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MIGRANCY, GENDER AND THE ILLUSION OF PARADISE: THE ABYSMAL HAVEN IN CONTEMPORARY MIGRATION LITERATURES

[1]Andrew Nyongesa & [2] Ann Minayo

[1] Department of Humanities, Murang'a University of Technology, Email: anyongesa@mut.ac.ke

[2] Department of Humanities, Murang'a University of Technology

Abstract

This paper interrogates the hyped belief that migration to the West is tantamount to easy riches and success among African immigrants in Abdulrazack Gurnah's Pilgrim's Way and Chimamanda Ngozi's Americanah. The paper compares experiences of male and female migrant characters to cross question the myth of "Western paradise." While literary studies exist on the plight of migrant characters in host nations, this comparative reading has received inadequate attention. With the advent of globalization, some migration scholars aver that through hybridity, migrants from the global South to Western metropolis form linkages by hybridity to take advantage of economic opportunities for personal development. Migration to the United States and Europe has been viewed as the appropriate prescription to the plight of refugees and economic immigrants as long as they opt for the middle space to negotiate their existence in the foreign nations. Emerging writers and scholars in migration however interrogate this notion and view migrancy as deliberate choice by migrant characters to place themselves under misery and subjugation by the dominant groups in host nations. To these writers and scholars, migration to Western cities is not the prescription to immigrants' predicament but rather a predisposing factor to worse problems such as otherness, economic exploitation and pathological conditions. Using postcolonial theory, the article provides new evidence that demonstrates abjection, squalor and pathology to overturn the myth of eternal bliss among migrant characters

Keywords: Americanah, Chimamanda Ngozi, Migration Literature, Minorities, Refugees, Abdulrazak Gurnah

Introduction

This paper interrogates the myth that migration from Africa to the West is tantamount to attainment of life goals and prelude to quick riches by African immigrants in Gurnah's *Pilgrim's Way* and Adichie's *Americanah.* The paper compares experiences of male and female migrant characters to cross-question the myth of "Western paradise." While literary studies exist on the plight of migrant characters in host nations, this comparative reading has received inadequate attention. The advent of globalization has elevated migration particularly from the global South to the global North, and many migration scholars laud transnationalism as the accepted trend. Both literary and scholarly writers have enumerated amazing benefits of postcolonial migration to other nations. Cohen (2008:7) underscores the role of migration in attainment of immigrants' goals. In his opinion, the ensuing anxiety in the interaction between the immigrant and the dominant group compels them to step out of their comfort zones and strive towards higher goals, and therefore do better than the hosts and those who remain. This is corroborated by attainments of minorities such as Barack Obama (as depicted in *Americanah*) in the United States of America.

It is however an overstretched generalization to operate on the presumption that all immigrants are capable of attainments typical of Barack Obama or Rishi Sunak. Intellectual, economic and political achievements are not solely enabled by tension of othering experiences. If this is plausible then all immigrants would have reached the peak of their lives because they incessantly confront the anxiety of otherness. Bhabha (1995: 2) singles out hybridity as the most suitable mode of existence among immigrants. He suggests that characters that opt for the middle space coexist more peacefully and become more successful in foreign nations. He observes that the hybrid being in a liminal space is in advantageous position because something new begins. This study interrogates Bhabha's observations as to whether most migrant characters that opt for the hybrid space have a healthy and happy stay in Western nations.

This article extends McGregor and Chigwedere's theses that postcolonial migration replicates the plight of immigrant characters in foreign nations. It also compares experiences of male and female migrant characters to interrogate the illusion of West-ward migration. Using postcolonial theory, it provides new evidence by rejecting elevation of migration as a prescription of African problems and highlighting the predicament of migrant characters in Gurnah's *Pilgrim's Way* and Ngozi's *Americanah.*

Migrant Characters and Destitution: Immigrants, Squalor and Pathology in Western Metropolis

