

**FORCED MIGRATION AND WOMEN AS DISPOSSESSED
GENDER: AN APPRAISAL OF SOJI COLE'S *EMBERS***

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Abstract

*Forced migration is generally inimical to mankind but particularly hazardous to women. However, these hazardous acts which make women vulnerable are hardly considered as substantial enough to warrant an outcry against the migration phenomenon. Women face major challenges resulting from forced migrations, which expose them to violence, rape and other anti-social behaviours imposed on them by the circumstances. All these tend to have significant impacts on their social, economic, cultural and environmental development. This paper, therefore, uses Cole's *Embers* to critically interrogate the issues of forced migration as a gendered problem. This work shall expose the claims that the problem of forced migration is an offshoot of the opportunistic post-colonial Nigerian rulers who have assisted to change the narratives of the family structure and peaceful order of society to a chaotic world. The paper focuses on the IDP Camps that are highly fuelled by corruption and the challenges for womanhood.*

Keywords: Women, Forced migration, Corruption, Cole's *Embers*, Dispossession, Vulnerability.

Introduction

Violent conflicts around the world have caused so much harm; hence the Nigerian situation is neither new nor strange. It has been in existence since the colonial era with protests against unbearable policies that resulted in violent activities like the Egba uprising of 1918, the Aba Women's Riot of 1929 and the Enugu Colliery Strike in 1949 over taxation, among others. Other violent disputes and confrontations that are more intense and different in orientation from the colonial period also emanated from ethnic militia groups and religious intolerance between the Christians and Muslims. The latest and most long-lasting one is the emergence of the deadly Islamic sect, Boko

Haram, which cuts across Northern Nigeria and including countries like Niger, Cameroon and Chad with its activities threatening national and international security. The Boko Haram phenomenon is an offshoot of religious fundamentalism/intolerance, ethnic bigotry/supremacy, political feud, security impasse and lack of socio-political development as well as struggle for power and internal and external conspiracy against the Nigerian state among others (Alozieuwa, 2012).

Idayat: ... Those you call Boko Harams are a group of agitated men and women, but those who empower and use them are here right now – the politicians! They are the ones who snuff lives out of the people they are supposed to lead (94).

“The Boko Haram is believed to be a reincarnation of the Maitatsine insurgency of the early 1980s” (Adesoji, 2011), whose major reason for uprising is the hatred for Western education; to them “Western education is a sin and forbidden” (Peters, 2014; National Counterterrorism Center, 2016; Omoera & Ogah, 2016). Hence their target has always been killing of teachers, education workers and students (Chothia, 2011). This widespread insurgency that started in 2010 has led to the death and displacement of over two million Nigerians, who have fled into urban areas around crisis zones (<http://www.internal-displacement.org/sub-saharan-africa/nigeria/figures-analysis>). This armed terrorist group has found new ways of using force in the most unusual and irregular manner to destabilize the security of the Nigerian state, thus presenting nontraditional security challenges to the nation as a whole and Northern Nigeria in particular. The unfortunate but true state of the Nigerian security situation is, therefore, likened to a fire that never dies. While the people on all sides of the crisis and the events they daily encounter are like embers that are only waiting for the right amount of wind to stoke them to a full fire (Ibiyemi, 2019).

The forced migrants who are mostly women, girls and children, as the male among them have been forcefully co-opted into the group or killed. These female face major challenges and discrimination that exposes them to violence, rape and other anti-social behaviours imposed on them by their circumstances. This paper shall use Cole’s play *Embers* to critically interrogate the issues of forced migration and dispossession as gendered problems, focusing on females. This article claims that the problem of forced migration is an offshoot of the opportunistic post-colonial Nigerian rulers who have assisted to change the narratives of the well knit family structure and peaceful order of our society to a world of extreme chaos. The paper will particularly focus on the new world of IDP camps highly fuelled by corruption and more importantly, use Fineman’s vulnerability theory to expose the

challenges for womanhood and the various ways that female gender face “hidden crimes” - victimization (Cavanagh, Dobash & Dobash, 2007), deprivation, defamation and stigmatization while depending on others for their livelihood and protection.

