

# History, Literary Re-Historicization and the Aftermath of War in Chinua Achebe's *There Was a Country* and Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *Half of a Yellow Sun*

Ijeoma Ann Ngwaba

English and Literary Studies, Federal University Oye-Ekiti, Ekiti State, Nigeria

**Abstract**—This article examines how Chinua Achebe's memoir *There Was a Country* and Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's novel *Half of a Yellow Sun*, respectively, narrates and re-historicizes the Biafran War (1967-1970). More specifically, this article highlights the different ways in which each author questions the Nigerian Federal Government's countenancing or active supports of ethnic rivalry and marginalization in relation to the Eastern part of the country which is the major cause of the war as stipulated by both authors. While Achebe's book, his final one, is a memoir and Adichie's is a novel, their views on this and other aspects of the war have much in common, and this connection is only one of the many between the two Igbo-born authors. The present discussion also establishes the connection between Achebe's memoir on the Biafra war and Adichie's literary re-historizing of the Nigerian nation and the Biafra War. Paramount in both Achebe's and Adichie's treatment of this war is the foregrounding and condemnation of the human brutality that led and defined the war. This paper posits that war is not necessary for any form of correction or peace and should not be used as a measure to effect changes in any society. It rather causes psychological trauma for those involved, and those who witnessed it are left with horrifying reminiscences which are derived from trauma. The paper concludes that these can be avoided and war should be discouraged at all cost.

**Index Terms**—national history, rehistoricisation, postcolonial, West African story-telling, comparative literary study

## I. INTRODUCTION

Chinua Achebe wrote extensively on different subjects which expose the effect of colonial rule and the failure of the nationalist and postcolonial leaders to resolve the issue of ethnic conflict. His first novel *Things Fall Apart* (1958) is the most widely read novel in modern African literature. His other novels include *No Longer at Ease* (1960), *Arrow of God* (1964), *A Man of the People* (1966), *Anthills of the Savannah* (1987) and his last memoir, *There was a Country: A Personal History of Biafra* (2012). Achebe wrote his novels in English and defended the use of English in African literature, despite the language being rejected for African literary purposes in some quarters as a "language of colonizers". His novels concentrate mostly on the rich cultures/traditions of Igbo's, the impact of Christian religion, as well as the problems between Western and traditional African cultures during and after the colonial era. He also makes use of folk stories, proverbs, and oratory in most of his works.

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie is an award winning writer whose literary outputs has gained significant prominence all over the world. "Adichie is considered a diasporic writer as well as a "third generation" West African Writer and focuses her attention on African women and their challenges, resilience and wisdom; their love for the family, respect for their traditions and husbands and how some of them were able to resist forms of violence and subjugation. Adichie's female characters generally are complex and versatile" (Ngwaba, 2022).

Achebe's *There Was a Country* is his personal experience of the Biafra war which took place between 1967-1970. The novel records the events that led to the Biafra war, the hardship and killing of innocent people, the difficulties encountered by the Biafrans, and the aftermaths of the war. Chinua Achebe's memoir, no doubt are historically situated as may be seen in this memoir. Thomas Lynn observes that, "Achebe's own life merits examination as part of an analysis of language and politics in his narratives because he personally navigated competing, politically volatile structures of power. He demonstrated along the way a combination of respect and defiance toward tradition and authority that his fiction dramatizes" (Lynn, 2017, p.16).

The memoir presents Ojukwu as the leader of the Biafran people and how he came up with the idea of fighting a war in order to liberate the Igbo's. Most people criticized Ojukwu for coming up with such an idea. Achebe affirms that, "David Hunt wrote a memo to London describing Ojukwu as an over-ambitious man who had engineered the secession and manipulated his people into supporting him". Many people agree with Hunt's view, but Achebe's view differs,

I believe that following the pogroms, or rather, the ethnic cleansing in the North that occurred over the four months starting in May 1966, which was compounded by the involvement, even connivance, of the federal

government ... secession from Nigeria and the war that followed became an inevitability.' The Igbo's were blamed for everything gone wrong in Nigeria, especially the coup, ... But the most vital feeling Biafrans had at that time was that they were finally in a safe place ... at home (Achebe, 2012, p.67)

