

# The Igbo Persona and the Agony of the Nigerian Civil War in Hyginus Ekwuazi's *That Other Country*

**Solomon Awuzie**

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8239-7392>

Edo State University Uzairue-Iyamho

[awuzie.solomon@edouniversity.edu.ng](mailto:awuzie.solomon@edouniversity.edu.ng)

[sonsawuzie@yahoo.com](mailto:sonsawuzie@yahoo.com)

## Abstract

The article contends that Hyginus Ekwuazi's *That Other Country* addresses the Nigerian Civil War experience and the agonies of the Igbo persona. Being a latter third generation Nigerian poetry, the collection chronicles the connection between the agonies of the Igbo persona, the activities that led to the war, and the war experience itself. Unlike most Nigerian Civil War poetry, Ekwuazi's *That Other Country* is influenced by the recent campaign and agitation for Biafra. The poetry does not only record a new version of the war experience, it reflects the Igbo persona's disenchantment with the worsening socio-political situation of the Nigerian State. The poetry shows that the agony of the war glows, even though the war took place 50 years ago. The collection depicts that the agony of the war is fuelled by the inability of the Igbo persona to forget the horrible experience of his past. The article concludes that Nigerian Civil War poetry has continued to surface because successive Nigerian governments have been unable to provide a levelling ground for its people to melt away the tribal and ethnic mistrust that has become part of its national consciousness.

**Keywords:** Igbo; Nigerian Civil War poetry; Biafra; Hyginus Ekwuazi; *That Other Country*

## Introduction

Hyginus Ekwuazi's *That Other Country* addresses the Nigerian Civil War experience and the agonies of the Igbo persona. The Igbo persona in the collection is a representation of the Igbo people—the people that constituted the major ethnic group in the former eastern Nigerian region and who are presently occupying the five eastern Nigerian states of Anambra, Enugu, Imo, Abia and Ebonyi as well as some parts of other Nigerian states like Rivers and Delta. Even though Biafra was originally put to use to map the geographical space of the former eastern Nigerian region during the war, whenever Biafra is mentioned in recent times, the five eastern Nigerian states quickly come to mind. This is not only because Igbo was the major ethnic group in the former eastern Nigerian region and that they were actively involved in the war, but it is also because Colonel Chukwemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu, the then eastern Nigerian governor (who declared the region as the sovereign state of Biafra), was Igbo. Being a latter third generation Nigerian poetry (see Awuzie 2019, 78), Ekwuazi's *That Other Country* chronicles what it is like to be Igbo in the present Nigerian federation. It represents the agonies of this generation of Igbo, while showing a very strong connection between the agonies of the persona and the activities that led to the war, as well as the war experience itself. More than the activities that led to the war, the collection emphasises how the war has reshaped the life and destiny of the Igbo persona in the Nigerian federation.

Unlike most Nigerian Civil War poetry, especially those written by the Igbo poets, that have been influenced by the poets' involvement in the war, Ekwuazi's *That Other Country* is influenced by the recent campaign and agitation for Biafra, initially started by Ralph Uwazurike, the leader of the Movement for the Actualisation of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB) and joined by Nnamdi Kanu, the leader of the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB).

*That Other Country* does not only evoke memories of the Nigerian Civil War, it reflects on the grief associated with the war and what the persona sees as the mistakes of the war. The collection provides some relative details on the travails of the Igbo persona in the present Nigerian federation. It sees the Nigerian Civil War as a war of self-defence, but laments the defeat of the Biafran militia government. It goes ahead to link the present Igbo persona's predicaments with both the successes and failures of the war. Like most Nigerian Civil War poetry, the collection celebrates the Biafran militia soldiers who fought in the war with naked bodies and bare hands. The collection reveals that the continuous agitation and campaign for Biafra are fuelled by the marginalisation of the people, the high level of corruption in the country and the worsening national insecurity. For the past 50 years, the Igbo community has had to deal with one form of corruption or the other as well as the pollution that has always been there as a result of oil drilling. In order to stress this, the collection maintains that successive Nigerian governments have created an atmosphere of chaos in the region in order to continuously milk the people. However, the aim of this article is to examine Ekwuazi's *That Other Country*

and to discuss its treatment of the Nigerian Civil War theme. This article reflects on the personality of the Igbo persona as well as the agonies that have endeared him to his Biafran past. Part of the reasons for this article is to also posit that Ekwuazi's *That Other Country* examines the Nigerian Civil War from a very new perspective other than the usual. It emphasises how Ekwuazi's collection engages with the Nigerian Civil War experience in order to reflect on the Igbo persona's disenchantment with the socio-political realities of the Nigerian federation.

