

**ISAAC BORO'S INVASION OF USAKEDET
DURING THE NIGERIAN CIVIL WAR,
1967 – 1968**

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ABSTRACT

The study examined the plights of men and women of Usakedet area of Ndian Division, Southwest Cameroun during the Nigerian Civil War. The atrocious activities and disrespect to trans-border sovereignty of the indigenes and fishermen of Usakedet communities unleashed by Major Isaac Jasper Adaka Boro of the 3rd Marine Commando of the Nigerian Army has not received mention in various scholarly writings. The study employs historical methods which explores both primary and secondary sources of information gathering. It concludes that the Nigerian-centric writings on the Nigerian Civil War have done little or nothing, in pushing the sufferings, rape and killings that rendered a large population of Usakedet men and women who knew nothing about the war to the academic arena or the public space. Also,

the Ahmadu Ahidjo led-Cameroonian government and its successor, who gave full support to Nigeria against Biafra took no action to redress and appease the innocent Usakedet people who went through hell in the hands of Late Major Isaac Adaka Boro in 1968.

Keyword: Usakedet, Isaac Boro, Nigeria, Cameroon, Civil War, Invasion.

INTRODUCTION

The impact and exploits of the Nigeria's civil war of July, 1967 to January, 1970 waged between the Federal Military Government of Nigeria and secessionist Biafra led by General Yakubu Gowon and Colonel Emeka Odumegwu Ojukwu respectively on the Usakedet (now Isangele) people of Ndiab division, Southwest Cameroon has apparently not been sufficiently documented by both the Nigerian and Cameroonian war historians, authors and writers.

This obvious neglect of documentation of the activities of the 30 month old war, its characters or dramatis personae such as Late Major Isaac Jasper Adaka Boro in Usakedet area was presumably caused by Nigeria's loss of hold and control in the erstwhile mandated area of the Southwest region of Cameroon, seven years after the UNO monitored plebiscite. Also, apart from supporting the Nigerian Government during the war, the Cameroonian government lacked the military and media temerity to confront and globalize Nigeria's assault on her citizens in Usakedet villages of Oron, Amoto, Bateka (Efut Inwang), Archibong Ukogho, Akwa Afaha, and Massaka and the Rio Del Rey estuary seen as very remote by Yaoundé and which were Nigerians administrative locations under the UNO mandated territories prior to 1960¹. Various authors and historians have written extensively on the war and Isaac Boro's exploits as students leader, Niger Delta freedom fighter and consequently his involvement in Nigeria's war of 1967-1970 which killed over three million people², yet little or no virtually no mention of the atrocities, massacres and assaults inflicted on the armless Usakedet's men and women by Isaac Boro received mention.

Though the UN plebiscite of 1961 made Usakedet and the entire south west region parts of the Cameroons. It is evident that the area stretching from Abana (now Idabato) to Rio Del-Rey *Akpa Usakedet* and other fishing villages in the Bakassi Peninsula currently in Ndiab Division were heavily militarized by the fragment of Biafran forces and Nigerian troop of the 3rd Marine Commando (3MCDO) commanded by Brigadier Benjamin Adekunle under whom Major Isaac Boro commanded the Sea Boys

Training School³, Atimbo in Calabar and 19 (Commando Brigade Special Marine Force. Alabi-Isama confirms as follows:-

We went on patrol by dingy boats with Isaac Boro through James Town across the Widenham Creek abd Bakassi to Ibono, South –West Oron, the selected main landing site. The Biafrans had thought it was impossible, and did not deploy enough troops to the area. With little extra effort and training on how to operate in the Creeks and marshy areas from Isaac Boro we made the impossible easy.⁴

This study is, therefore, an attempt at unveiling the Africans military exploits of Isaac Boro in one of the Cameroonian communities known as Usakedet for scholarly documentation

Usakedet: Location And People

Usakedet is recognized officially as Isangele by the Cameroonian authority. It is a language group and people located in Ndlan division of the South-West region of Cameroons and is historically seen as a major inter-ethnic migrational or dispersal. point of the various groups and people now making up the Akwa Ibom, Rivers and Cross River States of Nigeria⁵. Usakedet is bounded in the North by Mundemba, South by Kombo Abedimo, West by the Atlantic Ocean and Nigeria and East by Ekondo Titi and Kombo Itindi⁶.

