

Biafra and the Question of Genocide: Examining the Dimensions of Violence in *Heroes and Toads of War*

Stephen David

Summary

Genocide is often used to describe the Igbo experience during the Biafra/Nigeria civil war, particularly within secessionist discourse. This has become a potent tool in gathering support among the Igbo youths – who did not witness the war and consequently rely on “available” narratives of the war. The classification of the war as a genocide presents certain polemics, some are: the difficulty of casting Biafra as vulnerable and lacking in agency; the framing of the war suffering as a universal Igbo experience; the presentation of Biafra as ethnically homogeneous, and that Biafra stimulated linear solidarity from its inhabitants as a force for absolute good. Employing insights from literature, this study reads the dimensions of violence in selected literary narratives of Biafra against International Criminal Court’s definition of genocide. It concludes that there were events that could be described as cases of war crimes narrated in the texts; but there was no intention to annihilate the Igbo. The texts narrate acts of brutality perpetrated by both belligerents. It finds also, that genocide was used as a tool for mobilizing support for the Biafran cause during the war. It was a propaganda tool to gain the attention of the world and to motivate a fight to the end.

Opsomming

“Volksmoord” is ’n term wat dikwels gebruik word om die Igbo-ervaring gedurende die Biafra/Nigerië-burgeroorlog te beskryf – veral binne die afstigtingsdiskoers. Dit het ’n kragtige instrument geword om steun onder die Igbo-jeug, wat nie die oorlog beleef het nie en gevolglik op “beskikbare” oorlogvertellings staatmaak, te werf. Die klassifisering van die oorlog as ’n volksmoord ontketen bepaalde polemieke, waaronder: die problematiese uitbeelding van Biafra as kwesbaar en hulpeloos; die representasie van die lyding wat met die burgeroorlog gepaard gegaan het as ’n universele Igbo-ervaring; die voorstelling van Biafra as etnies homogeen, en die veronderstelde lineêre solidariteit onder die inwoners van Biafra as ’n absolute mag ten goede. Hierdie artikel interpreteer dimensies van geweld in bepaalde literêre vertellings van Biafra aan die hand van die Internasionale Strafhof se omskrywing van “volksmoord”. Die gevolgtrekking is dat daar inderdaad gebeure plaasgevind het tydens die burgeroorlog wat as oorlogsmisdade beskryf kan word en wat in die tekste oorvertel word. Die bedoeling was egter geensins om die Igbo uit te wis nie; die tekste beskryf dade van brutaliteit wat deur beide strydende kampe gepleeg is. Verder blyk dit dat volksmoord as ’n propagandistiese hulpmiddel aangewend is gedurende die oorlog om steun vir die Biafraanse saak te wen – dit is gebruik om die wêreld se aandag te trek en die konflik enduit te regverdig.

JLS/TLW 34(2), June/Junie 2018
ISSN 0256-4718/Online 1753-5387
© *JLS/TLW*
DOI: 10.1080/02564718.2018.11711



Introduction

Agitations for Biafra as an alternative space to the problematic Nigerian state is gaining wide acclaim among Igbo youths. At the heart of this secessionist discourse is the framing of the civil war which followed the creation of Biafra in 1967 as one motivated by genocidal intentions. These narratives have been tooled by Zionist groups like IPOB and MASSOB¹ to garner support among Igbo youths by claiming that the safety of the Igbo people isn't assured in Nigeria. When staged against a backdrop of the wanton destruction of lives that occurred during the war – from July 6, 1967, to 13 January 1970, claims of genocide would seem true. However, a careful reading of the dimensions of violence in Biafra yields important questions regarding this framing. Literature presents a useful site for this kind of investigation due to the multiplicity of voices and stories it curates. Also, as Ernest Emenyonu observes, fiction has been a space where writers have grappled with the quotidian specifics of wartime Biafra (2008: ix) – in a way that presents deep stories of the Biafran experience beyond grand heroics. Attempts to memorialise Biafra through fictional lenses has produced compelling fictional works such as Chinua Achebe's *Girls at War and Other Stories* (1991), Chukwuemeka Ike's *Sunset at Dawn* (1976), Adichie Chimamanda's *Half of a Yellow Sun* (2006), Iweala Uzodinma's *Beast of No Nation* (2005).²

Biafra was carved out of Nigeria's eastern region on the 30th day of May 1967 and was comprised of many ethnic groups that were willing/unwilling citizens of the new nation. Chief among these ethnic groups were: Igbo, Ijaw, Itshokiri, Urhobo, Delta-Igbo, Calabari, Ishan and several others – all indicating Biafra's ethnic heterogeneity. The conflict that led to the creation of a secessionist state and eventual civil war could be traced to the January 15, 1966, putsch which is often called the Igbo coup,³ in which a group of young military officers, mostly of eastern extraction, attempted to effect a change of government. Although the coup failed, it left several northern

-
1. IPOB is an acronym for Indigenous People of Biafra, while MASSOB is Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra. I have chosen to refer to the groups as Zionists to indicate the manner in which Biafra is described as a space of perfection, much like Zion. On the other hand, the name also signals the Jewish identity which secessionists have struggled to create for Igbo people – as a lost tribe of Israel.
 2. This is just to mention a few of the popular prose fictional accounts. There are also works in other genres but the preponderance of the novel genre is evident.
 3. It is indeed difficult not to read the coup as Igbo-planned given the number of Igbo officers involved in the planning and execution. Also, Igbo politicians were spared in the political killings that heralded the coup. See Michael Gould (2013); Peter Baxter (2015); Godwin Alabi-Isama (2012).

political elites dead.⁴ It has been argued that it was anger over the killing of northern leaders that was used to incite the northerners to turn against easterners resident in the north (Achebe 2012: 63). The killings that occurred from 1966 to 1967, led to a mass flight of easterners back to the eastern region and offered grounds for a subsequent declaration of Republic of Biafra as a safe space for all easterners.⁵ In July of the same year, first shots were fired in what the Nigerian Government called a police action to bring the secessionist state back into the federation. This action was stiffly resisted by Biafra army. Consequently, the conflict spiralled into a thirty months-long traumatic war which ended after Biafra surrendered.⁶

The war claimed many lives, with accounts ranging from 150,000 to 3 million. Although scholars cannot agree on the body count, one thing that is indisputable is the devastating effect of the war on Biafrans – and that the most potent weapon used against them was starvation, which occurred after the imposition of a blockade on Biafra by Nigeria. The Nigerian excuse being that weapons were being smuggled into Biafra under the guise of food aid. The blockade, coupled with the pogroms that preceded the war, are some of the signs that are read by scholars as indicators of the genocidal intent of the civil war. There have been several spirited attempts to cast the civil war as a genocide, especially by writers of Eastern extraction. Chief among this group

