

# The Vitality of Yoruba Culture in the Americas

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## Abstract

*How did Africans create homes for themselves and maintain ancestral practices after being forcefully taken across the Middle Passage as enslaved people into various regions of the New and Old Worlds? In the Americas, they found themselves in a place clearly distinct from African cultural and geographical landscapes and were forced to adapt to strange climates and contend with alien cultures unfamiliar to those of their homeland. Rather than being completely steamrolled by colonial pressure, however, Africans of various ethnicities actively contended with the diverse influences of the colonial context. Such practices have, in turn, shaped the continued cultural diversity of the Americas to this day. This paper explores the diffusion and vitality of Yoruba culture, in particular throughout the nineteenth century in Brazil, Haiti, Cuba, and Trinidad and Tobago, where Yoruba forms of religion, Roman Catholic sensibilities, and indigenous cosmographies formed hybridized spiritualities and worldviews. This paper interprets historical evidence alongside secondary sources and contemporary cases in order to evaluate how the conjunctural forces brought about by slavery, colonialism, and inter-culturation occasioned the formation of Yoruba Atlantic and Afro-Latinx religions such as Candomble, Santeria, and Voodoo, as well as Orisha practices. This paper also examines how such spiritualities and worldviews have contributed to the complex social and cultural composition of the Americas in the modern world. It pays special attention to the conflictual and creative energies surrounding cultural diffusion and cross-cultural migration. Although various African ethnicities were brought across the Atlantic, Yoruba cultural practices have survived with a sustained intensity.*

## **The Dispersal of the Yoruba in the New World**

During the trans-Atlantic slave trade, many Africans were captured in West Africa and shipped across the ocean to areas throughout the Americas. Many Yoruba people were transported to areas across the entire hemisphere, to places as diverse as Venezuela, Brazil, Surinam, and Guyana in what is now called South America; to the colonies of Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida in what is today recognized as the United States; as well as to locations such as Nicaragua, Guatemala, Hispaniola, and the West Indies, throughout what is presently Central America and the Caribbean.<sup>1</sup> As with the Yoruba, other African ethnic groups were dispersed across the American hemisphere. According to scholar Okon Edet Uya, the Caribbean islands imported about 4,700,000 enslaved people of all ethnicities during the slave trade. At the dawn of the Civil War in the United States, the number of enslaved people stood at around 4,500,000. Further, the Caribbean and Brazil were the largest importers of slave labor, receiving as much as 80 percent of all Africans transported to the Americas.<sup>2</sup> According to historian S. A. Akintoye, the Yoruba were scarcely involved in the trans-Atlantic trade even up to the late-seventeenth century, but starting around 1750 as a result of the conflict in the Oyo Empire, more and more Yoruba slaves were shipped to the Americas, reaching a peak from about 1826 to 1850, before declining in 1867. Akintoye estimates the total number of Yoruba slaves taken across the Atlantic to be around 1.2 million, representing less than 9 percent of the total number of African slaves transported to the Americas.<sup>3</sup>

Though scattered and mixed with other ethnic groups and races, scholars trace the largest concentrations of Yoruba to the Bahia province of Brazil, as well as to Cuba and Saint-Domingue on Hispaniola. According to records, of about 700,000 African slaves taken to Saint-Domingue (today's Haiti), approximately 173,000 were captured from the Bight of Benin (the area covering the coasts of Benin, Togo and Western Nigeria), and of these 173,000 about 43,000-57,000 were Yoruba.<sup>4</sup> In Cuba, enslaved people of Yoruba origin constituted about 12 percent of total slave imports, making up roughly 68,000 of the 564,000 slaves in that area. About 80 percent of these slaves were imported during the nineteenth century alone. From 1550-1850, a total of 3.5 million

African slaves were imported into the area now known as Brazil.<sup>5</sup> A total of 439,000 Yoruba slaves were imported into Bahia from about 1675 to about 1850 (representing 40 percent of all African slaves brought to the region), and around 292,000 were taken between 1800 and 1850 alone.<sup>6</sup>

Because Bahia and the Caribbean islands of Cuba and Hispaniola were home to many Yoruba slaves, it is in these areas of the New World where the culture and religion of the Yoruba were most troubled and most at risk of being erased. Yet this has enabled the Yoruba culture to thrive, adapt, and evolve with a lasting intensity in these areas.