Following the ceding of the entire mandated territory of South-West region to the Camerouns in 1961 through a referendum, the entire Rio Del-Rey estuary Akpa Usakedet or Asiantum became part of the Camerouns and was governed or ruled by traditional rulers and administrators of the Cameroonian origin⁷.

Historically, the word "Usakedet", pronounced locally as Usak-Areh means "shining smiling teeth" which connotes the characteristic description of the riverine people who typically showed open expression of happiness and contentment having amazed catches during fishing expedition or outings. The daily joyous composures were often full of smiles and happiness, hence, the origin of the name Usak-Areh or Usakedet in Efik/Ibibio language group⁸.

However, Usakedet is among the 18 Council areas out of the 360 Council areas in Cameroun having been created and renamed as Isangele on 29th June 1977 by the Ahmadu Ahidjo led government⁹. The area played dominant role during the slave trade era. The main slave market which served the Efik region and Duala was located at the terminus point of the Rio Del Ray estuary known as Fumen¹⁰.

Usakedet is widely accepted among the various tribal groups of the Lower Cross River Area of Nigeria as their principal place of dispersal to the present places of abode during the periods of migration of the Bantu race. Though Usakedet people began to get influenced by foreign or colonial rule since 1884 when Germany colonized the area and changed the name to Efut word: "Isangene" "Isangeli" or Isangele" yet they still regard themselves as the Usakedet speaking people with distinct tribal identity in the Camerooun Republic. The word Isangele (as Usakedet is officially recognized today) is not original to the people.

It is a nomenclature evolved by the Balundo or Efut people of Oroko nation during the colonial period to undermine the continous use and propagation of the name Usakedet seen more or less a word of the Efik/Ibibio descend, accent and root¹¹. Usim Promise Usim notes that Just as the Efik

Table 1:Communities And Families Of Usakedet (Isangele)

| S/No | Communities | Tribal stock | Family | Village Administration |
|------|---|---|--|--|
| 1 | Oron | Isangele (Usakedet) | Anwang Boku Uma Akpong Irundo Ebongko Bakoko Atakpa | Headed by Village Head, Family Heads and Deputy family Heads <i>mbo Ufak</i> and <i>ndiana mbo Ufak</i> |
| 2 | Amoto | Usakedet | Akpe Efanga Abak Abre Uma Isong Isuruba | Headed by village head, family heads and deputy family heads <i>mbo ufok</i> and <i>ndiana mbo ufak</i> |
| 3 | Bateka (Efut inwang or Efo Acha) | Balundo (Efut) | Bombori Dibokato | Headed by village head, family heads and deputy family heads <i>mbo ufak</i> and <i>ndiana mbo ufak</i> |
| 4 | Massaka | Mixture of Usakedet (Isangele) and Efut (Balundo) | Dibokato Offiong Obini | Headed by village head, family heads and deputy family heads <i>mbo ufak</i> and <i>ndiana mbo ufak</i> |
| 5 | Archibong (Corridor I & II) | Archibong family of Calabar | Archibong Edet Ojum Aba Sutang Ikot Efanga Ikot Efanga Ambai Ikot Marusi | Headed by village head, family heads and deputy family heads <i>mbo ufak</i> and <i>ndiana mbo ufak</i> |
| 6 | Akwa (Oqua) | Balundo (Efut) | Akpe Efanga Dibokato | Headed by village head, family heads and deputy family heads <i>mbo ufak</i> and <i>ndiana mbo ufak</i> |

Sources: F.A. Goodlife, An Intelligence Report on the Isangeli Community of Kumba Division, Cameroun Province, National Archives, Buea, file 1080, Ag.35, 1940, pp. 20-23

language took a central position among the Akwa Ibom and Cross River States people of Nigeria during the colonial period, same did the Balundo (*Efut*) language dominate in the linguistic primacy of the South-West colonial administration and era¹² The word "Isangele" is an *Efut* word *Isangene* which means "sojourners" or "traveller" and corrupted to Isangeli and Isangele by the German, British and French administrators, writers and missionaries¹³.