This section is a critique of the notion of hybridity as the gateway to assimilation and material prosperity of migrant characters in the West. In as much as characters who love the culture of their mother nations find it difficult to coexist with the dominant group in host nation (Gautam, 24), it is not a guarantee that characters imbibe Western culture are absolved from the challenges of the migration experience. In Adiche's *Americanah* and Gurnah's *Pilgrims Way* these characters at do not have the economic advantages that migration scholars such as Cohen and Bhabha suggest but end up in what Foucault terms as "madness" in relation to destitution and indigence (7). Tembi (2016: 22), in his analysis of *Harare North* observes that some migrant literatures disrupt "the popular perception of Europe a as a place for "easy riches." Citing Gikandi, Tembi asserts that Chikwava demystifies migration to the West as a paradise where immigrants' dreams are fulfilled and instead depicts the hardships of the migration experience (23). Gikandi and Tembi's ideas reiterate migrant experiences in Gurnah's *Pilgrims' Way* and Adichie's *Americanah* where contrary to their optimism, the protagonists' economic conditions degenerate to squalor. In their analysis of disillusioned migrant characters in *Americanah*, Okpiliya and Ushie (2018: 183) point out that most Nigerians hold the belief that "America, England, Australia and Asia are havens" to which their economic problems vaporize and goals attained. While Okpiliya and Ushie demonstrate how Nigerian immigrants turn to "craziness" to survive in host nations, the study deliberately leaves out the plight of other African immigrants such as East Africans and the pathological consequences sustained from migrant conditions. Indeed after her arrival in the United States, Ifemelu starts going through experiences that subvert the optimism that Nigerians hold.

Unlike conservative characters that Chigwedere and Bhabha accuse of holding to "fetish identities" of the mother nation, Ifemelu understands the English Language and is open to learning American culture. But the sudden change from Nigeria starts having a negative impact on her: the bananas were "big and tasteless" (110), the loose social fabric confounds her; in Nigeria there is family, friends, relatives from extended family (107), but in the United States there is cultural shock– she comes across American women going to lunch in sneakers and couples kissing in the broad daylight (118). The actual impediment begins when she leaves Aunty Uju and starts the search for a job; her harrowing experiences subvert the myth of paradise (Tembi 2016: 22). Ifemelu's determined search for a job is not just fiasco, but the kind of jobs for which rigorous interviews are held would be described in Africa as "blue color" or graft. For example, she loses an interview for a babysitter's job because she lacks CRP

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certification and Ginika's friend, Kimberly hires someone else (146). After losing dozens of interviews, the narrator observes that Ifemelu typed many application letters without any hope of finding a job (139).

The unemployment witnessed in this episode further overturns the belief in a Western "haven" (Okpiliye and Ushie: 183). These futile job searches are the same as those people in Africa have, and sometimes overcome by getting better jobs. Obinze for instance gets a job to run Chief's errands without any rigorous interview (22). As a result of Ifemelu's desperation, she falls prey to a sex predator who inserts his fingers in her private parts in exchange for a hundred dollars (125). This affront to Ifemelu's sexuality reiterates Adeyelure and Roux observations that migrants' status and blackness expose them to maltreatment in host nations (1). While Adeyelure and Roux (2023)'s study underscores the othering conditions of immigrant characters in Adichie's *Americanah*, this study extends their reading through gender comparison of the predicament of migrant characters and pathological consequences in *Americanah* and *Pilgrims Way*.

As result of the sexual abuse, Ifemelu suffers from a chronic depression that results not just to the end of her love relationship with Obinze, but constant relationship breakups that are symptomatic of self-alienation. While Hegel (1967: 535) associates this pathological condition with the propensity to rebuff social relationships, Mallya ( ) describes Ifemelu's condition as "depressive disorder" and "psychic fragmentation" (171). After the sex abuse, the narrator says that Ifemelu feels alienated and imagines darkness descending around her life. So disconcerted by what America has brought her way, she deletes all Obinze's texts and voice messages; henceforth, his emails go answered because of the despair and melancholy that besets her (155). The use of the word "detached" recaps Hegel's self-alienation in which the character or person abandons social relationships; Laing refers to such persons as schizoids as they have a break with self, and society; and other scholars refer to this as a shattered self, devoid of human warmth and incapable of continuity (Zepenic 84). Ifemelu is unable to attend to her daily chores, leaves her plates dirty and she remains indoors for many days.