-
4. It is important to add that General Aguiyi Ironsi – the General that took over after the coup – was also marked for execution by the coup plotters but he was able to seize the initiative from the planners in Lagos.
 5. However, Philip Aghoghovwia (2014) and Alabi-Isama (2012) present a different view of safety and belonging within Biafra. In fact, Aghoghovwia notes that the minority groups felt that they were under invasion by Biafra. See Aghoghovwia, Philip. *Ecocriticism and the Oil Encounter: Readings from the Niger-Delta*. An Unpublished PhD Thesis Submitted to Stellenbosch University. (2013). See also, Saro-Wiwa Ken (1989). *On a Darkling Plain: An Account of the Civil War*. Saro-Wiwa also narrates the atrocities committed against his people (a minority group) during the ‘invasion’ of their land by Biafrans.
 6. The historical background given here is propaedeutic, many of the undercurrents that could present credible rationale for the outbreak of the war are not captured here because they have been extensively studied by several scholars; in fact, it is almost impossible to write an extensive account of the war without slipping into terrains of plagiarism. For a deeper engagement with the history of the war see Michael Gould (2013); John de St. Jorre (1972) and Philip Effiong (2016), Akpan Ntieyong (1971). I should add that both Philip Effiong and Akpan Ntieyong were important members of the Biafran cabinet. Effiong was the Chief of Army Staff and second in command to General Odumegwu Ojukwu – the Biafran leader. While Akpan was the Secretary to the Government of Biafra.

of scholars are Chima Korieh, E.C. Ejiogu, Ekwe Ekwe and Chinua Achebe – who joined just before his death, as well as Fredrick Forsyth.

To achieve this framing of the devastating events of the war, Biafrans are presented as autochthonously Igbo, and as agentless non-aggressors who were persecuted for their identity. Biafra is cast as a space that was created for the protection of the easterners, a place where everyone suffered equally due to Nigerian brutality. The war is consequently read as the Federal army's attempt to exterminate the Igbo people. And since Biafra is ineluctably tied to Igbo survival, warring against the country is read as a threat to Igbo existence. Achebe in his celebrated war memoir, *There Was a Country* indicates the centrality of this framing of Igbo/Biafra identity to claims of genocide. He argues that the Nigerians wanted to “exterminate the Igbo people from the face of the earth”, and this “was predicated on a holy Jihad proclaimed by Islamic extremists in the Nigerian army” (2012: 229).⁷ He situates the war at the intersection of ethnic identity (Igbo-ness) and religion (Christianity).⁸ Beyond its contentious nature, Achebe's statement reflects how autochthony shapes the genocidal war rhetoric by rendering Biafran-ness synonymous to Igbo-ness. This linear representation of Biafra disavows the existence of Biafrans who weren't Igbo, Igbo who didn't identify as Biafrans, and the classed dimension of power and belonging in Biafra which exacerbated the suffering of ordinary Biafrans.

Similarly, E.C. Ejiogu writes that Biafra was created as a safe space to counteract Nigeria's genocidal push into Igbo heartland:

[B]ut for the declaration of the Republic of Biafra, which emerged as the replacement state that functioned for the protection of the well-being and larger interests of the Igbo and other targeted peoples of the Eastern Region, given the prevalent scenario epitomized by the new state industry, all bets were off that it could have been only a matter of time before the purge pushed right into the Eastern Region and the Igbo heartland in the same wholesale and free-wheeling style that had characterized it all along.

(2013: 750)

-
7. Herbert Ekwe Ekwe also follows this line of argument when he writes that 3.1 million Igbo were massacred by Nigerians. He accounts for only Igbo casualties (2011: 26).
 8. The religious war/ identity framing of the conflict presents many questions: For instance, there were Igbo people that remained in Nigeria during the war. According to Michael Gould, Dr. Upabi Asika, an Igbo lecturer at the University of Ibadan decided to stay in Ibadan on the Nigerian side during the war (2013: 75). Also, the war was led on the Nigerian side by a Christian, General Yakubu Gowon. The officer that received Biafran surrender, Colonel Olusegun Obasanjo – as he was then known – is a Christian.

Contrary to Ejiogu's position that Biafra was created to safeguard the lives of Igbo people, many accounts have made it clear that there were plans for secession well before the pogroms (Gould 2013; Baxter 2014; Venter 2015).⁹ Also, as Ntieyong notes, the Igbo wanted revenge for the 1966 pogroms. In fact, there were reprisal killings of Hausa people in the east (Ntieyong 1971: ix). To capture the mood of the time, he cites Ojukwu's statement that "[o]ur soldiers are ready [...] if Gowon should make the mistake of crossing into our territory, even by a few yards, we shall immediately go into open, outright and total war" (1971: xiv).¹⁰ Such state-ments, and there were indeed many of them – which praised the invincibility and impregnability of Biafra, make it a tad difficult to cast Biafra as an "agentless non-aggressor". It also makes it polemical to cast the war as one prosecuted for Igbo survival as argued by Herbert Ekwe Ekwe (2011), Chinua Achebe (1968 and 2012) among others.¹¹ Another action which threatens the possibility of framing Biafrans as non-aggressors was the invasion of Nigeria's mid-west region on 9 August 1967 – an act which clearly demonstrates Biafran agency and capacity to attack Nigeria.¹² Prior to the invasion, people in the mid-west had refused to support

-
9. Research has shown that secession was planned before the outbreak of northern massacres in 1966-67 and that this might be responsible for General Ojukwu's refusal of a part -implementation of the "Aburi" agreements, despite advice from notable members of his government (Ntieyong 1971). Also, key members of the Biafran cabinet like Dr. Pius Okigbo (Christopher Okigbo's brother) warned against secession due to the economic implications of a Nigerian blockade (Effiong 2017: 139). Michael Gould (2013) curates several documents that reveal attempts to purchase arms before the killings in the north. Also, Chinua Achebe (2012: 83) observes that "[a]s early as October 1966, some were calling for outright war".
 10. Ojukwu declared that no army in "black Africa" could take on Biafra. See Philip Effiong (2015: 135)
 11. By citing survival of the Igbo people as the bane of creating Biafra, Nigeria's war to forcefully reclaim Biafran territory is thus framed as a genocidal one. Resisting the invading Nigerians then becomes a war of survival for the Biafrans. However, survival had differing connotations for people in Biafra based on how they belonged as well as social class. For the hegemons, it meant survival of Biafra as a sovereign state while for the vulnerable, it invoked a struggle to stay alive, to survive the brutality of the war.
 12. Michael Gould describes the invasion as an "unprovoked foray into the mid-west region" (2013: 64). When the unprovoked nature of the invasion is read together with the targeted destination of the Biafrans – Lagos, the seat of power at the time – the salience of power struggle as the central pivot of the conflict becomes apparent. In fact, most accounts of the invasion berate the commanders of the invading forces for not rushing through to Lagos to seize

either side in the conflict due to the multiplicity of ethnic groups domiciled in the region. However, after the invasion – which subjected them to Biafran brutality, they were forced to support the Federal side (Gould 2013).¹³