Usakedet (now Isangele) has a population of about 5,000 inhabitants and was recently governed by a council of 22 officials headed by Late Mayor Caroline Offiong Usim, daughter of Late Chief Anjeh Usim who was beaten and tortured to death by instalment by Late Major Isaac Adaka Boro of the Nigerian Army during the Nigerian Civil War of 1967-1970¹⁴.

Traditionally, Usakedet is divided into: Oron, Amoto, Bateka (*Efut Inwang*) Massaka, Archibong and Akwa which are all original paramount chiefdoms, though there are several other villages founded and occupied by Nigerians of Oron, Ibibio, Efik, Eket, Andoni (Obolo), Ijaw fisherman, hunters and farmers. Such villages or Mba, Ubuhu Efe, Ine Okpo, Ine Eteya¹⁵ all along the Rio Del-Rey estuary known locally as *Akpa Usakedet or Asiantum*.¹⁶ The major ethnic groups Usakedet are prominently made up of the Ibibio, Efik, Oron, Eket, Ibeno, Ijaw and Andoni (Obolo). However, the classification of some of these groups as ethnic groups within the Cameroons has raised a lot of controversies among those groups who all claims that they are totally independent ethnic groups from each other¹⁷

The Man: Isaac Japer Adaka Boro

Late Major Isaac Adaka Boro (fondly called Boro) was an Ijaw born teacher, Policeman, Soldier, Student Union President at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka and pioneer minority right activist in Nigeria. He was born on 10th September, 1938 in a town called Kaiama in Oloibiri, in the present day Bayelsa State of Nigeria. After working briefly as a teacher in 1958 at the Mission School, Amassoma, Isaac Boro joined the service of the Nigeria Police which sent him on loan as a temporary instructor at the Man O'War Bay's character and leadership training centre, Victoria (now Limbe) in Southwest Cameroon. Upon his return to Nigeria, Boro left the Police Force and was declared *AWOL* (Absent Without Leave) but swiftly got admitted to study Chemistry at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka where he became President of the students' Union¹⁸

He spent barely two years as an undergraduate student of University of Nigeria, Nsukka where he later abandoned his studies and took to full time Niger -Delta centric activism. He began to embark on tour

and visits to solicit financial and moral support for the 'Ijaw' cause. He visited Cuban Embassy in Ghana to identify with and claim solidarity with the then Cuban leader Fidel Castro whom he admired greatly but his visit to the Embassy was unsuccessful as he was equally forced to leave the embassy premises unceremoniously.

The undissuaded Boro returned to Nigeria with his comrades of ijaw tribe such as Samuel Owonaru, Nottingham Dick and began to recruit young ijaw men to form the Niger Delta Volunteer Force (NDVF) of about 150 young men whom he gave trainings in the use of firearms and explosives in the creeks and bushes.

*Today is a great day, not only in your lives, but also in the history of the Niger –Delta. Perhaps, it will be the great day for a very longtime. This is not because we are going to bring the heavens down, but because we are going to demonstrate to the world what and how we feel about oppression. Remember your 70 years old grandmother who still farms before she eats, remember also your poverty-stricken people, remember too, your petroleum which is being pumped out daily from your veins, and fight for your freedom.*¹⁹

The NDVF men unleashed attacks on a police station at Yenagoa, raided the armoury and kidnapped men and officers of the station in 1966. They blew up oil pipelines and engaged regularly in gun-battles with the Police with reasonable civilian innocent casualties. Consequently, the Nigerian Government under the then military Head of State, General Aguyi Ironsi suppressed the revolution and arrested Boro, Owonaru and Dick who were put on trial on a Nine count charge of treason at the Port Harcourt Court before Justice Phil Ebosie who found them guilty and sentenced the trio to death by hanging.