Achebe foregrounds the historical issues that affect the Easterners and their various predicaments which led to the war. Namwali Serpell is of the view that,

The Biafran war became one of the world's most well-known humanitarian crises as millions - mostly women and children - succumbed to starvation. Renowned author Chinua Achebe's latest work, *There Was a Country*, presents what its subtitle calls "a personal history of Biafra. The memoir articulates the connection between "the particular tension of war, and the kind of literary response it inspires" through an uneasy but often stirring amalgam of three genres: memoir, historical analysis and poetry (Namwali, 2012, p.2)

## II. HISTORY AND RE-HISTORICISATION OF THE BIAFRA WAR

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *Half of a Yellow Sun* richly develops the literary construction of the Nigerian woman in the colonial and post-colonial era through re-historicisation in the sense that Achebe's memoir serves as a guide to Adichie's novel. As earlier stated, literature is one of the major means through which female writers express their views on matters that affect them and the society at large. Gachari states that "Literature enlarges the perception of a culture by a reader through expanding their understanding of the projected world and conveying a distinct image of the people that compromise the setting in the literary work" (Gichari, 2007, p.5). Mugo, as cited by Gachari concurs with Gallagher and Lundin's note that "it is a widely accepted fact that works of art including literature reflect the social structures of the societies from which they emanate. Literature and creative art in general thus help us to define specific cultural and social heritages (Cited by Gachari, 2007, p.5). Adichie in this novel exposes some of the issues that affect women and the female characters words and actions serve to debunk some myths about women. Adichie posits that she offers "an unapologetic Biafran perspective on Nigerian nationalism that subverts official narratives of post-war national reconciliation" (Adichie, 2007, p.3).

What *There was a Country* and *Half of a Yellow Sun* do in our contemporary world in a remarkable way is to expose the problems that Nigeria as a country had and still has. Nigeria is at crossroad with lots of political manipulations by the wealthy, tribalism, corruption and a well documented history of what led to the Biafran war and its horrifying manifestations. The novel is set in postcolonial era and dramatizes aspects of the Biafran war which took place between 1967 and 1970; it is also a love story. The flag of Biafra has half of a rising sun and the rising sun inspired Adichie's title, *Half of a Yellow Sun* since it focuses on the causes and consequences of the war. Chinua Achebe and Binyavanga Wainaina recognize Adichie's fearlessness, "asserting that it takes guts to take on the intimidating horror of Nigeria's civil war without looking away" (Achebe & Wainaina, 2008, p.1).

Achebe states that the essence of his memoir "*There was a Country*" is to educate Nigerians, for the future purpose (in a historical context: a political history, a non-fiction and an autobiography), on one of the most significant events in the history of Nigeria" (Achebe, 2012, p.9). Thomas Lynn notes that in, "*There Was a Country*, Achebe reflects on the psychic trauma suffered by the Igbo's due to the war and its linked circumstances: "The experiences of the Igbo community from the pogroms onward had different effects on different people. There were a multitude of reactions-anger, loathing, sorrow, concern, depression" (Lynn, 2017, p.12).

The paper highlights how the memoir and novel are deployed for purposes of literary historicisation and (re)historisation respectively and socio-political critique from the writer's perspectives while pointing out the essential divergences and convergences between the periods in which they wrote their novel. No doubt, Achebe and Adichie belong to different generations. Both writers use their literary work to narrate the history of the Biafra war and its disastrous consequences on the populace. Worthy of note is that both bring out marginalization of the Easterners as the major cause of the war and similarly, they both show the anti-Igbo pogroms in the North were a major precipitating factor that led to the war. Achebe's memoir serves as a guide to Adichie's re-historicisation of the biafran war.

Achebe's memoir tackles the effects of the war as well as the demise of his close friend, the poet, Christopher Okigbo. *There was a Country* is divided into four parts and each gives a detailed analysis of the author's life and experiences during the Biafran war. The novel is filled with series of poems which jolts the reader to the reality of war and its dehumanizing effects. It also celebrates utopic moments during his childhood, adulthood, the independence of Nigeria and the emergence of Biafra. The first part examines Achebe's family's background and his childhood days; the second part takes a look at the Biafra war and its effect especially on the Igbo's. Part three concentrates on the reasons why Biafrans surrendered during the war: there were lots of economic blockages and people were dying due to starvation. Part four examines Nigeria's painful transitions, corruption, indiscipline, state failure, rise of terrorism, state resuscitation and recovery.

