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**Language, Gender and War Situation: “Her/story” in Nwapa’s  
and Adichie’s Stories, the Complement of “His/tory”**

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**Abstract**

*Writers are the voices of people and they derive the subject matters of their discourse from the experiences of society. These experiences are derived from the socio-political and spiritual lives of the people that make up the society. Any major occurrence that disrupts the equilibrium of an existing social structure is a subject matter of a discourse and every discourse has language as its indispensable medium. This paper examines the predicaments of women in the 1967-1970 Nigerian civil war through the voices of women in Chimamanda Adichie’s *Half of a Yellow Sun*, Flora Nwapa’s *Never Again* and *Wives at War and Other Stories*. The works expose the tribulations*

*that women underwent in the civil war, their active participation and contribution for the sustenance of a troubled society. The exposure not only contradicts the men's stories that portray women as passive participants in Nigeria-Biafra war, they complement and validate the men's stories. The works also make claim that these women might not have carried guns but they fought the war in their own courageous way.*

**Key words:** War situation, Gender, Patriarchy, Predicaments

### **Introduction**

Gender is one of the three major groupings of the human world. It cuts across the two major groups of races and classes. Whether one is black or white, poor or rich, one must be either male or female and from the dawn of history, the predominant thing that has always created conflict is the issue of power. The questions are: Who dominates the other? Who is superior to the other? Who dictates the tune and who dances to the tune? Gradually, the struggle for power or dominance between man and woman brings patriarchy into existence.

Patriarchy is a social system in which society is organized around male authority figures. In this system, fathers have absolute authority over women, children and property. It implies the institutions of male rule and privilege, as is dependent on female subordination (Wikipedia)

A patriarchal society such as Africa is an unjust social system that is oppressive to women. It is a society where the woman is relegated to the background in every sphere of life. It is a society that upholds the ideology that, "a woman is seen and not heard". She is inferior to the man both spiritually and physically, a man's intelligence surpasses hers, therefore she should rely on a man for guidance and protection. She does not have a say so to say in her society. Her place is in the kitchen and she should sacrifice everything to make her man happy. Bobo paints the picture thus:

The symbol of black women as mule not only means that they were beasts of burden, it also means that they were without exercisable options in life. They were given as little thoughts and considerations as dumb animals (73).

Hence a woman's thought, feelings and aspirations are inconsequential as far as a patriarchal society is concerned. Peter notes that 'Society generally teaches men they should dominate; it teaches women they should be submissive, and so men have the opportunity to dominate women. More and more, however, women are reacting against the ill effects of being dominated' (25). Against this backdrop, writers, especially female writers advocate for gender equality. Okoye (39) explains that the

belittling and suppression elicited the reaction of women as they learnt to write. They used the metaphorical weapon, the pen, and expressive language to advance perceptibly the cause of women. This competence in fiction writing helps women writers to wage war against the age-old dominance by men. This eventually gave birth to feminism, “a collection of movements and ideologies aimed at defining, establishing and defending equal political, economic, cultural and social rights for women” (Wikipedia). Hooti and Jeihouni explain feminism as,

a movement to fight against the authority of sexist oppression. It fights ceaselessly to push the world toward the reconsideration of the current power relations between men and women. It is the struggle to wipe out the fossilized and cemented ideology of dominion, which has legitimized man as the superior gender (44).

The advocacy for gender equality started as far back as the 17th century. In 1869, John Stuart Mill published a controversial work entitled *The Subjection of Women*. Mill in the work argues succinctly that women are not inferior to men and should therefore be given equal rights in domestic, education, social and political affairs. During this time, women subjugation was a universal phenomenon. Men strongly believe that women were inferior to men and were created by God for male's comfort and pleasure. The place of women was in the home and farm work. The 'lucky' women who commanded any form of “respect” were those who were regarded by their husbands as objects of beauty and should therefore be decorated for men's fulfillment.

