

**A DEPICTION OF NIGERIAN CIVIL WAR IN CHIMAMANDA NGOZI
ADICHIE'S *HALF OF A YELLOW SUN***

BY

**Chinaza Miracle UKWUEGBU (Miss)
ART2000178**

**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH AND LITERATURE
FACULTY OF ARTS
UNIVERSITY OF BENIN
BENIN CITY**

FEBRUARY 2025

**A DEPICTION OF NIGERIAN CIVIL WAR IN CHIMAMANDA NGOZI
ADICHIE'S *HALF OF A YELLOW SUN***

BY

**Chinaza Miracle UKWUEGBU (Miss)
ART2000178**

**A PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH AND
LITERATURE, FACULTY OF ARTS, UNIVERSITY OF BENIN, BENIN
CITY IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR
THE AWARD OF BACHELOR OF ARTS DEGREE IN ENGLISH AND
LITERATURE**

FEBRUARY 2025

CERTIFICATION

I certify that this project work was carried out by **Chinaza Miracle UKWUEGBU** with Matriculation Number **ART2000178** in the Department of English and Literature, Faculty of Arts University of Benin City, Edo State, Nigeria under my supervision.



PROF. H.O. OKOLOCHA
(Project Supervisor)



DATE



DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to GOD ALMIGHTY, who has overseen and supported me in all aspects and ramifications of my life.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Foremost, all heartfelt gratitude goes to God in Heaven, for his guidance has never failed me while going through the course of this degree. Without his help and direction of my steps, I would have been nothing. May his name forever be glorified.

I would also like to extend my gratitude to my project supervisor, Prof. H.O. Okolocha for her accessibility and support. She has continued to offer aid while working the project, making the experience more conducive and easier. When I had difficulty understanding the path to go on for the next chapters of my research, she took the time to call me and explain it. For that, I am forever grateful.

To my ever supportive and wonderful parents, Mr and Mrs Jude Ukwuegbu, your help, prayers and encouragement has continued to see me through and through. Special thanks to mum Mrs Ukwuegbu for all you have done for me may God continue to bless you. My siblings Chiemerie, Ebube, Amaka and Ogorchukwu thank you for making me laugh and being good siblings. Special thanks to my friends, Joy, Gift, Victory, Rosemary, Favour Chukwuchetam and Victoria Chizen.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Cover Page	i
Title Page	ii
Certification	iii
Dedication	iv
Acknowledgement	v
Table of Contents	vi
Abstract	vii
 CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	
1.1-Purpose of Study	1
1.2 Scope of Study	1
1.3 Methodology	1
1.4 Theoretical Framework	1
1.4.1 Trauma Theory	2
1.4.2 Collective vs. Individual Trauma Theory	2
1.4.3 Key Concepts in Trauma Theory	3
1.5 Review of Scholarship	13
1.6 Thesis Statement	17
 CHAPTER TWO: ETHNIC TENSION AND NATIONAL IDENTITY	
2.1 Introduction	10
2.2 Colonial Roots of Division	10
2.3 Ethnic Suspicion and Distrust	21
2.4 Conclusion	25
 CHAPTER THREE: SOCIAL IMPACT ON CIVILIANS	
3.1 Introduction	26

3.2 Civilian Suffering and Displacement	26
3.3 Gendered Experiences of War	35
3.4 Conclusion	37

**CHAPTER FOUR: PSYCHOLOGICAL AND EMOTIONAL
CONSEQUENCES OF WAR**

4.1 Trauma in Half of a Yellow Sun	39
4.2 Memory, Grief and Loss	42
4.3. Reconciliation and Post-Colonial Reflections	43
5.2 Works Cited	47

Abstract

This project examines the depiction of the Nigerian Civil War in Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *Half of a Yellow Sun*. It's focus is on how the novel portrays the war's impact on individuals, families, and communities. Findings reveal that Adichie's novel provides a nuanced and humanized portrayal of the Biafran War, highlighting the devastating effects of conflict while also showcasing the enduring resilience and cultural identity in the face of adversity.

CHAPTER ONE

1.1 Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study is to explore how Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *Half of a Yellow Sun* depicts the Nigerian Civil War (1967–1970) and to analyse the impact of these depictions on readers' understanding of the historical, social, and political landscape of the period.

1.2 Scope of Study

This study is limited to the depiction of the civil war in Adichie's *Half of a Yellow Sun*. It will explore how Adichie portrays key aspects of the conflict, such as ethnic tensions, loss, trauma, and resilience. The text was selected for its rich portrayal of the events that transpired in the civil war. While the novel covers various dimensions of Nigerian life, this research will be limited to passages, dialogues, and plotlines that directly illustrate or reflect on the Civil War and its effects.

1.3 Methodology

This study will use qualitative literary analysis as its primary methodology. It will involve close reading and textual analysis of *Half of a Yellow Sun*. The analysis will examine how narrative structure, character development, and thematic elements contribute to the depiction of the civil war and its impact on the characters' lives. Secondary sources, including scholarly articles and literary critiques on *Half of a Yellow Sun*, will be consulted to provide critical perspectives and enhance understanding of Adichie's narrative choices and their cultural implications.

1.4 Theoretical Framework

This study will use trauma theory as a framework to understand the impact of the civil war in the lives of the characters portrayed in Adichie's *Half of a Yellow Sun*.

1.4.1 Trauma Theory

Trauma theory is a framework that helps us understand how literature represents psychological and collective trauma—deeply disturbing events that have lasting emotional and mental impacts (Visser 270). The roots of trauma theory can be traced back to the field of psychology. Sigmund Freud, one of the first thinkers to study trauma, explored how traumatic events affect memory and identity. Freud developed ideas about how people repress or bury memories that are too painful to face (Kumar Mandal and Singh).

In the 1990s, trauma theory became more prominent in literary studies, largely due to the work of scholars like Cathy Caruth. Caruth expanded on Freud's ideas and applied them to literature. She argued that trauma is not something people can fully understand or explain because it disrupts normal ways of thinking and remembering. Instead, trauma often creates gaps or silences in memory and can cause people to remember things in fragmented, incomplete ways (Caruth 15).

1.4.2 Collective vs. Individual Trauma

In trauma theory, there are two main types of trauma: individual trauma and collective trauma. Individual trauma refers to the psychological impact on a single person who has experienced a traumatic event. This type of trauma is often shown in literature through characters who struggle with painful memories, guilt, or a loss of self (Bode 54).

On the other hand, collective trauma refers to trauma experienced by an entire community or society. This kind of trauma occurs when large groups of people experience violence, oppression, or cultural loss (Holman et al.). Postcolonial literature explores both individual and collective trauma. In these texts, characters may suffer personal pain, but this pain is usually tied to a larger history of suffering shared by their community.

1.4.3 Key Concepts in Trauma Theory

Memory and Forgetting

Memory and forgetting are central concepts in trauma theory, especially when applied to literature. Trauma impacts how individuals remember or forget painful events, often by disrupting traditional memory processes (Kihlstrom 260). In literature, these disruptions in memory are often reflected through storytelling techniques such as non-linear narratives, gaps in the storyline, and unreliable narrators (Martinez 3).

Traumatic memory differs significantly from ordinary memory. Unlike normal memories, which are processed and stored coherently, traumatic memories can be disorganized, appearing as isolated images, sounds, or sensations. This phenomenon is highlighted by trauma scholars like Cathy Caruth, who explains that trauma involves “a response, sometimes delayed, to an overwhelming event,” and that traumatic memories often resist complete integration into the survivor’s life narrative (Caruth 45).

Literature captures this fragmented nature of traumatic memory through various storytelling techniques. One common method is non-linear narration, where the story does not follow a straightforward, chronological sequence. In trauma literature, this mirrors how survivors might relive fragments of their trauma without the sequence or clarity of ordinary memory. Non-linear storytelling creates an experience for readers that reflects the

unpredictability of traumatic memory and allows them to understand the fractured way in which survivors recall past events (Amir 23).

Witnessing and Forgetting

“Witnessing” in trauma theory refers to the act of observing or experiencing a traumatic event, whether directly or indirectly, and the complex psychological response that follows (Rovit 45).

In literature, witnessing can be seen through characters who grapple with their memories of trauma, often experiencing flashbacks or intrusive thoughts. These characters may feel compelled to remember and recount their traumatic experiences as a way of processing their pain, seeking healing, or affirming their experiences (Van der Merwe 41). In *Half of a Yellow Sun*, the characters who have experienced the Nigerian Civil War act as witnesses to the violence, starvation, and loss they endured.

“Forgetting” in trauma theory refers to the psychological and social processes by which individuals or societies suppress or erase traumatic memories. However, forgetting does not necessarily eliminate the effects of trauma; it may instead manifest in other ways, such as psychological symptoms, behavioural changes, or unexplainable feelings of sadness, anxiety, or isolation (Brewin 2).

Silence

Silence can be a profound response to trauma. Individuals who have experienced significant loss or violence may find it challenging to articulate their feelings and experiences. This silence can stem from a sense of overwhelming grief, shame, or fear of not being believed or (Ritter 176).

1.5 Review of Related Scholarship

Scholars like Lunga and Behzad Pourgharib et al. have analyzed how Adichie uses her characters to represent various facets of trauma and survival. Olanna, Odenigbo, Ugwu, and Richard each experience the war differently, providing a multifaceted view of the psychological and emotional toll of conflict. The characters' interactions reveal how traumatic events can shape and reshape personal identities. Mohd and Saiel argue that Adichie's portrayal of war captures both the internal and external struggles faced by those affected. Janice argues that Olanna's journey illustrates the challenges of maintaining one's sense of self amidst violence and displacement (129).