Furthermore, Ejiogu’s statement illuminates the exclusion of other ethnic identities within narratives of Biafran suffering. Although he declares that Biafra was created as a haven for “the Igbo and other targeted peoples of the Eastern region”, his summation of the casualty figure features only Igbo casualties (750). This writing out of the presence of other groups within Biafra, and how they suffered might be a deliberate attempt to frame the Igbo people as victims, consequently disavowing the dimension of violence perpetrated by Igbo against other ethnic groups. Ultimately, it obliterates the ambiguity of Igbo identity as both victim and oppressor.¹⁴ This framing powers the casting of the Igbo nation as a people “targeted for annihilation” (Ejiogu 2013: 750).

Thus, to contribute to the genocidal war debate, and to complicate the Nigeria/Biafra framing of the debate, I turn to literary narratives of Biafra to gain some insight into the lived experiences of Biafrans within Biafra. Relying on literature’s capacity to “reflect and reflect on history” (Adebanwi 2013: 407), the role of the artist as witness (Huttenbach 2001) and the place of civil war fiction as “the only effective means to digest the poison of the past” (Hawley 2008: 15), this article examines the dynamics of violence, and suffering within Biafra through literary narratives of the war. Huttenbach (2001) observes that art serves as a means of bearing witness to traumatic experiences of genocide, in the same spirit, this article seeks to read literature as bearing witness against claims of genocide. In a sense, I read the “culpability [of Biafran hegemony] in causing things to fall apart in that society” (Chielozona 2005: 109).

Nigeria/Biafra war literature has enjoyed several deep explorations from scholars like Chidi Amuta (1983); Craig McLuckie (1990); Kole Omotoso

power. Ultimately, Major Banjo and other leaders of the invasion were executed. See Frederick Forsyth’s *Biafra: The Making of an African Legend* (1969).

13. The invasion is sometimes cited as the reason why the Yoruba people in the Western region joined the Federal side. Many towns in the invaded Mid-west region were Yoruba towns like Ore and Ondo. Sadly, the mid-westerners suffered more brutality after their liberation by Nigeria Army.
14. Igbo identity is central to arguments for, and against framing Igbo as victims of genocide. To present the Igbo people as marked for annihilation because of their religion, education and unrivalled economic drive, there’s the need to create a coherent and autochthonous identity. The presence of other ethnic groups who don’t necessarily fit into the mold threatens this narrative. Thus, they are silenced in the narrative of Biafra/Biafran-ness.

(1991); Chreachain Ni Firine (1991); JOJ Nwachukwu-Agbada (1996); Mathew, Leczner (2016); and Bryce, Jane (2008) among several others. However, no notable study has been devoted to reading literary texts against claims of genocide. Thus, by tracing how violence is perpetrated against Biafrans in the texts – and by who, this article investigates the veracity of genocidal war claims. But first, we will have to grapple with the term genocide.

Genocide and the Struggle for Definition

Defining genocide is a murky affair due to the scholarly contestations that continue to surround what qualifies as genocide. Although the term was coined, and used for the first time in 1944 by a Polish lawyer, Raphael Lemkin, to describe events of the Holocaust – and to name it so it could be criminalized in law. But it has since assumed different meanings and readings. To avoid the murky waters of contested definitions, I will base my reading on the 1948 United Nations definition of genocide which states that; “In the present convention, genocide means any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical [sic], racial or religious group [...]” (cited in Adam Jones (2006: 13). However, to also acknowledge the many flaws that have been identified in this definition, and the nuanced way the two successful genocide tribunals (ICTY and ICTR)¹⁵ have interpreted genocide, I will nuance my reading a little, sticking to the thread that links most of the definitions. To help in this regard, I employ Scott Straus’ (2001) comparison of 21 definitions of genocide to tease out the thread that runs through most of the definitions. Two themes that stand out are the “intent to destroy a collective” and the “helplessness of the victims”. One of the definitions that seems to speak to these two themes satisfactorily is Israel Charny’s (1994) definition. He describes genocide as “[m]ass killing of a substantial number of human beings, when not in the course of a military action against the military forces of an avowed enemy under conditions of the essential defencelessness and helplessness of the victims”. While this definition certainly won’t put to rest controversies concerning what genocide is, it is anchored on the helplessness of the victims and the intent to destroy. Upholding the helplessness of the victims is important in order not to deconstruct the concept to a state of aporia (a state where meaning is lost). These two themes can be considered the key to what genocide means. The thread that links them together is violence; how it is performed and by whom. It also requires an identification of the victims. These themes and questions are critical anchors for my reading.

15. ICTY is International Crimes Tribunal for Yugoslavia, while the ICTR is the tribunal on Rwanda.

In line of this nuanced reading of genocide, Heerten and Dirk Moses (2013) present broad overviews of efforts to frame the war as one fought with the total annihilation of the Igbo as its goal, thus pushing for its inclusion in the canon of genocidal events. Also, Roy Doron (2014) argues, convincingly with the aid of archival documents, that the genocide rhetoric was a tool for propaganda during the war.¹⁶ At the heart of the genocide discourse is the framing of Nigeria as perpetrators and Biafrans as victims. However, I will argue that reading “Biafrans” as victims in a blanket sense disavows violence perpetrated by Biafrans and excludes the real victims of the war – those who didn’t have power, or who didn’t “belong” to the privileged class or group.