Due to the prevailing national crises in 1966 in Nigeria, the death sentence was delayed until another Head of State, General Yakubu Gowon took over after the death of General Ironsi on July 15, 1966. As a result, Boro, Owonaru and Dick were pardoned by General Gowon who enlisted Boro as a non-commissioned soldier when the Nigerian-Biafran war broke out in 1967 to fight on the Nigerian side against whom he campaigned and revolted. As a Nigerian soldier, Boro commanded the Sea Boys Training School, Atimbo in Calabar and was also a Battalion commander in the 3rd Marine Commando under Col. Benjamin Adekunle.

Isaac Adaka Boro equally gained the death sentence executed in a non-judicial manner' when he was brutally killed in a controversial circumstances on 17th May, 1968 at Ogu village near Okrika in Rivers State²⁰. Before his death, Boro authored an autobiographical work titled: *The Twelve-day Revolution* published in 1982 and was survived by a wife and four children.

According to Obansanjo, Boro's Sea Boys' School had about one thousand soldiers recruited during the civil war under Colonial Benjamin Adekunle controlled 3rd Marine Commando which hurriedly and poorly trained the soldiers with little or nothing in the way of training facilities and resources.

Obansanjo further asserts that:

*Isaac Boro and his men of sea school had become a significant factor in the division. Their knowledge of the riverine areas, their ability to the line off the land, their swift though tactically less accomplished movement accounted for their huge success in areas around Andoni, Buguina and other riverine areas.*²¹

The researcher notes that though Boro's antecedent as the pioneer Niger Delta or Ijaw activist is undisputable judging from his love for his people yet it is further noteworthy that his activities during the civil war raised the doubt if truly he was only passionate about the Ijaw people's emancipation or the entire Niger Delta region he claimed to fight for This was because Boro was instrumental to the killing of a reasonable number of Oron, Efik, Eket, Ibibio, Obolo and Cameroonian fishermen, indigenes and businessmen around the Nigerian water-way and in the Cameroonian communities of Oron and Amoto in Usakedet (Isangele)²².

Isaac Boro's Invasion Of Usakedet And Major Events

Between July 1967 when the Civil War started in Nigeria and 17th May, 1968 when Isaac Adaka Boro's troop withdrew from Usakedet area and the Penninsula, a number of atrocious events ranging from maimings, beatings, rapes and killings of innocent civilians occurred in Usakedet villages of Oron and Amoto. Also, the riverine fishing settlements of Ukoho, Akwa (Archibong), Ine Eteya, Ine Akpak, Inua Mba, Ubuhu Efe, Ine Okpo located along the Rio-Del Rey estuary were militarized being the highway for arms and humanitarian resources traffic to Nigeria though the Cameroons²³.

Indiscriminate killings *Oron and Amoto people who occupied the upland areas of Usakedet were mercilessly killed at sea and homes by Nigerian soldiers led by Isaac Boro who marched into the areas on 13th April, 1968 and unleashed sporadic shootings, rapes and assaults on the innocent traditional rulers and indigenes²⁴.*

Usakedet by its natural and geographical location is both farming and fishing area with major openings to Ikang, Oron and Atlantic oceans in Nigeria. In Amoto and Oron upland communities, a number of inhabitants were farmers, hunters and fishermen. Also, women of Ijaw and Obolo origin who resided in the fishing settlements were actively into fishing, hence, they were equally preys to Boro's boys act of rape in creeks and rivers around Ikang, Rio Del-Rey and other riverine settlements. Caroline Usim asserts that:

Oron and Amoto people who occupied the upland areas of Usakedet were mercilessly killed at sea and homes by Nigerian soldiers led by Isaac Boro who marched into the areas on 13th April, 1968 and unleashed sporadic shootings, rapes and assaults on the innocent traditional rulers and indigenes²⁴.