Like Ifemelu, Daud and Karta in *Pilgrims Way* leave their ancestral lands and only find admittance at the marginal space of the English society in the hope for better education and prosperity. On the contrary, the conditions of their lives in the host nation are pathetic and confounding. Daud lives alone in a filthy house, which the landlord does not repair unless the black tenants pay more (9). Ironically, the landlord brags of his magnanimity and tremendous benevolence towards 'other' races. Daud's house is described as having a very thin wall between it and the neighbour's. While inside, he hears what seems like falling plaster and mice darting in and out in the floor boards as they screech to interrupt his sleep. One in a while, Daud has to stop what he is doing to chase them for its own sake as they are so many to be eradicated (81). The crumbling plaster corroborates the neglect of the house because the people working there are not worth a decent house. The house is infested with vermin such as rats and the landlord is not bothered possibly because Daud is just an animal. He has to spend time chasing the vermin away to enjoy temporary peace, which doubles up as his leisure given that he cannot have good moments with the English neighbours.

The narrator observes that "the old couple" in his neighbourhood remained taciturn in his presence; whenever they see him approach, "they went inside the house and shut the door" (82). Their house is juxtaposed to Daud's as having "pictures, and objects littered the rooms, and plants flourished under the kitchen window" (82). Before Daud invites Catherine, he describes his house as "open shelves being rough, and splintered… his antique oven was rancid with grime" (82). When Catherine pays him a visit, she is confounded at the squalor. When she opens the curtains, "clouds of dust billowed away from the

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curtains and hung suspended in the airless room" (99). Catherine neither opens the window nor curtains to save the window from collapse. According to Mirmotahari (2011: 74), Daud's destitution is a deliberate reminder of his marginalisation or "cultural unbelonging," and regardless of his diligence, Daud and fellow immigrants belong to the "margins of margins." Catherine is quite embarrassed by her new boyfriend's condition, but tacitly understands the situation of minorities in England.

Similarly, Ifemelu in *Americanah* is compelled to live below the poverty line and agreeing to take jobs in the poorest places in the United States. After the futile search for jobs, Ifemelu agrees to take a cleaner's job in South Philadelphia described "in an apartment in South Philadelphia a tired faced woman opened the door and led her into a strong stench of urine. The living room was dark, unaired and she imagined the whole building; she imagined the whole building steeped in months, even years of accumulated urine, and herself working everyday steeped in this urine cloud" (125). Ifemelu dreads working in these squalid conditions to meet the cost of her education because the scholarship she had received was partial; the constant warnings of discontinuation due to fees balances and failure to pay rent on time compel her to accept these job offers. In spite of it being drudgery of sorts, Ifemelu is not hired and when her housemate, Elena leaves her dog to eat Ifemelu's bacon, which triggers her depression. Whereas in African universities she enjoyed the generosity of fellow students and parents, her American colleagues otherize her by class and race. For instance, though the party invitations are gestures of generosity in Africa, in the US, the organizers comb through the orders for each attendant to pay their bills (122). Worse still, in spite of her joblessness, she has to brace for their constant recriminations for any rent delays. Jackie for instance says "[w]hat are we supposed to do? We're not her fucking parents" (147). In his postcolonial reading of *Harare North*, Tembi sums up the fate of immigrant characters as "abject" living as "outcasts on the margins in states of nonbelonging, homelessness, speechlessness and powerlessness" (173) in a nation that maintains towards them the policy of exclusion. It is shocking to realize that the only jobs reserved for immigrants are drudgery or prostitution for female immigrants–euphemized as "escorts" (148). But later when Ifemelu finds a white boyfriend, Curt, she gets a white color job with ease.

Ifemelu and Daud's living conditions reiterate Chidora (2017:175)'s assertions of the migrant experience as the state of abjection, defined as "forms of existence" that compel one into "shame, disgrace or debasement, rendered beyond the limits of the liveable, denied the warrant of tolerability, accorded purely a negative value." For Foucault (2006:7), this abject state of living is viewed by modernism as madness. In the same way, Obinze in *Americanah* is condemned to this "madness" as a reward for his hybrid stance towards Western ways. It begins when Obinze leaves Nicholas' house to pursue his economic independence and attain his mythical dream in London or "haven" in Okpiliya and Ushie's observations. After many days of job search, he ends up as a toilet cleaner his Nigerian degree notwithstanding. The "haven" that Obinze has come to offers him the shock of his life when he enters a toilet one fateful day, he is confounded to walk into a house and come face to face with a mound of human waste on the toilet bowl. Obinze stares at the molehill of human waste longer than ten minutes, unsure of whether he should wash it away or not.

