Displaced Bodies, Mobile Wounds: Trauma and Migration in Contemporary Nigerian Novels

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Abstract

In an era shaped by neoliberalism and shifting global economic orders, African migrants are increasingly navigating transnational spaces of employment and residence. Influenced by the European Union's (EU) migration diplomacy, labour agreements, and skill partnerships with Third-World countries, these movements potentate trauma for the migrants. This research proposes to interrogate the ways migratory spaces invisibilise Africans. It explore how exilic experiences and new cultural contexts deepen psychic pain. This study adopted Roots' (1992), and Mengel and Borgaza's (2012) models on trauma. Using qualitative content analytical and an in-depth critical and content analytical method, attention was drawn to how racism, restrictive migration policies, exploitation and embodied migration experience lead to psychological distress. Findings reveal that identities become fluid as individuals become transnational beings offering continuity and connection to places of origin despite dislocation. This study avers that while structural system in diasporic spaces emboldens psychological trauma, migrants create translocal connections between home and host nations by reconstructing transnational memory to counter pejorative immigrant labels, while navigating the spatial and cultural dislocation accompanying cross border experiences.

Keywords: Displaced Bodies, Mobile wounds, Trauma, Migration, Nigerian Novels,

Introduction

Since returning to democracy, Nigeria has been characterised by high level of mobility of her citizenry; a trend that reveal the country as having the second highest number of emigrants in the continent. According to (UNHCR, 2025) an estimated 17 million Nigerians live in the diaspora. To Adeniyi, journeying abroad for a typical Nigerian seems to be an opportunity to escape from 'insecurity, economic hardship, social exclusion, and burgeoning violence and conflicts, apart from acquiring wealth and changing status, it is, therefore, a means to an end'(2019: p.xiv). In addition to the aforementioned, Adeniyi (2019) is of the opinion that a close relationship exists between economic, political, and socio-cultural issues on the one hand, and mobility on the other. Thus, the continuing agony of exploitation and the hostile economic policies perpetuated against the people by the political leaders, and neoliberal economic policy which grants permit for international labour has precipitated a wave of mobility of Africans to the diaspora.

Critiquing the neoliberal economic policy which encourage the movement of skilled workers from the Global South, Okome posits "Africa and the rest of the Third World have (become) labour reserves from which both brain and brawn are drawn to serve the hungry global economy" (2003, p. 9). Thus, the spawning of human resources, coupled with transnational experience provides the ambiance that the Africans migrants' experience is explored. Describing the condition of female migrants, Okome (2003, p.8) avers: "African immigrant women are hybrids that stride beside two worlds, the home country and the country of sojourn/immigration". Navigating the two distinct worlds within a broadened spectrum of globalisation and cosmopolitanism has created a liminal existence as migrants carry mobile wounds-traumatic experiences that migrants travel with from their homelands into the host countries. On the subject of the global migration crisis, Adichie (2016) observes that "nobody is ever just a refugee". She is of the opinion that we dehumanise people when we reduce them to a single thing such as "refugee or immigrant". She observes that the practice of reducing individuals to "a thing" by the host country is all that constitutes the shattering of self for the migrants. This study posits that for the migrants, the mobile wounds are triggered through

personal experiences such as cultural alienation, racial discrimination, social exclusion and persistent feelings of unbelonging.

In this contest of this study, trauma is transnational as the everyday experiences of the migrants brings to fore the fragmented identities and severed attachments of migrants from their country. Thus, trauma is foregrounded as the psychological resulting from loss of familiar cultural spaces and the ensuing emotional scars of migrants. Within this framework, displaced bodies represent invisibilised migrants who are struggling with a condition of loss with their home countries but have developed adaptive strategies and built resilience that enable them to negotiate identity and belonging across multiple spaces that binds then to their home countries.