The informant who was barely 5 years old noted that about 65 men and women, including children were mercilessly killed, wounded and maimed by Isaac Boro's guns. She further inform that Boro's anger was unleashed when he required that all the inhabitants of Usakedet should chant after him: "One Nigeria!!!" which were rebuffed by his victims who on the contrary chanted "One Cameroon"²⁵ Also, the paramount chief or ruler of Usakedet then, Chief Henry Anjeh Usim who ruled from 1922 to 1974 was assaulted and severely beaten to a pulse by Boro's soldiers for claiming Cameroonian citizenship instead of Nigeria. His house was destroyed with bombs. The story of the humiliation and assault of Chief Henry Anjeh Usim remains apparently central in the minds of Usakedet indigenes and posterity till date²⁶. The invasion of Usakedet was seen as a measure which desecrated the traditions and culture of the people of Usakedet.

Massacre At Akum Beach Market

Akum beach in Usakedet located in Oron was the terminal point of the highway from Mundemba through Bateka to Oron. The beach was both a commercial nerve-centre and maritime port into the Rio-Del-Rey maritime

junction at Fumen and other adjoining fishing locations in the Southwest Camerouns. The memory of the mindless destruction, beating, rape and massacre of the innocent traders sent to early graves by Isaac Boro on 13th April, 1968 in Usakedet remained very fresh in the minds of those who witnessed the event. Okon Christopher Ayongha narrated in an oral interview that:

*Akum beach market held its pride of place through decades until the unfortunate invasion of Nigerian soldiers under Isaac Boro. Thousands of bullets fired by soldiers left trails of blood, tears and sorrow in Usakedet and neighbouring Efut families and took the shine off the market which had ceased to exist since then. Usakedet's prime centre of commerce had become a place of death.*²⁷

Rapes and killings of Usakedet women

Another event which was widely noticed was the indiscriminate rapes of Usakedet women. According to Anjeh Aboko Ita, a 120 year old *Iyamba* of *Obe Ekpe* a prominent women leader named Madam Oku Efa, who protested the assaults her people was shot dead under a gruesome manner. Rape by soldiers was a common phenomenon. Late Mrs. Adiaha Dan, a seven month old pregnant woman was stabbed to death while protesting and resisting rape assault²⁸.

Impact Of The War On Usakedet People

The impact of the 30 month civil war on Usakedet people shall be classified into: Negative and Positive impact respectively.

Negative Impact

Emergence or Advent of High profiled Armed Robbery: Before the war in 1967, Usakedet people had little knowledge of the use of ammunitions and guns except matchet or baton as weapons but following the invasion of the area by Boro, guns and dangerous ammunitions went into the hands of the people for personal security while sea robbery along the creeks became rampant immediately after the war²⁹. In an oral interview with the Village Council of Oron-Usakedet, Daniel Anki Ambo, *the high rate of killings in recent times among young men and youths of Usakedet through indulgence in robbery and other anti-social behaviours show that the wicked Nigerian/Biafran soldiers have reincarnated*³⁰. Daniel Anki Ambo's opinion was based on the rate of incessant robbery of Usakedet traders enroute Ikang by sea pirates, a development which was strange.

Loss of Settlements/Villages: As a riverine area, Usakedet had settlements such as Edek Ekpu, Ine Ekoi, and Edek Ekid in the Rio Del-Rey corridor. These places were deserted by Nigerian and Cameroonian fisherman due to Major Isaac Boro's act of mercilessness. As a result, those settlements though re-occupied under different names by Ibibio, Oron, Ijaw and Eket people were completely abandoned between the period 1967-1970³¹

Desecration of Usakedet Tradition /Culture: The war had greatly affected the belief system of the Usakedet people³² Before the war, Usakedet deities were greatly venerated, but during the war sacred instructions like non-admittance of strangers, twins and parents into shrines and other sacred places were violated through the acts of the invading soldiers. Also, the assault metted on the highest traditional ruler of the Usakedet people, Anjeh Henry Usim which led to his death in 1974 was an act of abomination and desecration to the tradition of the people of Usakedet.