The ordeal gets him thinking, and he takes it as a personal affront to his self-esteem. He leaves his tools and flees from the scene (228). This passage underscores Chidora's "shame, disgrace and debasement" because of existence of immigrants at the margins. Obinze has to live on cleaning human waste in spite of her mother's middle-class status in Nigeria. The phrase "smaller and smaller" illustrates the "disgrace" and debilitating impact of the job on his self-esteem. The little wage for which he cleans the human waste causes further devastation of his psyche. Obinze abandons his gloves and other cleaning equipment and decides to impersonate himself as Vincent to get papers for a decent job. The kind of

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jobs immigrants are offered in the host nations also demonstrate the futility of the migration experience. Like the character Aleck in *Harare North,* Vincent though Nigerian takes pleasure in exploiting undocumented Nigerians. He agrees to give Obinze his papers on condition that he pays forty percent of all the earnings (241). One devastating aspect of this relationship is Vincent's triumph over Obinze– a lecturer's son pleading for his help. Adichie describes the overcrowded room in which Obinze meets Vincent's as "claustrophobic feel pervaded the flat, the concrete neighbourhood with no trees, the scarred walls of the building. Everything seemed too small, too tight" (241). Obinze has to stay with his cousin Nicholas whose unreliable job has exposed to psychological disturbances such as fear and anxiety. Nicholas' anxiety stems from "disgrace and debasement" (Chidora 175) because, like Obinze, he has impersonated himself for many years. Adeyelure and Roax describe the impersonation as "identity theft" that enable desperate "transnational immigrants" to obtain sustenance (7). It is traumatizing to become a "Philip" rather than "Nicholas" and live with incessant dread that discovery would result in immediate forfeit of all benefits of citizenship and subsequent deportation.

Going by Foucault's definition of insanity, African immigrants such as Daud, Obinze and Ifemelu are mad in the modernist sense because they have transgressed the norms to live in destitution. Foucault contends that at the dawn of the modern age in Europe, "poor vagabonds, the unemployed," were confined to mental asylums (7). After Obinze refuses to raise Vincent's stipend, he stakes a claim to his identity and betrays Obinze at the work place (250). Obinze leaves the job and follows the footsteps of fellow immigrants: arrange a fake marriage to a European citizen to acquire citizenship. Chidora's observations on debasement of the immigrant are evident because marriage to immigrant characters has nothing to do with personal happiness, but a means to getting identification papers. Vincent reports Obinze to the police; he is arrested and deported.

In the same way, Daud in *Pilgrims Way* resorts to graft in spite of his academic qualifications. Daud's job is described as a scene and smell of human bodies be chopped and it filled him with revulsion. Daud has never had the notion that human bodies can bleed as such. Above all, he detests the reality that the poverty of his situation has compelled him to do such as job; a drudgery that entails tidying the theatre after surgery to wash away all the blood and pus from the instruments, and furniture (12). It shocks him these are the friendliest of all the duties he has been assigned at the hospital.

The theatre room where Daud work is filthy, stained with blood of patients whose bodies have been operated on by surgeons. After the operations, he had to clean the blood and pus from floors and furniture. These are jobs that most white people cannot do; indeed Catherine confirms it when she tells Daud that nursing is "boring, the work is hard and dirty" (19). But Daud is an orderly, of which race they despise and take advantage to allocate any work in messy places. In a soliloquy or self address, he complains that Solomon orders him more often to dirty places not meant for him. Among aspects of his job description are "shaving the patients' pubic hair should he be directed to do so. […] He did not even know where he would begin if he was asked to shave a woman" (12). This is a job that would transgress the culture of Daud both as an African and a Muslim, but he cannot complain because of his marginal position in the foreign nation.

Gender Difference and Migrant Experience: Treatment of Male and Female Characters in Western Metropolis

Studies have interrogated the plight of African migrant characters in the West, and extended this to their experiences by gender. Ajibola (2018: 128) demonstrates the plight of female immigrant characters in a number of African novels including Adichie's *Americanah* and concludes that female migrant characters are at the most pathetic point, "zero point" where they experience the worst

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incidents that serve as hindrances to career growth or cause deaths. While Ajibola's study relies on primary texts by Nigerian writers, this study incorporates Gurnah's *Pilgrimage Way* and suggests that in some instances, male migrant characters suffer the brunt of the migrant experience.