Between Civil War and Genocide: Dimensions of Violence in Festus Iyayi’s *Heroes* and Eddie Iroh’s *Toads of War*

Eddie Iroh’s *Toads of War* (1979) and Festus Iyayi’s *Heroes* (1986) are historical novels that examine the traumatic experiences of the civil war. The texts possess exceptional closeness to historical details of the war due to the positionality of both authors as war witnesses. Eddie Iroh was a member of the Biafran civil service while Festus Iyayi was a journalist in Biafra. However, despite being poignant narratives of wartime suffering, they haven’t received as much critical attention as other texts in the civil war corpus – perhaps because their narratives are “overtaken by the events” of the war (Hawley 2008: 24). Conversely, it is these “events” that position the texts as apposite for my reading. *Toads of War* is the story of a wounded Biafran soldier, Kalu Udim, who is promptly relegated to the periphery due to his lack of physical agency. *Heroes* tells the story of Osime, a journalist who becomes disillusioned when he discovers that the war is a conscienceless intra-class scuffle between taskmasters. The robust narration of Biafra that the texts present make them viable canvases for looking beyond the pictures of starving pot-bellied children that have become emblematic to the war. To this end, the

16. He notes that Biafran authorities didn’t see the war as genocidal. But they needed the story to sustain the aid that was being smuggled into Biafra due to the Nigerian blockade and to frighten the Biafrans to fight on. Citing Nnamdi Azikiwe’s statement after he abandoned the Biafran struggle, Doron notes that Azikiwe, an Igbo elder statesman decried the way the rhetoric of genocide was used to hold the people hostage, and to facilitate the continuation of the war at a huge cost in terms of human lives. He also examines internal memos in the Biafran department of propaganda which state clearly that the Nigerian troops treated Igbo people in areas they captured from Biafra kindly. The Biafran authorities were indeed worried that this could prompt an exodus into Nigerian held territories, and consequently bring the war to an abrupt end. See Doron, Roy. Marketing genocide: Biafran propaganda strategies during the Nigerian civil war, 1967-1970. *Journal of Genocide Research* 16.2-3 (2014): 227-246.

paper aims to mine some of the deep-but-excluded stories of the vulnerable in wartime Biafra in fictional texts.

A good point to start in teasing out the dimensions of violence in the civil war would be Festus Iyayi's narration of civilian life under the occupation of Nigerian army and that of the Biafran. After putting out calls that Igbo people should report to the army office for vetting after their takeover of Benin City, the Biafrans that honour the invitation are put through a kangaroo investigation, and summarily executed (*Heroes* 55). When we meet Osime, the protagonist in *Heroes*, his solidarity lies with the federal troops until the dirtiness of the war hits close to home with the sadistic murder of his landlord, Mr. Ohiali. He feels partly responsible for Mr. Ohiali's death because he had encouraged him to honour the invitation for vetting put out to non-combatant Igbo by federal forces – but that was before his near-death encounter with soldiers at the welcome celebration (*Heroes* 40).¹⁷ His subsequent entreaties against going are rejected by Mr. Ohiali who has become convinced that heeding the call of the federal army is a show of innocence and solidarity.

Beyond the cordial relationship that exists between Osime and his landlord, the writer also strategically introduces a love affair between him and Ndudi, Mr. Ohiali's daughter. The relationship works to create Osime as a round character who is capable of deep emotions – an attribute which comes to the fore in his graphic description of Mr. Ohiali's killing. Capturing the excitement of the “hunters”, he says:

[...] the soldiers let him run for some time for they must have known that on that bare-naked ground, the man hadn't the slightest chance in the world. Then just as he reached the bank of the river, there was a sudden outburst of gunfire. It looked for a moment as if Mr Ohiali would make the river. Then he seemed to bend over backwards and crumble as the bullets hitting him first propelled him forward and then broke his back.

(*Heroes* 56)

Through a powerful use of empathic imagery, readers are invited to witness Mr. Ohiali's murder in the hands of soldiers who should protect him. We hear his back breaking and see his flailing hands as hot lead ravages his body. This scene has a profound effect on the readers because we know Ohiali intimately and can identify with him: we have seen him drinking beer, we know his family – we even participate in the pensive goodbyes he shares with his worried wife. Unlike the other men who are lined against a wall and shot, Mr. Ohiali wanted to live. The pleasure that his death gives his hunters, evokes deep emotions of pain and anger for both readers and Osime.

Witnessing Ohiali's execution causes great anguish for Osime, he is angry with all soldiers but even angrier with the Nigerian troops. He marches into

17. He was brutalised by Nigerian soldiers at the welcome event because he dared to argue with one of them.

the office of the officer in charge to register his resentment, but he is presented with pictorial documentation of Biafran wickedness which rivals, or possibly trumps that of the Nigerians. The Nigerian Captain offers him a cold commentary which galls him:

The captain said quietly. "They took the women, raped them in front of their children and husbands and then as if that was not enough, drove those long sticks through their vaginas into their wombs. Then they cut the throats of the men and the children. Cut their throats and severed their heads from their bodies. And all these were civilians."

(*Heroes* 61)

Again, the killing of innocent civilians is narrated in a graphic manner which evokes deep sensations of horror. Although we are distanced from the traumatic event, the pictorial evidence handed to Osime ruptures any emotional distance that temporal and narratorial space might have created. This episode in the grotesque performance of violence by the soldiers is even more troubling because the victims couldn't have been accused of being soldiers. Unlike Mr. Ohiali, they were women and children. The pictures, and the accompanying voice of the captain which gives even more sinister details of the killings convince us of the wickedness of Biafra soldiers. In the moment captured above, the text identifies perpetrators of violence across Nigeria/Biafra divides in a way which threatens the one-sided framing of violence which defines claims of Nigerian genocide. Since the "one-sided" nature of killings is central to claims of genocide (Chalk & Jonassohn 1990: 23), it seems polemical to read the brutal acts above as cases of genocide.

The barbaric acts perpetrated by both sides against harmless civilians awakes Osime to the between and betwixt-ness of the vulnerable during the war, and to the Janus-faced nature of reading the war with a binary lens of Igbo versus Nigeria. This realisation is critical because a binary framing of the dimension of violence is what powers accusations of genocide levied against Nigeria. Also, in this moment, things fall apart for Osime because the basis of his view of Nigeria Army as liberators fighting for the protection of ethnic minorities against Igbo overlords becomes ruptured. He realises that none of the two armies has the liberation or safety of the people at heart, rather, the war is a game between two elite classes that comprised of the soldiers, the politicians, the diplomats and the contractors. It also highlights the incorrectness of framing all Biafrans as agentless victims that were led to gas chambers like the Jews in Auschwitz. Unlike the Jews in Auschwitz who were non-aggressors, Biafrans are portrayed as guilty of same crimes as Nigerians. More importantly, it situates vulnerable Biafrans at the cross-currents of the war's violence and indicates how their fraught belonging is embedded in their "sameness and difference" – that is, to the Nigerian soldiers, they are enemies because they are Biafrans – whether they support the Biafran side or not. In the same space, their difference in terms of

ethnicity, ability, class or solidarity also exposes them to another dimension of violence within Biafra, a place they call home. One of such is being called a “sabo”.¹⁸ The victims in the pictures are “Biafrans” who are suspected to be Nigerian collaborators, consequently, they are brutally executed by Biafran troops. Their main sin being that they belong to a minority ethnic group, thus, they are neither Biafran enough nor completely Nigerian. One crucial point that comes through in Osime’s realisation is that violence was perpetrated by both sides against defenceless people. This makes it polemical to frame Biafrans as victims of genocide orchestrated by Nigeria because it doesn’t account for the dimension of intra-Biafra dimension of violence.