### **Yoruba Spirituality and Trans-Atlantic Hybridization**

Even before the trans-Atlantic slave trade, the story of the Yoruba is characterized by cultural heterogeneity. Yoruba country is home to independent states with a variety of inter-related cultural groups that share linguistic affiliation. There are distinct dialects, yet the Yoruba speak a standard language that is generally understood by all cultural sub-groups. In Nigeria, the following groups exist within the Yoruba nation: Egba, Ijebu, Ekiti, Oyo, Ijesha, Ilaje, Owo, Ife, Ibarapa, Igbomina, Egbado, Awori, Egun, Akoko, Ondo, and Yagba. In other areas in Africa such as Benin and Togo, the major Yoruba sub-groups are Ife, Ketu, Isa, Idaisa, Ajase, Sabe, and Anago. Other West African nations like Sierra Leone and Gambia are also home to some Yoruba.<sup>7</sup> According to scholar J.A. Atanda, the ancestral homeland of the Yoruba includes the whole of Oyo, Ondo, Ogun, Lagos, and a substantial part of Kwara state in Nigeria, as well as the south-eastern part of Benin, the area formerly known as Dahomey. Sitting between latitudes 6<sup>0</sup> and 9<sup>0</sup> North and longitudes 2<sup>0</sup> 30<sup>1</sup> and 6<sup>0</sup> 30<sup>1</sup> East, with an estimated area of about 181,300 sq. km, such lands have shaped many aspects of Yoruba mythology and culture.<sup>8</sup>

In one Yoruba story of creation, the earth was watery and lifeless when the deity Olodumare or Olorun sent to earth some heavenly beings to create land, plants, and animals. Such beings were to bring with them pieces of dirt, a chicken, and one palm nut. Coming down from heaven by a chain, these beings proceeded to pour the dirt into the water, which created a small piece of solid land. Afterwards, the chicken began to scratch at the surface

and the small mound of dry land began to spread throughout the earth, forming the continents of the world that exist today. The one palm nut was sown, which led to the start of plants and even agricultural life on the planet. In Yoruba mythology, it is believed that this first heavenly contact with earth took place in Ife; thus Ife means “the source of the spreading.” The Yoruba believe that they are the first race of humans and all races originating from Ife and the surrounding area. Another version of this myth adds further depth to the story of creation. In this myth, Obatala was chosen as the leader of the earthly expedition, but due to drunk and disorderly behaviour was displaced as creator by Oduduwa. Today, the latter is revered in Yoruba culture and is known as the father of the Yoruba people and the human race in general.<sup>9</sup>

Another creation account contends that when Oduduwa reached Ile-Ife, other people were already settled there. The existence of these seemingly contradictory origin stories indicates an underlying versatility and plurality to Yoruba cosmology, a sort of spiritual resiliency that would be put to use as a result of the trans-Atlantic slave trade and the dislocation and re-worlding of Yoruba slaves.

Indeed, such a resilient and pluralistic sensibility would shape the American Yoruba diaspora. According to scholar T. Falola, the number of Yoruba deities are so countless that the phrase “four hundred and one” is often used as a placeholder or a way to give a concrete, comprehensible number to such limitlessness. He states that Esu and Ifa (divination with all its sacred texts) or Orunmila (the god of divination) are the most worshipped deities in the Yoruba cosmic belief system.<sup>10</sup> In Bahia, the foundation of Yoruba epistemology and cosmogony aided in building a common identity among the Nago people and a uniquely diasporic belief system. As a result of forced migration and the disruption of the family unit brought about by slavery, the local lineage deities so important in the Yoruba homeland faded away in the New World, and instead importance was given to supreme rulers Olorun, Obatala, Sango, Ogun, Ifa, Yemoja, and Olokun, among others. Importantly, Yoruba descendants in Bahia lived under the Christian beliefs of their slave masters and were forced to worship their gods under the guise of Catholicism. Out of necessity, the Nago people thus syncretized Catholic beliefs with African pantheon

worship, a distinctly diasporic religion that would come to be known as Candomble.