## Igbo Persona in Nigerian Civil War Poetry

Nigerian Civil War poetry has continuously recounted the agonies of the Igbo people as a result of the Civil War. One of the reasons for this is because many of the Nigerian Civil War historical accounts have contemplated the war as genocide against the Igbo, hence this mindset is translated into Nigerian Civil War poetry (Eke 2015, 281). The agonies of the war were first anticipated in Okigbo's latter poetry, which reflected the crisis that led to the Civil War and has continued to surface in a number of poems produced by other Igbo poets who wrote poetry during and after the Civil War. In Christopher Okigbo's "Path of Thunder" the poetic disposition that produced much of the post-war poetry is also anticipated (see Okuyade 2010, 206). After Okigbo, the Nigerian Civil War poetry persistently reports on the savagery of war to the extent of aestheticising its experience in poetry. This has also led to the war being described as the most creatively represented historical experience in Africa; and as a creative experience where the voice of the people and the full burden of their memory are recreated in poetry (Amuta 1988, 85; Soyinka 1999, 21).

Like many poets, Chinua Achebe's poetry on the Nigerian Civil War also reports the agonies of the war. In engaging with the issues of the war, Achebe's poetry is marked by an ambivalence that is typical of Igbo culture and that reflects on the agonies of carrying within oneself the memories of the war. Through the use of his poetic style that evokes the aura of traditional Igbo poetry, Achebe describes the horrors of war in a way that is marked by the ambiguity of Igbo life and culture. Not only does his poetry take an ironic stance upon the subject of war, but it also reflects on the duality of things. This is because as he himself has said, "the Igbo people have a firm belief in the duality of things. Nothing is by itself absolute" (Achebe in Nwakanma 2008, 10). Hence, his poetry assumes a documentary of the Igbo life during the years of the war in a way that reaches out for the soul. In his article on the Nigerian Civil War poetry, Okoye (2015, 2) reveals that Achebe's poetry reflects on the agonies of the Igbo during the war and that this was done in order to produce poetry that was designed to persuade the world to engage in bringing relief drops for the suffering Biafrans. Okoye also maintains that Achebe introduces and applies the concept of pathos into his poetry with a conscious aim of arousing pity and sadness. Achebe wrote only poetry at this time, probably because of his involvement in the war. His desire to write poetry sprang from his admiration of the kind of efforts his compatriots put into the war (see Ezenwa-Ohaeto 1997, 130; Hawley 2008, 17). In his memoir, entitled *There was a Country: A Personal*

*History of Biafra*, Achebe (2012, 3) affirms that there is a connection between the distress of war, its tension and the response it inspires, hence during the war, he could only express himself in poetry.

Apart from the major contributions of Chinua Achebe, most of the poems that came during and after the war were from poets associated with the University of Nigeria at Nsukka and the University of Ibadan. Even though Hausa as well as Yoruba poets wrote poetry that engages the Nigerian Civil War experience, the majority of the poetry that reflects on the plights of the Igbo during and after the war, was written by the Igbo associated with the University of Nigeria Nsukka (see Ebeogu 1992, 38). This is because the University of Nigeria Nsukka at that time fuelled the Biafran resistance and endowed it with a depth of philosophy, as well as drew the attention of a global audience to it (Ebeogu 1992, 38). Ebeogu argues that not only was poetry at the centre of the kind of literature produced by both scholars and natives alike during the war, but the poetry also reflects on the moods of the moment. After the war, the poetry produced at the University of Nigeria Nsukka evoked the commitments and patriotism of people during the war. Ebeogu (1992, 38) explains this thus:

... poems of the Biafran War were spontaneous in composition and immediate in their relevance. They tended to reflect the varying moods of the moment. There was no time lag between the experience and the songs that embodied that experience ... their metrics and their rhetorical thrust bore witness to the strains imposed upon any language during a traumatic situation.

The poetry reflects the harsh realities of widespread suffering and destruction. The outburst of creativity immediately after the war was informed by the poets' disgust and this has continuously been reflected in Nigerian Civil War poetry in the form of the tragic consequences of war. To also buttress this in the poetry, the poets capture the mental torture of the people and their frustration, which have been transformed into "the images of death, decay, and betrayal" (Aiyejina 1988, 115). Azuonye (1972, 2) posits that the agonies of the Igbo that have always surfaced in most Nigerian Civil War poetry can be linked to the fact that the images of the war hunt the poets' psyche because they see it as "a sad and senseless war" that truncated the ambitions of that generation. He reveals that the representations of Civil War experiences in poetry are persistently captured in most critical debates in order to show that the agony of the war does not only persist, but that the successive Nigerian governments have a lot to do to install peace that has been bruised during the war, and to restore unity among the aggrieved people for a better Nigerian nation.