Nobody tells one's story better than oneself. Ogbazi (17-18) observes that before very recently, the horrors and ugly stories of the Nigerian civil war are mainly recorded by the men folk in literary genres, hence the men's inability to succinctly capture women's experiences are psyche during the pogrom. These are works like Ekwensi's *Survive the Peace and Divided We Stand*, Festus Iyayi's *Heroes*, Chukwuemeka Ike's *Sunset at Dawn*, Eddie Iroh's *Forty- Eight Guns for the General*, I.N.C. Aniebo's *Anonymity of sacrifice*, Ali Mazuri's *The Trial of Christopher Okigbo*, Kalu Okpi's *Biafra Testament*, Bole Omotoso's *The Combat*, Onuora Ossie Enekwe's *Come Thunder*, Meki Nzewi's... *And I spied et al*. Ogbazi also explains that in each of these novels,

...it is a man who is the subject, the hero and usually, the message is as well derived only through him. Women are back dropped, as if they did not exist during the war, or did not exist during the war, or did not fight or suffer as a result of war. Worse still is that literary criticisms on the subjects of this war would, unfortunately pay a blind

eye to any discussion on the female victims, may be, since minor female characters who play inconsequential roles (18).

This stance by the male writers and their critics is not surprising since the African society regards women as mere voiceless appendages to men. Women are "...some kind of ornamental attachments to the inflated ego of their husbands" (Achusi 161). Obbo is also of this view when she observes that, '...some male authors, while not personally hostile to women developed theories that were clearly 'mankind minus women' or reduced women to mere cogs in societal machinery, even though the very same authors had data suggesting otherwise' (2).

The derogatory saying, "a woman is seen and not heard" aptly describes this. In a typical African society, an assertive woman is usually admonished with the accusation. "Don't you know you are a woman? You ought to be silent when a man is talking". This inferior portraiture of women has influenced the men's war stories. Hence, in the novels, women are merely portrayed as men's chattels and sex objects who worry unceasingly about their property, Jewellery, husband and children. A woman's consistent image is that of a wife and mother while her area of operation does not go beyond the home. She is a passive participant in the civil war. These, of course, are misrepresentation or under-representation of women in war situations. The roles of women go beyond what the male writers ascribed to them. The woman's ability to cushion crises at household, social and national level is completely ignored by the male story tellers.

The portrayal of women in these male authors' works leaves much to be desired. A woman should therefore tell her own side of the story because she was involved. The story of the Nigerian-Biafran war or any war for that matter is incomplete without the authentic voice of the woman. A woman understands her feelings, roles and predicaments more than any man. Her story equally documents the history. Her story lends credence to the story of a man. Nwapa, the pioneer of African female writers, justifies her feminist writing thus:

When I do write about women in Nigeria, in Africa, I try to paint a positive picture about women because there are many women who are very, very positive in their thinking, who are very, very independent, and very, very industrious" (Wikipedia).

Women should carve out a space for their causes and concerns.

To chart the cause of Nigerian-Biafran civil war, female literary artists like Flora Nwapa, Buchi Emecheta, and Chimamanda Adichie, to mention but three, take up the challenge of telling the story of the unfortunate Nigerians-Biafran civil war and the significant roles played by women in the war.

As fearless feminist writers, they have in the words of Itishri Sarangi and Yajnaseni Mukherjee 'try to restore the tarnished image of the woman and make it glorified' (19). Their novels are explosions of pent up feeling that have gathered over the years. They are like mirror reflecting the protest and the outburst of the suppressed feeling of women which has never been given attention. These works are particularly important to us as women because they have come up at this point in time to tell the world that women participated actively in the Nigerian-Biafran war. The predicaments/challenges faced by women in war situations as recorded in Flora Nwapa's *Never Again* and *Wives at War* and Chimamanda Adichie's *Half of a Yellow Sun* through the female's voice is therefore the thrust of this paper.

**Synopsis of the Novels - *Never Again and Wives at War* by Flora Nwapa and *Half of a Yellow Sun* by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie**

*Never Again* is a chronicle of the tragic civil war seen from the eyes of a first person narrator, Kate, the heroine of the novel, while *Wives at War* is a collection of short stories that portray women activities, reactions and predicaments in war, social and domestic conflict situations. The collection of eight short stories (*Wives at War*) explores how women's ingenuity, assertiveness, astuteness, perseverance and steadfastness help them to cope with difficult and unpleasant war situations. The stories go beyond civil wars and focus on other kinds of wars such as demands of tradition that enslave women, war against racial prejudice, war between sexes, and war of conscience. Nwapa uses both first person and omniscient narrative techniques to explore the stream of consciousness of her heroines in the stories.

