

Globalization and Transnational Migrations

Globalization and Transnational Migrations:
Africa and Africans in the Contemporary
Global System

Edited by

Akanmu G. Adebayo and Olutayo C. Adesina

**CAMBRIDGE
SCHOLARS**

P U B L I S H I N G

Globalization and Transnational Migrations: Africa and Africans in the Contemporary Global System,
Edited by Akanmu G. Adebayo and Olutayo C. Adesina

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To our children and grandchildren...
and to
present and future generations of transnational migrants

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PREFACE

This book is on contemporary global connections and interconnectedness, and the implications of these for Africa and Africans. The contemporary international system is definitely global. People in this globalized world interact with and affect one another “in ways previously unimaginable” (Singer, 2002, p. 10). Globalization is often perceived as political, economic, and technological, but the contemporary global system has had significant, new implications for age-old socio-cultural issues, such as identity, citizenship, migrations, gender, race, and religion, and for various regions of the world. For Africa and Africans, the context of globalization is unique, the challenges are enormous, and the consequences are varied.

Sufficiently concerned about these issues, the editors of this book convened an international conference on “Globalization: Migration, Citizenship and Identity” at the University of Ibadan, Nigeria, from November 6-9, 2007. The objectives of the conference included: to promote academic discussions leading to our understanding of migration, citizenship and identity from global perspectives; to contribute to the understanding of one’s nationality, race, ethnicity, class, gender, and culture in global contexts; and to facilitate the development of intellectual and cross-cultural networks.

The chapters of this book grew out of papers presented at the conference. There is no doubt that the discourse on globalization, transnational migrations, citizenship, and identity will be illuminated by an interrelated set of positions, for which this book has proceeded to offer critical scholarship and the archives of memory and culture as tools for moving beyond imagination to potentially valuable experiences. These are done through established case studies that showcase inclusion and exclusion within the context of globalization. With 18 chapters arranged into six sections, the objective of this book is to illuminate and understand the nature and intensity of change wrought by globalization and transnational migrations, and the implications of these for Africa and Africans.

The two chapters of Section I provide a critical look at globalization and the African experience. Chapter I, which is also the introduction, highlights the controversy over the effects of globalization and reveals the complexity Africa has continued to face in the contemporary global

economic system. Chapter 2 by Abubakar Momoh examines African perspectives on neo-liberal globalization and highlights the key issues undergirding globalization discourse in the real world of the African people and its Diaspora.

The second part of the book, on “Identity and Citizenship,” commences with Chapter 3 by Kunle Amuwo, which examines the salient elements and values in their ebbs and flows, germane to understanding identity formation and citizenship across the contemporary “global village.” Amuwo does this through a comparative and empirical investigation of how skilled African immigrants in South Africa and France (from 1994 to date) cope with the dynamics of change they are faced with, their encounters with new cultures and identities in host nations and communities as well as the political dynamics of identity and citizenship in their new environment.

Chapter 4 by Marjolaine Paris provides a compelling experience of Africans in an interconnected world. Using recent developments in France, the chapter reveals the institutional, structural, and practical mechanisms for ensuring the continued marginalization and subjection of Africans as the French society grappled with the need for social engineering for rapid change. Angèle Smith in Chapter 5 looks more deeply at the unfolding social process of globalization. She focuses on the shifting perceptions of social space and boundaries in contemporary Ireland with the arrival of unprecedented numbers of transnational migrants mostly from Africa. Chapter 6 by Amadine Spire interrogates how African “foreigners” negotiate their insertions and their citizenships in two West African countries. The chapter underlines some specific questions dealing with the mobility, integration and “citadinization” of African foreigners in two West African capitals.

The third section of the book, “Transnational Migrations,” looks at Africa’s transnational migrations from various perspectives. Kamau Moffat in Chapter 7 details Kenyan policy on the internal migration of international refugees and the conditions under which they live and survive in Kenya. It also evaluates these policies in the light of refugee protection documents and other human rights conventions. The chapter brings out the trend of refugee migration from the Kenyan refugee camps to other parts of the country, a move contrary to government policies.