Literature Review: Displacement and Migrant Discourse

Voluntary and involuntary displacement have characterised migration trends in postcolonial African societies. They are occasioned by economic hardship, war and armed conflict, climate change and natural disaster. In the context of this study, displacement refers to the state of being estranged from one's landscape (geographical, cultural, social or psychological) often resulting in fragmented identity of the migrant and the continuous search for negotiation, belonging and adaptation in the migratory spaces. From the perspective of academic research, several studies have been carried out on displacement and migration from different perspectives. For instance, Schwartz (2023) examines trauma arising from displacement as it affect different aspects of the migrant. According to the Scholar, since displacement triggers cultural and psychological trauma, migrants are hardly able to function effectively to their full capacity in their host countries. The paper eventually succeeds in exploring psychological dimension of displacement by demonstrating that being severed from one's native environment open the vulnerabilities of migrants.

Sarr (2024) makes a significant contribution that is relevant to this present study. In the paper, the author investigates the nexus between displacement and racism. This was done with a view to unravelling how one's inability to reconcile Western and African values add to the precarious conditions experienced by migrants. The scholar's analysis revealed that a number of African literary writers who migrated to the diaspora emphasised how racism delegitimize and invisibilise Africans in the diaspora

Ewuzie and Chukwueloka (2025) paper also reckons as a contribution to migration which emanates from women's quest for survival against the backdrop of neoliberal policies and pull and push factors that necessitates the displacement females from their home countries. According to the authors, internal and external pressures basically shapens the dimension of displacement of African women across the diaspora. The study concludes that migration is a gendered experience because African women migrants constantly navigate the intersecting realities of their gender, race and migrant status, each of which influences their lived experiences in distinct yet interconnected ways.

A general look at the woks that have been reviewed so far shows that displacement has evolved into a significant field of scholarly inquiry, driven by the increasing movement of African migrants in response to persistent economic, political, and socio-cultural challenges across many democratic African societies. In Nigeria, specifically, the twenty-first century has witnessed a growing wave of migration as citizens leave the country in search of economic security, political stability, and better opportunities abroad. While this phenomenon has attracted considerable academic attention, limited research has examined migratory wounds and traumatic experiences of displaced individuals as represented in contemporary Nigerian novels. This study seeks to address that gap by exploring how these literary texts depict the psychological, emotional, and existential consequences of displacement, thereby contributing to existing scholarship on migration and trauma.

Theoretical Framework

Root (1992) conceptualises "insidious trauma" to the traumatogenic effects of oppression that "do harm to the soul and spirit but are not necessarily overtly violent or threatening to bodily well-being at the given moment". Her position attention to the fact that traumatic events fall within the scope of the secret, private, hidden experiences of everyday pain of the typical human experience. She contends that this type of trauma is enduring and often remain in the psychological and emotional burden that migrants move around with. This form of trauma shaped by spatial, political social condition invariably lead to the enduring pain that migrants carry across space.

Mengel and Borzaga Trauma Theory

According to Mengel and Borzaga (2012, p.ix), "trauma is inextricably linked to economic and political issues (which are) inextricably linked to institutions and structures". Mengel and Borgaza are of the opinion that trauma results from the historical condition of a people. The economic and political underpinnings in the historical development of most African countries reveals a social system that has failed to build up and protect its citizens from poverty, natural disasters, and social turmoil such as insecurity, kidnapping, and terrorism. Closely related to the aforementioned economic and political precarity is the preponderant decision of young Nigerians to migrate to the Global North in a desperate bid for survival.

Largely important to displacement, and trauma is what Lijtmaer (2014, p.59) conceives as social trauma. This form of trauma according to Lijtmaer results from a deliberate, inimical and malicious act perpetrated or invented by individuals, organisations or the state, such that it adversely affects the people producing a state of fear and helplessness and destroying social link.