Positive Impact

Conversely, there were also positive impact of the war; however, it must be accepted that universally the negative impact of any war usually out-weighs its good side, therefore, the Isaac Boro's invasion of Usakedet was beneficial to the people in the following ways:

Training of Usakedet People on Personal Security: The invasion exposed the people to the modern method of personal security as young men began to acquire light weapons for personal use against any eventuality.

Self-Discovery and Nationalism: Isaac Boro's invasion of Usakedet in 1968 reawakened in the minds of Usakedet people that tendency toward their Cameroonian nationalism and identity. This was clearly expressed when they opposed and confronted Isaac Boro's soldiers even at gun point against the acceptance of Nigerian citizenship.

Ahidjo's Dilemma

Late President Ahmadu Ahidjo of Cameroun was a Fulani man whose father was originally from Kano in Nigeria³³ Infact, Ahidjo grew up around Yola and Mubi in Nigeria and was playmate to Senator Iya Abubakar. His former District head in Nigeria, Ambassador Malabu, was made Ambassador to Cameroun to cement the relationship between the states³⁴. Thus, Nigeria gained and sustained Cameroun's support during the civil war even when its citizens were raped, maimed and killed.

Furthermore, Ahidjo and key elements in the francophone

Cameroon bureaucracy were afraid of the effect on Southern Cameroons of a precedent for secession by supporting Biafra. It was not a secret that Southern Cameroons had always preferred self-determination. To be sure, Nigerian's interest in Cameroun became evident in years after civil war as she paid immense tribute to the Cameroun government and contacts between their two heads of state increased from 1970-1975 without any comment, report and support to the victimized and traumatized people of Usakedet put through untold pains by Major Isaac Boro of the Nigerian Army thereby creating a doubt over Ahidjo's sincerity toward the people of Southwest Cameroun especially the Usakedet people regarded more or less as Nigerian Cameroonians by the Francophone Cameroonians.

President Ahidjo regarded the Nigerian civil war with deep concern because Nigeria was a neighbouring country and because the crisis touched on a principle that he held very dearly: the territorial integrity of African states which he indirectly did not keep to as Nigerian forces invaded Cameroons territory of Usakedet. To prove his deep support for Gowon, he deployed Cameroonians troops along the frontier and sent Cameroon secret police into the border villages to monitor and prevent large purchase of local and imported goods. To further reduce tension in those border areas during the war, Ahidjo passed restrictions that forbade listening to Radio Nigeria or Biafra at high volume. The wearing of native cloth with images of Ojukwu or Gowon was also banned in parts of Cameroons.

As the war progressed, thousands of Biafrans refugees sought shelter in the adjoining areas of West Cameroun. Between 1968 and 1970 as many as 25000 Ibos fled into Southwest Cameroun³⁵ Cameroun's official position with regard to the refugees was stated by the Defence Minister, Sadou Daoudou in Buea in late 1969. He said that because of Cameroonian hospitality, it could not forbid entry to all Nigerians into the country owing to the present crisis in Nigeria. But this could only be done if Nigerians kept peace and did not revive in Cameroun the old rivalries that had existed among them in Nigeria, above all if they respected Cameroun's sovereignty. The researchers assert that Cameroons position during the Nigerian civil war confused many political analysts. At the time when the memories of the 1961 plebiscites had not yet been totally forgotten, many would have expected that Cameroun would rejoice and even support³⁶ the breakup of its giant neighbour who was in possession of a section of this country.