Although it formed on Brazilian plantations, Candomble is rooted in Yoruba sensibilities—Yoruba remained the language of communication during rituals and ceremonies. Scholar Okon Edet Uya explains that Candomble has been described as consisting of “experience and science, revelation and prophecy, communion of men and divinities, dialogue between the living and the dead, which marks the point where the existential continuity of African life has been recaptured.”<sup>11</sup> The most important Orishas or deities in Candomble worship include the following:

Xango - Orisha of lightning and thunder.

Ogun - Orisha of war and iron.

Oxossi - Orisha of hunter.

Omolu - Orisha of pestilence and disease.

Nanah - Orisha of rain.

Yemanja - Orisha of the sea

Oxun - Orisha of fresh water

Yansan - Orisha of wind and storm.<sup>12</sup>

These deities are worshipped under the guise of Catholic figures. For example, Yemanja worship is combined with that of the Virgin Mary.<sup>13</sup> Though largely practiced by the African community in Bahia, the religion has spread to other areas of Brazil, such as Rio de Janeiro. Today it has a sizable number of adherents in other areas of Latin America and even North America, including worshippers of European origin.

African slaves created another syncretic religion in Cuba that is also largely Yoruba in structure and content. Santeria, which means “way of the saints” and is also known as *La regla de Ocha* or “the rule of the Orishas,” is a religion with characteristics similar to that of Candomble in Brazil. In the mid-nineteenth century, the wars ravaging the Yoruba homeland increased the number of Yoruba who were captured as slaves. Many were transported as slaves to Cuba and came to be known as the Lucumi. The Santeria religion still practices fundamental elements of the Yoruba belief system which include: names and personalities of the African deities, divination procedures, ceremonial spirit possession and trance, liturgical music and instruments, Yoruba language, beliefs in ancestor veneration and reincarnation, dance as a vehicle of worship, and sacrificial practices.<sup>14</sup> As with Candomble, Santeria

has elements of Roman Catholicism as Orishas are identified with saints of Catholic belief.<sup>15</sup> The central doctrine of Santeria is that every human being has a guiding and protector spirit that is an Orisha or saint. In Santeria, Chango (also known as Saint Barbara) is the Orisha that controls lightning, thunder, and fire, and is the giver of power over difficulties and the symbol of strength and passion. Yemanja (also known as Virgin of Regla) is the saint of the sea and symbol of motherhood. Also, adherents believe in the Yoruba god of divination, Ifa, or Orunmila, as the giver of hidden truths and knowledge said to aid devotees through the challenges of life. For this reason, diviners, also called Babalawos, are an integral aspect of the religious system.

Santeria was mostly met with ambivalence by Spanish colonial authorities but, as Akintoye notes, its syncretic nature made it unacceptable to many as it was seen as a dilution of Catholicism. With the emergence of the Afrocubanismo movement in Cuba in the 1920s, the contribution of Santeria to Cuban civilization became more and more apparent. The movement of Santeria quickly spread to other areas in the Americas after the Cuban revolution in 1959. Today, Santeria is practiced by people of African origin, including black Cubans and persons of mixed heritage, and has also travelled to other nations of the Americas, such as Argentina, Peru, Columbia, Puerto Rico, and other regions where people of African descent reside.<sup>16</sup> In North America, the religion has been modified to eliminate most representations of Catholic saints and symbols. The Santeria Circle was founded by Oba Oseijiman Adefunmi Efuntola I, who after initiation into the priesthood of the religion in 1959, went on to establish a temple for Orisha worship in Harlem, New York, in the 1960s. He also established a commune called Oyotunji village in North Carolina. The Ifa Olokun Cultural Center was established in Atlanta, Georgia, by Bolu Fatunmise to further promote the religion.<sup>17</sup>