Methodology

Chimamanda Adichie's *Americanah* and Sefi Attah's 'Twilight Trek' a short story in her collection *News From Home and Other Stories* constitute the data for this study. The study adopts the qualitative research design. Excerpts from Adichie's *Americanah* and Attah's'Twilight Trek' were extracted after a close reading of the text relating to how migration across geographical spaces engender trauma. Excerpts that examine how migration cause mental, physical and psychological rupture were purposively selected for analysis. The motivation for the choice of the sampled excerpts lies in the depiction of migration as a multifaceted and complex movement capable of causing cultural dislocation, non-inclusion, invisibility and embodied wound in liminal spaces. The selected excerpts of the characters are interrogated to ascertain the manner migration culminates into insidious trauma. The structural, psychological, social and embodied experiences of the characters were in relation the theoretical framework in the study. Embodied reality and existential condition of migrants are described in terms of how the experience of migrants in exilic spaces creates psychic rupture. The study engages Roots' and Borgaza and Mendel conceptualization of trauma to foreground diverse ways migration reconfigures individual due to conditions of loss, rupture and alienation sustained by exclusion in diasporic spaces.

Textual Analysis

Adichie's narratives such as: *Purple Hibiscus (*2004), *A Thing Around Your Neck* (2009), *Half of a Yellow Sun* (2006), and *Americanah (2013)* have been explicit about the reasons for migrating and have indicated conditions such as poverty, lack of economic opportunities, poor or complete lack of infrastructural facilities, war and the need to choose out of the not- so- pleasant situation in the country as factors responsible for the rise in migration on the global space. *Americanah* (2013), explores the themes of migration, racism, globalisation, and the trauma resulting from the forced separation of two young lovers, Ifemelu and Obinze who migrated to America and the United

Kingdom simultaneously. In character delineation, Adichie examines the theme of race and individual identity in the global space by presenting an extensive fragment of experiences through the love story that crosses Nigeria, England, and America to interrogate the place of Africans in the race policy of America and the eye of the global world.

Explaining why there is an increase in the number of young migrants, Obinze, a major character in *Americanah* (2006) points out that:

> There is a need to escape from the oppressive lethargy of choicelessness. They would not understand why people like him, who were raised, well-fed and water but mere in dissatisfaction, condition from birth to look inwards somewhere else, were now resolved to do dangerous thing, illegal things,so as to leave, none of them starving, or raped or from burned villages, but merely hungry for choice and certainty (Adichie, 2006, p.*276)*

Why does Adichie capture such perplexity in one of the main characters? The implication of this is that the concept of 'insidious trauma' is well defined in the Nigerian state to have been closely linked to a failed social system that creates "micro aggressions" and subsequently trauma. Adichie's position confirms Roots' (1992, p. 252,) argument that "trauma is deeply linked to economic and political issues (and are) inseparable from institution and structures and adversely affect people by producing a state of fear and helplessness''. It is the trauma arising from this fear and helplessness that Adichie tries to describe in *Americanah.*

For Obinze, just like most Nigerian youths, leaving the shores of the country for anywhere else is a beacon of hope and the best way of manoeuvering out of the dark maze of socio-economic intricacies of their natal country. The assumption of Ifemelu and Obinze, is leaving their fatherland, is a definite way of escape from the malaise of political tyranny, corruption, ethno-religious crisis, political violence, election rigging, misgovernance, embezzlement of public funds, and different malaise which have encumbered development in post-Independence Nigeria.

For Adichie, choicelessness is a reason for migration. The question in this study is, can this choicelessness be defined in terms of the inability to change prevailing social, political, or economic challenges or the choicelessness which comes from the inability to maximize one's potential or the inability to create a new social and political structure or the lack of opportunities as a result of restrictive political environment? Whichever way one examines the aforementioned reasons, it will not be completely out of place to adduce to have identified some factors as responsible for the influx in the number of illegal migrants from sub-Sahara African countries to different continents of the world. Besides, while the answer to these questions may not be one-sided, migration out of the perplexities of crippling underdevelopment coupled with the impoverished condition of the Third world countries makes migration to become a means to an end. Dispirited individuals are often left with no choice but to leave their motherland and find opportunities outside the shores of their countries. The trauma in diasporic and exilic narratives is therefore only a step in the trajectories of the many complexities associated with sojourning in a foreign land, as the migrant wait to discover a sense of helplessness and despair while he fights the sense of negation from the new environment which stifles his aspirations as he continues to struggle for survival, acceptance and social recognition.