Chapter 8 by Rasheed Olaniyi closely examines the intractable challenges of migration and human trafficking from a new perspective, and the politics of immigration characterized by restriction of entry, containment, and selection in the European Union (EU). It argues that globalization and the new immigration policies in the EU ensure that only

an elite group of highly-skilled migrants enter the EU while the poor are encouraged to stay in their own countries. Chapter 9 by Omon Merry Osiki discusses economic globalization through the intensification of cross-border trade, most especially the phenomenon of human trafficking and other trans-border crimes and criminality across the Nigeria-Benin border. It also raises the issue of the use of diplomatic tools as well as other cross-border strategies and initiatives to end this problem. Olayinka Akanle in Chapter 10 argues that Nigerians' migratory experience and globalization contribute in different ways to national underdevelopment, continually predisposes the people to illegal immigration, and creates structural impediments for them in the destination country.

The fourth section of the book is "Social Issues: Youth, Religion, and Gender." It looks closely at the social implications of globalization for African peoples and culture. Mofeyisara Omobowale and Ayokunle Omobowale in Chapter 11 highlight the impact of globalization in the social change that Yoruba culture has experienced. The authors distil the forces that have transformed women's roles and status among the Yoruba of Nigeria in a global society. Chapter 12 by Henry Kam Kah explains globalization as a phenomenon that has provided opportunities for industry and business expansion in Cameroon and which has attracted a greater migration of women to the littoral quadrant than was hitherto the case. This increase in female southward movement as a result of global capital flow and services to this region has become a challenge to stereotypes in the migration history of Cameroon. Chapter 13 by Helen Labeodan examines the impact of globalization on the Nigerian youth as it affects traditional moral values. It argues that globalization has lifted cultural experiences out of its traditional secured localities and that one way of understanding this is to think about the places we live in as being increasingly "penetrated" by goods, cultural traits, and attitudes. Chapter 14 by Elisabeth De Campos examines the contributions of interpreters to the global Pentecostal identity between two West African countries, Nigeria and Niger Republic. The author highlights the attempt by interpreters in these two countries to adapt to the realities of global migration. She concludes that the various transnational social ties maintained between Anglophone and Francophone West African Pentecostals bring about socio-cultural challenges faced by these interpreters.

The fifth section of the book is "Political and Economic Issues," starting with Chapter 15 by Shola Omotola. The chapter analyzes the interface between political globalization, the citizenship question, and security threats in Africa. This is against the background of the widespread

idea that political globalization would engender inclusive citizenship. Chapter 16 by Olisa Muojama is an attempt to correct the persistent misconception of the historical continuum of globalization. He posits that in the present phase of globalization, skilled labor moves from the global south to the developed countries of the global north, while capital flows among the economies of the global north almost to the exclusion of the global south.

The last section of the book is the section on “Literary Perspectives.” The section marries vivid storytelling with vigorous analysis of the interface of globalization and Africanity. Ayo Kehinde in Chapter 17 examines the attempts of Nigerian immigrant novelists to come to terms with different cultural standards in their host communities. The discourse also critiques the novelists’ strategies of cultural adaptation. The last chapter, Chapter 18, by Ayodeji Shittu analyzes the impact of globalization, as defined by space and experience, on the memory and, consequently, the creative imagination of Nigerian exile/migrant poets as demonstrated in style and thematic thrusts.

The authors of this volume believe that the ultimate importance of this book lies in the persistent attempt to understand globalization from various perspectives as a first step to achieving an inclusive globalization—one that assists to reshape relations as well as interactions of identity and within and across class, race, and cultural settings.

Reference

Singer, P. (2002). *One World: The Ethics of Globalization*. 2nd Ed. New Haven and London: Yale University Press.

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It is quite impossible to list all the people who have contributed to the success of this endeavor. However, our appreciation goes to the entire academic and non-academic staff of the Department of History at UI, and the Institute for Global Initiatives at KSU. Special thanks go to Dr. Daniel S. Papp, President of Kennesaw State University (KSU); Professor Olufemi Bamiro, FNSE, Vice Chancellor, University of Ibadan (UI); Professor Adigun Agbaje, Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic), UI; and Professor Labode Popoola, Dean of Postgraduate School, UI. We have gained from the zeal, friendship and support of Professor Bolanle Awe, Dr. Dan Paracka, Ms. Vivian Bonilla, Professor Femi Omosini, Dr. B. A. Mojuetan, Dr. Rasheed Olaniyi, and Mr. Paul Ugboajah. We thank them for their steadfastness and support.