First, both male and female immigrants are traumatized by racial othering at the work places and joblessness as depicted by Adichie and Gurnah respectively. The two writers take Fanon's trajectory that point out the nexus between racial othering and pathological tendencies among minorities (182). For example after falling prey to sex abuse by the white Tennis coach, Ifemelu develops symptoms of chronic depression for a number of weeks. The narrator observes that Ifemelu losses her strength and ability to think of the best way to take her life. She sits in the house, reads books, but cannot attempt any physical activity. Ifemelu loses appetite and cannot even tidy utensils (150). In this episode, Ifemelu exhibits pathology through depression and suicide, which are aspects of the fragmented self, defined by Gray et al as a self in turmoil and fractured by traumatizing experiences (124). According to Karl Menninger, suicide is an attempt to kill "the significant other," that is the love or despicable object they have incorporated in the making of the self (Cited from Davison, 2008: 252). The character's self- esteem diminishes to the state of "a deserted infant" that yearns to "annihilate the incorporated object." In Menninger's view, Ifemelu possesses the Tennis coach's self as the significant other that she has incorporated in the formation of the self and she finds it difficult to live with it alongside her boyfriend's (Obinze). Suicide is meant to eradicate the despicable self that has found its place in her. But when Ginika calls and helps her find a job at Kimberly's house, Ifemelu recovers from the depression and makes a lot of progress in her life.

Daud in *Pilgrims Way,* on the other hand, experiences a permanent pathological sickness as opposed to Ifemelu's temporary condition. The othering conditions Daud has experienced since his coming to England have compelled him to get used to loneliness such that when his friends, Karta and Lyod request to come and occupy one of his extra rooms, he candidly objects to it. The narrator says that Daud lives alone and insists that she holds her solitude in great esteem such that he seldom invites others to pay him a visit. He is described as self-reliant, confident in his loneliness and the embodiment of independence (48). The "independence" referred to in this episode is symptomatic of a pathological condition that Laing (1960: 69) refers to as the unembodied self. According to Laing, traumatic experiences separate the individual's mind and body and they develop intra-personal rather than interpersonal relationships. Whereas Ifemelu in *Americanah* undergoes this unembodiment for few weeks, Daud is its permanent victim as illustrated by "he relished his solitary existence." Laing associates the "self- sufficiency" typical of these unembodied individuals with "impotence" (75), while William Fairbairn refers to it as "pathological splitting" meant to shield the victim from "threatening experiences" (233). Nyman Jopi (2017) refers to Daud's condition as melancholia and defines it as "a way of addressing traumas generated by the experience of migration and colonialism" (48).

Nyman (2017: 116) underscores the permanent attributes of Daud's fragmentation by use of "melancholia" particularly quoting Gurnah's interview in which he invokes the pain of the tragic hero with regard to experiences of migrant characters. Just as the hubris and sorrows of tragic heroes and heroines become part and parcel of their lives and traits so is Daud's situation in *Pilgrim's Way*. Indeed the impotence that Laing associates with unembodied selves is evident when Daud meets a Swiss young woman and is unable to have sex. The narrator says, "[a] meaningful glance at his astonished loins that had known nothing about this part of the plan…he could not be bothered with the labour of it" (61). This asexual element demonstrates the severity of Daud's pathological condition. On the contrary, Ifemelu in *Americanah* is able to have sex even with the Tennis coach she does not like at all. Generally

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term "impotence" is used to demonstrate the pathological characters disconnection or alienation from others.

Secondly, as much female characters get "fixated" in their job searches or do not find promotions as Ajibola suggests, male migrant characters are subjected to the worst drudgery or are compelled to impersonate themselves to find better jobs. While Ifemelu only comes close to getting a job in a squalid home at Philadelphia (125), and possibly substituted by a male competitor, Obinze in *Americanah* and Daud in *Pilgrims Way* get these humiliating jobs and do them for a long time. In spite of being a lecturer's son and graduated from a university in Nigeria, Obinze is reduced to doing drudgery for a living in England. This is unlike Ifemelu who has not graduated and becomes a babysitter in a rich family in the United States. Obinze thinks, "[h]e was indeed abroad cleaning toilets, wearing rubber gloves and carrying a pail in an estate agent's office on the second floor of a London building" (227). The Ghanaian lady who cleans the ladies' toilet snubs Obinze's friendly gesture, which debilitates his self-esteem. Adichie brings in the Ghanaian lady to demonstrate how both genders are subjected to drudgery, however, the episode of the ugly "mound of shit" that drives Obinze from the current job, contradicts Ajibola's claims, and serves to underscore the more painful realities associated with male migrant characters. Furthermore, Daud in *Pilgrims way* is intensely otherized by the white bosses in the hospital, but he dreads complaining for fear of being sacked; instead, he resorts to writing letters that only address the readers. In one of his letters, he complains to his boss Solomon.