In Adichie's *Americanah,* trauma is initiated with the vagueness that comes with the dissipation of the American dream and the anxiety of not being able to fit in the social order. The existing racial structure leaves most of the characters in a discomfiting state. Ifemelu rightly points out that "America has a way of subduing the migrants" (p.110). Here, Adichie seems to reinforce Roots' (1992) position that insidious traumatic events lie within the range of the secret, private, hidden

experience pain of the normal human experience. Ifemelu and Obinze's insidious trauma arises from being subjugated and living in buildings that smelt of neglect, the low-paying job that defines their social class, and assuming a dual identity to gain recognition and acceptance. The pain of these experiences is characterised by the migrant's wearing of an acceptable look while feigning their accent to become visible and possibly securing employment that makes them hybrids. The hybridisation of Adichie's characters does not only create a split in their personality, but it also leaves them floating in the new role they have created for themselves. To this end, the initiation of the characters' traumatisation process sometimes comes from individuals who occupy higher social strata or social practices which aid in creating individuals with complex personalities. This complexity is exhibited in the characters nuances and the exaggerated ego they have built for themselves.

Bartholomew, a divorced accountant who is seeking the hand of Aunt Uju in marriage, has left Nigeria for thirty years; and, the very first time he is introduced, he is described as "lost". He is lost in the present state of "things in his country" (*Adichie,* 2013, p.117). The trauma addressed by Adichie is complicated because the characters she describes in *Americanah* were uprooted from the motherland. For these characters, home has become a mirage, a thing that exists as a fleeting shadow. The inner conflict experienced by Bartholomew is reflected in his constant struggle to keep abreast of events from home while keeping up with the dictate of his new home. For people like Bartholomew, the nation, Nigeria, has become an "imaginary homeland". In addition to the aforementioned, Barthelomew's blind argument with Ifemelu reveals his state of 'in-betweenness'. Subsequently, while he is not completely integrated into his migrant country, his "Americanah" status does not fully permit him to go back to his roots and attune himself with the values of the culture as a result of his thirty-year sojourn in U.S.A.

More fundamentally, Adichie's engagement with the migrant's country's non-acceptance of the academic qualifications of the migrant intelligentsia is also a factor capable of bruising the migrants' personality. Aunty Uju has to continue writing examinations that will qualify her to become a family physician, while Ifemelu is only able to get a job and a residence permit as a result of Curt's influence. The ponderous question at this juncture is: is the academic qualification of the migrant intelligentsia of any value? If it is not, the Western model of academic qualification which was passed to independent African nations calls for scrutiny.

In another breathe, if America, the dream country could create individuals who struggle to maintain physic balance as a result of various negative experiences they have been subjected to, then it is an unhealthy testimony that such idolised country is incapable of providing succor for those who come to the countries to escape from various economic and political challenges which had made them flee their respective countries. Ironically, the statue of liberty and the phrase engraved on the base of "The New Colossus", "Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free" have made the United States a major destination point for migrants in the face of the many challenges which have besieged Third World Countries. However, the strata created within the system flawed exigencies of the migration policies negate the insinuation of freedom in a society whose capitalist liberal principles have made young women to be continually recruited as domestic servants and subjected to humiliating treatment while they try to adapt to the new environment. Furthermore, Adichie attempts at deflating the ballon of deception hankered around becoming an Americanah, a notion flunked around with impunity, especially by "the been tos" who see living abroad as a mark of affluence.

