



# THE CHALLENGES OF IMMIGRANTS: A DIASPORIC STUDY OF IMBOLO MBUE'S BEHOLD THE DEAMERS

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**Abstract :** This study encloses the hardships faced by immigrants. It portrays the dark side of the American Government. It stresses out the innocent immigrants finding it hard to get asylum. The abyss of America has been exposed. The reality and reason behind immigrant families' struggle have been portrayed through the characters. The ending was a bitter truth which need to be accepted by all countrymen

**IndexTerms –** *Immigrants, American Dream, reality.*

## I. INTRODUCTION

### INTRODUCTION

Literature reflects the reality of life. Literature speaks of the struggle and survival of life and also the hardships faced by people of all ages. Through works, the unspoken truth about society, cultural conflicts, social beliefs, and the reality of life is widely spoken through the literature. Literature can be regarded as a tool that reveals the history of each era. Afro-American Literature tells about the immigration problem and also the cultural conflicts. In Literature personal emotions and pain were written as words.

Literature holds positivity and negativity about life. Literature is the soul of Life. There is a vital relationship between life and literature. In my opinion literature without the depiction of society is like a well without water. So literature and society are internally and externally waves from the very beginning of time to modern. In the sense of Mathew Arnolds, "For the creation of a masterwork of literature two powers must concur, the power of the man and the power of the moment, and the man is not enough without the moment".

The migration of people from one nation to another led to the birth of diaspora literature. The Oxford English Dictionary 1989 traces the etymology of the word 'Diaspora' back to its Greek root and its appearance in the Old Testament. God's intentions toward the people of Israel are to be dispersed across the world. The Oxford English Dictionary here commences with the Judic History, mentioning only two types of dispersal they are, the first one is, Jews living dispersed among the gentiles after the captivity and the second one is Jewish Christians residing in Palestine. Socially, the colonial masters along with the Christian missionaries brought education to Africa in 1842.

The Cameroon American literature is set due to the arrival of missionaries. And Cameroon is a place located in South Africa. The author Imbolo Mbue was the first one to throw light on the place called Cameroon. Her life experience was presented vividly in her works. Apart from Imbolo Mbue, there is another writer from Cameroon, Nkiacha Atemnkeng is a Cameroonian writer based in Douala, where he works for Swissport at the Douala Airport. His illustrated story book for children, The Golden Baobab Tree was published by Advent Books in 2014 and it was available on Amazon also. His works had also been published in the 2013 Caine Prize anthology, Lusaka Punk, and other stories, and the 2014 Writivism anthology, Fire in the Night and Other stories. African- American Literature reached an early high point with slave narratives of the nineteenth century and the Harlem renaissance. African Americans focused on the role of African Americans within the larger American society.

### About Author:

"There are two kinds of people in the world, those who leave home, and those who don't", the above line is quoted from Tayari Jone's An American Marriage (2018). The works were written by Mbue and act as a bridge between the United States and Cameroon. Behold the Dreamers by Imbolo Mbue is a post-national allegory. It dramatizes the cyclic shifts at the level of individual and national experience and the exhaustion of certain narrative modes in explaining and bridging these shifts. The novel Behold The Dreamers was Domestic fiction. Imbolo Mbue is a Cameroonian-American novelist and short story writer based in New York City. The author was well known for her debut novel Behold the Dreamers.

Imbolo Mbue's second novel *How Beautiful We Were*, set in the fictional African village of Kosawa, tells of a people living in fear amid environmental degradation wrought by an American Oil company. Pipeline spills have rendered farmlands infertile. Children are dying from drinking toxic water. Promises of cleanup and financial reparations to the villagers are made and ignored. The country's government, led by a brazen dictator, exists to serve its interests. Left with few choices, the people of Kosawa decide to fight back. Their struggle will last for the last decades and come at a steep price. The novel is told from the perspective of a generation of children and the family of a girl named Thula who grows up to become a revolutionary, *How Beautiful We Were* is a masterful exploration of what happens when the reckless drive for profit, coupled with the ghost of colonialism, comes up against one community's determination to hold on to its ancestral land and a young woman's willingness to sacrifice everything for the sake of her people's freedom.