### Igbo Persona in Ekwuazi's *That Other Country*

However, the expressions of pain, anger and despair about the war experience have not only been engaged by poets who experienced the war. Younger poets (like Hyginus Ekwuazi, who do not have first-hand experience of the war), have also recounted the agonies of the war experience they have heard so much about, because they too have

become victims of it. Unlike the older poets who reported how the sad and senseless war, which could have been averted, truncated the ambitions of millions of Igbo youths, Ekwuazi's poetry captures the effect of the war on the present Igbo consciousness in the Nigerian federation. One similar feature of Nigerian Civil War poetry is that both the older poets and the younger poets address the war experience as if they had both experienced it. In Ekwuazi's *That Other Country* for instance, the persona does not only record his imagination of the war experience, he manipulates it to reflect his disenchantment with the worsening socio-political situation of the Nigerian State. He uses his poetry to show that the agony of the war glows, even though the war took place 50 years ago. And like the older generation of poets who wrote war poetry, Ekwuazi depicts that the agony of the war is fuelled by the inability of the Igbo persona to forget the horrible experience of his past. In the preface to the collection, Ekwuazi (2010, 6) explains that the ability to forget the past is the greatest of all God's gifts. When a person continues to hold on to the agony of the past, he does not only hurt himself, he is unable to move on. Ekwuazi posits further that one's ability to forget is very crucial, thus:

I recall a graveside oration at a Muslim funeral. The greatest gift of God to man, said the imam, is man's ability to forget. I've always understood him to mean that the weight of certain memories could be potentially fatal—if other memories didn't, mercifully, completely delete them or blunt their edges. But then, for me, there remains, always, the memory of even that which is forgotten.

Throughout the collection, the Igbo persona shows that he finds it difficult to forget. In "Bread crumbs do not assuage loneliness—or do they?" the Igbo persona reveals that his inability to forget is linked to his feeling of rejection in the Nigerian federation. In the fifteenth stanza of the poem, the Igbo persona explains that his rejection now makes him feel "like a deflated balloon" (Ekwuazi 2010, *That Other Country*, p.62).<sup>1</sup> Though this feeling only exists inside of him, on the outside he looks "... all a man should be: strong, resilient, impervious" (p.62). To even stress what his rejection has made of him, the Igbo persona posits further:

... our friends and relations, who stood by me  
throughout the period, see me as the man who  
lost both eyes and both arms and both feet but  
even so, functions adequately—

I see pity peeping through the admiration on  
their faces but they cannot, these kind souls  
they cannot see the vacuum within me—

they cannot see  
the loneliness which disconnects me

---

1 Hereafter, all references to lines in Ekwuazi's poetry collection, *That Other Country* (2010) are given as page numbers only.

from even myself (p.62)

The above lines underscore the Igbo persona's disenchantment with everything around him. They also show the Igbo persona's disconnection with friends from other tribes or ethnicities that helped out during the war. While trying to grapple with his feeling of rejection, he is further confronted with the problems of the nation's socio-political instability and worsening national insecurity.