The impact of war on personal identity has also been studied by scholars. According to Simoes da Silva, Ugwu's transformation from an innocent young boy to a soldier and survivor is emblematic of how war can forcibly redefine personal identity (109). Ezika-Anaduaka et al. note that Adichie's depiction of Ugwu's experiences as a child soldier underscores the brutal impact of war on young minds. This narrative of innocence corrupted by violence contributes to the novel's exploration of memory and survival. For many of the characters, survival becomes an act of both physical endurance and psychological resilience (111).

Edson examines how Adichie's novel raises questions about what it means to belong to a nation-state (133). The push for Biafran independence, as depicted in the novel, reflects the complexities of identity within a fragmented Nigeria. Biafra's attempt to secede from Nigeria represents a struggle for autonomy and recognition for the Igbo people, who felt marginalised within the larger Nigerian state (Dickson et al. 37).

Lindecrantz argues that *Half of a Yellow Sun* portrays national identity as something that is fluid and contested. Adichie's narrative thus highlights the diversity within Nigeria and critiques the simplistic notion of a unified national identity. Nayel adds that the novel depicts postcolonial identity as a complex negotiation of cultural heritage, colonial influence, and contemporary political struggles.

Rideout points out that Adichie presents a nuanced portrayal of female characters who navigate the expectations of traditional gender roles in a period of national instability. Olanna and Kainene, the central female characters, represent two contrasting approaches to resilience and agency. Olanna's experiences highlight the emotional toll of both personal betrayals and the violence of war, while Kainene's pragmatism and independence challenge conventional ideas of femininity (71).

Scholars have also found that Adichie's female characters reflect themes of intersectional feminism, as they confront both gender-based discrimination and the hardships of war. Odubajo argues that the novel presents a critique of patriarchal structures within Nigerian society (34). Mbah adds that Odenigbo's transformation—from a revolutionary idealist to a drunkard struggling to reconcile his ideals with his reality—illustrates how gender roles can shift during times of crisis (12). Professor and Noble posit that Adichie uses Olanna and Kainene to depict women as both survivors and active participants in the fight for survival and identity, thereby challenging traditional gender roles even as they try to survive the violence around them (8).

Akpome studies the narrative technique used in the text. The critic states that narrators, Ugwu, Olanna, and Richard, enable the readers to understand how the war impacts people of different backgrounds. Ugwu, a young houseboy, sees the war as an outsider, experiencing its horrors without fully understanding the political issues. Olanna, an educated woman from a

wealthy family, views the war with both hope and fear for her community. Richard, a British man, offers an outsider's perspective as he becomes deeply involved in the Biafran cause (Oluwaseun 121).

This narrative style is praised by scholars like De Mey. De Mey explains that by shifting between these characters, Adichie gives readers a "complete picture" of the war's impact. We don't just see the political events; we feel the personal struggles and losses. This choice of multiple narrators also reflects Nigeria's diversity. It shows that each character has a unique experience based on their background, and no one story can fully represent the whole experience of war. The technique makes the novel feel real and relatable, as it avoids a one-sided view of history (De Mey 23).

Uwakeh argues that each perspective adds layers to the story. Ugwu's journey from innocence to adulthood highlights the loss of innocence that war brings (Uwakweh 82). Olanna's experience, as she deals with betrayal and loss, shows how war affects families and relationships (Marić 23). Richard's outsider perspective helps readers see how foreigners often misunderstand African conflicts, but also how they can become deeply invested in them (Tunca 64).

Many scholars, including Lama Muteb, have noted similarities between Adichie's work and novels like Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* and Nuruddin Farah's *Maps* (Muteb 5). Godwin Aondofa and Ugo Ijem argue that these novels also explore the theme of conflict, but each approaches it from different cultural perspectives (2). Edson explains that Adichie's focus on relationships and daily life makes her novel different from other war literature, which often focuses only on the political or military aspects. This approach makes the story resonate with readers worldwide, as it reminds us that the pain and loss of war are universal experiences (133).

Scholars like Strehle have explored how *Half of a Yellow Sun* influences discussions on identity and belonging among the African diaspora. Strehle argues that in *Half of a Yellow Sun*, Adichie presents a diasporic vision that critiques the Western myth of nationhood as a unified family. The critic posits that Adichie portrays the Nigerian Civil War and the genocidal violence against the Igbo minority as key violations of the social contract that show that this “family” of the nation is anything but homogeneous. Through the doomed Biafran struggle for independence, the novel’s characters lose not only their homes but also their sense of homeland and belonging. They become outsiders, even in their own land, alienated by both the trauma of war and the collapse of Biafra (24).

1.6 Thesis Statement

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *Half of a Yellow Sun* shows how the Civil War affects people's sense of belonging, the way ethnic divisions shape their lives, and the lasting emotional scars it leaves on ordinary people.

CHAPTER TWO

ETHNIC TENSION AND NATIONAL IDENTITY

2.1 Introduction

Ethnic tension refers to the hostility, suspicion, or antagonism that exists between different ethnic groups within a society. It can manifest in various forms, from subtle prejudice and discrimination to open conflict and violence. National identity is a sense of belonging to a nation and a feeling of connection to its shared history, culture, values, and traditions. This chapter will look at ethnic tensions and national identity in the Nigerian civil war depicted in Adichie's *Half of a Yellow Sun*.

2.2 Colonial Roots of Division

The British colonial policy of “divide and rule” left deep scars on Nigerian society. The British colonial masters separated the North from the South, favouring the Northern leaders for administrative roles. Adichie touches on this when Richard remarks,

The British preferred the North. The heat there was pleasantly dry; the Hausa-Fulani were narrow-featured and therefore superior to the negroid Southerners, Muslim and therefore as civilized as one could get for natives, feudal and therefore perfect for indirect rule. Equable emirs collected taxes for the British, and the British, in return, kept the Christian missionaries away. - (Adichie 148).

According to the text, the British preferred the North because it was easier for them to control the feudal Northern leaders and keep out the Southern groups, who had more interaction with Western missionaries. This separation created distrust and resentment,

especially as the Northern elites gained power at the expense of the Igbo and other Southern ethnic groups.

Through the character of Richard, Adichie explains that in the Southeast, the Igbo lived in decentralised, republican communities, a structure that posed a challenge to British indirect rule. To control the Igbo, the British appointed “warrant chiefs,” often individuals who lacked traditional legitimacy but were empowered by colonial authorities to oversee local governance. This approach disrupted indigenous governance and led to resentment. These colonial legacies created a fragile union, a “collection of fragments held in a fragile clasp,” as Adichie describes (193).

This colonial legacy meant that Nigeria’s independence began with an unequal distribution of power. While Nigeria was technically “united,” it was really divided by ethnicity, with each region wanting more control. When the first coup happened, these divisions became even clearer.

The First Military Coup and the Igbo “Agenda”

The first coup in Nigeria took place in 1966. In the novel, Odenigbo, known as “Master,” is listening to the radio as Major Nzeogwu speaks. He announces, “The Constitution is suspended and the regional government and elected assemblies are hereby dissolved” (155). Major Nzeogwu frames the coup as a corrective measure meant to eliminate corruption and internal strife. He introduces his revolutionary ideals with a youthful, confident voice, promising a “nation free from corruption and internal strife,” but as the narrative unfolds, the ethnic undertones of the coup begin to surface. The phrase “Our enemies are the political profiteers, the swindlers, the men in high and low places that seek bribes,” while aiming to unify, implicitly targets those in power, who were predominantly from certain ethnic groups, particularly the Northern elite. This sets the stage for ethnic conflict, as the coup, while

initially framed as a movement against corruption, gradually becomes seen as an Igbo-led action, thus triggering backlash from other ethnic groups (155).

In a particularly telling moment, one of the guests at Master's house suggests that the coup is an opportunity to end corruption, calling the military leaders "true heroes." But as the news spreads, it becomes clear that most of those killed are Northern leaders. "The BBC is calling it an Igbo coup," one of Master's guests notes. This comment points directly to the growing suspicion that the coup was not a nationalistic movement but an ethnic act, with the Igbo people being labeled as the instigators of the violence. The use of the word "Igbo" to describe the coup shows how ethnic identities became inseparable from political actions.

The novel's Professor Ezeka replies, "It was mostly Northerners who were in government," showing that the Igbo did not kill Northerners out of ethnic hate, but because they were the ones in power. Yet this perception sparked anger in the North. People began to believe that the Igbo wanted to take over Nigeria (157).

The ethnic tensions further manifest in the scenes with Olanna and Arize in Lagos, where they encounter a public display of aggression towards those perceived to be Igbo.

Another man in a safari suit was being slapped on the back of the head. "You are Igbo man! Don't deny it! Simply identify yourself!" (166)

When the crowd accuses Olanna and Arize of being Igbo, Arize has to speak fluent Yoruba, implicitly denying her identity, in order to escape the potential aggression. This reflects the ethnic animosities heightened in the wake of the coup. The crowd says, "We are counting the Igbo people." This shows how quickly ethnicity became a marker of loyalty or treason.

Olanna is shocked at the situation. When she enquires, Arize casually responds that “they have been doing this in Kaduna and Zaria since the coup” (166). This event shows how the coup, which was originally framed by the orchestrators as an ideological shift, quickly devolved into ethnic targeting and violence. It shows how ethnic identity became the lens through which political actions were interpreted.