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Akanmu G. Adebayo
Kennesaw, GA, USA

Olutayo C. Adesina
Ibadan, Nigeria

SECTION I

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION: GLOBALIZATION AND TRANSNATIONAL MIGRATIONS: AN OVERVIEW

OLUTAYO C. ADESINA
AND AKANMU G. ADEBAYO

...Human beings imitate, or are absorbed by, the ideas of others on what to believe and how to live. Sometimes, they are forced to do so (Wolf, 2005, p. 102).

Africans now live in a world that is significantly different from anything they had previously experienced since the end of World War II. It is a world shaped by contemporary globalization. The uniqueness of our global interconnectedness (Sachs, 2005, p. 213) and the vast new power of modern technology have seemingly set in motion a global partnership designed to work together for change. The global process has intensified in recent times not only by changing the very nature of our world but also by creating cultural and social processes that transcend boundaries (Appadurai 1991, p. 192; 1996). The framework for understanding the crucial and difficult issues arising from this phenomenon is to show how the recipients of globalization have plugged into different aspects of this experience but in accordance with their differentiated and respective capabilities as an imperative of global realities. This calls for serious consideration and interrogation. The interpretation of globalization as an engine of growth and development has thrown up a serious debate between the supporters (global-enthusiasts) and antagonists (global-skeptics) of the phenomenon. But the debate in several respects has not sufficiently revealed in practice and in reality the several ambiguities embedded in this “engine of growth and development” analysis. So while the ideas and practices of globalization that have shaped and engaged the world’s economy, social geography and human interactions have received

copious attention, they have not been well shown in the case of Africa either as a multiplicity of sites and effects, competing impulses, or as personal or group experiences.

The challenges of globalization are unique, enormous, and varied. The world has come to recognize interdependence and interconnectedness as the most significant features of the age of globalization. However, Olukoshi (2004) has posited that the processes that created globalization are such that its benefits can hardly be equal and just for all groups or classes of individuals, whether within or across states, regions, and even the world as a whole. So, how much has the world been alive to the lived experience of Africans in the age of globalization? How well have Africans themselves responded to the windows of opportunity created by globalization? How should Africans as a significant part of humanity “brush off opposition and make faster headway toward the goal of a single world economy, free of all barriers to trade or investment between different states?” (Singer, 2002, p. 54). In other words, do we all as members of the human race share the same commitments to survival, an end to extreme poverty, and the elevation of human dignity? As a corollary to the foregoing, the question also arises as to how much room for manoeuvre is available to the African at home and in the Diaspora to cope with the changes or take advantage of globalization and the forces it unleashed.

The acceleration of the pace of change has redefined the world with economies losing their national character and their citizens becoming increasingly global within a transnational system of production based on international division of labor and labor migrations. These have unleashed a desire by different spheres of the world to secure for themselves or their citizens a greater share of the world’s known and unknown resources both internally and externally (Fafowora, 2001, p. 298). The results have been the capacity of modern man to intermingle, criss-cross, and ultimately to alter their cultural depth. The globalized world therefore reveals a coalescence of erstwhile variety to a single universal trend, which inescapably is eroding old feelings and distinct comprehension of people’s worldview (Nnamani, 2003, p. 38). For Africa and Africans, therefore, the contemporary global system has had significant, new implications for social and cultural issues, such as identity, citizenship, migrations, gender, race, and religion.

Transnationalism has been defined as “the processes by which immigrants build social fields that link together their country of origin and their country of settlement” (Quoted in Miles, 2004, p.8). We apply

“transnational migrations” in this study the way Anne Miles has used it, thus:

...transnational migration implies that migrants do not just cross one social setting to go to another: the very process of crossing borders creates new social and cultural patterns, ideas, and behaviors. Transnational migrants not only grapple with making sense of a different place but can also transform both the place and themselves through their actions. The term “transnationalism” draws attention to the connections between people and places—connections that extend well beyond obvious national borders... (Miles, 2004, p.8).