*Half of a Yellow Sun* is Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's second novel. It is an epic novel that recreates the events of the 1967-1970 Nigerian-Biafran civil war. The subject is Nigerian's civil war, specifically the fate of Biafran. It is a tale of war, suffering and destruction told from a woman's perceptive. This pathetic tale evokes in the reader sympathy for those who were at the receiving end, the Biafrans.

The stories are set in different Nigerian societies. The geographical settings cover both rural and urban communities in Nigeria. The authors use the settings to make these works as realistic as possible. The time of the stories runs between early sixties to seventies. This was a period of political upheaval in the country which eventually culminated in a civil war that lasted for thirty-six months. During this period, the Nigerian citizenry, especially the women and children experienced a lot of unimaginable hardship. Women sacrificed everything at their disposal in order to sustain their families, the soldiers and the society at large. The stories also reveal the atrocities committed by soldiers in the course of the war. It equally brought to the fore the futility of war and man's inhumanity to man. The women's roles in all the stories negate the erroneous impression that women are merely weak, docile and vulnerable

members of the society. Their actions question and refute the patriarchal Igbo adage, “Nwoke lusia ugu, Nwanyi enwere akuko” meaning, after men have fought a war gallantly, women only play the insignificant role of relating the story of men’s valor (perhaps to their children). On the contrary, women’s efforts to an appreciable extent sustain the entire society.

The themes of the stories bother on love, selflessness, hatred, deceit, selfishness, hunger, falsehood, disease, murder, pogrom, class distinction, patriarchal impositions and restrictions on women, sacrifice, unflinching hope and belief in a deity, different degree of exploitation, and propaganda. In all these, women play prominent roles. They grapple with the predicaments that are necessitated by different types of war. A survey of the characters in the novels reveal that the authors present more female characters to buttress the fact that women were not passive during the war but active participants.

### **The Predicaments of Women in the Stories**

*Never Again* (1975) and *Wives at War and other stories* (1980) are Nwapa’s Nigerian Biafra war stories. With these literary works, she tells the woman’s side of the war story. She vividly captures the female experiences of the war which not only complements the man’s story but also authenticates it. The Nigerian civil war discourse is incomplete without women sharing their own experiences as the men did.

A literary artiste does not write in a vacuum. Her writing is shaped or influenced by her society. Nwapa’s *Never Again* concentrates on the important roles that Biafran women play in the war in order to sustain and preserve their lives, families, soldiers and society at large. The work exposes the variety of terrifying experiences and challenges of war that women go through in order to survive. The three war stories in *Wives at War and Other Stories* equally expose the horrors of Nigerian- Biafran war as well as the predicaments that women go through in the course of the war. Assessing these war experiences shared by women in Chimamanda Adichie’s *Half of a Yellow Sun*, Ogbazi comments that such war stories exemplify:

...the various ways the ensuing upheavals of a war precipitated by men impacted on the woman, disjuncting and fragmenting their lives and ultimately causing them not to live meaningful, peaceful and fulfilled lives (22).

In the stories, women go through a lot of horrendous experiences in order to sustain their families. They are usually propelled by love and loyalty to their loved ones. Their major preoccupation is to take care of their families and ensure that Biafra emerges victorious in the war.

Women went through traumatic experiences that affect their psyche during the civil war. They had their dreams shattered as a result of the war. Bisi, the heroine of the story, *Wives at War* is a devoted wife who is determined to prove that an inter-tribal marriage between her and her beloved Igbo husband, Ebo, would be successful in spite of all odds. So when the war breaks out, she leaves Lagos and travels to Onitsha with her husband. Her ordeal begins when she makes constant relocation with her husband and children until they finally settle at Okporo, an obscure town in Igbo hinterland. These constant movements are necessitated by the loss of Biafran major cities to the Nigerian army. So the war made them to leave their comfort zone, Lagos, to become refugees in an obscure village. Bisi neither speaks nor understands the language of Okporo community. Her husband has a faceoff with the villagers because he is living in affluence while the villagers are starving. Ebo changes totally from a loving and caring husband he was before the war to a womanizer, fun seeker and bribe collector. Bisi is disappointed. She suffers mental torture and depression and she accuses her husband bitterly:

You, you are wicked to bring me to this God forsaken place. There is no food here, there is no water either. The people are hostile to us. They will poison us, they will kill us. You and your people, you and your propaganda. You told me the war would end in two weeks. Liar, you are a liar and all your people. Liars all (3).