In *Toads of War*, the dimensions of violence that being an “outsider within” introduces is finely narrated in the travails of Kalu Udim, a wounded Biafran soldier. Although his location at the twilight of belonging makes him suffer deprivation, it also gives him a depth of vision. He acts as a lens for reading intra-Biafra violence and the callous manner in which food, which was critical to the survival of Biafrans is misappropriated by the elites. And how this power of life and death over the vulnerable fertilises the ruling class’ desire for a continuation of the war. Kalu laments that in Biafra, [w]e saw a new ruling class, a new elite, emerge. It was a wicked, heartless, despicably squalid cabal that was ruled by the power of money and scarce commodities” (*Toads* 47). The elites described by Kalu realise the potency of starvation as a tool of power and they exploit it while blaming the enemies on the other side.

Starvation is pivotal to arguments that frame the war as a genocide. Arguing that starvation is a proof of Nigeria’s plan to annihilate Biafrans, Emefiena Ezeani (2014: 137) asks: “[...] what other convincing evidence of Biafra genocide was more eloquent than life pictures of millions of children, young people and women being starved to death?” Indeed, millions of Biafrans starved during the war as a result of the blockade,¹⁹ but that’s only a part of the story. After the plight of starving Biafrans was poignantly presented to the world, the Nigerians offered to open-up a land corridor to allow aid in form of food and medicine into the embattled enclave. This offer was rejected by

18. “Sabo” is a short form of saboteur. This term had serious potency due to the paranoia that was whipped-up in the reasons often given by the ruling class for the continued loss of key towns. They cited sabotage as the reason for the crushing defeats that Biafra army suffered towards the end of the war – when in reality, it was due to lack of arms with which to match the well-armed Nigerian forces – as well as the war weariness of the boys. This created so much suspicion that neighbours and even family members turned on each other, suspecting any form of dissent as sabotage. A lot of Biafrans were executed or imprisoned without trial under this guise once accused. See Philip Effiong (2015: 169) and Akpan Ntieyong (1971: 105).

19. Nigeria’s military government claimed the blockade was needed to stop arms that were being smuggled into Biafra in the name of food aid.

Biafra ruling elites.²⁰ Some have argued that having realised the potency of pot-bellied kwashiorkor afflicted children in evoking sympathy from the world, Biafran elites weren't ready to let go of such a leverage (Meisler 1969: 303). Even when relief agencies managed to smuggle food into Biafra, they were mandated to pay a landing fee before they could distribute their aid.²¹ These issues make it difficult to read the war as a genocide.

A sinister dimension to this politics of food aid is revealed after Kalu's fruitless nine-mile trek to Emekuku in search of food (*Toads* 61-64). He arrives at the relief centre (food distribution centre) managed by Reverend Father Nwobi who isn't so christian in his ways. He describes the sorry sight thus:

The relief centre was awake. Wide awake and bustling. The cries and screams of scores of hungry little children tied to their mothers' backs resounded like a universal boiling kettle, filling the humid air, my ears and, I believe, the ears of the Reverend Father in charge of the centre. Mothers jostled one another, mindless of the tiny tots strapped to their backs. Amputees and other disabled soldiers littered the front lawns like withered, unsold vegetables returned from the market.

(*Toads* 64)

The grim scenario painted above reveals the horrible fate of the vulnerable in wartime Biafra. In what would aptly pass as a case of the "falcon not hearing the falconer" after things fell apart – in the famous words of William Butler Yeats, mothers can neither hear the cries of their children nor appease them because they are locked in the existential struggle for food. Even the mothers are not heard by the Reverend father in charge of the relief centre. The reverend father's refusal to respond to the cries of starving Biafrans at his centre – despite having relief materials, reveals another strand of violence. Against the backdrop of starving people who litter the relief centre "like withered unsold vegetables" – a simile which poignantly captures both their

20. In defence of this decision, Chinua Achebe (2012) writes that the elites had feared that the food aid would be poisoned by Nigerians. This is a surprising excuse – given the scale of human suffering that was playing out in Biafra at that point in time. Also, since opening up the corridor was Nigeria's reaction to Biafra's genocidal war campaign, it is highly improbable that they would poison food meant for Biafrans. It is also uncertain that the starving women and children would have cared about where their food came from if they had a say in things.

21. The Biafran leader, General Odumegwu Ojukwu explained that the monies charged the relief agencies was to ensure a speedy distribution of the food aid and to provide Biafra with the needed foreign exchange. See Michael Stewart's *Biafra: Fighting a War Without Guns* (1995) at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p00fz94c>. Peter Baxter (2015) argues that it was these monies that caused the conflict to drag on for an extended period.

rejected status and their inhuman treatment, Kalu reveals that there were “Cartons, sacks, cans, and crates of assorted foodstuffs were piled ceiling-high and spilling on to the floor” (*Toads* 66). The priest refuses to feed the starving lot because he plans to feed the likes of Major Ukatta and his girlfriend, Kechi (*Toads* 65),²² and to seduce beautiful young girls. While it was the cries of Kwashiorkor afflicted children, their mothers, and the wounded that motivated frantic efforts to supply relief materials to the enclave, the food aid is used to keep the ruling class comfortable.

Chinua Achebe’s short story “Girls at War” (1991) echoes the narrative above. But unlike the docile starving mass portrayed by Eddie Iroh, Achebe’s crowd jeer at Nwankwo, a member of the elite class, as his driver loads bags of relief into the boot of his car.

Nwankwo was deeply embarrassed not by the jeers of this scarecrow crowd of rags and floating ribs but by the independent accusation of their wasted bodies and sunken eyes. Indeed, he would probably have felt much worse had they said nothing, simply looked on in silence, as his trunk was loaded with milk, and powdered egg and oats and tinned meat and stockfish.

(Girls at War 60)

Using words like “WCC” (War Can Continue)²³ and “Irovolu” “Shum” to mock the idea of revolution peddled by the ruling class, the people in Achebe’s relief centre demonstrate their awareness of the deceptive strategies employed by hegemony to ensure a continuation of the war. This intra-Biafra dimension of violence represented by Achebe, who was a Biafran apologist, and Iroh indicates that fellow Biafrans were complicit in exacerbating the effect of starvation on Biafrans. It becomes difficult to frame the war as a Nigerian genocide after acknowledging these other strands of violence.