Transnationalism is more than the crossing of borders; but borders (or boundaries) themselves come in different shapes and sizes, and have different uses. Not just national or international, a border may be the physical space between two persons guided by rules or conventions. That physical space can be of varying sizes, and can be the source of misunderstanding when a person moves from a close-talking or hugging society to one where considerable physical distances are expected. Borders may also be psychological. It consists of the limits set by a society which often contribute to the total make up of a people’s identity—such as class, ethnic group, group mentality, or aspirations. Transnationalism implies a transcendence, a person’s or group’s ability to go through and beyond these psychological inhibitions or limitations. It also implies the ability to transcend social boundaries, the limits that a society sets for both its citizens and “Others.” These include taboos, dos and don’ts, and so-called traditions. A major component of social borders is spiritual—the mode of worship, the dress code for men and women, what is considered sacred or profane or sacrilegious, and the relationship between and among various religions.

A crucial element of the contemporary phase of globalization is the transnationalization of labor. This has remained critical and central to the formation of identities and loyalties among various population segments which do not regard the nation as the sole or principal source of identification, and the associated new solidarities and notions of membership (Sassen, 1998, p. xxxi). With globalization, an immense array of cultures from around the world became reterritorialized in a few single places and in deep contestation. In recent times, the issue of linguistic niches and accents within a communicative environment, most especially an established lingua franca, has also become formidable in the contexts of identity politics, inclusion and exclusion, spatial relations and power.

A developing, yet critically understudied and possibly underappreciated, product of transnationalism is dual-citizenship or dual nationality, a phenomenon that has increased the complexity of identity for African immigrants in Western countries. Citizenship in most African countries is by descent from a parent or grandparent who is a citizen, not by the simple act of being born in the country. Citizenship by descent combines with a very stringent process of naturalization to deny African migrants the citizenship of other African countries. In Europe and the United States, on the other hand, provisions are made for naturalization but the processes are often tortuous and difficult, moreso in recent years. Once achieved, however, African migrants have been able to take advantage of opportunities for global mobility. Especially when traveling internationally, dual citizens carry two passports, produce one or the other for immigration or border patrols, and enter or leave third states with fluidity. Not all nations allow dual citizenship. In those that do, questions often arise about the commitment and loyalty of such citizens to the country of naturalization over the country of descent. In the United States, military service has been one of the main avenues an immigrant could use to attain naturalization and this had seen over 32,000 servicemen and women through expedited naturalization process between 2001 and 2007 (Visapro, 2007). As a by-product of transnationalism, dual citizenship is a potential path to the emergence of the world's next "global" leaders in all areas of human endeavor: business, politics, sports and entertainment. These transnationals and their offsprings are usually binational and bicultural, and sometimes bilingual or multilingual. The successful election and inauguration of Barack Obama as the 44th President of the United States have given many African transnationals high hopes and great joy. Of course, not all would produce a president, but many second-generation African transnational migrants can no longer rule out that possibility. Already, many have started the process: a Nigerian councillor in London, a Nigerian mayor in Ireland, etc.

Seeing a New World in Motion

In spite of the advances recorded in the age of globalization, millions of Africans still lack access to the most basic things of life such as food, portable water, and sanitation, and have continued to live an existence characterized by high infant mortality rate, joblessness, low life expectancy, malnutrition, disease, and illiteracy (UNDP, 2000, p. 30; World Bank, 2000/2001, p. 3). The intractable social and economic problems that have kept the countries of Africa at the bottom of the world

economic ladder (Collier, 2007, p. 3), most especially since the economic collapse of the 1980s have created a mass of malcontents who are increasingly finding their countries difficult to live in. So, while Africa's economies did not grow, its population did (Stiglitz, 2007, p. 42). For this critical mass, globalization has opened their horizons and migration has become a critical means to an end. Implicit in the term "globalization" is the idea that we are moving beyond the notions of growing ties between nations and are beginning to contemplate something beyond the existing conception of the nation-state (Singer, 2002, p. 8). Paradoxically, however, Africans have also tended to retain a sentimental attachment to their culture in the face of the rampaging impact of globalization.