While Arize and Olanna dialogue about the ethnic tensions, Ibekie adds that her uncle does not sleep in his house anymore due to the fear of ethnic retribution. The fact that he has to sleep in different houses each night to hide from potential persecution shows the breakdown of trust between ethnic groups and the creation of an atmosphere where survival depended on hiding one’s identity.

The Second Coup and Igbo Massacres

Just six months later, a second coup happened. Just six months later, a second coup happened. Adichie writes, “The second coup happened a week later, and Richard’s first reaction was to gloat” (171). Richard’s initial gloating response may seem misplaced, but it reveals the undercurrent of discontent among certain groups towards the existing government and military power. The coup provides Richard with a chance to feel vindicated, as he had earlier voiced concerns about the government's instability, only to be dismissed by others, including Madu. The use of the word “gloat” implies a sense of satisfaction at the destabilisation, signaling that political tension had been building up and that the coup only amplified existing animosities.

Kainene hears terrible stories from the radio she is listening to. She learns that Igbo soldiers were lured to a “muster parade” in the North, only to be separated and killed. Kainene reveals that in spite of the ongoing coup, the “Nigerian Radio isn’t saying anything” (172). The silence of the Nigerian media in contrast to the alarm raised by the BBC shows a

pervasive unwillingness within Nigeria to acknowledge the ethnic cleansing underway. It also shows the complicity of Nigerian institutions in ethnic tensions and bigotry. The news of the coup makes Kainene tense. Her body language becomes taut and she rocks back and forth. She is anxious about the safety of her people, particularly her friend Madu. Her physical reactions reflect how ethnic violence has invaded her life and rendered her helpless as she watches her ethnic group suffer from afar.

The killings continue, and soon she learns of Colonel Udodi's horrific death. His death is recounted with visceral details—of Colonel Udodi's death—"Northern soldiers put him in a cell in the barracks and fed him his own shit" (173). This description is difficult to read and shocking to comprehend, yet Adichie includes it to underscore the extreme and systematic cruelty that the Igbo people endured. By depicting such atrocities, the novel brings the brutality of ethnic conflict into sharp relief, showing how certain groups, in this case, the Igbo, were stripped of their basic human rights. Kainene's depiction of Udodi as one who "died on a cross" suggests that Igbo soldiers, like Colonel Udodi, were sacrificed in a manner that mirrors the profound sacrifice associated with martyrdom.

Colonel Madu is able to escape the bigotry-inspired cruelty. He appears in Kainene's house two weeks later, where he recounts how he narrowly escaped. Madu's friend Ibrahim, a Northern officer, saves him by hiding him in a chicken house and then helping him disguise himself as a Fulani nomad. Madu's harrowing escape, including his time "in the chicken house for two days" and his experience hiding in the water tank of a train, is a stark example of how survival in this conflict depended on relinquishing all personal dignity. His decision to take on a disguise that erases his Igbo identity—wearing a "fireman's suit" and hiding in the water tank—reflects the impossibility of coexisting with the Northern soldiers who would kill him based solely on his ethnicity. The irony of an Igbo officer, once a person of authority,

being forced to hide as though he were nothing more than an animal in a tank of water also shows how ethnic conflict severely strips away one's humanity (174).

Madu also reflects on the ethnic balance policy in the Nigerian military. He says, "The problem was the ethnic balance policy. I was part of the commission that told our GOC that we should scrap it, that it was polarizing the army." His statement reveals the institutionalised nature of ethnic tensions. It implies that even well-intentioned policies meant to ensure fairness among ethnic groups instead exacerbated division. The policy, which promoted unqualified Northern soldiers, demonstrates how the conflict was ingrained in the military structure itself. Madu's frustration also extended to the "British GOC" (General Officer Commanding). This shows how the governance structures imposed on Nigeria by the colonial masters were embedded with and exacerbated ethnic hierarchies and distrust (176).

Adichie creates a scene of horror and disbelief as Ugwu listens to a radio announcement about violence against the Igbo in Maiduguri: "We have confirmed reports that up to five hundred Igbo people have been killed in Maiduguri." (177) Ugwu's Master, a Nigerian intellectual who is ordinarily composed, reacts in denial and shock, exclaiming, "Rubbish!" and "Impossible!" These reactions reflect the disbelief and powerlessness felt by individuals as they come to realize that ethnic tensions have grown beyond control. The Master's response represents the reaction of those who are taken aback by the scale of ethnic violence (Adichie 177).

Olanna is initially unaware of the imminent threat to her life and to the lives of her family members, as she sits comfortably with Mohammed, drinking "chilled rice milk." Her relaxed state contrasts sharply with Mohammed's growing anxiety when he returns holding what "looked like a pamphlet" and states bluntly, "They're rioting." This subtle shift in tone signifies that Olanna's life is about to change drastically, as Mohammed tries to protect her

from the hostility outside. The ominous repetition in Mohammed's words, "They're rioting... you must leave right away," hints at the violence brewing outside, foreshadowing the brutal events that will soon unfold. Mohammed's report of "Igbo bodies...lying on Airport Road" suggests that the riots are not merely demonstrations but targeted violence with deadly intentions. The rioters, who are motivated by ethnic and religious hatred, specifically target Igbo people as "infidels" and, according to Mohammed, are "well organized," indicating a systematic form of ethnic cleansing (Adichie 182).

One of the most telling moments in the novel is when Olanna observes the bus moving through the streets with a loudspeaker blaring, "The Igbo must go. The infidels must go." This chilling declaration encapsulates the hostile and dehumanising rhetoric aimed at Igbos. It is significant that the message is repeated twice. This repetition proves that the hatred of Igbos is central to the rioters' agenda. The use of the term "infidels" demonstrates how religion is weaponised to justify ethnic violence. It portrays Igbos as outsiders who are culturally and religiously incompatible with the northern community. By doing this, Adichie illustrates how religious and ethnic differences intersect to create a toxic atmosphere of division and hostility (183).

When Olanna reaches her uncle's compound in Sabon Gari, she is confronted with the brutal consequences of this ethnic animosity. The imagery here is graphic and deeply unsettling. Adichie writes, "She stopped when she saw the bodies. Uncle Mbaezi lay facedown in an ungainly twist, legs splayed." The description of her uncle's body in such a vulnerable and undignified position highlights the complete disregard for human life shown by the attackers. His death, along with the mutilated body of Aunty Ifeka, reveals the horrific lengths to which the rioters have gone in their hatred for Igbos (184).

Adichie's vivid descriptions continue to reveal the impact of ethnic violence on individuals and communities, as seen in the scene where Olanna spots Abdulmalik, a familiar figure, among the attackers. He boasts, "We finished the whole family. It was Allah's will!" Abdulmalik's words are particularly jarring for Olanna, as he is someone she once trusted, yet he now exhibits a casual cruelty in his involvement with the murder of her family. This encounter underscores how ethnic and religious divisions can turn neighbours into perpetrators of horrific violence. The chilling indifference with which Abdulmalik "nudged another body, a woman's headless body," exemplifies the brutal dehumanisation that is characteristic of ethnic hatred. The fact that he steps directly over bodies instead of stepping aside symbolises the erasure of respect or empathy for the Igbo people, who are viewed as disposable (184).

In the twelfth chapter, when Richard is trying to travel out of Kano, ethnic tensions place his life and that of other Igbos in immediate danger. In the airport scene, soldiers burst in, shouting, "Where are the Igbo people? Who is Igbo here? Where are the infidels?" The soldiers also use the phrase "Nyamiri" to refer to Igbo individuals. This reveals how ethnic slurs are used to categorize, condemn, and reduce a person's identity to a single, derogatory label (190).

The terrifying moment when the soldier forces Nnaemeka to say "Allahu Akbar" highlights the desperation and helplessness of Igbo individuals who must feign loyalty to survive. Nnaemeka's reluctance to say the words due to his accent reflects the tragic irony that his own voice betrays his identity. The excerpt reads, "Nnaemeka knelt down. Richard saw fear etched so deeply onto his face that it collapsed his cheeks and transfigured him into a mask that looked nothing like him." This description underscores how the fear of ethnic persecution transforms people: it strips away their humanity and reduces them to caricatures

of themselves in the face of life-threatening fear. Richard's internal conflict as he watches, hoping that Nnaemeka will "say the words, anyway, to try," reflects the survival instinct that pervades individuals caught in ethnic violence, even as it may come at the cost of their integrity or dignity (190).

After shooting Nnaemeka, the soldiers continue their assault, killing the bartender and shattering bottles of liquor, an act that creates the smell of "whisky and Campari and gin," blending with the bloodshed to create a visceral scene of destruction (190). Adichie uses sensory overload to display the unrelenting nature of ethnic-fuelled violence.

The indifference of the security guards, who merely "folded their arms across their uniforms and watched," highlights the complicity of bystanders and the institutions that fail to protect the targeted group (190). Adichie uses this chilling image of passivity to reflect how the state and its representatives may implicitly support or ignore ethnic persecution by allowing violence to escalate unchecked.

Olanna's interactions with friends and relatives after the massacre show the depth of ethnic prejudice that has built up over time, particularly against the Hausa and Fulani people of Northern Nigeria. When visitors come to console her, their sentiments quickly turn to prejudice as they "mutter about the evils of those Muslim Hausa people, those black-as-he-goats Northerners, those dirty cattle-rearers with jigger-infested feet." Adichie uses these derogatory terms to depict how ethnic and regional stereotypes perpetuate a sense of division. The words "black-as-he-goats" and "jigger-infested feet" dehumanize Northern Nigerians, reducing them to mere caricatures rather than individuals.