Through the Eyes of Cole’s *Embers*

Migration has always been a major indicator of basic economic and social change; a change caused by industrialization, which is accompanied by massive movements by people from rural to urban settlements within the same country or outside to other countries. Forced migration is an experience of the perils of flight to find a new environment and hoping to find a durable solution allowing them to rebuild their shattered lives (Bakewell, 2011). This migration triggers precarious situations which become a source of violence and disruption of social and gender norms. It transforms the current inequalities which emanated from the situation into persistent inequities that continues to exist as it brings pressure on both gender, especially for women. The disruption, displacement and dispossession of people by violent conflicts are avoidable incidence but for the selfish and insensitive nature of humans, the world continues to witness these problems. These people who have been forced to leave their homes as a result of the effects of armed conflict, violence, violations of human rights and natural or man-made disasters are seen as Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs). This displacement often persists longer than usual as it continues beyond actual hostilities. Hence, it is seen as one of “the greatest tragedies of our time and these IDPs are among the most vulnerable of the human family” (United Nations, 2004).

The present insurgency birthed the Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) camps in Nigeria even when the IDPs are regular experiences by some Nigerians due to recurrent ethno-religious conflicts and natural/man-made disasters but the situation in the North East is way out of the normal. These IDPs though displaced within their territorial borders but outside their place of residence are generally faced with multifarious and sadistic circumstances ranging from being displaced from their homes to being dispossessed of their livelihood and security. However, the case of the IDPs made to live in camps provided by the Nigerian government is a sad reality. As a result of the misadventures which include the “lack of good governance and purposeful leadership, corruption, hopelessness, joblessness, loss of faith and moral piety, rape, crass materialism, insecurity/terrorism, and displacements of people, among others” (Edebor, 2018, p. 55).

These people are not just victims of the dreaded terrorists, but are also victims of the State, government officials and security

personnel/operatives who deprive them from the welfare provided by the government and are also sexually exploited. A culture that is made possible by the various structural and cultural factors that normalize sexual abuse such that it is freely manifest both in the private sphere of the home and the public sphere leaving no space safe for girls and women (Omorodion, 2021). On the other hand, the funds and food items meant for them (IDPs) are diverted by those entrusted with their welfare and upkeep; the security officials are not ready to protect and guard them except in exchange for sex, while the terrorists attack and abduct the girls who are either forcefully married, gang-raped or used as suicide bombers. The effects of the insurgency and displacement created widespread public insecurity, damaging to the individual and the community's "self-respect" caused by the loss of their "cultural space and identity" and "networks and associations" (Drydyk, 1999, pp. 4–5) as well as being involuntarily marched into resource-poor reservations (Soguk, 1999). This is because the intensity of the displacement has become a global problem, which is currently evident in the Northeastern part of Nigeria. According to Memunah in *Embers*, who narrates their ordeal of homelessness and disillusion: we have been here for six months. The only life we live here is listening to your stories. Please do not deprive us of that tonight (Cole, 2018, p. 4).

This displacement can disrupt social and gender norms bringing added burdens for both male and female as well as increasing the vulnerabilities faced more by the female gender, emphasis on physical vulnerability. Talatu reflects on the above issue when she said that: okay. (*Silence.*) Hmm. (*She goes into contemplation.*) The things I missed being a girl. Like I said; life is never fair to us as women. I lost independence when I should really have it... (4). As these people are forced to move from their habitual places of residence within their territorial borders, the effects of the displacement are diverse because they have been dispossessed of their sources of livelihood, home, and security as well as their protection and social support (UNHCR, 2008). Memunah in *Embers* captured their pains as she recounts the effect of terrorists' attacks on them, both from the home front and on their education. The women, before and during their stay at the IDPs camps have continually being dispossessed in all aspects, and it thus has ripple effects on their behaviours; this takes within its ambit the various forms of dispossession – psychic, economic or political and cultural – and their consequences on the dispossessed. Thus, dispossession does not occur in a vacuum but are tangible and real, and it manifests in the lives of characters as expressed below:

Atai: I found my way to Gali (*her village*) but the village wasn't there anymore.

- Atai:** The horrors that I saw in the five days were more frightful than the fiercest things I saw in Sambisa forest.
...
- Atai:** They first took me to their commander. He had many women with him. And he changed them as new ones came. After three days, he got tired of me too. He gave me to another soldier. It was horror. They threatened to kill me if I ever mentioned a word to the people outside when I leave
- Talatu:** And you didn't?
- Atai:** I kept my pain. When you have the gift of life in the midst of chaos, all other things seem not to matter. (59-60)