The movements of capital, services, goods, ideas, and labor (forced or voluntary) across boundaries, facilitated by instant communications and modern transport, have been major defining features of the contemporary world (Singer, 2002, pp. 196-197). These have no doubt also led others to understand and aspire to a different way of life but also added to the pressure to migrate. The global economic and financial system has also given added clout to the World Trade Organization (WTO), the World Bank, and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), all of them institutions that have altered or affected global governance in quite significant ways. In the 1980s many of the African economies had turned to these institutions to bail them out of their sordid economic states. Economic liberalization adopted by African countries had opened up their economies to foreign goods, but they had little to sell abroad. Investors, on the other hand, were only interested in taking out the continent's bountiful natural resources (Stiglitz, 2007, p. 41). Several of the austerity policies imposed on the countries also failed to stave off collapse or to stimulate economic growth. Thus, already distrustful of their governments, Africans had even less confidence in "distant institutions that talked about reducing poverty but seemed to make it worse at every turn" (Calderisi, 2006, p. 19). Such multi-dimensional movements and developments have had some repercussions for peoples, communities, and nations far and above their expectations. One of these was poverty.

From the 1990s a vast range of changes were induced by globalization. These would include transnationalism, integration, and interconnectedness of nation-states and the blurring of boundaries. Africans have now been swept into a fundamentally different world—one in which Africanness has been redefined in an extremely complex way. The controversy over the effects of globalization has revealed the complexity Africa has continued to face in a world where it was regarded as being at the bottom of the global economic system. The large scale material immiseration of its

people created large scale discontent. Unfortunately, the development and political failures of the continent have occurred against the backdrop of great economic and political advancements elsewhere in the world. This would crystallize a process of migration in, around, and out of Africa.

The global community has witnessed in recent times a movement towards tremendous demographic changes arising from a critical reconfiguration of social geography and the growth of supra-territorial and transnational spaces that have emerged as 20th century developments (Scholte, 2000, p. 1), and which have coexisted in complex interrelations. More importantly is the new and important global civil society stimulated by the free market ideology. The greatest challenge in the Third World now appears to be how best to adjust to the imperatives of globalization and integrate into the world system so as to take advantage of the processes unleashed by globalization. This has proved intractable in the face of the disadvantaged position of some of the migrants. This is because as globalization strengthens some states, it exposes and exacerbates the failings of many others (Rice, 2008). The citizens of such countries are entering the world stage as global underdogs. And as noted by Sachs (2005, p. 2), certain parts of the world are caught in a downward spiral of impoverishment, hunger, and disease. Bourguignon (2006, p. 1) has delivered a warning in which he asserted that globalization has “opened a window of opportunity, one that may not stay open for a long time.” Thus, different parts of the globe are called upon to meet new challenges about its well-being and its inclusion in a process that has created a global market for goods and services and one largely indifferent to national borders and governments. These have also ignited new concerns in different parts of Africa. So, as the nations of the world have moved closer in their quest to tackle issues like trade, climate change, justice, and poverty, this appeared to have created complex realities for some, and new contexts for others to construct their reality. How have these changed the prospects of the African in his or her quest for a good life? How far did this quest remain a fantasy or reality? Would globalization serve to shape a new world favorable to African interests? More specifically, would it enhance the brotherhood of man?

Arising from the foregoing are key contested issues such as the changing powers of states, the emergence of pluralized and hybrid social identities, and the understanding of identity-formation and citizenship, the structure of politics, and nature of human interactions (Giddens, 2004, p. 61; Zeleza, 2003; Nyamjoh, 2004, pp. 37-59). Marginalization and globalization’s unrealized potential to eradicate poverty and promote economic growth (Stiglitz, 2002) have helped to define the position of

states, groups, and individuals in a global world. These have all invariably helped to illuminate the extent to which the contemporary world system simultaneously conduces to and is averse to pluralization of identities (Amuwo, Chapter 3 of this book).

Redefining the New World: Whose Rule Book?

