the post-colonial African leaders to provide for the aspirations and hopes of Africa's common people.

If we look at many countries in the world today, corruption is a major social problem. It is a universal problem that exists in varying degrees in all parts of the world. In other words, what constitutes corruption varies from one society to another, based on the norms and mores prevalent in each society. Because norms vary from one society to another, we can therefore say corruption is a relative notion. *Ipsa facto*, what is considered moral in some societies might be inconsistent with external morality. Therefore, there is no uniformity as to what exactly constitutes corruption. Whatever corruption may mean to any society, it is considered as a problem that is inimical to the healthiness of the society, and hence repugnant to equity, social justice and fairness. Corruption, no doubt undermines economic growth, causes administrative inertia, oppression, inequalities and inefficiency.

While there is no precise definition for "corruption", however, many students of the society will agree with the definition of corruption as aptly explicated by Osoba (1996), which is "a form of anti-social behavior by an individual or social group which confers unjust or fraudulent benefits on its perpetrators, is inconsistent with the established legal norms and prevailing moral ethos of the land and is likely to subvert or diminish the capacity of the legitimate authorities to provide fully for the material and spiritual well-being of all members of society in a just and equitable manner" (pg. 372). Lyon and Lyon (1999) add that corruption encompasses a whole array of practices, such as nepotism, bribery, embezzling, ethnic or personal preference in the awarding of contracts, patronage and the like (pg. 2). It is within these definitional contexts that I will examine the social impact of corruption in Nigeria.

The word "Nigeria" has been known to the world since 1898 . But it was not until 1914 that the entire country now known as Nigeria came to be officially called Nigeria when Southern and Northern Nigeria were amalgamated. The population of Nigeria is about 100 million people of diverse ethnic backgrounds. It comprises about 250 ethnic groups

and thousands of different linguistic and dialect groups (Badru, 1998: 2). Hausa/Fulani, Ibo and Yoruba are the three major ethnic groups. Other groups are Edo, Itsekiri, Ijaw, Tiv, Jukun, Urhobo, Ibobio, Igbira, Kanuri, and many others.

The bane of Nigeria as a country is corruption. It has become so endemic, corrosive and even pervasive that the entire society is becoming dysfunctional. In Nigeria, corruption breeds other social vices such as crime, prostitution and violence. Indeed, for many Nigerians and outside observers corruption is a sobriquet of Nigeria. Corruption in Nigeria is a cankerworm that is gradually destroying the social fabric of the entire society. Corruption has become so serious that Nigeria ranked worst of the 54 countries surveyed in 1996 and 1997 by Transparency International, which is a Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) based in Berlin. They assess the level of corruption in different countries through an annual international Corruption Perception Index (Szeftel, 1998). In 1998, Nigeria was number 98, considered the second most corrupt country after Cameroon (<http://www.transparency.de/documents/cpi/index.html>). Osoba (1996) asserts that corruption in Nigeria can only be understood in relation to the outside influence; it has a deep historical root. Historically, pre-European contact with Nigeria was devoid of corruption because it was not a monetized society (pg. 72). In other words, corruption thrives with a money economy. This can explain the intensification of corruption since the oil boom of the 1970s. *Ipsa facto*, corruption is not unconnected to iniquities of the market; it flourishes where there is gross inequality.

Lyon and Lyon (1999) believe that corruption in Nigeria is nothing but a mere symptom rather than a cause of Nigeria's problem—a symptom of crass class inequality and social division. If this is true, the colonial experience of Nigeria needs to be looked into. This means corruption is a symptom of bad structure entrenched by colonialism. Put differently, the foundation of corruption was laid during the British occupation of Nigeria. Colonization of peoples by the Europeans was based on exploitation of the people and the natural resources of the colony. As Osoba (1996) puts it, the colonialists exploited Nigeria through the domination of monopolistic and oligopolistic trading firms. The expropriation and appropriation of resources for capital accumulation for the development of the metropolis was a fraudulent and corrupt system. The only roles left available for Nigerians to play in the colonial economy were menial ones like peasant farming, petty trading, petty clerical and the like. Colonial Britain did not develop the industrial base of her colonies, rather they were made the satellites of the metropolis for harnessing the raw materials. In order to make the exploitation of Nigeria less administratively taxing, different ethnic groups were brought together, the strategy which allowed the policy *divide et impera*.

The British colonialists continued to perpetuate their economic exploitation after independence by putting in place a spurious power-sharing arrangement between themselves and their monopoly enterprises on the one hand, and the nascent Nigerian bourgeoisie on the other. The relationship that exists between the colonialists and the former colonies is neo-colonialistic. This is a partnership between the imperialist bourgeoisie and the *comprador* bourgeoisie of the peripheral Third World country for the

mutual, though unequal, advantage of both groups of capitalist exploiters (Onimode, 1982: 138). Osoba (1996) aptly explains the neocolonial *modus operandi inter alia*;

"By progressively transferring formal legal authority to rule to their Nigerian surrogate bourgeoisie under decolonization the departing British colonialists succeeded in securing their acquiescence in the retaining, even consolidating and enhancing of the existing structures of accumulation under which foreign monopoly capital dominated all the key sectors of the economy..." (pg. 375).

Corruption is made functional through the connections of the international capital on the one hand, and the agency of the Nigerian ruler on the other hand. According to Onimode (1982), neocolonialism is a new form of control by former colonial rulers to maintain old dependency relations. However, it is a "contractual relationship" between the two parties of the internal bourgeoisie of the peripheral Third World country and the imperialists. This "contractual arrangement" is symbiotic in nature, though unequal association, which is to the advantage of both sides. So, if it is a "contractual arrangement", therefore it is within the power of governments to terminate the contract (pg. 138).

Turner and Badru (1984) examine the interconnections of the ruling elites in Nigeria with the international capitalists. This is a "commercial triangle" that is made up of three groups--the middleman, the representatives of a foreign company, and the government. This association is meant for business deals that will profit all the parties involved. In Nigerian political economy, the state is the main market, because it buys the foreign goods and controls opportunities to profit through its position. The foreign capitalists struggle to gain contracts from the state, which always involves competition with other foreign capitalists. In order to gain favor, foreign capitalists offer the state officials an extravagant inducement of bribes and commissions to the public officials (pg. 10). Lewis (1996) characterizes the neocolonial state as prebendal. In a prebendal society, power is concentrated in a single ruler, who uses his position as a conduit for private accumulation, and allocates the state resources based on nepotism—a situation akin to Lenski and Lenski's proprietary theory of the state (1995: 208). Furthermore, corrupt enrichment, political power and loyalty to one's kinship in Nigeria are related. One ethnic group fights the other for access to political power because it is a license to a primitive capital accumulation and domination of the other groups. The elites struggle for political power to gain access to public treasury. It is therefore not surprising that there is incessant military putsch in Nigeria. Every successive administration in Nigeria always corruptly enriches the leadership, nothing changes--a barber's chair syndrome.

Achebe (1983) believes that the impact of colonialism on Nigeria was untoward, but he nevertheless admonishes the leadership because it has had opportunities to redress the inequalities and injustices that pervade Nigerian society. His main argument is that the problem in Nigeria does not lie with the ordinary people nor with the land or climate, but is socially perpetrated by its leaders who have failed "to the responsibility, to the challenge of personal example which are the hallmarks of true leadership" (pg. 1). Also, Lewis (1994) attributes the poor socio-economic condition in Nigeria to the ruling elites, "...state officials fomented growing corruption, and sanctioned or organized an expanding

realm of illegality. Large-scale corruption has undermined economic growth in Nigeria for at least two decades, but the relative scale of malfeasance increased dramatically in the final years of Babangida's rule..." (pg. 97).

Achebe and Lewis are right in the light of how corruption has become a socio-pathological matter in Nigeria. Corruption has always been an issue in Nigeria since the independence. For example the first democratically elected government was torpedoed by the military for corrupt practices. But corruption reached a crescendo during the regimes of Generals Ibrahim Babangida (1985-1992) and Sani Abacha. In the case of the former, the collusion with the international capitalists and the internal social forces to pauperize Nigeria was apparent. In order to maintain a political longevity, he favored the international capital and the comprador class. At the end of his regime, corruption had become the warp and weft of Nigerian culture. The two "maximum leaders" (Babangida and Abacha) as exposed by Lewis changed the method of personal enrichment from prebendal to predatory rule (Lewis, 1996: 100). Predatory rule embodies a shift from more diffused and limited individual authority to centralized form of economic management for rapacious control. For example, under General Babangida's administrative and structural changes, the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) was transferred to the office of the President, and the CBN governor was obliged to report directly to General Babangida who was the President (Osoba, 1996: 382). The stolen wealth of Nigeria in foreign banks around the world is estimated at more than \$2.2 billion, about 200 billion naira. The present administration has collected no fewer than 14 illegally acquired properties from General Sani Abacha. These seized properties are being auctioned, with the asking price of about 2.025 billion naira (about \$22 million) (Newswatch, October, 18, 1999).

Corruption has become contagious, an infectious virus that permeates the entire social fabrics of the society. It has had a trickle down effect. Yes, what does one expect? If the leadership is corrupt, it then means corruption like a cancer will spread from the top down. If public resources are diverted for personal use, the mass of the people become alienated and are deprived of their basic needs. If a public servant with family does not receive his salary on time because the public fund has been mismanaged or diverted to a personal account of a miscreant, what does he do? If one applies for a traveling passport and does not get it over a period of several months, what does one do? If a police officer is underpaid or not paid on time, what happens to his/her enthusiasm? Ordinary people resort to corrupt practices as survival strategies. A Nigerian radical once yelled, "we are all culprits and thieves! We are all dysfunctional!"

### 2.2.1 Adoption of Structural Adjustment Program (SAP) in Nigeria and its Impacts:

The adoption of the ignoble Structural Adjustment Program is a clear nexus between the Nigerian petty-bourgeoisie and the international capital. The economic crisis of Nigeria began during the civilian regime of Alhaji Shehu Sagari (1979-1983). Apart from the fact that revenue from oil, the mainstay of Nigerian economy, fell dramatically in 1980, the short period of this regime was riddled with corruption in the high public places, making it difficult for foreign investment to thrive (Badru, 1998: 91). In December 1983, the

military struck and the civilian government was dismissed. The military came with the excuse that the economy needed to be turned around to benefit the people and not mainly the oligarchy. Indeed the economy was collapsing, and corruption was one major reason. There are other factors as well, for example, revenue from oil fell from \$25 billion in 1980 to about \$6 billion in 1984, while at the same time, external debt rose from \$3.4 billion in 1978 to \$30.7 billion in 1988 (Badru, 1998: 92). In 1985, General Babangida, serving the interest of international capital and some internal interest groups sacked the regime of General Mohammed Buhari/Idiagbon which was more nationalistic and portrayed itself as a disciplinarian government.

While the previous governments had been cautious of externally imposed economic policies, Babangida cleverly adopted the International Monetary Fund's (IMF's) nine-point program Structural Adjustment Program (SAP) in 1987 in spite of opposition from the Nigerian public. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) supports political democratization, which goes with market liberalization. It is market liberalization that opens up the economy to international capital. Simply put, market liberalization means cutting down on government expenses, thus leading to what Mazrui (1994) calls "too little government" which ultimately leads to anarchy. There are nine policies or conditionalities of SAP, which are:

- (i) devaluation of the national currency and the abolition of foreign exchange control;
- (ii) removal of subsidies on essential items including petroleum;
- (iii) reduction of government spending on social services such as health and education;
- (iv) trade liberalization--open door to investment and importation of foreign goods;
- (v) privatization of public parastatals and sale of foreign shares in private companies;
- (vi) open door policy for multinational corporations including free repatriation of accumulated profits;
- (vii) monetary anti-inflationary policies, including but not limited to, control of bank lending and higher interest rates;
- (viii) control and reduction of wages paid to labor; and
- (ix) anti-inflationary dismantling of price controls and minimum wages as part of the fight against inflation.

These conditions must be executed before Nigeria can qualify for a new round of lending from the IMF and before they can work out a new debt rescheduling arrangement (Badru, 1998: 98-99).

### 2.2.2 The Rigmarole:

The intention of SAP was to make the national economy gradually stronger and over time be responsive to people's needs. SAP seeks to remove the domestic budget and external (balance of payment) financial imbalances in an attempt to provide for a healthy environment for resource allocation. The expectation of SAP is that the services and labor should be allowed to adjust to their market values, and once this is accomplished, the dream is that imported commodities will be available in the markets and everyone would be motivated to produce more. Eventually, foreign investment will flow; exports will grow and recovery. SAP is indeed a pack of rigmarole.

Mazrui (1994) identifies six basic but crucial functions of the state: sovereign control over territory; sovereign supervision of the nation's natural resources (not necessarily ownership); efficient and rational revenue extraction from people, goods and services; the ability to build and maintain an adequate infrastructure, such as road, postal services, telephone services and the like; the capacity to render such basic services as sanitation, health, education, housing; and the capacity for governance and maintenance of law and order. Nigeria has failed in all of these functions but the first.

The adoption of SAP has had a plethora of disastrous consequences on Nigeria. Some of the consequences are high inflation, workers' retrenchment, fall in the standard of living of most Nigerians, economic consolidation of the elite class, senior military officers and international capital, crimes, unemployment, and corruption at all levels of public services.

While the ruling class is becoming comfortable, the mass of the people have been condemned to an eternal purgatory. According to Federal Office of Statistics (FOS), the poor in Nigeria are made up of 36 % who are really poor and 35 % who are moderately poor. Twenty-nine percent are defined as non-poor. Those who are really wealthy enough, and not feeling the pang of hardship are about 3% of about 100 million people. In the urban areas, 77% of people are poor while in the rural areas, there are 68% poor people. This is based on the qualification of poverty based on the *World Development Report*; which defines the poor as "those who are unable to consume a basic quantity of clean water and who are subject to insanitary surroundings, with extremely limited mobility or communications beyond their immediate settlement" (Newswatch, April 22, 1996: 9).

Human capital for the labor market is an essential corollary to the development of any society. Health and education are important criteria for generating human capital. The cuts to health services and education are antithetical to the development that SAP purports to engineer. A society cannot grow, develop and compete with other nations of the world if its citizens do not enjoy good health. Lack of access to good health caused by the commercialization of health; and ill-equipped facilities and underpaid staff in all Nigerian health institutions are anathema to development. What happens when food becomes expensive and sick people cannot afford to visit hospitals? Death tolls increase, and socially and psychologically frustrated citizens are groomed. According to *Progress of Nigerian Children*, published by FOS, about 8 million children under the age five are suffering from malnutrition. Coupled with the weak or unavailable health infrastructure, eradication of childhood diseases, such as polio and measles seems impossible.

Malnutrition combined with health problems do not bode well for the mental and physical development of children (Newswatch, April 22, 1996: 9). Based on the reports from Progress of the Nations 1995, 80% of under five deaths in Nigeria are linked to mild nutrition, while 52% are linked to other kinds of malnutrition (Newswatch, April 22, 1996: 9). United Nations International Children and Educational Fund (UNICEF) survey of 10 states in Nigeria in 1993 showed that 51 % of children were suffering from chronic under-nourishment and 27% were underweight (Newswatch, April 22, 1996: 9). One does not need any statistical facts to know that Nigeria is a land beyond sorrow because the physical look of the mass of the people both in the urban and the rural areas is a monumental proof of poverty—faces of agony!

What one finds out is that education and health are for the few rich, which means the system is reinforcing inequality with these basic needs. If we look at advanced and semi-advanced nations on the earth today, what they all have in common are quality health care system and education. So, the death knell of any society in the modern era is sounding if its citizens do not have access to basic education and health care systems. Primary and secondary school education in Nigeria is a luxury, while post-secondary institutions are not well equipped to meet up to the modern standards. Science laboratories lack the necessary specimens and reagents to perform experiments. Most of their professors have left to seek greener pastures—referred to as the brain drain. Poverty among the mass of student population--frustration, hunger and loss of hope and self-esteem result in students getting back at the society that deprived them of their basic needs. If the parents of students are poor, there is a high possibility that the students will be poor as well. It is not uncommon for most Nigerian university students to live on formulae "0-0-1; 1-0-0; 0-1-0" and so on. Students are getting involved in all forms of antisocial acts like gangsterism, occultism, drug addiction and prostitution. Nigerian women and girls now prowl the streets of Europe to sell their flesh-- do prostitution. It used to be predominantly less-educated Nigerian females going to Europe for prostitution, but now university graduates and students now troop to Europe for the trade of the flesh (Newswatch, July 26, 1999: 16). There is ensuing general antipathy towards education within the general public. Education has commanded no respect because it does not translate in people being good citizens. Talking about the brain drain, the primary and the secondary schools are the ones draining the brains; they do not only drain the brains, they annihilate them! The oligarchy has a way out of the educational mess they create, they either send their wards to private-owned schools operated by foreigners or rich indigenes in the country or send them to school in Europe, North America or Australia. Class inequities and inequalities are thereby reinforced. For those who finish from tertiary institutions, if they do not have the opportunities to smuggle themselves out of the country by any means, they become armed robbers or constitute a social menace to the society.

Ordinary Nigerians are not passive in the face of all these difficulties, they perennially resist. The resistance of students, progressive academics, labor unions, market women and masses of people often produce repressive measures from the government, especially the use of lethal weapons. According to Federici (1992), most African countries adopting SAP spend a significant portion of their presumably scarce foreign currency on

buttressing their police forces and armies with sophisticated anti-riot equipment (pg. 311). Incessantly, there are riots in Nigeria which often lead to the closure of tertiary institutions for months, and even years; and activists are incarcerated or extra-judicially killed—an extra-judicial system of killing that was a rule during the aegis of Generals Babangida and Abacha. Poverty begets crime, it is true that Nigeria is being ruled by "two governments", the so-called constituted authority who rules during the day, and armed robbers who take over at night.

Without any fear of hot contradiction, the few elites benefit from the adoption of SAP. So, how does this benefit the regime of international capitalism? Economic liberalization enables large numbers of foreign multinationals to take control of major sectors of the Nigerian economy. For example, multinational corporations such as Lever Brothers, UAC and oil multinationals such as Texaco moved into commercial cropping. They established plantations to produce commercial crops such as rubber, palm oil and cotton in Nigeria. This shift to the agribusiness further strengthens the structure of the economic dependence (Badru, 1998: 94).

By 1990, about 55 public enterprises had been sold to private investors mostly foreigners. Furthermore, the devaluation of the currency favored the foreign investors to the detriment of the national bourgeoisie. The low level of Nigeria naira which is currently fixed at the rate of 84 naira to one US dollar gives the international capital to operate with relative ease. The looted money from Nigeria has been stashed in foreign bank accounts in Europe, Latin America and North America which is benefitting Western capitalism. The fact that the banks are not unaware that they are keeping stolen money shows that the West cannot be absolved from corrupt practices of the Nigerian leaders.

How does this state of affairs relate to international migration? Those professionals--doctors, lawyers, university professors, architects, surveyors, accountants, teachers, etc. decided to move out in droves from the mid-80s when the standard of living really began to be hit by the so-called "middle class" of the 1970s. This has continued since then. Odunsin (1996) finds that most Nigerian professionals working overseas, especially those in the US, attributed their decision to migrate to multiple factors. Prominent among these factors are a higher educational opportunity, opportunity to fulfill occupational and professional aspirations, unavailability of employment opportunities at home, political and socio-economic instability, and lack of information about employment opportunities. Others, ordinary men and women, exposed to the loopholes in the immigration system of most European countries and North America, and those who by virtue of their kinship affinities with those abroad, have continued to leave Nigeria since the mid-80s. But this migration increased in the 90s due to the perpetrated political imbroglio, and the macabre reigns of terror of Generals Babangida and Abacha. Students who have relatives abroad seized the opportunities to leave and jettison their academic careers because they are of no relevance in Nigeria. Remittances from Nigerian immigrants abroad become a *sine qua non*, and they help to alleviate suffering from starvation and want. Remittances go towards education, health and other social reproductive needs. Nevertheless, this migration flow is a resource to the developed countries who use the migrants for the development of their economies.

The Nigerian socio-economic woes should be seen as structural which should not be analytically reduced to either internal or external dynamics alone, but should be seen as the combination of micro and macro factors. Both levels of analysis should be articulated to enable all actors know the part they play. To sum up, the Nigerian ruling elites put their selfish motives ahead of the public interests, collude with the international capitalists who are not with clean hands to pillage their resources and destroy their people. As Shakespeare said an aeon before in *Julius Caesar*, "...the evil that men do lives after them, the good is oft interred with their bones". Indeed the venom that the Nigerian rulers unleash economically and politically on the mass of Nigerians will remain forever in the books of history.

## Chapter Three

### Theoretical Perspective

#### 3.1 Preamble

Within the past three decades, we have been witnessing changes in our ways of life. Patterns of living, attitudes and belief systems have all been affected dramatically. What has made this period unique is the tendency toward a "universal culture"; those areas of the world once untouched, and aspects of lifestyles resisting corrosion because some elements were passionate about them, are now being drawn into one single globe. The social change we are witnessing is called "globalization". Globalization has been described in different ways. Feminist scholars such as Fernandez-Kelly, refer to it as "new international division of Labor". Whatever we may call it, it cannot be disputed that social structures and social institutions of many societies around the world have either gone through some changes or subjected to some modification. Barrett (1998) sees this current state of development as a transformation of human society to a degree that can only be compared with the industrial revolution of the 18th century, and notes that globalization is that process of social change that is transforming the world (pg. 4). In spite of all these changes, many students and "academic entrepreneurs" have concurred that there is nothing happening now that had not happened in the previous epochs; however, they have noted that the intensity of this transformation is in some way unprecedented in the socio-historical annals of *homo sapiens sapiens*.

This chapter is divided into two sections, in the first section, I intend to center my exposition on globalization and how closely it has impact on international migration and the proliferation of transnational practices and activities around the world. I therefore theoretically intend to do the following here:

- Posit that globalization is not new but has a history behind it--a "metamorphosis".
- Explain how globalization influences labor migration, and then further the argument that transnationalism is not a new phenomenon as well.
- Enumerate globalizing factors motivating transnational practices and activities.
- Then, conclude that globalization does not necessarily homogenize, it also heterogenizes simultaneously.

The second section will look into the internal transformation of the Yoruba society in the form of loss of self-esteem which translates to the "dependency complex". Colonialism is considered as laying the foundation for the general socio-structural condition--a historically specific phenomenon that led to the Yoruba inferiority complex. The relationship between this psychological state of dependency, and as it relates to the attraction and allure to *ilu oyinbo* will be explicated. The socio-structural condition, which had been dormant was "exhumed" and brought to the fore by the collapsed economy of the 1980s.

### 3.1.1 Meaning of Globalization:

When a word is continuously used in the academic and even non-academic environment, it must carry some importance and with its use a kind of mass contagion continues to occur. Today, if we were to be tabulating the 20 most widely used words in the political and socioeconomic newspeak charts, globalization would be at or near the top. A popular word like this is understood less by its denotations than by its connotations. Writers use the term "globalization" in different ways. Laxer (1993), provides a fairly broad and inclusive definition. Globalization, according to Laxer has a plethora of connotations--it is a short form for the amalgam of closely related ideological, economic, technological and cultural changes taking place in the world. The ideological changes stress trade liberalization, deregulation and private enterprise. The economic changes include the internationalization of production, harmonization of consumption and increased mobility of capital and of transnational corporations. New information and communication technologies which make the world smaller and negotiate a shift from industrial production to knowledge-based industries constitute part of the technological changes. Finally, cultural changes involve a drive for the attainment of a universal world culture and the erosion and corrosion of the autarchic nature of nations (Laxer, 1993: 2). In view of this study, this definition applies to the Yoruba and to Nigeria as a country. One, the current macro-economic approaches dictated by the multilateral organizations, such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank; the presence of the multinational corporations, having some control on the economy; and the impact of Western cultural values are the ways that the Nigerian societies are a part of the global system.

Also, Comaroff (1996) claims that the global economy is erasing the power of nations and their economies. This is manifested in the decomposition of currency and customs boundaries, which once gave governments the power of control over their national wealth; and the transnationalization of the division of labor and the inducement of large-scale migrations of workers across established political boundaries (pg. 169). This is not unrelated to many countries in the Sub-Saharan Africa which have never been free from the control of their economies by the Western industrial nations.

Emphasis has been laid on economic globalization which began in the post-World War II. This economic globalization was triggered off by the economic and political forces that altered the relationship between capital and labor in the West. It came to reverse the successful mobilization of workers and the rise in real wages that resulted from it. The

rise in real wages provides stimulus for technological change and the relocation of manufacturing. This serves two important purposes: One, relocation enables employers to tap large wage differential between the workers in the industrial developed countries and those of the underdeveloped or developed countries; and two, this strategy eludes workers' rising demands for more emoluments in advanced countries. On economic globalization, Fernandez-Kelly (1989) adds that host governments in Asia, Latin-America and the Caribbean provide incentives that lead to the growth of export-processing zones where the labor pool is predominantly comprised of women assembling products for the world market. The relatively recent development of capital leaving the developed world seeking for valorization calls for a look at the socio-political ramifications from a broader global perspective and the interconnections involved. In the developing/underdeveloped countries of the world--Asia, Latin-America and the Caribbean in particular, export-oriented industrialization makes national economies become porous to foreign investments through governments' policies that are geared toward exploitation of comparatively low wages and disciplined workers, particularly women. In the developed countries of the West, "capital flights" have not resulted in the total erosion of the manufacturing sector, but instead, there is the reduction in blue-collar employment in capital-and labor-intensive sectors of the economy (pp. 625-627). Technological facilities such as computers, and management strategies enable employers to control operations in home countries and at the same time monitor productive facilities in far away lands.

Economic globalization is not restricted to relocation of industries alone but also applies to large loans made to the Third World countries by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Bank and international banking establishment. Loan negotiation and/ or renegotiation often leads to an increasing level of debt services at the tolls of ordinary people (Basch, *et al.*, 1994). Manufacturing industries relocating to the developing/underdeveloped countries for the purpose of generating "export processing zones" in Nigeria and its neighboring countries has not been attractive to transnational corporations. However, the reduction in blue-collar employment in capital-and labor-intensive sectors greatly affects those immigrants from Nigeria who have been arriving in Canada since the mid-1980s. But economic globalization much affects the Nigerian societies in terms of the penetration of foreign loans, which in part explains their migration to the West.

Globalization goes beyond economies. Globalization signifies the demise of the bi-polar wall, the end of the cold war and the ascendancy of the undisputed power and uni-polar leadership of the world headed by the US. Unipolarity is the weakening of the Soviet Union and its allies in world politics. This has some serious implications on the developing countries (Nigeria, definitely not exempted). Mazrui (1998) notes that the end of the Cold War deepened the marginalization of the Third World countries, especially many of the African countries. One, the triumph over communism has helped right wing parties who are less internationalist and less compassionate towards either the domestic poor or poor countries abroad. For example, Labor in Britain has shifted to the right of the center. Two, some parts of the world such as Africa have lost their socialist friends in world politics and in the UN. Three, less and less money is now being allocated for

foreign aid to the underdeveloped countries, because there is less motivation for foreign aid in the absence of rivalry with the USSR. And four, the end of the Cold War has reduced the internationalization of foreign education for a region like Africa. The diverse scholarships for African students to study in the defunct Eastern bloc is almost over and an alternative scholarships to study in Western countries have been radically reduced. Moreover, the opportunities for the Czech, Hungarian, and Polish academics to teach at African universities are reduced, and resources for Western visiting professors have been drastically cut.

### 3.1.2 Globalization as an Old Phenomenon:

Contrary to what some might lead us to believe, globalization is not a new phenomenon as we could see from the foregoing exposition. As a matter of fact, globalization has never been a new phenomenon to either the developed or the developing countries. For example, the fascination of the European aristocrats for beaver hats characterized the first 200 years of European history in Canada. Capital, technology, labor and mobilizations for military and political purposes continued to flow across Canadian borders (Laxer, 1993: 3). The history of Canada as part of European expansion, and the impact of that expansion on the Aborigines support the fact that global economy is not new. How could we then say this development was significantly different as claimed by the post-modernist globalizationists? Moreover, with a long experience of European colonialism, forced trade with the West, and multinational corporations, can we say that globalization is new to the Third World?

We can confirm that globalization is not a new phenomenon from the writings of Marx and Engels in the *Communist Manifesto* of 1848. I quote:

The need of a constantly expanding market for its products chases the bourgeoisie over the whole surface of the globe. It must nestle everywhere, settle everywhere, establish connexions everywhere. The bourgeoisie has through its exploitation of the world-market given a cosmopolitan character to production and consumption in every country (Tucker, 1978: 476).

Similarly Wolf (1981) takes us through a historical trajectory that began in the 15th century. The contact of the West with the autochthonous population of the world began *circa* 1400. According to Wolf (1981), all peoples of the world were involved; Asians, Americans, Europeans and Africans were involved through the interconnections of world trade. In the process, the African elders exchanged their own women and men for European goods, the European bought the Africans and turned them into slaves who worked in the mines and plantations of the Americas. The Americas were colonized by the Europeans and there was European trade with India and China. Wallerstein's (1974) espousal of the worlds system theory of division of labor, and in-depth documentation of the relationships between the West and the non-West by the dependency theory school have availed us an explanation of globalization of old. It is then indeed very absurd to

claim that globalization is new when both classical and reputable contemporary thinkers have been describing similar revolutionary changes as occurring for over 200 years.

All these assertions aptly corroborate the fact that globalization is never new to a country like Nigeria. The region now known as Nigeria includes that part on the West Coast of Africa which used to exchange its men and women for the European goods in the 17th, 18th and 19th century. Also, from the late 19th century to the second half of the 20th century, Nigeria and most African countries were colonies of some foreign countries. *Ipsa facto*, the Yoruba, as one of the major ethnic groups in West Africa have never been new to globalization.

It is pertinent to state that what has made the previous epoch of globalization different from the latest development is the revolutionization of technology which makes it very easy for the capitalist economies to penetrate all parts of the world with relative ease. Technology enables capitals to become transnational and easy to move around, thus facilitating a more pervasive penetration of capitals into the Third World countries. The structural change in technology since 1945 has been most noticeable in transportation, communication, and in the transmission of information and images. Moreover, communication in this era has been made more efficient through telephone, fax machine, satellite links, videotape, telex, E-mail, etc. (Laxer, 1995; Mishra, 1995; and Richmond, 1994).

In spite of these improvements in technology, economic globalization has adverse effects on common people both in the developed and underdeveloped world. Writers make mention of international division of labor. For example, the world system theory as propounded by Wallerstein (1974) explains how the metropolitan nations of the West exploit the "periphery" and the "semi-periphery" by harnessing their raw materials to feed the factories of the developed countries in the "center". By the same token, Walter Rodney (1980), writing from the dependency theory school of thought, documents how Europe "de-developed Africa". According to Rodney, the European slave ships exported millions of Africans to the Americas. This development, Rodney (1980) claims helped in the agrarian revolution in the Americas and the industrial revolution. The enforced dispersal of these black men and women to develop Western capitalism cannot be de-linked from the emerging globalization. Africa, Asia and Latin America were later colonized. Raw materials, mineral extraction and surplus capital began to consolidate Western capitalism and imperialism. All this helps to explain the theory of international division of labor. This theory of dependency, explaining the exploitation of one group by another is particularly relevant to the current study. This is in view of the fact that it explicates the historical nature of development, and the domination and inequalities which the "rise of the West" has brought to the world. This does not fall short of explaining the place of the Yoruba as part of the "exploited groups" of the world by the Western imperialists.

Furthermore, feminist writers such as Mies (1986), Fernandez-Kelly (1989) and Elson and Pearson (1981) argue that globalization or deindustrialization is another form of exploitation which they consider "new international division of labor" as opposed to

"international division of labor". According to Mies (1986), deindustrialization of the economy leads to the unprecedented mobility of capital investments on a world scale, centralization in advanced countries of decision-making processes affecting production, the dispersal of high labor intensive manufacturing technology to the Third World locations and lastly, the proletarianization of women in less developed countries as providers of cheap labor (pg. 112). The owners of production do this as part of strategy of reducing turnover time by shrinking barriers to production and to disrupt worker solidarity, which is "time-space compression" in capitalist political economy (Kearney, 1995: 551). Besides, this stratagem creates global inequalities between nations and also gender inequalities in both the developed and underdeveloped societies.

Women in the underdeveloped countries are victims of global capitalist exploitation sustained by relocation of industries, and are subjugated by the indigenous patriarchy. In the developed countries, women of color and poor white women are objects of exploitation by the corporate deindustrialization policies, but the former do less congenial work than the latter. Fernandez-Kelly (1989) exposé on how women of color have come to replace the poor white women in the Silicon valley of the US (pg. 628) is a corroboration. It is not only women of color but men of color that are being subjected to super-exploitation and racism in the industrial capitalist developed countries (Beale, 1970: 95). It has been generally agreed upon that workers, especially women workers in the multinational export factories are paid less than women workers in the developed countries and less than men workers in their home countries and those in the developed countries (Lim, 1983: 80).

Giving more attention to immigrant women in the developed countries, immigrant women have been subjected to the drudgery of capitalist exploitation and less than human treatment by the dominant group. Cohen (1987) exposes how Canadian employers divide migrant domestic workers into two groups: the black women and the "lighter skin". The former comprise women from the Caribbean while the latter are the Filipino, Indian, Mexican and Hong Kong domestics. Black women do less congenial work than the "lighter skin" (pg. 36). If black women are victims of racism and exploitation in Canadian society, the Yoruba immigrant women in Canada are not exonerated from same treatments which are meted out to people of color. Many of them suffer from racism and occupy the bottom stratum position in the society.

It is important to mention that globalization is not totally harmful to the immigrant population, especially the women. For example, the Yoruba women might be able to have some modicum of power more than what they got in their highly patriarchal Yoruba society in Nigeria. This is because of the notion of "flexible accumulation". Flexible economy/accumulation implies an amorphous nature of global capitalist economy which makes the availability of full time employment either scarce or unpredictable. The notion of the wife/mother staying at home while the husband goes for wage-earning jobs becomes very unlikely in the face of prevalent socio-economic realities. From the 1960s, in the developed world, women began to enter the labor force. Starting from the 1970s, women have been entering a labor force that is cheaper and more flexible. This is in a way to their advantage because women owing to their socialization are always flexible at

carrying out tasks in the domestic spheres. They are "flexible specialists" when they do different things such as cooking, laundry, groceries, child rearing, cleaning, doctors appointments, etc. This enables them to adapt quickly to the labor force that is flexible. And when it comes to remuneration, they are flexible as well—they can work for low pay compared to their male counterparts. For those women from the patriarchal societies in the underdeveloped/developing countries, such as Nigeria, they are meeting a particular economic situation that gives them some edge in terms of wage earning over their male counterparts. This in some ways gives them some empowerment.

### 3.1.3 Transnationalism as an Old Phenomenon:

So, if globalization is not new, is transnationalism new? If sociology teaches us anything, it would teach us, among other things, that labor is one of the most important criteria for the functioning of capitalism. *Ipsa facto*, in the course of the 19th century alone, 100 million people left their original homes to make journeys across oceans, primarily in search of gainful employment. Fifty million of them were Europeans, who went mostly to European colonies (or former colonies) of Canada, Australia, South Africa and the US governed by people of European descent. The other 50 million were non-Europeans, who were known as "coolies", "China men", "Africans", "Blackbirds", "Kankas" among many other names (Mintz, 1998: 121). These non-Europeans in diaspora were not only workers producing for the capitalist system, but were as well social actors engaged in the process of rejuvenating their culture. How they went about doing it then, was not too different from what those we now call "transnationals" are now doing in various metropolitan centers of the West today albeit they had no telephones or facsimile machines; however, the processes of addressing issues of community, religion and culture were very close to those of today. What they were doing then was akin to what our social scientists are studying today. These are the very issues that could have been brought to the fore in those days had these "imagined communities" in question commanded the interest of scholars of those times. The successors of this group are still reproducing their culture in different ways in the cities across Canada, the US and Australia. *In addendum*, certain immigrant groups, such as Italians, Irish, East Europeans and the Latinos and Latinas in the US have always maintained communications with their home countries.