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie in her review of the memoir acknowledges its relevance to the younger generation when she states,

History and civics, as school subjects, function not merely to teach facts but to transmit more subtle things, like pride and dignity. My Nigerian education taught me much, but left gaping holes. I had not been taught to imagine my pre-colonial past with any accuracy, or pride, or complexity. And so Achebe's work, for me

transcended literature. ...his long awaited memoir of the Nigerian-Biafra war, is both sad and angry, a book by a writer looking back and mourning Nigeria's failures (Adichie, 2013, p. 1)

However, Achebe makes use of Igbo proverbs in his writing and this manifest greatly in the first page of the novel which starts thus, "An Igbo proverb tells us that a man who does not know where the rain began to beat him cannot say where he dried his body. The rain that beat Africa began four to five hundred years ago, from the "discovery" of Africa by Europe, through the transatlantic slave trade, to the Berlin conference of 1885" (Achebe, 2012, p.1).

For Achebe, Nigeria's independence did more harm than good to the country. The British left after independence and the period could be regarded as post-independence. A majority of the British left the shores of the country while those in the commercial sector and oil businesses stayed. This opened new job opportunities for most Nigerians especially those with university educations. Achebe affirms, "By the late 1950s, the British were rapidly accepting the inevitability of independence coming to one of their major colonies, Nigeria. Officers began to retire and return home to England, vacating their positions in Nigeria's colonial government. They left in droves, quietly, amiably, often at night, mainly on ships, but also, particularly the wealthier ones, on planes" (Achebe, 2012, p.67). The problem in Nigeria started immediately after they left as the populace is left to the good faith of their countrymen.

### III. ETHNIC RIVALS AND CORRUPTION

Achebe gives an account of how the war started and horrors therein, he has first-hand information as regards to the war and a memoir is considered a historical account based on a writer's personal experiences and knowledge. In essence, it is not the writer's imagination but rather an event that occurs which he witnesses. For him, things began to fall apart soon after independence as there are lots of problems during election as to who will occupy different positions in the leadership realm. Corruption and misrule became the order of the day and ethnic rivalry took over the nation. Achebe states,

Within six years of this tragic manipulation, Nigeria was a cesspool of corruption and misrule. Public servants helped themselves freely to the nation's wealth. Elections were blatantly rigged. The subsequent national census was outrageously stage-managed; judges and magistrates were manipulated by the politicians in power. The politicians themselves were pawns of foreign business interests. The social malaise in Nigerian society was political corruption (Achebe, 2012, p.51)

Ethnic tussle became the order of the day in Nigeria and problems were analyzed based on the ethnic groups that were favored most. The Easterners were marginalized in several ways which led to the war. During the British rule, there were no traces of coups but once they handed over the power to Nigerians, plotting of coups began and the Igbo's were blamed for everything that went wrong in the country. On January 15, 1966, there was a coup to overthrow the government who created confusions in the mind of the populace. He describes the Igbo's as being receptive to change, individualistic, and highly competitive. These are some of the reasons that the Easterners started looking for a solution. They felt that having their own nation will be better where there will be no ethnic rival.

Consequently, military men and other intellectuals in the Eastern part of Nigeria called for a meeting to look for a way out of this terrible ethnic problem. Ojukwu who was a prominent figure in the military and very influential, came up with the idea of creating a Biafran state which would be for the Igbo's who were marginalized in Nigeria. He declared the Biafran State and they choose Enugu as the state capital. For Achebe, the nightmare began when, "On May 27, the Consultative Assembly mandated Colonel Ojukwu to declare, at the earliest practicable date, Eastern Nigeria, a free sovereign and independent state by the name and title of the Republic of Biafra" (Achebe, 2012, p.23). The war destroyed lives and property of mostly the Igbo's.