The collection reveals that the Igbo persona is left with no choice but to recoil to memories and to dreams. Ekwuazi has explained how disturbing these memories as well as dreams can be in the preface. When soaked in the memory of Biafra, he posits, the mind of the Igbo persona works like "an electronic billboard, with the images replacing one another in quick succession." He notes further that at times in the mind of the Igbo persona, there could be "a bleep ... red lights flash ... and a blank occurs where an image had been. But the blank itself tells a story: a story which skirts round and round the deleted images, hinting, tapping, reaching out, daring to remember" (Ekwuazi 2010, 6). The Igbo persona's dreams of the war experience, on the other hand, are connected with his memories of the same experience. His dreams have the ability to assemble the memories that have been torn to tatters by the present socio-political realities of the country. For a persona whose mind is in chaos, as we have seen in the collection, the Igbo persona represents an individual who is drowning. This, therefore, explains why Ekwuazi's *That Other Country* (a collection of 33 poems), creates a picture of drowning Igbo persona in a country that is blessed with both human and natural resources. Charles Nnolim (2012, 158) has earlier created the societal imagery in Nigerian literature of the present generation as representing a rudderless and drowning ship. Hence, in creating his poems in this collection, Ekwuazi reiterates not just this imagery of a drowning society, he depicts how this has come to define the personality of the Igbo persona. His collection represents the Igbo as a drowning persona, not just in a rudderless ship, but in quicksand. Seeing himself "drowning," to use the words of Ekwuazi (2010, 6) in the preface to the collection, the Igbo persona "remembers his whole life—in a series of images." The poems that are contained in the collection, therefore, represent the drowning Igbo persona's reverberation of his chaotic life experiences. By recounting his experiences through the poems, the persona reveals the image of himself as torn between two realities. First is the reality of the Nigerian State as a failed federation, especially as concerns its inability to forge kinship ties between its ethnic groups. The second is the reality of the Igbo persona's past, as well as his memory of Biafra, which haunts him and foregrounds the images of his rejection. The persona's rejection in a country where he truly belongs endears him to his memory of Biafra.

The poems detail how he contends with these dual realities of belonging to a country where he is less regarded, and how he has been able to carry within him the imagery of Biafra—the same imagery that now conditions his place in the Nigerian socio-political landscape. This picture of himself is even evident in the poem entitled "At times, there isn't enough room in my heart," where he compares the "vast interior" of his mind to a

universe that is large enough to contain his dual personality. Finding himself in a position where he feels rejected in his own country, the Igbo persona is left with no option other than to get obsessed with his memory of Biafra. In another poem, entitled “Can this cup pass me by, this dead of night?” Biafra is represented as no less a country. Whereas Nigeria remains the persona’s nationality, Biafra is represented as a country that occupies the persona’s mind—a country that feeds on the persona’s memory. Hence, Biafra is described in the poem as a country he crosses into “when the present/ walks, casually, backwards/ into the future/ to balm with solitude/ wounds afflicted/ and wounds sustained/ in public and private conflicts” (pp.9–10). It is also described as the “bits and pieces of a life already lived” (p.9) and the “bits and pieces of a journey already made/ on the road of lost innocence/ and on the road of innocence regained” (p.9).

Even when the persona wants to be identified as part of the Nigerian federation, he is treated with suspicion. The persona links his inability to easily mingle in the Nigerian federal system to the stigma the Biafran “years of failure and success/ of bad choices and good choices/ and choices neither good nor bad” brought upon him (p.9). Knowing that the Biafran picture has become part of the images that mark his identity, the persona accepts it. This acceptance now forges an attachment between him and the Biafran memories. In the greater part of the collection, the persona reflects this attachment in the form of love for the Biafran memories. This love is evident in the following lines where the persona addresses Biafra directly: “how fiercely/ and how deeply/ I value you” and “how hopelessly/ and how passionately/ I love you” (p.25).

In the collection, the persona recounts his Nigerian realities as characterised by chaos and corruption. In the poem entitled “Pictures I’ve tucked away in my memory,” the persona recounts the incongruous situation that has become part of his Nigerian public and private life. He states that he lives “in the creeks” where gas is flared, yet he cooks with faggots of “wet mangrove” (p.36). The poem paints a picture of poverty in a country that is blessed with abundant human and natural resources. The poem shows a very big gap between the political class and the masses. While the political class lives a life of luxury, the masses are recreated as a suffering populace. This incongruous situation in Nigerian public and private life is the major cause of chaos in the country. Not only has suffering been established as an important place in the lives of its people, but anger is also another cancer in the life of the nation and it seeks to tear the country apart. The Igbo persona notes in the poem that in his backyard, anger lives in those flared gases “like salamander in fire” (p.36). Having given his homesteads, farmlands as well as his sacred grooves in order for the “oil wells” to be developed, the “oil wells” become the source of crude oil that destroys his source of livelihood. Like the flared gas that fills his atmosphere with toxic chemicals, the barrels of oil pollute the earth, rendering him and his mates almost handicapped. Hence, he posits: “the anger in the creeks/ and the fire in the creeks—they set my memory on fire” (p.36). The Igbo persona laments further that he now lives in constant fear at the sight of:

all those images of:

gas flaring in anger  
 all through the day  
 all through the night ...  
 transforming every  
 raffia-thatched homestead  
 into a Turkish bath (p.37)

The poem shows that every aspect of the persona's life reflects the ruin which the Nigerian situation has made of it. The poem reveals that the oil that was discovered in the persona's community has caused him more harm than good. Apart from bringing poverty and suffering among his people, it has also turned his community into a war zone.