Developments across the world epitomize humanity in a state both of motion and alienation. The African has become susceptible to the product and process distinction in the demand and supply chains created by the current global economy. By exploring the social, economic, political, and psychological dimensions of globalization, this study hopes to shed some light on the African experience in the age of globalization. Its focus basically is the consequences of globalization and the forces it unleashed for Africans at home and in the Diaspora. It does this by raising issues of importance to the survival of African peoples, their cultures and ways of life. It therefore in a very profound manner explores the implications of interdependency and transnationalism for African identity, culture, and material well-being from the perspectives of the local and the global, the personal to the group, and from the structural to the political. It is an analysis and synthesis of what globalization has and has not accomplished for Africans at home and in the Diaspora in an age when the allegiance or universe of the individual or group is no longer limited to the physical boundaries of the state (cf. Amin, 1997).

The increasing degree to which there is a single world economy is reflected in the globalization of production, mobility of labor, mass communication, and marketing, and these have accelerated the spread of consumerist values and ideas as well as the intensification of non-indigenous but largely Western ways of life. It has rolled back the importance of physical or geographical boundaries and has witnessed the ascendancy of cultural pluralism. Nevertheless, the emergence of a borderless world has serious implications for Africa and Africans. While abdicating to Africans responsibility for the consequences of global capitalism, African perceptions and reactions have underlined in a very different way the extent to which their thinking about the world has changed over the years. It is sometimes seen from the perspective of better jobs and higher pay, frequent remittances, regular food (and larger portions), easier and better access to safe drinking water, health care, and education among others. But this improvement in the condition of life has come at a cost.

The increased access to information technology and faster travels has enhanced a process that is simultaneously homogenizing and multicultural. Immigrants arrive at their adopted communities with new cultural values even as they are assimilated into existing norms and structures. As noted by Ajayi (2005, pp. 210-211):

This mix of the “old” and “new” translates into a dynamic, sometimes tense, relationship that reflects both multiculturalism and homogeneity. Ethnic-themed goods and services proliferate in these receiving communities and immigrants gradually slip in and out of these aspects of their societies. The same is often true of native-born people who may accept or reject these changes. The Internet also promotes homogeneity through the mass dissemination of pop culture and the “CNN effect,” that is, simultaneous access to satellite television socializes people in similar ways. Conversely, the Internet is a platform for exclusive communication within unique socio-cultural groups which are similar to ethnic neighbourhoods.

Giddens’ (2001, p. 33) position on globalization reveals the other side of the phenomenon:

...globalization is the reason for the revival of local cultural identities in different parts of the world...local nationalisms spring up as a response to globalizing tendencies, as the hold of older nation-states weakens.

The controversy has revealed the implications of globalization for people of African descent anywhere in the world and also raises the possibility that differences make in an interconnected world. These no doubt set in motion politically explosive and socially significant burdens. How this played out would be another eye-opener for those interested in the effects of globalization. But Africans have not been passive agents or mere tools of globalization. They should also be seen as active participants in what Hondagneu-Sotelo (1994) called “cultural construction,” and being capable of negotiating their existence within changing social conditions. Human beings are also unique in their ability to create the world in which they live. The opportunities they identify stimulate invention and innovation, which in turn create further opportunities (Wolf, 2005, p. 97). Thus, not only do transnational migrants depend on established networks, but the process of migration itself often facilitates the creation of new networks and communities (Miles, 2004, pp. 42-43).

The migration of African professionals and non-professionals in, around, and out of Africa has resulted in a new generation of migrants making the difficult choice of leaving nation, community, and family in

the hope of achieving a better life for themselves and their families back home. This has added a new dimension to transnational migration and its place in the new global economy, intersecting with a broad range of social, cultural, and institutional processes and transformations. This has evolved along patterns of identity, post-national citizenship, diasporas, and mobility. The individual and group logic, orientations and even identities that have shaped these have been influenced by the forces of ethnicity, family, social networks, and host sensibilities. How these have interfaced with global factors has bred their own cultural politics and this has remained under-studied. So while the historical and structural conditions that encourage transnational migrations have been well discussed, the symbolism and the degree of cultural capital represented by transnational migrants in a global world have not received adequate attention.