Transnationalism as an area of scholastic importance enables us to have a different look at world system theory and dependency theory in general, because they (the world system theory and dependency theory) tend to foment a uni-linear look at the relationship between the industrial capitalist West and underdeveloped/developing societies. The socio-cultural actions of those involved in international migration, labor migration whether coerced or not, were glossed over. In other words, migrants, even though they were exploited, were social actors as well.

### 3.1.4 Globalization and Neoliberalism:

Globalization no doubt affects the social-structure of societies around the world. Neoliberalism, with no doubt, is the social and political counterpart to globalization of the economy. According to Laxer (1995), the neoliberal agenda has both national and

global dimensions. Nationally, "Thatcherite revolutions" weaken social citizenship and rights, and drop Keynesianism. Neoliberalism favors deregulation and privatization. Privatization of state enterprises opens up new investment for transnational corporations. And globally, neoliberalism frees corporations from obligations to workers and citizens, and reduces the power of nation-states. This is made possible through trade agreements, which explicitly grant "rights of citizenship" to transnational corporations (pg.6). Based on Laxer's analysis, there is no doubt that neoliberalism or Thatcherism affects the Yoruba both nationally and globally. Nationally, cuts in social welfare spending, promoting private enterprise and small government affect the poor, and especially immigrants of color in Canada who are left to fend for themselves. In Nigeria, the introduction of Structural Adjustment Program (SAP) in the 1980s still has serious negative impact on the mass of the people. And globally, the domination of major sectors of the Nigerian economy by foreign multinational corporations has made Nigeria more dependent, and has escalated class inequalities, leading to migration and dependence of the ordinary people on the material support from relatives abroad.

### 3.1.5 Third World Dimension:

While globalization coupled with neoliberalism causes loss of some jobs and reduction in government support social services in the industrial developed countries, in the underdeveloped/developing countries, globalization and neoliberalism lead to DEATH of the ordinary people who cannot afford basic needs. Most countries in the underdeveloped/developing countries, in their quest to attract foreign investments grant tax concessions to transnational corporations. This precludes the states in the Third World countries from providing basic social services, as they receive less or no taxes from foreign investors. The staggering inflation, surging foreign debts, and economic stagnation have caused increasingly high budget deficits. Most Third World countries, plagued by debt crises, have responded to their ailing economies with austerity measures, a sobriquet of Structural Adjustment Policy. Governments of the Third World countries have pursued measures that withdraw government supports in areas such as education, health, food and shelter.

The neoliberal philosophy is connected to the travails of the Yoruba immigrants in Toronto. Their survival in part then depends on their transnational practices which can enable them build networks that span across national boundaries.

### 3.1.6 Globalization and Labor Migration:

One very important socio-political effects of globalization is labor migration. Labor migration, particularly, international labor migration is not a fortuitous phenomenon. It serves some specific functions for the developed industrial capitalist economies. Part of its specific functions is job enrichment for the developed countries, at the expense of the underdeveloped societies. According to Burawoy (1980), labor migration externalizes the cost and maintenance of labor to an alternate economy. What this implies is that labor migration eschews the receiving states such costs as education, health, feeding, socialization and shelter that reproduce a worker. In addition, international migration of

labor is controlled by the economic decisions of the developed countries, which usually hold the decisive position. These economic decisions of the developed countries are not made in isolation of their government policies. Singh (1987) points out that the state intervenes with its apparatus of law and order. For example the police, prison yards, etc. are used to repress the migrants, and are also used in the interests of employers. The state also intervenes through legislation which quite often is not in favor of the migrants (pg. 92).

Immigrants do not come to richer nations only because they want to; richer nations need immigrants, as a labor force and as a market for consumption of goods. It is a common perception and public opinion in the advanced countries that immigrants from the Third World countries flood their major cities to escape poverty. This claim does not seem to be true. Neither do the poorest of the poor migrate, nor is the move of migrants caused mainly by individualistic calculations of advantage. Instead, contemporary immigration is driven by two forces that are part and parcel of dynamics of capitalist expansion itself. These are, first, the labor needs of the developed countries, the quest for low-wage labor, and secondly, the penetration of the underdeveloped countries by the productive capitalist investment, consumption patterns, and popular culture of the advanced societies (Portes, 1997: 4). In the first case, acute labor shortage often stems from culturally conditioned resistance of native-born workers to accept the low-paying menial jobs performed by earlier immigrants. Such stigmatizing occupations include, agricultural stoop labor, domestic and other personal care jobs, restaurant kitchen work, and garment sweatshop stores (Singh, 1987; Portes, 1997). The second case has to do with the impact of globalization process on the supply of potential immigrants. There are so many social consequences attached to the zeal of transnational capital to expand markets in the developing and underdeveloped countries and to tap their pool of labor. Among these social consequences is the introduction of consumption standards bearing little relation to local wages--tyranny of media consumerism! This process prepares future immigrants by systematically socializing them in what to expect abroad. Ironically, this process does not so much affect the poor as it affects the working and middle class portions of the population who comprise the largest number of recipients of marketing messages and cultural symbols imposed from the West (Portes, 1997: 5; Smith & Guarnizo, 1998; Mahler, 1995: 84).

Mahler (1995) points out that the media portrayal of the West in underdeveloped countries is highly dubious and misleading. The media paint rosy pictures of middle class lifestyles and opulent living arrangements. The imagination of the people is played upon, and they are manipulated. Prospective immigrants then look up to *eldorado* awaiting them in their sojourn abroad. It is not only the media that make this distorted portrayal; early migrants and visitors to the West also give biased information. Migrants embellish their descriptions and emphasize the positive aspects of their experiences. In order to save their deflated self-esteem overseas, they tend to make themselves socio-economically important (pg. 86). They go about this not only by telling fascinating stories but by sending home to their kith and kin visual evidences, such as photos and video coverages of ceremonies. These photos and videos are shot at very attractive and beautiful locations and posed with people of different physical appearances and color pigmentation. In the

background are visual imageries of Western technological gadgets, such as electronics, cars and high rises. Even when photos or films are captured in poor looking neighborhoods, the advanced level of technology in the printing and production industries makes them look nicer than they authentically are. All this changes the imagination of the people. They dream and look forward to coming to the West without knowing that it is not all "that glitters that is gold".

The above points are not far from explaining the situation of the Yoruba. Most migrants to the West are young, able-bodied and have been educated by the Nigerian state and the community, but are unable to use their skills for the development of their original society. This leads to a job enrichment for a developed country like Canada. Moreover, the prospective immigrant is influenced by the penetration of visual images of the Western consumption pattern, and also from the fascinating news received from their family members overseas. All this leads to their hope for future migration.

Migration in the era of globalization is not limited to labor migration alone but includes the tourists, refugees, exiles, students, scientists, drug peddlers, terrorists and other moving groups and persons; this situation, Appadurai (1991) refers to as "ethnoscapes". These groups according to him constitute an essential feature of the world where politics of and between nations are being affected to a hitherto unprecedented degree (pg. 192). "Ethnoscapes" constitutes one of the features of transnationalism. It connotes that transnationalism is potentially "in opposition" and "in resistance" to the visible forms of globalization—the "omnipotence" of transnational corporations. Transnationalism involving different categories of "ordinary people" is a countervailing practice against the dominant transnational capital, multinational corporations and domineering power of global capitalism and neoliberalism. The emergence of transnational communities is a symbol of that protest. Transmigrants build networks that have political, social, economic and cultural impacts transcending two or more territorial entities. Many factors are accountable for it, and technology is a vital influence but not the cause of it. What are these factors that reinforce transnationalism?

### 3.1.7 How Transnational Practices Emerge:

International division of labor or new international division of labor necessitates inequalities between nations, especially in the arena of global distribution of resources; and the unequal level of technological and economic development which persists despite the relative integration of the world economic system. Ordinary people in poorer countries of the world make all kinds of rational decisions, including mass migration of labor to the developed countries. For many of these labor producing countries, remittances from overseas have become a *sine qua non* for their state capitalism or periphery capitalism. Besides, remittances are a good means of sustenance for kith and kin of migrants. The money sent is utilized for social production, education, welfare, improving the welfare of women and traditional festivals. Transnationalism thereby comes to the fore in an effort to alleviate the immiseration, penurization and pauperization of those left behind by the immigrants

There is also the nation-state's policy toward reincorporation of their nationals abroad in order to attract their capital investments. Basch *et al.* (1994) cite the tax breaks enjoyed by *balikbayan* in the Philippines under President Marcos as an example (pg. 257). Lessinger (1991), mentions how Non-Resident Indians (NRIs) are given preferential treatment by the Indian government to attract their capital. All this attests to the fact that transmigrants could be claimed by their "government". Their reincorporation and involvements in their home societies could lead to participation in the politics of their home country. In the case of Haiti, the nationals abroad contributed to political transition programs that brought President Aristide to power (see Basch *et al.* 1994; Goldring, 1998). Unlike some countries such as the Philippines and some countries in the East Caribbean which send their nationals abroad through a binational arrangement with the host countries, Nigeria as a country is not officially a labor exporting country. The individual Yoruba men and women migrate out of their own volition for a better condition of living. These migrants send goods, and remit money to their kith and kin in Nigeria to lessen their pains from the Structural Adjustment Program (SAP). Moreover, it is not unlikely that Nigeria will in the future embark on reincorporation policy as the Philippines, Haiti and India. But at the present, it is the individual families and local communities that do claim those who originally belong to them and are attracting them for economic help. All in all, Nigeria as a country benefits from remittances being sent home, because it provides employment in the banking sector, creates small businesses, infuses money into local communities, reduces the possibility of civil unrest, etc.

The politics of nation-building in the developed countries with hegemonic undertones trigger consciousness or re-affirm it. Racial categorizations in most European countries and North America are a means by the dominant population to subdue the subordinate groups who are people of color. According to Basch *et al.* (1994), the construction of American society as predominantly white has served to justify and perpetuate the subordination of the black population as well as to assimilate certain immigrant population and exclude others. Racial categorization of those of African descents of different ethnic extractions as "black" is based on an ideology of exploitation (see Omi & Winant 1986, 64). Racial categorization is nurtured by hegemonic constructions and practices. According to Schiller *et al.* (1992), the conceptions and categories of hegemonic constructions, and practices are used to exclude groups such as black from social and economic opportunities enjoyed by the white population (pg. 13).

Racial categorization is not absent in Canada. Richmond (1994), criticizes the official concept of "visible minority" (used by the Statistics Canada) which categorizes people of diverse criteria such as birthplace, ancestry, language, and religion, as a category such as "black", "Chinese", etc, without giving any cognizance to the very different circumstances and needs of such widely classified groups (pg. 161). In this particular case, groups such as the Yoruba, Ibo, Kikuyu, Ndebele, Zulu, Shona, Hutu, Tutsi, Nyamwezi, African-Americans, African-Caribbeans, African-Brazilians, etc. are categorized as a group without considering the diverse history, cultures and origins. In the same vein, it is not uncommon for blacks to be asked by the whites where they are from, regardless of how long their ancestors came to Canada (Barrett, 1994). This is based on the assumption that the blacks are from somewhere else.

Immigrants do resist racial categorizations in different forms. As in the case of the Haitians in the US, Charles (1992) points out how the Haitian migrant population constructs its transnational social fields by maintaining "multiple identities" in the US. This group accepts being black, but their being black is linked to Haitian history through Africa and not through the United States. This is a strategy employed to resist ascription into the low status generally allocated to black Americans (pg. 118). This particular case study illuminates how the Yoruba also try to resist racial categorization in Canada. While the Yoruba recognize that they are Africans and share some experiences with other Africans and those of African descents, they however carve out their identities as different from other groups especially the Caribbeans, African-American, African-Canadians and other ethnic groups from Africa. Their rejection of racism and racial categorization is in part expressed in their cultural reproduction and in the proliferation of ethnic institutions such as the media, language school, restaurants, voluntary associations churches, etc.

Segal (1998) notes that the exclusion and racial discrimination experienced by people of African descent leads to the notion of black consciousness and black power. The awareness of their place in the society essentially promotes the existence of black consciousness in vast black diaspora, gathering momentums for consciousness of its "peculiar identity, its collective past and its cultural heritage" (Segal, 1998: 7). This is indeed a testimony to the socio-economic and political exclusionary policy of the dominant class.

One major effect of racism is that, some ethnic groups end up in deplorable employment situations. For example, you find certain ethnic groups more represented in particular occupations, such as cab driving, health aides and in most cases, certain groups who are qualified to do white-collar jobs becoming highly "factorized" (working in the factory!). The experience of immigrants facing both covert and overt institutionalized racism (Barrett, 1987) which puts them in a less than human position contributes to their maintaining ties and identities associated with their home countries and communities. One way by which immigrants sidetrack their precarious labor market condition is through their transnational practice of making use of their social capital. Social capital enables them set up "transnational enterprise" (Portes, 1997).

Goldring (1998; 1996) argues that people create and maintain transnational social fields, because transnational social spaces, more importantly the locality of origin offer a special context for claiming and valorizing status. This is because many immigrants lack the social recognition in the larger community of settlement. She adds that meanings allow status claims to be understood through the interpretation of practices, rituals, goods and artifacts in the context of transnational communities and broader transnational social fields. Home town men, women, and families get their own social rewards when they return home or send their photos for members of their community to see. The general consensus is that they have done well compared to when they left. Material things sent to their locality of origin are not mere things in themselves but embedded in social relations. Schiller *et al.* (1992), in their analysis, of a barbeque sent to Haiti by a migrant noted that the barbeque does not just stand in and of itself as an item of material culture that will

change the material culture of Haiti. Rather, it stands as a statement about achievements in the United States and a self-promotion of social standing in Haiti (pp. 10-11). Recipients can say in public for all to hear, "my uncle Leo who used to drive trucks for Mr. Martin sent it from the U.S." The local environment of origin compensates for the missing status and recognition in the host society. This is quite related to the Yoruba who frequently keep in contact with the members of their local communities not only through their frequent visits, but also by sending material goods such as clothes, wrist watches, t-shirts, shoes, etc, and visual images like videos and photos to family, friends and well wishers who are on the other side of the border. These goods stand as the symbolic expressions of "their achievements" overseas.

Immigrants valorize their status through home town associations and clubs. While it is in the agenda to help with community development programs by filling the gaps left open by neoliberal policies, and also resuscitate home cultural practices, clubs and associations nevertheless give recognition to members when they are involved in collective projects in the locality of origin. "Altruistic projects" (Mahler, 1998: 88) embarked on by migrants create opportunities for them to bargain for social and political power in their community. Not only do they afford them some socio-political importance among members of their immediate communities but also grant them the avenues to meet powerful political elements which they would never have met had they not traveled, engaged and maintained contacts with their roots, nor would they have met political figures of the "host societies" where they are considered pariahs.

### 3.1.8 "A Twin of Paradox": Homogenization and Heterogenization:

The penetration of foreign capital coupled with Western influences into the developing or under-developed countries contribute to different kinds of migration, including labor migration. Modern communications technology in the era of globalization has freed people from "spatial boundedness" that constrains them from intermingling with other groups of similar ideas. Globalization in all its forms--cultural, economic, technology, political and the like, creates higher interaction among peoples of the world, links peoples with one another, and thus intimates greater communion among peoples and a greater understanding among them. One way or the other, nations, ethnic associations, religious groups, social movements, etc. have had the means and possibilities to engage in tasks that aim toward common goals.

Griswold (1994) refers to the concept of "relational community", which is made possible by modern mediation. This happens when people "are tied together by webs of communication, friendship, association, or mutual support" (pg. 139). The Yoruba are part of this "relational community". Members link up with others not only in Nigeria but also in different geographical locations around the world. The Yoruba and other Nigerian groups are connected with those of similar beliefs, experiences, lifestyles, etc. around the world, especially through the Internet newsgroups. Moreover, one cannot deny the fact that globalization contributes to the production of transnationals who struggle to "subvert" the vagaries and exploitation of transnational and multinational corporations, as well as their "lackeys" who are Nigerians. We can thus say that, globalization produces

some parvenus in the world, among which are the Yoruba. Some of those who could have "perished" in transnational factories or met their death from the cold hand of neoliberal Structural Adjustment Program can still hold on to some hope, and contribute to poverty alleviation in their local communities.

However, the world is still not devoid of wide inequalities between groups within nations, and among nations of the world. The high level of human deprivation in the world is stunning. According to the balance sheet of Human Development, 1990-1997, nearly 1.3 billion people live in abject poverty in the world; more than 880 million people lack access to health services, 2.6 billion lack access to basic sanitation; nearly 160 million children are malnourished and more than 250 million are working as child laborers; and at the end of 1997, there were nearly 12 million refugees in the world (Human Development Report, 1999: 22). Over two-third of these people are found in the countries of Africa, Asia and Latin-America. This purports that what we have is not really homogenization *per se* but also hegemonization.

So, to what extent can we applaud the post-modernist academic pundits, who talk about the denial or demise of metanarratives, when we consider inequalities that are prevalent in the current world? Globalization is to the favor of the powerful capitalists largely dominated by the white males. The national and global aspects of neoliberalism that go along side with globalization are making lives difficult for the ordinary people both in the developed and the developing nations of the world. The neoliberal policies of the Canadian federal government and the Ontario government are making lives difficult for the weak and the poor who have to deal with cuts in social services, and the withdrawal of settlement fees for new immigrants. Also, the processing fees levied against prospective immigrants to Canada affect those from countries, such as Nigeria, and many countries in Africa where a vast majority of the population are poor. Underemployment and unemployment caused by the industrial restructuring, and the slim opportunities for people to upgrade their skills discriminate against new immigrants and the poor. In the developing countries, the adoption of IMF and World Bank induced conditionalities further penurizes the vast majority who are already poor, and favors the "decapitalization" method of the multinational corporations.

See Appendix C for: Homogenization (Fusion) and Hegemonization (Fission).

### 3.2 Internal Transformation:

So far, I have looked at the external factors pertaining to international labor migration. At this juncture, I will focus on the socio-structural factors which are internal to Yoruba society and thus leading to the eventual migration to the West and the sustenance of relationships with the home society. This relationship is not only defined by the importance of the Western materialism, but is also defined by the dependency of the Yoruba psyche on the "white man". This will help to shed some light on some of the attitudes and behaviors of the Yoruba in Toronto, especially their perception of the West, the *ilu oyinbo* before and after the migration.

Writers of Yoruba history agree (as noted in Chapter 2.1) that Yoruba came from somewhere in North Africa or in the Middle East, facts which confirm that migration is not a modern practice. In fact the migration of the people predates the arrival of Arabs and the West to sub-Saharan Africa. In both colonial and post-colonial periods, importance is attached to traveling. But the importance attached to traveling to "ilu-oyinbo" is different from traveling to "ile-ibo" or "ile-Hausa" or "ile-Ghana". "Ilu Oyinbo" has assumed a special place in the mind of the Yoruba people and Africans south of the Sahara (cf. Laye, Camara; Armah, Ayi ). The word "oyinbo" has become so common in words and expressions of the Yoruba; and is also reflected in their day-to-day conversation, attitude and practice. Their psyche has been dominated by "Pan Oyinbo" syndrome. In the following space, I will discuss how the Yoruba dependency complex is not natural as believed by a writer like Manoni, and point out that it was the outcome of the colonial occupation. Moreover, I will point out that the Whites were able to dominate the mind of the people by "reconditioning" the major cultural complexes that sustained them, especially, the religion and education. In addition, I will end the section by reiterating that the European interference with the Yoruba culture from their world view did not end with colonialism, but continues till today.

### 3.2.1 The Genesis:

The explanation for the "dependency complex" can be traced to the Yoruba contact with the West through colonialism, and neocolonialism which is the metamorphosis of colonialism. Colonialism and neocolonialism as experienced by the Yoruba do not only explain the material relationship between the "white man" and the Yoruba people but also the psychological and psycho-analytical impacts of their interaction with the Western culture. This is with respect to the change or modification of the social-structure, social institutions and mind frame of the Yoruba people. The "Pan Oyinbo" mechanism makes the Yoruba people mentally, materially and spiritually dependent on consumption of the Western world view. There is the tendency for these people to see the "white man" as superior because of his race, rather than seeing him as superior because of his class--his economic and military prowess, which made him both economically and extra-economically dominant in the world. For example, those Yoruba who met the Europeans in the 19th century gave themselves names that purported to the latter being superior and of the same caliber with their gods. Two of such names are; "Oguntoyinbo"--Ogun (the god of iron and war) is equal to the "white man" and "Orishatoyinbo"--gods and the "white man" are equal. If one realizes the position occupied by Yoruba pantheon of gods, one cannot but say those names connote a high degree of blasphemy and a profanity of all that is sacred to their religious beliefs-- no human beings can be of equal status with the gods (see chapter 2.1).

The Yoruba are attracted to the metropolitan centers of the West not only in quest of materialism; but also because they are psychologically attracted. For example, many materially rich "black Africans" visit *ilu oyinbo* frequently in spite of the little or no recognition they receive from the Westerners. In the same vein, ordinary people come to the West to seek for honor and glory not from the *oyinbo*, but from the members of their community who attach high importance to the West. Other examples are: One, the

socialization process could be panegyric. It is common to refer to a child that is light in complexion as "oyinbo"-- "o lewa bi oyinbo", meaning "as beautiful as a white child"; a mother nursing a child will sing to her child to eat so well so that the child can look healthy and beautiful like "omo-oyinbo"-- "oyinbo child". In elementary schools in the 1970s, pupils were made to sing thus:

Oun meta lo mu ki ile-iwe wu mi igba n baduro bi alakowe, igba n ba wo bata to ba mi lese mu, ma de 'lu oyinbo ka we o.

The English translation:

Three things make me love the Western education; one, the way the "white man" dresses; two, the kind of shoes he wears, and three, in the future I will go to the White man's land to study.

And two, some conscious or unconscious practices of adults. Some Yoruba musicians, such as Soni Ade, Ebenezer Obe, "Barrister", "Obesere", "Kolington", and so on have at one point in their musical careers sung about "oyinbo" and "ilu oyinbo". For every tour of Europe or North America, they must sing some songs in reference to the good time they spend with "oyinbo" in "ilu oyinbo". They even qualify those who have made it business wise "oyinbo"-- "oyinbo oni motor ni Agege". Many adults express their Pan Oyinbo in a way that connotes an "inferiority complex". For example, skins become bleached with chemicals to make them lighter and hair becomes "burnt" to make it straight, or women wearing wigs, all to make them look closer to "oyinbo".

For writers, like Manoni, Memmi, Fanon and Cesaire, "Pan Oyinbo" is one of the indicators of a "dependency complex". While there is an agreement to this extent, there is however no consensus between Manoni and others as to the cause of the "dependency complex". Manoni believes that it is naturally ingrained in the psyche of the black person to look up to the whites for protection, and that the former lacks any flare for freedom or liberation. He argues that this had been the situation before the "White man" came to Africa, because the African oracles were aware of the "white man's" coming even before there was ever any contact (see Fanon, 1967: pp. 83-108; Cesaire, 1972: pp. 41-43). This kind of interpretation of the relationship between the "white man" and "black Africans" has been passionately argued against and counteracted by scholars and students of society, who hold on to the belief that the "dependency complex" is socio-historically perpetrated. The history of pre-colonial Yoruba society as compared to that of colonial and neo-colonial has rendered the natural explanation of "dependency complex" dubious, arbitrary and racist.

The European occupation, which led to the usurpation of power from the autochthonous Africans and subjugation of opposing groups not only materially "de-developed" Africa, but also have had psycho-analytical and psychological impacts on both the conquered and the conquerors. Materially, the British who conquered various Nigerian societies embarked on massive exploitation in the form of expropriation of natural resources for the development of metropolitan Britain and repatriation of surplus capital values. Their

rapacity, dehumanization and debasement of the so-called "natives" or "locales" have been well noted. The floggings, forced labor, conscription and physical torture undergone by men and women in the colonies have been well documented. These treatments that the colonized people around the world went through have a plethora of serious social ramifications on their self esteems, and attitudes and perception of the world.

Colonialism produces in Yorubaland and elsewhere marginal systems, which lead to marginal human beings. Mudimbe (1988) mentions that the "colonizing structures" lead to marginal societies (pg. 2). Marginality according to Mudimbe is not limited to loss of land or material deprivation, but includes the manipulation of people's minds. The portrayal of Africans by the colonialists contributes to the Pan Oyinbo perception which many of the Yoruba have today. Colonialism created an avenue for the Europeans to authenticate "their superiority" over the "Other". Barrett (1996) explains the discovery of "Other" in the age of imperialism. The "civilized world" discovered the "Other" who are "the primitive" and "the native". This discovery of "other" was used as the rationale for colonialism which resulted in both "humanistic and racist responses" (pg. 4). To make the "other" real, "Hamitic Hypothesis" was postulated to explain away the achievement of black Africans. The achievements of powerful Sudanese states such as Ghana, Mali, Songhai, Karnem Bornu and Oyo were claimed by Europeans to be due to "a mythical light-skinned nomadic people known as Hamites" (Crowder, 1968: 12).

According to Cesaire (1972), the colonizers tend to make the colonized believe that they benefitted from colonialism. Colonialism is portrayed as philanthropic, liberating the colonized people from diseases, ignorance, war, poverty; and a humanitarian gesture of evangelization, education and the development of infrastructure. According to Cesaire (1972), the justification for colonial rule is based on falsity and a brain washing:

"Security? Culture? The rule of law? In the meantime I look around and wherever there are colonizers and colonized face to face, I see force, brutality, cruelty, sadism, conflict, and, in a parody of education..... between colonizer and the colonized, there is room for forced labor, intimidation, pressure, the police, taxation theft, rape, compulsory crops, contempt, mistrust, arrogance.....My turn to state an equation: colonization = "thingification" (pg. 21).

Gramsci who is associated with the concept "hegemony", posits that domination is perpetuated by the dominant class in all spheres of life. Gramsci holds that ideological hegemony permeates throughout the civil society, including the trade unions, schools, churches, the media, the family and an entire system of values, attitudes, beliefs, and morality; ideas that are in one way or another supportive of the established order and class interests that dominate it (Boggs, 1976: 38-39). Hegemony is not always fully achieved but is always in a state of contestation, solely because of inconsistencies often inherent in preaching and practice (Brow, 1988: 323). Colonialism devalues certain aspects of Yoruba cultural practices which held them together, thus causing cultural anomie. While most aspects of the Yoruba cultural complexes were affected by colonialism, but two aspects of the culture adulterated for a purpose of "reconditioning" the mind suffice to be privileged, viz; religion and education.

### 3.2.2 Religion:

Ajayi and Alagoa (1974), stress that the Europeans not only sought to dominate the Africans through the technological means but also through "moral and psychological defeatism" . They add that they (the Europeans) "struck at the core of the religion that gave him self-confidence and the philosophy that helped him maintain a balanced relationship with his internal and external impulses" (pp. 126-127). In *Things Fall Apart*, religion became one of the issues of contestation between the Europeans and the Ibo of southeastern Nigeria. The people speak thus,

"... does the white man understand our custom about land? How can he when he does not speak our tongue? But he says that our customs are bad; and our own brothers who have taken up his religion also say our customs are bad ....." (Achebe, 1958: 124).

Many Yoruba were brainwashed, and many are made to believe that the pantheon of divinities who are subservient to the power of *Olodumare* is a practice inimical to human progress. Therefore, it is now socially and politically embarrassing for any Yoruba woman/man to proclaim that she/he practices African Traditional Religion.

### 3.2.3 Education:

It was not only the religious institution that the European colonizers tampered with, the informal traditional system of education was condemned as obsolete and an anathema to human progress. In lieu of this, a European system of education that promoted an individualism was entrenched. Colonial education was not designed to prepare young people for the service of their country. The syllabus drew from the Western notion of society. It emphasized the classical form of education which borrowed leaves from the ideas of Plato and Aristotle. And one important aspect of Platonic-Aristotelian philosophy was the division of society into two basic groups--kings and subjects, rich and poor, and ruler and ruled. The colonial system of education was meant to inculcate the values of the colonial society, and to train individuals for the service of colonial state. In other words, the colonial system of education promoted the individualistic instincts of human as opposed to collective good (Nyerere, 1974: 3). It is a form of education that promoted human inequalities and the domination of the weak by the strong. As if this was not bad enough, this colonial system of education alienated its beneficiaries from their cultural roots, in the process making them into cultural hybrids.

### 3.2.4 Colonial Legacy:

Memmi (1967) asserts that the colonialists must destroy the colonized's culture so as to be able to colonize the mind. The colonized must be inferiorized in order to be made socio-economically beneficial to the colonizer as an object ("thingified" as on page 127 quote from Cesaire, 1972: 21). The colonizer and his values must be portrayed as prestigious and sophisticated. The inferiority of the colonized and the superiority of the colonizer must be constantly expressed (pg. 87). Initially, the colonized do not appreciate their treatment, but after some time they tend to assume that the way they are being

portrayed is really true, and they begin to internalize their inferior position as enforced by the colonizer. The colonized will feel compelled to demonstrate to the "white man", by emulating him, to show that he/she is worthy as a person. In fact, their inferiorization does indeed amount to reality. This can somewhat explain the reason why the majority of Yoruba profess to either Islam or Christianity, and while they publicly condemn the belief in the Yoruba Olodumare, some secretly patronize the latter to solve a lot of spiritual problems. This happens because the African Traditional belief is considered anachronistic. Similarly, fluency in spoken and written English is considered a sign of sophistication, while proficiency in Yoruba as a language shows less exposure to modernity. In the field of education, more emphasis is laid on theory, and less in making the theory become practical. For example, in areas such as literature, African literary works are included in the syllabus, but stress is not being laid on the importance of community interest over that of the individual. No wonder, the leaders themselves did not believe in what they preached, because their values had been contaminated by their exposure to Western education, considered more superior than the Yoruba culture.

According to Thomas Theorem, if situations are defined as real, they become real in their consequences (Macionis, *et al.*, 1997: 319). Nevertheless, discrimination, mistreatment and exploitation of the colonized by the colonizer do not cause or lead to natural cognitive inferiority of the former, but they produce social inferiority, stigma, underdevelopment and disability for the colonized people in their constant attempts to measure up to the rules of the colonizer. The racial domination of the Yoruba by the British during the colonial rule sowed the seed of the "inferiority complex" that is currently germinating in the society today. Bolaria and Li (1988) point out that the European colonialism is not limited to the violation of the subjects' institutions, but includes fostering "an inferiority complex among the minority members, to the point where they begin to reject their own heritage in pursuit of culture and symbols that render a higher social recognition..." In addition, the colonized suffer from "low self-esteem and other psychological deprivations that are translated into behaviors that get to be defined by the dominant group as culturally peculiar" (pg. 25). It is pertinent to add that some may be quick to dismiss the fact that colonialism still has psychological impacts on the "post colonial" African societies. There is no doubt that it still does. Neocolonialism is a mere extension of colonialism. It (neocolonialism) is an "old wine in a new bottle", "independence" is a bamboozling and a deceitful propaganda. The relationship of inequalities between the "ex-colonized" and "ex-colonizer" is still glaring.

### 3.2.5 The Metamorphosis:

The adverse effects of colonialism come to the fore after the colonizer had physically disengaged from the political scene. Neocolonialism is the perpetuation of the colonial system in spite of formal recognition of political independence. One major ramification of this is that the Western powers, who were the former colonial masters still hold controls over African nations, whose rulers are usually either willing lackeys or involuntarily subordinate to these powers. Neocolonialism is connected to the dependency of certain aspects of the cultural complexes on those of the former colonial power. In spite of independence, Western influences, especially the popular culture, such

as music, films, video, etc. still penetrate through the media outfits, such as the magazines, televisions, newspapers, Internet, etc.

Many analyses based on migration of people from underdeveloped from the developed countries have always looked at the poor economic situation of the countries of migration as the main cause without looking at other factors and some "invisible factors" responsible for both the migration and the economic failure itself. In regard to Yoruba migration to the metropolitan centers of the West where material things are preponderant, two salient factors based on the ongoing analysis have come to the fore. One is, if there was no economic problem in the 1980s, the Yoruba would still migrate to the West, because of the impacts of colonialism on their psyche. Traveling to "ilu oyinbo" had always been alluring even during the oil boom of the 1970s. Then (in the 1970s), traveling to "ilu oyinbo" was not necessarily accorded with position of material wealth, but considered as one form of glory which a man or a woman should long for. Traveling to "ilu oyinbo" inflated your social position and made one a man/woman of prestige in the society. This can be understood as "colonial socialization". Be this as it may, one cannot deny the fact that the economic failure of the 1980s coupled with the repressive regimes of the 1980s and the 1990s caused a "mass migration". Secondly, the "collapse" of Nigeria as a nation-state is a concomitant of the colonization of Nigeria's material resources and the colonization of the psyche of the Nigerian people. In case of the latter, too much energy and effort have been invested in glorifying the West, translated into a "dependency complex". Whatever is good is often attributed to "white man's culture", while there is a lack of confidence in whatever is African. A child socialized to believe in other people's culture lacks the national consciousness that makes great nations reach their zenith of glory. A country suffers political, economic and social atrophies if its citizens are in want of national and patriotic consciousness. As well, a society disintegrates if its people lack the life-force that Ibn Khaldun refers to as "asabiya", spiritual force of unity. The colonial regime conditioned the mind of the people to think differently and to allow their material exploitation. This is not without a legacy. This is the psychological importance attached to *ilu-oyinbo*.

Those who migrate abroad will always return and keep in touch with those they left behind because they have to show them how they have been changed by their new environments. They tell tales of fascinating stories about "ilu oyinbo". In little communities, many of them become the heroes and heroines and the talk of the town. The community receives and deifies them because of their exposure to "white culture". People pray for them, and the youth long to be like them. Those who are already old and cannot make any long distance journey make it their wish that their children or grandchildren should be like them. For African boys and girls, there is a total loss of interest in their culture. If they want to grow up finish their studies and leave for *ilu oyinbo*, this is highly desired.

There is nothing natural about this relationship as claimed by Manoni. However, it is a condition that all *homo sapiens* are susceptible to. What happened to the Yoruba could happen to any human species. As a matter of fact, all the colonized people of the world suffer from exploitation of their natural space and have their worldviews tampered with.

This inferiority complex becomes more serious with increased economic problems, because people may react to their own poor condition as a natural course of events. They then tend to consider other materially successful groups as superior.

It is quite certain that as long as the leaders lack the political will and continue to be entrapped in their ignorance, the vicious circle of "dependency complex" will continue. But if there is a strong leadership that can turn the economy round, reduce the consumption pattern and restore some hope back in the people, over dependence on "ilu oyinbo" might not be eradicated but can be reduced with high self esteem.

## Chapter Four

### Methodology

#### 4.1 Preamble

I discovered by comparison that the truth was more interesting and beautiful than fiction. I left aside the latter and decided to avoid all invention and imagination in my work and to subject myself to the facts ( Leopold von Ranke).

