Conclusion
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1 Akinade (2005: 332) expressed the need to build a “culture of peace” by annexing the cultural and natural potentials of the country. This is in order to engage “softer, non-inciting, non-inflammatory” methods of transforming conflict situations. One feasible means of achieving this is for the government, in partnership with the private and non-profit organisations, to invest adequately and objectively into creating memory initiatives for ethnic integration within the polarised Nigerian geo-polity. This has become pertinent in the face of discontent which is still being expressed by victims due to the trauma of the Nigerian Civil War. The sufferings of these people are still extant through the scars sustained by the memory of the cruel deaths of relatives and friends with the neglect of creating “institutionalised public memory” initiatives (Bird and Ottanelli, 2011: 20). The grievance of the Igbo subsists till this day as they request for compensation for being punished economically by the Nigerian state. In the same vein, the Igbo nation still longs for an official apology from the Federal Government, having been left unsatisfied with that of the former Head of State, General Yakubu Gowon, who apologised in September 1992, (years after leaving his office as Head of State) for the atrocities committed against them by the federal troops during the war (Ohaneze Ndi Igbo, 1999: 16). On the other side of the divide, the Hausa also remain aggrieved for being the major casualties during the first Nigerian Military coup, which had Igbo officers as its key actors. The onus therefore lies on the power at the centre to bring the aggrieved parties together and call for a peaceful settlement of their grievances with recourse to true historical documentation. This efforts should subsequently be aided by joint development of memory initiatives.

2 The debate on the timing and duration of transitional justice mechanisms (see Kim, 2009: 408) is apt in concluding this paper. The centenary celebration of the country’s amalgamation necessitated the call for national introspection in re-evaluating the basis for the unity of the Nigerian state. Adopting the memorialisation policy at the national level would definitely aid the quest to understand the realities and challenges of the present time as consequences of the nation’s past. The starting point of this project could be to memorialise the amalgamation event itself by reconstructing the very buildings in which the document was signed and making it a memorial site symbolic of initiation of one Nigeria. In doing this, the Federal Government should endorse inter-agency
collaborations among its various organs (such as the National Commission for Museums and Monuments (NCMM) and the National Orientation Agency) and other non-state actors. There is need to sensitise the citizenry on the importance of memory initiatives in ensuring sustainable peace within the Nigerian nation. For instance, such sensitisation can emphasize the memorialisation of the Civil War as geared towards the abhorrence of inter-ethnic war as an official state policy, by the future leadership of a nation.

It is important to reiterate that the erection of monuments does not automate the healing process. Beyond mere creation of symbols and other memory initiatives, there must be a conscious effort to ingrain the correct interpretation of these memorials within the citizenry, especially among the youth population. With the right interpretation, within the contexts of the events which each memorial represents, the avoidance of the mistakes of the past through “never again” can then be achieved. Within the framework of multiple narratives for objectivity, Brigadier General Godwin Alabi-Isama’s account of the Biafran War, titled *The Tragedy of Victory*, is a welcome development as a counter narrative to the popular General Olusegun Obasanjo’s *My Command*, which was a prevalent version from a soldier who fought for the federal troops (Omatseye, Osuji and Macaulay, 2013). For instance, questions as regards the support and participation of the non-Igbo and even the Igbo First Republic politicians remain obscure. It was thus interesting to hear from Alabi-Isama’s interview that Isaac Adaka Boro fought on the Federal side, and helped capture vital parts of the oil producing South. He also made references to the domination of the non-Igbo by the Igbo even within the Biafran military ranks. It was also interesting to learn that there was the Hausa massacre at the Ogbe Hausa in Sabon Gari, Asaba where everyone (children and women included) was killed (Omatseye, Osuji and Macaulay, 2013: 25). This is indeed a part of the narrative that has been given less attention and could contribute to the discourse on genocide during the war period. In the same vein, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie’s novel *Half of a Yellow Sun* situates the war narrative within a second generational memory trajectory, and her observation of the “danger of a single story” implies that such efforts be guided to avoid a limited, narrow interpretation of persona as well as historical events. It would be quite interesting to read the events as they occurred in Lagos from the then Head of State, General Yakubu Gowon, who was a major actor during the war. The onus lies on the Federal Government to harness these extant narratives into a negotiated official account of this vital part of our history. This will be very symbolic and consequential for future relations among the citizens. History has to be put right to truly heal wounds and chart a way forward for the unity of Nigerians.

The summation of this paper is that the successful initiation and implementation of official memorialisation projects following the principles outlined above have many implications for building unity among the diverse ethnic groups in Nigeria. The appropriate starting point would be the Biafran War, which, to date, is the most audacious threat to the survival of Nigeria as a nation. The official historicisation of the events of the war, which practically affected every region in the country (be it in terms of the actors or events), would put the unity of Nigeria in perspective and provide a solid foundation for charting a forward course in sustaining it.
NOTES

1. The most cited example is that of the abandoned property in Port Harcourt, although this must be sieved from the recovery of illegal wealth amassed by the elites in the region.