### IV. WAR AND WOMEN: THE BIAFRAN EXPERIENCE

In all cases of war, women are most endangered and this reflects in the popular saying that "war hits home when it hits women and girls". Women constitute the greater part of any nation and they are also entrusted with the natural role of caring for the entire family especially, children. War has always been a traumatizing event for those who experience it; it leaves indelible marks on the psyche of its victim especially, women. Women face different forms of abuse in war situations which ranges from sexual exploitation and injustice especially from soldiers. They have always been on the receiving end of most wars due to their gender which makes them vulnerable. Their vulnerability makes them susceptible to war situations due to the role they play in the society.

Through rehistoricisation, Adichie recounts the tragic events of the war with details from Achebe's and Chukwuemeka Ike's account in his novel, *Sunset at Dawn*. For her, the war affected mostly women and children, she is able to give the same account of the age of women, pregnant women were also raped and killed as declared by William Norris (Reporter, Sunday Times) cited by Ojukwu: I have seen things in Biafra this week which no man should have to see. Sights to scorch the mind and sicken the conscience. I have seen children roasted alive, young girls torn into two by shrapnel; pregnant women eviscerated, and old men blown to fragments. I have seen these things and I have seen their cause: high-flying Russian Ilyushin jets operated by Federal Nigeria, dropping their bombs on civilian centers throughout Biafra (Norris, 1969, p.319).

As a result of the series of acts of violence against women in war situations, the Beijing Platform for Action and the Geneva Convention Relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War Art. 27 came up with some objectives that could help women during war situations. They include:

- Provide protection, assistance, and training to refugee women, other displaced women in need of international protection and internally displaced women.
- Promote women's contribution to fostering a culture of peace
- Provide assistance to the women of the colonies and non-self governing territories
- Reduce excessive military expenditures and control the availability of armaments
- Promote non-violent forms of conflict resolution and reduce the incidence of human rights abuse in conflict situations (International Organization, 2004, p. 1).

Furthermore, the image of the woman is painted as that of a sex object during the Biafran war; girls and women were raped by white mercenaries and their black brothers. Ugwu and other men who were conscripted into the Biafran army, joined in raping women. Women were used in exchange for material things during the war, In *Half of a Yellow Sun*, Eberechi who is considered as Ugwu's lover is offered as a gift to the Colonel in exchange for her brother's posting. The Colonel uses her as an exchange and she in turn becomes a sex object used by the man to satisfy his lustful desires. Eberechi describes how he did it quickly because she is considered a sex object that should be used and discarded afterwards. She sees her sexual encounter as a payback for helping her brother to get into the essential service in the army.

As the war progress, relief centers and refugee camps were established where mostly women and children live. Through this, Adichie presents collective and gender identity by which women are classified based on their roles in the society. Kainene has a refugee camp to help ease the sufferings of mothers and children; Father Marcel who is a religious leader is in charge of praying with and encouraging them. Unfortunately, the priest harasses the young girls sexually in exchange for food. He also impregnates most of them because they were vulnerable. Kainene is not aware of what is happening until one Urenwa confesses that it was Father Marcel who had sex with her. Da Silva argues that ... "through confronting and graphic representations of what often are semi-ritualistic occasions of domestic violence, of rape and mutilation, the novels articulate an aesthetics of excess that calls attention to the difficulty of speaking the unfinished business of nation-making in the post-colonial nation" (Da Silva, 2014, p. 458). This further shows how women are victims in all situations.

Adichie also presents the relevance of women during Biafran war as they struggle for food for the entire family despite the risks involved with facing the soldiers. Olanna who took charge of Amala's abandoned baby becomes so worried when Chiamaka suffers from kwashiorkor and lack of appetite. Most women also become guards who watch out for their families and alert them to run for their lives anytime they notice the enemy's plane. Kandiyoti (1998) recognizes this fact when he states, "Women bear the burden of being 'mothers of the nation'..., as well as being those who produce the boundaries of ethnic/national groups, who transmit the culture and who are privileged signifiers of national difference. The demands of the 'nation' may thus appear just as constraining as the tyranny of more primordial loyalties to lineage..." (p. 377).