Before I began this work, I had been faced with questions of objectivity by friends, colleagues and well-wishers. They believed that it was fundamentally impossible for a researcher to be objective while writing about his or her own people. There is no infallibility to bias based on our socialization, experience and education in the social sciences. This question did not come out of malice but stemmed from the confusion surrounding the issue of objectivity in social sciences as opposed to that in the natural sciences. It is erroneous to equate both, considering that the former are too rich and too complex for all researchers to see the social reality alike. Nevertheless, this is not to say that objectivity is not tenable in social sciences. White (1985) points out that objectivity is obviously a human problem which is difficult to attain, but possible. He also adds that "everyone has to make the necessary ascetic effort to see things as they are, to prevent extraneous considerations from interfering with and distorting that conformity of the mind with reality which is what knowledge is" (pg.15).

The issue of studying one's society is a cause for suspicion because it is believed that it makes a researcher easily susceptible to subjectivity. But "studying" from the outside is not a guarantee for a value-free research. In the words of Abu-Lughod (1991), "...the self never simply stands outside" (pg. 141). There is a human proclivity to bias based on who we are as social animals. However, there is also the possibility for human propensity to identify this as a flaw and try to avert it or control it, even if it cannot be totally removed from the conduct of our research. Furthermore, it is important that social sciences as a form of science are different from natural sciences, and even, natural sciences cannot totally be free of bias because it is humans that are behind experiments.

So, what is the role of a researcher? Any researcher is in a similar situation as any person in ordinary life who has to make a judgement about the significance of a social event, for

instance, a nurses' strike, higher level of unemployment among minorities, why minorities vote for the Conservative Party, high level of poverty among women, or factors leading to ethnic conflicts and racial animosity. Social scientists have to work hard to gather all the relevant information. She/he needs to work hard and be conscious of any possible false information, and especially, he/she has to exercise maturity of judgement in correctly interpreting the available evidence. It is precisely this maturity of judgement that distinguishes a good researcher, a good administrator, a good statesman and so on from an immature or poor researcher, administrator, statesman, etc.

#### 4.2 Personal Experience:

Polanyi (1958) in a chapter entitled "Objectivity", in his work *Personal Knowledge* talks about the importance of our senses as a necessary corollary for understanding phenomena. He says

"...For, as human beings, we must inevitably see the universe from a center lying within ourselves and speak about it in terms of a human language shaped by the exigencies of human intercourse. Any attempt rigorously to eliminate our perspective from our picture of the world must lead to absurdity" ( pg. 3).

The following is "my odyssey". Here I explain how I got involved in this research--the involvement which sheds light on the missions to accomplish. This is in an effort to express my passion for the work and how my personal experience has had some influence on the research. Personal experience should not be left unacknowledged by social researchers. It helps the readers to know the particular point that a researcher is coming from, my point being that I want to avoid the "hurry scurry" situation that one may fall into all in an effort to seek objectivity at all costs. Osoba (1996) strongly condemns those researchers who hide their "prejudices and predilections behind the smokescreen of value-free and objective analysis"( pg. 2). In my own case, I do not shy away from my vulnerability to bias which gives allowance for the readers to be aware of my representation of social reality. This awareness enables them to be more engaged in dialogue, comments and participation in the research itself.

I was born into a Yoruba ethnic group-of Ekiti subgroup in the Federal Republic of Nigeria. I do not consider myself an *ajebota*, nor am I an *ajepaki*. In my own case, I could qualify for both in different situations and contexts. For quite a number of people that I grew up with in my locality, I was an *ajebota* based on the fact that my parents were formally educated and they could easily pass for having middle class status in the 1970s and the early 1980s Nigeria. However, for those of my cousins whose parents moved to the cities in the 1960s to become businessmen and to work as accountants and university professors, I was a mere *ajepaki*. Whether I am an *ajebota* or *ajepaki* is not really important anymore, and for the mere fact that I was exposed to both worlds in Nigeria now sharpens my understanding of Yoruba society in relation to the world, which is not without an influence on this research.

I graduated from a Nigerian university in 1990. By the time I finished, I had decided to travel out of the country in search of golden fleece. My interest in traveling did not come in a vacuum. Two important reasons could be attributed to this. One is a socialization factor; I was growing up knowing that *ilu oyinbo* was good, and those of my cousins who had visited once or twice or had never visited but had acquaintances in the cities who had, frequently got preferential treatment in our local community, and they thrived on this social validation.

The second reason had to do with the socio-economic situation of Nigeria in the 1980s and the 1990s. During this period, I began to see changes. Living was becoming too difficult. The mass of the people had been alienated from the national resources by the ruling elites and people were being deceived (by the elites) that it was a normal course of things for the underdeveloped countries. I did not believe in their conundrums and rhetoric. I did not mind perishing in Nigeria if we could all share the "national burden" together as a people; "but for the monkey to work, while the baboon reaps the harvest", I could not fathom it. Today, I still fervently believe as I did then that the Nigerian leadership lacked the socio-economic and political sagacity to make Nigeria as a nation realize the dream of assuming the most important position in black Africa and among the comity of nations. Unfortunately, the Nigerian leadership put its personal interest ahead of national interest by embezzling and mismanaging the public's funds. While the mass of the people had been pauperized, the ruling elite that constituted the oligarchy was getting richer and becoming more comfortable. They tactfully and brazenly blamed all the misfortune on the common people. They reproached them for being lazy and lacking discipline. At this critical time, my sisters began to have their own families, and I gained nephews and nieces in the Western contexts, my extended family was expanding as well, which was a sign for me that my presence was a burden. At that time, I partly subsisted on my sisters' meager incomes in the city, which I did not want to continue. To draw up a curtain of charity, Nigeria of the mid-1980s and the 1990s did not only lack basic material well-being, but patriotism and national consciousness. It was these two major reasons among others that made me leave the country in the early 1990s.

We always thought of a rosy life ahead on the other side of the ocean. To be honest, I never knew that the Yoruba emigrants were not totally integrated into their host societies in the West! The impression we had was that they had the same privileges and opportunities as the dominant white population. I never knew that they had their own "ethnic colonies" in their countries of settlement. We were never given the true picture. They failed to tell us that the sojourn abroad is the continuation of the struggle left behind. All this I did not realize until my arrival. We are all in a pot of soup! We are on the horns of dilemma: you cannot go back home and you are not really comfortable here. Alas! There are difficulties in both nations--in Nigeria, there are all forms of problems--bigmanism (even bigwomanism), avarice, greed, gargantuan ego, corruption and all sorts of social injustice. In Canada, here, discrimination based on your accents, physical attributes, education; and crass exploitation of immigrant workers are very common. What can one do? People try to "live in-between" the two worlds by reuniting through different modes of communication, resuscitating their cultural practices and financially helping those left at home simultaneously. I continued to learn that it is no more a matter

of looking at things from one particular level of analysis only, but to look at the travails of Yoruba people and those of other countries from a macro-structural perspective, and through this, you can apportion faults from both macro and micro levels. In other words, you can know where the Nigerian oligarchy went wrong and also where the international elites contributed to those problems.

My partial understanding of the two societies--the Yoruba society in Nigeria and that in Toronto was not really enough to have a thorough understanding of their social vicissitudes, rather, rigorous and disciplined research was necessary. I wanted to understand some of these problems well, and because I was passionately concerned, I wanted to know how people became who they are, and from there find out how to move on and improve themselves, to be less exploited and be more competitive in the labor market. It was in quest of the causes of those problems facing black Africans, like the Yoruba, and the solutions to them; and also to contribute to sociological theory, most especially theory in international labor migration that led me into undertaking this project. It is to put a "human face" on Africans south of the Sahara as a people whose past was full of glory, marginalized by global capitalism and still surviving and contributing to human civilization. In explaining the last part, these are immigrants who are contributing to the Canadian society. How can Yoruba people uplift their status in this society? The search for an answer also contributes to this study.

#### 4.3 Limitations of the Research:

Some of the limitations to this project are:

One, the population surveyed and interviewed is non-randomly selected. Hence, the outcome and the findings cannot be generalized to the whole Yoruba population in Toronto. Non-random selection of population was adopted because of the absence of a readily available sampling frame of Yoruba population in Toronto. Even the Nigerian Consulate when it was "functional" did not have it; ditto, Canadian immigration does not stratify immigrants from Nigeria into their various ethnic groups--they are collectively known as Nigerians. Besides, when immigrants arrive through the international airports, it is not possible to know where they will end up living in the country. Some will arrive through the Toronto airport and later leave for Hamilton or Halifax or even Vancouver. The Yoruba Community Association is currently trying to compile a list of their members, but what often happens is that new arrivals and some old members do not show up for registration for various reasons. *Ipsa facto*, the most viable approach for getting into the population is through non-random snowball sampling.

Two, the data collection for the research is "one-sided". Field work was conducted only in Toronto and there was no possibility to confirm or disconfirm information revealed by informants from the other end. Great scholarly works on transnationalism have been conducted on both sides of the borders, i.e. both in the host and in the home societies. Some of these great works are those written by Goldring (1996), Chavez (1994), Mahler (1995), Basch *et al.* (1994), Schiller *et al.* (1992) and Rouse (1991). The field work for this project was confined to the megalopolis of Toronto and not extended to Yorubaland

in Nigeria. Members of an immigrant community often have a "Janus face"--one face abroad and the other one at home. There was no possibility to look at the latter--the other face!

Three, time and financial constraints make it difficult to include some important cultural events in the research. In terms of time, it is an immortal enemy. If one spends a minimum period of three years collecting data in the field for this project, it would never be enough because it is a very vibrant and active community. Four months of summer leave of absence spent collecting data did not afford me the opportunity to capture vital participant observation events such as naming and funeral ceremonies. While it is not my wish for any member to die to enable me observation, the death of an elderly person in Yoruba culture is always taken with celebration. I thought there could be one. In lieu of these events, video coverage of a naming ceremony and oral information on funeral ceremonies were used. In addition to time constraints, the limited amount of money for the research inhibited the chances of getting more people to participate in the research. This was because no external funding was available for the research. In order to yield a high response rate for a survey-interview, a researcher needs to make use of face to face meetings, which costs more money and time. Moreover, more than seven people could have been used for the unstructured in-depth interviews. Also, community events such as cultural shows, Yoruba plays, associations' membership fees, concerts and so on, gulped money. Hence some of these events were skipped, thus reducing my participant observation sessions.

Each of those ladies and gentlemen that took part in the research deserves a copy of the thesis. While I cannot make this possible, however, I promise to donate a copy of the research to the Yoruba Community Association's "Library" in Toronto, which is the umbrella association that oversees all socio-cultural Yoruba activities in Toronto and the environs.

#### 4.4 *Modus Operandi* for Data Collection:

##### 4.4.1 The Sample:

My aim was to survey-interview sixty to seventy people. I ended up having fifty subjects--thirty-three male adults and seventeen female adults-- who were willing to take part. Participants were found through snowball sampling, with initial contacts made through a friend and a leader in the community. Initial contact was made with the former through our normal friendly chats, while the latter was contacted over the phone. These two people introduced me to friends and acquaintances. More people were met in the course of going to the community events for participant observation.

My target population was Yoruba individuals, between the ages of 18 and 65 who had been living in the megalopolis of Toronto (including Brampton, Richmond Hill, Mississauga, etc.) for at least two years. "Two years" was used as one of the criteria based on the belief that they could reasonably answer questions pertaining to the community in Toronto. Although the megalopolis of Toronto was a criterion, a Yoruba

person living about forty kilometers north of Toronto was also included, because the person had been involved in community activities in the Toronto area for more than six years. I did not restrict my population to the Nigerian born Yoruba, but to all those of Yoruba parentage in Toronto who considered themselves to be Yoruba. Nearly all of my respondents were born and bred in Nigeria, but some were born in Canada, left when they were young and came back within the last ten years. I could consider all, but one of them to be first generation Canadians.

Six leaders of Yoruba association/clubs were interviewed. There are about ten known Yoruba associations and clubs in Toronto. I used my judgement based on the maturity of the clubs to administer my interviews. Those who took part in the unstructured in-depth interviews were drawn from the pool of those who took part in the survey-questionnaire.

#### 4.5 Data Collection:

Social reality can be studied by a researcher from different methodological angles. The type of method that a researcher adopts will have to depend on the research question itself--what the researcher is interested in studying. A researcher can adopt one, two or more methods to study a phenomenon. I use more than one means to study and understand the Yoruba community--the approach popularly known as "triangulation" in research method literature. This entails the use of multiple, but dissimilar methods that do not share the "same inherent weaknesses" to study a phenomenon (Singleton *et al.*, 1993: 391-392). My main aim is to explore the Yoruba community in order to know their general experiences, especially in Canada and how these relate to "how" and "why" they are maintaining their transnational social fields. This leads me into looking into community activities such as the association formations, and social events such as chieftaincy ceremonies, concerts, picnics, religious practices, etc. In order to study and represent this population, it becomes imperative for me to employ both quantitative and qualitative methods for the study. The former sets out to find out about the behavior, attitudes, characteristics, expectations, self-classification and knowledge (Neuman, 1997: 228) of the group as they relate to their experiences in the pre- and post migration period. The answers given are meant to reveal some important information about the Yoruba through (even though cannot be generalized) the descriptive statistical analysis. The frequencies of the responses will enable the readers to have an easy understanding of the Yoruba in Toronto. The latter is to complement the former in two ways: One, to explain the social world from the "subjects' perspectives", and two, to flesh out issues that came up in the survey-questionnaire but were not given proper documentation. It was found out that the subjects wanted to talk and refused to be subjected to the rubrics and "dictatorship" of survey-interview. They had been used to express themselves and liked to talk about their experiences, "good old days", bad times in the past, the hope for the future and their understanding of issues. *Ipsa facto*, two types of qualitative methods are employed--interviews (unstructured in-depth and semi-structured interviews) and participant observations.

##### 4.5.1 Quantitative:

#### 4.5.1.1 Survey-Interviews:

Before the survey-interview was administered, the instrument was tested on three Yoruba individuals (two males and one female) to look out for complicated questions and common errors. Difficult ambiguous questions were either removed or re-written. Afterwards, fifty individuals were interviewed through a questionnaire administered by myself. A survey-interview was used in order to generate high response rate and as well clarify questions that might not be clear to the respondents. As the research progressed, on a few occasions when questionnaires were given out, most of the subjects did not fill them out and those who did, omitted many questions; consequently a lot of questionnaires were lost in this process. In the case of those not properly filled out, the questionnaires were not used, especially when the respondents could not be located. In a few cases, some respondents filled out the questionnaires, and when they brought them back, ambiguous responses were clarified. Over 30 of the questionnaires were administered in person, while about ten were done over the phone. Face-to-face interviews, even though more expensive, have higher response rates than both mail and self-administered questionnaires (Neuman, 1997: 251; Singleton *et al.*, 1993:261).

The survey-interviews were mostly conducted in the participants' homes. The ones conducted over the phones were in their homes. The questionnaire took an average of 90 minutes to complete. The questionnaire is a mixture of different formats, comprised of open-ended questions, close-ended questions and likert scale formats. The questionnaire is comprised of eighty-two questions in number. Questions were mixed to control for "acquiescence response set". All the respondents are literates, and a large number chose to speak in English throughout the sessions. There were those who spoke English with intermittent injection of Yoruba expressions and phrases. Over all, the predominant language of communication was English, albeit, some respondents needed help in translating some terms, such as "elite" "capitalist" and "clitoris mutilation". While administering the questionnaires, periodic probes were being made to find out more about the respondents' choice of answers, particularly the closed-ended questions. Answers to those probes were either jotted in my field notebook, or written aside in the questionnaire. It was some of these probes and comments by the respondents that contributed to the formulation of the in-depth interview questionnaire. The original copy as it was administered is Appendix A (the survey-interview questionnaire).

#### 4.5.2 Qualitative:

##### 4.5.2.1 Un-Structured and Semi-Structured Interviews:

The unstructured interviews took place in the homes of five of the subjects and the sixth and the seventh persons were interviewed at their places of work. The respondents were chosen from those who responded to the survey-interviews, and one individual was particularly interviewed based on "a special position" he assumed in the community. Conversations were tape recorded with three of them, while important information was jotted down as back up in case of any failure from the tape recorder. Two chose to be interviewed without the use of tape recorders, and it was not convenient to record in the

sixth and seventh persons' place of work. Full notes were taken when the conversations were not recorded. The sessions were very unstructured, even though I had the questionnaire with me which I had tried to memorize and intermittently refer to for clarification. The interviews were not restricted to those questions I had drafted, because other issues, such as memories of the past--relationships, education, conflicts and resolution, family matters, disappointments, etc. came up during the interviews. Interview times ranged from 1 to 4 hours. As said earlier on, there were other issues that arose from the conversations. Table 4.1. is the detailed socio-demographics of the interviewees.

Table 4.1:

Name	Age	Year of Arrival	Home Town	Tape recording/Note taking	Occupation	Duration of Interview	Sex
Pa Adewale	75	1964	Abeokuta	Note-Taking	Retiree	3.5 hours	male
Leader Adeogun	50	1970	Ile-Ife	Tape-Recording	Cab driver	4 hours	male
Mrs. Adegoro	46	1996	Ondo	Note-Taking.	Factory Worker	2.5 hours	Female
Mr. Ola Soley	33	1992	Ikorodu	Note-Taking	Computer Programmer	2 hours	male
Chief Sasere	55	1995	Ibadan	Tape-Recording	Cab driver	3 hours	male
Chief Thompson	50	1972	Ado-Ekiti	Tape-Recording	Self-employed	3hours	male
Miss Falana	23	born in Canada	Owo	Note-Taking	Student	1hour	female

The following list is a summary of the questions asked of each and everyone of the subjects.

1. What was it like when you were growing up? Was there any significant event that affected your attitudes toward leaving for abroad, and your perception of place in the world?

2. What was the general situation of things with respect to the social and economic situations in Nigeria when you left?
3. What was your main reason for coming to Canada?
4. How was your early period--adjustment situation, school, employment, relationships, perception of self in relation to others both here and in Nigeria, etc.?
5. What were the people's ideas and beliefs about abroad then, and how has this changed?
6. What would you say about the proliferation of community associations among the Yoruba people in Toronto?
7. What do you think about the idea of gender equality in "Canadian society"? How has this affected the Yoruba community--a positive or negative impact (please explain)?
8. What do you think about female circumcision? If you had your way, would you perform it on your daughter or grand daughter? Why and why not? Was it performed on you? If no. Why? Is there any stigma attached to it?
9. Where are your two bosom friends from? Do you have Canadian (Whites) as bosom friends? Why and Why not?
10. What is your reaction to people at "home" asking for financial and material assistance? Do you often give out?
11. Is disunity one of the major problems facing the Yoruba in Toronto? In what ways are they disunited? Please explain?
12. What do you think of "Omo Olodu"? Are they giving the Yoruba/Nigerian a bad name?
13. How would you compare yourself to your peers back home who never came here?
14. What has been the most dramatic change about you since you came?
15. Please tell me categories of the Yoruba in Toronto, (e.g. class)?
16. Tell me one or two aspects of Yoruba culture that you are missing in Toronto.
17. What kind of changes do you experience in yourself when you visit Nigeria? If you have not visited Nigeria, what changes do you expect?
18. In your opinion, has coming to Canada been worth it for you? Please explain why and why not.

The semi-structured interviews were particularly conducted with six of the community leaders of various Yoruba associations and clubs. Prior to the meetings, official letters were sent to the leaders telling them about the research and the need for their cooperation in taking part in the interviews (see Appendix B). The letters served as the motivating factor for their willingness to take part. Three were conducted over the phone; one in the mall while the other two conducted with the leaders at the community association events. The interviews took from one and a half to two hours to complete. The following is the list of questions asked of the leaders.

1. How old is the organization?
2. How many members?
3. Age: the range?
4. The main purpose for founding the organization
5. The roles of the association in Canada:
  - A. Social
  - B. Economic
  - C. Political
  - D. Cultural
6. The relationship with other Yoruba associations.
7. The relationship with "Canadian Associations".
8. The relationship with other Yoruba/Nigerian associations outside Canada, e.g. Britain, US.
9. The roles of the association in Nigeria:
  - A. Economic
  - B. Social
  - C. Political (June 12 saga?)
  - D. Humanitarian.
10. What are the roles being played by women within this association.

11. What are the roles being played by youth.
12. What categories of people constitute the membership?  
E.g. professionals, working class, men, etc.
13. How many men and women are members?
14. What does it mean to be a member of this association?
15. Any annual traditional festivals?
16. How do you see this association in 10 years?
17. Major problems facing members of the association.

#### 4.5.2.2 Participant Observation:

The participant observation for this research took place at different settings. This includes social events such as community picnics, musical concerts, a send off party, *iwuye* ceremony, etc.; association meetings; committee on Yoruba Language Literacy Education; church liturgies and celebrations, *asalat* and hall parties. In most of these settings, interactions were made with those present and key informants helped to explain important symbols and practices. In most cases, full notes were taken and jotted down, while in some instances I chose not to write things down to enable me focus on what was happening around me. This allowed me to maintain uninterrupted conversations with those present.

The qualitative part of this research will in part be used to elaborate on the data collected through the quantitative method. It will expiate and provide a more robust set of findings.

#### 4.6 Field Work Experience:

Collection of the data for this study was not as easy as one could have expected. Every stage of the collection constituted a learning process. Initially, I thought I could "waylay" any "Yoruba looking" person in Toronto, speak Yoruba to him/her and then sought his/her participation in my research. I also thought that those that were my acquaintances, whom I considered as "uncles" and "aunts" would rally round, fill out my questionnaires and get as many people as possible for me. In retrospect, all this was a wishful thinking, a figment of my imagination! In the first scenario, at the early stage I went in to meet a prospective respondent at a Yoruba social function; having finished with him, there was a Yoruba male standing outside to whom I introduced myself first in English and then switched over to Yoruba to brief him about my project. He complied to help fill out the questionnaire, but while we were in the middle of the "socio-demo", he excused himself for the use of the bathroom and I never saw him again. I faced so many situations like that after. In regard to the second scenario, a couple who were one way or the other

known as family friends, and had been living in Toronto for more than ten years avoided filling the questionnaire because they found it "too personal".

It did not take me long before I knew that "immigrant communities" are vulnerable and susceptible to betrayal, which made them very suspicious of one another, including their own kind. In the course of convincing a man that I did mean well, showing a copy of my informed consent, he categorically dismissed me by saying he had seen the undercover handing over "the badge and a gun" to two Yoruba men in a café in Chicago. He concluded "man, I cannot trust you, you guys can do anything for 'the man'".

If you are studying members of the Yoruba community, do not expect certain questions to be answered easily, especially, questions that have to do with age or status, such as income and occupation. The Yoruba also attach a social hierarchy to age. Quite often, age goes with respect and privilege. You do not want to declare your age without being diligent about it. This is because you do not want people to have a low level of respect for you. As I continued administering my questionnaire, I began to realize that part of the questionnaire should be skipped until the respondent got some level of comfort, and confidence in me; then return to the omitted ones afterwards. In a number of situations, I guessed people's age, based on certain information that had been revealed to me in the early part of the survey-interview questionnaire. I was succeeding in doing this because of my change of strategy--I started the questionnaire from "less personal" to "highly personal matters", so as to let the respondent gain some level of confidence in me. This is not to say that there were not "those liberal men and women" who even told me their answers before my asking the questions.

Furthermore, questions pertaining to the social status in Canada seemed to be "threatening" to some respondents. Those who were underemployed or unemployed did not feel comfortable answering the questions on occupation and income in Canada. For example, in the case of the latter, they could easily choose from the list of options, but for the former which is open-ended, it is not uncommon for some respondents to answer as "business man". In all frankness, it does not ennoble an educated and highly socially placed person in Nigeria or in the Toronto community to say he is a cab driver or she/he is a factory worker! Initially, when I tried to probe into this in one or two instances, the respondents felt uncomfortable and, ever since then, I never tried to make any further probing in regard to people who gave a generic classification of employment, if the person did not appear open enough. Ironically, in the course of my interaction with the motley lot in the community, I got to know what most people did. Imagine, when I went to do my participant observation at social functions, right outside, I would see people pulling in their cabs up in the driveway at night. Besides, in mingling with the population, you begin to know about everybody. I have to say that situations as explained above could only be understood within the cultural context of the Yoruba immigrants. It is "a little community" where rumor and gossip spread like wild fire. Immigrants tend to have "masks" that they put on, both in their original homes and within the community where they subsist in the Diaspora. The fact that ordinary immigrants within the larger Canadian society are respectable members of their immigrant community explained why people

had to be conscious, especially in the communities where people are becoming more and more rewarded by what they have or can boast of rather than who they are.

It was in the process of administering the survey-interview that I finally decided that I must do in-depth interviews. Survey-interviews seemed too strict for the respondents as I was in control of the pace of the interviews. In most cases, the respondents wanted to talk, and they often complained of the choices as being restrictive in the closed ended questions. In the probes, issues came up that I needed to investigate further. Besides, some respondents, I later discovered, did not reveal truthful information. But most importantly, I found out that the Yoruba are very gregarious, hospitable, kind and generous. Even at the expense of their tight schedule and survival under the drudgery of the capitalist mode of production, most still found time to fill out my questionnaires for me.

By the time I was winding up the survey-interviews, I had developed friendships with a number of the people in the community. This was because I kept meeting those I had interviewed regularly at social functions, and over time, there emerged symbolic "uncles" and "aunts". I can recollect that the last social function attended for the research, I found out that I had known quite a number of the members of the community. In fact, the qualitative aspect of the research afforded me the opportunities to know a number of things. The interviews took place in normal and relaxing settings where respondents entertained me with food and drink. The interviews revealed a lot of issues not only about the Yoruba society in Nigeria and the community in Toronto but also their own experiences in life and the hopes for the future. Abu-Lughod (1991) advocates for "ethnographies of the particular" to complement other anthropological projects (pg. 153). Allowing individuals to recount their experiences allows for the understanding of different individual situations, within the general social forces. Similarly, Narayan (1997) proposes an "enactment of hybridity", which entails fusing the narratives with the anthropological analyses (pp. 35-36).

My experience in the field has taught me that the idea of a "native" researcher having the advantages, opportunity in the field to obtain the subjects, and to provide information and hence a better understanding of the social reality among his/her people; does not usually hold water. As a matter of fact, the clear-cut distinction between "native" and "non-native" should no longer be encouraged. Social researchers, especially anthropologists and sociologists have different identities. In the current state of affairs where there are global flows of trade, idea, politics, migration, etc., people have come to assume different aspects of identity emerging at different times. Narayan (1997) talks about "multiplex identity", by which factors such as "education, gender, sexual orientation, class, race, or sheer duration of contacts may at different times outweigh the cultural identity we associate with insider and outsider status" (pg. 23).

In my own case, as a member of the same immigrant population being studied, I had to rely on key informants to explain certain phenomena to me. This is because I did not know everything about the Yoruba society, and to understand a number of things, I had to depend on the elders of the community. In terms of religion, I do not belong to any sect,

albeit I was brought up with the Roman Catholic tradition. To know about the African Churches, *aladura* in Toronto, I had to rely on an elder in the community who is a member and a key informant. The community of *aladura* did not consider me a member because I had to learn about them. I remember my first participant observation at the *aladura* church--I felt very out of place. Upon entering, I headed straight to the seat right in front of me which was the women's section of the church. I was politely instructed to move to the other side where men sat. I was totally unaware that the *aladura* church had different seating positions for different sexes. In addition to this, by virtue of my pre- and post-migration experience, I had digressed from my tradition a bit. I did not arrive in Canada as a member of a family reunion nor to work and live within the community; I came solo and lived in the early part in a mono-cultural environment with little or no contact with the members of the community. This in part explains why I felt out of place when I started asking people to take part in the survey and at the community social functions. Besides, in the course of our life journey, we develop our own ideology separate from the mainstream beliefs and ideas, due to either those whom we come in contact with or through our vocation. Be it as it may, the study of this society opened up an opportunity to discover some aspects of the culture through reading and quest for knowledge. Nevertheless, I believe that the study and the collection of data for this research *may* be accomplished just as well by the so-called "non-natives". The so-called outsider *may* also do as well as the so-called natives after a protracted relationship with the group being studied. A good example is Knowles' (1997) research with the Jamaican seasonal workers (pp. 53-56). In fact, as Barrett (1998) aptly puts it, they (i.e. the "non-natives") could even have an advantage over the "natives", if they "study up"--i.e. studying those in power (pg.19).

In the next two chapters and the conclusion, the data collected for the research will be analyzed. Once again, readers are advised that the findings from the quantitative method cannot be generalized to the Yoruba community in Toronto and elsewhere. This is because of the method used for the collection of the data which was non-random sampling. However, as non-inferential as this could be, the descriptive statistical analysis used, complemented by the qualitative aspect of the research is robust enough. Overall, the methodology can immeasurably illumine the community and provide the foundation for further exploratory research, and opportunities for even explanatory studies. Also, the findings can provide the necessary information for those social policy makers and those involved in delivering public services for immigrant groups.

## Chapter Five

### What is the Yoruba Transnational Community?

#### 5.1 Preamble

The conception of a community in sociology and anthropology rests on the notions of commonality, solidarity, and shared history, interests and identity. Members of community have something in common; they consider themselves as part of one collectivity. A sense of community may derive from a shared socio-structural placement,

such as class in the Marxian sense; or from common status and experiences which may not be restricted to class as in the Weberian approach (Goldring, 1996: 74; Chavez, 1994); or from the Durkheimian division of labor where the interdependence of individuals facilitates solidarity, but of a different form from that of pre-industrial mechanical solidarity (Durkheim, 1933). Those engaged in academic projects dealing with international migration define community as including "sending" and "receiving" regions, influenced by social networks that cross borders (Goldring, 1996:75). Sociology of international migration recognizes the possibility of community without propinquity--community that transverses two or more nation-states. This notion of community is influenced by the impact of communication technologies and cross-border migration--relational notion of community (Griswold, 1994: 139). Community can be imagined as in Anderson's (1983) affirmation that national communities are "imagined political entities". It has also been argued that community can have two faces, both "covert" and "overt" presentation of community. The covert and overt analysis of community is akin to Stokholm's (1998) "front stage" and "back stage" analytical levels of community (pp. 63-91). This can also apply to the Yoruba community.

According to Tololyan (1996), modern diasporas now include entire ethnic, racial, national and religious groups outside their homelands. This applies to the Yoruba in Canada or elsewhere around the world. According to Goldring (1996), conceptions of community as involving modern migrants should not be analytically limited to national origin and destination, but should include "multiple and consistent statuses and identities adopted by or imposed upon migrants who live in the context of more than one nation". This is imperative in view of the fact that modern migrants occupy disparate class positions and are engaged in non-unitary conceptions of racial/ethnic strata, conflictual gender ideologies and more than one hegemony of nationalism (pg. 76).

The Yoruba community in Toronto is a community of social relations and social networks, of shared history, experiences and memories; it is a community of hierarchy characterized by divisions based on economic differences, gender, age, education, politics, lifestyle and generation. It is not a monolithic community, it is a community that is fluid in definition, porous to entry and exit. People exit or enter through marriage, profession, death and so on. Rouse (1987), describes the density of circulation of goods, people, ideas and information across sites on both sides of the US-Mexico border as "transnational migrants circuits". The transnational practices of the Yoruba in Toronto are not limited to the movement of people, but circulation of symbols, ideas and material culture.

According to postmodernist scholars, transnationalism enables ethnic and cultural groups to challenge the claim to universality by asserting their particularisms. The assertion of particularism has been linked to the post-industrial changes in the economy and technology. This postmodernist perspective is a form of resistance against the idea of a cultural homogenization through the global transformation of mass-market consumerism and global capitalism. According to McLellan and Richmond (1994), postmodernism is a paradigm shift, which involves among other developments, "the emergence as political forces of a number of groups that have traditionally been excluded from the political

forum" (pg. 665). It is imperative that groups are resisting and rejecting the dominant metanarratives such as imperialism, Western liberalism and communism. These particularisms ensuing should be seen as existing within the global metanarratives in which they are embedded. This is because they lose meaning when they are bifurcated from the larger globalization process (McLellan and Richmond, 1994: 666). Comaroff (1996), suggests that ethnic particularisms must find a place within cultural universalism. This would be the synthesis of ethnonationalism and Euronationalism. The former lays claim to primordial roots and has essentialist and metaphysical roots, whereby membership is by ascription. On the other hand, the latter is pertaining to the ideals of the secular state founded "on universalist principles of citizenship and social contract" (pg. 175). Heteronationalism, according to Comaroff (1996), is a means of reconciling these two positions. The objective of heteronationalism is to accommodate cultural diversity within a civil society. But fair devolution of power and the dissolution of hegemonies are rarely accomplished because the dominant class still holds sway over politics and economy (pg. 177).

There is a place for the Yoruba within Comaroff's heteronationalism. The Yoruba by virtue of their history and experiences within the postindustrial/modern world can also assert their own "notion of particularism". According to Ajayi and Alagoa (1974), the Africans maintain their sense of continuity through their own recent past and a glorious remote past. They write, *inter alia*, that the African's "historical tradition emphasized the solidarity and uniqueness of each community. It was the source of strength that made the African so resilient. It ensured his ability to absorb and refashion foreign influences in the light of his total historical experience" (pg. 126). If this is the case, the socio-historical vicissitudes of the Africans cannot debar them from constructing an adaptive mechanism. *Ipsa facto*, the Yoruba transnationals in Toronto may not be passive as it might have been presumed.

This chapter sets out to analyze the transnational practices of the Yoruba community in Toronto based on the data collected. The chapter is thereby divided into five sections. In section one, I bring to the fore the brief history of the community in Toronto, and the composition of the members of this community. Section two examines the cultural practices of the Yoruba in Toronto. Section three looks at the effects of globalization and neoliberalism on the Canadian society; and how groups are differently affected. Section four examines the conditions leading to transnationalism and analysis--focusing on 1) the colonial and postcolonial anomie, 2) racial barriers, 3) the place of kinship as culturally embedded, 4) voluntary organizational practices and individual search for social validation, 5) the incorporative practices of the nation-state and the primordial elements within it, and 6) political exigencies. And the last section discusses the configuration and reaffirmation of power relations in the community.

## 5.2 The Evolution of the Yoruba Community in Toronto:

Before the mid-1960s, non-Europeans were not encouraged by the Canadian immigration policy to immigrate to Canada because Canada was considered "unsuitable" for them. But this policy was replaced with a "points system" based on education, profession,

occupation and language in 1967. The result was a rapid rise in immigration flows from Asia and the Carribean, then smaller but notable flows from Africa (Simmons, 1996: 2; Bolaria and Li, 1988: 21). In spite of the pre-1960s unfavorable immigration policy towards non-Europeans, there is no iota of doubt that Africans must have been coming to North America prior to the 1940s, albeit, not necessarily to settle but to study. This is based on the fact that early African nationalist leaders studied overseas, especially in Europe and North America, particularly in the US. It is quite apparent that Nigerians have been going to Britain since the early part of this century owing to their "colonial affinity" with the latter.

Information has it that the earliest known Yoruba in Toronto came in the 1930s; "an Ondo man" they said. While facts regarding to the date in which the first Yoruba arrived in Canada are not readily available, records do have it that the early Nigerian nationalist fighters studied in Europe and the United States. For example, two of the most celebrated Nigerian nationalist leaders, Dr. Nnamdi Azikwe and Chief Obafemi Awolowo studied in the 1920s and the 1940s in the US and Britain respectively (Segal, 1962: 231-245). *Ipsa facto*, it would not be unusual to have the Yoruba studying in Canada at this time. What we know for sure is that people of color, especially those outside of Europe, from Africa and the Caribbean did not start settling down in Canada in large number until the middle of the 1960s when Canada shifted from a Eurocentric and racist immigration policy to a "points" based immigration selection system (Simmons, 1996: 2).