The Quest for a Better World

The margin of survival of the African in his/her country or in a land of sojourn is extremely narrow and precarious. This is a good way of understanding the advantages and the contradictions thrown up by the forces galvanized by globalization. Migration of unskilled labor leads to lower wages for unskilled workers in the developed world (Stiglitz, 2007, p. 274). In others, the relationship that developed on the heels of globalization has created a discernible trend towards great asymmetry and overlapping attitudes. A good example is Nigeria-South Africa relations. On the one hand, the intrusion of South African capital into the Nigerian economy by banks and telecommunication networks has been applauded to be a promising example of south-south economic interrelationship. On the other hand, the massive influx of Nigerian migrants into South Africa has raised very interesting reactions—xenophobia, subtle discrimination, and irruptions of violent attacks against Nigerian economic migrants. This is paradoxical in the age of globalization when the notion of what to give or what to take has continued to be defined by desires. On that basis, it is obvious that processes and impulses released by globalization are sometimes cruel and parochial. The story is replicated in several other countries. Amuwo (in Chapter 3) in a clear exposition on citizenship in the age of the global village, has affirmed that global citizenship is limited by the systematic and structural discrimination against immigrants (skilled and unskilled alike) and by nationals of host countries. How migrants cope with the dynamics of change they are faced with, their encounters with new cultures and identities in host nations and communities as well as the

political dynamics of identity and citizenship in their new environment becomes part of the baggage of contemporary globalization.

Conclusion

The importance of globalization in the contemporary period cannot be overlooked. As noted by Wolf (2005, p. 13), “Globalization is, on balance, resistible. But globalization is also, on balance, highly desirable. Precisely how desirable depends on the choices that are made.” The desire for a more equitable world in several respects (economic, political, technological, social, and cultural) has remained an aspiration of great and intrinsic value for Africans in the global age. Already, globalization has produced too many losers (Stiglitz, 2007, p. 274) thereby giving a lie to Friedman’s (2005) earlier postulation of globalization being a purveyor of a flattened world creating “a level playing field in which developed and less developed countries can compete on equal terms.” Africa and Africans have continued to exist as underdogs in a global but deeply divided world. This state of affairs has been amplified by Bono (2005, p. xiii) thus:

...fifteen thousand Africans dying each and every day of preventable, treatable diseases—AIDS, malaria, TB—for lack of drugs that we take for granted. This statistic alone makes a fool of the idea many of us hold on to very tightly: the idea of equality. What is happening in Africa mocks our pieties, doubts our concern, and questions our commitment to that whole concept...Deep down, if we really accept that their lives—African lives—are equal to ours, we would all be doing more to put the fire out. It’s an uncomfortable truth.

Flowing from the experiences of Africans and their continued desire for economic development and well-being, the most crucial challenges are: (1) how to put on the global agenda the integration of the world’s poor and disadvantaged into the new world order; and (2) how to renegotiate the strategies of ensuring that the global village would serve the needs of all the countries and peoples of the world rather than that of the strong and mighty alone. In the final analysis, finding answers to these questions may define the most important paths towards not only ending global instability but also achieving the much-touted 2015 Millennium Development Goals and the creation of a more just and equitable world.

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CHAPTER TWO

AFROCENTRIC PERSPECTIVES ON NEO-LIBERAL GLOBALIZATION

ABUBAKAR MOMOH

This chapter examines African perspectives on globalization. The work situates the key issues undergirding the discourse on globalization in the real world of the African people. It assesses the impact of globalization on African life, and attempts a comparative analysis of global flow of capital, amenities, and labor. It highlights the urgent and critical issues confronting the African working classes and how globalization can become meaningful to them. In this regard it points to several issues which globalization needs to factor into its geometry. Finally, the chapter highlights how all these connect to the African Diaspora and proposes the role they can play in the unfolding phenomenon.

Introduction

To understand globalization, especially to herald it as a solution to economic, social, and technological problems of the contemporary world, scholars must also examine the impact it has on specific regions of the world. In particular, African voices need to be heard in the discourse on globalization. This chapter has three objectives. First, to posit that neo-liberal globalization has come merely to provide new rationalization for the crisis and contradictions of Western capitalism. Second, although globalization offers nothing new, however, there are real changes (not necessarily positive changes) that have occurred in the world that require an Afrocentric intervention because of the way Africa is marginalized in the scheme of things. Third, the chapter will show the direction in which social forces are moving in Africa and indicate what implication it has for the future of Africa.

The prelude to the understanding of the current globalization and its “one-world” or “flat world” approach is best captured by three major