These dispossessed characters representing the women in Northeastern Nigeria are at the mercy of "commercial exploitation or official persecution" (Twynning, 1998, p. 105) but most importantly their impulses and consciousness which they invariably unleash on others once they are opportune. The consequences of dispossession are the production of the rough beast, which awakens "buried instincts" (Césaire, 1972, p. 13) of the dispossessed. When we allow displacement and dispossession to persist, we inherently authorize all forms of dangerous systemic oppression and violence which the victims consciously and invariably unleash on themselves as well as others. Truly the affected characters are filled with hatred so will destroy others without fear of destroying themselves. This played out in the lives of Memunah and Idayat, their hatred for the system blinded them to the love they have for other dispossessed and sufferings girls at the IDPs camp so they sacrificed themselves (62-64; 95). The after-effects of dispossession are a psychopathological symptom of the mind, a physical act of violence and outward manifestations of a sick and troubled mind. This trend of displacement and dispossession in most African conflict zones is highly traumatic, dehumanizing and dreadful because it puts people at high risk of being victims of crime and victims for crime. The female are more exposed to victimization from all quarters; hence their anger, even as they resign themselves to fate. The discussion that ensued among the girls is a pointer to the fact that their existence depends on what they can do for themselves:

- Talatu:** I know the forests boys did so many things to you..., but your faith? I hope the things they did to you has not stopped you from believing in God?

- Memunah:** It is safer to keep believing in God than not.
- Idayat:** Even the atheists believe in God. They just don't agree with the way people interpret him.
- Memunah:** Yes, I agree that there is a divinity that shapes our existence. But you choose either to believe in it or not. ... How then do we explain the partial sense of this divinity?! How do we believe in God when he seems partial to some and makes others look like he doesn't exist?
- Idayat:** If there is God then he wouldn't allow the rustling eruption of evil thoughts that come from the hearts of men!
- Memunah:** Where was God when the Boko Haram Boys came into our schools that night; blowing up things, firing off guns, breaking and finagling their way into our hostels to cart us away! (22-23)

The issue of displacement and dispossession are not only an economic tool of oppression, but also a political tool because the economic disorder creates the conditions under which criminalization and other abuses occur. The system generates and enforces the subjugation of marginalized people who are under the said conditions, which is reflected in the women's lives in the IDPs camps: Idayat: Goggo, the hassle here is like being in captivity. How do we define a life of freedom when it bears all the signs of captivity? The real Boko Haram is here, not in the forest of Sambisa. They are here with us every day. They live with you and me. The Boko Harams are those Government people ... The Boko Harams are those Camp Officers ... The Boko Harams are those in uniforms ... (20).

Forced migration, displacement and dispossession are gendered problems because the major victims of this situation are children, young girls and women. "Migration is a profoundly gendered process, and the conventional explanations of men's migration in many cases do not apply to women" (Kanaiaupuni, 2000) because women suffer in specific ways and are particularly vulnerable as a result of their gender, social roles and social positioning and to all forms of violence including sexual violence (UNHCR, 2008). Forced migration expose the female gender to horrible assaults at the hands of men in the guise of security guards, government officials, military units, and terrorists groups, among others. They are also placed in high risk contexts and their safety is no more ensured because they are either faced with serious threats of rape when hunting for their survival or are forced to provide sexual favours in exchange for obtaining food rations that were provided

by the government. The impacts of these terrorists' acts indicates that women and men experience displacement differently, especially as it has substantial effects on gender roles since these displaced females have taken on more and different roles as providers and protectors of families in the face of unpleasant events. Talatu, took up this role of being a mother, teacher, encourager and provider of food to the girls:

Talatu: (*huskily, almost in a whisper*): So my girls, you can see the dilemma of women. I am saying to you; go after your dreams. It's not anybody's world. The world is free for us all to create our own share of happiness.

Atai: You should be a teacher, Goggo.

Talatu: Maybe you right. Life taught me. I should teach others.... (37)

The Boko Haram terrorists made their insurgency gendered, as they particularly targeted female as a tactic of war; hence kidnapping some, and killing those who sought to escape or who refused to convert to their teachings (ICG, 2016; Matfess, 2017). These terrorists put in place doctrines that are beneficial to them and will continually transform current inequalities among the sexes into persistent inequities in the future. So they opened up avenues for these females to be taking in as Jihadist brides who are enslaved sexually because of the Islamic belief in Fatwa (sexual Jihad) through which a manifesto to guide women was entrenched (Ali, 2015). They demand absolute submissiveness of females, which gives rise to the acceptance of violence and the fostering of masculinity and power that is naturally associated with violence as a norm. Aside from attacking education, they target female students and this has adverse effects on them because the impact shows on their physical and psychological health. This elicits more problems for the country as well as the communities because their cohesion, stability and economic development are adversely affected. Apart from the insurgency's attacks that particularly affected these females, the Nigerian security sector as well as the political class have also made their actions gendered by the rampant discrimination against women in several ways. Thus, they face abuse, insecurity, discrimination, subjugation among others from many sides: the insurgency, the government, and the burden of caring for themselves, their families and the crisis affected children. Women were possessions that are disadvantaged during displacement among others; this is evident in *Embers*:

Memunah: My mother used to tell me that women are created for men. "It's a man's world", she says all the time.
(3)

Talatu: ... Maybe your generation will change things. In my time, women were mere fabricating machines for making children. They were the ill-coloured photo frames hung on walls like synthetic decorations (6).

Talatu: Rest of mind, I mean. You need it. This war has driven every one of us to the edge. We are victims of the war. And we are also victims of the trauma that comes after a war. (80)

This forced migration is a conceived “evil” (Penz, 1997, p. 37), which is generally inimical to mankind but mostly hazardous to women, girls and children. However, more often than not, these hazardous consequences for the womenfolk are hardly seriously considered as weighty enough to warrant an outcry against the migration phenomenon. Their vulnerability opens them to sexual assault, exploitation, forced marriages and gang-rapes, forced labour and even used as suicide bombers among other anti-social behaviours (IOM – Nigeria, 2015; Pieri & Zenn, 2016; Weeraratne, 2017). These terrorists use of women as properties were borrowed from the patriarchal ideologies of African society, more especially of Islamic tenets which sees early and forced marriage as a common cultural practice to control female behavior (Adeyemo, 2013; Braimah, 2014; Oriola, 2016; Oriola & Akinola, 2018; Itebiye, 2016).

As one of the deadliest extremist insurgent groups the world over, but unfortunately domiciled in Northern Nigeria; the Boko Haram’s brutality and fierce attacks on the indigenes of the Northeastern people of Nigeria have negatively had critical impacts on every aspect of the Nigerian life. As a result of this pathetic situation, the Northeastern Nigerian victims lose their innocence, homes, livelihood, and education as well as their economic, social, political and cultural lives, whether directly or indirectly. Memunah and Idayat narrate their ordeal in the hands of the terrorist gangs before they made their way to the IDPs camp:

Memunah: Homes? School? You amuse me, Atai. Have you forgotten that the scoundrels burnt down the whole school in the town when they came to take us that night? You forgot how they left the towns in ruins leaving a flame of raging inferno in our homes and in our fathers’ stalls? (5)

Idayat: Goggo, I may be a small girl but what I have experienced...

Memunah: You mean what ‘we’ have experienced?

Idayat: Yes. 'We'. What have we not experienced? With those mad boys in the forest? With the traumatic sojourn in Sambisa, do you think it is still possible for us to be the same girls who were abducted? (47)

Even when they believe their reasons for these incessant attacks are germane, dialogue and negotiation would have been the best option; as these human massacres, disruption of business activities, destruction of farmlands and infrastructural damage have entrenched poverty and suffering as well as created more socioeconomic and humanitarian crises that the terrorists sought to obliterate (Eme & Ibietan, 2012; Okoli & Iortyer, 2014).

These displaced females are always categorized as the most "vulnerable" group because they are exposed to violence, exploitation and harrowing sexual abuse in the hands of those who are "supposed" to guard them, whether as male relations or strangers. Situations of intra-family abuse are evident in our society and it is a twin edged sword; of abuse and incest, which is strongly frowned at by the African culture but is freely taking place in our society. Talatu's story embodies the plight of many vulnerable girls across our society, she is made vulnerable by her status as an orphan and as a girl-child but her resilience in the face of such unpleasant danger is limited so she is forced to flee the village for the big city of Kano because she is tired of being abused by her uncle (Omorodion, 2021). As a symbol of other women, we observe that Talatu like others are marginalized, disadvantaged, and disenfranchised from mainstream society (Fineman, 2008). The general concept of vulnerability is associated with victimhood, deprivation, dependency and pathology (Fineman, 2005; Knowles, 1996); it is a constant and universal condition of the human race, in that all humans are vulnerable and have the potential of being dependent. So this displacement is obviously a human condition that portrays vulnerability and the inability of victims to ensure their self-provision of needs and protection at least during their trying period, hence their dependency. However these displaced women are not innately vulnerable but rather placed in situations, which create and aggravate vulnerability and human rights abuses (Forbes-Martin, 2003; Freedman, 2015; Khan, & Laurie, 2017) as they are relatively exposed to risk factors beyond their control:

Talatu: It's been long. ... I could see the bulge from his khaki trouser. His eyes were dilated. He was high on drugs before he came to me. ... (19)

Soldier 4: ... You forgot everything they promised the IDPs? Has anyone of those things been fulfilled? Yet

- they send their drivers here every other night to take some of the girls away to the city. ... (28-29)
- Atai:** Even if we don't wish to talk about our story in the forest of Sambisa, the memory cannot be erased. It will live with us forever. Sometimes memory is pain. But to forget is itself a crime. It is the pain of memory that nudges us clearer to the failure of our humanity. (56-57)
- Memunah:** That is why I said the forest is better! This is where the Boko Haram really operates. Look at those soldiers; every night they go into the tenets to rape girls. The camp officials also rape us. They threatened us with foods and other supplies if we don't have sex with them. The governor would come here with ten bags of rice, and tell the world that he brought a hundred. Then at night his driver comes around to pick up one of us. Tell me how this place is better than the forest (62)
- Idayat:** ... Memunah was locked up in a room and raped by the Camp Commandant's office. After he was done, he asked that she be thrown into the guard room. There, one by one the soldiers raped her too. And they passed her to the cleaners.... (89)

As Fineman has explained, vulnerability "need not be equated with weakness any more than age inevitably means loss of capacity" (2012, p. 96), rather the less advantaged social groups are often labeled as vulnerable, which is also a way to marginalize and exclude some social groups from mainstream society (Fineman, 2008). Vulnerability in this case reflects deep-rooted gender bias and social inequality in which the social subject constantly find themselves trapped in unpleasant events in life that are beyond individual or even societal control.

Human vulnerability arises from our embodiment, which carries with it the imminent or ever-present possibility of harm, injury, and misfortune. Some vulnerability is compounded by the possibility that we can succumb to illness or injury that may cause disruption of existing employment, economic, or family relationships. These harms are not located in the body itself, but in the interruption or destruction of institutional or social relationships. This form of harm can be as catastrophic to an individual as other vulnerability and also illustrates how human beings are dependent on societal institutions. Human vulnerability is universal, constant, and complex, it is also particular. While all human beings stand in a position of constant vulnerability,

we are individually positioned differently to experience it uniquely. Vulnerability is inherent in the human condition and often associated with poverty and discrimination. When it is realized, we articulate the attention and need for protection, safety and security and we become dependent on all spheres – economically, socially, psychologically, and physically. Using the IDPs camp in Cole's *Embers* as example, we are exposed to the issue of government's neglect and insensitivity as well as the abuse of their human rights which further entrenches the women's vulnerability (88, 92). These women became divided because of their vulnerable state; some sought for protection from the politicians, while others from the camp and security officials. The system's unlawful ways of carrying out their responsibilities also created this vulnerable state of the women.

The corrupt system misuse power to achieve illegitimate channels, which put in place mechanism to commit other crimes such as embezzlement, and fraud. These are the experiences found at the IDPs camps where corrupt officials engage in unethical practices that are motivated by their selfish interests because they are in power. They distribute to whoever they please, while leaving the ones that deserve it. Whether as gray or passive corruption (Prenzler, Beckley, & Bronitt, 2013; Hetzer 2012, p. 219) as committed by public officials directly or through an intermediary, the bottom-line is that the act is harmful and tends to undermine the public's confidence in the honesty of public officials. The system still celebrates these corrupt officials and allows these practices even when the populace is unhappy and disillusioned about the situation. This is exactly the case with the government officials, camp officers and security personnel in *Embers*, where the Soldiers exposed the "constitutionalized corruption" in their discussion:

Soldier 4: There is no road to happiness, happiness is the road. Everyone walks his way to happiness. Let me tell you this; our country has been ruined beyond measure. After the war, the politicians decapitated the rest of the nation. The citizens are the victims. They are always victims like votive deposits left in the shrine of a despicable god. It is corruption that brought us to this point. Corruption is everywhere! We need a complete change of the system but the democracy we practice will not bring that change. Democracy is for the foolish majority. Change comes with the radical desire of a minority.

Soldier 3: Hmm.

Soldier 4: Corruption has a flappy wing that slaps whatever obstructs the course! The ones who brought us into this condition twisted the laws to have their ways. For us to defeat them, we have to fight dirty. ... (69-70).