Moreover, there were alleged pressures from France on Cameroun to follow the examples of Gabon and Ivory Coast and recognize Biafra. But Cameroun withstood all such pressures and came out solidly in support of Nigeria despite the invasion of its territory by a troop of the Nigerian Army

led by Isaac Boro. Not only that, Ahidjo used his good offices to reconcile Nigeria with four African states that had recognized Biafra in his capacity as Chairman of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) in 1969.

CONCLUSION

No examination of the Nigerian civil war of 1967-1970 would be complete without the recognition of the role by the Nigerian Armed Forces of the 3rd Marine Commando in the trans-border of Usakedet area of the Cameroons. Apart from infringing on the sovereignty of the Cameroons, the war victims and casualties of Isaac Boro's atrocities have been adversely made to suffer a war they had no say in its making. During the 30 month old fratricidal war, women exhibited courage and suffering alongside men of the area in a more severe and daring nature than the counterparts in the hinterlands of the Cameroons and most Nigerian territories because of their peculiar terrain, occupations, maritime proximity and environment which served as the traffic highway for mobilization of ammunitions and humanitarian resources for both the Nigerian and Biafran sides. Usakedet men, including traditional rulers, were beaten up, maimed and killed while women were subjected to rape and indignity by the Nigerian soldiers under Isaac Boro's command, unfortunately, little or no obvious recorded or globalized remarks were made of the activities of those soldiers of the 3rd Marine Commando. Following the formal surrender by General Phillip Effiong on the 15th January, 1970 a 3-stage unity plan of Rehabilitation, Reconstruction and Reconciliation (the 3Rs) was announced by General Gowon³⁷ yet, the once traumatized and shattered but courageous men and women of the Usakedet area were not touched after the needles war they knew nothing about. As the war ended, the poor men and women of the area who adversely suffered the pangs of loss, courage and suffering of the war continually live in the memory of the war experiences as evident in the palace of the war time. Paramount chief of Usakedet Anjeh Usim whose house was badly destroyed by Boro's bullet and are still left without renovation till date.

Endnotes

¹ Daniel Anki Ambo. Aged: 67. Chairman, Oron Village Council, Isangele. Interviewed at Anwang, Oron on 14-12-2019.

². Chinua Achebe. *There was a Country – A Personal History of Biafra*. NewYork: Penguin Press, 2012. P. 227

³ Godwin Alabi-Isama. *The Tragedy of Victory: On the Spot Account of the Nigeria-Biafra War in the Atlantic Theatre*. Ibadan: Spectrum Books Limited, 2013, pp.84-101.

⁴. Ibid, p.217.

⁵ Okon Edet Uya. *A History of Oron People of the Lower Cross River Basin*. Oron: Manson Publishing Company. 1984. pp.20-28

⁶Anki Ambo Daniel. A Brief Historical Collections on the Administrative Development of the RioDel-Rey (Usakedet), 2018, pp. 1-15

⁷. Tengwan Ambe Frederick, Free Camerooun Now, Buea, University Press, 2016 pp. 1-5

⁸. Anjeh Aboko Ita. Aged: 120. Cup-bearer and *Iyamba* of *Ekpe*. Interviewed in Anwang–Oron Usakedet, 14/10/2019.

⁹. Tengwan Ambe Frederick. Free Cameroon: Post card from Isangele <https://emergingcameroonsnow.blogspot.com>. Accessed: 18/3/2021

¹⁰. Efiong Okon Osung. Aged:82 Former Village Head of Akassa Fishing Settlement. Ekondo Titi, Cameroun. Interviewed at Eyotai, Udung Uko L.G.AKS on 17/6/2022.

¹¹.Anki Ambo Daniel. A Brief Historical Collections on the Administrative Development of the RioDel-Rey (Usakedet), 2018, pp. 1-15

¹².Usim Promise Usim. Aged: 64. Former Youth Leader. Interviewed in Oron–Usakedet on 23/10/2019.