Olanna's exhaustion after hearing stories of violence—such as "The Okafors had lost a son and his family of four in Zaria, the Ibe daughter had not returned from Kaura-Namoda,

the Onyekachi family had lost eight people in Kano”—suggests a community irreparably scarred by loss. These stories of death are not merely statistics but deeply personal tragedies, each one exacerbating Olanna’s grief and reinforcing a sense of injustice and betrayal by the Nigerian state. The repetitive recounting of these atrocities suggests that the war has become a defining feature of daily life, and it amplifies ethnic divisions as each loss sharpens the collective resentment felt by the Igbo people.

Richard’s historical commentary in his book contextualises the roots of this ethnic tension, countering the narrative of "age-old" hatred. Richard notes, "The notion of the recent killings being the product of 'age-old' hatred is therefore misleading." Here, Adichie critiques the oversimplified views that ethnic violence in Nigeria has always existed. She argues instead how colonial policies, particularly the British "divide-and-rule" strategy, intentionally sowed discord among Nigeria's ethnic groups. Richard states that “these policies manipulated the differences between the tribes and ensured that unity would not exist, thereby making the easy governance of such a large country practicable.” In highlighting the role of colonial interference in shaping these divisions, Adichie draws attention to how history and external forces have fuelled animosities that became destructive during the war.

Olanna’s experience on the plane later in the excerpt further embodies the pervasive ethnic biases in Nigeria. The man sitting next to her embodies this prejudice when he comments, “Why should an Igbo man be the vice chancellor in Lagos?” His frustration is not with any specific Igbo person but rather with the broader Igbo community, as he claims, “The problem with Igbo people is that they want to control everything in this country. Everything.” (276)

Olanna’s response to the man’s prejudice is subtle yet pointed. When he mistakenly says “keda” instead of “kedu,” she quietly corrects him, stating, “We say kedu, not keda.”

Her soft, almost understated correction serves as a reminder that the Igbo people, and by extension every ethnic group, possess unique identities and nuances that cannot be flattened into a singular, antagonistic “other.” Olanna’s response also demonstrates her refusal to fully accept the prejudices that surround her. Instead, she asserts her dignity and her identity in the face of ignorance and bias (276).

2.3 Ethnic Suspicion and Distrust

Richard and Madu discuss the possibility of a second coup following the January 1966 coup, which had introduced significant instability and fear across Nigeria. Richard notes that “all everybody was saying was second coup, second coup,” referencing the pervasive fear in Zaria, a northern Nigerian city, that a second coup would soon unfold (171). This repetition of the phrase “second coup” highlights the nation’s collective anxiety and the rumours that were spreading, particularly among the Hausa-Fulani people in the north, who perceived the Igbo as potential usurpers of power.

Richard’s remark that “Radio Kaduna and the New Nigerian” were also discussing the possibility of a coup signals how pervasive these fears had become, as even the media appeared to amplify the concern, thereby contributing to an environment where distrust festered.

Madu’s response—“What does the press know, really?”—shows his scepticism towards the media’s portrayal of events. It suggests that the press was inflaming ethnic tensions rather than providing unbiased information. Madu’s scepticism reflects the tendency of different ethnic groups to question each other’s motives, especially when broadcasted by media with perceived ethnic biases. Radio Kaduna, a station based in the north, is associated with the Hausa-Fulani group, and Madu’s dismissive tone might suggest his distrust toward northern media sources (171).

As Richard continues, he describes the media's role in stoking fears of an "Igbo takeover." He recalls, "The papers ran articles about jihad, and Radio Kaduna kept broadcasting the late Sardauna's speeches," referencing the revered northern leader whose death in the January 1966 coup further fueled northern resentment against the Igbo. This portrayal suggests a media narrative that frames the Igbo as a threatening "other," stirring fear that they would dominate the political and civil spheres. The word "jihad" implies that some northern factions might have viewed the conflict as a religious or cultural crusade, with an undertone of righteous opposition to an Igbo-controlled state. This rhetoric of "jihad" hints at a deeper cultural divide, where each side views the other not merely as political opponents but as existential threats to their way of life.

Madu's response to Richard's concerns is dismissive. He is reluctant to acknowledge the looming threat: "There won't be a second coup. There's a little tension in the army, but there always is a little tension in the army." His words underscore his confidence, or perhaps denial, regarding the situation's volatility. This reaction can be interpreted as a broader commentary on how individuals in positions of power often downplay the severity of ethnic tensions, either out of optimism or to maintain a facade of stability. Madu's quick shift to talking about "goat meat" is almost a deflection, a way of grounding the conversation in mundane matters, as if to brush off the gravity of what Richard is sensing. This dismissal, however, belies the severity of the ethnic and political divisions that are brewing beneath the surface (Adichie 171).

After the second coup, Colonel Madu, a close friend of Kainene's, expresses his disillusionment after the killings. He says, "Igbo soldiers and Northern soldiers can never live in the same barracks after this. It is impossible, impossible." This line captures how the violence created a barrier between ethnic groups and made reconciliation seem impossible. It

underscores the sense of betrayal and fear that has developed between the ethnic groups. By stating “it is impossible,” Madu reinforces the notion that the conflict has created an unbridgeable divide. This absolute language hints at a broader and more intractable distrust among the groups involved in the war. It illustrates how ethnic violence has eroded any hope of unity or mutual respect between the soldiers (176).

The distrust between the ethnic groups is further emphasised when Madu laments the imposition of Gowon as head of state. Madu’s objection: “They cannot impose Gowon on us as head of state. It is not how things are done,” indicates his perception that the political leadership is biased in favor of the Northern soldiers and their interests. Gowon’s appointment represents, for Madu, not just a power shift but also a breach of protocol that symbolizes disrespect and disregard for other ethnic groups. Madu’s anger here is twofold: it is directed at the decision-makers who ignore military hierarchy and also at the perceived injustice of Northerners being promoted over those “who are senior to him.” Through this dialogue, Adichie reveals how ethnic favouritism is perceived to undercut competence and integrity in the Nigerian military and furthers the sense of ethnic distrust and betrayal (177).

Adichie deepens the emotional gravity of the scene by detailing Madu’s mourning for “solid good men” like Udodi, Iloputaife, Okunweze, and Okafor. These men, he notes, were “men who believed in Nigeria and didn’t care for tribe.” Madu’s reflection here introduces a painful irony: those who sought to transcend ethnic divides and identify with a united Nigeria were among the victims of the violence that sought to uphold ethnic superiority. Udodi’s death is particularly heartbreaking to Madu, as “Udodi spoke better Hausa than he spoke Igbo, and look how they slaughtered him.” This quote captures the painful reality of the Nigerian Civil War, where ethnic loyalty often outweighed shared humanity or cross-cultural friendships. Udodi’s fluency in Hausa, a symbol of his connection to Northern Nigeria, could

not save him from the violence rooted in ethnic division. His murder highlights the entrenched prejudices that have hardened into acts of violence and have led to ethnic distrust on the individual level (Adichie 176).

Madu's frustration and helplessness about the ethnic balance policy serve as another layer to the novel's exploration of ethnic distrust. He recalls being "part of the commission that told our GOC that we should scrap it, that it was polarising the army, that they should stop promoting Northerners who were not qualified." The policy, designed to maintain ethnic "balance" within the army, has instead contributed to an imbalance of competence and trust. Adichie uses this policy to illustrate how institutionalized favoritism can distort an organization's integrity, leading to resentment and division. Madu's regret about the policy reflects a missed opportunity to foster meritocracy and unity in the army, and the imposition of Northern officers symbolizes the systemic inequities that exacerbate ethnic distrust. His reference to the "British GOC" (General Officer Commanding) also hints at the colonial legacy that left Nigeria with systems ill-suited to its diversity, highlighting how colonial structures contributed to these divisions.

2.4 Conclusion

This chapter has explored ethnic tensions and national identity during the Nigerian Civil War as depicted in *Half of a Yellow Sun*. Adichie masterfully illustrates how colonial legacies, political coups, and targeted violence exacerbated existing ethnic divisions, transforming them into open hostility and widespread distrust. The chapter demonstrates how the struggle for power and the manipulation of ethnic identities undermined the fragile unity of the newly independent nation and ultimately results in a brutal civil war that challenged the very notion of a shared Nigerian identity.

CHAPTER THREE

The Social Impact of Civil War on Civilians in Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *Half of a Yellow Sun*

3.1 Introduction

Social impact refers to the effects of an event, policy, or action on the social fabric of a community, including its institutions, relationships, and overall well-being. The social impact of civil war can be devastating and far-reaching. Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *Half of a Yellow Sun* provides a powerful exploration of these social impacts. This chapter will explore how the text portrays the experiences of civilians caught in the Biafran War and the profound ways in which the conflict reshaped their lives and their society.

3.2 Displacement and Destruction of Homes

Before the war, Adichie establishes homes as places of safety, identity, and belonging. Odenigbo's house in Nsukka functions as a hub of intellectual discourse and camaraderie. Odenigbo engages in critical socio-political discussions with his friends and colleagues. Nsukka is depicted as a microcosm of intellectual vibrancy, security, and order. Odenigbo describes the place as "being free of colonial influence" (38). This setting stands in sharp contrast to the upheaval that follows, emphasising the fragility of the concept of home.

"Evacuate now! The federals have entered Nsukka! We are evacuating now! Right now! I am going to all the houses still occupied. Evacuate now!" (219)

The outbreak of the Nigerian Civil War disrupts lives and forces many characters into displacement. The characters are thrust into a precarious existence where their homes, both literal and metaphorical, are stripped away.