The debut novel garnered her with PEN/Faulkner Award for Fiction and the Blue Metropolis Words to Change Award. Her works draw from her own experiences as an immigrant, as well as the experiences of other immigrants. Mbue went to the United States in 1998 to study business management as an undergraduate student at Rutgers University. After her graduation, she went to study Master's Degree at Columbia University. Then she began to work in the corporate sector in New York City but lost her job as did millions of Americans during the Great Recession. In 2014 Imbolo Mbue signed a million-dollar deal with Random House for her debut book *Behold the Dreamers*.

According to the Washington Post's Ron Charles, as the book's release coincided with the 2016 presidential election, paired with the "anti-immigrants" rhetoric that was brought to light by candidates with their supporters, the novel brought to light the "vast bureaucracy designed to wall off the American Dream from outsiders". In 2017, the novel was selected by Oprah Winfrey for her Book Club. Mbue is a contributor to the anthology *New Daughters of Africa*.

#### **About work:**

Mbue's writings were often praised by renowned authors and famous publishers. The *Behold the Dreamers* novel was reviewed by many popular authors. Taiye Selasi, author of *Ghana Must Go* says, 'There are no heroes in this marvelous debut, only nuanced human beings. A classic tale with a surprise ending'. *New York Times Book Review* remarks that 'Mbue writes with great confidence and warmth... A capacious, big-hearted novel'. The *Kirkus*, Starred Review states that Mbue's work is, 'Realistic, tragic and still remarkably kind to all its characters, this is a special book'.

The novel *Behold the Dreamers* is narrated from the third person perspective. The narration shifts focus between Neni and Jende, and while at times giving insight into their thoughts, is only partially omniscient. Mbue uses character insight selectively in the narration to build suspense, such as when Neni goes to blackmail Cindy Edwards. The narrative stays in the past tense, but events are often relayed in a non-chronological order that jumps between the present and memories. The chronology of events is occasionally explicit but often relies on context. Mbue's prose is mostly straightforward and unadorned but her characters are complex, with contradictory motivations, which provide the story with depth and quiet power.

This novel was first called "The Longings of Jende Jonga" when it sold for seven figures. Later the title of the work was changed to *Behold the Dreamers*. *Behold the Dreamers* has been adapted into an opera and is about to become a stage play in addition to the potential for a movie. She currently lives in New York City. She started in Harlem and now lives in downtown Manhattan and has been a professor at Columbia University. She says that her character, Vince Edwards, was largely based on the students she was teaching at Columbia. She considers herself to be a fan of tennis and she still uses a Discman, and she is grateful to the women who made sacrifices before her so that she can have the freedom she does today.

Her work *Behold the dreamers* was translated into eleven languages they are, French, Dutch, German, Czech, Polish, Serbian, Russian, Greek, Hebrew, Portuguese, and Danish. There is also the various cover art for *Behold the Dreamers*. As of August 2016 and to her displeasure, *Behold the Dreamers* still has not been published in her birthplace, Cameroon. As a dissection of the American Dream, Imbolo Mbue's first novel is savage and compassionate in all the right places." *New York Times* review was remarkable in history.

Imbolo Mbue's *Behold The Dreamers* has earned overwhelming praise for its candid analysis of the less advantageous angles of the "American Dream," told through the juxtaposition of Cameroonian immigrants and their wealthy, white-American counterparts. While almost every reviewer lauded the novel for the unique perspective it brought to an important time in recent American history, some had qualms with how Mbue built her characters, most of whom wanted the characters to be more fleshed out.