Haiti was also a site that gave rise to a modern, diasporic religion in the Americas. The Haitian Slave Revolt (1791-1804) was a series of confrontations that resulted in the successful overthrow of the French. Haitian Vodou, or Voodoo, emerged as a hybridized form of worship which equally combines Roman Catholic liturgies with African pantheistic beliefs drawn mainly from the Yoruba and Aja religious cosmic systems.<sup>18</sup> Scholar B.S. Ifekwe states that in the religion there is a male priest called the houngun and a

female counterpart known as the mambo. Both leaders are carriers of the culture of their people, as they conduct the ceremonies and rituals with the aid of subordinates who help in propagating the religion through music and dancing. He posits that the religion helped to create a unique black culture in the island that had and still has an impact on the area.<sup>19</sup> The name Voodoo is an Aja word for Spirit and its belief is based on the Yoruba worship of Orishas. As with the influx of slaves in Bahia and Cuba, many slaves brought into Hispaniola can be traced to the disturbances of the Yoruba wars and the conquest of the Oyo Empire in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The Yoruba diaspora in Haiti began to arrive in large numbers in the second half of the eighteenth century also as a result of the Oyo wars, making up about 20 percent of Haiti slave arrivals and for the Aja about 7 percent.<sup>20</sup>

Trinidad and Tobago saw the emergence of the Orisha religion. Originally conquered by the Spanish, it was taken over by the British in the 1790s, who themselves brought in many indentured servants from India. This dual-island's ethnic composition was quite complex, as the French, Spanish, English, and Hindus resided there. As the British introduced large sugar plantations, African slaves were imported and so the ethnic and racial dynamics became more heterogeneous. It was at the beginning of eighteenth century that Yoruba slaves became a common feature in the area, representing a minor fraction of the 20,000 slaves in the island.<sup>21</sup> Though by 1807, the British officially abolished the slave trade and so as a result, a relatively small number of African slaves were imported into the island. However, during the 1830s and 1840s quite a large number of slaves liberated by the British were taken to Trinidad as indentured servants, most of them of Yoruba origin. From 1797 to 1833 when slavery was allowed on the island, the slaves that were there were prohibited from practicing their ancestral religions. As a result, they developed a syncretic religion blending elements from Catholicism, Protestant Christianity, and even Hinduism. The religion was named the Orisha religion. Essentially a religion of the worship of mainly Yoruba deities, each Orisha was given two names. For example, Obatala, the most senior Orisha, was also called St. Benedict, Yemoja became St. Anne, Ogun became St. Michael, and Sango became St. John. This religious system made use of Yoruba shrines, rituals, and sacrifices in addition to Catholic symbols and figures. It also

had spiritual leaders: the male figure was called Mongba (priest) and the female was called Iya (priestess). However, these priests and priestesses had to register with colonial authorities in order to carry out certain ritual practices.<sup>22</sup>

Yoruba culture has continued to persist and evolve in these areas of the Americas. In Brazil, Cuba, Haiti, and Trinidad and Tobago, along with other areas in the Caribbean and South America, Yoruba sensibilities have shaped diasporic, Afro-Latinx cultures for hundreds of years. While religion is not often thought of as indicative of modernity, such Afro-Latinx syncretic religions emerged as a result of slaves adapting to the dislocating and oppressive circumstances of the modern world-system. Such religious and cultural practices constitute a “first wave” of Yoruba migration throughout the Western hemisphere, the other coming in the mid-to-late-twentieth century due to both economic developments in Nigeria and because of the diasporic network already in place as a result of slavery and the concomitant cultural adaptations discussed herein.

### **The Resilience of Yoruba Culture in the Modern World**

This study mentioned earlier that although the Yoruba are part of the many ethnic groups from West Africa to cross the Atlantic, they are one of the few to have successfully conserved certain elements of their ancestral beliefs. I postulate that the reasons behind the tenacity of Yoruba culture and its ability to sustain and duplicate itself outside of the continent all the way across the Atlantic can be attributed to a variety of factors. One is the Yoruba belief in a common progenitor. The Yoruba belief system, while pantheistic and consisting of a variety of myths, holds that the Yoruba are the first race of humans and that Oduduwa is the father and progenitor of all Yoruba people. All groups in the Yoruba nation, regardless of where they reside, believe they originated from one source (Oduduwa), and they carried this belief with them wherever they went. In this way, it is the most fundamental aspect of Yoruba culture — its origin — that helps explain the cultural changes at the heart of the Yoruba diaspora throughout modernity.<sup>23</sup>