One old member of the community, who left Nigeria before 1958 for Europe before coming to Canada in 1964, claimed that he met Nigerians and the Yoruba who were studying in Toronto at that time. Most early immigrants came to study, and left after their studies to serve in Nigeria. This continued until the mid-80s when the change in Nigerian economy resulted in most people staying longer. This has continued on until now. It is also pertinent to add that those who left for Nigeria in the 1960s and especially those of the 1970s after their sojourn in Canada had been returning to Canada since the middle of the 1980s.

In the early period, most Nigerians came to the West to study because studying abroad was a corollary to prestige and honor within the Yoruba and Nigerian community. Those who went to the West, especially *ilu oba* and the US (where most came to study in the period before the independence in 1960) were regarded as "little gods". On their arrival, dignitaries and people of high caliber in the community including the *baale* and *oba* met them at the airport with dances and jubilation. Pa Adewale who grew up in the 1930s and 1940s in Nigeria, who currently lives in Brampton, Ontario left Nigeria before the independence; he had this to say,

"those who traveled and came back returned as heroes. All women loved you, and would want to marry you. Everyone, including the children and adults alike loved you... they did not want to harm you or endanger your life. They only wanted to appreciate you for bringing honor to the community...they never asked for a brass farthing..."

He adjusted himself in his chair and reminisced "my child, those were really good old days". Also Chief Sasere who happened to travel out of Nigeria in the 1970s for the first time but grew up in the 1960s in Nigeria claimed that, traveling abroad was very prestigious and was exciting. He remembered the olden days and sang one of the old songs popular among the school children then, and still now, "... ma di eni atata, ma di eni aponle,...ilu oyinbo wu mi lololopo mosi ma de be o"--meaning, I love the White man's land with all my earth, and I pray to be there some day". Even though, colonialism is now history, the old ideas and beliefs do not die easily, rather the strand continues. In other words, people still have to deal with the colonial legacy. Today, traveling abroad is not as prestigious as in those days, but people still consider it prestigious. Mrs. Adegoroye who came about three years ago states vaingloriously "my brother, I have really changed a lot, I am now more civilized and advanced than those friends I left behind, they look at me with pride...whenever I speak with them over the phone, I could feel the respect in their voice". Also Miss Falana who was born in Canada, but lived in Nigeria for three years in the 1990s completing her high grade school, reveals that she was being treated specially from other students because she was "omo oyinbo". She adds, "I was exempted from punishments, such as cutting the grass and flogging".

One informant, a "returnee" who came in the early 1970s to study, and went back to Nigeria for a short period of time in the 1980s and later came back to Canada, said that today, people do not like you simply because you go abroad, but because of your money. Then, they loved you for who you are and not because of your money. He concludes with disappointment "if you go home now and refuse to return to your destination abroad, your family members are gonna get rid of ya; not that they hate you, but because they do not want any pest--if you ain't useful, they discard you...it was not like this then".

### 5.2.1 The "Yoruba Cargo Cult!":

These days, the social construction attached to traveling abroad is akin to Armah's (1969) allegory of Ghanian's society of the 1970s. Armah uses the "cargo cults mentality" of the Melanesian tribes as an analogy comparable to the Ghanian society of the 1960s and the 1970s. Armah (1969) speaks through Baako, who says *inter alia*:

"...at any rate it is clearly understood that the been-to has chosen, been awarded, a certain kind of death. A beneficial death, since cargo follows his return. Not just cargo, but also importance, power, radiating influence capable of touching ergo elevating all those who in the first instance have suffered the special bereavement caused by the been-to's going away... So how close are we to Melanesian islands? How close is everybody?..." (pp. 223-229).

Indeed the Yoruba society of the 1980s and the 1990s has been very close to Melanesian. Traveling abroad is being associated with acquisition of material wealth and there is over-reliance of community members and individual family members on the migrants, believing that they (migrants) have the power to solve all their socio-economic problems. The Yoruba society now places so much importance on *eru*. This implies that many travelers are now being respected less for their intellect and non-monetary contribution to

the community, but more for what they could deliver in terms of *eru* and money. It is not an exaggeration that family members could destroy one of their kinds who fails to meet their financial and material needs, just as Baako was destroyed for failing to "make them consume things we have taken no care nor trouble to produce" (Armah, 1969: 284).

Without any fear of contradiction, the recent immigrants may be admired more because of their economic edge over those left behind-- the ability to consume more than them, but also they admire them for coming to *ilu oyinbo*, which has been historically been socially rewarding. Succinctly, we can say that the early comers came mostly to seek "glory" and not necessarily "gold", while the new comers come mostly for "gold", used to acquire some "glory". *Ipsa facto*, members of the Yoruba community in most of the metropolitan centers of the West, where material goods are preponderant, are a motley lot. They comprise all categories of people; educationists, researchers, students, drug peddlers, visitors, small entrepreneurs, fraudsters, refugees, professionals and so on, "digging for gold" by all sorts of means. Compared to the previous era, the categories are now heterogenous--as Chief Thomson puts it, "Canada is now a rubbish, not as it used to be any more, every Tom, Dick and Harry now come, man I am sick of this place now".

Table 5.1: Purpose of Coming to Canada: 48% of those surveyed came to Canada for economic reason; 32% for further educational study; and the rest came to Canada for other reasons, such as children joining their parents, wives joining spouses, etc.

Purpose	Frequency	Percent
Economic	24	48.0
Studying	16	32.0
Other	10	20.0
Total	50	100

### 5.3 Cultural Practices:

#### 5.3.1 Gender Relations:

It was in the middle of the summer 1999, that a visiting Yoruba band from Nigeria was entertaining the Yoruba audience in Toronto. Yoruba of all ages, classes, professions, gender and education were present. It was a free for all night as the musician had been notorious for vulgarity. His vulgarity has to do with his too much talk about sex, sexual relationships and explicitly unrestrained mention of men and women genitalia. For example, the leader of the band could ask his audience, "ta lo ti ja pata ri!"--meaning, how many men have destroyed women's underwear, and a vast majority of the male sex signaled with their hands in ululation, while the women danced on. Those in "the

traditional school" might find his expressions offensive, while I doubt if those subscribing to the Western feminist ideology could tolerate him. But this night, everyone came out in droves to have a good time, and to take an opportunity to express themselves. Obesere, the leader of the group did not disappoint anyone.

There was an instance when a woman caught the attention of a few people around her. She was so enthralled with the lyrics, and perhaps the vulgarity that she charged the atmosphere for a brief while. She looks pale in complexion, but seemed like she used to be dark naturally. She had "bleached" her skin. This is not an unusual when you are out in the Yoruba social functions (it is not uncommon to see men and women who have bleached their skin in order to attain "lighter skin"). This woman was enjoying the song, rotating her bottom at different angles and in the end, she protruded it. Out of nowhere, a middle-aged Yoruba man with a pony tail emerged (a "full blood" Yoruba man with a pony tail! He had managed to get some chemical to straighten his hair. Usually women do it, but I think this man admired the "oyinbo pony tails" too much), danced on and kept getting closer to the woman until he finally got very close, and managed to adjust the most private part of his body to touch the woman's bottom. The Yoruba men and women were not used to that kind of "explosive" dancing, and being aware of what was happening looked on. They did not seem disgusted but were "pleasantly surprised". When the rhythm changed, the momentum changed, at least temporarily--the "explosive dance" only lasted for some three minutes. Shortly after, those dancing got less interested, and wanted to leave the middle of the dance floor, when came around another middle-aged Yoruba man, who in a friendly but serious way yelled at the woman that delivered the "explosive dance"; "madam, that dance was very outrageous, if you were my wife, I would never allow you to go out for two weeks". It was funny the way he said it in Yoruba and everyone including the man and the woman laughed. Then she replied, "well, there is nothing I can do about it. That is how I do my thing, I rock wherever I go, I don't care...it is a free world". All those who were aware of the incident laughed more. It was one of those lightening moments which made everyone happy. I learnt later that it was Madam Aduke, a visitor from Houston, Texas.

For most Yoruba Nigerians, females and males, home and abroad, the man is the head of the house. The leadership is considered as naturally given. Some people might have an opposing views to this, but for the majority of the people, any contrary view to this is an act of rebellion. In the Diaspora, situations might have been altered a little bit due to the difference in social structure, the feminist movement and the universality of equality and rights; however, the Yoruba still believe that "oko ni olori aya"--man is the "boss"! (see Table 5. 2) In the survey-interviews, one of the questions was whether "oko ni olori aya"; 62% of the population "strongly agree". Only 12% of both groups "strongly disagree" . When the difference between the male and female responses are considered, using Chi-Square, the female population differs slightly in their agreement with the male population--lower agreement among women than men, but there is no significance at .76519.

Table 5.2: "Oko ni olori aya": The husband as the natural leader of his wife:

Agreement	Frequency	Percent
strongly disagree	6	12.0
disagree	5	10.0
agree	8	16.0
strongly agree	31	62.0
Total	50	100.0

Other Responses to Gender Issues:

Table 5.3: Men Should not Help with Domestic Work: Most respondents are strongly in support (54%) of men taking part in domestic chores.

Agreement	Frequency	Percent
strongly disagree	27	54.0
disagree	11	22.0
agree	7	14.0
strongly agree	5	10.0
Total	50	100.0

Table 5.4: Whether Polygyny is good: Most of the respondents are not in support of men having more than one wife. 68% "strongly disagree".

Agreement	Frequency	Percent
strongly disagree	34	68.0
disagree	5	10.0
agree	5	10.0

strongly agree	6	12.0
Total	50	100.0

Table 5.5: Female Circumcision Must Continue as a Cultural Practice: 62 % of the Yoruba survey-interviewed are opposed to the old practice of female circumcision. But 16% are still strongly in support of the practice.

Agreement	Frequency	Percent
strongly disagree	31	62.0
disagree	8	16.0
agree	3	6.0
strongly agree	8	16.0
Total	50	100.0

Table 5.6: A Woman Can Drink Liquor With the Husband at a Party/Social Function: 44% are strongly in favor of women having the same "privilege" as men when it comes to liquor consumption. And 32% are not in support of such "equality".

Agreement	Frequency	Percent
No Response	1	2.0
strongly disagree	16	32.0
disagree	4	8.0
agree	7	14.0
strongly agree	22	44.0
Total	50	100.0

Table 5.7: A Woman has no rights to know how much her husband Earns!: 20% "strongly agree" that the wife is not entitled to know how much her husband earns as

income. 52% "strongly disagree", and believe that the wife has the right to know her husband's salary.

Agreement	Frequency	Percent
Strongly disagree	26	52.0
disagree	5	10.0
agree	9	18.0
strongly agree	10	20.00
Total	50	100.0

-

Table 5.8: Who Should give new born baby a name?: 86% of the respondents hold to the position that both parents—mum and dad are the most eligible to give new born baby a name. 10% believe that the father has the right to do so.

Response	Frequency	Percent
father	5	10.0
both parents—mum and dad	43	86.0
all members of the family (including extended family members)	2	4.0
Total	50	100.0

The inception of modernity is not without some social impacts on all societies around the world. But the degree of its effect varies from one society to another. The awareness and the propagation of oppositional ideas and opportunities add to the ways by which people are breaking out of their ossified shells of acquiescence to oppression and domination. While men are still considered the leader of the house, women contest their power. There are three major ways by which gender relations operate within the Yoruba community in Toronto. One is total rejection of patriarchy; two, reconciliation of the Western notion of equality of sexes with the Yoruba traditional dominance of the male sex. And three is acquiescence. In the first case, a family may break up, the children become separated and

there are fights over properties, especially the house if they have one. This often leads to ill-feelings. Usually the woman is blamed by the members of the community for allowing "domestic feuds" that could have been amicably settled to get out of hand. Domestic problems are considered private matters that should not spill over into the public realms of the police and of the law. The woman is thereby considered wayward, having no regard for the custom and being inconsiderate of the future of the kids. One of the community leaders, a highly respected woman interviewed, told me that if a woman has any consideration for the children, she should not expect the husband to totally submit to the Western notion of equality (still contested in the West!) that asks for too much—parity of power, negating the concept of "husband is the boss". According to her, a Yoruba woman who expects the husband to take the full responsibility of the domestic chores, such as cooking, laundering, grocery-shopping, and cleaning is deluding herself. The man might do them if he wants to, but if he refuses and the woman wants to force him, the man would not give in and the family will break up, and when "two elephants fight, it is the grass that will suffer—the children", she said. She concludes that her own husband is not totally domineering, even though she concedes the leadership to the husband but claims that they both respect each other and both have their individual roles to play. She believes in negotiation in marriage, and consideration for the impact of incessant fights at home as they have serious socio-psychological impacts on children. She criticized an undue claim of parity with men, as this was not working for the Yoruba community. There were other women who chose to take this "middle road". The third type includes the most traditional type of women. These are the women who work and still take the domestic work as their responsibility. The man has total control over the household. They agree to the dominance of the husband, and decisions could hardly be made without the husband's consent. The man may also have more than one wife.

There is no total equality between men and women in the Yoruba community, but women might appear to have more power and freedom than their counterparts in Nigeria. This is because most of the women interviewed have been through Western education, and their daughters and sons might have been influenced by a "more liberated ideology" in the Canadian society. They also gain from their children studying in the Canadian higher institutions of learning where they mingle with other cultures which are "liberal to women". For example, a daughter confronted her mother for circumcising her. Also, the accessibility to wage earning employment enables women to be less or not at all dependent on men. The composite index originally designed to measure the level of patriarchy in the community did not meet my expectation because all the indicators are not unanimously agreed to by the respondents. Hence, they have been analyzed based on the responses to individual indicators (see Tables 5.2-5.8).

The gender division of labor is still a practice in the community. Roles such as cooking, child care, cleaning and several domestic chores are still considered women's. However, in individual homes, these roles are not often clear-cut as one would expect it to be based on the cultural practices prevalent in the society of origin. This division becomes more glaring at preparations for association social functions. Men take the responsibilities for drinks, music, settings and renting of hall for the ceremonies while women take care of

the food, *ere ibile*, decorations, clothing and the like (Participant Observation, summer: 1999).

In terms of leadership roles within the community, women are not restricted from holding any posts in the community. Women have always been executive members of most of the associations. For example, the Yoruba Community Association, the largest Yoruba Association in Toronto had a woman's president in the past, and other associations have had, and do have women as leaders as well. Does this mean that it is "women's world" or the free world of Madam Aduke? Are men overwhelmingly in support of equal opportunities with women? No--for example, the community is accommodating women in all these leadership positions because of the nature of the community in Toronto. As one leader said, "we only allow these women into these associations because this is Canada...our fathers and mothers at home have their separate associations...but here to have enough people, we need them...". Also, one association which has a woman as their leader could not have done otherwise, because the woman had been in Canada before most of the members of the association, and was even the motivating factor for the formation of the group. One of the leaders notes that the degree of "equalitarianism" allowed in the community meetings make many men uncomfortable, as tension can be felt when women oppose men's view points at meetings. As a matter of fact, one association does not allow women as members, because the members believe that women's participation in the association signals the failure of the association, a moribund. More importantly of all, the husband is still the head of the house, not only in theory but also in practice.

All in all, women are more conscious of their rights, and many of them compete with men, albeit not without conflicts. These conflicts often lead to family breakdowns, violence and disunity within the group. However, groups revert to traditional measures of settling rifts before they explode to government intervention. For example, the Ile Oluji Cultural Association constituted the Council of Elders as a group to settle internal rifts.

5.3.2 Death: The saddest aspect of the Yoruba experience in Canada which people are reluctant to talk about is death. Death is inevitable as we all know. Death is never expected in the community, considering the fact that most members of the community are under 60 years of age. According to the information gathered, few of the members have died in Canada. But when such a sad incident occurred, members rallied round to get financial donations toward the funeral costs. In most cases, people do not hold any reception after the burial, as in the Yoruba traditional burial of those who left many older survivors behind (Pa Adewale, interview, summer: 1999). If a person is diagnosed with a terminal illness that may eventually lead to death, that person may have to return to Nigeria to look at the possibility of alternative medicine, which is traditional. People often help with the financial costs of the trip back to Nigeria. I gathered that the members of the community were very supportive in unfortunate situations like this. One leader categorically revealed that, no matter how old a person was, if he or she died in Canada, it was still considered sad, because Canada was not a place to die. The Yoruba believed that in the old age, it was not necessary to be in Canada. The expectation was that, one must die among his or her people. This belief is not too far from the Yoruba adage of "ile

labo si mi oko"--dying on a journey is not wished for--home is a place of rest. *Ipsa facto*, Canada is not considered a home.

5.3.3 Naming: In Nigeria, the Yoruba often do their naming of the child on the eighth day following birth. Originally, a male child is named on the 7th day, a female on the 9th, while the twins on the 8th day. But most people now do it on the 8<sup>th</sup>. In Toronto, many Yoruba do not name their children as in the traditional form. This is in part due to the socio-economic system of the Canadian society. There are those who will be working on the 8th day, and the morning designated for the traditional practice is not feasible because people will be working then. Those who want to do the naming ceremony do it at their own convenient time, while some do not do it at all. The Yoruba do not traditionally hold baby showers but in Canada, it has been adopted to help the woman who is about to deliver. Usually, baby showers are done for the first child of the family in Canada. That is, if the woman had had a child in Nigeria before coming, they will still have a baby shower to help out, even though the child is not a first child. A baby shower is in part meant to emotionally and materially help the mother of a new baby and her family. It is very helpful in a situation when the woman just arrived in the Yoruba community.

5.3.4 Marriage: The Yoruba still believe strongly in the customary wedding involving the *idana*. Even couples may get married in the registry here, and go to Nigeria for the traditional part or/and the church wedding for Christians and *so yigi* for Muslims. These serve two major functions for the couple. One, it enables members of the family to get involved--both the extended and nuclear--as witnesses to the wedding. And secondly, it is a means of getting some social validation in the community. Women, in particular, found the traditional part very important and symbolic, and felt that the husband had not married her without fulfilling the customary obligations.

It is considered disrespectful for some Yoruba if the husband does not fulfill his traditional role before marrying the woman. Nevertheless, how a couple organizes their marriage ceremony could be economically determined. There was an instance when a man went to his fiancé's home town in Nigeria for the introduction, while the wife remained in Toronto. Phone calls were made back and forth during the arrangement to keep the woman aware of what was going on. The video of the event was brought back to Toronto by the husband. There are those who celebrated their wedding ceremonies here in Canada, but had the traditional part put on by their families in their absence.

### 5.3.5 Religion:

5.3.5.1 The Muslim Yoruba in Toronto: The Yoruba Muslims in Toronto worship in any mosque that is close to them at the appropriate time. The Yoruba in Toronto do not have a specially designated place of worship. Those who took part in the survey claimed that they worshiped in any mosque with other Muslims in Toronto. However, on Sundays, the Yoruba Muslims meet for *asalat*, where they share Islamic knowledge--read the Quoran and the Hadith of the prophets and pray together. It is a spiritual fellowship. They show their solidarity to the Islamic faith. Also, new members in the Yoruba community are welcomed and are given orientations. The *asalat* can also be a place for some members to

seek recognition. For example, people spend US dollars to seek for prayer for their loved ones. This is made public for others to recognize (Participant Observation, Summer: 1999). Sunday *asalat* for the Yoruba Muslim community is not only a place to fulfil one's spiritual obligation to *Allah*, but also an opportunity to meet with one another for sharing information about work, home country and upcoming community events.

5.3.5.2 The Christian Yoruba in Toronto: The Yoruba Christian churches contribute in no small measure to both the spiritual and other social needs of the community. The Yoruba Christians split their time between attending the orthodox, Pentecostal and the *aladura* churches. Most Christians surveyed claim that they go to the *aladura* churches. Many of them were members of this Christian sect before they came while there are those who became the members of the church on their arrival. These churches--the *Celestial Church of Christ*, the *Cherubim and Seraphim*, the *Christ Apostolic Church and World Soul Wining Evangelical Ministry*, claim to have the power to cure people from evil spirits and to combat the power of witches. They have the divine power to predict the future and avert impending danger for those who seek for their assistance. During their revivals and Sunday masses, they could go into a trance. This happens when they commune with the *malikas*--holy spirits. When they are "in spirits", they deliver messages to any members of the church. Messages from the *malikas* could be delivered to people at random (Participant Observations, summer and the fall: 1999). From time to time, leaders of other *aladura* churches from Nigeria come to visit them. Whenever they come, they lead fellowship for the whole group. Members share a sense of security and the community is an abode of protection against the world full of sin and hatred.

The songs, drums and the dances are very much Yoruba, albeit, they mix their songs with English, Ibo and Hausa to make other people feel welcomed. Like their Muslim counterparts, the church events such as the *ajodun*, annual thanksgiving and other social events provide the fora for members to seek for recognition. No doubt, the *aladura churches* are purely Yoruba zones!

In the survey-interview, only one person claimed to believe in the African Traditional Religion (A.T.R). This is a religion that most Yoruba do not publicly claim any more. But one way or the other, African religion has certain elements in common with the other religions-- it is fused with some aspects of Islam and the African churches. Most of the Christians are aware of this. There was an incident that occurred in one of the Yoruba churches in Montreal which was shared by a member of a Toronto *aladura* church as a testimony and a thanksgiving to God for saving his life. He was beaten with a Yoruba magical charm by a shepherd of the church, *olonde* which caused him a serious headache that almost killed him. I must clarify; the African religion is not reliant on the use of magic, however, the practice of magic and charm is one of the elements. And I must also state that the fact that some members of the Yoruba Christian churches still associate themselves with some of the Yoruba traditional elements does not exonerate them from fusing traditionalism with Christianity, even though they consider the traditionalists as "evil doers" and "primitive". Moreover, there is quite a number of Yoruba who publicly profess to Christianity, but covertly patronize the *adahunse/babalawo* for various spiritual helps. Among these Yoruba are people of high standing in the community, such

as the politicians, lawyers, doctors, business men and women, professors, etc. But in the public, most of them (if not all) deny the traditionalists.

Table 5.9: Religious Affiliations of the Yoruba in Toronto: 68% profess to Christianity; 30% to Islam and 2% believe in the Yoruba traditional religion.

Religion	Frequency	Percent
Christianity	34	68.0
Islam	15	30.0
African Traditional Belief	1	2.0
Total	50	100.0

#### 5.4 Typology of the Yoruba in Toronto:

The Yoruba Transnational community can be classified into the following social strata based on my field work--survey-interviews and participant observation. The following major groups can be identified: namely, the "returnees" and the "stayers", small business owners, working class--blue collar, white collar; and there are professionals such as dentists, lawyers, accountants, doctors, management consultants, pharmacists, musicians, insurance brokers, etc. Others are students, priests, visitors, refugees, traders, unemployed and the *omo olodu*. I will caution the readers that these categories are not clear-cut as they are not mutually exclusive of one another. For example, a medical practitioner could as well engage in a small business; and so also a small business owner working in the factory to make both ends meet.

##### 5.4.1 The "Returnees" and the "Stayers":

The returnees are those who came in the early period, in the 1960s and the 1970s. They went home after their studies but came back in the 1980s and the 1990s (obviously, they are still returning). Two types have been identified. Those who came here to study in various universities in Canada in the 1960s and the 1970s (Type I), and their children who were born in Canada (Type II) but left with them and are now returning, most of them to continue their studies. Most returnees now studying went with their parents, who left to take up various appointments in Nigeria in the 1970s and the early 1980s. The Type I returnees went back to serve their country and contribute to the community that they left behind. The Nigerian economy was booming in the 1970s up to the early 1980s. Leader Adeogun, a returnee, who was in Austria for a short period before coming to live and study in Canada from 1972 to 1980 told me that he got a job immediately he arrived in Nigeria in 1980. He said, that even though there were opportunities to work here then, few people wanted to stay. He also added that, when people stayed here and did not

return, the family became apprehensive because they (members of the family) might lose respect in the community--*omo re gbe sajo*—a disparaging expression! People see your long overstay without coming home at all as a sign of failure or lack of accomplishment. Going back home after one's study was a source of joy for many families - "they did not really want your money, but they wanted you to come home and contribute your own quota to the community".

The stayers continued to live in Canada without going back home for good at any time. Pa Adewale intended to go back home after two years in Canada, but could not go back because the money he was making was not enough for him to go back home to settle. Quite a number of stayers had been married before they came here. One of the informants told me that with the help of her parents, her husband was sent to Canada to study in 1974, and from time to time, he returned home to see the family members. Many stayers visited (and still visit) home from time to time to spend time with their relatives. There are a number of reasons why they continued to stay. One, they could not compete with their skills with those who studied in Nigeria, compared with the early period when they had privileges over those who studied in Nigeria. Two, some did not have enough money to allow them to comfortably settle down. Three, those who had wives and children at home considered Canada a place of work, while Nigeria was home where one can rest. Some stayers had their wives and kids at home, and they returned to them seasonally. Their family members were left behind to enable the children to learn the Yoruba culture, which allowed the traditional mode of discipline. For example, Mrs. Ogundipe did not join her husband who left in 1972 until 1992. All their children were born in Nigeria and they only came to join the family about five years ago. Four, there were those who got married to non-Yoruba women, and did not really have any serious reason to leave their family behind. Five, adapting back to Nigeria where the infrastructure was of no match to that of Canada was another inhibiting factor. And lastly, for those who had not really had the opportunity to acquire recognizable skills at home, they were not proud enough to go back because people would make fun of them.

Table 5. 10: Occupational Classification of the Respondents in Canada: 42% of those survey-interviewed work in the blue-collar sector, such as factory, cab driving, cleaning, baby-sitting, etc. 34% are in white collar sector, such as insurance brokerage, computer programming, accounting, medicine, etc.

Occupational Groups:	Frequency	Percent
blue collar	23	42.0
student	8	20.0
white-collar	17	34.0
self-employed	2	4.0

Total	50	100.0
-------	----	-------

Table 5.11: Formal Educational Attainments of the Respondents: 80% of the respondents have a post-secondary education; and 16% are studying in different post-secondary institutions.

Formal Education	Frequency	Percent
university graduates	29	58.0
college graduates	11	22.0
high school graduates	2	4.0
students in the university	7	14.0
students in the college	1	2.0
Total	50	100.0

### 5.5 Why the Heterogeneity!:

There is no doubt that more people have been migrating since the mid-1980s for a variety of reasons; which make the new wave of migration different from the early period. Compared to the early period, more people are now coming with the intention to stay rather than to come here for a brief period of time to study, and then return. Also, more and more people are making contacts with home in various ways than in previous times.

Both in the past and in the present, the Yoruba have been coming to the West for various reasons. One, people come for accumulation of prestige and higher status. The attachment of prestige to traveling to the West was very high in the early stages, higher in the colonial period than in the post colonial period, but much less now. Even though it is much less now, it is still socially rewarding to travel overseas. In the early period, most people came here to study for a variety of reasons. For those who came during the colonial period, they came to study because most academic and professional training was unavailable in Nigeria then. Back then it was very difficult to travel overseas, partly due to little or no kinship connections. There were three different ways of traveling overseas then. One was through parental sponsorship for those whose parents were rich. Two was through self-sponsorship; in this case, you would have to arrange for an admission into university in the country of your ambition. And three was through government scholarship, given to those who excelled in their academics (Pa Adewale, Interview: 1999).

After independence, there was not really a high need for people to travel overseas to study, as there were similar opportunities in Nigeria however, people still traveled to study. In spite of the relatively good economy of Nigeria in the 1960s, and the oil boom of the 1970s, gaining admission into the university in Nigeria was very difficult. Most people would have to be able to pass the rigorous West-African School Certificate Examination/General Certificate of Education (WASCE/GCE). Going to a good school made it easier because WASCE/GCE was a tough examination to pass. Those who gained admission into the Nigerian universities then were well respected, because one, they must have come out from their high schools with flying colors and secondly, they must have been lucky to gain an admission into the high school in the first instance. For those who wanted to go to the university but could not have access to one in Nigeria owing to the strict admission requirements, traveling abroad was a possibility, not only for the sake of studying but also because it was still socially rewarding (Leader Adeogun, Interview: 1999). *Ipsa facto*, in the period before the 1980s, most people came here to study.

The economic problems gradually metamorphosed into political repression and the resistant imbroglio that accompanied it. By the 1990s, this had reached a crescendo and was at the maximum after the June 1993 annulment of the election in Nigeria. The whole world knew what happened in Nigeria on the 12th of June, 1993. The military annulled the election believed to have been won by a business tycoon of the Yoruba ethnic group, who was "popularly elected" by the people. As a result of this, there was a mass opposition to military adventure and its obduracy in Nigeria. Ill-feelings developed against the Northern ruling elites by the Yoruba because it was believed in many quarters that the annulment was ethnically motivated. Even though some people were really being persecuted--the political repression and the clamp down on the opposition gave an impetus to many Nigerians, who had been materially destroyed by the "military occupation, and the internal colonialism" to claim asylums in the West, most especially Canada which was found to be much more liberal than many countries in Europe.

The military larcenous and predatory rule in Nigeria affects the entire social fabric. For example, the educational system was bastardized. The universities were being shut down for several months, even up to two years. The university suffered from brain drain, and also most of the professors were "enlisted" to work under the *de facto* military government, while many went to the West in search of greener pastures. The Type II returnees came back in the late 1980s and the 1990s to continue their university education. Mousa and his sister Aminat came because they were spending up to three years in a class. Quite a number of university students who were concerned about their future left as well. Omowale, a university student came not only because of the closure, but also because she questioned what would become of her even when she finished her study in Business Administration. She was able to judge her future based on the fate of those before her.

In addition to the above socio-economic and political miasma, the globalizing process in the form of media consumerist policy penetrating Nigeria is another factor. This changes people's perceptions about the world and their environment. The improvement in

technology gives people more opportunities. For example, the pragmatic nation building policy of the Canadian government by which the immigrating to Canada has become publicized on the Internet to attract skilled immigrants and business class investors in the 1990s was a new opportunity. The notion of Canada being a beacon of hope, a peaceful place and a society where "equalitarianism" is prevalent was (and still is) disseminated to the whole world to attract highly skilled people. Pa Adewale says that in the 1950s and the 1960s, there were not many opportunities available for them to learn much about the outside world, unlike now when the information is flowing and readily available for people to make use of (Interview, summer: 1999). Festus, a young graduate of Chemical Engineering from the University of Lagos, told me that he was never aware of the possibilities to apply to Canada under the "independent class" until he learnt of it on the Internet where he was working in an oil company in Nigeria in 1994. The advancement in communication technology, such as the phone, fax modem, telex, Internet; and other improvements in technology, such as airplanes, audio-visual and other tele-communication gadgets, make the world closer, thereby attracting people to Canada as a country to settle. Pa Adewale revealed that in the 1950s, people traveled by sea, and that it took him two weeks to get to Europe from Nigeria, and several weeks to get to the Americas (Interview: 1999). But now people can travel with relative ease.

Apart from all the above-mentioned factors, the colonial legacy of the Yoruba, especially their historical place in the world, might be considered specifically unique to them, as well as to other colonized peoples of the world. For the Yoruba of this century, traveling abroad goes beyond the materialistic understanding of the phenomenon. It is a serious event that is connected with the Yoruba supernatural understanding of the world. The idea to travel could be nurtured or could begin to develop right from infancy or even before birth. Leader Adeogun told me that as early as the age of six, he had known that he was going to travel. The *ifa* divination predicted that he would be a parvenu, because he would never farm like his parents and ancestors. Many years after, this came to pass (Interview: 1999). I gathered that early prediction of a child's predestination leads to jealousy among members of same household. If a child is predicted to travel abroad, it implies future greatness in the community. The rivals in the family may want to spiritually harm him or her, by bewitching him/her. Mrs. Akintela, a member of *aladura* church told me she "made it here" (to Canada) with the power of prayer, "...they did not want me to come here, they had been blocking my progress for years, but God said that they would never change my destiny...even when I got here, they were still after my life..." (Participant Observation, fall: 1999). The point being made is that, traveling abroad is a preparation of a life journey for many of the Yoruba.

#### 5.6 Canadian Situation:

Canada like most industrial capitalist countries of the world is enmeshed in the economic restructuring and neoliberal policy as measures for global competition. In order for Canada to be internationally competitive, it has pursued various strategies. The current government (formed by the Liberal Party) has been a staunch backer of the World Trade Organization (WTO), which favors movement of corporations from one political region to another unencumbered. The Canadian government in recent years has entered into

trade agreements with certain partners or with all countries that favor the lowering of tariffs. Examples are the Canada-Auto Pact, the Canada-US trade agreement (CUSTA) of 1989 and the North American Free trade Agreement (NAFTA) (ratified in 1994) (Simmons, 1996: 6). These free trade agreements have had serious impacts on the Canadian Industrial base. Firms in recent years have moved to free-trade zones with lower wages, minimal health and safety regulations, and weak or no labor unions. Those left over have adopted methods of cutting labor costs, especially by hiring people part-time so as to avoid payment of benefits, such as dental care, sick leave, injuries, etc. Also, part-time workers do not have the same rights as full-time workers. They can be retrenched at any time. In Toronto, many of the Yoruba working in the factory who I interviewed revealed that the companies they worked for did not hire them as direct employees, but through the employment agencies, specializing in placing people to different industrial work sites in Toronto. Under this arrangement, the companies where these Yoruba individuals work owe them no responsibilities, and can lay them off whenever their services are not needed.

In the past three decades, tax revenues from corporations have been extremely reduced. It is on record that, in the early 1970s, corporations paid 21% of all income taxes; now they pay less than 6%, and every year about \$ 18 billion or more profits go completely untaxed (O'Hara, 1997: 15).

The Canadian government's efforts to increase global competition have led to massive job losses over recent years and high national unemployment. This has been largely caused by corporate downsizing in their efforts to exploit cheap labor elsewhere. Many corporations move to Mexico and parts of the southern US where workers can be paid less. Not only this, some of them move for strategic reasons, such as getting closer to their markets and natural resources. The official unemployment figure is nudging 10 %, but stands closer to 16 % if you include discouraged and underemployed workers. Youth unemployment is in the range of 20 % and shows no signs of declining. While this is happening, the government has embarked on cuts in social spending, especially the cuts in transfer funds to the provinces and change to Unemployment Insurance to Employment Insurance. Employment Insurance has been made difficult to get through longer eligibility periods, shorter duration and lower benefits (Simmons, 1996: 6-7).

Neoliberalism is not only being pursued at the federal level, but is also a policy being adopted at the provincial level as well. This has been zealously adopted by the Progressive Conservative Party of Mike Harris in the Province of Ontario. The Ontario government, in order to attract investors, and in part reduce the deficit and the debt, has pursued cutting expenditures on social spending, especially cuts to social assistance, closure of many hospitals, shelters for the poor and a reduction in social services for the poor.

The Canadian immigration policy of recent has reflected the government's competitiveness within the global economy. The Canadian immigration policy has thereby moved toward greater selectivity, by giving priorities to "designer migrants". These are migrants that are selected to fill perceived shortages in the current Canadian

labor and business community. *Ipsa facto*, the ideal new economic immigrant has very high-level job skills or capital acumen with entrepreneurial experience. Emphasis on this class of immigrants frees the Canadian government from certain services such as language training and settlement costs often expected to be provided by the government for new immigrants in need of such services (Simmons, 1996: 1).

Two other measures being adopted by the government that are noteworthy are: one is the recovering of administrative costs from prospective immigrants through the imposition of processing and settlement fees, whereas, in the past, immigrants to Canada paid no fees; when they did, it was nominal. At present, a family consisting of a couple and two children now pay about \$3,200.00 (US \$2,400) in application fees (Simmons, 1996: 9). And two, sponsors of family members are compelled to make written commitment that they will be financially responsible for the upkeep of those they are sponsoring for a minimum period of ten years. Hence, those being sponsored are not eligible to social welfare from the government for the whole period. This policy is inconsiderate because it fails to account for the fact that the sponsors themselves may be unemployed, because of the corporate downsizing causing unemployment and loss of jobs.