The war strips away the idea of permanence. It reduces life to something that can be carried away in a hurried moment. The things left behind, books, photographs, and even the familiar air of Nsukka, represent the ruptured continuity of their lives, the severed ties to a past that once felt secure.

The refugees flooding into Umuahia are another vivid representation of displacement. These people flee from violence, abandoning their homes, lives, and everything they knew. The streets are filled with new faces—“women knocked on the door often to ask if there was any work they could do in exchange for food. They came with their thin naked children.” (233) They are hungry, desperate, and displaced. The constant arrival of these refugees adds to the feeling of loss. Ugwu in particular is affected by the growing number of people who have nowhere to go. Adichie writes, “The neighbors took in relatives. Master’s cousins came for a few weeks and slept in the living room until they left to join the army.” (346) No one is immune from the violence of war. Everyone must find new spaces to survive, even if that means sharing the limited space in their homes.

As the war intensifies, more places are turned into camps for refugees. Olanna's own school is repurposed for this purpose. “Akwakuma Primary School would be turned into a refugee camp. They have brought bamboo beds and cooking utensils already” (346). Even schools, which are supposed to be places of education, become places of survival. There is no sanctuary. Olanna, while trying to maintain some normalcy, organizes classes for the refugees. She, too, is affected by the loss of normal life. “She closed the pot. ‘I’m going to organize classes here in the yard’” (346). The idea of teaching in the yard illustrates how the war has forced people to adapt, even when they don't want to.

The character of Kainene also embodies the harsh reality of displacement. After purchasing a house in a previously abandoned location, Kainene works hard to make it

livable despite the looming threats of violence. “The new house was surrounded by cashew trees. Richard remembered how dejected it had looked when Kainene bought it—half-finished with layers of green mold on the unpainted walls” (376). The house which was once a place of hope now carries the weight of a destroyed future. It is surrounded by fear, yet Kainene’s determination to make it home speaks to the resilience of those displaced by war. She, too, has no choice but to adapt to the uncertain conditions.

Kainene leads Olanna to a refugee camp, where she witnesses firsthand the toll the war has taken. Olanna describes the people in the classrooms: “Not one of them reached out to slap away the fat flies. The only movement Olanna saw was that of a child sitting by the door; he unfolded and refolded his arms” (422). The image of the child, so weak and malnourished, is a painful reflection of the cruelty of war. These people no longer have homes or even the energy to protect themselves from the flies. The loss of dignity, health, and identity is evident. “The taut globes that were their bellies would not fit in a shirt anyway. Their buttocks and chests were collapsed into folds of rumpled skin” (422). The degradation is complete. These people are no longer seen as individuals, only as victims of an endless cycle of suffering.

Kainene’s bitterness about the refugees’ deaths is also telling. “Sometimes I hate them,” she says, pointing to the bodies of the dead. Her words reflect the exhaustion of witnessing so much loss. “I hate them for dying” (423). The grief is overwhelming. Kainene is tired, not just of the war, but of the continuous tragedy that fills the camps. The dead bodies pile up, each one a reminder of the displacement that has stripped away human lives. “Father Marcel and another man carried the dead woman, by her ankles and wrists, out of the classroom and to the back of the building” (423). There is no space for mourning. Death becomes a routine, a part of life that must be dealt with as efficiently as possible (423).

The refugee camps in *Half of a Yellow Sun* are a manifestation of displacement, not just of bodies but of homes, dignity, and lives. The characters, like Ugwu and Kainene, are forced to adapt to their new realities. They live in makeshift homes, surrounded by refugees, and face the emotional weight of loss daily. The war has scattered their lives into pieces and has forced them to reckon with survival in the face of overwhelming tragedy.

The destruction of homes is another aspect of the Nigerian civil war that is depicted in the novel. As the Biafran forces lose ground, the once stable homes of Nsukka residents are transformed into sites of violence and desolation. This is depicted in the excerpt below:

“Ugwu felt the warm wetness of urine on his shorts and was convinced that the bombs would never end; they would continue to fall until everything was destroyed and everyone died. But they stopped. The planes moved farther away in the sky... Smoke rose from a compound near the corn-grinding station a street away. Two houses had collapsed into dusty rubble.” (250)

The emotional impact of this destruction is captured in Ugwu’s terror as he feels “the warm wetness of urine on his shorts” and becomes “convinced that the bombs would never end” (249). This moment conveys the profound fear and helplessness that war instills, particularly in those who have lost the safety and stability that home provides.

The psychological damage caused by displacement is profound. The loss of security, the constant fear of violence, and the uncertainty of survival become daily struggles. Refugees in Umuahia, like the women who knock on the door "often to ask if there was any work they could do in exchange for food," are desperate (346). Their children are hungry, their bodies thin and naked. "Sometimes, Olanna gave them garri soaked in cold water before telling them she had no work" (346). The sense of helplessness is overwhelming. There is no

work, no hope. The women and children who flood the streets reflect the brokenness of displacement. They are people who once had homes and routines. Now they have nothing. They are simply trying to survive. But the emotional cost is too high.

The psychological trauma doesn't only affect the displaced. It also affects those who try to help. Richard and Kainene are examples of people trying to hold on to some semblance of normalcy. But even in their new house, the emotional scars are visible. "The new house was surrounded by cashew trees" (347). It seems a peaceful place, but it is not. The memories of what it once was—"half-finished with layers of green mold on the unpainted walls"—remind them of what they have lost (346). The flies, the bees, and the unease that settles in their bones show the toll of the war.

Kainene works tirelessly, but her exhaustion shows. "There was a manic vibrancy about her" (386). She is everywhere, dealing with refugees, organizing, keeping things running. Yet, she is also worn down. She no longer talks about her personal losses. "She no longer spoke of Ikejide." Instead, she focuses on the suffering around her. The faces of the displaced, the children with their "bones clearly outlined," and the women who are "dead" but still alive in their broken bodies all weigh heavily on her mind (386).

The refugee camp itself is a place where mental anguish is palpable. Olanna's tour of the camp reveals the horror that is life in a refugee centre. The smell alone makes her "faint." The suffering is evident. "In the second classroom, she felt that even the air inside her was becoming soiled" (422). The bodies lying on bamboo beds are not just physically broken but psychologically shattered. The mother whose child clings to her back, the frail bodies of the children, are living but dead in spirit. The psychological toll of their suffering is clear.

Kainene's frustration with the refugees' deaths reveals the complexity of her emotions. "Sometimes I hate them," she admits. Not because of their suffering, but because they die. The constant loss is overwhelming. The psychological impact of seeing so many people die without being able to save them wears her down. Kainene is torn between her desire to help and the toll it takes on her. The baby she tries to save, feeding it protein tablets, symbolizes her struggle. She knows it might not survive, but she keeps trying. She cannot stop. She cannot let go.

The displacement also leads to a loss of identity, particularly in the character of Olanna. It fragments her sense of identity. The war also disrupts her intellectual and social identity as a university lecturer at Nsukka and a politically engaged partner to Odenigbo. Her transition to survival mode replaces these roles with a version of herself that is overwhelmed by loss and trauma.

Similarly, Odenigbo, once a confident intellectual and political idealist, loses his ideological fervor. The war reduces him to a shadow of his former self, his ideals undermined by the chaos and futility of conflict. Ugwu's identity also shifts drastically. From a curious, ambitious houseboy, he becomes both a victim and perpetrator of violence, particularly in his participation in the rape of a woman during his conscription. This act leaves a moral scar, adding to his fractured sense of self. Even Richard, the British expatriate, grapples with his identity. His romanticized view of Biafra is shaken as he becomes an outsider in the war effort, unable to fully belong to the cause he idealizes. Through these characters, Adichie vividly portrays how war strips away the foundations of identity, replacing them with survival, guilt, and disillusionment.

3.2.1 Community and Shared Loss

The characters live through devastation, yet they support each other in ways that speak to the resilience of human connection during war. The novel's portrayal of communal life is complex. People are displaced, their homes destroyed, and their families scattered. But in these dire circumstances, they come together, forming new families and networks to survive.

Ugwu's thoughts reveal the impact of the war on the community. He imagines his family back home, in danger of being taken by the vandals. "Images of his mother and Anulika and Nnesinachi splayed out underneath a dirty sun-blackened Hausa soldier came to Ugwu so clearly that he shivered" (345). Ugwu's desire to return home reflects his deep concern, but also his helplessness. The refugees, like Ugwu's family, are part of a larger exodus, yet there is no sense of isolation in their shared plight. The more people flee, the more they rely on each other for survival.

This need for solidarity is evident in the way people cope with loss and hardship. Olanna, who could have stayed detached, chooses to help refugees. She organizes classes in her yard. "I'm going to organize classes here in the yard," she tells Ugwu (346). Her determination to assist comes despite her own suffering. Even when resources are scarce, the refugees find ways to support one another. Mrs. Muokelu takes in eight relatives, and Olanna helps as much as she can. The community that forms around these refugees is not just a survival mechanism; it is a way of maintaining dignity and hope in the midst of disaster.

The school-turned-refugee camp shows the scale of this shared suffering. Kainene's decision to turn the new house into a place of refuge demonstrates her commitment to the cause. "I always start with the bunker," Kainene says, giving Olanna a tour of the compound (421). The refugees who occupy the space live in cramped conditions. Kainene's work involves making these conditions bearable. It is a quiet, selfless act, which speaks to the

communal spirit she embodies. Her exhaustion shows when she returns from the camp each day. "There was a manic vibrancy about her, about the way she left for the refugee camp each day, about the exhaustion that shadowed her eyes when she returned in the evenings" (386).