The United States is no stranger to immigrants and the trials that they face. Immigrants, refugees, and asylum-seekers alike have long made the journey to the United States in search of a better, safer life for their families and a fresh start with "endless opportunities." They flee their homes from persecution and do not carry much with them. However, oftentimes these individuals become so transfixed by the fictional grand lure of the "American Dream," that the immense challenges lying ahead of them go unchecked, or overlooked, sometimes causing a dangerously slippery slope of destruction or worse deportation. The divisive nature of the American political climate creates an even greater challenge for contemporary migrants, as immigration and border security have become a central focus of the current administration and sparked a worldwide debate on issues of immigration. In her debut novel, *Behold the Dreamers*, Imbolo Mbue offers an unparalleled look at a variety of issues in the immigration system that often burdens, and/or threaten, migrants, asylum seekers, and refugees, including: proving their asylum case, and the arbitrary deadline for filing asylum applications, stress on immigrants with student visas, and trying to assimilate and settle in, whilst being prejudicially stereotyped.

#### **About Novel:**

Jende Jonga is a Cameroonian immigrant in the United States on a temporary visa pending his asylum case. Neni Jonga wife of Jende Jonga is a community college student on a student visa. Clark Edwards is an executive at Lehman Brothers the downfall of his company is the key concept of this novel, and Cindy Edwards is a nutritionist with a rich background. In 2008, Clark Edwards hires Jende to be a chauffeur. The job offer comes as a welcome change in the Jongas' luck, which has been hard since they emigrated from rural Limbe, in Cameroon, to a shabby apartment in Harlem. As Jende drives the Edwards family about the city, he learns that money has not made them happy. Clark seems stressed about some problems with the books and leveraging of debt at Lehman Brothers; further, he occasionally engages in encounters with sex workers. Cindy has imposter syndrome because she grew up poor and was conceived out of rape. Vince Edwards, a law student at Columbia, rejects his parents as too

materialistic but takes their money. Mighty, a child, is shuffled back and forth between school and activities by domestic help because his family is so busy.

The lives of these two families begin to intersect. Clark is increasingly absent and stressed because he feels a sense of foreboding about the reliance of Lehman Brothers on shoddy bookkeeping and investments in subprime real estate products. Cindy, already insecure because she feels she is not good enough for her husband, turns to alcohol and Vicodin to soothe her worries over her marriage and absent husband. Vince, on the cusp of graduating from law school, rejects his pathway into the wealthy elite by deciding to go to a retreat out West and later to India, to find himself. Mighty grows increasingly unhappy as he overhears more and more arguments between his parents.

Jende's life is complicated because of his pending immigration case, overseen by a marginally-competent lawyer named Bubakar, who makes constant requests for more fees. Jende's request for asylum is rejected and he knows he will be deported sooner or later. Neni discovers that she is pregnant. Neni accompanies Cindy and Mighty to the Hamptons, to serve as live-in help. While at the Hamptons, Neni discovers that Cindy is an addict and that the woman is deeply unhappy.

Vince devastates his parents by telling them he will be going to India. Lehman Brothers declare bankruptcy. Jende loses his asylum case when the judge rejects his fabricated story of persecution at home; he prepares himself to return to Cameroon. A newspaper story about a madam with Wall Street clients confirms Cindy's suspicions that Clark is cheating on her, and Cindy forces Clark to fire Jende, who has covered for his boss.

Meanwhile, Neni, who was unable to work during the end stages of her pregnancy, and had quit her job at Jende's request (he wanted her at home with the new baby girl, Timba), discovers that no financial aid is available if she wants to return to school and that pharmacy school is prohibitively expensive. Neni blackmails Cindy for \$10,000 to keep silent about Cindy's addiction. Her plan to secure her future fails, however: Jende is tired of struggling, and agrees to return to Cameroon voluntarily. Jende beats Neni one night after she blows up over his high-handed decisions. Cindy dies after a binge of drinking and drugs. Clark becomes a lobbyist for the credit union industry. The Jongas, using the blackmail money as a nest egg, return to Cameroon, where Jende plans to be an entrepreneur and live comfortably in Limbe, where much money is enough for affluence. Neni stands by Jende, despite her love for America and sadness that her children may miss out on the opportunities in America.