Recently, Canadian immigration policy has included in their requirements that the prospective immigrant (the principal applicant) should demonstrate that she/he has at least a sum of \$10,000.00 to repatriate from the country of origin to Canada (Application form for Landing, 1999). This amount of money may be shown to the immigration officers at the port of entry, as happened to one member of the Yoruba community who just arrived as an immigrant. This amount of money is no doubt a lot for most people from the Third World countries who are willing to immigrate to Canada. Apparently, most of them would be precluded from immigrating to Canada. This policy is not being sensitive to the unequal development between nations of the world.

Globalization and neoliberalism no doubt have serious impacts on the immigrants from the poorer countries. The difficulties encountered in the process of migration and the impossibility of reuniting with their family members exert both psychological and emotional pressure on the migrants. Moreover, the high priority being given to the independent and entrepreneurial class reproduces inequalities between groups within the Canadian mosaic. This becomes more pervasive when the government is failing to support new immigrants with social services, such as language and job training. The fact that some immigrants lack basic skills to integrate into the Canadian labor market makes it difficult for not well-to-do immigrants to socially and economically adapt to Canadian society. Also, many well educated immigrants from the poorer countries end up doing menial jobs such as driving the cabs and working in the factory because some of them lack the basic tools to retrain and re-skill to meet the required "Canadian experience and education". Furthermore, out of frustration many immigrants leave for the United States after a while in Canada where they perceive there are more job opportunities for them.

In the survey, about 70 % of the Yoruba living in Canada believe that their Yoruba counterparts in the US have better socioeconomic opportunities than them. In response to the question as to whether they would move to the US if they had the opportunities, about

38 % say "Yes", 50 % say "No", while 12 % are "not sure". Many of those who say "No" to moving to the US consider factors such as difficulty in settlement, family situation, perception of crime, etc. (see Tables 5.12 & 5.13). The consideration for moving to the US for better economic opportunities is not peculiar to immigrants who feel dissatisfied with their living condition in Canada, but it is also a trend applicable to many Canadians of various class and ethnicities. Canada at present is losing some of its skilled and educated people to the US.

It is important to note that the Canadian immigration policy cannot be totally absolved from racism, because of the high values it places on specific skills, application fees and cash needed to repatriate for settlement in Canada. According to Richmond (1994), immigration policies do not explicitly have to exclude certain groups in order to be considered "racist". If the consequence of particular policies disqualifies certain ethnic groups, while making it easier for other groups to gain admission, then such regulations could be considered "quasi-racist", albeit, they do not specify race as a criterion (pg. 155).

Table 5.12: If the US is Better: Respondents are asked if there are more opportunities in the US than in Canada: 70 % of them answer "yes"; 20 % answer "no"; while 10% of them do not know.

Agreement	Frequency	Percent
yes	35	70.0
no	10	20.0
I do not know	5	10.0
Total	50	100.0

Table 5.13: This question is as to whether respondents would move to the US if it is possible. 38% answer "yes"; 50 % "no", while 12% are not sure.

Answer	Frequency	Percent
yes	19	38.0
no	25	50.0
I am not sure	6	12.0
Total	50	100.0

To essentialize the methods which various groups use to get sustenance in this period of globalization purports an inadequate understanding of the particulars within economic globalization itself. The globalization process is experienced differently by different groups. For those immigrants of color from less developed countries, they do not merely suffer from material deprivation, but the emotional and psychological torture in the process of their migration. Many young migrants leave parents, grand parents, cousins, nephews and other members of their extended family kinship behind. In most cases these people are dependent on these migrants for economic support, while the latter also need the former's emotional and moral supports. There are also adults who get cut off from their spouses, children, members of the extended family and also friends and well wishers known over the years. These are the people whom they might not meet any more or for a long time. Also, when these immigrants travel, they do not travel hitch-free. They are more often harassed, abused and assailed by the immigration officers, customs and the police in the second countries and countries of destination.

There are those who will comment that, "this problem of unemployment is not peculiar to the immigrants of color, it happens to the white Canadians as well. Like others, they go to the US." When a Canadian of the dominant race leaves for the US for better economic opportunity, he/she still retains what makes him/her "the ideal human being". The opportunity to continue a normal life with the family members is still there, and his/her emigration is not induced by racism but a rational decision to improve his/her economic opportunities. Do these "white Canadians" lose touch with their wives, children, mothers, fathers and acquaintances for many years? No doubt, awareness of different situations of immigrants within the global process helps to understand how the system has privileged certain groups over another. One informant reveals that he is aware of racism in the United States, but the job opportunities are there for him. He asks and comments, "why should I lose everything in Canada? The possibility to have a gainful employment is not available, and there is racism...I do not care anymore...Canada is as racist as any Western country..." This aptly captures that popular aphorism: to be poor and be black is a "double jeopardy" (some feminists talk about "triple jeopardy"!).

## 5.7 Forms of Transnational Practices: Conditions Motivating the Transnationalism:

### 5.7.1 Post-Colonial Trauma:

The poor socio-economic state of Nigeria is in no doubt a contributing factor to the Yoruba transnational practices. The extraction of raw materials and repatriation of capital by the imperialistic colonial regime, and its perpetuation after independence under the canopy of neocolonial peripheral economy decimate and despoil the Nigerian potential for industrial development. This situation precipitates a primitive accumulation of resources by the Western imperialists and their lackeys who are unfortunately the Nigerian ruling elites.

According to Onimode (1982) the post independence Nigerian leaders acting as "native agents of imperialism" threw Nigeria open to imperialist plunder in the name of "open door policy" on foreign capital (pg. 140); making Nigeria a *laissez faire* neocolonial

dependent country. This happened in most part because there was very little effort made by the British to invest in the Nigerian economy during many years of colonialism. The little investments of the British on Nigeria were confined to areas that benefitted the colonial state, such as sectors providing raw materials and industrial by-products for the British industrial economy. Similarly, the colonial investments in infrastructure were restricted to those areas that complemented export crop production. For example, the rail road networks were built to go through cotton and rubber plantations, while areas that had no economic potentials were neglected (Badru, 1998: 46-47).

It is not surprising that the post colonial Nigerian major economic sectors are dominated by multinational corporations. Sectors which are dominated by them include but not limited to the following: petroleum and other minerals such as tin, columbite, iron ore, zinc, etc.; manufacturing (specializing mostly in consumer goods that could be cheaply produced with local inputs); banking and insurance; distributive and construction; and other sectors are transport, communication, forestry, etc. Some of the effects of this sectoral control on the Nigerian economy are: decapitalization; technological underdevelopment of Nigeria; political instability; and cultural degradation (Onimode, 1982: 141-156).

The current socio-economic problems of Nigeria are no doubt inherited from its historical placement in the world history--a colony of another people. The independence of the 1960 was a "flag independence" as the economy was still largely dependent on the multinational corporations of some European countries and the US. This problem was further escalated by the "corrupt prebendal" military governments of Generals Ibrahim Babangida and Sani Abacha. It is all these factors, put together that made Nigeria "an unfavorable and dangerous place" for many of its citizens to live in. Most importantly, the economy has failed to cater to the needs of the vast majority of the people.

The adoption of macro-economic policies in the mid-1980s badly affected the standard of living of most Nigerian workers. Inflation, food shortages, hikes in tuition fees, high costs of medicals, etc. are things Nigerians had to deal with without any government supports. One result of this is the migration of the Yoruba *en masse* to the West for long term stay since the mid-1980s. And remittances from abroad are continuously being relied upon by those who have relatives overseas.

By the mid-1980s, when the Nigerian currency had become devalued, many "stayers" began to come and visit Nigeria because of the purchasing power of the Canadian dollar. Ola Soley who came about seven years ago, revealed that, in the late 1970s, when he finished High School, he did well in his West African School Certificate Examination (WASCE), and entered the University to study Economics. Then, he said "who wanted to travel overseas and stayed there? There were so many opportunities in Nigeria for those with good education, those of my friends who failed left for overseas and did not come back until the late 1980s"(Interview, fall: 1999). The conversion rate of the Canadian dollar has been an impetus for people to come home, to show their economic power. Before the devaluation of the Nigerian currency, there were people who could not come home because of the insecurity that those they left behind might have done far better than

them, particularly in academics and occupational advancement. Chief Thompson confirmed this. When he visited Nigeria in 1978, most of his colleagues were doing better than him socio-economically (Interview, summer: 1999).

### 5.7.2 Perception of and Experience of Racism:

Several authors have pointed out that whatever background or nation-state of origin of migrants of color who come to the white-dominated societies of the West, they come as subordinate people. Also, they are continuously treated as "outsiders". Different migrant groups from the Caribbean states of St. Vincent, Haiti and Grenada are considered outside the "real America" and are lumped up together as "blacks". Similarly, those from Asia, and the Phillipines in the US are not included within the "real America". However, people of African descent suffer from racism more than other groups like the Filipinos and the Chinese (Basch *et al.*, 1994).

Barrett (1987) argues that racism is institutional in Canada. He considers institutional racism as being "intrinsic to the structures of society", such as Canada. Institutional racism may be "overt or covert, expressed formally in the laws of the land, or less visibly in patterns of employment and the content of school textbooks" (pp. 307-308). Because of the institutional nature of racism in Canada, it manifests itself in many facets of life, such as in the employment, education, immigration, media, police and state (Barrett, 1987: 309-325).

People of color face all kinds of racial discrimination which are barriers to their full integration into society. For example, the Chinese immigrants who entered in the 19<sup>th</sup> century were subject to racism by the Canadian public (Li, 1988). This confirms that racism is not a new phenomenon in Canada, it has been historically entrenched in the system. According to Bolaria and Li (1988), non-white "foreign workers" are faced with a "double jeopardy" in Canada. One, as workers, they share the same plight with other migrants who come to Canada to sell their labor. And two, as non-whites, they experience discrimination based on their skin color which "confines them to a socially and economically inferior position" (pg. 222). People of African descent, regardless of where they come from and what generation are treated as "outsiders" in Canada. Whether a person of African descent was born in Canada, or is fourth or fifth generation or an immigrant, people will always ask where he/she is from (see Barrett, 1994: 190-223; Bolaria and Li, 1988: 222). In terms of wage labor, many of them often do less congenial work than other groups. In some cases, persons of African descent are mistreated more than other people of color (see Cohen, 1987: 36; Sorenson, 1990: 303-303). In most cases, the awareness of racism shapes the perception of immigrants in Canadian society.

Most of the Yoruba surveyed responded that they had suffered different forms of racism in Canada. About 87 % claim that they have suffered racism in various ways, notable among which are accusations of having body odor, unemployment, accent, name calling, underestimation of capability, etc. As writers, such as Barrett (1987: 341) and Bolaria and Li (1988: 35) point out, racism is perpetuated to consolidate power, to undermine other groups for the perpetuation of the powers that be. Racism grows with capitalism, and

relates to international labor flows and immigration. While there are so many stories soberly recounted, I regret that I cannot document them all, but three suffice to mention here:

Table 5.14: Racism: If Respondents have suffered from any form of racism: 86% reveal that they have suffered from racism; 10% say that they have not being recipients of racism; and 4% do not respond.

Response	Frequency	Percent
yes	43	86.0
no	5	10.0
no response	2	4.0
Total	50	100.0

#### 5.7.2.1 Case Study One:

Omowale arrived from Nigeria about five years ago. According to her, she went to the same high school with the wards of upper and middle class Nigerians. She was in her second year of the university, studying Business Administration when she decided to join her brother in Toronto because of the incessant closure of schools in Nigeria, and for future advancement. In Canada, she has put her education on hold because of high tuition. Ever since her arrival, "finding reasonably decent job in Toronto has been so difficult...I have moved from one factory to another, earning \$6.85 an hour". She finally found "an office job" "which was a bit O.K., it was carrying files from one spot to another and photocopying materials...you know messenger job in Nigeria?.....what can one do? They paid \$11/hour, the highest wage I have had in five years in this country..." Omowale worked here for two weeks, until she was "summoned" by a woman working in the office for a "sensitive and private" matter. What she told her was that she had an offensive body odor, and that everyone there had been complaining about her, that she stank. She stated that as the woman was talking to her, she covered her nose. Omowale confided that it was the most humiliating experience of her life. After leaving work, she went directly to a doctor, she did not tell the doctor what had transpired at work, but said that someone close to her said that she had "an offensive body odor" and would want the doctor to examine her in case she has some medical complications. The doctor got close to her, sniffed every part of her body, checked her blood pressure and did a general body examination. The doctor told her that he did not smell anything from her, and could not find anything wrong with her.

I met this woman shortly after her medical check up. She was fuming. At the end of her story, she said, "how can Canadians tell me about personal hygiene...my parents must not hear this...is it their fault?...no,...it is the situation in Nigeria".

#### 5.7.2.2 Case Study Two:

Fr. Bamidele is a Catholic priest, a Yoruba from Nigeria. He initially came to work with a Catholic mission in downtown Toronto for one year. In the middle of his assignment, he was asked to report to the Bishop in charge of the mission one morning. There he met other officiating priests waiting for him. He was alleged among other things of going to visit members of the church at home, even when he was not invited to come over. The complaint did not come from the members of the congregation but from one of the priests working and residing in the same mission with him. He was immediately given two days to leave the mission for Nigeria, and a letter of dismissal was given to him, and a copy sent to his diocesan Bishop in Nigeria. I personally met this priest at the airport, and I read the note written by the priest that reported him to the community authority, apologizing that he did not know that the decision would result to his dismissal. In the letter, he concluded, "...you have been a source of joy to our community, and I will be remembering you in my prayer...". I contacted one or two Canadians over this issue to see whether it was culturally not permissible for a priest to visit a member of his congregation. Both of them, one a professor at the university said that there was nothing culturally wrong with it.

#### 5.7.2.3 Case Study Three:

Mr. Ogundele arrived in Canada in the mid-1970s after five years in Germany. His wife is a German. He has been working with the Ontario Ministry of Health for many years. He recounted his close encounter with racism on the job. Being a supervisor, he went to supervise a group home one day, and found that the owner of the facility did not adhere to the government regulation on the kind of clothing that the inmates should wear in the winter. He made the owner aware of the condition of the inmates and told her that if she did not follow the government guidelines, the facility might have to be closed. The owner reported the case to "the union", that he threatened to close down her home. The union took the case to the administrator of the ministry, who summoned him immediately. There was no private enquiry until called to the meeting. Right in the presence of the owner of the facility and other women who were members of the union, he was given a letter of demotion. What was most devastating to Mr. Ogundele was the personal humiliation he suffered in the midst of the gathering. In front of the administrator, he was called names, such as "nigger", "monkey", "kuku", "sambo" he said, "my dear brother, I never knew that these people called us by so many names". What was really perturbing was that the administrator did not show any intolerance to the verbal abuse, but was laughing. He said after the incident he went into a mild depression for three months.

Racism, be it the institutional type or an individual casual encounter in the street, never ennobles, it is usually a painful experience that may never be forgotten. Racism is perceived as a sign of rejection. In the case of the Chinese, Li (1988) states that racial

discrimination makes the subordinate groups withdraw to their ethnic enclaves to avoid competition and hostility from the white dominant class (pg. 2). The in-group interaction among the Yoruba community is very high. They do not consider Canada as a place to totally put their loyalty on, rather loyalty has to be divided between Canada and Nigeria, and other Yoruba in different parts of the world. Rejection and discrimination foster ethnic solidarity among the Yoruba, and they give impetus to withdrawal, cynicism and lack of trust of the dominant group (see Table 5.14: Racism).

For some Yoruba immigrants, racism was a big disappointment. They believe that the Yoruba in Nigeria treat the white population in Nigeria with respect and courtesy. Chief Thompson revealed that, while he was working in Lagos in the late 1960s and early 1970s, whites in Lagos had special privilege. And that those who went to the village among them received gifts, such as the crops and poultry. He says "on getting to Canada, the blacks were being treated disdainfully...I think our people give them too much respect and what do we have in return?" (Audio-tape interview: 1999). Also Pa Adewale recounted how the white population lived exclusively in the most beautiful parts of Lagos in the 1950s.

In considering the high level of in-group interaction in the survey, I found it pertinent to ask in the in-depth interviews why the Yoruba do not have the "White Canadians" as bosom friends. It was agreed by all those interviewed but two that they had no cause to have Canadians as friends. Mrs. Adegoroye states that Canadians are too cunning, and that you cannot confide in them. Chief Sasere answered my question with a question, "how can you be friends to them?" And continued "when I pick them up in cabs at night, that is the only time I interact with them. For those who work in the factory, they do not see many of them there". He added that the institutional "double standard" made it difficult for both groups to interact. But Mrs. Babatola who works in the factory, when probed says that whites who work in the factory get special treatment from the employers. They are given the easiest tasks (Survey-Interview: 1999). Another informant told me that he only wanted to finish his work and avoid talking to anyone of them-- "You see those white folks working in the factory have no skills, I am a Master's degree holder; I studied both in Nigeria and overseas, but when they see you, they think you are a fool".

The harsh experiences of immigrants, especially, unemployment, underemployment, and poor working conditions make them value their culture and "own kind" more, they are therefore drawn more toward their home country.

### 5.7.3. Value of Kinship System:

Transmigrants make family decisions across national borders. Family networks sustain transnational practices of the Yoruba immigrants. The kinship system is reconfigured and made adaptable to the new experiences. Family connections become a source of strength, a source of empowerment and also an avenue for maneuvering conflicts. Two case studies will be presented to explicate the nature of family connections in the Yoruba social fields--ensuring the strength, maneuvering and conflicts characterizing this cross-border mingling.

### 5.7.3.1 Case Study One:

Mr. Olawale came to Canada in 1978, leaving his wife and their two children behind. His travel expenses were borne by both his family and the wife's family. The plan was to upgrade his education, in hopes that after a period of four years, he would return to Nigeria for a better opportunity. While he was away, extended family members helped to take care of his wife and children. In the early period, he was in contact with the family through letters, phoning and through friends, relatives and acquaintances traveling home. Once in a while he sent paltry sums of money toward the upkeep of his family. By 1982, he went to Nigeria for the first time after his departure, and since then, he had been going home every year. By 1985, the support from the family members was no longer adequate for his wife, partly because the children had started high school and partly due to the rising cost of living in Nigeria. So, more financial help was needed from Mr. Olawale. While the wife worked, the remittances from Canada supplemented her income. By 1989, the situation had been worse so that the entire family (including the extended family) had to look up to him for various financial assistance. In his tenth year in Canada, he got married to a Yoruba divorcee, but still maintained contacts with his family (but with a diminishing amount of money being sent home). Instead of going home every year, he now goes home every two years, to see his wife and members of the extended family left behind.

### 5.7.3.2 Case Study Two:

Comfort was a trader, also a single mother of four children. She sold clothes in Ibadan. The children have grown with two of them in the university in Nigeria. In order to get capital to expand her enterprise, she decided to come to Canada in 1996, in hopes of working for two years and then to going back. She put her sister, a graduate of university who was unemployed, in charge of the store. All the children were in boarding school, and the arrangement was that they should go to their grandparents (Comfort's) in an Akoko village during the holiday. Decisions pertaining to the welfare of the children are made by phone. Comfort does not call directly, but buys phone cards of \$20.00 every week, on Friday nights to call Nigeria and speak with the family members.

The profit made from the store went toward the children's upkeep and other family members who might be in need of financial assistance. In December, boxes of clothes, shoes and stationery are sent home through friends and relatives going to Nigeria on visits. Things have not gone well for Comfort in Canada as she had envisioned before coming. She had not been able to acquire a reasonable amount of money that could conveniently make her expand her business. She also wants to be going to Europe frequently to buy goods for sale in Nigeria. All she can do now is to stay in Canada and work in the factory through the temporary employment agencies. At a time, she was considering sending money to her relatives from her meager earnings to help develop a piece of land she had bought before leaving home. But plans are changing now, money cannot easily be saved at the present moment, because the "surplus money" goes toward family needs. This is also because the money being realized from the store has not been

enough to meet the family expenses, so she has to supplement it with her wage-earnings in Canada.

In both case scenarios, the importance of kinship system comes clear. The kinship form helps with the continuity of the Yoruba transnational families. Two important themes can be clearly identified from the first vignette. One, we see how family members rallied round to send Mr. Olawale to Canada in 1978, and his leave helped to improve the standard of living condition of the family members in the 1980s. The devaluation of the Nigerian currency reduces the purchasing power of Nigerian workers while boosting that of those Nigerians in the richer countries, like Canada. This is simply because when they exchanged the Canadian dollar for the Nigerian naira, they had more money to spend due to the higher exchange rate of the Canadian dollar to the Nigerian naira. His coming abroad was a big relief. Leaving his family at home was economically viable, because it costs a lot for a family unit to travel all at once. In fact, from 1970s to the middle of the 1980s, men traveled with the support of their wife and the extended family members. In some cases, the woman did not have to join the husband, but stayed behind to raise the children with the support of her parents, brothers and sisters, as well as the relatives of the husband. This is different from the Caribbean and the Philippines household organization *vis-a-vis* the migration, whereby the women would have to come in as the domestic or the nannies, while men would come later. Accordingly, in the early period, most of the women came to join their husbands in Canada. Even up till now, there are those who still have their wives in Nigeria, having been here for more than twenty years. For example, Leader Adeogun (a returnee) came back in 1992, and since then he has not been able to get any gainful employment. The arrangement was that the family should stay in Nigeria while he sends money to them for their upkeep. He believes that if the family members come to join him here, they will suffer, due to his current situation. And besides, application fees and flight tickets are prohibitive. As said earlier on, the pattern of migration has changed, both sexes now travel, there are even instances when a woman has to go first and sends for her husband to join her.

The second theme in the first case is the practice of polygyny. Mr. Olawale ended up having two wives. While this is customarily allowed in Nigeria, it is illegal in Canada. However, polygyny among the Yoruba of today is not always based on agreement, but people manage it. Hence, it is a fertile ground for conflicts. It is often negotiated, even if it is not agreeable. Immigrant males from a polygynous society like Nigeria get around the Western law that makes this illegal through their transnational practices. In a way, patriarchy which one might expect to diminish through the Western influence in the society of settlement is reconstituted and even strengthened. A popular Yoruba song goes, "okunrin le laya mefa, ko buru, okunrin kan soso lolorun n yan fun obinrin", meaning—a man can have several women, no problem, but, it is only one man that has been mandated to a woman by God. If a man travels overseas for years, leaving the woman behind, it is not socially stigmatizing if he marries again or if he has extramarital affairs. But for the woman, it is traditionally expected that she have no sexual encounter with another man. If this happens and people get to know, the family can either break up, or the woman becomes a subject of gossip in the community. The man is considered the natural head of

the household, and has the final say on all matters--his decision might be challenged, but not necessarily overturned--"oko ni olori aya".

Migrants use their family connections to sustain their transnational practices. Elderly parents, as in the case of Comfort, help to take care of the children in the absence of their parents. Those left behind also benefit from the remittances sent home from overseas. In fulfillment of kinship obligations, Yoruba individuals in Toronto send money to their relatives in Nigeria. Among those surveyed, 92 % claim that they are asked by their relatives in Nigeria to support them financially. Out of these respondents, 34 % respond that request for financial assistance is very often, while 36 % say that it is once in a while that they are called upon for financial assistance. This does not exclude the students and those with little pay. People always ask for financial assistance, and migrants may get frustrated and consider family members as the "Oliver Twist" asking for more. But more often than not, they give out, even at the expense of their comfort. In spite of urbanization and the influence of Western individualism, the idea of sharing and communal support is still strong among the Yoruba. All those who took part in the in-depth interviews are positive to helping their kith and kin whenever they could afford it including one individual who spent most of her life in Canada here. Financial assistance is sought for various reasons, but mostly for clothing, social functions, food, tuition, hospital bills, rents, etc. Remittances constitute one of the areas by which people tend to fulfill their kinship obligations. Mostly, they are not hostile to helping out. But people express their frustration over the incessant demands from home. People become frustrated owing to the fact that expectations from family members could be too high some time. Family members and friends have a very high expectation about the West--they overestimate the potentials for capital acumen.

Money is usually sent through the money transfer outlets, such as the Western Union. Many Nigerians are aware of how the system works, in terms of how to receive the remittances from overseas. The recipients of remittances are people of different ages, occupations, education, gender and classes. These people include the working class, students, retirees, civil servants, etc., but mostly those who are in one way or the other deprived of their basic needs. Another form of support is the sending of material goods, such as clothes, books, shoes, music, etc.

Building houses in Nigeria is highly valued by the Yoruba migrants. Houses built at home show both the social and economic importance of the person who had them built. Psychologically, the house serves as a source of security, where one can return in old age. The Yoruba do not believe in dying on a journey, Canada is not considered home, but Nigeria is. Socially, its conspicuousness in the community gives one some social validation, prestige and recognition in the community. Besides, houses built by transmigrants, usually with modern architectural designs is an improvement in their living and those of relatives. About 56 % responded that they have one project or the other that they are embarking on in Nigeria. It is the family members that mostly help with the supervision of the projects (see Tables 5.16 and 5.17). Transmigrants provide better living conditions for their family members. They provide employment, as in the case of Comfort's sister and jobs for local contractors when the building project kicks off.

The family members are not mere recipients, they reciprocate in different ways. It is their kin members who assist them in their day to day activities when they are at home to visit. In other words, they "resocialize" them back into the community. They remind them of the taboos, the local festivals and even help them to find partners. The belief in endogamy is still strong among the members of the community. Marrying to "outsiders" is still strongly opposed by some members. People still go home to choose their partners (see Table 5.18).

Table 5.15: The frequency of relatives in Nigeria requesting for financial help from the transmigrants: 92% of the respondents are asked by relatives for financial help. Out of this 92%, 34% of them are regularly asked ("very often"); 22% "often", and 36 % once in a while.

Response	Frequency	Percent
very often	17	34.0
often	11	22.0
once in a while	18	36.0
never	4	8.0
Total	50	100.0

Table 5.16: Those who are engaged in projects in Nigeria: Projects include building of house, small businesses, charity, etc. 56% of the respondents do have one project or the other being undertaken in Nigeria; 40% do not; 2% maintain confidentiality; and 2% do not respond.

Project	Frequency	Percent
yes	28	56.0
no	20	40.0
confidential	1	2.0
no response	1	2.0
Total	50	100.0

Table 5.17: How those who have Projects get them supervised: This question is "not applicable" to 42% of the population surveyed. 22% have their extended family members as supervisors; 18% close family members; 10% organizations and friends; 6% have their projects supervised by themselves and 2% maintains confidentiality.

Mode of Supervision	Frequency	Percent
not/applicable	21	42.0
relatives--uncle, auntie, etc.	11	22.0
family--father, mother, wife, etc.	9	18.0
organization and friends	5	10.0
self	3	6.0
confidential	1	2.0
Total	50	100.0

Table 5.18: Importance of Yoruba marrying Yoruba: 24% of the Yoruba surveyed for the study think it is "very important" for Yoruba persons to marry one another; 22% think it is "important"; 42% do not think it is necessary; while 12% do not find it important.

Endogamous Marriage	Frequency	Percent
very important	12	24.0
important	11	22.0
does not matter	21	42.0
not very important	4	8.0
not at all important	2	4.0
Total	50	100.0

Table 5.19: Frequency of Contact with Relatives: All the respondents keep in contact with family members in Nigeria, mostly by phone. But 80% of them do regularly keep in contact ("very often"—46% and "often" 34%).

Response	Frequency	Percent
very often	23	46.0
often	17	34.0
once in a while	10	20.0
Total	50	100.0

As beneficial as this arrangement is for all the parties involved, it is not without some shortcomings. It often creates an avenue for conflicts. Family expectations might be too high, their demands might be considered too inconsiderate--the Oliver Twists who always ask for more. There is the ingrained notion that the West is the *eldorado*, the land comparable to the fabulous Midas touch that often leads to gold and silver. As Mahler (1995) points out, those left behind do not know how difficult it is to survive in the host societies. They often base their calculation on the exchange rate without knowing that their mathematical calculation is wrong. They are not aware that "you earn in dollars and pay in dollars" (pg. 92). One member of the community whom I ran into constantly during the field work was very analytical of the "Nigerian Factor". In one of the tete-a-tete (chit chat of young men) at one of the picnics organized in the summer by a Yoruba group, he explained that those at home are misled by two major sources of information. One, the Nigerian local media, fails to tell the Nigerian populace about the local news in the community of settlement. He added that issues such as recession, hikes in the petroleum prices, rent increases, minimum wages, discrimination and unemployment among immigrants were not covered by the local news. He said that the local news media laid too much emphasis on macro-economics and politics. Another way by which they are being misled is the information reaching the people from the "omo olodu". The "omo olodu" technically do not work for their money, most of them do not make any effort to go to school, all they do is to defraud the banks and the insurance companies. They are the ones that go home spending money wastefully and giving the people the impression that Canada is the land where it is easy to make money, this informant explained. This particular informant dominated the discussion at this informal forum.

The second time that I met him, it was prior to *Obesere* concert in Toronto. At the gate, before the concert started, this young man was having a normal Yoruba discussion about politics and other social issues. There was a story of a Yoruba man who went for a holiday, but refused to give money to those members of his extended family. He told them that he had not come to North America because of them. On getting back to North America, the next day, the man did not wake up from his sleep. It was believed that the

man was bewitched. Those who listened to the story were very angry and condemned not only those who were believed to have "spiritually murdered" that man, but the entire African population. They considered Africans as diabolically wicked and opposed to human progress. The whole course of the argument changed when the "political scientist" made his own contribution. He stated categorically, that those Yoruba in the West should behave more maturely when they visited home. He said that those people visiting home had "gargantuan egos". They believed that those left behind were less than humans and treated them disdainfully. He cited an incident at the Nigerian airport. It was about a woman who boarded the same plane with one of his friends to Nigeria on a visit. As they cleared the immigration and the custom section at the airport, at the arrivals section was a boy of about five years and an older lady of about sixty years who came running to welcome this woman. The child and the woman were the migrant's son and mother respectively. To the attention of everyone present the woman yelled at her mother and criticized her for not dressing the child properly, and ended up screaming that "this is not a Nigerian child, he is an *oyinbo* child". He said that those who came to the airport to receive the passengers just looked on, dumbfounded.

ded. The "political scientist" concluded his testimony with the Yoruba proverb-- "omo to ba mo iya re lo ju, osi nii yoo ta omo naa pa"--meaning, those who disrespect their mother shall die in perdition. I met this man many times during the fieldwork.

Of course, family members could easily be exploited by the migrants. Men often go abroad through their wives' sponsorship, but refuse to reciprocate the gesture with kindness, rather get married and abandon their "benefactors". People often give their children privileged treatment over their cousins and other members of the family because they are "omo *oyinbo*". There are those men, both young and adult who go home spending important part of their time sleeping with all sorts of girls and women, taking advantage of these women and girls who look up to them as superiors, because they are from *ilu oyinbo*. Family members can also be exploited in Canada. Older ones can exploit the younger members of the family that come to join them by overworking them, using them as babysitters, imposing stringent rules on them and not making them gain any academic skills.

#### 5.7.4 Voluntary Associations:

The Yoruba transmigrants make use of voluntary associations such as home town associations, churches, philanthropic groups and old boy/girl school connections provide opportunities for building relationships across national borders. Most of these associations have helped immeasurably to alleviate poverty in Nigeria. Some home town associations engage in community development activities, such as building roads, equipment for the hospitals, books and stationery for schools, contributions toward building/renovation of community centers/*oba* palace, scholarship funds and promotion of annual festivals. The neoliberal policy in Nigeria and the neglect of the ordinary people especially in the villages have called for collective supports for lessening the suffering of the people. Transmigrant associations do not restrict their activities to the development of the home land, but also towards helping their co-ethnic groups in the

country of settlement. The Yoruba Community Association in Toronto has a settlement program for newcomers. Also, a member of the community who is a lawyer and a member of the association volunteers his time to help the Yoruba asylum seekers prepare for their cases. Those who are seriously sick and need money for medical care are given both moral and financial help, so are youth needing counseling given some sort of therapy. Also, these voluntary associations organize picnics in the summer that attract members of the community, and new comers have opportunities to mingle with other new members and old members of the community.

These associations and some of the clubs have links with other associations in other parts of the world. For example, the Eko Club is affiliated with Eko Clubs of Houston, London and New York. Also, Ile-Oluji Cultural group works with other Ile-Oluji sons and daughters around the world. Other associations such as the Sickle Cell Foundation educate not only the Yoruba people in Toronto, but work in conjunction with other black groups in Toronto. They are not only operating in Canada but have spread their tentacles to Nigeria with regard to awareness, and development.

The *aladura* churches give the Yoruba community opportunities to continue the practice of their religion autonomous from the "mainstream" churches, such as Catholic, Baptist, Anglican, etc. Many members of these *aladura* churches had been members in Nigeria and continued to be members when they came to Toronto. There are also those who were converted in Toronto.

Voluntary organizations provide opportunities for public social validation and recognition both in Canada and Nigeria.

#### 5.7.5 Incorporative Practices of the Nation-State:

Goldring (1998) makes mention of the extra-territorial power of the nation-states striving to claim their sons and daughters abroad. Similarly, Schiller *et al.* (1992) allude to the notion of the deterritorialized nation-states incorporating the Haitian nationals abroad. The Nigerian government of the recent past has not made any public policy toward incorporating their nationals for either their economic position or their expertise. This is in part due to the political instability that has characterized most of post-independent Nigeria. However, the last military government, which was headed by General Abubakre appealed to all Nigerians abroad to return and partake in the transition to civil rule in May 1999. Ever since the inception of the civilian government of President Obasanjo, he has been garnering for support from Nigerians abroad. The case of Nigeria seems to be different from those immigrants from the Caribbean and the Phillippines who come to North America based on bi-national agreements between their states and Canada. The Nigerian political economy was never geared towards inducing nationals to travel abroad. Suffice it to say that the Nigerian foreign missions overseas have never been responsive to their nationals abroad. Most immigrants, if not all, come at their own expenses and stay at their own peril. In this case, it is difficult for any government to re-claim the citizens who are already cynical. However, individuals claim their kith and kin. Also, local communities confer chieftaincy titles (both ceremonial and traditional) on their sons

and daughters. In Toronto, there are close to ten traditional and ceremonial chiefs. One of the chiefs admits that he was the *de jure* representative of his *Oba* in Toronto, and that it is his role to meet with the *Oba* from time to time to tell him how the people are doing (Interview: 1999). A prominent member of the community was conferred with a chieftaincy title in Toronto in the summer. This gentleman is known for being an outstanding member of both the Yoruba and the Canadian communities in Toronto. The news about his performance had reached his home town *Oba* who sent emissaries to traditionally instal him as a chief (Participant Observation, fall: 1999). This was a diplomatic move by the *Oba*, as it is a way to attract his indigine and expand his kingdom. There are other members of the community who have been conferred with both hereditary and ceremonial chieftaincies in their home towns or villages.