## V. RE-WRITING THE NATION: BIAFRAN WAR AND ITS REPULSIVE REMINISCENCES

Consequently, anytime the name Biafra is mentioned, everybody remembers Ojukwu but the assertion below by Achebe succinctly states that it is not entirely his idea but that of some prominent Igbo people during that time. One could believe that the creation of the Biafran state is not out of the ordinary, something prompted it. The Igbo's were massacred at any slightest provocation with false accusations and as such, believe they are second class citizens in their country. There were a series of marginalization and mistreatment that prompted the Igbo's reaction by coming up with the idea of their own state. Achebe affirms,

Beginning with the January 12, 1966, coup d'état, through the counter-coup (staged mainly by Northern Nigerian officers, who murdered 185 Igbo officers) and the massacre of thirty thousand Igbo's and Easterners in pogroms that started in May 1966 and occurred over four months-the events of those months left millions of other future Biafrans and me feeling terrified. As we fled "home" to Eastern Nigeria to escape all manner of atrocities that were being inflicted upon us and our families in different parts of Nigeria, we saw ourselves as victims (Achebe, 2012, p.95)

One could vividly see that Igbo's were marginalized and not treated as eligible citizens of Nigeria. As humans, they tend to react which led to the creation of the Biafran state. Achebe agrees with this fact when he states, "The Nigerian Biafra War began soon after Emeka Ojukwu's proclamation of secession. Gowon decided to first use the federal army's First Command in what he termed a "police action" in an attempt to "restore federal government authority in Lagos and the break-away from Eastern region" (Achebe, 2012, p.128). The move to capture the Biafran border towns of Ogoja and Nsukka proved to be a declaration of war. Following this, in July 1967, Nigerian troops attempted to cross the Niger Bridge into Biafra as he portrays.

Most of Achebe's reminiscences of the Biafran war are that of trauma, hopelessness, despair, anxiety and death. As events unfold, there were great efforts made by international organizations to foster peace and unity in the two warring

states but it was to no avail as Gowon, the then head of the Nigerian state avoided most meetings called by the Organization of African Unity (OAU).

It is obvious that Biafrans were gaining an upper hand at first but there was a decline along the way. Series of failures, hardships and hunger were on the increase. Nigerian leaders made all efforts to block avenues that could help Biafrans. They once shot down a Swedish Red Cross plane carrying humanitarian supplies and medicines to those who were sick and almost dying of hunger. It got to the extent that they detained some international Red Cross directors, all geared towards frustrating them so that they could give up but it strengthened them the more as they insisted on seeking their freedom through the creation of the Biafran state.

The absence of health personnel worsens the fate of those wounded during the war. Most pregnant women died as a result of poor health care and the absence of pre-natal care. These terrifying experiences leave an indelible mark in their psyche. Olanna also describes how she saw Uncle Mbaezi's body lying helplessly on the floor and his wife's butchered naked body during the period of the anti-Igbo pogroms. This gory site haunts her for life and most women who lost their husbands assume the role of the father in their various families. This suggests that women cannot be totally considered weak, and also they tend to disagree with the general notion of being regarded as inferior beings.

Adichie in this novel concurs with Laura Sjoberg's assertion about the Biafran war as she states, "While war has gendered causes, gendered practices, and gendered consequences, it is also lived and experience in gendered ways" (Sjoberg, 2014, p.19). The gender identity of the woman comes into play during the war. Women also try their best in taking up their role as mothers and protectors of their family. Olanna takes over the responsibility of taking care of her family when Odenigbo's mother died which made him to be constantly drunk. Often, women watch helplessly as their children die as a result of malnutrition. They also trek amidst the dangers of being raped by soldiers to distant places in order to get food for their family. This signifies the sacrificial role of women and dismisses the notion of women as inferior or weak. It was Olanna's duty to scramble for food when Chiamaka, her adopted child, suffers from Kwashiorkor. Mama Oji and many other women dared the consequences of being raped and went to relief centers to struggle for food for their families. Adichie imbued in her characters an outstanding spirit of courage, perseverance and resilience. She posits that war wreaks havoc on the lives of women and girls and on the health and educational services they provide which is pertinent to the survival and development of the family and community.