Ebo, of course, tries all he could to assure Bisi of her safety and brighter future, but the pressure and stress becomes unbearable to her; she goes berserk which culminates in outright madness. Ndidi in "*Daddy Don't Strike the Match*" "jumped up from the bed" when her husband stroke a match. Her nerves are in shambles. The constant bombing and shelling has sapped her strength and courage.

Olanna in *Half of a Yellow Sun* also has similar traumatic experience. Her ordeal starts from Kano where she manages to escape death in the hands of the murderous Hausas. She suffers psychological trauma and near paralyses for some weeks after she sees the callous killing of her relatives, the dead bodies of Igbos that littered the streets of Kano and the plaited head of a child carried in a calabash by a woman (194). We soon find that that is just the beginning of such agony. Adichie tells us that Olanna is constantly traumatized by the incessant air raids when they eventually flee from Nsukka to a refugee camp in Umuahia. We are moved to sympathize with them as they take cover in the bunker from time to time. She becomes so scared that at a time 'she was afraid to go outside to the pit latrine, she was afraid to sit down because she might doze off and be unprepared when the siren went off' (337). This was the bitter experience of women during this period. They lived with the sentence of death hanging around them constantly. At a point the narrator says that Olanna feels that 'Death was the only thing that made any sense...' (341). But she soon comes to term with her situation and is



determined to survive because she reasons that ‘if she had died, if Odenigbo and Baby and Ugwu had died ... the war would continue without them’ the narrator explains further that ‘it was the very sense of being inconsequential that pushed her from extreme fear to extreme fury. She had to matter. She would no longer exist limply waiting to die’ (341). With that determined spirit she begins to put up a positive approach to the situation she finds herself.

As an industrious woman, she devises strategies to overcome her fears. She organizes classes for children in her yard where she teaches them ‘to make sure that when the war is over, they will all fit back easily into regular school’ (355). She joins in the scramble for food at the relief centre. She also devises various strategies to make ends meet as Odenigbo no longer has a job.

Women have their dreams shattered as a result of the war. Olanna is from an affluence family and has just returned from abroad with a Master’s Degree. She has the hope of settling down with her boyfriend and getting a good job but we find that this dream is soon shattered. She is forced to flee Nsukka with her boyfriend Odenigbo when the Nigerian army advances. She could not enjoy a happy wedding ceremony or a honeymoon because there is a sudden air raid while the wedding ceremony is being held. They have to take cover in their wedding attire. Anulika is another young girl that has her dreams dashed. She has dreams of becoming a mother; in short, she has hope of starting with a male child. She tells Ugwu, ‘I want to have a baby boy first, because it will place my feet firmly in Onyek’s house’ (152). This dream is soon shattered when during the war she becomes a victim of sexual assault and loses one eye. Alice, another notable character also has a bitter experience which reduces her to a recluse. She is deceived and jilted by an army colonel who impregnates her and disappears as soon as his wife turns up.

Mental pains and agony becomes part of the life style of women during this period. They weep as their loved ones are conscripted. This is Olanna’s experience when Ugwu is taken. She confronts Odenigbo publicly where he was drinking because of the grief of losing Ugwu. Women are traumatized as they witness bloody scenes, or corpse littered everywhere. Even the boldest and strongest of the female characters, Kainene, could not stand such bloody sight. The narrator tells us that after she witnesses the running headless body of Ikejide, she cries for several nights.

Women are sometimes compelled to suppress their consciences and get involve in unwholesome activities in order to sustain their lives and that of their beloved ones. The heroine of “A Certain Death”, in *Wives at War* buys a young man of eighteen years to be conscripted for the war because she is afraid of losing her brother, the only surviving member of her family. She reasons thus:



Suicide it was. To be compelled to go to war and to be conscripted into the Biafran army was suicide, pure and simple. Like the youth who was now going to take the place of my brother. I had bought him to die, in place not of but for my brother (38-39).

Eberechi in *Half of a Yellow Sun* is given as a gift to a soldier who exploits her sexually, perhaps, in exchange for food. Her parents who commit the atrocious crime are grateful to the soldier for making their daughter a mere object of sexual gratification. Agnes, a university graduate, and her younger sister in *Never Again* voluntarily become the mistresses of a Biafran white mercenary because they have no money, home or place to go to during the evacuation of their town, Ugwuta. In *Never Again* Flora Nwapa narrates,

... when a soldier told you he was from the war front, you gave him drinks if you met him in a pub. ... if he was an officer, and you had daughters, you did not mind if he slept with one of them or even took her away the next morning (15).