Chima the Duke enjoys the best that life offers – food, money and more importantly access to the world outside Biafra. In fact, he prays against an end to the war:

He lacked nothing, wanted nothing - not even an end to the war. An end to the war would mean the termination of his influence and affluence, of a charming life-style that had overwhelmed his wildest fantasy. He had an abundance of the most important items, the lack of which had driven others to fervent prayers for an end to the sufferings: food in his store and money in his pocket.

(Toads 5)

22. Father Nwobi isn’t Major Ukatta’s only source of relief food. As, a commander of Biafran troops, he diverts food meant for his boys at the front in a bid to satisfy his licentious adventures.

23. This term underscores the elites’ desire for a continuation of the war due to the kind of power it brought them. Kalu Udim also alludes to this in his description of Chima the Duke (*Toads* 5).

Chima's affluent lifestyle in wartime Biafra reveals that suffering wasn't universal within the beleaguered enclave and that the ruling class benefitted from prolonging the war. Against this backdrop, Kalu Udim, who sacrifices his right hand to the war, cannot have access to a meal in many days; he is reduced to scrounging for crumbs from Major mere's lavish table.²⁴ This makes it clearer to Kalu that the battle for survival is indeed more against the looters of stockfish and powdered milk than it is against the Nigerians.

Disputing claims that the war needed to be fought to avert a genocide, Osime in *Heroes* observes that such narratives were used to manipulate unsuspecting people into supporting the war.

The people are manipulated into the war because those at the helm have a monopoly over the means of indoctrination and information. They can misinform the people, they trick the people into war. The people are manipulated into a war only to have their children killed, their houses destroyed by bombs and grenades. The present war is a war that arises from the greed of a few men. No principles are involved here because even if the country breaks up or remains one, nothing really changes.

(*Heroes* 64)

Osime's poignant statement reveals that the war wasn't driven by a need to prevent a genocide, it was driven by the greed of the elite class. He identifies the real victims of the carnage, who are obviously not the tough-talking generals, nor the diplomats who turned images of starving children into currency for a continuation of the war. The real victims are the ordinary people who do not want war but have it foisted on them. His observation invites us to witness the precarious situation of the vulnerable who are caught between the warring parties. Their exploitation and oppression continue regardless of the flag they rally under. Ndudi, Osime's wife to be, who is a Delta-Igbo,²⁵ is raped by both Biafran and Nigerian soldiers (*Heroes* 244-245). She neither Biafran enough to the Biafrans nor Nigerian enough to

24. Kalu Udim loses his arm at the warfront during a Nigerian onslaught. After heroically repelling a Nigerian advance, he suffers an epileptic fit during which a mortar bomb lands on his hand.

25. The Delta-Igbo like other ethnic minorities within Biafra suffered dire consequences for being caught in-between the Nigeria/Biafra hegemonic positions. Their solidarity was demanded and constantly questioned. Philip Effiong (2016) writes that they were severely attacked and killed by Biafran soldiers and Igbo civilians within Biafra. They faced similar fates within Nigeria as events of the Asaba massacre of 1968 have shown. When Nigerian troops crossed the Niger Bridge into Asaba, an area populated by Delta-Igbo, they went on a killing spree, leaving truckloads of corpses in their wake. Activists are presently pushing for a recognition of the massacre as a war crime. See <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IEaX9IVVrCM>.

Nigerians. To Ndudi, both Nigerians and Biafrans are oppressors because of her marginal position in the society as neither here nor there. Ndudi's rape signals a need to investigate the perpetration of violence by both belligerents. Such events raise questions regarding an essentialist framing of Biafrans as victims of Nigerian genocide.

The statement also captures how people were deceived and goaded into a war to protect the interests of the hegemony by mapping the "other" as a threat by propaganda. Many writers and witnesses agree that although the easterners felt betrayed by the government, they didn't want to secede.²⁶ Like Osime, Kalu Udim, the wounded Biafran soldier in *Toads of War* is angry about the use of fear as a propaganda tool to sustain the war. He observes the opulence that the war created for those who were lucky to "belong" to the class of those that mattered. To him, patriotism and solidarity are employed to create an endless supply of sacrificial lambs while the rulers relish their newfound power. He tells us that the war's "gloom and grimness existed not in the quarters of a few people – the war racketeers and profiteers, the disaster millionaires, the big shots, the toads of war, civilian and military, who fought their own war by proxy" (*Toads* 3) because they had access to power. Jane Bryce (2001) also nods in this direction in her reading of Buchi Emecheta's *Destination Biafra*. She calls the conflict "a quest for personal power" (292). The leaders enjoy their affluence while "the boys were at the battle-fronts, doing the fighting, the killing-and the dying. You had to kill your enemy or be killed by him, they had drummed into the boys' ears. [...] If the big shots were not big fighters, at least they were good indoctrinators (*Toads* 3). Here Kalu unravels how the fear of annihilation was employed as a tool for maintaining solidarity. And how erstwhile neighbours become recreated as enemies, consequently rendering them "unknowable",²⁷ to use a "Mbembian" term. Importantly, the fear of annihilation is represented as a propaganda tool. This indoctrination is a kind of violence against the men because they are tricked into believing that their survival is tied to the enemy's defeat at all costs. Although Osime succeeds in recalibrating the humane side of some of

26. Akpan Ntieyong, makes this observation as well as scholars like Gould 2013, Baxter 2015, De Jorre 1971, Mc Luckie 1991 and many others.

27. Achille Mbembe (2017) observes that rendering the "other" as unknowable makes it possible to strip her of humanity. The other becomes a remote phenomenon that is too distant to read. Mbembe observes that the unknowable nature of the "other" strips him of humanity. See Mbembe Achille. *Critique of Black Thought*. Duke University Press, 2017. Homi Bhabha also advises that the way to know the "other" is to know him/her beyond one's frame of reference, that is, acknowledging the familiarity and the replete complexities of the other would help in synthesizing belonging and acceptance to the "unknowable other". He made the statement during a public conversation at Stellenbosch University on 15th August 2017.

the Nigerian troops he interacts with, the soldiers still see the Igbo people as “Nyanmiri”,²⁸ a term which robs them of personhood. Thus, belonging is constructed to the belligerent positions as either/or in a manner that magnifies intra-group similarities, erases inter-group similitude while exaggerating inter-group differences. By magnifying intra-group similarities, the intra-group dimension of violence is erased. The folly of such mapping of us versus them – in a blanket nationalistic sense – is what Osime decries when he notes that the Igbo man didn’t have any problem with his Hausa neighbours before the rulers fell out during the sharing of the “national cake”, but the men are coned into seeing the war as one that must be fought for survival (*Heroes* 111). Ultimately, Osime’s observation suggests that the Igbo weren’t being persecuted for their Igbo-ness, rather, the war was a power tussle among elite class – and the Biafrans caught in the middle were mainly cannon fodder.