Another factor responsible for Yoruba resilience across the diaspora and throughout history is the prevalence of strong



kinship networks. The reason for the continuation of the family and kinship structure of the Yoruba was greatly assisted by the institution of the Roman Catholic Church in the New World. For example, Catholic religious doctrine, in the form of the sacrament of baptism, proved to be a great vessel in preserving the Yoruba practice of fictive kinship. As slaves participated in the religious rituals of selecting godparents, the godchild and godparent relationship strengthened the extension of kinship networks in which slaves cared for each other through this medium even though they were biologically unrelated. Yoruba kinship traditions therefore persisted through adaptation under colonial rule and Catholic rite. Another Yoruba tradition in this vein that was easily adaptable is the gender-based division of labor. The already existing gendered labor division among the Yoruba was utilized by slave owners and was particularly common on the plantations in places such as Brazil, such that male slaves were often assigned what were thought of as more physically demanding tasks like tilling fields or chopping wood, whereas women slaves might instead harvest crops and construct fences.<sup>24</sup>

Additionally, the Yoruba originally lived in large, dense towns rather than in smaller villages, unlike many other ethnic groups, and such an urban orientation may have played a part in adapting to life on the plantation and perhaps even after emancipation. Examples of such Yoruba settlements include Oyo, Ijesha, Ife, and others which were and still are strong urban centers. Slave economies in the Americas made use of plantation networks that possessed a systematic physical layout and organizational logic not entirely unlike those shaping the towns and urban settlements in the Yoruba homeland.<sup>25</sup> While perhaps difficult to contemplate, it is worth considering how the Yoruba, while working on the plantation, made the space of the plantation work for them. More research that considers the ways in which slaves adapted to different types of plantation environments throughout the Americas, including on sugarcane plantations in Brazil or Hispaniola and cotton plantations in the American South, is necessary, as is a deeper understanding of the relationship between the ethnicity of slaves and the probability of their escaping, or “marooning.”

Other prevalent Yoruba practices that persist to date include their social traditions and associational institutions.<sup>26</sup> In Cuba, scholar Kevin Roberts states that Afro-cultural mutual

aid associations such as “Cabildos de nacion” emerged in the eighteenth century, basically sponsored by the Catholic Church. Though often biologically unrelated, members of the association often viewed other members as extended kin. In the British Caribbean, slave sociality could be found in group-based traditions such as the communal preparation of food, exogamous marriages, community gardens and yards, and the practice of market days. These practices are very similar to Yoruba traditions from the homeland, and in fact, many Yoruba-descendant slaves took part in such traditions.<sup>27</sup> Regarding Yoruba communitarian principles, author Louis Antoine Aime de Verteuil writes:

Guided in marked degree by the sense of association. . .the principle of combination for the common weal has fully sustained wherever they have settled in any numbers; in fact the whole Yoruba race may be said to form a sort of social league for mutual support and protection.<sup>28</sup>

Another explanation for the sustenance of Yoruba culture in the diaspora is the abundance of Yoruba in the area most ravaged by the slave trade as well as intercultural processes that were set in motion on the African continent. It is believed that Yoruba myths of origin, traditions, and ideas already permeated into the cultures of other groups such as the Edo and Aja people. As the power of the Oyo Empire expanded, it became a major carrier of Yoruba culture and language, and the latter became a common language used for trade and other commercial purposes in neighboring areas. A classic example of the economic and cultural influence wielded by the expansion of the Oyo Empire can be found in the Kingdom of Dahomey, an area characterized by both Yoruba and Aja elements.<sup>29</sup> Many people of Dahomey were taken to Bahia during the Bight of Benin Cycle from 1770-1851, and the already existing diffusion of Yoruba influences into the area assisted in making the Yoruba culture dominant among the different black settlements in South America and the Caribbean. Perhaps most straightforwardly, the sheer number of Yoruba-descendent slaves in certain areas also accounts for the lasting vitality of Yoruba culture. In areas like Bahia, where people of Yoruba extraction made up 40 percent of the slaves, the concomitant development

of Yoruba-influenced cultural practices such as those of the Nago is not at all surprising. While Yoruba slaves in the Americas were able to negotiate ancestral and alien cultural forces, it is important to discuss the challenges of such intercultural, syncretic processes and the problematics of discussing a monolithic Yoruba diaspora.