Aisha, a migrant Nigerian hairdresser during a conversation with Ifemelu point out the despair and psychological trauma African women migrants go through to secure resident permit. Firstly, they have to stand for long hours braiding hair to keep body and soul together. In addition, these women

also go into relationships with men who already have residency permits to secure their stay in these foreign countries. Aisha also reveals that the men with green cards are only with them for sexual gratification and exploitation. Aisha's frustration makes it obvious that acquiring a residency permit in America is like a donkey passing through the eye of a needle. She expresses her frustration with one of the men she dated. She reports, "Me, I try an American when I come, to marry. But he brings money problems, no job and every day he says give me money, money, money"(p.363). Thus, apart from the fact that her lover was out to drain her financially, her consternation is compounded by her inability to attend her father's burial. Adichie explores the pathetic case of Aisha to buttress her position that men who are citizens the migrants settler countries exploit these women as portrayed in the case of the young American man Aisha dated.

For the migrant, therefore, traumatisation process is initiated at various social interactions with the local folk of the community migrated to. The migrant is clearly at a disadvantage in terms of language, food, ways, and customs of the people, as well as the resources of the land most times. Whichever way one looks at it, the migrant is the stranger whose relocation has put him in the position of a beginner in the country he has migrated to. However, the entire process of acclamatising to a new environment becomes cumbersome when one weighs the speed and uninterrupted versatility which are a normal part of growth processes and subsequently, the social acculturation in specific locales are less operational in the migrant adult because of previous knowledge of certain values, ways, and practices that have been acquired in childhood.

Owing to these factors, the migrants' efforts at positioning themselves mentally and physically in a new environment are tantamount to an imposition of a completely new mould. An adult migrant has formed a personality with an already fixed mould who has already conditioned his mind and values in a certain direction. This, in most cases, is at variance with the values, systems, and ways of the new order. What then is the aftermath of these two conflicting systems and on the minds of individual whose mind and body constitute the meeting place of the two cultures in contact? In response to the afore-mentioned, several issues are raised.

Firstly, the mind of the migrant is often embattled and confused because it has no definite focused system and values consistent with the particular country he has migrated to which can enable effective operations and interactions. Secondly, the migrant loses self-esteem and confidence because of his failure to completely absorb and flow appreciably well within the community when compared to the locals around him. The third is the lack of total acceptance, which breeds in him or her complex and emotional insecurity and mental incapacitation. At this juncture, the theoretical interpolation proves germane for appreciating and assessing the migrant's confusion, sense of alienation, and mental weariness as a result of his inability to fully attune to his new environment, and his struggle blending the culture of his new environment with his indigenous culture in which he was fully formed. Therefore, the problem of migration within the transnational frame, creates an ambiance for evaluating the economic condition of African countries while shifting our attention to a broader perspective on the postcolonial condition of individuals in Third World countries.

Educated individuals like Ifemelu live as hybrids. She feigns a foreign accent in a bid to secure employment and recognition. Ifemelu became nervous while talking with Cristina Tomas. '(Her) accent creaks with consciousness as she assumed the bourgeoisie of the American society'(173). Ifemelu's "foreignness" and ambivalence position leaves her more dejected. She soon discovers that her desire to be like the whites "left in her a vast, echoing space…she had taken on for so long...a way of being that was not hers" (175). The characters potrayed in *Americanah* are traumatised not just because they are trapped within a structure that permits racism. Their trauma becomes more pronounced because the neo-colonial structure inherent in the societies they migrated to leave them struggling for recognition in a system that has eroded their dignity.

On the subject of racism and the psychological effects on Africans, Ifemelu abnegates the impression of the migrant black women that engaging in illicit relationships with the Whites will make them acquire a status and gain recognition. This situation places Aisha in a precarious and traumatised position. Ifemelu, the protagonist of the novel, observes that racism can never come to an end because it exists within the structure which has been institutionalised by the Whites. As the voice of the author, she embodies the black migrants who crave to be accepted as individuals and not by the colour of their skin. She responds:

> Racism is about the power of a group and in America it's white folkswho have that power. How? Well, white folks don't get treated like shit in upper-class African American communities and white folk don't get denied bank loans or mortgages precisely because they are white and white folks don't give white criminals worse sentences than black criminals for the same crime...(Adichie,2013, p.327)

From this excerpt, Adichie confirms what Lijtmaer (2014, p. 59) depicts when he states that "social trauma results from a deliberate and malicious act perpetuated or invented by individuals, organizations or the state, such that it adversely affects the people producing a state of fear and helplessness and destroying social links". The stratification of races places the blacks at the lower rung of the ladder while the White supremacist's stand and constant victimisation of non-whites becomes a defining attribute of psychological trauma migrants have to grapple with.