Kalu Udim observes that the elite class, which he calls disaster millionaires, didn’t want an end to the war because it gave them real power, the power of life and death, women of their choice – all within the cost of a few tins of canned food or Garri. Kalu also alerts us to the fact that the palpable fear of extermination that defines the existence of the vulnerable due to the workings of the propaganda machinery is missing in the quotidian interactions of the elites. They host parties; like Major Mere in *Toads of War*, whose leftovers from constant partying could feed a whole village – and all these happen right in the face of a devastating starvation. Or Chima the Duke who travels around the world to shop for his girlfriend under the guise of diplomatic visits. These leaders travel around the world and live in affluence while they “they scare the people with lies” (*Heroes* 102) to continue the fight. Many of these elites are mainly responsible for writing a lot of the popular histories of the war, where they create a kind of self-exculpation which inserts them into the community of those that suffered. It is this hijack of the suffering of the vulnerable by the “elites” that Sergeant Audu denounces in *Heroes* by declaring that there is a need to hear the stories of the victims, how they suffered and who supervised the suffering. Audu bemoans the kind of hegemony that allows the Generals to document the suffering of the people when they were busy under the sheets while the people suffered. By listening to these other stories, the victims’ stories, it becomes possible to question grand self-exculpatory accounts that presently dominate the historiography of the war.

28. Nyanmiri (Nye nmiri) is an Igbo word which means give me water. The genesis of the derogatory usage of the word lies in the anti-Igbo pogroms of 1966 when the Hausa people went on a killing spree. Some Igbo people had taken refuge in the palace of an Emir in the north in the hope that they would escape the massacre, however, they were handed over to the killer crowd by the emir. “Nye nmiri” is believed to be the last cry that emanated from their throats after they were slaughtered.

Osime calls our attention to the fact that the war was not fought based on any principle. In his interactions with the rank and file at the war front, he exposes how the belligerents ensured a continuation of the war through a non-negotiable demand for solidarity. This is central to understanding how enemies and friends were mapped. In *Toads of War*, when the men at the front decide to fraternise with their colleagues on the other side, an order is sent from “above” that they should lure their Nigerian friends over to their side and arrest them as prisoners of war. One would have thought that since Nigeria/Biafra leaders claimed that they wanted peace, such sparks of peace should have been explored to seek a quick end to the war. This aligns with Ntiyong’s (1971) statement that Ojukwu really wanted an opportunity to avenge the Igbo massacres that occurred in the north. Thus, contrary to the claims that the war was fought to take care of the “Igbo Problem” as noted by Achebe (1987), and essentially to halt the enemy’s push towards Igbo annihilation, the “enemies” encountered in the texts are simply those who don’t align with the inordinate ambitions of the two sides. I mean an anti-war Biafran is as much an enemy as a Nigerian.

Arguments in favour of reading the war as a genocide often present Biafrans as having unalloyed support for the war due to the palpable fear of annihilation (Achebe 2012; Emefiana 2014). However, in the selected texts, solidarity is foisted on Biafrans. In *Toads of War*, Kalu Udim is conscripted into the Biafran army on the orders of his boss – despite being epileptic. During his exchange with the corrupt conscription officers, he is informed that he has no choice but to join the army, regardless of his health condition. He is forced to fight the war because a member of the ruling class wants him to. In *Heroes*, Osime remarks that although the masses realised they were being used as cannon fodder in other people’s wars, solidarity had become the currency for survival. He notes that ordinary Igbo man didn’t have a problem with the ordinary Hausa or Yoruba man until the politicians and the generals fell out among themselves. Despite this realisation by the masses, they are trapped within the cycle of violence, trapped like Sergeant Mezu in *Toads of War*, who signs up for a suicide mission which claims his life – because he doesn’t want his solidarity to be questioned. A sad testament to this is how General Obasanjo²⁹ boasts about executing battle weary Nigerian soldiers in a bid to motivate a stronger devotion to the war. This state of forced solidarity then transforms citizenship and belonging into a prison for the vulnerable. It is important to recognise these strands of violence even within sites of “belonging” because a binary framing of victim/perpetrator which is being used in the genocide rhetoric will elide these other kinds of suffering.

29. General Olusegun Obasanjo, now Chief Olusegun Obasanjo, was the Nigerian officer that accepted Biafra’s surrender. His self-exculpatory memoir titled *My Command* captures many episodes of such “disciplinary” measures that ensured the rank and file fought on to the end.

Conclusion

While it is important to chronicle, and condemn the cold-blooded killings that happened during the war, framing the killings as genocide against the Igbo people will erase the dimension of intra-Biafran violence that was either used to maintain solidarity or to terrorise the outsiders within. It will also foreground a picture of universal suffering within Biafra, consequently framing it as a kind of concentration camp. The selected texts present a departure from this image of Biafra, they capture the ways violence is employed by both belligerents as a tool for power. Claims of genocide are narrated in the texts as half-truths designed by the ruling class to fertilise a desire to fight to death among the masses while they consolidate their hegemonic positions. The texts poignantly highlight that the victims on both sides are led to believe that their existence is tied to a destruction of the enemy. This seems like a deliberate strategy to deflect the people's attention from the real enemies, the ruling class. It is disturbing that the same rhetoric of Biafra as the only space where safety is assured, and Nigerians as murderers, is still being employed in recruiting Igbo youths into Zionist groups. Even more troubling is the hate which Biafra as victim narratives have hatched in the hearts of Igbo people. It is important to acknowledge that neither the Igbo identity nor the Nigerian one was the problem, in fact, both terms elide the multiplicity of identification that occurred during the war. They also elide how difference created unique kinds of violence for those considered outsiders within. The texts represent fear of genocide as a propaganda tool deployed to ensure firm solidarity. In a sense, the genocide rhetoric could be read as a kind of violence against the people – since the fear of being killed made people avoid towns captured by Nigerians, making them flee deeper into the ever-shrinking Biafra where starvation was rife. Conversely, a lot of Biafrans that stayed in cities captured by the federal troops had access to food.

Questioning the narratives of the war is important due to the way it has been woven into the collective memory of the Igbo people, and how it is being employed in contemporary agitations for Biafra as a Canaan of sorts.³⁰ By reading the blames across divides, one can unveil the real victims of the war, and their spread across borders erected by belligerents. Such readings will be able to highlight how those caught in-between were used as cannon fodder in other people's conflicts. This might help stretch the tracing of violence

30. IPOB's narrative of Biafra revolves around a return to Biafra where all the dreams of the youths will be actualised – alluding to biblical Canaan. The leader of the group recently inaugurated a military wing named Biafra Secret Services (BSS), this represents a dangerous direction for the country and the South-east geopolitical zone in particular. While the group is mostly made up of unemployed youths without military training, the Nigerian government is known to respond to such "threats" with all their military might. For more on BSS, see <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JT31YodLE5I>

beyond the Nigeria/Biafra framing which is presently employed by the genocide war school of thought. Indeed, if we must read the conflict as a genocide, then it was a genocide against the masses who trusted their leaders to guide them appropriately in trying times. We too, like Kalu Udim and Osime, must realise that the war was really a war of the elites and we must say “never again”.