#### 5.7.6 Political Exigencies:

The political development in the home countries draws migrants to the involvement in the politics of their home countries. Basch *et al.* (1994), stress how the Filipinos and the Haitians responded to the political turmoil surrounding the assassination of Benito Aquino and the deprivation of Aristide of his presidency, respectively. It is added that those who were apolitical about their home-state politics, especially those born in the United States were drawn into political activism (pg.243). The whole world was aware of what happened in Nigeria on the 12th of June 1993 and the aftermath. A Yoruba leader was believed to have overwhelmingly won an election but was denied his mandate by the military junta. Shortly after this, the Nigerian military leader hanged Ken Saro-Wiwa, an environmentalist and a playwright. After the annulment of the election, the Yoruba both at home and abroad came together to condemn the military rule. In Toronto, a group of people came together to form a political organization-the Yoruba Heritage Club. They organized symposia and were involved in educating the Yoruba population in Toronto and other Canadian social groups. Other associations sprang up in the US and in other parts of the world where the Yoruba reside. At the height of the political turmoil, there was Radio Kudirat (RK) launched abroad to ideologically counter the military rule as well as educating the entire world about Nigerian problem. Ironically, those Nigerians outside the country had more access to the news and events taking place in Nigeria than those living there. While press gag disallowed those in Nigeria from having alternative news media, those overseas were able to monitor the events in Nigeria because of their access to different sources of information. Apart from getting news from the radio and varieties of newspapers, many Nigerians freely get news and other information on the Internet. In the survey-interview, about 58% of respondents get news on the Internet while others get news from other sources such as the newspapers published in Toronto and Nigeria. Information technology allows Pan-Yoruba organizations such as the Yoruba Nation ([yorubanation.org](http://yorubanation.org)), Association of Yoruba Descendants in North America, and the Yoruba Heritage in Toronto ([yorubaheritage.com](http://yorubaheritage.com)) to thrive. These associations, through their websites, work toward educating the Yoruba not only about their fate within the Nigerian nation-state, but also create avenues for other Yoruba descendants in the US, the Caribbean and Latin America to learn more about Yoruba culture.

In Toronto, the Yoruba Community Association has a website--[www.yorubas.com](http://www.yorubas.com) that provides different sources of information about the Yoruba around the world. The Internet gives members of the "Yoruba nation" access to learn about their history and culture. Apart from Internet services, information is received from other sources, such as the Yoruba magazine, *The O'dua Gazette* which is published every four months. The plethora of media sources of information affords both the first and second generation Yoruba to be engaged in the politics of the homeland.

Table 5.20: Frequency of reading Nigerian News: All the respondents read the news about Nigeria, but 60% usually do (always and frequently).

Reading Nigerian News	Frequency	Percent
always	12	24.0
frequently	18	36.0
sometimes	14	28.0
seldom	6	12.0
Total	50	100.0

Table 5.21: Medium of Getting News about Nigeria: Most of the respondents 58% get news about Nigeria on the Internet.

Medium of Getting Nigerian News	Frequency	Percent
Internet	29	58.0
Nig/Afri Newspapers in Toronto	7	14.0
T.V.	6	12.0
Others	8	16.0
Total	50	100.0

-

### 5.8 Power Reconfiguration and Reaffirmation:

Complete articulation of transnational practices in the present period must not capitalize on the so-called liberatory aspects of the social fields alone. Rather, the detrimentalness of the whole process should be brought to the fore and not subjected to the fascinating stories of postmodernist theorists that lay too much emphasis on the "empowerment" of these immigrants oscillating between more than one nation-state. By focusing on this aspect alone, one is underrating the domination and exploitation that are involved in the whole process, and at the same time neglecting the psychological and the mental agonies that immigrants and their family members suffer.

Family is breaking up and becoming dislocated due to the displacement that occurs in the course of migration. In most of the less developed countries, people are daily becoming alienated, and ordinary people in these societies deal with a plethora of hardships. This alienation has manifested in high rates of unemployment, rising infant mortality, malnutrition, diminishing quality in educational systems, urban sprawls, environmental degradation, breakdown of families and communities. These problems will continue as there are no signs in globalization that they will be ameliorated. According to the 1999 Human Development Report from the United Nations Development Program, 1.3 billion people live on less than one dollar a day (about one-quarter of humanity). In the developed countries like Canada and Britain, there is a differential opportunity to employment and occupation between the "ethnic and visible minorities" and the "white population". This is connected with "non-recognition of their credentials, lack of Canadian experience and racial discrimination" (Richmond, 1994: 161-164).

The socio-economic opportunities that favor the white population at the expense of the "visible minorities" may continue to widen the historically created gaps between them and the white population. The global economy is no doubt dominated by the transnational corporations who have become more powerful than the nation-states. Many of these large corporations are owned by the white males (and their women benefitting from the capitalist system that allows them to blossom). These corporations exploit the immigrant labor within the Canadian economy and go off-shore to utilize the cheap labor of the already impoverished countries of the south. These corporations have more power than the nation-states, and according to Hurtig (1992), they also influence the government--he who pays the piper dictates the tune! (pp. 256-259). On the other hand are groups from the underdeveloped/developing countries like Nigeria who are traveling from one metropolitan center in the West to another. What is in a life of many Yoruba immigrants in the West? Definitely, they are parts of the "modern nomads", moving from one country of the developed world to another in search of relatively tolerable environment. It is apparent that Canada is not the first country of sojourn for some of the immigrants, and definitely, most of them are going to move on (as seen in Tables 5.12 and 5.13). Those of them who were once in the "second countries" such as the US and some European countries did not move out of pleasure, but for reasons such as unemployment, racism, scapegoating, unfavorable immigration policies, etc. Quite often in the process of this "modern nomadism", many leave their family members behind. For example, quite a number of the Yoruba parents in Toronto are separated from their children for a

protracted period of time, also in the of course traveling, wife and husband do not see for a long time. Conflicts are bound to ensue within the families in part because family members have not spent enough time together to understand one another. Besides, spouses contest over the leadership of the household. The idea of the male being the leader of the house becomes irrelevant if he cannot provide for his family, due to lack of gainful employment. In the worst case scenarios, family breaks up. Many children of the Yoruba immigrants are exposed to work at early age, and the parents easily lose control over them because they are also struggling to make both ends meet. *Ipsa facto*, unemployment, underemployment and non-standardized jobs often encountered by the immigrants marginalize them and dash their "Canadian dreams". If one may therefore ask, in whose interest is globalization?; it is to the interest of the big corporations owned by the dominant members of the society. And some of those transnational practices enumerated in the previous sections are part of the measures being taken by the ordinary people caught, to materially and emotionally relieve themselves.

It is when the above exposition has been considered that one may be able to look at other levels, that is, how power is diffused--reconfigured and reaffirmed in the transnational social fields.

The Yoruba transnational social activities are an admixture of continuation and/or discontinuation of cultural practices which may be an expression of resistance or in some cases composition of a regime of stratification.

Transnationalism enables the Yoruba to strengthen their kinship system which places values on reciprocity. As a matter of fact, the poor economic situation of Nigeria seems to make the extended family system moribund. The youth flee for the cities to look for employment with little possibility of helping the old, especially the women. Men are failing to take up responsibilities at home, because they are either unemployed or do not have enough to support the children and the women. During the annual traditional festivals, and Christian and Muslim religious celebrations, people cannot make it back to their roots to meet their family members. According to Olaogun (1996), the economic problem in Nigeria is threatening the kinship system. This is because, young members of the family who could have been supporting the family and the community move to the city in search of employment. And owing to the harsh economic situation in the city, they find it difficult to maintain ties with their extended family members (pg. 74).

Yet ironically, in the case of the Yoruba transnationals, the distance of their family members in a far-away land does not diminish their kinship obligations, rather it makes the kinship system more functioning. Even though these immigrants may not visit their loved ones frequently, when they do, it is considered good. The "migradollars" enables people to help their family members through remittances and other material supports. The use of family and community members in projects help both the migrants and the community at large--a good form of social capital.

"Ethnic businesses", such as restaurants, selling of Yoruba attire, audio and video production, musical promotion, publication of Yoruba language literature, groceries,

patrons of *malams* and *aladura*, etc. promote the Yoruba social capital. These ventures at least help some members to become self-sufficient and less dependent on wage-labor, exploitation from other groups, especially the capitalist exploiters who suck the blood out of immigrants of color in Toronto. Their social capital helps to avoid the drudgery and *crass* exploitation by the dominant class.

Moreover, these social fields make women less susceptible to patriarchal domination. Their exposure to alternative views make some challenge the power that perpetrates inequities. When they are not aware, they see that they are being called upon by their sons and daughters to resist. In some ways this helps, in another way, the end result is fatal. Madam Aduke's show at the Obesere concert was a political statement that women should be able to express themselves, and have fun when they like. Madam Aduke's show was a typical example of resistance, and the young girls coming out to express themselves, by listening to "explicit vulgarity", thus making their own statements that you do not have to be in the disco or rock and roll clubs to listen to sensuous talk. It is a form of resistance in their own rights.

The *omo olodu* are not left out. Wherever there are social functions, they come out to impress everyone, especially the young women in the community. Many of them display material wealth to the chagrin of those women. They were once boys and men deprived of "good lives" in Nigeria. (The "political scientist" is a typical example of those whose souls and intellects had been destroyed by the destroyers--the politicians and the military elites, and dumped in the wilderness of North America for the Canadian capitalism to finish them off). They could not date their age mates, because they have been snatched by the filthy politicians and the military elites who are the "sugar daddies" that entice them with money. Some of these young men and women turn to fraudsters because they cannot get good jobs. Some of them could have furthered their education, but there is no encouragement. Those of them who are educated and would want to work only have access to factory jobs at \$6.85/hour. If they do defraud they can at least materially live like an average Canadian. Who says Canada is now meant for every Tom, Dick and Harry? Canada might have been "contaminated by different people coming", but the message is clear, traveling overseas is no more a privilege to be enjoyed only by the few.

The transnational practices of "ordinary migrants" have often been considered the "transnationalism from below", the terrain of non-elites, challenging the "transnationalism from above", the capitalist multinationals. The former is considered to transform the "traditional power set up and reconfigure the power base" (Mahler, 1998: 91). Yoruba transnationalism does not demonstrate this *in toto*. The Yoruba do not make efforts to transform the power hierarchy, both in Canada and in Nigeria (if they do, it is negligible!). There are still clear evidences of a "regime of hierarchy" (Goldring, 1996). The actors in this hierarchy have changed a bit, but the domination is still perpetrated. Domination based on gender, class and age still characterizes the community. Men still consider equality with women as an aberration. Women still accept their role as the weaker sex who cannot succeed without men (as they do elsewhere!). Men still go around having multiple sex partners, as a way to reaffirm polygyny, whereas, "women's infidelity" is considered a crime and a despicable act that cannot be condoned. As one

leader said, "women have spoiled the community with extra-marital affairs". Men travel to Nigeria for the purpose of marrying "tamed traditional women" who are not "liberated". Also, men go to Nigeria for immoral sexual acts because of their position. This disparity does not seem necessary because women work as much as men do, and are just as educated. They support their families both in Canada and in Nigeria as their male counterparts, perhaps even more.

Within the Yoruba community are those whose participation in "politics of the belly" (apology to Geschiere, 1997: 202 cited from Leon and Leon (1999)) destroyed the country and have driven well-meaning sons and daughters to the West. These pestiferous parasites still exist in the midst of the population. They still hold high status and prestige in the community. They are those with very succulent hands, compared to the calloused hands of highly educated old men and women toiling in the factories and the "cab business". Ironically, these people who have sold their men and women into absolute slavery still command respect in the community, and also in Nigeria. The question now is, who are the enemies?

The power hierarchy is still being reaffirmed based on age. Gerontocracy is still a major problem. The older people still try to dominate the young ones without any genuine reason. Traditional forms of respect are still expected from the younger generation who are not ready to give it. The young members of the community believe that elders are supposed to control their wards and those who live under their whims and caprices, but not those who come here subsisting on their own.

The Yoruba transmigrants have a life full of contradiction. Many of them discourage those in Nigeria from coming to Canada because of hardship; however, their lifestyle is an attraction to those being discouraged. The *owambe* party can be very expensive when people spend money lavishly as if there were no tomorrow. But a member seems to explain that most members of the community have been destroyed by two types of destroyers-- "the destroyers within" (the agents, who are members of the community) and "the destroyers from outside", (the capitalist exploiters). He says, "if they do not do all this, suicides will descend on our people...we are suffering a lot in this land".

The regime of hierarchy as applied to the Yoruba community in Toronto cannot be simply analyzed, it is characterized with multi-layered and multi-dimensional forms of domination. It can only be well understood within the local particularities of the Yoruba cultural complexes.

## Chapter Six

### The Yoruba Voluntary Organizations

#### 6.1 Preamble

Voluntary organizations are important to ethnic groups in the Diaspora. They serve as agents of resistance, cultural continuities and reconstruction of identities. Participation in

one or more associations can create increased self-esteem and political involvement and less alienation for members of the group. Most voluntary organizations command greater participation, enthusiasm and personal commitment than do those in which activities are done for pay (Sorenson, 1990: 313). Involvement in these associations contributes to individual members' happiness, satisfaction, fulfilment and mental well being. In Toronto, I identify 10 community "clubs" and associations under the umbrella of the Yoruba Community Association. The *aladura* churches and the *asalat* are considered as parts of the Yoruba voluntary organizations. These clubs and associations exist for the most part, to cater for members who hail from the same home towns in Nigeria, while others are associations of friends formed for the purpose of social

or financial support. Those associations that are of the "home town or region" based are the:

- Ekinmogun Cultural Association,
- Ekiti Kete,
- Idanre Cultural Association,
- Ijebu Heritage Association,
- Ijesa Progressive Association of Canada,
- Ile-Oluji Cultural Association,
- Ogbomoso Parapo in Canada,
- Oyemekun association.

All the above-named associations are formed by members from the same home towns or specific regions in Yorubaland that have same dialects, for example the Ekiti; Ondo, Ijebu, and the like. Membership to these organizations is not restricted to place of birth, because people can enter through marriage or parents (applicable to those born in Canada, or elsewhere).

The second type of group social membership--clubs, comprises of friends who meet for economic and social reasons. They are not exactly home towns based. They are open to those of similar interests as in the:

- Anchor Club (mostly married men, who meet from time to time, make money contributions collected on rotational basis. It is not restricted to only members of the Yoruba ethnic group, but membership is dominated by the Yoruba, who originally started it. Women are not allowed to be members).

Membership into this group is dependent on gender and financial standing. The financial situation is important because it was founded by a group of friends who met, combined their money together and collected it rotationally. This is called *esusu* in Yoruba, and this practice has spread to cities across North America and to non-Yoruba groups, especially the African-Americans who know it and use it to assist one another.

- The Eko Club, the membership could be fluid because Lagos is home to people of different ethnicities, and regions in the Yoruba hinterland who could eventually

claim to be Lagosians. This is connected with the cosmopolitan nature of Lagos which draws not only other Yoruba groups, but also other Nigerians of different ethnicities who migrate to the city for social and economic reasons.

All these associations and clubs have sprung up in the last ten years. But the Yoruba Community Association has been in existence for 18 years now. All those associations and clubs mentioned above are considered parts of the Yoruba Community Association. The president of each and everyone of them is an automatic Vice-President to the President of the Yoruba Community Association. In this chapter, I will discuss the proliferation of several associations or groups despite the relatively small population of the community. The functions of these organizations both in Nigeria and Canada will be discussed. Also the social and psychological rewards that participation in these voluntary associations provide for the individual members will be examined.

## 6.2 Proliferation of Yoruba Associations in Toronto:

The Yoruba Community Association has existed for 18 years. Other associations began to spring up in the early 1990s. The creation of these associations was connected with the rise in the population of the Yoruba in Toronto. The increase in the population was caused by the deepening economic crisis of the mid-1980s, coupled with the political impasse of the early 1990s. The Yoruba Community Association was not able to encompass different groups of the Yoruba, of diverse region, dialect, culture and education. With the Yorubaland, even though the people make claim to the same root, which is the Oduduwa dynasty, groups assert differences in terms of the region that they come from. They are also differentiated by different dialects which are not altogether mutually intelligible (Forde, 1951: 5). Apart from this, there is variation in the level of development in these regions, which is influenced by European early activities, modern politics and economic potentials. Regions such as Lagos, Badagry and Abeokuta, which were close to the Atlantic Ocean, were recipients of Western influence, especially education and Christianity before areas like Ekiti, Akoko, Ondo and Owo. These factors make the Yoruba not as homogeneous as an outside observer might think.

These different groups were interested in not only maintaining their identities, they also had different priorities vis-a-vis the needs of their local communities in Nigeria. A leader explains "to put all the leaders together under one umbrella association has been difficult, because of different identities--power struggle ensues, and aspirations and missions differ..." (Community Association Leader Interview: 1999). Some members of the community who used to be members of the Yoruba Community Association complained of financial impropriety of the leadership, its greed and too much pan-individualism rather than pan-communal interest. A former member says "you know our people, wherever they go, corruption goes along with them".

The youth also complain that the association is not useful for them, and charge that the older people believe too much in perpetuating inequality based on age. One young man said, "I cannot go to their meetings, and they ask me to go and run stupid errands for them, such as bringing suitcases from their car". As pointed out in the first part of chapter

two (2.1), the Yoruba hold strongly to age seniority which cannot be compromised. It is believed in that culture, that the young should take instructions from the older members. Wherever the Yoruba are, or may find themselves, you always see this present. At social functions, restaurants, churches or *asalat*, one sees that symbol of obedience and subservience to the older members--you see females kneeling down rather than hugging, and male prostrating or bending for the older members. This also extends to sending the younger persons on errands as part of the cultural impunity enjoyed by the older members of the group. In actual fact, at the Yoruba Community Association meetings, unlike some of the other associations, you do not have young members of the community present at meetings (Participant Observation: summer, 1999). One member of the community alleged that when sons and daughters of the Yoruba have problems with the law, the members do not want to live up to the challenges of helping them-- "they are much more interested in *owanbe* party..." While the above mentioned allegations were not denied by a leader of the community, the member however, stated that "problems such as these happen everywhere, especially in complex organizations...we the Yoruba have always been complex, even prior to the arrival of the Europeans...".

Corruption, misunderstanding, leadership tussle, fights, arrogance and greed are the reasons given by dissented members as the causes of other groups springing up.

The fissiparous nature of community was agreed to by all the Yoruba community associations' leaders as a strength rather than a weakness. It has become a strength because all the presidents of each of the associations and clubs are vice-presidents to the president of the Yoruba Community Association. The president of the Yoruba Community Association is a member of the Nigerian-Canadian Association and a member of the larger *Egbe Omo Yoruba in North America*. So, the centrifugality eventually leads to centripetality. The leadership structure of the associations enables not only the Yoruba Community Association to reach all groups, but also helps towards the solidarity of all Nigerians in Toronto and around the world. For example, the Eko Club of Toronto is affiliated with Eko Clubs of London, England and those of various cities in the United States. Similarly, the Ile Oluji is a branch of Ile-Oluji National Union, the umbrella organization based in Ile-Oluji, Nigeria. They are also affiliated with the Ile-Oluji National Union in the United States, England and France. Furthermore, the fission enables each of the associations to embark on development projects in its respective smaller communities in Toronto and in Yorubaland (see Table 6.1 for membership participation).

Table 6.1: Membership in Yoruba community associations and clubs: 48% of the respondents are members of one or more Yoruba associations and clubs in Toronto, while 52% are not members of any of the Yoruba clubs and associations.

Membership	Frequency	Percent
yes	24	48.0

no	26	52.0
Total	50	100.0

### 6.3 Transnational Projects:

6.3.1 Nigeria: Various community associations help alleviate the harsh social and economic problems of their community in Nigeria. Members are aware of the problems facing members of their community. Most of their projects deal with the humanitarian community development, socio-economic support and cultural advancement of their community. Part of their annual fundraising and individual donations go toward providing hospital equipment for under-funded hospitals and health facilities in various parts of Yorubaland. Hospital drugs are also shipped home to help members of the community. Association members in Canada work in conjunction with those members in the home town to monitor the medical needs of people at home, and then liaise with those Yoruba in the medical fields here to help with the procurement of those medications needed by those in Nigeria. Ile Oluji Cultural Association, initially founded to cater to the needs of their members here in Canada, later changed the focus to helping their community members in Ile-Oluji, Nigeria. Ever since they began community projects in Nigeria, they have been donating drugs for patient use. In January, 1999, drugs were presented to the Ile-Oluji Development Committee for distribution to local hospitals. In addition, over the years, they have been contributing to other community projects such as renovating the existing hospitals and providing water wells for the community hospital. Another community contribution is the presentation at Ile-Oluji musical instruments to the local cultural band, Adeyemi Ojefon Cultural Band (Community Association Leader Interview: 1999). The Eko Club also funds the hospitals in Lagos. Other associations such as the Oyemekun, Ijebu and Ekiti Kete have not embarked on major community support programs in Yorubaland, but hope to be engaged in them in the future.

Socio-economically, associations in Toronto donate books, stationeries and computers to educational institutions in Nigeria. These donations are beneficial to schools that have been under-funded by the government. Moreover, financial support is made toward home town festivities and celebration. For example, money donation was made by the Ile-Oluji Cultural Association of Canada to Ile-Oluji Day—an annual event that attracts all the indigines of Ile-Oluji town in Nigeria from different parts of the world.

The Yoruba Community Association has been involved in fund raising and awareness raising of Sickle Cell Anemia (CSA), an inherited blood disorder that primarily afflicts people of African and Asian descents. The organization for the awareness of Sickle Cell Anemia was originally founded by the Black in Health Organization in Toronto. Ever since its foundation about five years ago, individual members of the Yoruba community have been involved in different activities and events organized around CSA by this organization, but the Yoruba Community Association did not get involved in their activities until 1999. Every year, for the past five years, children with the CSA have been going to a camp, called "Camp Jumoke". Individual members of the Yoruba community

have always been involved in this event as well, but the Yoruba Community Association got involved for the first time in the summer of 1999 when they took part in the walkathon organized to raise fund for the camp (Participant Observation: summer, 1999). As Nigeria is planning to build a Sickle Cell Center in Nigeria, a member of the Yoruba Community Association is raising money from various Yoruba associations and individuals to sponsor a room. This room will be named "Toronto Room". Close to \$25,000 will be needed for this.

-

6.3.2 Canada: The activities of these Yoruba voluntary organizations do not focus on their communities of origin, they are also playing various roles within their Canadian community in Toronto. Associations donate funds to the "sick children hospital" and "variety village" every year; they also donate food to the food bank and sponsor refugee resettlement. These contributions are not exclusively made to the Yoruba groups or individuals but are beneficial to the entire community at large. During the Kosovo crises, the Yoruba Community Association donated money toward the resettlement of refugees from Kosovo.

Voluntary organizations are helping toward the settlement of new comers into Canadian society. The Yoruba Community Association was helping at one time to provide legal assistance to those Yoruba arriving as refugees to Canada via Toronto. The Ile-Oluji Cultural Association provided room and board for new comers from their home town, Ile-Oluji. Their leader asserted that new members knew about the Ile-Oluji indigenes in Toronto before they even arrived in Canada (Community Association Leader Interview: 1999).

In the summer, all the associations organize picnics at different times, inviting members of other groups to take part. Picnics provide opportunities for members of the community to come together. At the picnics, people form groups based on their interests to share stories. These times provide forums for people to tell stories about home, old times, friendship, good economic times in Nigeria, and funny stories about their Canadian experiences. At these social settings, serious matters are turned into "jocose" for the purposes of lightening up the reality. Different issues are brought up. These meetings create avenues for information-sharing about events, business opportunities and consolidation of social capital.

The associations organize other social functions such as the Yoruba Community Association *Odu'a Night Award*, when those members of the community who have contributed to the larger community in areas such as education, sports, volunteering, etc. are rewarded. Other functions are traditional *ere ibile*, *Ogun* dance and *egungun*, such as *eyo*. The displays of traditional songs and play give those Yoruba born in Canada an opportunity to know about "their parents' culture" and also give them a sense of belonging. It also enables the urban elites who are typical Pan Oyinbo elements to see what they refused to see in Nigeria. There are some of those cheering and clapping who

would never have taken part in such events in Nigeria. For many *ajebota*, they are witnessing *ere ibile* and other traditional performances for the first time.

Community associations organize special parties for the youth, as it is in the interest of the older members who are mostly parents to promote marriage among members of the community (see Table 5.18). Some of the community leaders and members of the community are concerned that they are losing the youth to exogamous marriage.

Members of various Yoruba associations are there to help one another, both financially and materially. Anchor Club helps its membership through *esusu*. The collection of *esusu* helps toward founding and maintaining small businesses. Also, for Oyemekun Association, the members help one another socially and financially when there are social functions such as naming, marriage and funeral ceremonies, both in Canada and in Nigeria.

These associations are currently working on long term projects. For example, the Ijebu Heritage is looking toward investment in Retirement Plans and planning to negotiate for phone cards at cheaper rates, as most members of the community usually make phone calls to Nigeria. The Yoruba Community Association is currently working on having a community center within the next few years. Nearly all the associations have plans for helping their home towns in Nigeria, and those who have not started this have it in their agenda.

#### 6.4 Religious Voluntary Organizations:

The majority of the Yoruba in Nigeria and elsewhere adhere publicly to Islam or Christianity. In Toronto, the Muslim meet on Sundays for *asalat* to share the quoran and the hadith of the prophets. The Yoruba go to different Christian religious sects, but the dominant "Yoruba churches" are the *aladura* churches which are divided into different sects. Four groups are identified in Toronto: the *Cherubim and Seraphim* (C&S), the *Celestial Church of Christ*, the *Christ Apostolic Church*(CAC) and the *World Soul Winning Evangelistic Ministry* (WOSEM). The Yoruba Muslim community in Toronto does not worship distinctly from other Muslim groups residing in Toronto; however, they have the *asalat*, which is a Yoruba prayer group. In terms of social functions and activities that are Yoruba-oriented, the *aladura* churches are more vibrant in Toronto than their Muslim counterparts. From the participant observation and survey-interviews, it is revealed that a lot of the Yoruba in Toronto are more attracted to these churches than to the orthodox Christian churches.

Table 6.2: Place of Worship: 8% of the Yoruba surveyed attend the multicultural churches (encompassing different ethnic groups); 28% the Yoruba churches (*aladura*); 18% Canadian churches (mostly white votaries); and 6% black church (dominated by black population of different ethnicities, such as the West Indians, black Canadians, African-Canadians, Africans, etc.). 30% are Muslims and they worship in various mosques in Toronto, and 8% do not attend any church. All those who profess to Islamic faith respond that they attend the mosque.

Response	Frequency	Percent
Multicultural Church	4	8.0
Yoruba church	14	28.0
Canadian Church	9	18.0
Black church	3	6.0
Mosque	15	30.0
I do not attend any	5	10.0
Total	50	100.0

The *aladura* churches are the indigenised form of Christianity among the Yoruba. Barrett (1991), considers the *aladura* Christian groups as a simultaneously politico-religious movement (pg. 22). They are political because they partly emerged as a form of protest against the domination of the church by the early missionaries who were whites. They are religious because they still believe in God but make Christianity more meaningful to the Yoruba/African cultural milieu. By so doing, they do not claim ignorance of witchcraft and other evil forces that serve as a hindrance to good health, prospect and happiness. But rather than denying them as in the orthodox Christian faith such as the Anglican, Methodist and Baptist, the *aladura* counteracted those forces through prophesy, divination, fasting, healing and communal fellowship (Hackett, 1991:286).

In Toronto, the *aladura* churches provide spiritual, psychological and social supports or safety-nets for members of the Yoruba community. Their functions are irreducible to spiritual healing alone, rather they encompass different aspects of adherents' experiences in life, and this mode of operation Barrett (1991) refers to as "explanation-prediction-control" mechanism (pg. 23). Those who are faced with problems of witchcraft and sorcery originating from Nigeria and in Toronto get the spiritual help. Psychologically, the prophets and the priests are always there to counsel and advise people on how to cope with their day to day struggles. Socially, they bring members of the community together. Social functions such as the yearly harvest thanksgiving for the adults, and the children draw all members from all walks of life to the church. The music, dance and songs are mostly Yoruba. During the 6th Adult Harvest Thanksgiving Service of the *Cherubim and Seraphim Church*, Oke Igbala Ayo in Toronto, guests were invited not only from other Nigerian ethnic groups, but also from the "Canadian population", the US and even from Nigeria. Prior to this, the *Celestial Church of Christ*, Ayo Mother Parish had celebrated yearly harvest (Participant Observation: fall, 1999).

These churches from time to time invite priests, shepherds, or prophets/prophetess (as their leaders are called) from Nigeria or elsewhere to share in fellowships, revivals, prayers and spiritual healing powers with the members of the community.

6.5 The Social Relevance: The social importance of the Yoruba voluntary organizations for both the development of the home country and the host community cannot be over-emphasized. They help immeasurably as agencies of both collective and individual contributions to the host societies. Their emergence in the recent years cannot be seen in isolation of the travails of the Yoruba people both at home and abroad, and the depreciation in the socio-economic lives of Canadian society. Contrary to the belief of the average Canadian that African immigrants come to this land with their caps in hand to beg for food and subsistence, the activities of the Yoruba in Toronto render this notion superficial. These immigrants not only cater to the needs of their groups but contribute to the larger Canadian society as in the case of contributions toward Kosovo resettlement, food banks, charitable donations, etc.

In Nigeria, the government has abandoned its responsibilities, especially in areas of providing for the basic needs of the people. Needs such as education, health, housing, food and medication have been abandoned, and the Canadian transnationals who are home town members are aware of this, and respond by trying to alleviate the suffering of their people as a collective. Moreover, the neoliberal policy of double standard of the Canadian Government, favoring the investor class of immigrants over the not quite well-to-do independent class and the refugee claimants calls for individual immigrants to fend for themselves on arrival in Canada. The most convenient option open to many immigrants is linking with the members of their home towns, regions and kin members (from Nigeria) in Canada. The voluntary associations help with issues of settlement, participating in especially informal orientation, employment information and legal matters.

Our understanding of the contribution of voluntary organizations should not be limited to what they give to those who are "less fortunate", but we should as well look at what they get in return. Membership in a voluntary association is connected to power and status in the community of origin. Projects such as money and goods donation, renovation of dilapidated infrastructure, building of wells and houses, are never done *incognito*. Rather they are named after the group and the association involved, such as the envisioned "Toronto Room" in the heart of Lagos. As one community leader said, whenever a donation is made, the local folks in the community of origin usually say, *ki ori je ki omo mi lo Canada, (may God let my ward go to Canada)* (Community Association Leader Interview: 1999). Although, these offers are made out of the consideration for the socio-economic well-being of the people, but they are not devoid of "compensation" or reward that encourages further involvement.

Participation in events and social functions organized by these voluntary organizations gives members of the community a sense of belonging and recognition of individuals within the group. In some social functions and association meetings, people's achieved statuses are valorized. People are called by their titles--it is common to hear people being

addressed loudly for all those present to hear as "Lawyer A", "Architect B", "Engineer C", "Accountant D", "Senator E", "Shepherd F", Chief Z, etc. The Yoruba or rather, the Nigerians like to be addressed with titles, and these events make this possible for them. Also, those who have digressed from their academic professions in Canada get satisfaction and some self-pride by being addressed in titles associated with their academically-achieved statuses. The same goes for the chiefs and the elders who are given less recognition by the Canadian public, by virtue of Canadian culture which is no respecter of primordial statuses.

Leaders of the voluntary organizations tend to use their positions for social and economic connections both in the country of settlement and in the home country (Goldring, 1998: 185). As leaders, they have easier access to the important traditional and political actors of their home countries. Thus, they can use this connection for their benefit. Moreover, they have the possibility of meeting the mayors, Members of the Provincial Parliament, the Members of National Parliament or even the Prime Minister of the country of settlement, and the political juggernauts of their home country, which can be socially, economically and psychologically rewarding.

In the summer, some associations were preparing for the visit of the governors of their states in Nigeria, to Toronto. These governors were slated to meet those members of their state for discussions pertaining to Nigerian socio-economic and political progress and development. Among those preparing for this August visit were people of diverse social backgrounds in Nigeria; from peasantry to civil servants and teachers to small business owners. These were the categories that had been totally neglected by the Nigerian ruling elites, and ironically, these are members of the associations that these governors will be sitting down to have parleys with. In Nigeria, it is not a hyperbole, that streets and quarters are cordoned off for the governors and top government functionaries, that they do not have time to spend with the ordinary people, but in Toronto, they would. Moreover, why these politicians even come to the West should be questioned. It appears they do not have any genuine relationships with the people either in Nigeria or abroad but with the "Oyinbo people". Coming to *ilu Oyinbo* is a desire for them, more important than going to the villages in Nigeria/Yorubaland to see how the local folks are faring.

Most Yoruba social functions organized by the organizations are attended with people displaying their expensive Yoruba attire, such as *laze*, *coupion*, *cocaine* (a particular kind of cloth material), *organza* materials, good shoes, necklaces; while some come to show off their cars. Most events are not missed by the *omo olodu* often with their mobile phones to show off, designer shoes and expensive wrist watches. These are the events where people gain recognition. This recognition is not usually gained elsewhere. At these social functions, people come prepared with \$1.00 US bills to "spray" on the dancing floors. It is usually the US dollar bills, especially \$1.00 that they use. Why not Nigerian money or Canadian money? In London, England, where there is a higher pocket of Yoruba population, the Yoruba also spend their \$1.00 bills, and there are other Yoruba in the party who change pound sterling to the US dollar, based on a commission. This happens when people run out of money and cannot go to the bank at night. As somebody sitting next to me in a social function put it, "the Yoruba are very complex; you may

never know what is going through their mind...US dollars in Canada!" These social functions serve as a means of making money for those in the audio and video production business. The videos and the audio-tapes are sold to members of the community, while some are sold in Nigeria or get diffused to other places where the Yoruba live. When those in Nigeria see how their fellow members display their opulence in Toronto, they consider them as socially and materially more opportune than them. Those at home compare the "awon Toronto" with "awon Germany", "awon Yankee" and "awon London". Moreover, associations send calendars, magazines and photos to their home towns for the members to see. These images captivate the imagination of those at home who become drawn to the far away land that produces this high number of parvenus.

Succinctly, apart from the fact that voluntary associations help immeasurably in alleviating the hardship of the recipients through their altruistic donations, the membership is beneficial to members both psychologically and socio-economically.

Conclusively, the voluntary organization practices are characterized with some contradictions. These contradictions center around the difference between the "appearance" of the members of the community on the one hand, and "reality" of things on the other hand. Membership in voluntary organizations for many Yoruba is psychologically suiting. For most of these men and women, they derive "consolations" from participating in the community social events. For the older members, the community events enable them to get due respects from the younger members of the community. The kind of respect that these older members deserve cannot be derived from the mainstream Canadian society. One community member explains "our people do not have any choice, people cannot go home regularly to assume their roles in the community...so what they are missing they are replacing through these association practices" (Community Association Leader Interview: 1999). There are those who become active members of the religious organizations, especially the *aladura* church not only to seek spiritual protection from their "enemies", but also for the possibility of solving some social problems considered to be "spiritually caused", e.g. unemployment, stress, child's deviant behavior, etc.

These association practices can become misleading to an average member of the "Canadian dominant group", who might think that this group has the "freedom and power". This is because they consider their practices as a form of "empowerment". Of course, glory must go to the policy of multiculturalism in Canada which allows these people to express themselves socially. However, to fully understand why this group holds on to their cultural practices, thorough understanding of the reality of things with the immigrants from the developing countries of the world is necessary. Barrett (1987), while trying to explain the reason behind the establishment of in-group organizations by people of color says, *inter alia*, "... to overcome structural disadvantage, and the overwhelming psychological damage that makes them doubt their own worth..." (pg. 343). As the old saying goes thus, "the appearance is different from reality". Indeed, the appearance of the Yoruba immigrants through their association ceremonies is indeed definitely different from the reality.

In the final analysis, when those family members in Nigeria see the videos, audio-tapes, photos, calendars, etc., of social events of their members abroad, they immediately assume that all goes well with them. They rely so much on what they see on the videos, without knowing what these members are going through in their day to day living experience. This "appearance" indeed differs from the advice they get from some of their family members, friends and acquaintances in Toronto, who have discouraged them from immigrating. For example, in the survey-interview, 46% of the respondents will encourage prospective immigrants from coming to Canada, while 50% will not (see Table 6.3).

