

Finally, the volume lists many ways to address the current challenges, without further analysis of what these different approaches would entail or whether they are even feasible. For instance, a number of authors argue that the organisations that will thrive and continue to make a difference will be those that embrace innovative approaches, provide intellectual leadership when responding to the needs of their constituents, cultivate accountability, and generate independent funding by harnessing technology and volunteerism – reaching out to the diaspora or engaging in profitable activities in order to liberate themselves from donor agendas. Yet it remains unclear exactly what each of these approaches would mean in practice. Nonetheless, this volume forms a good starting point for a discussion that many human rights organisations must take seriously, and provides a useful resource for those who wish to know what challenges lie ahead in the quest to increase human dignity.

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The Politics of Post-War Demobilisation and Reintegration in Nigeria by

OLOKUNLE OJELEYE

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The Nigerian civil war, which ended in 1970, has remained a major reference point in public discourse on power-sharing and the political equation in Nigeria. While the war itself is seen as the outcome of the zero-sum political game among the three major ethnic groups, the partial way the crisis was resolved is said to have marginalised the interests of a section of the country and rendered the goal of national integration more difficult to achieve. This new book authored by Olukunle Ojeleye offers Nigerians another opportunity to engage with this significant aspect of their national past.

The first two chapters discuss the background to the Nigerian civil war, the course of the war and the composition of the armed forces. Chapter 3 focuses on the socio-economic and humanitarian dimensions of reintegration. Chapter 4 explores the politics of disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration. The final chapter examines the role of the international community in the provision of humanitarian assistance.

Two cardinal principles seem to underline the author's historical interpretation. The first is the desire to avoid the Whig error of interpreting the past with the eyes of the present. Hence, quite early in the book the author reminds the reader that the civil war and the post-war policy of rehabilitation, reconstruction and reintegration took place at least a decade before Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR) policies and practices began to attract international attention. The second principle is a clear understanding of the philosophy behind the implementation of rehabilitation, reconstruction and reintegration [the 3Rs], namely that it was designed to show that the entire country was the victim of the civil war, and that care was taken to demonstrate that secession did not pay dividends.

The logical explanation of the author that the whole process of demobilisation was aimed at reducing the bloated size of the Armed Forces takes the wind

out of the sails of those who habitually castigate the federal government for not integrating the ex-Biafran soldiers into the Nigerian Army. Similarly, the author offers a more acceptable explanation for the introduction of the Indigenisation Decree of 1972: the circumstances suggest that it was inspired by the oil boom of the post civil war period and a patriotic zeal to protect Nigeria's young industry, in contrast to the commonly made argument that it was intended to strangle the economy of the Igbo. If the latter was the case, the Igbo present at the meeting of the Supreme Military Council where the decision was taken would probably have raised an objection. The conceptual problem of confusing the outcome of an exercise with the motive that underpinned it has done incalculable damage to the unity of the country.

In several places, the author demonstrates sound critical judgement and draws conclusions that are difficult to fault. These will be useful to both governments and peacemakers. From the book, it is sufficiently clear that only a reintegration process that is accompanied by infrastructural development can work in Africa. The author also stresses the need to involve the international community in post-war DDR processes to erase or minimise the memory of war trauma.

The book, however, has a few shortcomings which can be addressed in subsequent editions. Like other works on the Nigerian civil war, the book concentrates only on the treatment of the Igbo. First, it glosses over the effect of the demobilisation and reintegration exercise on the ethnic minorities in the Eastern Region. Secondly, although the festering issue of abandoned property receives considerable attention, the author ought to have explained why the development was restricted to Port-Harcourt and Rivers State. An insight into the nature of inter-group relations, particularly between the Igbo and the Ijaw in Port-Harcourt before 1967, would have helped. Besides, the author's choice of 1897 as the foundation of modern Nigeria on p. 29 is hardly justifiable given the administrative and political history of the territory.

On the whole, Olukunle Ojeleye has considerably advanced the state of our knowledge on the Nigeria civil war and peace building in Africa. His book will help to create a paradigm shift in a country where the politics of belonging has eclipsed the task of nation-building.

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China into Africa: trade, aid and influence edited by ROBERT I. ROTBERG
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This volume is an excellent collection of academic essays on Sino-African relations and covers a wide range of issues, including political, economic, military and cultural ties between the two regions. It also features contributions from Western academia as well as African and Chinese researchers. By considering the history of engagement between China and Africa – with many chapters making it clear that China's current engagements with Africa can be traced back over half a century – the book helps the reader to separate fact from myth. For example, Deborah Brautigam, an expert on these matters, concludes that the aid provided by Beijing is still far below that of traditional Western