This again reinforces the unfair and bias treatment of the girl-child who is regarded as mere property that can be given away at any cost.

Some girls and women are lured into prostitution in order to negotiate a living. Adichie narrates how Special Julius' brother, a director in one of the relief centers treats young girls 'that crawl around looking for sugar daddies'. According to her, he takes advantage of them and 'takes up to five of them into his bedroom at the same time' (339). Chinua Achebe gives a similar incidence in *Girls at War* and tells us about Gladys, a young girl full of dreams, who Reginald Nwankwo once respected because 'she wasn't going to make an exception even for one who once did her a favour' (106). But as the war progresses and with much stress and hardship Achebe tells us that 'she gave him a shock by the readiness with which she followed him to bed and her language' (118). We find that as a result of the untold hardship these young girls lose sense of direction and become victims of circumstance.

During this period girls/women are sexually exploited not only by enemies but by tribe's men who take advantage of their vulnerability as we can see in the example above. We also read the pathetic story of young Urenwa who Father Marcel impregnates in exchange for the food he is suppose to give to the people at the relief center. Kainene who is in charge of the centre and who labours to get the food stuff says in fury, 'He fucks most of them before he gives them the crayfish that I slave to get here!' (480). Urenwa is not the only victim of his shamelessly act, he equally takes advantage of other starving girls. Kainene who could not imagine such wicked act asks Father Jude in tears, 'How could you stay here and let him spread the legs of

starving girls? It is only a woman who could really understand the magnitude of what that man does to those young girls.

Starvation is another predicament that befalls people during war. The stories are replete with instances of this. People eat anything they can lay hands on in order to survive the war. Women are loaded with extra responsibilities in order to sustain their families. They undergo a lot of self denial in order to keep their families going. Women willingly sell their belongings in order to save their beloved ones from starving. Adichie tells us that there were also women who were willing to work in exchange for food. Ndidi in "Daddy Don't Strike A Match" exchanges an ebony head, a cherished artifact, for four tins of ovaltine so that her children will not be malnourished. She does not drink the remaining ovaltine she prepares for her daughter, Ifeoma, so that the family will not run out of beverage on time.

Unfortunately, Ndidi's extraordinary sacrifice is not made by John, her husband. He buys and smokes cigarettes at will. After smoking, he leisurely drinks the remaining ovaltine that Ndidi reserves exclusively for the children. This is also the case with Odenigbo, Olanna's boyfriend. Adichie tells us that while Olanna constantly worries about the food shortage, Odenigbo, the head of the family is calm to the extent that 'His calmness bewildered her' (319). Kate in *Never Again* dreads hunger more than any other evils of the war. She laments:

I thought of all sorts of things. Hunger was paramount in my thoughts. I have never known hunger in my life. Now I was going to be faced with hunger, my children will be faced with hunger. In a short time, they would have kwashiorkor and if we are lucky they might survive, but it could impair their health for life (50).

Achebe in *There was A Country*, aptly describes the pains of a mother whose child must die out of severe malnutrition (kwashiorkor) in a refugee camp. He writes

No Madonna and child could touch  
Her tenderness for her son  
She soon will forget.  
She took a broken comb and combed  
The rust- colored hair left on his skull.  
And then humming in her eyes began.  
Carefully to part it  
Like putting flower in a tiny grave (108).

The mental torture which a woman experiences knowing that her child would die and there is nothing she could do about it is unimaginable. The sufferings of women in the war are indeed “horrendous and sympathetic” (Ogbazi 25).

Women had to scramble for food at relief centres. The rations were usually meager but they have no option. Some even spent the night outside the gate of the relief centre. We are moved to sympathize with these women as they rush from one queue to another ‘dodging the swinging canes of the militia’ at the relief centre just to fend for their children (330). What could be more painfully than for a woman to watch her children die slowly of starvation or contract kwashiorkor, a disease caused by lack of protein?

Pregnant women are not spared from the horrible experiences. A pregnant woman in *Never Again* has a premature labour and dies in the process when Ugwuta is being evacuated. She laments:

Mama, I am without a husband. My husband has been killed by the Nigerians. He is a strong headed husband. He refused to leave with us. I begged him No, it is coming again [the baby]. Mama I’ll die, to die, to die, to die... she was dead” (58).