Similarly, Dike's physical presence in Warrington and the discrimination he experienced in school because of his colour evidently led to his depression and eventual suicide attempt. As a result of the constant rejection and taunting he suffers among his peers, he is constsntly in a limbo, while seeking to unravel his identity. The absence of a father-figure, the circumstances surrounding his birth, and his second-class position as a migrant in America makes him despondent. When Dike could not assert his identity, a conflict of personality sets in and he is consequently traumatised. In a way, Ifemelu blamed Aunty Uju for Dike's predicament. She informs her: "You told him what he wasn't but you didn't tell him what he was" (p.380). His alienation among his peers psychologically unsettles him. He distances himself from his family because of the complex structure put in place by the system. Dike's reaction confirms Lijtmaer's position that "trauma impairs both psychological and physiological functioning of individuals and events associated with it are processed as 'horrific images, visceral sensations or flight/fight reactions" (2014, p. 59). Adichie's exploration of psychological and emotional trauma arising from migration gives a holistic approach to the mental state of the characters as they strive to assert their individuality in foreign countries. Adichie's characters' experiences in the diaspora reveal their dilemma as they strive to be recognised and accepted as a global citizen.

In the story "Twilight Trek"(2010), Sefi Attah conceives trauma as arising from the complex psychological, physical, and emotional experiences of migrants. "Twilight Trek", opens with the shrouded secrecy of the immigration processes of illegal migrants. Attah interrogates the vagaries of transnational trauma by exploring the plight of illegal immigrants who leave Africa to journey through the Sahara and the Mediterranean Sea to enter Spain. The perilous journey these young Africans embark upon among other agonising experiences they encounter in their sojourn, exposes the perilious experiences of illegal migrants who are in pursuit of the golden-fleece. The experience of Patience and Jean-Luc, the protagonist of this story reveals the trauma which accompanies illegal migration. Attah pointed that such the journey is fraught with many hardships which often gravitate towards loss of lives. Attah describes the physical exhaustion which comes from combating sand storms and cold winds which blow at night, coupled with and the emotional and psychological torture of these migrants.

Through her character's portrayal, Attah's engages themes such as migration, intercontinental slave trade, and human trafficking. Patience and Jean-Luc, Attah depicts the agonising experiences of illegal migrants. Attah seems to explain that these characters have built a form of defence mechanism against the various life-threatening experiences they encountered in the course of their pursuit of a better life outside the shores of their countries. The effects of these traumatic experiences is what Deutch (1966, p. 448) refers to as "residuem"- the part of a person's traumatising experience which remains at the subconscious level. What Deutch is positing is that the conflict in self often leads to a complex web of behavioural patterns we often see in traumatised migrants. This now brings us to the idea of the shattering of self, a basic condition of a traumatised state. This is what Habib (2005, p.575) describes as a form of "otherness". Patience and Jean-Luc are unable to integrate the not too pleasant experiences which their migration is fraught with into their existing mental scheme. This could be a reason why both of them do not have a pleasing disposition to any subject that relates to how they arrived in the countries they are living at the moment.

Jean-Luc, one of the travellers, migrating through the Sahara asks, "How many of us have sought the Promised Land and ended up driving taxi cabs, guarding buildings at night, washing dirty plates and toilet seats, sleeping in cold ghettos and on streets?" (Attah,2010, p.86). Invariably, the fate of young men like Obinze and Nan seems sealed because apart from taking up demeaning jobs and marrying any kind of woman to get a resident permit in their second countries, they also end up losing their liberation because they have to live under the cloak of these new wives. The fate of the females is not any different. Apart from working as domestic servants, a good number of them end up working as prostitutes on the cold streets of Europe.