In "The feeling persists," the Igbo persona relates these experiences to an expression of hate for the people. The poem also reiterates the malicious victimisation as well as the accusation of his people that they ignited the civil war that took most of their people by killing "the bird" (p.15). The "bird" in the poem refers to the Prime Minister, who was killed in the 1966 coup that was led by a group of junior military officers. Even as the years pile on, the accusing finger has never ceased to point at him and his people. Instead of ameliorating the effect of this accusation, the accusing finger has since "multiplied and tripled and/ quadrupled" the effect that the present generation is now brought into the picture. Having underscored his series of reminiscences on the corruption and the chaotic situation that characterised his Nigerian experience, the Igbo persona resolves never again should the "bitterness and sorrow" that are associated with his Nigerian citizenship be allowed to poison his day.

The Igbo persona recoils into his memories of Biafra just to escape his chaotic Nigerian experiences. In the poems, Biafra is portrayed as a country where the persona finds peace and succour in its memories—a country of self-reflection and pain. In order to migrate into this state of mind, the persona's senses traverse "a veritable highway" and then meet at the junction where his memories connect with his "dreams through a revolving door that opens both ways ... into another country" (p.6). He reveals in "The feeling persists" that "on this endless stretch of road/ that leads to the home" he barely knows and can dimly remember, the only landmarks guiding his feet are his memories of Biafra—the same Biafra he thought he had lost. The Igbo persona compares his remembrances of Biafra to strands "of dried meat" in-between one's teeth "where no broomstick can reach" (p.14). What this also implies is that whenever he is soaked in his memories of Biafra, he usually feels alone. His loneliness is defined by the fact that his endless journey into his world of memories is a journey within himself. Hence, when he is in it, no words or hands can reach him. Within his universe of memories, what occupies him is pain. This happens because "each step" of memory is the digging out of the strand of pain like when one tries to dig out the "venison in the cavity of/ a decayed tooth/ where no salve can reach" (pp.14–15). In the poem entitled "I know what it is like," the Igbo persona states that he knows "what it is like to drown/ in memory" (p.11). Drowning in memory is contemplated as that state of mind where the persona

sees himself living in the Biafran past. He reveals that when he is drowned in memory he is “adrift in a fog of pain” (p.24):

- the pain of a premature birth
- at the cock’s third crow
- the pain of an umbilical cord yet to be severed from a dying baby
- the pain of a life unlived
- the pain of a tiny grave without a cross ... (p.24)

Once he is “adrift in the fog” of his memories, it takes time for the pain to fade away (p.24). The fading of the pain occupies him with anger that rages like fire: “like the fire that burns but/ does not destroy” and “like the fire that preserves/ what it destroys” (p.24). This shows that these memories are not ordinary. As a matter of fact, they are memories that are triggered by ordinary incidents of the day. Despite the invasion of his mind by the spectral of the war, he learns to wrap the pain that comes with it in a smile. Instead of the pain causing him to hate the war memories, it endears him to it the more.

In “I shed lava-hot tears for both halves of the yellow sun,” the Igbo persona notes that for every tear that drops from his eyes in this state of memory, he hears “the shuffling footsteps” of his people. He describes them as a “hapless and dispossessed people” who are constantly seeking to better the home they had left in order “to seek a home away from home” (p.18). He states that sometimes those “shuffling footsteps” “cross-fade into ululations” “for all who died/ defending the homesteads/ with their naked bodies” (p.18). The poignancy of the remembered pain is “the permanent pain of a war/ lost and won on the fighting fields/ but now carried into the dining room.” The grief that is associated with the memories of the war is continuously recounted like one would count the beads of the rosary. The memories can be compared to a string that strung a million grieves together. The grief is usually that of loss and emptiness. The Igbo persona carries this loss in his heart every day and night. The loss in his heart has layers and its presence in his heart builds up into one solid memory of the Biafra whose presence “continues to light up the road ahead” of him (p.35). In “The pain that has marked me for life” he compares the pain of losing the war to the pain that is “worse than labour pains” (p.47). The pain that has marked him is “of different hues and shapes” (p.47). The pain is further described with the metaphor of “the snake/ that has swallowed its tail” (p.47) and as:

the pain that burns in the body  
as it burns in the mind

the pain that burns at night  
as much as it burns at day

the nerve-wrecking pain  
that I’ve never been able to straddle (p.47)