Despite the overwhelming sense of loss, Kainene never stops trying to help. She does what she can to improve the lives of those around her, even if the result is only temporary relief. But this shared experience of loss is not just about survival. It is about the painful intimacy that war brings. In the refugee camp, there is rawness to the suffering. The people are not faceless victims; they are individuals with names, histories, and dreams. Kainene's empathy for the refugees is evident in the way she interacts with them. She doesn't just offer food or shelter. She offers understanding. When a pregnant woman spits at Dr. Inyang, accusing her of aiding the enemy, Kainene responds with force, slapping the woman in anger. "We are all Biafrans! Anyincha bu Biafra!" she cries (387). The scene is about solidarity and identity. In the face of fear and hatred, Kainene insists that they are all one people, despite the divisions.

The shared loss becomes more apparent when Kainene takes Olanna through the camp's classrooms. The smell inside the rooms overwhelms Olanna. "The smell hit her at the first door" (421). In the classrooms, the children are malnourished, their bodies showing the signs of hunger. Olanna is struck by the sight of a mother with two children, "naked; the taut globes that were their bellies would not fit in a shirt anyway" (422). The children's bellies are swollen from hunger. The mother's steady gaze is one of resignation, as if she has already accepted the unbearable reality. Yet, in the midst of all this suffering, the shared experience of loss and pain binds them together. Kainene's actions are a testament to the strength of communal support. She tries to feed the baby with a protein tablet, even though it is clear that the child's survival is uncertain. "Maybe it will for this baby. Maybe" (422).

The destruction of lives is evident in the refugee camp, yet Kainene's attempt to make a difference shows the resilience of the human spirit. The community created within these circumstances is one that refuses to give in entirely. The people suffer together, but they also help one another. The act of surviving becomes a communal effort. Even the simplest acts of care—giving food, holding a baby, comforting the sick—are forms of resistance to the violence that surrounds them.

3.2.2 Resilience Amid Loss

While the novel emphasizes the devastating effects of displacement, it also highlights resilience. The characters' ability to rebuild and adapt reflects the enduring human spirit. After the war, Olanna and Odenigbo attempt to piece their lives back together. They begin to rebuild their damaged house. This determination to rebuild underscores the resilience that often accompanies loss. While the scars of displacement remain, the act of reclaiming a sense of home shows resistance against the forces that sought to uproot them.

3.3 Gendered Experiences of War

Men and women experience and suffer the impact of the war in unique ways in the text. Women are frequently depicted as bearing the brunt of the war's immediate consequences, primarily focused on survival and caregiving. This is illustrated through the woman displaced from the market, who laments, "We were on our way back from the market when we discovered the vandals had occupied the junction and were shelling inside the village. We could not go home. I had only this wrapper and blouse and the small money from selling my pepper. I don't know where my two children are" (350)> This encapsulates the precariousness of women's lives—their vulnerability and the constant threat of displacement and separation from family.

This resonates with broader observations about women in conflict zones, where they often become responsible for maintaining family structures and securing basic necessities amidst chaos (Lindsey 23). Their roles are often reduced to immediate survival, as seen in Olanna's forced prioritization of safety over her career: "What will you do then?" "I don't know," she responded" (335). The limited choices available to her underscore how war restricts women's agency and confines them to reactive roles.

Furthermore, the novel doesn't shy away from depicting the harsh reality of sexual violence as a weapon of control, exemplified by the scene where the "bar girl was lying on her back on the floor, her wrapper bunched up at her waist... Between her legs, High-Tech was moving" (441-442). This brutal event underscores the systemic vulnerability of women to sexual assault during wartime. It also serves as a microcosm of the gendered power dynamics that are exacerbated by conflict. In the chaos of war, existing social hierarchies are often reinforced, and women become particularly susceptible to acts of violence and exploitation (Wood 124). By including this scene, Adichie confronts the uncomfortable truth about the ways in which women's bodies become battlegrounds in times of conflict.

Men's experiences in *Half of a Yellow Sun* are equally complex, though distinct. They are often defined by their involvement in the war effort, either through conscription or voluntary enlistment. Ugwu's transformation into a soldier, detailed through descriptions like "The parade left Ugwu's arms stiff. The obstacles training left his calves throbbing. The rope-climbing left his palms bleeding" illustrates the physical and psychological demands placed upon men during wartime (435). Their masculinity becomes intertwined with their ability to endure hardship and engage in combat. This aligns with societal expectations of men as protectors and providers, which are amplified during times of conflict.

Ugwu's witnessing of the horrors of war, such as the man with "his blown-open belly," reveals the trauma and survivor's guilt that many soldiers—predominantly male—experience (442). This resonates with studies on the psychological impact of war on combatants, portraying the disconnect between the idealized image of the stoic warrior and the reality of trauma. Even Odenigbo, who assumes a protective role, as seen when he reassures Olanna—"Nkem, it's okay," Odenigbo said. "A bullet hit him but it looks like a flesh wound"---is not immune to the stresses and anxieties of the situation (335). This attempt at reassurance, while intended to offer comfort, also reveals the burden placed upon men to maintain composure and project an image of strength, even in moments of profound fear and uncertainty.

3.4 Conclusion

Half of a Yellow Sun provides a powerful and multifaceted portrayal of the social impact of the Nigerian Civil War on civilians. Adichie depicts the devastating effects of displacement, the destruction of homes and communities, and the profound loss of life, dignity, and identity. Through the experiences of characters like Olanna, Odenigbo, Ugwu, and Kainene, the novel reveals the war's disruption of established social structures and the forced adaptation to precarious new realities. The creation of refugee camps, the constant influx of displaced persons, and the pervasive fear of violence underscore the breakdown of normalcy and the struggle for survival.

Furthermore, the novel highlights the gendered dimensions of conflict—how men and women experienced the war in distinct ways. Women faced heightened vulnerability to sexual violence, displacement, and the burden of caregiving amidst chaos, while men were confronted with the pressures of militarisation, the psychological trauma of combat, and the societal expectations of stoicism and protection. Despite the overwhelming tragedy, *Half of a*

Yellow Sun also portrays the resilience of the human spirit. The characters' ability to form new communities, find solace in shared experiences of loss, and strive to rebuild their lives after the war underscores the enduring power of hope and the determination to overcome even the most devastating circumstances.

CHAPTER FOUR

PSYCHOLOGICAL AND EMOTIONAL CONSEQUENCES OF WAR

4.1 Trauma in *Half of a Yellow Sun*

Half of a Yellow Sun delves into the devastating impact of the Nigerian-Biafran War on individuals and communities. The novel doesn't shy away from depicting the brutal realities of conflict, and it particularly focuses on the psychological scars left on its characters. These characters, caught in the crossfire of war, experience trauma in various forms, leaving them deeply changed.

Olanna endures a series of traumatic events that chip away at her sense of self. Initially, she faces the profound betrayal of her partner, Odenigbo, who fathers a child with Amala, the servant in his mother's house. This betrayal shakes Olanna's trust and sense of security. However, this personal trauma is soon overshadowed by the larger tragedy of the war. The brutal murder of her aunt, uncle, and cousin during the anti-Igbo pogroms in Northern Nigeria is a turning point for Olanna. Witnessing such horrific violence, compounded by the feeling of abandonment by her nation, leads to a physical and emotional breakdown. She becomes paralyzed. Furthermore, she is plagued by "Dark Swoops," periods of intense depression and emotional numbness. The abrupt onset of her paralysis and incontinence at Odenigbo's doorstep marks the precise moment her body and mind registered the full weight of the atrocities she had seen. Adichie describes the The Dark Swoops as a "thick blank descended from above and pressed itself over her face, firmly, while she

struggled to breathe." These are akin to panic attacks and are physical replications of the suffocating fear and helplessness she felt during the massacre. The subsequent visions of "burning owls at the window grinning and beckoning to her with charred feathers" are nightmarish flashbacks that replay the horror and death she witnessed. Olanna is also unable to describe the "Dark Swoops" to anyone. This highlights the isolating nature of trauma, the way it can defy language and leave the sufferer feeling profoundly alone.

In contrast to Olanna's experience, Richard, the English writer, experiences the war from an outsider's perspective. Although he is not directly involved in the fighting, he is deeply affected by what he witnesses. The violence, the suffering, and the sheer brutality of the war leave a profound mark on his psyche. He carries the weight of these experiences, grappling with the moral implications of observing such devastation. This trauma fuels his artistic endeavors, driving him to document the war and its impact on the Biafran people. His photography and writing become a way for him to process his trauma and to bear witness to the atrocities he has seen. Richard's case demonstrates that trauma is not exclusive to those directly involved in combat; even observers can suffer significant psychological harm.

Kainene, Olanna's twin sister, develops a pragmatic and resilient approach to survival in the war-torn region. Faced with constant danger and uncertainty, she becomes resourceful and focused on immediate needs. However, this outward resilience does not mean she is immune to the psychological impact of the war. The constant fear, the loss of loved ones, and the daily struggle for survival take their toll. Kainene's transformation, her shift from a more carefree young woman to a hardened survivor, speaks to the profound psychological changes wrought by war. The disappearance of Kainene at the end of the war leaves a gaping hole in Olanna's life, and it is a loss that she struggles to accept. This final trauma underscores the enduring nature of the psychological wounds inflicted by war.

Ugwu, the houseboy who becomes deeply enmeshed in the lives of Odenigbo's family, also experiences significant trauma. He witnesses acts of violence and is himself subjected to exploitation. The war strips him of his innocence and forces him to confront the harsh realities of the world. He is forced to grow up quickly, shouldering responsibilities and witnessing events that no young person should ever have to see. These experiences leave a lasting impact on Ugwu, shaping his understanding of the world and his place in it.