Furthermore, federal troops were dispatched to the East and instructed to kill as many as they could so that the Nigerian nation could take over those areas. Achebe describes the Asaba massacre as the worst of its kind, as they killed so many people and destroyed their property. Defenseless men and boys were killed and more than half killed at Asaba are titled chiefs from the area. Their bodies were not properly buried which contradicts the tradition of the people and violates their rights as custodians of tradition of the area.

This could be regarded as the height of man's inhumanity to man, this level of atrocities attracted notable figures who were worried over the killings of their fellow human beings. This is a clear indication that Igbo's were right in looking for a way out of their predicament. It is sad that human beings can be slaughtered like animals without any remorse from the perpetrators and still, wants the victims to be united as one. No doubt, this must have left horrifying images and visions on the psyche of those whose loved ones were massacred during this period and even more on those who witnessed while this evil deed is being carried out.

In her essay, *Half and half children: Third generation women writers and the new Nigerian novel*, Jane Bryce argues that "a new group of Nigerian women writers offers a recognition of national realities in which the feminine is neither essentialized and mythologized nor marginalized, but unapologetically central to the realist representation of a recognizable social world" (as cited in Lecznar, 2016). Women of Adichie's generation, he suggests are "rewriting the script of national identity construction by empowering and centralizing female voices and identities in their works".

However, all effort proved abortive as more people were killed; the Nigerian troops seemed to have an edge over Biafrans as they had more deadly weapons that could wipe away an entire state. Achebe rightly states, "By the time the Nigerian forces were done they had shot at least 1,000 and perhaps 2,000 Ibos [sic], most of them civilians. There were other atrocities, throughout the region. In Oji River, *The Times* of London reported on August 2, 1968, the Nigerian forces opened fire and murdered fourteen nurses and the patients in the wards. In Uyo and Okigwe, more innocent lives were lost to the brutality and blood lust of the Nigerian soldiers..." (Achebe, 2012, p.137).

Raiding the hospitals and killing nurses is just the height of ruthlessness on the side of the Nigerian army. Patients who are almost at the point of death died instantly as they couldn't withstand any form of pain: they were already brutalized and dehumanized with this kind of torture. These are horrifying images of brutality and man's inhumanity to his fellow creatures. It takes Achebe a very long time to narrate this repulsive scene of murder and the Nigerian government's heartless attitude towards the war which focused especially on Igbo's.

These are a few instances of the gruesome nature of the war that rendered most people useless. It affected the psyche of those who witnessed it, and they always pray not to have a repeat of that.

Consequently, everyone seemed to be against Biafra; the death of the United Nations secretary general in an air crash in 1961 affected Biafrans as there were no more supports from the organization. Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe, a onetime president of Nigeria pleaded with the United Nations to help end the problem in Nigeria, but his propositions were dismissed on the ground that it was 'unworkable'. Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe withdrew his support for Biafra and some intellectuals believed that Ojukwu never consulted him before declaring the war. Dr. Okechukwu Ikejiani affirms, "His

[Azikiwe's] feeling was that when a leader of a nation wants to go to war, he should consult the people. Primarily Ojukwu should have consulted Azikiwe. Secondly, he should have consulted [Micheal] Okpara [premier of eastern Nigeria]. Thirdly, he should have consulted other leaders" (Achebe, 2012, p. 218). These are the issues that lead to the problems of Biafra which made them to look for a way out of their predicament as everyone seemed to be against them.

As a result of the constant killings of Biafrans and the high rate of malnutrition, Ojukwu and his members were considering ending the war. There are indications that the war are gradually coming to an end, Achebe accepts this fact when he states, "After failing many times over the thirty-month period, Gowon finally had Biafra surrounded on three fronts. In Mid-January 1970, after Owerri had been recaptured by the federal troops and Uli airport was under heavy air and land assault by federal troops led by Olusegun Obasanjo, I knew the end of Biafra was near" (Achebe, 2012, p.223). Achebe's feelings were confirmed and became a reality when Ojukwu announced on the radio that he was "leaving the People's republic of Biafra to explore alternative options for peace". This shocked most Biafrans as they never expected this from their fearless leader.