The italicization of the letter suggests that it is anything but an internal monologue or soliloquy, which reiterates Laing's observation about the "mental" obsession among unembodied selves. Okung'u avers that Daud writes letters because he is "addressing people he cannot dare to approach, and the fact that he will never deliver them is a form of self-address" (86). In the letter, the drudgery allotted to Daud in England is palpable: clean and maintain instruments in the theatre room, shave the patients' private parts, regardless of whether they are men or women and any other duties assigned by the boss, for instance, scrub the disposal corridor. Daud compares this to slave labour and can only be contrasted to Ifemelu's job as a babysitter at Kimberly's house. Apart from being warned to supervise what the children watch, Ifemelu does not experience autocracy or racism at her work place in America. In fact, Kimberly is as generous as to offer her an old car for her personal use. The salary she is paid is enough for her to reject Kimberly's offer of accommodation and hire for herself an apartment where her white boyfriend, Curt pays her visits. Ifemelu saves money, sends it to parents and encourages them to move to a new flat (193). While Daud spends time writing letters that demonstrate his pathological condition, Ifemelu writes a blog that does not just earn her income, but elevates her public presence in the United States. The narrator says, "E-mails came from readers who wanted to support the blog" (300), and indeed she earns enough money to resign from her formal employment without much ado.

Furthermore, there are gender differences with regards to love relationships immigrants have with members of the host nation as depicted in Gurnah's *Pilgrims Way* and Adichie's *Americanah.* Daud manages to have a relationship with Catherine, a white English girl, but most of the benefits are psychological rather than financial or economic. Most of Daud's dreams are horrific and Catherine's love relationship plays an essential role in helping him recover from his painful experiences in Zanzibar. The narrator writes, "[h]e woke up in tears, his heart soaring with dread. He curled up in her arms while she comforted him, rebuking him for the pain he caused himself" (183). Catherine gives Daud the moral support and buffer he requires to overcome the traumas he sustained in his mother nation and host nation. She in fact abandons her white boyfriend, Malcom for Daud's sake; however, Daud does not acquire any economic benefits from the relationship. While Daud's friend, Karta gets few trips to France

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from his female friend, Helen; there are no tangible economic benefits Karta acquires from it. On the other hand, female migrant characters such as Ifemelu benefit a lot from love relationships with men from the host communities. The narrator observes, "[t]hat was what Curt had given her, this gift of content, of ease" (193) to attest to the total change that Curt brings to Ifemelu's economic life. Curt takes her for shopping outings and in few days' time she does not have to look at prices of things because Curt has the wherewithal to change his life. Ifemelu stops borrowing textbooks and is able to save and assist her parents at home. After her graduation, Curt calls his white friends and Ifemelu is shortlisted for interview and then gets a job with a media company (195). Adeyelure and Roux aptly observe that Ifemelu's resolve to accept Curt's relationship is "premised on accessing privileges through his status" (8). Indeed she gets the best of it, which can only be contrasted with Daud's love relationship with Catherine in *Pilgrim's Way*.

Moreover, there are glaring gender differences in the othering experiences migrant characters face in love relationships with members of the host nation. While both of them are exposed to hostility from White hosts, male migrant characters experience more severe reactions than their female counter parts. Indeed Ifemelu complains about constant hostility from Curt's friends and relatives, for instance the narrator says, [t]he looks had begun to pierce her skin. She was tired even of Curt's protection, tired of needing protection" (283). Sometimes they would walk into hotels and the managers would ask Curt if he needed lunch for one person, which is himself. Ifemelu would feel "slighted"; however, Daud's experiences were more severe as he sometimes got into physical confrontations with white young men because of his love for Catherine. As Daud takes Catherine for a walk, the white young men block his way and use offensive words, "[g]ive us a kiss, nigger [...] The two men laughed, turning their backs on him with complete assurance of their strength. They were both in their thirties, dressed in jeans and jumpers with the sleeves pulled up to reveal muscular forearms" (89). Catherine takes the lead by shouting at them; Daud resorts to his usual monologues, "*it's all right, they are Englishmen*" (89).