Table 6.3: Advice For Those who Want to Migrate to Canada: 4% give "no comment" as answer to this question; 46% will encourage prospective immigrants to come to Canada; while 50% will discourage them from coming.

Response	Frequency	Percent
no comment	2	4.0
encouragement	23	46.0
discouragement	25	50.0
Total	50	100.0

#### Conclusion: Assessment, Recommendation and Suggestion

Most of the early Yoruba immigrants in the West came for prestige, and not necessarily for economic reasons. These migrants of the 1960s and the 1970s mostly came to study, with the majority of them returning home. The recent immigrants come mostly for economic reasons, pushed by the neocolonial state of the Nigerian economy which favors the extraction of natural resources and the control of the important sectors of economy by the transnational corporations on the one hand, and the corrupt practices of much of the postcolonial Nigerian leadership on the other hand. In other words, the current immigrants are the by-products of a society driven by the "cargo cult mentality". The economic dependency of Nigeria on the West is accompanied by the penetration of Western culture which influences the worldview of the people, attracting both the young and old alike to Western metropolitan centers. As pointed out in Chapter one (section 1.1), the documentation of Africans in the Diaspora as "transnationals" is still missing in the literature. Moreover, lofty projects done on immigrants of African descent from the Caribbean in the West by writers (especially, Schiller *et al.* (1992); Basch *et al.* (1994)) have so far analyzed their activities within the framework of "economically induced migration". What is given little or no currency in these works is the psychological impacts of such encounters between the West and the Africans, which promote the migration, and this encounter is not devoid of domination of the mind and the psyche.

As argued in the second part of chapter three (3.2), the migration of the Yoruba to the West should not be considered in isolation from the ideological hegemonic power of colonialism, which had a legacy. Colonialism creates a distortion between the African societies and the West, by extracting the natural resources for the development of Western capitalism. The dependence of most African economies on the West continues after the independence--neocolonial economic system. That said, the psychological domination leading to the dependency complex did not end at independence.

As has been pointed out in this research, future immigrants are being socialized from their childhood; this form of socialization has impacts on their future decision to migrate. This form of socialization constitutes the socio-structural factor, that had been prevalent, but was "blown out" with the failed economy that began in the mid-1980s. This is to say in other words that, even if the economy had not failed the vast majority of the Nigerian population, the tendency, allure for, and the love for the *ilu oyinbo* had dominated the psyche of many of the Yoruba--they had been conditioned to love all aspects of the Western culture-- their life-style, consumption, mannerisms, etc. to the detriment of their own culture. In brief, the Nigeria's economic problem is not enough to explain the Yoruba migration to the West. This was illuminated in the previous chapter (Chapter 5), where the analysis delved into the "early comers" who came to seek for "glory". It was also mentioned that African elites came to *ilu oyinbo*, not purposely for economic reasons, but for other reasons which are psychological. The elites have been coming even when they had little or no recognition in the West, and despite their privileged position at home, they still have this attraction to the West. In the case of the ordinary Yoruba, they are coming to get social validation which stands them out in the community, not necessarily because of the advantage they enjoy from the exchange rate of the Canadian dollar to Nigerian naira, but also because of the societal perception and belief about *ilu oyinbo*. Albeit, these days, "money power" seems to be privileged over social power, but the latter is not *incognito*.

The migration process may seem liberatory as it appears, but literature needs to focus more on the "below the surface" level to capture the pre-and post-migration psychological and mental agonies, and their intensities on various transnational groups in the "host societies" rather than looking at the rosy picture of things, and generalizing. The "ethnic institutions" which seem to be considered as "emancipating" the people may even be reactionary to social change in both the "host" and the "home countries". In order to understand the phenomenon of transnationalism, different methods, micro-macro, quantitative-qualitative, oral history, feminist methodology, etc., should be employed to capture the real nature of the social reality.

In summary, the Yoruba transnationals are the products of globalization. They are victims of the economic globalization in terms of the historical integration of colonized Africa to the world economic system during the trans-Atlantic slave trade, colonialism and of lately, the penetration of foreign capital in the form of loans from foreign banks and the International Monetary Fund. The exposure to the communications technology and advancement in transportation technology promote and contribute to their sustenance of transnational practices. Ironically, they are victims of two worlds, the world they left

behind because of socio-economic and political insecurity, and their bottom stratum position in Canada. Furthermore, their shortcomings are compounded by the global distortion and unequal developments of the world. They arrive at the time when the economy is going through corporate restructuring--change from industrial to post-industrial service economy that lays emphasis on knowledge-based skills. This is what these immigrants are least prepared for. To add more salt upon injury, the Liberal Party of the federal government is leaning more toward the right in pursuit of the neoliberal philosophy, so also the Conservative Party of the provincial government is zealously pursuing same neoliberal ideology. It is imperative that immigrants should retrain and reskill to make them competitive in the labor market; and lack of opportunities for job retraining and reskilling makes lives more difficult for these immigrants, thus creating more inequalities between the immigrants and "the Canadian population".

The Yoruba transnationals are not passive in the face of the neoliberal worlds; they try to resist and manoeuvre their hardships by constructing their transnationalism as a succor for both their kin members in Nigeria and those in Canada (cf. Chapters 5 and 6). They do not limit their contributions to those of similar ethnic kinship but to the entire Toronto community. This makes Toronto a vibrant community for all and sundry. Six factors inducing their transnational practices have been examined and critically analyzed based on the data collected for the research. They are:

- The place of the Yoruba within the world system. The integration of African societies (including the Yoruba and the Nigerian societies during the Transatlantic slave trade, colonialism, and the neocolonial structure) with the global economy undermines the ability of independent Nigeria to assert its rightful place among the comity of nations. Rather, the structure put in place by colonialism generated the opportunities for the accumulation of resources by both the imperialist world and the predatory Nigerian ruling class to the detriment of the ordinary Nigerians. Part of the metamorphosis was the migration of the people to the materialistic world to seek for the acquisition of material resources. Material goods and remittances from overseas in form of money, become the *sine qua non* for many Nigerians to get by.
- Racial categorization and racism as a stumbling block to socio-economic mobility. Discrimination and other measures of hostility in the Canadian white-dominated society cannot but make the divided loyalty to Canada an option. The Yoruba are conscious of this. They perceive and experience it. Members of the community then seek succor within the Yoruba communities in Canada, Nigeria and elsewhere around the world. They become more aware of their place in the world, and struggle to define it in their own way.
- The importance attached to their kinship becomes strengthened owing to the deepening economic crisis in Nigeria. Both material and social supports are being provided to alleviate the suffering of their kin members. Members of the family in Nigeria are not just the "Oliver Twist" asking for more and more, they also serve as the networks linking their brothers, sisters, uncles, aunts, cousins, friends, etc. to the community that they left behind. In the end, both stand to gain.

- The voluntary organizations not only serve the needs of the Yoruba in Toronto and Nigeria but other groups in Canada. They create the fora for humanitarian activities and opportunities to acquire social prestige. These organizations, thus affirm the traditional pan-human interests of the Yoruba.
- The societies that the immigrants left behind still claim them, even when the nation-state is short of this; the traditional locality confers them with honor and prestige, in form of honourary and hereditary chieftaincy titles.
- Political activism with other progressives domiciled in Nigeria and other parts of the world was warranted by the maladministration of the military dictatorship.

In examining the various forms of transnationalism as they relate to the Yoruba transnational social fields, it became evident that some aspects of the practices are very strong, while some are very weak. The concern now is how to use the strong aspects to strengthen the weak part of the social fields. Before doing this, it is pertinent to enumerate the weak and the strong parts of these social fields.

The Strength: On the strong side, the Yoruba transnationals are archetypes of immigrants who constitute what some writers have described as "modern Diasporas". They constitute members of the new groups challenging the current state of affairs in the modern world. For example, different groups of Nigerians in the diaspora fought against the military oppression headed by Generals Babangida and Abacha. Two areas of participation that have international magnification are:

First, the 12th of June, 1993 annulment of election in Nigeria. The Yoruba group protested, claiming that the annulment fraudulently denied the people of their mandate, and was ethnically motivated. This could be compared to the immigrants of Haiti origin in all the major cities across the world fighting for the restoration of Aristide. In Toronto, the Yoruba formed a political arm of the struggle called the Yoruba Heritage Club, which had affiliations with other Yoruba groups around the world, particularly the politically inclined ones, such as National Democratic Committee (NADECO). These groups popularized the "12th of June 1993", and were very difficult to crush, not only because they were ubiquitous, but also because of their media power. The NADECO had its own radio station in exile, *Radio Kudirat*, transmitting to all the Yoruba and Nigerians of progressive interest and keeping them abreast of the development taking place in Nigeria. Most pieces of information that petered through to the world were unavailable in Nigeria because the media had been gagged.

The second is the killing of the indefatigable leader of the Ogoni, Ken Saro-Wiwa by the Abacha government in Nigeria, and the aftermath. Ken Saro-Wiwa was fighting against the Shell-BP multinational corporation and the Nigerian government for the environmental devastation of the Ogoniland in Nigeria. He was hanged with seven other Ogoni leaders at the behest of the military "kangaroo court". The Ogoni with other well-meaning Nigerians campaigned against the Nigerian government and the exploitation of the people of Nigeria by the Shell-BP, calling for boycotts of Shell-BP products. That the military regime eventually gave in to the people's demand is to the credit of the ordinary people of Nigeria, who suffered under the yoke of the military, and those transnational

groups that complemented their efforts to actualize a *persona non grata* against the military dictatorship.

Furthermore, the kinship network system of the Yoruba transnationals has been a resource to both the Yoruba/Nigerian communities in Nigeria, Toronto and around the world. Poverty is being alleviated in Nigeria through remittances, small businesses, information for kin members to migrate and charitable and non-charitable projects of both the individuals and community associations. Practices such as resettlement, legal costs and community supports are extended to members here in Canada. The Yoruba in-group solidarity in Toronto is strong and is being used to help one another both socially and economically. However, it can be said that their "humanitarian roles", such as remittances and donations in Nigeria are in a way ingraining reactionary mentality in the Yoruba and Nigerians in Nigeria. Dependence on material supports from those abroad tends to make people more obedient and lenient with the ruling elite. Who knows, if the absence of these overseas supports would have led to a great revolution in the society! However, these supports do serve the immediate needs of members in Nigeria.

The Weakness: The major weakness observed in these transnational performances is the low level of capital accumulation. This is glaring in the low level of members' participation in entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurial undertakings by these transnationals, in Nigeria and in Toronto are lower than those of immigrant groups such as the Chinese, Jews and Indians. Most members earn wages in the blue-collar sectors such as the cab driving business, factory, domestics, etc., while many are unemployed. With the high level of their education, they should engage in service economies in areas such as high-technology, music production, and proprietorship and entrepreneurship in restaurants, groceries, estate, clothes sales, etc. In order to be a socio-economically formidable force, they may have to utilize their social capital. This social capital can be easily realized from their "cultural strength", particularly their in-group solidarity. The possibility of realizing this would in part depend on "the locality". One locality is Nigeria; and Canada is another locality. As mentioned in chapter one, we should not be carried away by the illusion of the global village "imploding on all"; rather our analysis of international migration in this era of globalization should still give some paramouncy to the importance of locality. Using the example of the Chinese to buttress my point about the importance of locality, the Chinese have historically been victims of racism in Canadian society. Their experience of racism in part led to the "formation" of Chinatowns in major cities of North America. Lately, these communities have become more economically buoyant due to the infusion of Taiwanese, Hong Kong and mainland China's capital into their already established communities. Relating this to the Yoruba, internal transformation of Nigeria would help their members abroad immeasurably, in that the transnationals could divert their "income surplus" to academic self-improvement and investments in business.

Still on the importance of locality, the internal diversity within the country of emigration can predict an immigrant's performance in the country of destination. For example, a highly educated Nigerian on a commonwealth scholarship to Canada would definitely outdo a peasant from Nigeria, arriving from Nigeria as a refugee. Similarly, how immigrants of different ethnic groups would fare *might also depend* on the locality of

origin. Immigrant groups from Korea (South Korea; one of the industrializing nations of the world) have the opportunities of outdoing Nigerian immigrants because of the higher material opportunities (including technical education) in their home country. *Ipsa facto*, the "Nigerian factor" (see chapter 2.2) is worth looking at. This leads me to begin my analysis on how to make the Yoruba immigrants more competitive, by examining the necessity for internal social reforms in Nigeria.

Taking into consideration that globalization is the mantra of this era, and whether nation-states like it or not, they must take part in it. It should be reiterated that Africa has never been new to globalization. During the trans-Atlantic slave trade, Africa exchanged its human resources for European goods, and with colonialism, the natural resources were tapped by the imperial Europe to develop their productive capitalism. And currently Africans are losing their human potential and resources to the West. In all phases of global development, Africa has been losing. Unfortunately, it does not seem there is a way out for African countries to opt out of the global capitalism. However, if globalization is pursued with a "human face" by not putting the interest of the market ahead of the people's agenda, African countries might be uplifted from the present state of hopelessness. In other words Nigeria, as well as other African countries, should partake in globalization without sacrificing the mass of the people for the benefit of the few as it is the case now.

#### A. Measures to be Taken by Nigeria:

i. **Emphasis on Social Capital:** Putnam (1995) defines social capital as constituting features of social life, which include networks, trust and norms. These features of social life make it possible for a group of people to effectively pursue "shared interest" (pp.664-65). Apparently, social capital is easily realized in a society that is devoid of conflicts between groups. In many African countries, social capital has been destroyed by wars, crime, violence, poverty, diseases and oppression. People are finding it difficult to reproduce their culture. They can no longer bequeath their norms and practices to the coming generation. This greatly undermines the growth of human capital.

In Nigeria, the crime rate has reached a crescendo, armed robbery, ritual murder, politically-orchestrated assassination, rape, etc, have become rife. All this constitutes a stumbling block to social capital. Inequality is the major cause of crime and conflicts in Nigeria. So the Nigerian leadership must be conscious of the fact that deregulation and privatization which are key elements of globalization will reinforce inequalities, so the government should work towards bridging the wide gap between the rich and the poor, by redistributing resources.

In the major cities where social capital has been destroyed by urban sprawl, crime infestation, poverty, etc. voluntary organizations can spring up to replace or complement the battered kinship system. Coleman (1988) points out that social capital in the family and in the community fosters human capital, which will eventually lead to public goods (pg. S119).

ii. Invest in human capital: Human capital is an essential corollary to the development of any society. Investment in human capital creates in the labor-force the skills needed for economic growth. Human capital like social and physical capitals does depreciate. No doubt human capital is depreciating in Nigeria due to poor sanitary condition, pollution, childhood diseases, food shortages, abject poverty, etc. Diseases such as AIDS can easily depreciate the human capital. The impending ravaging effects of the AIDS virus in Nigeria as in many other poor countries will definitely undermine the human capital potential (Newswatch, Dec. 20, 1999).

Inequality is a major problem facing Nigeria and many African countries. Nigeria, an oil-rich country with so much money in foreign accounts is ranked 146 in human development index, classified as a "low human development" country (Human Development Report, 1999: 136). In terms of adult illiteracy rate, 40.5% of the population was illiterate in 1997; population without access to safe water, 51% (1990-1997); health services 33% (1981-1992); and sanitation, 59% (1990-1997) (Human Development Report, 1999: 147). It is apparent in Nigeria that the gap between the "haves" and the "have nots" is too wide, which calls for an urgent remedy because of its future implication. The rise of ethnic groups, such as the Odu'a People's Congress (OPC), Igbo People's Congress, Egbesu with pugnacious agenda; and the declaration of Sharia in some northern states are part of the symptoms of already existing inequalities and injustice. The globalization process is going to intensify all these problems. What does the government have to do?

Evidence from the developed countries has shown that, there is always a wide gap in the socio-economic statuses between the educated and the uneducated, so Nigeria must be ready to invest in education, so as to bridge this gap of inequality. The government should make education one of its top-most priorities. There should be a universal free primary and secondary education policy, and incentives given for post-secondary education. University graduates must be able to compete with their counterparts in other parts of the world. But this cannot be accomplished if the teachers are poorly paid. The teachers should be rewarded with reasonable emoluments, while the universities are equipped with modern technology to make these teachers more enthusiastic about the profession of teaching and its pedagogy. Investment in education is a major investment in human capital. And this investment must be cognizant of the constructive aspects of the indigenous knowledge such as the traditional healing power, medicine, crafts, sense of community, arts, etc. In other words, the educational system should also be able to transmit to its recipients the indigenous culture, language and cultural history.

Investing in education would be cost-efficient for the Nigerian government in view of its past experience and that of some other nations. For instance, in the 1970s, the Nigerian and Ghanaian governments sent students abroad for undergraduate and graduate study and recruited hundreds of foreign teachers to teach at their national universities. Owing to the declining oil revenues for Nigeria in the 1980s and the economic declines in Ghana in the 1970s and the 1980s, they were unable to continue with these programs. Hence, most of the students sent abroad never returned home because they had little loyalty to their government (Kritz and Caces, 1992: 226). What is necessary for Nigeria to do is to invest

on their indigenous universities and attract their trained nationals in science and technology fields abroad.

iii. Democracy: The Nigerian governments of the past, whether civilian or military had never addressed the problems of the common people. The new civilian regime should therefore address the problems of the vast majority of the people who are living in poverty. Nigeria must adopt a "people-centered" democratic principle. This means that the elected representatives truly represent the people, not the present system whereby the party chiefs give money to people during the election to entice their votes. How can democracy be overhauled in Nigeria? Education is very important--free and quality education for all! In addition to this, grass roots elements such as the social activists, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), local women's group and other progressive groups should be involved in economic and political literacy education of the people from the grassroots level. This will conscientize and sanitize the people and the society, and make them aware of themselves as citizens. This awareness will help them elect one of their kind to represent them at the local, national and federal legislative assemblies. For example, as it stands now, it is very easy for the opportunists from Lagos, London, Rio de Janeiro or Toronto, to go to Ekiti region in Yorubaland to contest elections and represent the people, without knowing the problems of the people.

iv. War against Corruption: Corruption is an anathema to Nigeria's progress. Stringent measures should be taken to combat this "disease". Previous regimes had only paid a lip-service to this problem because they thrived on it. The new regime should tackle this problem bravely; not only that, they should lead by example by being accountable. The laws against corruption must be followed to the letter without any form of "sacred cowism". Political and economic literacy will help greatly in solving this problem. As it is now, those who have corruptly enriched themselves one way or the other "get rewards". The public respects them, the *Emirs*, *Obis*, *Obas*, *Amanayabos*, etc. do give these people traditional and honorary chieftaincy titles. Many Nigerian tertiary institutions make them pro-chancellors or *honoris causa*. Empowerment of the people from the grassroots level will turn the people against them, as this will reveal that corrupt leaders are the enemies of the society.

v. Infrastructure: The Nigerian government must be able to invest in infrastructure, by repairing the dilapidated infrastructure and upgrading the available. The Nigerian communications technology needs an improvement, most especially the telephone services should be made accessible to the ordinary people. Roads should be in good condition. Electricity supplies need to be regular so as to boost the local productivity which relies on energy supply. Pipe borne water should be made available, and should be regular. All this improves the human capital potential, leading to efficiency, healthiness, creativity, reliability, innovation and invention, etc. Currently, it is the rich that have unfettered access to all these basic amenities. For global competitiveness, these basic and social amenities have to be extended to the ordinary people so as to enable them realize their potential.

vi. Cultural Pride: Good infrastructure will no doubt attract investors, and also tourists. Nigeria has a potential for tourist investment. Different Nigerian groups can seize this opportunity to use their cultural heritage for capital accumulation. For example, many Nigerians spend thousands of dollars on pilgrimages to Mecca, Medina, Jerusalem and Rome annually. Also, the elites go to see the Pampas in Argentina and palm readings in India, while many more go to various European, Asian and American tourists centers. All this is extravaganza and a loss of foreign currency! Nigeria too can develop its own tourism, not only for its economic opportunities but also for cultural pride. For the Yoruba, Ile-Ife is their spiritual home, it is their "Garden of Eden". It should be popularized and made known to the whole world. Ile-Ife can be made the "Mecca" of Africa. It is not a bad idea if there is an *O'dua Day*, commemorating the founding of the "Yoruba Nation". This will attract all those of Yoruba descents from around the world.

vii. Beware of Global Economic Integration: Nigeria should be aware of over-zealous adoption of free trade and free capital mobility on the domestic production. Total embrace of global capitalism weakens the national boundaries and helps towards the consolidation of the transnational corporations. It takes a leader the socio-economic sagacity to know that the economic policies to be adopted should be cognizant of the techno-economic reality of his/her nation. Nigeria, like many other developing countries must try to protect its natural resources and environment. Take, for example, the travails of Canada and Mexico. The Free Trade Agreement between Canada and the United States (FTA) and North American Free Trade (NAFTA) between Mexico, Canada and the US stand to benefit the elites in all the countries. But overall the US is gaining at the expense of the other two. Mexico, the weakest among them is at the receiving ends of the dirty stick. Labor union has been weakened, thus exposing the workers to crass exploitation by the multinational corporations including those based in the US and Canada. The remuneration of the workers is a far cry from being commensurate to the labor. The average hourly wages in the factories in northern Mexico are \$1.64, compared with an average hourly wage of \$16.17 in the US (Korten, 1995: 129). In similar vein, the environmental burden can be passed on to Nigeria, as Japanese companies are doing to the Southeast Asian countries (Korten, 1995: 31). The leadership should realize that globalization is the invention of the dominant classes, groups and nations of the world. It is to serve the specific interests of the dominant social actors. It is then the role of the government to protect its own people, by being concerned with the environmental factors, labor laws and welfare of the workers. These factors are important because they are part of the larger driving factors for corporations from the North coming to the South for relocation. What this means is that Nigeria should look at the pros and cons of any kind of economic integration.

Rather than jumping into free trade agreements that can result in exploitation with the developed countries, Nigeria should consider forming trading partnership with other African economies, engage the global economy on their own terms and not those set by the multinational corporations. Furthermore, the time might be ripe for Nigeria to take a look at the feasibility of African-American business partnership. This should not be considered as "a reverse racism", but a feasibility of equitable economic arrangement. A committee should be set up to see if certain special incentives such as favorable tariff in

certain sectors and dual citizenship could make this partnership possible and beneficial to both parties. The African American population with its middle management expertise might benefit Nigeria.

Furthermore, Nigeria can reverse its brain drain, by attracting the Nigerian expatriates and professionals overseas. There are highly skilled Nigerian professionals—technicians and scientists who only need to be convinced that they will be treated well and be provided with opportunities to develop a strong private sector. They can also be the harbinger of technology transfer. Taiwan, Hong Kong and mainland China are reversing their brain drains by encouraging their American-born indigines to return and work as expatriates. India and the Republic of Korea are probably doing the same thing (Human Development Report, 1999: 90).

Technology transfer can also be realized by investing in training engineers and scientists; and earmarking a reasonable amount of money on research and development. Foreign investment can be promoted in local factories, but a heavy managerial role should be taken by Nigerians. This is the policy adopted by the Asian tigers—South Korea, Taiwan, Singapore, and Hong Kong, which launched them into the group of "Newly Industrializing Countries" (NICs) (Barnet and Cavanagh, 1994: 285).

viii. Beware of Externally Imposed "Conditionalities": The Nigerian government should find alternative means to generate revenues. The government can generate revenues from job creation and equitable tax system. Import substitution can be achieved by the imposition of tariffs on goods that can be locally produced. Government can create incentives for entrepreneurship through access to loans, seminars for small business owners, etc. This will save Nigeria from foreign loans which often have strings attached to them.

#### B. New International Economic Order:

The deepening socio-economic crises facing the developing countries of the world calls for a change in the workings of the global economic system. National economic planning cannot be efficient as long as multinational corporations have power over nations. The omnipotence and omnipresence of transnational corporations is a bad omen for most developing countries. Transnational corporations also contribute to the immiseration, and causing untimely death for many. Apart from exploiting the people, they pass on their environmental burden to the developing countries. Environmental devastation like the kind in Ogoniland hardly occurs in the West, partly because of strong environmental laws and strong social movement groups. The fact that multinational corporations pass on their environmental burden to the less developed countries constitutes international racism. Every year nearly 3 million people die from air pollution, and more than 5 million die from diarrhoeal diseases by water contamination (Human Development Report, 1999: 22). What needs to be done is the promulgation of international law making the multinational corporations accountable for their environmental mess, such as payment of the costs of pollution, deforestation, also health care costs, loss of livelihood, etc.

With globalization, there will be a rise in money laundering around the world. Money laundering through shoddy deals of African leaders is already having serious negative impacts on the ordinary people. Monies stolen by kleptomaniac Nigerian and African leaders are stashed in the European and North American banks. There should be an international law in place superseding national laws, which will prohibit money laundering. In the letter of this law, corrupt enrichment of leaders in one country should be considered a human rights violation, and crime against humanity. This is in view of what corruption in public places has done to people in a country like Nigeria.

Debt burden is a serious problem plaguing Africa. Renegotiation of the debts of developing countries needs to be considered. These debts should be negotiated based on the particular situation of individual countries. In the case of Nigeria, it can negotiate for one, or two or all of the following: debts cancellation on humanitarian ground, freezing the bank accounts of the public officials who stashed money in foreign banks around the world to pay part of the debts owed, and moratorium for interest and debt payments for a specific period of years. But most importantly, lending institutions such as the World Bank and the IMF should be reformed. Greater participation of the developing countries in the decision making is necessary.

#### C. The Canadian:

The experience of blacks in the multi-racial societies of Africa (South Africa and Kenya in particular), North America and Latin America shows that they are discriminated against more than other groups (with the exception of the Aborigines in the Americas). In South Africa, the black Africans are treated worse than the Indians (see, Mandela, 1996: pp. 334, 338). In Columbia, they occupy the bottom stratum of the society (see Guarnizo & Diaz, 1999: 413). In the West, racial divides which ostracize the black population continue. *Ipso facto*, Canada is not an exception. While globalization affects all races and the working class population of different ethnic and racial groups in Canada, it nevertheless affects immigrants of color more than the white population. This is because of the historically created distortion in the distribution of the global resources (see chapter 3.1). The political economy of the Canadian state represented by its immigration favors the investor class who can migrate with its money and settle in Canada, while poor immigrants and refugees are left to fend for themselves. This policy excludes a vast majority of prospective immigrants from the developing countries from migrating to Canada. Also, the neoliberal policy being pursued by the Ontario and federal governments has had negative impacts on the new immigrants.

Vertotec (1999) talks about trans-locality. As mentioned earlier, Nigeria/Yorubaland is a particular locality that can either "do or fordo" an immigrant from realizing his/her goals in the community of settlement. By the same token, the society of settlement constitutes another locality. How "hospitable" a society is to the immigrants will influence the progress of those immigrants. The accessibility to economic opportunities by the Yoruba immigrants in London, England, New York or Toronto, Canada may vary; and the variation might either be an hindrance or a boost to accumulate the capital or the desired goals depending on a group's /individual's motive.

Anti-poor, especially anti-black, sentiments within the Canadian society draw the black people back economically. The Canadian government needs to look at how to help those who have been historically marginalized by socially assisting them. This is important because of its future implication on ethnic or racial harmony and the Canadian international reputation.

The undocumented immigrant population in the city has become an issue for many immigrant groups. Their status tends to reinforce inequalities within the society because they could neither get a decent employment nor have access to skills upgrading/and reskilling. This situation allows for crass exploitation of these groups and over-acquisition of capital by the dominant capitalists. To ameliorate this problem, the government should treat this as an urgent matter by granting all undocumented immigrants an "amnesty".

i. Political Participation: The Yoruba immigrants should be more involved in Canadian politics. They should be involved in coalition politics with other marginalized groups with civil rights agenda. This is important, for example, if it is discovered in any parts of the metro-Toronto that particular factories are dominated by the people of color, with very low wages, while those in the management positions are predominantly whites, the matter should be brought to the fore, to enable the people know what the specific problems are--whether it is due to lack of adequate skills, systemic institutional discrimination or a mere company policy. This will help the society as well as the social policy makers and analysts to decipher the problems facing different groups.

The absence of "people's democracy" is not idiosyncratic to the developing countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America (even though, it is a major set back in many of the countries on these continents); however, "people's democracy" is also a problem in the societies with "old democratic tradition". This is because it is the elites that still wield the economic and political power. And currently, the powerful multinational corporations have too much influence on the government (see Hurtig, 1995). Laxer (1993) propounds an alternative form of democracy, which entails "the control of decision making in all spheres of society, public and private, by non-elite people" (pg. 16). According to him, this form of democracy is the,

"revolutionary democracy of Jean-Jacques Rousseau and the participative system of John Stuart Mill. It is the class-, caste-and race-emancipatory projects of Marx, Ghandi and Mandela and the grassroots democracy of second-wave feminism" (pg. 16).

This idealist version of democracy as espoused by Laxer (1993) is all encompassing and inclusionary. In this case, efforts should be made to generate global consciousness (just like the NGOs, market women, students, etc. are needed in a developing country like Nigeria). All the progressive elements should get involved in the economic and political literacy programs educating the ordinary people, particularly helping them develop global consciousness. People should be educated about the interconnections of the world, the relevance of and interdependence of one area of the world on another, and the relationship between the so-called "underdeveloped, developing, third world, south, etc.

countries" and the "developed countries". Apart from this, the educational curriculum should include the study of other groups around the world, perhaps, this could educate not only the owners of the multinational corporations ravaging the world, but also those like the church leader and the administrator (see chapter 5), who are all racists par excellence!

The Yoruba believe that *ile labo simi oko* –that Canada is a place of work, while Nigeria is home where one would go back to in the end. For example, the majority of the people surveyed are considering leaving for Nigeria at one point in time--42 % are definite about when they will be returning while 52 % are hell bent on about leaving Canada, but have not decided about when, while 6 % do not wish to leave at all. This belief could have the effect on realizing the economic goals needed for future sustenance. The over-reliance on vacating Canada prevents people from investing and undertaking capital-generating projects.

ii. Entrepreneurship: The Yoruba should be much more involved in different fields of business endeavors. They can use their social capital to create businesses in restaurants, selling Yoruba/Nigerian food, grocery stores catering to the needs of African population, phone card business, Yoruba/Nigerian clothing, crafts, music, travel, etc. as the Otavalo (cf. 1.4).

Social capital functions properly when there is trust. *Esusu*, rotating-credit associations is an old practice of the Yoruba. It is a practice that has been transplanted to all places being resided by the Yoruba immigrants around the world. It is now a common practice by the African-Americans, who now call it *susu*. Members of the Enchor club are using this method to help one another. If most of the banks are not interested in granting loans to "little people", the *esusu* can serve as an alternative to the institutionalized banking system that is part of the corporate world. As *esusu* helps with small businesses in Nigeria, it can also help toward savings for small capital expenditures.

The Yoruba usually have one social function or the other, which entails renting a space, usually a hall. It is high time they buy a hall, and pay the mortgage. This hall can be rented out to other groups in Toronto to generate money. The churches can also use this space for their various activities. Having a hall for business purpose is necessary in the light of the fact that the Yoruba seem to be using halls for parties not less than most groups in Toronto.

iii. Education: The Yoruba have never been found wanting in the acquisition of Western education. They were among the early recipients of Western education in the sub-Saharan Africa, introduced by the early missionaries in the middle of the 19th century. Sound education will enable members to be competitive within the larger Canadian society. However, for the Western education to be sustainable, it has to be complemented with the Yoruba traditional educational principles which emphasize respect, expectation, obligation, community and reciprocity. It is this complementarity that will transform the social capital into human capital.

Children have to be taught the Yoruba values of trustworthiness, discipline, honesty and transparency. These values can be fostered by the voluntary associations (the churches and the *asalat* included). Lack of honesty and trust fragments the community, thus weakening the social capital. For example, in one of the Yoruba shows, the sponsors deliberately hoarded the tickets so as to make members pay higher rate at the gate. The initial arrangement was that those who bought their tickets before the event would pay X amount of money, while those who bought at the gate would pay a Y amount of money which was higher than the original fee. A day to the event, the organizers withdrew the tickets from circulation, thus creating an artificial scarcity. This "forced" a high number of the community members to buy their tickets at the gate. This kind of business strategy left so many members disgruntled. Several weeks after this incident, the leader of the band had a problem with the promoter and the band members. Also, the accusation of financial impropriety against the association leaders is not good for social capital. Openness and transparency should be the hall mark of day to day public activities.

iv. Gender and Conflict Resolution: The overwhelming majority of those surveyed agreed that the man is the natural head of the house--*oko ni olori aya*. It should be noted that there is nothing natural about men being the head of the house. Male supremacy in any society is socio-historically perpetrated--as the feminist saying goes thus, "women are made, not born". Conflicts may ensue over the leadership, which may be caused in part by the Western feminist struggle for equality. But couples should find a means of resolving these conflicts within the community without ending up in the police station or the court of law. Another Yoruba adage says *a kii ti ile ejo de se ore*--meaning, kinship relationships can never be the same when matters are adjudicated in the court of law. This shows how the Yoruba place values on conflict resolution within the community. This Yoruba adage is plausible when one considers what the judicial system means for family matters. The interference of the police in domestic matters is quite impersonal. It is a business--the staff work for their wages. If the family breaks up, it makes the system more functional. If the family breaks up, it has effects on the children. The children of a broken family may end up in the street, which is a boon to the judicial system--more jails, more police, judges, etc. If the family breaks up and the children grow up with a low level of educational attainment, it is a boon to the capitalist system, especially when they are people of color--meaning more people to do menial jobs.

The role that the Ile-Oluji Council of Elders is playing in resolving conflicts among its members is a leaf that needs to be borrowed by all groups. Nevertheless, the "police system" cannot be totally neglected, but should be taken as a last resort.

The politics of "personal destruction", particularly blaming everything on women--promiscuity in particular--within the community should be stopped. Skin bleaching with poisonous chemicals by women and men to make them lighter, and such practices like the "gentleman with the pony tail" should be discouraged because they are signs of inferiority complex. This should not be bequeathed to the future generation. If the social capital in the family and the community is relegated, the children when grown up will have no cause to reproduce the transnational practices of their parents, thus making transnationalism evanescent.

#### D. Suggestions for Future Research:

Examining the psycho-social factors in transnational practices: Going Beyond the Materialist-Economic Explanation of Transnationalism. As pointed out in this study that the Yoruba colonial experience cannot be de-coupled from the poor state of the Nigerian economy; future research projects could look more into this, and other "extra economic" factors involved in transmigration and transnationalism.

Moreover, future nature of the transnational social fields of the Yoruba or other ethnic groups south of the Sahara could examine and predict whether current transnational practices would continue or be an evanescent phenomenon. Further studies may therefore look at inter-generational conflicts in the area of ideology, beliefs, traditions, etc. This may help to understand what this transnational phenomenon will look like in the future.

Gender aspects of migration have not been given their due attention and recognition. In the near future, ways by which women sustain transnational practices need to be explored. In the case of the Yoruba, women are no doubt contributing immensely to the sustenance of the transmigration. In Africa, south of the Sahara, it is apparent that more men travel and leave women behind. In other words, women traveling leaving their husband behind is less frequent. However, in the case of the Yoruba, the phenomenon is now changing. Future studies may look at the implications of this change on the society. Also, cross-cultural comparison of gender ideologies as they relate to migration may be examined. For example, comparisons between the matrilineal and patrilineal societies of Africa may be studied.

Furthermore, in the Diaspora, immigrants who share same experience come together, perhaps more than they could have in their homeland—the Yoruba community in Toronto is a typical example, especially the "shared notion" of helping one another both in Nigeria and in Toronto. The Yoruba in Toronto socially support one another, and valorize the cultural kinship both in Toronto and in Nigeria. More works may look into how groups like the Yoruba (and those in similar situation) could turn the kinship solidarity into acquiring capital without diminishing their "pan-human interests".