In “The pied piper sang of a home he didn’t know,” he links the pain to “the smell of/ blood” he perceives as well as “the sound of the fire and the screams of/ the dying” that are “built into a soul-tearing dirge” that he feels (p.64). Even though the war happened many years ago, the “years have not diluted” the smell as well as the screams he hears. He notes again that when his memories are in their full display, “the present and the past become two streams/ emptying into the same river and seamlessly/ flowing towards the ocean” (p.102). In “When dreams offer no escape from the turmoil of memories,” which is the last poem of the collection, the persona makes a statement of hope on the Biafran dream: “memories that are carved in stone/ always bring forth dreams cast in granite” (p.106). He explains that “this memory-turned-into-dream” that takes him out of himself has “deposited experiences of a macabre and eerie kind” in him (p.106) and now he remembers who he is. Hence, he now knows that he is nothing but “Memory!”

## Conclusion

In conclusion, Hyginus Ekwuazi’s *That Other Country* has not only been able to show that the agonies of the war persist; it has also revealed the extent to which the war has affected the Igbo persona. The collection depicts that this generation of the Igbo represents individuals who are torn between two realities, with each demanding equal attention. While the first reality is informed by the circumstance of his immediate reality in the Nigerian space, the second is conditioned by the terrible memories of the war that have both worsened the persona’s emotional wellbeing, and have created room for his marginalisation. Being that the collection is recent, it goes to reveal the mental status of the Igbo in the present Nigerian space. Since poetry is an important means through which poets purge themselves of their emotional realities, for Nigerian Civil War poetry to continue to surface after 50 years, shows that successive Nigerian governments have been unable to provide a levelling ground for its people to melt away the tribal and ethnic mistrust that has become part of its national consciousness. Of course, the collection has shown that instead of killing the horrible memories of the war, time has continued to fan its ember.

## References

- Achebe, C. 2004. *Collected Poems*. New York: Anchor Books.
- Achebe, C. 2012. *There Was a Country: A Personal History of Biafra*. London: Allen Lane.
- Aiyejina, F. 1988. “Recent Nigerian Poetry in English: An Alternative Tradition.” In *Perspective on Nigerian Literature: 1700 to Present*, Vol 1, 112–128, edited by Y. Ogunbiyi. Lagos: Guardian Books.
- Amuta, C. 1988. *Literature of the Nigeria Civil War: Perspectives on Nigerian Literature*, Vol. 1. Lagos: Guardian Books.

- Awuzie, S. 2019. "Mirroring the Society, Mirroring its Hospital: Hyginus Ekwuazi's Poetry and the Challenge of Nation-Building." *English Studies at NBU* 5(1): 77–91. <https://doi.org/10.33919/esnbu.19.14>.
- Azuonye, C. (Ed.). 1972. *Nsukka Harvest*. Nsukka: Odunke Publications.
- Ebeogu, A. 1992. "The Spirit of Agony: War Poetry from Biafra." *Research in African Literatures* 23 (4): 35–49.
- Eke, K. 2015. "War and Nigerian Poetry: Peter Onwudinjo as a Case Point." Okike: Chinua Achebe Memorial Edition, 279–295.
- Ekwuazi, H. 2010. *That Other Country*. Ibadan: Kraft Books.
- Ezenwa-Oheato. 1997. *Chinua Achebe: A Biography*. Oxford: James Currey.
- Hawley, J. 2008. "Biafra as Heritage and Symbol: Adiche, Mbachau and Iweala." *Research in African Literatures* 39(2): 15–26. <https://doi.org/10.2979/RAL.2008.39.2.15>.
- Nnolim, C. 2012. "A New Writer in a New Context: Camillus Ukah's When the Wind Blows." *ANA Review* (1): 158–164.
- Nwakanma, O. 2008. "Metonymic Eruptions: Igbo Novelists, the Narratives of the Nation and New Developments in the Contemporary Nigerian Novel." *Research in African Literature* 38 (2): 1–14. <https://doi.org/10.2979/RAL.2008.39.2.1>.
- Okoye, C. 2015. "Poetics of Pathos: Achebe's War Poetry." *Mgbakoigba: Journal of African Studies* 5 (1): 1–8.
- Okuyade, O. 2010. "The Re-articulation of Hope from Grief: Nigerian Civil War Poetry as Ledger." *Novitas-Royal (Research on Youth and language)* 4 (2): 201–215.
- Soyinka, W. 1999. *The Burden of Memory, the Muse of Forgiveness*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.