The novel also highlights the specific trauma experienced by women during wartime. Anulika, Ugwu's sister, is brutally raped, an act of violence that silences her and robs her of her former energy. Furthermore, the young girls at the Orlu camp who are sexually exploited by a priest in exchange for food represent another layer of trauma. They are forced to endure this exploitation in order to survive.

Anulika's silence after her rape speaks volumes about the profound psychological impact of sexual violence. Her inability to articulate her experience highlights the shame and fear that often accompany such trauma, as well as the societal stigma that can silence victims. Similarly, Olanna's initial muteness after witnessing the massacre in Kano reflects the overwhelming nature of her experience. Words seem inadequate to express the horror she has seen, and her silence becomes a form of self-protection, a way to shield herself from the pain of reliving the trauma. Kainene's withdrawal into silence after witnessing Ikejide's death also suggests a similar coping mechanism. Faced with the unbearable reality of war, she retreats into herself. In addition, the silence of the world outside of Biafra becomes a source of trauma in itself. The international community's seeming indifference to the suffering of the Biafran people, their failure to intervene and stop the violence, is perceived as a betrayal. This silence amplifies the sense of isolation and abandonment felt by the characters, adding to their psychological burden.

4.2 Memory, Grief, and Loss

Memory, grief, and loss shape the characters' experiences and influencing their actions in profound ways. In the face of war's devastation, memory helps in preserving identity and maintaining a connection to a life that existed before the conflict. Olanna clings to memories of her love for Odenigbo. These recollections offer a sense of stability amidst the chaos. Similarly, the collective memory of their Igbo heritage and traditions provides a sense of continuity for the characters. This shared history becomes a reminder of who they are and what they stand for, even as their physical world crumbles around them.

However, memory is not solely a source of comfort; it can also be a site of immense pain. The characters in *Half of a Yellow Sun* are haunted by the memories of what they have witnessed and lost. The brutal images of violence, the faces of loved ones who are gone, and the constant fear of death become etched into their minds, resurfacing unexpectedly and triggering renewed waves of grief. This is particularly evident in Olanna's experience with "Dark Swoops," where the trauma of witnessing her family's murder resurfaces, overwhelming her and rendering her temporarily paralyzed.

Furthermore, the uncertainty surrounding Kainene's disappearance amplifies the grief experienced by Olanna and Richard. The lack of closure, the absence of a body or definitive confirmation of her death, leaves them in a state of perpetual mourning, unable to fully process their loss. This ambiguity underscores the complexities of grief in a war context,

where death is often sudden, violent, and shrouded in uncertainty. Consequently, the memories that once provided solace become sources of anguish as it constantly reminds the characters of the profound losses they have suffered.

Olanna's struggles with depression, Richard's artistic obsession with documenting the war, and Ugwu's journey from innocence to disillusionment all illustrate the enduring impact of past experiences. They are forced to grapple with the memories of violence, betrayal, and loss, memories that intrude upon their present and threaten to consume them. This struggle is further complicated by the societal context of the war.

4.3 Reconciliation and Post-War Reflections in *Half of a Yellow Sun*

The end of the Biafran War, as depicted in the *Half of a Yellow Sun*, does not bring a neat resolution. Instead, it marks the beginning of a different kind of struggle – the arduous journey of reconciliation and rebuilding. The war has fractured not only the physical landscape but also the emotional and psychological well-being of the characters.

One of the most striking aspects of the post-war period is the pervasive sense of loss. Olanna's desperate search for Kainene underscores the uncertainty and grief that grip many families. Even though the fighting has stopped, the absence of loved ones leaves a gaping hole. Olanna's moments of hope are interspersed with the agonizing reality of not knowing Kainene's fate. She clings to stories of others who returned after long absences, yet the unspoken fear of never seeing Kainene again hangs heavy. This ambiguity surrounding Kainene's disappearance amplifies Olanna's grief, making it difficult to find closure.

In the aftermath of the war, Olanna burns her Biafran pounds. She does this when soldiers visit her home. She is afraid that they will discover her hidden money and react violently. Nonetheless, her burning the Biafran pounds is not simply a practical measure to

avoid detection; it's a symbolic rejection of the instability and uncertainty that surrounds her. Odenigbo tells her, "You're burning memory". This highlights the different ways they are coping with the trauma and loss of the war. He clings to the symbols of Biafra, keeping his flag tucked away, a tangible reminder of their struggle. Olanna, however, chooses a different path. Her act of burning the money is a way of asserting that her true memories, her experiences, reside within her and cannot be confiscated or destroyed. She is taking ownership of her narrative, refusing to let external forces, whether soldiers or the fluctuating value of currency, define her or her memories.

Furthermore, Adichie depicts challenges of reintegration and the uneasy peace that follows the war. At a checkpoint, Odenigbo and Olanna are stopped by Nigerian soldiers who are initially perceived as liberators. This becomes a source of anxiety and even humiliation. Odenigbo is slapped and forced to carry wood, demonstrating the lingering resentment and the power dynamics that continue to shape the post-war reality. Even though the war is officially over, the scars of conflict remain visible. The destroyed Nigerian fleet also serves as a reminder of the violence that has occurred. Olanna's complex reaction – acknowledging the defeat while feeling cheated – captures the ambiguity of the post-war period. There is no clear victory or loss, but rather a sense of profound change and the need to adapt to a new reality. The oppression at checkpoint highlights how easily old animosities can resurface, even after the formal cessation of hostilities. The Nigerian officer's behavior underscores the continued power imbalances and the potential for further injustice.

In addition to the external challenges, the characters also face internal struggles. Odenigbo's return to his house in Abba is filled with a mixture of relief and trepidation. The overgrown yard and the makeshift grave for his mother serve as tangible reminders of the losses he has suffered. His emotional reaction underscores the personal cost of the war.

Similarly, Ugwu's experience with Miss Adebayo reveals the complexities of post-war relationships. While he initially dislikes her "Nigerianness," there is also a longing for the past, for the time before the war when their interactions were more innocent. Miss Adebayo's story, of learning about the Biafran famine in London, highlights the disconnect between those who experienced the war firsthand and those who remained removed from its realities. It also underscores the role of information and awareness in fostering understanding and reconciliation.

Adichie also portrays the resilience of the Igbos. Despite the losses and trauma they have endured, the characters demonstrate a remarkable capacity for survival. Olanna's search for Kainene, Odenigbo's return to his house, and Ugwu's presence in Odenigbo's home all suggest a determination to rebuild their lives. Even the seemingly mundane details, like the return of the butterflies and the water running again, symbolize a return to some semblance of normalcy.

However, this resilience is not portrayed as a simple triumph over adversity. It is a complex process, marked by setbacks, uncertainties, and the lingering pain of the past. Olanna's fluctuating emotions, her moments of hope followed by despair, illustrate the ongoing nature of healing. It is not a linear progression but rather a series of ups and downs, as individuals grapple with their experiences and try to find a way to move forward. The arrival of the books for Odenigbo from his international colleagues symbolizes the continuation of life and intellectual pursuits despite the devastation. It highlights the importance of preserving knowledge and culture in the aftermath of conflict. Similarly, the presence of Richard, now a more integral part of the household, suggests the formation of new bonds and the creation of a new kind of family in the wake of loss.

Works Cited

- Akpome, Aghogho. "Focalisation and Polyvocality in Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *Half of a Yellow Sun*." *English Studies in Africa*, vol. 56, no. 2, Oct. 2013, pp. 25–35, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00138398.2013.856556>.
- Amir, Oussama. "Fragmented Memory and Resonances of the Traumas of the Holocaust and War in the Novels of Patrick Modiano." *International Journal of Arts and Humanities*, vol. 2, no. 2, 25 Oct. 2024, pp. 39–47, bluemarkpublishers.com/index.php/IJAH/article/view/124, <https://doi.org/10.61424/ijah.v2i2.124>. Accessed 5 Nov. 2024.
- Behzad Pourgharib, et al. "Decolonized Trauma: Narrative, Memory and Identity in Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *Americanah*." *Arcadia*, vol. 58, no. 1, 1 June 2023, pp. 16–34, <https://doi.org/10.1515/arcadia-2023-2005>.
- Brewin, Chris R. "Memory and Forgetting." *Current Psychiatry Reports*, vol. 20, no. 10, 28 Aug. 2018, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11920-018-0950-7>.
- CARLSON, EVE B., and CONSTANCE J. DALENBERG. "A Conceptual Framework for the Impact of Traumatic Experiences." *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse*, vol. 1, no. 1, Jan. 2000, pp. 4–28, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1524838000001001002>.
- Caruth, Cathy. *Listening to Trauma*. Google Books, 2016.
- . *Trauma*. Johns Hopkins University Press EBooks, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1 Jan. 1995. Accessed 3 Oct. 2024.
- . *Trauma: Explorations in Memory*. Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995.
- Center for Substance Abuse Treatment (US). "Trauma Awareness." *Nih.gov*, 2014, www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK207203/.
- De Mey, Joke. *The Intersection of History, Literature and Trauma in Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's Half of a Yellow Sun*. 2010.