## CHAPTER II

### Modern Immigrant Experience:

The word immigrant plays a vital role in the person who was in search of a new identity. The word immigrant was believed to be coined by Noah Webster, author of *An American Dictionary of English Language* (1828). "From the beginning of the human species, people have constantly moved from one region to another." says an author named Tanya Golash Boza. When the issue regarding immigrants are discussed there arises two types of immigrant, Old immigrants, and New immigrants. During the nineteenth century, immigration was at its peak and those who reached the United States in the early 1800s were known as old immigrants. The immigrants who immigrated in the late 1800s are called new immigrants.

The old immigrants immigrated in search of better work. But the new immigrants shifted to the United States for better economic opportunities. The foremost reason is the country began to have substantial industrial growth after the cold war. The immigration of people from different sectors and culture resulted in the development of a multicultural society. The modern immigrants who step into the United States with ulterior motives overcome many hardships.

The foremost issue faced by these kinds of immigrants is documentation. The immigrants are being ignored and they are unable to continue living in a foreign land. It is proven that the United States has become a successful nation through the waves of migration from almost every part of the world. The former President of America Bill Clinton describes that:

More than any other nation on Earth, America has constantly drawn strength and spirit from wave of immigrants. In each generation, they have proved to be the most restless, the most adventurous, the most innovative, the most industrious of people. Bearing different memories, honoring different heritages, they have strengthened our economy, enriched our culture, renewed our promise of freedom and opportunity for all....

The immigrants on other hand feel pride in their present situation but they are unaware of the fact that their condition may change at any time.

Immigrants who settle in a foreign country would always have the feeling of something lost. It is because they could never have the feel of being at home. According to Lipman, "undocumented immigrants contribute to the United States economy by investing and consuming goods and services; filling millions of "essential worker" positions resulting in subsidiary job creation, increased productivity and lower costs of goods and services; and making unrequited contributions to social security" (Harvard Law Review 3). Undocumented immigrants are frequently called "illegal aliens" and many Americans believe that it is a crime to reside in the United States as an undocumented immigrant. Yet the law is much more complex.

The study says that the United States gained a familiar image globally and it is also called a "nation of immigrants". In the eighteenth century, Jean de Crevecoeur, a French American writer observed that in America, "individuals of all nations are melted into a new race of men"(23). The people of one nation claiming their nation belonged to them at "First" is ridiculous. The immigrants are tied closely to their world of illusionary and they fail to recognize the barriers that are placed before them.

The author Imbolo Mbue was an immigrant. Mbue migrated from Cameroon to America for her studies and she depicts the struggle and survival amidst the foreigners as an immigrant through her debut work. This work was considered to be a Domestic novel. She portrays the importance of each character and the major characters she depicted in her novel were migrants. While Mbue talks about the protagonist he is a migrant. Jende Jonga migrated to the United States several years before the beginning of the novel. He worked menial jobs to raise money for Neni's student visa. The novel portrays a rich white family Mr. Edwards also migrated from Wall Street to America. The novel narrates another migrant lawyer Bubakar who migrated from Nigeria. The novel also encounters Mr. Edwards's son who migrated to India leaving his homeland.

In *Behold the Dreamers*, Jende alludes to Cameroon's lack of class mobility. Like many other Cameroonians, Jende was not born into a wealthy family, so he would remain poor and unable to move up the economic ladder for the rest of his life. Cameroon's problems with socioeconomic ability stem from the former colonial educational structure. Under French rule, access to education was very limited; only a small minority could even begin primary school. Part of this was due to all teaching required to be in French, whereas the British used more vernacular languages. The concentration of colonial expenditure was also confined

to a limited number of schools. Consequently, people had little educational mobility, which in turn led to weak socioeconomic mobility. In Cameroon, higher levels of education are required to obtain non-agricultural work. Jende's desire to achieve the "American Dream" is justified by Cameroon's trying economic condition.