Moreover, some intellectuals believe there is no need fighting for battle that has caused them so much pain and misery. As such, Sir Louis Mbanefo and Philip Effiong met with a small group of Biafrans to discuss the way forward and how to end the war. Most people didn't accept to surrender but a majority of intellectuals like Chinua Achebe feels there is no need continuing a battle that seems endless and whose leader has abandoned the people. They encouraged the troops to lay down their weapons.

One could clearly ask the need for the Biafran war if the Federal Government ended up destroying property and inflicting injuries, killings and sufferings without achieving their aim. Then, the Biafran war is not worth fighting for considering the fact that it affected Biafrans and traumatized the psyche of those who witnessed and lost their loved ones during the war. There were a series of repulsive reminiscences and horrifying images of death as demonstrated in this Achebe's memoir, which is deeply disturbing. Achebe and Adichie approach some crucial issues such as ethnicity in a strikingly divergent ways which in essence reflects the thematic preoccupation of both writers. They tend to agree on some certain aspects like ethnicity and favoritism that lead to the Biafra war which is obviously historical.

## VI. CONCLUSION

This paper has illustrated how Achebe and Adichie give a detailed account of the history as well as literary re-historicization respectively of the Biafra war. Achebe's memoir gives a vivid account of all the events in the war while Adichie draws credence from Achebe's and Chukwuemeka Ike's version. Both writers belong to different generations but their account of the war revolves around the marginalization of the Easterners and the disastrous effects which proves the Igbo's right. Each writer vigorously outlines the efforts of the Nigerian government to jeopardize the Igbo's effort of being free. It is clear therefore that the Biafran war is a reaction to the marginalization of the Easterners. The Easterners could vividly see the manifestation of tribalism and ethnic chauvinism. What *There was a Country* and *Half of a Yellow Sun* do in our contemporary world in a remarkable way is to expose the problems that Nigeria as a country had and still has. Nigeria is at a crossroads with lots of political manipulations by the wealthy, tribalism, and corruption, as well as a documented history of what led to the Biafran war and its horrifying manifestations. War is described in Achebe's memoir and Adichie's novel as a cultural, political, tribal and social phenomenon which exposes the high rate of tribalism and corruption in Nigeria. Achebe and Adichie challenge those who are corrupt and faced with lots of ethical issues which they extensively analyzed in their literary artifacts. They explore the repulsive reminiscences of war which left many psychologically dead and traumatized with many events of bloodshed. It is very disheartening for parents to watch their children die of starvation and much more deadly for children to see how their parents and relations are murdered in cold blood. The war caused a lot of environmental disasters as bombs were detonated which affected the productivity of the lands. War is not necessary for peace and most war renders its victims hopeless without achieving its aim. Nigerians, especially those from the Eastern part, should be provided with adequate post traumatic rehabilitation due to the effects of war, which has remained a haunting history for them. This paper posits that war is not necessary for any form of correction or peace and should not be used as a measure to effect changes in any society. It rather causes psychological trauma for those involved, and those who witnessed it are left with horrifying reminiscences which are derived from trauma. The paper concludes that these can be avoided and war should be discouraged at all cost.

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**Ijeoma Ann Ngwaba (nee Ibeku)** is a native of Nsirimo Umuahia in Abia State, Nigeria. She is a graduate of English and Literary Studies (B.A) from Abia State University, Uturu in 2004 with a second class upper division. She also graduated from University of Port Harcourt, Rivers State in 2009 with an M.A (Hons) in Arts (Ph.D grade); and recently completed her Doctoral program at University of Ibadan, Nigeria in 2021.

She lectures at Federal University Oye-Ekiti, Ekiti State, Nigeria. Her works are extensively published in journals and others have been cited in reputable theses and books. Her research interest covers African and African-American literature, Migration literature, literary theory and criticism, Film and Media studies, Oral literature, gender-related discourses and comparative literary studies.

Dr Ngwaba is a member of North East Modern Language Association (NeMLA), African Literature Association (ALA), English Scholars Association of Nigeria (ESAN) and African Association for Japanese Studies. She won the 2020 North East Modern Language Association Postcolonial essay award.