¹³. Anjeh Orami Dibo. Aged: 51. Royal Secretary. Interviewed in Oron–Usakedet on 12/10/2019

¹⁴Ericson Effi Usim. Aged: 73. Retired Forestry Staff Interviewed at Atakpa Road, Oron-Isangele Southwest Cameroon on 5/12/2020

¹⁵F.A Goodliffe. An intelligence Report on the Isangeli Community of Kumba Division, Cameroun Province, National Archives, Buea, File 1080, Ag.35, 1940, pp. 20-23.

¹⁶.Anki Ambo Daniel. A Brief Historical Collections on the Administrative Development of the Rio Del-Rey (Usakedet) 2018, pp. 15-18

¹⁷.O. A. Odiong. *Bakassi Peninsula: Growth, Conflict and Evolution*. Calabar: Odiong and Sons, 2008. Pp. 12-13

¹⁸ Isaac Jasper Adaka Boro. *The Twelve-Day Revolution*. Benin-City: Idoho Umeh Publishers. 1982, pp.1-

On February 23, 1966 Boro declared the secession of the Niger Delta Republic with himself as Head and Commander-in-Chief. He made the following declaration and clarion call:

¹⁹Isaac Jasper Adaka Boro. *The Twelve-Day Revolution*. Benin-City: Idoho Umeh Publishers. 1982, pp.1-5

²⁰Isaac Jasper Adaka Boro. *The Twelve -Day Revolution*. Benin-City: Idoho Umeh Publishers, 1982, pp.1-5.

²¹Olusegun Obasanjo. *My Command*. Ibadan: Heinman Publishers, 1980, p.47

²²Okezie Amarube, The troubled land of our ancestors, News service Magazine, April, 24, 1994, p.20.

²³Caroline Offiong Usim, Aged 54, Major of Isangele and granddaughter of Anjeh Usim, interviewed at Oron- Usakedet, 13-10-2019.

²⁴Anjeh Usim Francis. An Address presented to the Senior Divisional Officer, Ndian Division, 3/8/2018, p.2

²⁵Okon Christopher Ayongha. Aged: 62. Member of Village Council. Interviewed at Oron – Usakedet 26/10/2019.

²⁶Edem Etara 2nd World War Veteran. Aged: 115. Interviewed at Oron Town on 27th July, 2019.

²⁷Anjeh Usim Francis, An Address presented to the Senior Divisional Officer, Ndian Division, 3/8/2018, p.2

²⁸Okon Christopher Ayongha. Aged: 62. Member of Village Council. Interviewed at Oron – Usakedet on 26/10/2019.

²⁹Edem Etara. A Civil War Veteran. Aged: 115. Interviewed at Oron Town on 27th July, 2019.

³⁰Daniel Anki Ambo. Village Council Chairman. Aged: 67. Interviewed at Usakedet, 26/10/2019.

³¹. Eric Usim. Aged: 70. Retired Staff Forestry Staff. Interview at Usakedet, 12/10/2019.

³². Jean Koufan Menkene and primus Fonkeng, "Cameroun Nigeria Relations: A model for posterity" *Nigerian Journal of International Affairs*, volume 36, Number 2, 2010.

³³ Available at <http://www.dawodu.com/bakassi2.htm>, p.6, accessed 27 January, 2020

³⁴Edmond J. Keller. Secessionism in Africa. *Journal of African Policy Studies*. Volume 13, Number 1, 2007, p. 17

³⁵ UNITAR, Peaceful Settlement among African States, Roles of the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity, New Unity, New York, 1972, p. 33

³⁶ Mathias Asukwo. Aged: 78. Member of *Obe* Cult. Interviewed in Oron –Usakedet on 27/5/2020.

³⁷ Esin Okon Eminue. Military Regimes and Political Development in Nigeria. 1966-1999. *Ibom Journal of History and International Studies*. Vol. 14. No. 2 December, 2012 p.199.

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