### **Rethinking Yoruba Diaspora and Modernity in the Americas**

When does a culture begin, and when does it become modern? At what point has a culture “adapted” so much as to be something else entirely? The syncretic model of culture utilized throughout this essay understands that, as Falola states, it is unreasonable to search for “cultural purity” or an “authentic culture,” as the values, practices, and sensibilities that comprise a cultural group continually change throughout time.<sup>30</sup> Yoruba slaves in Brazil, Cuba, Haiti, and Trinidad and Tobago preserved, adjusted, and adopted ancestral and alien cultural practices such as religion, cuisine, folktales, and more. As anthropologist Roger Bastide states in a now well-known quote regarding Afro-American religions, “syncretism is simply a mask put over the black gods for the white man’s benefit.”<sup>31</sup> Yet such intercultural entanglements are not always only creative; often they also occasion cultural conflict and attempted erasure. Malinowski’s theory posits that processes of cultural change are based on the interaction of institutions, and as these institutions impinge on one another, the product is often constructive and conflictual.<sup>32</sup> For instance, the Orisha religion consists of traits from Catholicism, the religion of the Spanish, who served as Trinidad and Tobago’s first colonial master; Protestant Christianity, the faith of the English, the island’s subsequent colonizer; Hinduism, the religion of indentured servants imported from India; and elements of the black slaves’ Yoruba pantheon worship. The interaction of such spiritual sensibilities and religious institutions did not only result in a miraculously “hybridized” Afro-American religion; what also emerged for slaves were further instances of colonial oppression and institutional rejection.

Indeed, most of the syncretized religions discussed herein were and actually still are rejected by the Catholic Church. Scholar Abdias Do Nascimento argues that Catholic authorities in Brazil have made conceited and conspicuous efforts to suppress

Afro-Brazilian religions. As one example, he points to a headline from *Folha de Sao Paulo*, a prominent newspaper, which reads, "Priest did not want to see Xango," the latter being a prominent Orisha. The article describes an episode in which Candomble followers attempted to arrange a mass in a church historically significant to the black Brazilian community, the Igreja do Rosario or "Church of the Rosary," which was constructed by slaves of the religious fraternity of the same name. The Candomble adherents were denied their celebrations as the parish priest left the church, essentially forcing the mass to be cancelled. Crucially, Nascimento notes that followers of the Afro-Brazilian religion were also rejected by black members of the Catholic community. As if to rub salt in the wound, state police prohibited Candomble followers from singing in the streets in protest.<sup>33</sup> Nascimento believes that European powers and religions institutions have never fully accepted or taken as legitimate African religions, much less Afro-American ones.<sup>34</sup> Such unacceptance makes it difficult to ascertain the actual number of the followers of such religions during the colonial period, and in fact, even to this day an accounting is problematic because individuals who adhere to Afro-American religions may identify as Catholic in order to escape social and state pressure. As if to sidestep such pressure, attempts have lately been made to reclaim and return to the original form of Orisha worship devoid of Catholic symbolisms. An example can be found in the Santeria Circle established by Oba Osejiman Adefunmi Efuntola I, who has tried to modify the religion in an attempt to return it to its original form of worship, strictly adhering to Yoruba traditions expressed in the areas of marriage, language, dress, and social organization.<sup>35</sup>

Due to the long-term separation of these two ancestral kinsmen, one based in the homeland and the rest scattered throughout the diaspora, the latter has contributed most straightforwardly to the proliferation and variation of Yoruba culture. However, as people of the same kith and kin separate, and the forces of migration run their course, a culture becomes extended as a result of geographical separation from its primogenitor. The difference between Yoruba culture in Africa and throughout the diaspora should not be perceived with disdain or judged on a scale of purity; rather, it ought to be both celebrated as a form of resistance on the part of black slaves in the Americas and historicized as a

defining feature of modernity in the Western hemisphere. Caught at the juncture between slavery, colonialism, and cultural diffusion, Yoruba slaves and their descendants in the Americas individually believed and passed from one generation to another the precepts of African pantheon worship while still manifesting various forms of Yoruba culture in other forms of art and expression. As agents of both tradition and change, such Africans have preserved through adaptation those elements of Yoruba culture that slavery could not halt and the pains and toils of the plantations could never completely obliterate. The strength of Yoruba culture was, therefore, most tested in the fields of the plantations and in slaves' ability to maintain the contours of their cultural personality in foreign lands, essentially negotiating their African-ness under the noses of slave masters and European institutions. In synthesizing ancestral and alien religions and other forms of cultural expression on plantations throughout South America and the Caribbean, these enslaved persons gave themselves a sense of home and belonging while also contributing to the economic, political, and cultural developments of Europe and the Americas and the formation of the modern world.