The work *Behold The Dreamers* begins with an epigraph that sums up the entire novel in brief. The epigraph connotes immigrants also the promising verse describes God promising Abraham a very fertile land Canon. Imbolo Mbue sums up the epigraph that is taken from the Bible:

For the Lord your God is bringing you into a good land a land with streams and pools of water, with springs flowing in the valleys and hills; a land with wheat and barley, vines and fig-trees, pomegranates, olive oil and honey; a land where bread will not be scarce and you will lack nothing; a land where the rocks are iron and can dig copper out of the hills. (Deuteronomy 8:7-9)

The modern immigrants describe their life as pomp. Their manner of living is portrayed as a sophisticated life. The immigrants treat their life with richness and are not willing to lower their life to anyone among their colleagues and neighbor. At the very beginning of the novel itself, Imbolo Mbue tries to evoke the readers about the necessity of getting documents in a foreign land. The documents alone cannot make an immigrant lead a happy life. Jende tries to gain citizenship through an asylum application and then through immigration appeals.

Jende Jonga the protagonist of the novel goes to America from Cameroon with his wife Neni and their young son Liomi. Their hope is for a better future filled with opportunities and experiences. For them, America is synonymous with happiness. The decision has been a leap of faith, involving great sacrifice. But despite the financial challenges, Jende and Neni live their new life in Newyork. All they need now are the 'papers' that will allow them to settle permanently in their adopted country. The immigrants rely on their rich employers who are not understanding their struggle. They live a life under the rules of rich people and rely on their money.

In his first interview, Jende was asked about his papers. The documents are given more priority than one's resume for a job. He asks, "And what kind of papers do you have in this country?"(BD 6), Mr. Edwards asks Jende about his identity as well as about his papers. Being a Cameroon migrant author throws light on the importance of documents and makes the readers aware of the struggle faced by the immigrants. An immigrant needs to get a job in a foreign land to feed his family and stomach. The immigrants are asked to wait patiently until they receive a message of acceptance from the foreign land. Jende says, "I just really don't know, sir. Immigration is slow, sir; very funny how they work"(BD 7). Jende being an immigrant mocks the American Government for their delaying work.

Immigration was the great challenge faced by the African people while entering their dream world of America. Bubakar, though he was considered to be the great immigration lawyer Bubakar could not guarantee the papers to Jende. Apart from these problems, there are other problems with immigrants is about their children. Jende and Neni want to assure about the education of Liomi and also his character. While Mrs.Edwards was drunken, Neni called out for the help of Betty and Neni heard a screaming sound saying that "You don't teach these children how to obey, tomorrow they'll start behaving like American children"(BD 118). Hence the author exposes the outcome of immigrants children if they disobey the words of their parents. Being in a foreign land they were worried about the life of their children and Neni was worried about the child growing in her womb. Though the parents left Cameroon for a better life still they are facing struggles when it comes to the education of children. Neni also feels pity for her studies and she was tense when she was told about the document.

One phase of immigrants lies in getting papers and others on their families. The author presents the importance of education through her novel because the United States was one of the main countries that sponsor educational programs in Cameroon and one of these programs is the Susi Program on Contemporary American Literature. In 1906, *The Jungle*, a novel written by Upton Sinclair portrays African immigrants in America who were influenced by the American dream to pursue a promised better life only by working hard. In the novel, Sinclair illustrates America from the same perspective as Imbolo Mbue. Upton Sinclair meant *The Jungle* to the marginalized state of immigrants. He describes, "In that country, rich or poor, a man was free...he might do as he pleased, and count himself as good as any other man. So America was a place of which lovers and young people dreamed. If one could only manage to get the price of passage, he could count his troubles at an end"(BD 25)

The middle-class family seeks developed countries in hope of earning a lot and becoming rich as soon as possible. The people become immigrants for survival in the homeland. The bitter truth about the immigrants is that for the sake of survival the immigrants are ready to sacrifice anything including their life. When the life of Jende and Neni got worse due to papers the congregants in America began to console both and they also state, "The American immigration system can be cruel,"(BD 234).