- Dickson, Bernard, et al. "History, Memory and the Politics of National Unity in Adichie's Half of a Yellow Sun and Achebe's There Was a Country." *International Journal on Studies in English Language and Literature (IJSELL)*, vol. 2, no. 5, 2014, pp. 81–89, www.arcjournals.org/pdfs/ijSELL/v2-i5/12.pdf. Accessed 6 Nov. 2024.
- Edson, Laurie. "Mapping Relationality: Adichie and the Social Spaces of Post-Independence Nigeria." *English Language Notes*, vol. 52, no. 2, 1 Sept. 2014, pp. 133–147, <https://doi.org/10.1215/00138282-52.2.133>. Accessed 17 Oct. 2019.
- Eyerman, Ron, et al. "Cultural Trauma, Collective Memory and the Vietnam War." *Politička Misao : Časopis Za Politologiju*, vol. 54, no. 1-2, 24 June 2017, pp. 11–31, hrcak.srce.hr/clanak/270258.
- Ezika-Anaduaka, Chisom, et al. "Tragic Optimism in Half of a Yellow Sun and beyond the Horizon." *Lwati: A Journal of Contemporary Research*, vol. 15, no. 3, 13 Nov. 2018, pp. 111–151, www.ajol.info/index.php/lwati/article/view/179548.
- Godwin Aondofa, Ikyer, and Blessing Ugo Ijem. "BINARY DIFUSSION of CULTURAL CONVENTIONS and CULTURAL DYNAMICS in CHINUA ACHEBE'S THINGS FALL APART and CHIMAMANDA ADICHIE'S HALF of a YELLOW SUN ." *International Journal of Arts & Sciences* , vol. 8, no. 7, 2015. Accessed 6 Nov. 2024.
- Holman, E. Alison, et al. "Media Exposure to Collective Trauma, Mental Health, and Functioning: Does It Matter What You See?" *Clinical Psychological Science*, vol. 8, no. 1, 8 Oct. 2019, pp. 111–124, <https://doi.org/10.1177/2167702619858300>.
- Janice, Spleth. "The Biafran War & the Evolution of Domestic Space in Half of a Yellow Sun." *A Companion to Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie*, 2017, pp. 129–138.
- Keats, Patrice A. "Vicarious Witnessing in European Concentration Camps: Imagining the Trauma of Another." *Traumatology*, vol. 11, no. 3, 2005, pp. 171–187, <https://doi.org/10.1177/153476560501100303>. Accessed 2 Dec. 2019.

- Kihlstrom, John F. "Trauma and Memory Revisited." *Www.ocf.berkeley.edu*, 2006,
www.ocf.berkeley.edu/~jfkihlstrom/Tsukuba05.htm.
- Kumar Mandal, Dipak, and Sukhdev Singh. "Sigmund Freud's Psychoanalytic Perspectives on Trauma Theory with Special Reference to Hysteria." *Journal of Positive School Psychology*, vol. 2022, no. 4, 2022, pp. 10256–10260,
www.journalppw.com/index.php/jpsp/article/download/6349/4188/7318.
- Lama Muteb, Alharbi. "The Nation Revisited: Examining Patriarchal Presence in Nuruddin Farah's "Maps" and Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's "Half of a Yellow Sun" - ProQuest." *Proquest.com*, 2015.
- Lindecrantz, Nicky. "Identity in Half of a Yellow Sun Nicky Lindecrantz." *Creating the Contemporary Literary Canon*, 8 Jan. 2023.
- Lunga, Hlumelo D. "A Postcolonial Ecofeminist Comparative Analysis of War Fiction: The Case of Arundhati Roy's the God of Small and Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's Half of a Yello Sun." *Repository.unam.edu.na*, 2020,
repository.unam.edu.na/handle/11070/2869.
- Marić, Mirna. "History, Memory and Trauma in Contemporary Nigerian Novel." *Repozitorij.unios.hr*, 29 Oct. 2012, repozitorij.unios.hr/islandora/object/ffos:1465.
- Martinez, Judith. "The Displacement of Ghosts. Memory, Migration and Trauma in Non-Linear Narratives." *Unsw.edu.au*, 2020,
unsworks.unsw.edu.au/entities/publication/4fdd3833-2a56-4033-9daa-9cf36eae5ff7/full, <https://doi.org/10.26190/unsworks/22115>. Accessed 5 Nov. 2024.
- Mbah, Chukwudi Victor. "Themes and Techniques in African Novel: A Review of Ngozi Chimamanda Adichie's Half of a Yellow Sun." *Ansu Journal of Language and Literary Studies*, vol. 1, no. 2, 2015,

ezenwaohaetorc.org/journals/index.php/AJLLS/article/view/215. Accessed 6 Nov. 2024.

Mohd, Farhan, and Saiel. "Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's Half of a Yellow Sun: A Decolonized Narrative against War, Conflicts and Violence." *Quest Journals Journal of Research in Humanities and Social Science*, vol. 11, 2023, pp. 2321–9467, www.questjournals.org/jrhss/papers/vol11-issue12/11122329.pdf.

Nayel, Dheyaa Khaleel. "War and the Question of Identity: A Study of the Novel Half of a Yellow Sun and the Movie the Wall." *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, vol. 15, no. 3, 8 May 2024, pp. 798–806, jltr.academypublication.com/index.php/jltr/article/view/8041, <https://doi.org/10.17507/jltr.1503.12>. Accessed 6 Nov. 2024.

Odubajo, Adedayo. "An Evaluation of Shifting Gender Constructions in Selected Works of Achebe, Adichie and Emecheta." *Repository.nwu.ac.za*, 2023, repository.nwu.ac.za/handle/10394/41906.

Oluwaseun, Ayodabo. "Narrative Strategies and Chronotope of Violence in Chimamanda Adichie's Half of a Yellow Sun." *Www.academia.edu*, vol. 12, no. 2, 2018, www.academia.edu/17168642/Narrative_Strategies_and_Chronotope_of_Violence_in_Chimamanda_Adichie_s_Half_of_a_Yellow_Sun.

Professor, Katie, and Marianne Noble. *Lived Experiences of Male and Female Hybridity within Chimamanda Adichie's Diaspora*. A University Honours in Literature, Spring, 2013.

Rideout, Jennifer. "Toward a New Nigerian Womanhood: Woman as Nation in Half of a Yellow Sun." *Commonwealth Essays and Studies*, vol. 36, no. 2, 1 Apr. 2014, pp. 71–81, <https://doi.org/10.4000/ces.5213>.

- Ritter, Maria. "Silence as the Voice of Trauma." *The American Journal of Psychoanalysis*, vol. 74, no. 2, June 2014, pp. 176–194, <https://doi.org/10.1057/ajp.2014.5>.
- Rovit, Rebecca. "Introduction: Witnessing History, Performing Trauma." *Journal of Dramatic Theory and Criticism*, vol. 27, no. 2, 2013, pp. 45–52, <https://doi.org/10.1353/dtc.2013.0005>. Accessed 31 Oct. 2019.
- Simoès da Silva, Tony. "From Lived Spaces to Literary Spaces: The Figure of the Child Soldier in Contemporary African Literature." *African Geographical Review*, vol. 37, no. 2, 24 July 2017, pp. 109–119, <https://doi.org/10.1080/19376812.2017.1351881>. Accessed 26 Feb. 2020.
- Stef Craps. *Postcolonial Witnessing : Trauma out of Bounds*. Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire ; New York, Ny, Palgrave Macmillan, 2015.
- Strehle, Susan. "Producing Exile: Diasporic Vision in Adichie's *Half of a Yellow Sun*." *MFS Modern Fiction Studies*, vol. 57, no. 4, 2011, pp. 650–672, <https://doi.org/10.1353/mfs.2011.0086>. Accessed 16 Aug. 2020.
- Tunca, Daria. "'The Other Half of the Sun.'" *Palgrave Macmillan UK EBooks*, 1 Jan. 2014, pp. 64–99, https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137264411_4.
- Uwakweh, Pauline. "(Re)Constructing Masculinity and Femininity in African War Narratives : The Youth in Chimamanda Adichie's *Half of a Yellow Sun* and Gorretti Kyomuhendo's *Waiting: A Novel of Uganda at War*." *Journal of the African Literature Association*, vol. 7, no. 1, Jan. 2012, pp. 82–106, <https://doi.org/10.1080/21674736.2012.11690201>. Accessed 24 Feb. 2019.
- Van der Merwe, Chris N. "Narrating Our Healing." *Google Books*, 2024, books.google.com/books?hl=en&lr=&id=uvMYBwAAQBAJ&oi=fnd&pg=PR5&dq=%2Bwitnessing%2Bcan%2Bbe%2Bseen%2Bthrough%2Bcharacters%2Bwho%2Bgrapple%2Bwith%2Btheir%2Bmemories%2Bof%2Btrauma. Accessed 5 Nov. 2024.

- Vidhya, Ms R, et al. "Feminizing the War Novel: A Study of Half of a Yellow Sun." *Journal of Language and Linguistic Studies*, vol. 17, no. 3, 2021, www.jlls.org/index.php/jlls/article/view/5438. Accessed 6 Nov. 2024.
- Visser, Irene. "Trauma Theory and Postcolonial Literary Studies." *Journal of Postcolonial Writing*, vol. 47, no. 3, July 2011, pp. 270–282, <https://doi.org/10.1080/17449855.2011.569378>.
- Windle, Gill. "What Is Resilience? A Review and Concept Analysis." *Reviews in Clinical Gerontology*, vol. 21, no. 02, 21 Dec. 2011, pp. 152–169, www.cambridge.org/core/journals/reviews-in-clinical-gerontology/article/abs/what-is-resilience-a-review-and-concept-analysis/B94C9BEAD7F43E1297EC9443DD24CA5C, <https://doi.org/10.1017/s0959259810000420>.