However, this dysfunctional society, which births a generation whose fury, is at its breaking-point and simmering embers that will burst forth into infernos that may consume the entire society. This situation calls attention to the rot in IDPs where all forms of abuse of human rights and corruption have become the order of the day. According to Edebor, the Nigerian state stands the risk of experiencing total collapse except if urgent measures are taken to set the nation on the path of honour and regeneration. So all issues that threaten the survival of the nation must be jettisoned even revolution is recommended as a weapon in ending the reigns of corrupt leaders and ensuring progress and sustainable developments of the nation (2018, p. 56).

The Nigerian state made women become objects, tools to satisfy other people's purpose that is why those forcefully displaced ones begin from a position of loss, including the loss of assets, family and community; as well as emotional and physical health that makes them more vulnerable and open to objectification. An objectification informed by the local patriarchal culture of the people that promoted gender inequality (Oriola, 2016) and violence against women during conflicts and war. They use women as spoils of war, treated like objects whose experience and feelings are unimportant and not to be considered because they are seen as silent, lacking the capacity to speak even when they are not voiceless (Nussbaum, 1995; Roy, 2004; Langton, 2009) and this is clearly captured in *Embers* (3, 8 & 10). They are silenced by the patriarchal system that limits their ability to speak, fight back injustices, access spaces of power and decision making by constraining them under cultural norms and practices which give privilege to men over women. These women broke the culture of silence, they spoke out; hence the various reactions against the oppressive situation they find themselves and this is making the world to listen to them, from Idayat to Memunah to Regina (Soldier), they spoke against the system; ready for the consequences of their outburst (*Embers*, 47-49). This objectification negatively impacts on their psychological health and leads to the development of mental disorders as well as psychosocial damage (Jacobsen, 2014, p. 100).

The way the "supposed protectors" objectified them, made some of them believe that the terrorists were better; hence their case was

likened to the *Stockholm syndrome*. A psychological phenomenon in which hostages express and develop empathy, sympathy and positive feelings towards their captors sometimes to the point of defending and identifying with them. These feelings are generally considered in light of the danger or risk endured by the victims who essentially mistake a lack of abuse from their captors for an act of kindness (De Fabrique, Romano, Vecchi, & van Hasselt, 2007, p.12; Brown & Muscari 2010, p.93). This is evident in Cole's *Embers*, girls captured by Boko Haram terrorists aligned with the terrorists to cause more mayhem (4, 61 & 94); while others are in alliance with the political class and the security officials after their experience in the forest with the Boko Haram terrorists (58, 82, 86 & 88).

These are the resultant effects of vulnerability; it creates room for dependency and self-defensive survival mechanism to protect self from the extreme stress, fear and danger of perceived threat from any abuser. Hence, these girls develop emotional bond with their abductors (Boko Haram terrorists) and look at them in positive light because their provision, protection and survival are assured (Nair, 2015, p. 388). They identify with these people so well that they view others as enemies because their isolation period with these "supposed protectors" (Politicians, Camp Officials/Security Personnel) opened up avenues for their conscious bond with the offenders when they came face to face with the reality of their situation.

Conclusion

Looking at the IDPs' situation through Cole's *Embers*, Fineman's theory of vulnerability indicates how to allocate resources among vulnerable individuals. So, it can be a useful concept to design Nigerian's social policy for better IDPs' camps in the Northeastern parts of Nigeria. But can the African blind politician who looks from only one direction that is in his or her favour, accept Fineman's concept of resource allocation? Will these politicians and their allies be conscientious and truthful to themselves and the people they lead? Will they forget about personal greed and the quest to always want to be in control and allow good governance to prevail? Can the Nigerian state wholeheartedly initiate proactive measures to bolster its internal and external security systems against terrorism and violent conflicts? Are the measures adequate enough to checkmate these acts of terrorism, corruption, horrendous carnage and dispossession that are still ongoing in the IDPs camps? If the answer to these questions is no, then there is nothing we can do but to toe the line of the playwright as he voiced it through some of the characters:

- Talatu:** Goggo, I am sorry. I think the option is simple. The system has to destroy itself to regenerate
- Talatu:** Leave that to the politicians, girl!
- Memunah:** The politicians will keep destroying us, Goggo. What we need now is a revolution. A sweeping revolution! (20).
- Talatu:** ... I agree with Memunah; to bring light into the empty darkness of your lives there has to be destruction. The destruction of those who brought untold misery into your lives (82).
- Idayat:** It is no use, Goggo. A system that gives so much room for us to be inhuman to each other has to self-destruct to give way to a fresh generation. (95)

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