Immigration was considered the most dominant issue and a study entitled "Acculturation and African Identity in Imbolo Mbue's *Behold the Dreamers*" by Mary Linda Vivian Onuoha. In her research, she discusses the acculturation and identity of some characters especially protagonists as immigrants in America. In her finding, the main characters never find it easy to fit within American culture, so they go back to their root by bonding with their African relatives. The author Imbolo Mbue portrays that it is not easy to obtain a green card in America. She expresses those things when Jende Jonga was unable to achieve get papers easily. Here Bubakar shows the outcomes of the paper, "A few years?" Bubakar asked in mock shock. "How about thirty years? I know people who've been fighting Immigration forever (BD 72). The undocumented status offers few legal protections and is inherently unstable because the undocumented are at constant risk of deportation, which poses significant barriers to immigrant integration.

The other previous study was conducted by Wyman in her short article entitled "Feeding on Truth; Living with Lies: The Role of Food in Imbolo Mbue's *Behold the Dreamers*" which identifies the structure of truth and lies from the food by tracing gustatory themes. Its finding is identified with the main characters comparing America and Cameroon in food with its price. The food in America is more expensive than in Cameroon but they cannot neglect America is more promising.

In the year 2015 United States marked the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the passage of the Immigration Act of 1965, which began the most recent period of mass immigration to the United States. This act abolished the restrictive quota system of the 1920s and opened up legal immigration to all the countries in the world, helping to set the stage for a dramatic increase in immigration from Asia, Africa, Latin America, and the Caribbean. Meanwhile, it limited the number of immigrants coming from countries in the Western Hemisphere. The Cameroon people received a piece of good news regarding their migration to the United States. The US Department of Homeland Security announced recently that it has designated Cameroon for Temporary Protected Status.

As strikingly, Jende and Neni's narrative trajectories could be said to reflect Paul Gilroy's insight on migration in *The Black Atlantic* that, "the movements of black people—not only as commodities but engaged in various struggles towards emancipation, autonomy, and citizenship—provides a means to re-examine the problems of nationality, location, identity, and historical memory" (16). It is certainly valid and useful to consider *Behold the Dreamers* alongside novels like *Americanah* and *Homegoing Sun* that feature Afropolitan characters who migrate to the United States but in the end opt to return home. The struggle of African Americans was fearlessly spoken by Henry Highland Garnet an American abolitionist and clergyman who was familiar with his militant approach to ending slavery, which was expressed in his "Call to Rebellion" speech:

But from this moment cease to labor for tyrants who will not remunerate you. Let every slave throughout the land do this, and the days of slavery are numbered. You cannot be more oppressed than you have been—you cannot suffer greater cruelties than you have already. Rather die freemen than live to be slaves. Remember that you are THREE MILLIONS ! (10)

The above passage claims about the reality of African Americans and their life in America was vividly spoken by Henry Highland Garnet.

In the play *A Raisin in the Sun* written by Lorraine Hansberry, she describes a black family striving hard to live a stable life in the middle class. This work was similar to Mbue's *Behold the Dreamers* where Jende tries to establish a stable life among the high-class people. In *A Raisin in the Sun* the author portrays the survival of black people where they assume money as an important part of survival in life:

Mama: Oh- So now it's life. Money is life. Once upon a time freedom used to be life- now it's money. I guess the world do change...

Walter: No- it was always money, Mama. We just didn't know about it.

Mama: No...something has changed. You something new, boy. In my time we was worried about not being lynched... You ain't satisfied or proud of nothing we done. I mean that you had a home; that we kept you out of trouble till you was grown; that you don't have to ride to work on the back of nobody's streetcar-You my children- but how different we done become. (Act I, Scene ii)

The above conversation reveals Mama's and Walter's economic struggles. Mbue's work often focuses relatively on what she experienced as an immigrant. She describes the hardships faced in the United States as an immigrant. Especially she stresses the sufferings and struggles faced by the Africans. The Africans enter into their illusionary world with a lot of expectations but they strive hard to live. The character Jende worked as a dishwasher and was then hired as a Chauffeur. In this novel author gives an in-depth insight into the laborious and costly process of trying to acquire a green card. The yearnings for home, Cameroon, whilst trying to fit into a new home, the eternal immigrant heart caught between two worlds.