References

- Achebe, Chinua
 1968 Chinua Achebe on Biafra. *Transition* (36): 31-38.
 1991 *Girls at War and Other Stories*. New York: Anchor Books.
 2012 *There Was a Country: A Personal History of Biafra*. London: Heinemann.
- Adebanwi, Wale
 2014 The Writer as Social Thinker. *Journal of Contemporary African Studies* 32(4): 495-420.
- Aghoghovwia, Philip
 2014 Ecocriticism and the Oil Encounter: Readings from the Niger Delta. Unpublished Thesis submitted to Stellenbosch University.
- Alabi-Isama, Godwin
 2014 *The Tragedy of Victory: On the Spot account of the Nigeria-Biafra war in the Atlantic Theatre*. Ibadan: Spectrum Books.
- Amuta, Chidi
 1983 The Nigerian Civil War and the Evolution of Nigerian Literature. *Canadian Journal of African Studies* 17(1): 85-99.
- Baxter, Peter
 2015 Biafra: “The Nigerian Civil War 1967-1970”. *Africa @ War Series*.
- Bryce, Jane
 2008 Half and Half Children: Third Generation Women Writers and the New Nigerian Novel. *Research in African Literature* 39(2): 49-67.
- Israel Charny
 1994 Toward a generic definition of genocide. In: George Andreopoulos (ed) *Genocide: Conceptual and Historical Dimensions*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, pp.64-94
- Chalk, Frank & Jonassohn, Kurt
 1990 *The History and Sociology of Genocide: Analysis and Case Study*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Chreachain, Ni Firinne
 1991 Festus Iyayi’s Heroes: Two Novels in One?” *Research in African Literatures* 22(1): 43-53.
- De St Jorre, John
 1972 *The Brothers’ War: Biafra and Nigeria*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.
- Doron, Roy
 2014 Marketing Genocide: Biafran Propaganda Strategies During the Nigerian Civil War, 1967-1970. *Journal of Genocide Research* 16(2-3): 227-246.

- Douglas, Anthony
 2010 Resourceful and Progressive Blackmen: Modernity and Race in Biafra 1967-1970. *Journal of African History* 51(1): 41-61.
- Effiong, Philip
 2016 *The Caged Bird Sang No More*. Pinetown: 30° Publishers.
- Ejiogu, E.C.
 2013 On Biafra: Subverting Imposed Code of Silence. *Journal of Asian and African Studies* 48(6): 653-670.
- Ekwe-Ekwe, Herbert
 2011 *Readings from Readings: Essays on African Politics, Genocide, Literature*. Reading: African Renaissance.
- Emenyonu, Ernest
 2008 Editorial Article. *War in African Literature: A Review* (26): xi. Oxford: James Currey & Heinemann Publishers.
- Eze, Chielozona
 2005 Cosmopolitan Solidarity: Negotiating Transculturality in Contemporary Nigerian Novels. *English in Africa* 32(1): 99-112.
- Ezeani, Emefiana
 2014 *In Biafra Africa Died: The Diplomatic Plot*. London: Veritas Lumen Publishers.
- Friedrick, Forsyth
 1971 *The Making of an African Legend: The Biafra Story*. Suffolk: Penguin.
- Gould, Micheal
 2013 *The Biafran War: The Struggle for Modern Nigeria*. London: I.B Taurus.
- Hawley, John
 2008 Biafra as Heritage and Symbol: Adichie, Mbachu, and Iweala. *Research in African Literatures* 39(2): 15-26.
- Huttenbach, Henry
 2001 The Artist as Witness: David Friedman's Graphic Experiences and Memories. *Journal of Genocide Research* 3(3): 463-467.
- Ike, Chukwuemeka
 1976 *Sunset at Dawn, a Novel about Biafra*. London: Fontana.
- Iweala, Uzodinma
 2005 *Beasts of No Nation: A Novel*. London: John Murray Publishers.
- Iroh, Eddie
 1979 *Toads of War*. London: Heinemann.
- Iyayi, Festus
 1986 *Heroes*. Ibadan: Longman.
- Jones, Adam
 2006 *Genocide: A Comprehensive Introduction*. London: Routledge.
- Heerten, Lasse & Moses, Dirk .
 2014 The Nigeria – Biafra War: Postcolonial Conflict and the Question of Genocide. *Journal of Genocide Research* 16(2-3): 169-203.
- Lecznar, Mathew
 2016 (Re) Fashioning Biafra: Identity, Authorship, and the Politics of Dress in Half of a Yellow Sun and Other Narratives of the Nigeria-Biafra War. *Research in African Literature* 47(4): 112-132.

- Mbembe, Achille
2017 *A Critique of Black Thought*. Duke University Press.
- Meisler, Stanley
1969 Biafra: War of Images. *The Nation* 3(10): 301-304.
- McLuckie, Craig
1990 *Nigerian Civil War Literature: Seeking an Imagined Community*. Lewinston: The Edwin Mellen Press.
- Ntieyong, Akpan U.
1971 *The Struggle for Secession, 1966-1970: A personal Account of the Nigerian Civil War*. London: Frank Cass.
- Nwachukwu-Agbada, J.O.J.
1996 Buchi Emecheta: Politics, War and Feminism in Destination Biafra. In: Umeh, Marie, (ed.) *Emerging Perspectives on Buchi Emecheta*. New York: Africa World Press, pp. 387-395.
- Obasanjo, Olusegun
1979 *My Command: An Account of the Nigerian Civil War 1967-1970*. Ibadan: Heinemann.
- Omotosho, Kole
1991 The Nigerian Federation in the Nigerian Novel. *Publius: Federalism in Nigeria: Towards Federal Democracy* 21(4): 145-153.
- Saro-Wiwa, Ken
1989 *On a Darkling Plain: An Account of the Nigerian Civil War*. Saros International Publishers
- Scott Straus
2001 Contested Meanings and Conflicting Imperatives: A conceptual Analysis of Genocide. *Journal of Genocide Research* 3(3): 349-375.
- Venter, Al J.
2015 *Biafra's War 1967-1970: A Tribal Conflict in Nigeria that Left a Million Dead*. West Midlands: Helion and Company.

Stephen David
University of Stellenbosch
stevtope@yahoo.com