There seems to be a research potential in comparing the Yoruba Transnationals in different regions of the world, e.g. the Yoruba in Toronto, Canada compared to those in London, England or Berlin, Germany. How different Yoruba or Nigerian immigrants fare in the different metropolitan centers can be examined. In the same light, future studies may look into comparing different "African groups", in the metropolitan centers of the world where there are high levels of consumption for material goods. One may compare the Nigerians in Toronto with other African groups such as the Kenyans and Ghanians who are also highly represented within the black population in Toronto. In addition, many Yoruba in Toronto believe that their counterparts in the US have more opportunities than them. Is this true? In what aspects? Or is it only in terms of opportunities to gainful employment? What about the social condition? Research in this area may unveil factors that "do or fordo" different groups in different parts of the world for comparison.

Community voluntary organizations are one of the numerous ways by which the Yoruba in Toronto tend to maintain their identities, help one another and get some "consolation". It is evident that the Yoruba voluntary associations no doubt serve many purposes for the members and the larger Toronto community. More works may focus on how immigrants also deserve satisfaction from the humanitarian and altruistic roles that they render in the different social fields, rather than expending academic energy exclusively on what they "give out" alone. What about what they derive from partaking in community voluntary associations?

Finally, the Nigerian/Yoruba Transnational professional class was not examined in this study, due to the nature of the research. Many developing countries are now harnessing and tapping the skills of their "nationals" in the industrial developed countries of the world—the "reverse brain drain" (mentioned in the conclusion). They are doing this through the "politics of extraterritoriality". The Nigerian government at present is exploring ways to get Nigeria out of its ossified shells of underdevelopment. How Nigeria and other African nations in their drive toward development can tap the skills and knowledge of their nationals abroad may be a focus of future projects.

#### Bibliography

- Abu-Lughod, Lila. 1991. *Writing Against Culture*, in *Recapturing Anthropology, Working in the Present*, Fox G. Richard (ed.), Santa Fe: School of American and Research Advanced Seminar Press.
- Achebe, Chinua. 1983. *The Trouble with Nigeria*, Nairobi: Heinemann.
- Achebe, Chinua. 1958. *Things Fall Apart*, Nairobi: Heinemann.
- Ajayi, Ade and E.J. Alagoa. 1974. *Black Africa: The Historians' Perspective*, in *Slavery, Colonialism and Racism*, Mintz, W. Sidney (ed.), New York: W.W. Norton.
- Ajai, J.F.A. 1965. *Christian Missions in Nigeria, 1841-1891*, London: Longman.
- Anderson, Benedict. 1983. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Growth and Spread of Nationalism*, London: Verso. Reprinted 1991.
- Appadurai, Arjun. 1991. *Global Ethnoscapes: Notes and Queries for a Transnational Anthropology*, in *Recapturing Anthropology, Working in the Present*, Fox G. Richard (ed.), Santa Fe: School of American and Research Advanced Seminar Press.
- Appadurai, Arjun and Carol Breckenridge. 1989. *On Moving Targets*, *Public Culture*, vol. 2 (1).
- Armah, Ayi Kwei. 1969. *Fragments*, Nairobi: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd.

- Ayandele, E.A. 1966. *External Influence on African society*, in *Africa in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*, Anene, C. Joseph and Godfrey Brown (eds.), Ibadan: University Press and Nelson.
- Badru, Pade. 1998. *Imperialism and Ethnic Politics in Nigeria*, Asmara: African Press Incorporation.
- Barnet J. Richard and John Cavanagh. 1994. *Global Dream: Imperial Corporations and the New World Order*, New York: Touchstone.
- Burawoy, Michael. 1980. *Migrant labor in South Africa and United States*, in *Capital and Labor*, Nichols, Theo (ed.), Glasgow: William Collings & Co. Ltd.
- Beale, Frances. 1970. *Double Jeopardy: To Be Black and Female*, in *The Black Woman: An Anthology*, Cade, Tony (ed.), New York: New American Library.
- Basch, L., N. Glick and C.S. Blanc. 1994. *Nations Unbound*, New York: Gordon and Breach Publishers.
- Barrett, Stanley. 1998. *Forecasting Theory: Problems and Exemplars in the Twenty-First Century: 14<sup>th</sup> International Congress of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences*.
- Barrett, Stanley. 1994. *Paradise: Class, Commuters and Ethnicity in Rural Ontario*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Barrett, Stanley. 1991. *Issues and Perspectives on Religion and Society*, in *Religion and Society in Nigeria: Historical and Sociological Perspectives*, Olupona, K. Jacob and Toyin Falola (eds.), Ibadan: Spectrum Books Limited.
- Barrett, Stanley. 1987. *Is God a Racist? The Right Wing in Canada*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Boggs, C. 1976. *Ideas in Progress*, London: Pluto Press.
- Bolaria, Singh and Peter Li. 1988. *Racial Oppression in Canada (2nd edition)*, Toronto: Garamond Press.
- Brow, James. 1988. *In Pursuit of Hegemony: Representations of Authority and Justice in a Sri Lankan Village*, *American Ethnologist*, 15, 2: pp.311-327.
- Cesaire, Aime. 1972. *Discourse on Colonialism*, New York: Monthly Review Press.
- Chavez, L.R. 1994. *The Power of Imagined Community: The Settlement of Undocumented Mexicans and Central Americans in the United States*, *American Anthropologist*, vol. 96 (1): 52-73.

Clark, P. John. 1967. *Abiku*, in *West African Verse: an Anthology*, Nwoga, Donatus (ed.), London: Longman Group Ltd.

Cohen, Rina. 1987. *The Working Conditions of Immigrant Women Live-in Domestic: Racism, Sexual Abuse and Invisibility*, Resource for Feminist Research, 16 (1).

Cohen, Robin. 1998. *Transnational Social Movements: An Assessment*, Paper to the Transnational Communities Seminar (held at the School of Geography, University of Oxford, 19th June, 1998).

Cohen, Robin. 1996. *Diasporas and the Nation-State: From Victims to Challengers*, International Affairs, Vol. 72, pp. 507-20.

Coleman, James. 1988. *Social Capital in the Creation of Human Capital*, American Journal of Sociology, vol. 94: (s95-120).

Comaroff, John. 1996. *Ethnicity, Nationalism, and the Politics of Difference in an Age of Revolution*, in *The Politics of Difference*, Wilmsen N. Edwin and Patrick McAllister (eds.), Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Crowder, Michael. 1968. *West Africa Under Colonial Rule*, London: Hutchinson of London.

Crowder, Michael. 1962. *The Story of Nigeria*, London: Faber and Faber.

Charles, Carolle. 1992. *Transnationalism in the Construction of Haitian Migrants' Racial Categories of Identity in New York City*, in *Towards a Transnational Perspective on Migration: Race, Class, Ethnicity, and Nationalism Reconsidered*, Schiller Nina, Linda Basch and Cristina Blanc-Szanton (eds.), New York: The New York Academy of Sciences.

Durkheim, E. 1933. *The Division of Labor*, Glencoe, Illinois: The Free Press.

Elson, D. and R. Pearson. 1981. *Nimble Fingers Make Cheap Workers: An Analysis of Women's Employment in Third World Export Manufacturing*. *Feminist Review*, 79.

Fadipe, N.A. 1970. *The Sociology of the Yoruba*, Ibadan: Ibadan University Press.

Fanon, F. 1967. *Black Skin, White Masks*, New York: Grove Press, Inc.

Federici, Silvia. 1992. *The Debt Crisis, Africa and the New Enclosures*, in *Midnight Notes*, New York: Autonomedia.

Fernandez-Kelly, M. 1989. *Broadening the Scope: Gender and International Economic Development*, *Sociological Forum*, vol. 4 (4).

- Forde, Daryll. 1951. *The Yoruba-Speaking Peoples of South-Western Nigeria*, London: International African Institute.
- Goldring, Luin. 1998. *The Power of Status in Transnational Social Fields*, in Smith P. Michael & Luis E. Guarnizo (eds.), *Transnationalism From Below*, London: Transactions Publishers.
- Goldring, Luin. 1996. *Blurring Borders: Constructing Transnational Community in the Process of Mexico-US Migration*, *Research in Community Sociology*, 6, 69-104.
- Griswold, Wendy. 1994. *Cultures and Societies in a Changing World*, Thousand Oaks, California: Pine Forge Press.
- Gupta Akhil and James Ferguson. 1992. *Beyond "Culture": Space, Identity, and the Politics of Difference*, *Cultural Anthropology*, vol. 7, pp 6-23.
- Hackett, J. Rosalin. 1991. *New Religious Movements and Religious Self-Determination*, in *Religion and Society in Nigeria: Historical and Sociological Perspectives*, Olupona, K. Jacob and Toyin Falola (eds.), Ibadan: Spectrum Books Limited.
- Hannerz, Ulf. 1989. *Notes on the Global Ecumene*, *Public Culture*, vol. 1 (2).
- Human Development Report. 1999. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Hurtig, Mel. 1992. *The Betrayal of Canada*, Toronto: Soddart Publishing Co. Limited.
- Idowu, Bolaji. 1973. *African Traditional Religion, a Definition*, London: SCM Press Ltd.
- Johnson, Samuel. 1921. *The History of the Yorubas; From the Earliest Times to the Beginning of the British Protectorate*, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd.
- Karim, H. Karim. 1998. *From Ethnic Media to Global Media: Transnational Communication Networks Among Diasporic Communities*, International Comparative Research Group Strategic Research and Analysis, Canadian Heritage.
- Kyle, David. 1999. *The Otavalo Trade Diaspora: Social Capital and Transnational Entrepreneurship*, *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, vol. 22 (2).
- Kearney, M. (1995). *The Local and the Global: The Anthropology of Globalization and Transnationalism*, *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 24: 547-65.
- Knowles, Kimberly. 1997. *The Seasonal Agricultural Workers Program in Ontario: From the Perspective of Jamaican Migrants*, M.A. Thesis, Guelph: University of Guelph.
- Korten, C. David. 1995. *When Corporations Rule the World*, West Hartford, Connecticut: Kumarian Press, Inc.

Kriesberg, Loius. 1997. *Social Movements and Global Transformation*, in *Transnational Social Movements and Global Politics*, Smith Jackie, Charles Chatfield, and Ron Pagnucco (eds.), New York: Syracuse University Press.

Kritz, Mary and Fe Caces. 1992. *Science and Technology Transfers and Migration Flows*, in *International Migration Systems: A global Approach*, Kritz Mary, Lin L. Lim and Hania Zlotnik (eds.), Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Laxer, Gordon. 1995. *Social Solidarity, Democracy and Global Capitalism*, *Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology*, vol. 32: (288-313).

Laxer, Gordon. 1993. *Social Solidarity, Democracy and Global Capitalism*. The Porter Lecture.

Laye, Camara. 1959. *The African Child*, London: Collins.

Lessinger, J. 1992. *Nonresident-Indian Investment and India's Drive for Industrial Modernization*, in *Anthropology and the Global Factory*, Rothstein A. and M. Blim (eds.), New York: Bergin & Garvey.

Li, Peter. 1988. *The Chinese in Canada*. Toronto: Oxford University Press.

Lim, L. 1983. *Capitalism, Imperialism and Patriarchy: The Dilemma of Third World Women Workers in Multinational Factories*, in *Women, Men and the International Division of Labor*, Nash, J. and M. Fernandez-Kelly (eds.). Albany: State University of New York Press.

Lewis, Peter. 1996. *From Prebendalism to Predation: The Political Economy of Decline in Nigeria*, *The Journal of Modern African studies*, 34, I, pp. 79-103.

Lenski, Genhard, Patrick Nolan and Jean Lenski. 1995. *Human Societies, An Introduction to Macrosociology* (7th edition), New York: McGraw-Hill, Inc.

Lyons P. Andrew and Harriet D. Lyons. 1999. "Poor Man Dey Starve; Baboon Dey Chop:" *The Political Economy and Symbolic Meaning of Corruption in Nigeria*, Kitchener/Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University & University of Waterloo.

Mba, N. 1987. *Women in Lagos Political History*, in *History of the Peoples of Lagos State*, Adefuye, Ade, Babatunde Agiri and Jide Osuntokun (eds.), Ikeja, Lagos: Lantern Books.

McLellan, J. and Anthony Richmond. 1994. *Multiculturalism in Crisis, a Postmodern Perspective in Canada*, *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, vol. 17 (4).

Mandela, Nelson. 1994. *Long Walk to Freedom*, Toronto: Little, Brown and Company.

Mazrui, Ali (1998). *From Slave Ship to Space Ship: Africa Between Marginalization and Globalization* (Walter Rodney International Conference), Binghamton: State University of New York.

Mazrui, Ali. 1994. *The Blood of Experience: the failed state and political collapse in Africa* (Presentation made at the Cairo Consultation on "The OAU Mechanism on Conflict Prevention Management and Resolution"), sponsored by the Organization of African Unity (OAU), the Government of the Arab Republic of Egypt, and the International Peace Academy.

Mintz, S. 1998. *The Localization of Anthropological Practice, from area studies to transnationalism*, *Critique of Anthropology*, 18 (2).

Mahler, J. Sarah. 1995. *American Dreaming: Immigrant Life on the Margins*, Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press.

Mahler, J Sarah. 1998. *Theoretical and Empirical Contributions Toward a Research Agenda for Transnationalism*, in *Transnationalism from Below*, Smith P. Michael and Luis E. Guarnizo (eds.), London: Transaction Publishers.

Mudimbe, V.Y. 1988. *The Invention of Africa*, Indianapolis: Indiana University Press.

Mishra, R. 1995. *Social Policy and Challenge of Globalization*, in *Social Policy and the Challenge of Social Change*. Sanders, P. and S. Sharen (eds.), Sydney: University of New South Wales, pp. 1-34.

Mies, M. 1986. *Patriarchy and Accumulation on a World Scale: Women in the International Division of Labor*, London: Zed Books Ltd.

Mills, C. W. 1959. *Sociological Imagination*, New York: Oxford Press.

Memmi, A. 1967. *The Colonizer and the Colonized*, Boston: Beacon Press.

Naranyan, Kirin. 1997. *How Native Is a "Native" Anthropologist?* In *Situated Lives, Gender and Culture in Everyday Life*, Lamphere, Louise, Helena Ragona, and Patricia Zavella (eds.), New York: Routledge.

Neuman, Lawrence. 1997. *Social research Methods, Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*, Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Newswatch, December 20, 1999.

Newswatch, October 18, 1999.

Newswatch, July 26, 1999.

Newswatch, April 22, 1996.

Nyerere, J. 1974. *Education for Self-Reliance*, Tanzania: Office of the President.

Odunsi, B. 1996. *An Analysis of Brain-Drain and its Impact on Manpower Development in Nigeria*, *Journal of Third World Studies* (193-214).

O'Hara, K. 1997. *The Liberal Wreckard, 31/2 Years of Implementing the Corporate Agenda*, in *Monitor-Reporting on Business, Labour and Government*, vol. 4 (2).

Olaogun, James. 1996. *The Penetration of Catholic Christian Teachings on the Canonical Form of Marriage into Traditional Yoruba Culture*, PhD. Thesis, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University.

Onimode, B. 1982. *Imperialism and Underdevelopment in Nigeria: the Dialectics of Mass Poverty*, London: Zed Press.

Osuntokun, Jide. 1987. *Introduction of Christianity and Islam in Lagos State*, in *History of the Peoples of Lagos State*, Adefuye, Ade, Babatunde Agiri and Jide Osuntokun (eds.), Ikeja, Lagos: Lantern Books.

Osoba, S.O. 1996. *Corruption in Nigeria: Historical Perspectives*, *Review of African Political Economy*, 69:371-386.

Omi, Michael and Howard Winant. 1986. *Racial Formation*, in *Racial Formation in the United States: From the 1960s to the 1980s*, pp. 57-69, Routledge.

Ojo, G. Afolabi. 1966. *Yoruba Culture, A Geographical Analysis*, London: University of London Press Ltd.

Polanyi, Michael. 1958. *Personal Knowledge: Toward a Post-Critical Philosophy*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd.

Portes, Alejandro. 1997. *Globalization from Below: The Rise of Transnational Communities*, Working Paper, Princeton University.

Portes, Alejandro, Luis E. Guarnizo and Patricia Landolt. 1999. *The Study of Transnationalism: Pitfalls and Promise of an Emergent Research Field*, *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 22 (2).

Putnam, R.D. 1995. *Turning in, turning out: the strange disappearance of social capital in America*, *PS: Political Science Politics*, vol. 28: 664-83.

Ramonet, Ignacio. Fall, 1999. *A New Totalitarianism*, *Foreign Policy*.

- Richman, Karen. 1992. "A *Lavalas at Home/A Lavalas for Home*": *Inflections of Transnationalism in the Discourse of Haitian President Aristide*, in *Towards a Transnational Perspective on Migration*, Schiller, G. Nina, Linda Basch and Christina Blanc-Szanton (eds.), New York: New York Academy of Sciences.
- Richmond, A. 1994. *Global Apartheid: refugees, racism, and the new world order*, Toronto: Oxford University Press.
- Rodney, W. 1981. *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*, Washington: Howard University Press.
- Rotimi, Ola. 1971. *Gods are not to Blame*, London: Oxford University Press.
- Rouse, Roger. 1991. *Mexican Migration and the Social Space of Postmodernism*. *Diaspora*, vol.1 (1): 8-23.
- Rouse, Roger. 1987. *Migration and the Politics of Family Life: Divergent Projects and Rhetorical Strategies in a Mexican Transnational Migrant Community*, Manuscript, La Jolla: Centre for US-Mexican Studies, U.C.-San Diego.
- Secombe, Wally. 1997. "The family values debate in the light of Western family history", in *The Politics of Moral Panics and Family Values: A Conference Report*, Kate Bezanson (ed), Toronto: Center for Work and Society, York University.
- Segal Ronald. 1998. *Globalization and the Black Diaspora*, Working Paper, Transnational Communities Institute of Social and Cultural Anthropology, Oxford.
- Segal, Ronald. 1962. *African Profiles*, Baltimore ii: Penguin Books.
- Singleton, Royce, Bruce Straits and Margaret Straits. 1993. *Approaches to Social Research* (2<sup>nd</sup> edition), New York: Oxford University Press.
- Schiller, G. Nina, Linda Basch and Cristina Blanc-Szanton. 1992. *Towards a Transnational Perspective on Migration: Race, Class, Ethnicity, and Nationalism Reconsidered*, New York: The New York Academy of Sciences.
- Simmons, A. 1996. *Economic Integration and Designer-Immigrants: Canadian Policy in 1990s*, Toronto: York University.
- Singh, Hira. 1987. *The Political Economy of Immigrant Farm Labor: A Study of East Indian Farm Workers in British Columbia*, *The South Asian Diaspora in Canada: Six essays*, Milton Israel (ed.), *The Multicultural History of Ontario*.
- Sklair, Leslie. 1998. *Transnational Practices and the Analysis of the Global System*, London: Seminar delivered for the Transnational Communities Program Seminar Series, London School of Economics and Political Science.

Smith P. Michael and Luis E. Guarnizo(eds.). 1998. *Transnationalism from Below*, New London: Transaction Publishers.

Sorenson, John. 1990. *Opposition, Exile and Identity: The Eritrean Case*, Journal of Refugee Studies, Vol.3 (4).

Stockholm, E. Sean. 1998. *Deconstructing Essentialisms: An Ethnographic Exploration of Chinese Canadians in Kitchener-Waterloo*, M.A. Thesis, Guelph: University of Guelph.

Szeftel, Morris. 1998. *Misunderstanding African Politics: Corruption and the Governance Agenda*, Review of African Political Economy, 76: 22-240.

Tololyan, Khachig. 1996. *Rethinking Diaspora(s): stateless Power in the Transnational Moment*, Diaspora, 5 (1), pp. 3-36.

Tucker, R. 1978. *The Marx-Engels Readers* (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition), London: Norton & Company.

Turner, Terisa and Pade Badru. 1984. *Oil and Instability: Class Contradictions and the 1983 Coup in Nigeria*, Journal of African Marxists, no. 7.

Vertotec, Steven. 1999. *Conceiving and Researching Transnationalism*, Ethnic and Racial Studies, vol. 22 (2).

Wakeman, E. 1988. *Transnational and Comparative Research*, Items, vol. 42 (4).

Wallerstein, Immanuel. 1974. *The Modern World-System*, New York: Academic Press.

White, J.J. 1985. *Objectivity: Difficult But Possible: A Rejoinder to Leroy Johnson*, Essays in History (University of Lagos Historical Society Journal), vol. 4.

Winland, N. Daphine. 1998. *"Our Home and Native Land"? Canadian Ethnic Scholarship and the Challenge of Transnationalism*, The Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology, vol. 35 (4).

Wolf, E. 1982. *Europe and the People Without History*, Berkeley: University of California Press.

#### Glossary of Some Yoruba Words, Slangs and Expressions Used

Amebo: a slang; gossip (one who gossips).

Aye Olaju: Modernization.

Adahunse or Onisegun: Herbalist.

Awon Toronto, Awon London, etc.: slangs; the Toronto Socialite, London Socialite, etc.

Apon: A man who has reached a marriageable age and has not married, (slightly derogatory).

Ajebota: a slang; middle class/upper class, educated, westernized, urbane.

Ajepaki: a slang; Lower class/working class, rural.

Aladura church: Indigenised form of Yoruba Christianity.

Egungun: Masquerades, symbolizing the ancestors.

Egunsin: Melon

Ere ibile: Yoruba traditional dance.

Eru: Properties, goods, materialism.

Esusu or susu: a subscription club in which members contribute money agreed upon to be given to members in rotation.

Eko Ile: The Yoruba traditional form of education, home training, informal education.

Eyo: A kind of egungun, masquerades of the Lagosians.

Ilu oyinbo: Land of the White people.

Ilu oba: England.

Ile Ibo, Ile Hausa, etc.: Ibo land, Hausa land, etc.

Idana: Yoruba traditional marriage, when dowry is paid to the wife's family.

Iwuye (ceremony): Chieftaincy ceremony.

Isakole: Tribute to the king.

Ife oo daye, ibi oju ti n mo wa 'le aye: Ile-Ife, the cradle of human civilization.

Iya: Mother.

Ilemosu: Divorced woman living by herself or at the parents' home (derogatory).

Isalu orun: Heaven, metaphysical world of the spirits.

Mongele: Huge or big.

Oba/Owa: King or monarch.

Obi: Kolanuts.

Olori: titular name for the wife of the king (oba).

Ose dudu: Locally manufactured Yoruba soaps.

Oyin: Honey.

Oyinbo: a white person (could also mean "English", as a language).

Omo Oyinbo: child of a white person.

Olodumare: God.

Olonde: Magical charm that harms.

Ogberi: The ignorant folks.

Omo Olodu: a slang; fraudsters.

Orisha: The gods.

Owanbe, party: a slang; elaborately large Yoruba night party.

Magun: Magic placed on woman by a jealous husband, could result to the death of opposite sex who has a sexual intercourse with her.

So yigi: Muslim wedding.

Sugar Daddy: a slang; married men who have sexual affairs with unmarried women of younger age.

## Appendix A

Questionnaire: Survey-Interview

I. Social Demographics:

1. Age.....

2. Home Town or Village.....

3. Marital Status. If married, where does your spouse live.....?

4. How many wives do you have.....?
5. Level of formal education.....
6. Specific training, e.g. vocational, technical, professional etc.....
7. Sex.....
8. Name..... (by preference).
9. Religion.....
10. Occupation in Nigeria.....
11. Current occupation in Canada.....
12. Where do your parents live.....?
13. Parents' occupation: Mother..... Father.....
14. Do you have children? If yes, how many children.....? And where do they live.....?
15. Place of residence in Toronto.....?
16. Annual Income:
  - A. Under \$10,000
  - B. \$10,001-\$15,000
  - C. \$15,001-\$20,000
  - D. \$20,001-\$25,000
  - E. \$25,001-\$30,000
  - F. \$30,001- \$35,000
  - G. \$35,001 and over.
17. How long have you been in Canada.....?
18. Have you lived somewhere else in Canada before coming to live in Toronto?

Yes..... No.....

If yes, where..... and why did you come to

Toronto.....?

19. How long have you lived in Toronto.....?

20. Main purpose for coming to  
Canada.....?

21. How would you describe living  
here.....?

22. What other countries have you lived in.....?

For how long.....?

Why did you leave.....?

23. Do you agree that Canada is a multicultural country? Yes.....No.....

(If Yes, how.....? If No, how.....?)

24. Would you say that there is racism in Canada..... ?

In what ways do you experience racism.....?

25. What did you think about Canada before you came.....?

26. What do you think about Canada now.....?

27. What do you tell people in Nigeria about Canada.....?

28. What do you tell Nigerians willing to come here.....?

29. How large would you estimate the Yoruba community in Toronto?

A. 5,000 - 10,000

B. 10,000 - 15,000

C. 15,000 - 20,000

D. 20,000 - 25,000

E. 25,000 - 30,000

F. 30,000 - and over

30. Is it necessary to write about a Yoruba community in Toronto.....?

Please explain why/why not.....?

31. Do you belong to any Yoruba association in Toronto.....? If so, what Yoruba association.....?

32. Do you belong to any Nigerian or West African association? If so, what Nigerian/West African association.....?

33. Is the Yoruba community very supportive?

A. Yes

B. No

C. I do not know

34. How would you say the Yoruba community in Toronto is supportive of its members in Nigeria.....?

35. How would you say the Yoruba community in Toronto is supportive of its members in Toronto.....

36. What projects, if any, are you embarking on in Nigeria? ( e.g. building house, business investment, charity, etc.,).....

37. How do you get help with supervision of your projects.....?

38. In the last year, how often do you get in contact with relatives in Nigeria?

A. Very Often

B Often

C. Once in a while

D. Never

39. By what means do you get in contact.....?

40. How often are you asked by relatives in Nigeria to support them financially and materially?

A. Very Often.

B. Often.

C. Once in a while.

D. Never.

41. When people ask you for financial support, for what purpose.....?

42. Do you send money to relatives living somewhere else other than Nigeria.....?

If yes, where..... and for what purpose.....?

43. Please, name two major problems facing members of Yoruba community in Toronto

.....  
.....

44. Please rank the following statements in order of importance: From 1=Low to 4=High.

A. I believe that it is the role of women to do the domestic work, without men helping out:

1.....2.....3.....4

-

B. It is natural that, "Oko ni olori aya"—meaning man is the head of the house including the woman:

1.....2.....3.....4.

-

C. I do not see anything wrong if a man has more than one wife

1.....2.....3.....4

D. *Female Clitoris mutilation* is a cultural practice that should not be stopped:

1..... 2.....3.....4.

E. A woman can drink liquor with the husband at the social functions if the woman wishes:

1.....2.....3.....4.

F. A woman has no right to know how much her husband earns

1.....2.....3..... 4

G. Who should give the new born baby a name?

A. The mother

B. The father

C. Both parents, i.e. mum and dad

D. Others.....please, specify

45. I speak Yoruba in public when with a group of Yorubas

	at Work	Shopping	Subway/ Street Car	Friends' -- both Yorubas and Non- Yorubas	Other Non- Yorubas
Always					
Frequently					
Sometimes					
Seldom					
Never					

46. I speak Yoruba at home

	With My Spouse	With My Children/Room Mates.
Always		
Frequently		
Sometimes		
Seldom		
Never		

47. What is your favorite Yoruba meal.....?

48. When in Canada, I eat my Favorite Yoruba meal a day:

- A. Always
- B. Frequently
- C. Sometimes
- D. Seldom
- E. Never

49. When in Canada, I wear my Yoruba attire in public:

- A. Always
- B. Frequently
- C. Sometimes
- D. Seldom
- E. Never

50. How is it important to teach kids Yoruba culture

- A. Very important

B. Important

C. Does not matter

D. Not very important

E. Not important at all

51. How important is it for Yoruba to marry a Yoruba person?

A. Very important

B. Important

C. Does not matter

D. Not very important

E. Not at all important

52. I identify myself as;

A. Canadian

B. Yoruba/Nigerian

C. Afro-Canadian

D. American

E. Others.....Please specify.

53. I participate in parties/picnics organized by members of Yoruba community:

A. Very often (once in two weeks)

B. Often (once in a month)

C. Sometimes (once in three months)

D. Seldom

E. Never

54. In Canada, I go to:

- A. Yoruba "church" or "mosque";
- B. "Canadian church"/mosque
- C. Black church/mosque
- D. Others.....Please specify.
- E. I do not attend any

55. Who are the three closest friends (please, include their ethnicity) that you associate with in Canada (Real names are not required. You may as well give their nicknames)

.....  
 .....  
 .....?

56. How often do you get in touch with one another?

	Phone/E.Mail	Physical Contacts
Very Often		
Often		
Sometimes		
Seldom		
Never		

57. In the last month, I read news about Nigeria:

- A. Always
- B. Frequently
- C. Sometimes
- D. Seldom

E. Never

If you answered question 57, please respond to question 58

58. Where do you get news from?

A. Canadian newspapers/magazines

B. Nigerian newspapers/magazines published in Toronto

C. Nigerian newspapers/magazines published in Nigeria

D. Yoruba newspapers/magazines published in Nigeria

E. Yoruba newspapers/magazines published in Toronto

F. African newspapers/magazines in Toronto

G. Others.....please specify

59. How important is it for you to help fellow Yoruba here in Canada financially and socially:

	Socially	Financially
A. Very Important		
B. Important		
C. Not Important		
D. Does not Matter		

60. I feel secure within my Yoruba ethnic group—"secure" in terms of being comfortable with others in social environment.

A.. Strongly agree

B. Agree

C. Uncertain

D. Disagree

E. Strongly disagree

61. What is your favorite Yoruba music (e.g. fuji, juju, apala etc.).....?

62. In Canada, I listen to my favorite Yoruba music

A. Always

B. Frequently

C. Sometimes

D. Seldom

E. Never

63. I feel sympathy for my fellow Yoruba:

A. Strongly Agree

B. Agree

C. Uncertain

D. Disagree

E. Strongly disagree

64. How many people have come to Canada through your moral influence.....?(Moral)

65. How many people have come to Canada through your financial influence.....? (Financial)

66. Do you think that Nigerians living in the US, on average have better opportunities than those living in Canada.....?

67. Would you move to the US if you had the opportunity.....?

68. Name two major problems that you think are confronting Nigeria as a nation:

.....

.....

69. How can the problems named above be solved.....  
.....?

70. What do you think of Yorubas visiting Nigeria to spend time with relatives.....?

71. Do you belong to any voluntary associations (such as church, social, age-grade, community associations, etc.) in Nigeria?

A. Yes

B. No

If you answered Yes to question 71, please name the type of association.....

72. How many times have you visited Nigeria since you left.....?

73. How often would you like to visit Nigeria.....?

74. Do you consider yourself as part of the class of elite in your community back home in Nigeria?

A. Yes.....

B. No.....

C. I am not sure

-

75. What other class do you consider yourself to be part of in Nigeria? (At present)

A. Lower class

B. Lower Middle Class

C. Middle Middle Class

D. Upper Middle Class

E. Lower Upper Class

F. Middle Upper Class

G. Upper Upper Class.

H. Others.....(please specify)

76. Choose any category from the following that you think you belonged in Nigeria, (before you left):

A. Capitalist

B. Working class

C. Peasant

D. Small business owner

E. Unemployed

F. State functionary

G. Others.....(please specify).

77. Please indicate which of the following class you think you belong in Canada

A. Capitalist

B. Working class

C. Small business owner

D. Unemployed

E. Government official

F. Others.....(please specify).

78. What class do you consider yourself to be part of in Canada?

A. Lower Class

B. Lower Middle Class

C. Middle Middle Class

D. Upper Middle Class

E. Lower Upper Class

F. Middle Upper Class

G. Upper Upper Class.

H. Others.....(please specify)

79. Do you consider yourself as part of elite class among members of Yoruba community in Toronto?

A. Yes

B. No

C. I do not know

80. When are you planing to go back to Nigeria for good.....?

81. Why are you staying in Canada at the present moment.....?

82. What else, if anything, would you like to tell me about your experience in Canada .....?  
.....?

Thanks for taking part in this survey interview. E se o!

Appendix B

Department of Sociology and Anthropology

University of Guelph

Guelph, Ontario

N1G 2W1

Dear Sir/ma:

Re: Permission to Grant Interview:

Your name and that of the association have been recommended to me by Mrs. Ester Opadiran (former President of the Yoruba Community Association) for my research study. This letter is therefore being written to your association in regard to the current study, "Ethnographic Study of Yoruba Community in Toronto", being undertaken by

myself as partial fulfilment of the Master of Arts program at the Department of Sociology and Anthropology, University of Guelph, Guelph, Ontario.

I am also a Nigerian of the Yoruba ethnic group. This project involves survey-interviewing of individuals of Yoruba origin regarding their experiences in Canada and also of leaders of various Yoruba associations to recount the activities of their groups in Toronto and in Nigeria. The interview will take approximately one-hour in each of one to two sessions. I am thereby soliciting for your help and moral assistance in getting members of the association to fill out the questionnaire and grant me an interview regarding the socio-economic and cultural activities of your association in Toronto.

I would like to add the following regarding confidentiality:

- those interviewed will remain anonymous in the collection and storage of data.
- the interviewees' names will only be known by me and used for personal reference.
- anything the interviewee has stated, he/she has the right at any point to take back, or to be regarded "off the record".

I will be calling you very shortly to confirm the date, time and place that will be mutually convenient for both of us for the interview. Thank you in advance for cooperation.

Thank you! Oodua Agbe Wa O!

Yours truly,

Temitope Charles Adeyanju

Phone: (416) 614-0797

E. Mail:

Appendix C: At the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, what do we have?

Homogenization (Fusion)	Hegemonization (Fission)
Increasing similarities among world societies.	Increasing world domination by a specific power or civilization.
At the end of the 20 <sup>th</sup> century, people dress more the same all over the world than they did at the end of the 19 <sup>th</sup> century.	But the dress which is the same is an overwhelmingly Western dress code.
At the end of the 20 <sup>th</sup> century, the human race	But those world languages at the end

<p>is closer to having world languages than it was in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.</p>	<p>of the 20<sup>th</sup> century are disproportionately European—especially English and French.</p>
<p>Epidemiological Transition: At the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, humans live longer than at the of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.</p>	<p>But life span of those in the industrial developed countries is far higher than those of the Third World countries where there is a new upsurge of diseases such as cholera, HIV/AIDS, <i>Ebola</i> and Diarrhoea, cutting lives short.</p>
<p>At the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, we are closer to a world economy than ever before.</p>	<p>But those who control that economy are disproportionately Western—especially the G7 (Japan is the only non-Western among them). The richest fifth of the world’s population owns 80% of the world’s resources, while the poorest fifth owns barely .5%. Out of a global population of 5.9 billion, barely 500 million people live comfortably, while 4.5 billion remain in need (Ramonet, 1999: pg. 118).</p>
<p>The ideological systems of the world at the end of 20<sup>th</sup> century are converging with the market economy triumphant over state-command economy.</p>	<p>But those who are enforcing marketization are Western economic pundits—backed by the power of the USA, the World Bank, the IMF and the European Union.</p>
<p>The educational systems at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century are getting more and more similar across the world—with concepts such as "associate professorships", and "two semester" years.</p>	<p>But those shared academic ranks, semesters and scholarly paradigms are disproportionately ideas held by the United States and Western Europe.</p>

(Adopted from A. Mazrui’s lecture, "From Slave Ship to Space Ship: Africa Between Marginalization and Globalization").