The novel perhaps underscores the dreams of the immigrant given the harsh reality of the world. The characters in the work *Behold the Dreamers* face challenges as an immigrant and they were soothed by the words of Natasha member of the American church she read a Biblical portion from the bible, "The scripture that morning was from Genesis 18, the story of the weary visitors who visited Abraham and Abraham, not knowing they were angels, treated them with kindness. Natasha preached about the treatment of weary strangers in America. She decried the contemporary American definition of weary stranger as illegal alien"(BD 364). Undocumented status, also called "unauthorized" or "illegal," is the direction if the unintended result of the development of legal statuses over the last century.

They wrapped themselves amid American ideology and their culture. When Jende was asked to move out of the country Neni and Jende seem to refuse the order of the American Government. They were not able to face the real life that was present before them. This shows the inevitability of the poor migrants. They are forced to make decisions when they are rejected for documents. Imbolo Mbue succeeds in presenting the immigrant family by showing their hidden quest in life.

Jende was no more interested to live in a country that does not permit him to stay. So he tries all his means to convince his wife but Neni was stubborn about her dream to live in the United States. According to Jende, he says that " He thinks it's better for a person to suffer in their own country than to suffer somewhere else"(BD 314). This pictures Jende's disinterest in the United States and the consoles himself that he could live a better life in Cameroon with what he had earned until that day. Even though the Protagonist, Jende Jonga lost his interest in a foreign land. Neni did not lose interest she tries by all means to achieve the dream of being in the United States. In that one way, Neni was ready to marry another person to get papers. She says, "We divorce, I marry him. I get *papier* through him, then me and him divorce and me and you marry back, but the whole time we continue living..."(BD 319).

The immigrants face any sort of problems but it is shocking to analyze the character of Neni being a woman she puts forth a striking attack on the readers. Neni was ready to marry another guy just for documents. The immigrant women are sold to get papers. Assimilation is an important process in immigrant life but once a person adapts and is used to the foreign culture it becomes difficult for them to go back to their native identity.

The protagonist and his family encounter all those suppression to survive in America. Being black immigrants they were not ready to argue with their landlords or their superiors. Jende was forced to note down all the duties and the schedule of Mr.Edwards and was asked to put them down in a blue notebook by his wife Mrs.Edwards. Jende could not refuse the order made by his superior's wife, "Mrs. Edwards," he said, "what you are asking me to do is very difficult." "I know." "What you are asking me is ... In fact, madam, I can lose my job with Mr.Edwards if I do something like this. Mr. Edwards made it very clear to me—" "You will not lose your job," she said. "I'll make sure of that. You work for the whole family, not just him. Get me what I want, and I'll make sure you keep your job."(BD 192)

Immigrants are most likely to be heterogeneous. In this novel, America was assumed as the 'Host' and the African people or the migrants from other countries are considered as 'Parasite'. The emigration of Jende and his wife Neni is not driven by war, famine, or poverty, but by the death of opportunities financially, educationally, and professionally in their hometown of Limbe. As a student, Neni was in the country legally, intent on mastering pre-calculus in hopes of becoming a pharmacist, while Jende who has applied for asylum, drives a livery cab. Mbue's works resemble the acclaimed Nigerian-American author Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie for depicting the hurdles a certain class of American-Africans faces, yet passages like these are also reminiscent of Joseph O' Neill's "Netherland", another story of an immigrant's seduction by the game and peculiarities of New York.

"One can never trust any government- I don't trust the American government and I don't trust the Cameroon government." "No, but it's our government and it's our country. We love it, we hate it, it's still our country. How man go do?" "It's our country," Winston agreed. "We can never disown it."(BD 380)

Here at the end of the novel, Imbolo Mbue portrays Jende Jonga's love for her native land. Though she did not trust the American government, here she vividly presents her love towards native Limbe. Ultimately, the immigration experience ends up being a bad one for the family, as they had to file for a voluntary departure and go back to Cameroon. Through the character, Jende author claims that the American government cannot be trusted by the immigrants. But the native government of Cameroon can be trusted when compared to America.