With her death, her children are deprived of their mother and the horrible scene that accompanies her death will definitely leave a permanent scar in the lives of his children and onlookers. The woman’s losses and pressure of war contribute to her untimely death. Achebe in *There was A Country* collaborates the above scene with a true life experience his wife, Christie had during Nigerian Biafran war. She (Christie) narrates the story thus, “One image still haunts me till today: that of a pregnant woman split in two by the Nigerian blitz. That was a horrendous experience for most of us, and we were all very frightened after that” (189).

People usually suffer deprivation and losses during wars. Women are usually the worst hit because they are always deeply attached to their children and husbands. They are deprived of the good life they are used to before the wars. Ndid and her family in *Wives at War* are living a blissful life in Kano before the outbreak of the war. She makes every effort to maintain this status quo just before the outbreak of the war, hence she relocates her family to Enugu. Unfortunately, Ndid and her husband are away for a weekend when Enugu falls. So she loses virtually everything apart from few items of clothing and an ebony head which she exchanges with a white priest for four tins of ovaltine. In “A Certain Death”, one of the stories in *Wives at War*, a woman loses her entire family when the crises ensue. She narrates the ordeal thus: ‘My children, the driver and my personal belonging never reached my home. There was an accident near Ore and all the passengers were killed. My husband preferred to remain in the U.S.A after this tragedy’ (34).

Olanna loses her twin sister Kainene. This is a woman who laboured tirelessly to cater for her boyfriend, family and refugees; unfortunately she went to the market few days before the end of the war and never comes back. This character reveals that there were women who in one way or the other contributed to the survival of many during the war. However such women are never acknowledged. She might not have carried gun but she fought the war in her own courageous way. Her family and the people that survived in that particular camp are testimony to this fact; after all the men that fought did it for the survival of people.

The voice of women are often suppressed by men during war, their opinions are inconsequential. Ndidi, the heroine in “Daddy Don’t Strike a Match” tries in vain to dissuade her husband, Mr Okeke, from smoking. The rude answer she gets is, “I will not stop smoking, Ndidi. Enough of this Now go to bed” (23). Eventually, the match that he strikes in a chemical laboratory for cigarette the next day kills him, thereby multiplying the predicaments of his wife who is left to fend for four children singlehandedly in a war torn Biafra. Kate in *Never Again* is completely ignored or termed a saboteur or a pessimist when she expresses her fear of the Biafran war being an effort in futility and the fact that her people are being fed a lot of lies through propaganda. Kal, a propagandist and chauvinist retorts: “Kate, people like you should go into detention and remain there until the end of the war, and the state of Biafra fully established. You are too dangerous” (2) Kate’s people shun her suggestion for timely evacuation from Ugwuta to another place when it becomes inevitable that her town will be captured by enemy soldiers until it becomes too late. Mike’s wife in *Never Again* is barred from participating in conversations on the war by her husband because “...she criticized everything that went on in the war and Mike’s wife had obeyed like the good wife she was. She did not want their twelve years marriage bliss to be terminated by the Biafran war” (37). The above experiences are bound to leave women traumatized. Anybody who has gone through these bitter experiences of war will never want to have a similar experience in future. Little wonder that Nwapa entitles her novel *Never Again*.

### Conclusion

The foregoing analyses of Flora Nwapa’s *Never Again* and *Wives at War and Other Stories* and Chimamanda Adichie’s *half of a Yellow Sun*, lay bare the predicaments faced by women in Nigerian civil war. The works are chronicle of the civil war told by women. They exposed, without pretences, the evils of war and the sufferings of the war victims with special reference to the bitter experiences and tribulations of women in the war. Through the heroines of the works, the women’s versions of the war stories are heard. They narrate the despicable nature of the war, the pogrom and the inhuman conditions that human beings are subjected to in the war.

Women's steadfastness and contributions in the war negates the patriarchal impression that women are helpless and non resourceful during the periods of the conflict. Women are not only supportive to their men, they are equally resourceful. Their sensitivity, intuition, and indebt analyses of situations help to check situations of hopelessness and depression on the parts of the men folk.

The stories of the two female writers, Adichie and Nwapa, contradict the depiction of women as mere appendages and passive participants in the war. Women went through horrific experiences in order to sustain their men, children and the Biafran society. The women's stories complement and validate the men's side of Nigeria- Biafra war.

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