It is worse when they visit friends, both Black and White. White friends such as Lyod's father, Mr Marsh, takes Catherine aside and asks, "[d]o people say things about him?" (181). Mr Marsh concludes that it is worse for their children (mixed race children that they do not have) because they inherit the worst from both races. Catherine's mother describes her relationship with Daud as "stupidity" while Curt's mother in *Americanah* makes remarks about Ifemelu's beauty and allows her son to date her (200). At Karta's leaver's party, an English acquaintance, Mathew, asks Catherine, a very private question, "[d]o you sleep with him?" (197). Catherine just wonders how to respond to that, but she maintains her love for Daud. In the presence of Karta, a black friend, Daud has to listen to sermons about how he should not trust English women because they are "snakes" (127). He blurts, "[a] woman is always two-faced. You can't trust one bitch of them. Especially these clean-cut English ones. There's only one thing they want from a black man" (126). Ifemelu in *Americanah* on the other hand, receives compliments from black women such as Aunt Uju and Ginika about how much Curt loves her and wishes that the relationship continues (277). Ginika describes her as a self-subotager for ending such a beautiful relationship: Karta wants Daud not to give his relationship with Catherine the gravity it deserves.

Finally, there are gender differences with regard to incarceration and deportation among African immigrants. In his study of immigrants in the Unites states, Golash-Boza (2017:137) observes that Black men are seven times more likely to be incarcerated and deported than white men. The phrase "Black men" has both gender and racial connotations. This is the experience that Obinze undergoes while Ifemelu decides at her own volition to return to Nigeria. After making the decision to impersonate

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himself to get a better job, Obinze's uses Vincent's documents, but is unable to pay the high fees to Vincent. He receives advice from the cousin Nocholas to arrange a sham marriage to an EU citizen to get his own documents; however, Vincent betrays him and is arrested and incarcerated. The composition of the Dover Prison almost confirms Golaza-Boza's claims; the narrator says of Obinze, "[h]e was with two women and five men, all handcuffed, all bound for Nigeria" (275). Of the seven prisoners and deportees, the men are five, which is seventy one percent. One of the male deportees is terribly affected by the arrest and deportation. He vows to take of his shirt and shoes with a false belief that this would cause change of heart in the authorities. As Obinze faces this shame of deportation, Ifemelu in the United States arranges for a personal return to Nigeria. After ending her love relationship with Curt, she makes money by blogging, and resigns from her formal employment (399). Following a short relationship with Blaine which coincides with Obama ascend to power, Ifemelu opens communication with Obinze and decides to return to Nigeria. Okpiliya and Ushie aver that Adichie uses Ifemelu's return to overturn the theory of onward migration because she is a successful immigrant (183). It is apparent that while most male immigrants suffer the humiliation of failure and deportation, the contrary is the case with most female migrant characters.

Conclusion

From the foregoing discussion, it is evident that the shift to the hybrid space and migration from the global South to the global North is not a solution to problems facing immigrants in the global South. Daud in Gurnah's *Pilgrims Way* and Ifemelu in *Americanah* lives in squalor and sustain pathological conditions in spite of the hybrid space they occupy. Furthermore, there is a gender dimension to the predicament of migrant characters; while both male and female characters confront similar challenges, male characters face the brunt of the migration experience in love relationships, drudgery, sexual harassment, and incarceration and deportation. The pathological conditions sustained are more severe in male characters than female characters. Adichie prescribes the narrative of the return as the permanent solution to the problems facing immigrants through Obinzes deportation and Ifemelu's voluntary return. Both characters find their footing in the homeland with Obinze becoming a properly owner in many parts of Nigeria, and United States. He discovers that with his new class, it is easy to obtain an American Visa and acquire property in the West. Adichie's is a Pan-African voice that encourages African people to remain or return to Africa and develop their nations and by so doing earn international repute. Gurnah on the other hand suggests that although the West is not a paradise, immigrants can coexist peaceably by establishment of linkages through hybridity. This is Daud's situation improves through his love relationship with Catherine.

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