The author also stresses out the love towards her native land by stressing out the word 'our'. This shows the excellent craftsmanship of the author, Imbolo Mbue. In her book review, Elizabeth Toohey affirms that *Behold the Dreamers* "follows the path of a Cameroonian family whose members, like many newcomers to America, harbor dreams of success unavailable to them back home. Undocumented immigration, the widening gulf between rich and poor, and the thinly veiled racism of an avowedly 'post-racial' culture converge in this new generation of immigrants' painful encounter with the American Dream" (Toohey 23)

*Behold the Dreamers* sheds light on the struggling life of the black immigrants. The immigrants used to change certain elements in themselves to meet the approval of a dominant force be it a culture, a race, or a social class. Immigrants often see America as great, too mobile to predict or trust, or even dangerous. African immigrants had to endure more pain than the other immigrants. African immigrants are prone to mockery and criticism because of the prevailing racism in America. Hence the next chapter is the Reality of the American Dream.

## CONCLUSION

"I went for years not finishing anything. Because, of course, when you finish something you can be judged." Says Erica Jong. Summation is a term that sums up the entire context of the dissertation in a brief manner. *Behold the Dreamers'* work was considered domestic fiction. Imbolo Mbue considered herself the epitome of inspiration in her writings. Though her work was not granted in her homeland, her hope for her debut work was stunning. It depicts the truth behind Cameroon as well as America. Also, this work was successful because she narrates her own experience throughout her novel. Mbue is born in a village in Cameroon's interior and she grew up in the coastal city of Limbe. Mbue says that the education that she had learned in Limbe is mostly from the British Education system. The author confesses that she studied mostly British writers. The author was not aware of America rather she knew something about America virtually.

Imbolo Mbue maintained her secret of writing a novel to the outside world until her work was published. The literature in English-speaking Cameroon has not developed at the same pace as national African literature. Cameroon Anglophone literature has been small fish in the pond trying very hard to establish its own unique identity. The plight of this literature is made worse by the fact that it defies any clear classification. The lack of international recognition and the existence of publishing difficulties do not automatically translate into a dearth of literary creativity. A cursory glance at the articles in this issue demonstrates that the critics are still reading from an outdated script.

The two African literary giants Niyi Osundare and Chinua Achebe are a crop of emerging writers who are slowly but surely putting Anglophone Cameroon back on the literary map. This is merely the tip of the iceberg of the ongoing Anglophone Cameroon literary renaissance at home and in the Diaspora. Behind the wall of silence is buoyant and thriving literature impatiently waiting for the world to discover its depth diversity and beauty.

The immigrants' hardships are expressed through the novel *Behold the Dreamers*. The *Behold the Dreamers* takes the reader from Cameroon to a new culture, new opportunities, and new dreams, with idiosyncrasies that the reader easily relates to, and characters that are very real. The issues faced by the immigrants are exposed to society by the author. The trials and tribulations of the immigrants are presented in a nutshell manner. The writer takes us into the mind of Jende Jonga, helping us understand the problems faced by immigrants to America, particularly those from Africa. The immigrants with great hope apply for their papers to get a green card. But they are betrayed by their false hope. The green card act as a key to opening the golden gate of America. But they are struggling hard to open the gate.

Contemporary writers have also shown the destructive side of America in their writings in a different genres. The authors are bold enough to describe America and also some writers are assumed to be an immigrant same as Imbolo Mbue. The writers are enacting the role of a writer as well as they are acting the role of well-wisher to all the immigrants. Especially the writers who express their own life experiences as an immigrant were taken into consideration. They provide sufficient knowledge to the readers to be aware of all the illegal things happening around America. And warns them not to fall into the abyss created by the American people.

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