### Notes

- <sup>1</sup> Stephen Akintoye, *A History of the Yoruba People* (Dakar: Amalion Publishing, 2010), 366.
- <sup>2</sup> Okon Uya, *African Diaspora and the Black Experience in the New World Slavery* (Calabar: Clear Lines Publications, 2005), 89-90.
- <sup>3</sup> Akintoye, *A History of the Yoruba People*, 365-367.
- <sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 366.
- <sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 367.
- <sup>7</sup> Olukoya Ogen, "Rethinking the Haitian Revolution, 1791-1805," *Ibadan Journal of History* 1 (2013): 79.
- <sup>8</sup> Toyin Falola, *The Collected Works of J.A. Atanda* (Austin, T.X.: Pan-African University Press, 2017), 82.
- <sup>9</sup> Akintoye, *A History of the Yoruba People*, 1.
- <sup>10</sup> Toyin Falola, *Esu: Yoruba God, Power and the Imaginative Frontiers* (North Carolina: Carolina Academic Press, 2013), 3.
- <sup>11</sup> David L Imbua et al., *History, Culture, Diasporas and Nation Building: The Collected Works of Okon Edet Uya* (Bethesda: Arbi Press, 2012), 330.

- <sup>12</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>13</sup> Basil Davidson, *Discovering Our African Heritage* (Boston: Ginn and Company Inc., 1971), 260.
- <sup>14</sup> David L. Imbua et al., *History, Culture, Diasporas and Nation Building*, 331.
- <sup>15</sup> Akintoye, *A History of the Yoruba People*, 377.
- <sup>16</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>17</sup> David L. Imbua et al., *History, Culture, Diasporas and Nation Building*, 332.
- <sup>18</sup> Akintoye, *A History of the Yoruba People*, 381.
- <sup>19</sup> Steiner Ifekwe, "A Historical Analysis of Black Religions and Cultural Development in Haiti and Jamaica," *Ibom Journal of History and International Studies* 16, no. 1 (2017): 36.
- <sup>20</sup> Akintoye, *A History of the Yoruba People*, 379-380.
- <sup>21</sup> Ibid., 381-382.
- <sup>22</sup> Akintoye, *A History of the Yoruba People*, 382.
- <sup>23</sup> Ibid., 368.
- <sup>24</sup> Kevin Roberts, "Yoruba Family, Gender and Kinship Role in New World Slavery" in *The Yoruba Diaspora in the Atlantic World*, eds. Toyin Falola and Matt D. Childs (Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2004), 251, 253.
- <sup>25</sup> Ibid., 255.
- <sup>26</sup> Akintoye, *A History of the Yoruba People*, 368.
- <sup>27</sup> Kevin Roberts, *The Yoruba Diaspora in the Atlantic World*, 254, 255.
- <sup>28</sup> Akintoye, *A History of the Yoruba People*, 368.
- <sup>29</sup> Ibid., 368-369, 379.
- <sup>30</sup> Toyin Falola, *The Toyin Falola Reader on African Culture, Nationalism, Development and Epistemologies* (Texas: Pan-African University Press, 2018), 149.
- <sup>31</sup> Abdias Do Nascimento, "Racial Democracy" in *Brazil: Myth or Reality?* (Ibadan: Sketch Publishing Co Ltd, 1977), 101.
- <sup>32</sup> Michael Angulu Onwuejeogwu, *The Social Anthropology of Africa: An Introduction* (Suffolk: Chaucer Press Ltd, 1975), 11.
- <sup>33</sup> See Nascimento, "Racial Democracy" in *Brazil*, 105.
- <sup>34</sup> Ibid., 106.
- <sup>35</sup> David L. Imbua et al., *History, Culture, Diasporas and Nation Building*, 332.