Additionally, the connections between the lives of emigrants in Chika Unigwe's *Black Sister's Street*, Attah's "Twilight Trek" and Adichie's *Americanah* indicate and confirm what Okome (2003, p.10) observes as "exploitation by metropolitan coloniser". For the African migrants, migration has caused enormous dislocations such that the opportunities to earn a living only come with low-paid, overworked, and no-benefit labours. Consequently, most migrants have no concept of the welfare of the state. Consequently, majority of these immigrants become traumatised because there is little to cushion the effects of "the vagaries of (the) uncertain world" (Okome, 2003, p. 6).

In furtherance to the aforementioned, the trauma of illegal immigrants in "Twilight Trek" is compounded by human traffickers who exploit migrants by smuggling them through the desert. Migrant smuggling is a form of modern-day slavery. With several migrants across the African continent- Mali, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Nigeria, e.t.c. fleeing the social, political, and economic realities of their countries, the agony of being reduced to a refugee in the camps across the Sahara, leaves them traumatised years after getting to their dream destination. Recounting his experience, the narrator observes that illegal migrants like them are gnarled together. This leaves the narrator oscillating between living and being "pronounced dead; the ground between madness and reason; the mountain of Babel where nothing seems to make sense after days of unending suffering in the desert " (Attah, 2010, p. 89).

Characters like Patience, a young lady from Mali with a nomadic background who is trying to break the shackles of poverty in her family was forced into the intercontinental sex trade. Elaborating on her ordeal, she pointed out that: 'They recruited me in Bamako. Hear? I'm supposed to be in Tangier right now, working. Understand? When I get to Rome, I'll continue to work. It's bondage. Intercontinental. White men, African women. See?" (Attah, 2010, p. 95). The underlying trauma of these female migrants is evident in their exposure to illicit sex, their oath of allegiance with a highly connected cartel, and drug barons who could kill them if they attempt to escape. This modern form of human slavery operates in the guise of helping vulnerable young ladies and men migrate abroad to take up job opportunities.

For Adichie, migration is depicted as arising from social blindness and the search for identity. This social blindness is often influenced by the label which has been ascribed to individuals who sojourn abroad in search of a better life and the desire that comes from not having to live in a country that lacks social amenities; whose people are misgoverned, and whose citizens suffer from social and economic insecurity (poverty). Attah on the other hand underscores the emotional and existential consequences of migrating through the Sahara routes especially the lived reality illegal migrants.

Conclusion

From the representation of displacement, mobile wounds and trauma engendered from transnational experiences and the characters' response to these experiences, Adichie and Attah seem to suggest that individuals can fight off the recesses of a bruised consciousness and maintain a healthy self-esteem from the refracted self through a constant appraisal of oneself while reconciling the differences between one's culture and that the host country. Therefore, Adichie and Attah's portrayal of trauma is in terms of the locale of employment and individual's assertion in the face of multiculturality. Consequently, the mobile wounds arising from transnational experience and hybridity has become de rigueur to function effectively within emerging multiple cultures. It is against the backdrop of the overwhelming challenges of migrants in this neoliberal age and the phenomenon of globalisation of emigres identified in Adichie's *Americanah* and Attah's Twilight Trek.

Additionally, the travails of desperate Africans attempting to enter Europe and other destinations, coupled with the cruel fate awaiting these sojourners, present the traumatic perspectives of the migrant narratives. Overtly, while factors such as globalism and multiculturalism encourage transnational movement, the depravity and psychological trauma accompanying migration covertly reveal the prejudiced disposition, racial hierarchy, and the social abyss migrants are condemned to: not just a separationist agenda but as an ideological and social condition for the politics of domination; a constant reminder of migrants' status in their host country. Finally, Adichie and Attah's vision is an implicit request that Nigerians should confront the consequences of living in these complicated times through a collective national reassessment of their humanity, nationality, and moral identity. Conclusively, the traumatising experiences of migrants necessitate the need to investigate the danger inherent in intercontinental migration beyond the rhetoric of everyday politics.

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