2014

JORA: Complete Volume 1, Issue 1

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Journal of Retracing Africa

JORA

JOURNAL OF RETRACING AFRICA (JORA)

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EDITOR'S PREFACE

We are pleased to announce the inaugural issue of *Journal of Retracing Africa* (JORA). For centuries, Africa's socioeconomic and political development has been dictated by a dynamic and complex coalescence of external and domestic forces. Narratives on Africa abound. Many, unfortunately, hold myths, misconceptions, and misrepresentations of issues and events surrounding the continent. The launching of JORA is an attempt to offer a thoughtful and balanced reconstruction of African societies, histories, and cultures. By providing a platform for scholars to provide their unique perspectives on all aspects of the African experience, JORA makes a valuable contribution towards producing an account about Africa that is more accurate, comprehensive, and reliable.

In this issue, Victor Olumide Ekanade examines the problems and challenges of Africa's economic development in a globalizing world. Probing the influence of external financial institutions on Africa's economic policies and focusing on Nigeria's consequential economic experiments since the 1980s, he shows how "Nigeria's uncritical embrace of Western-styled neoliberal economic policy largely undermined the country's quest for a sustainable economic development."[1] As the author shows in the article, the implementation of a neoliberal agenda has "encouraged capital flight, authoritarianism, corruption, [and] the mushrooming of the informal sector." To address these problems, the author insists that the federal government "must practice home-grown development policies that fulfil the developmental aspirations of the masses."[2]

Any discussion of the various victims of the Nigeria-Biafra War, 1967-1970, is incomplete without analyzing the experiences of minorities within Biafra: Efik, Ijaw, Ogoja, and Ibibio. During the war, as Arua Oko Omaka reminds us, these ethnic groups faced "layers of loyalty and disloyalty both to the federal authority and the Biafran government" which caused them to experience "a high degree of persecution, molestation, injustice, [and] psychological torture."[3] Through careful analysis of oral and written evidence on the war, the author shows how the need to establish control over "the oil-rich region" not only made the conflict to assume an international dimension, but also exposed minorities "to more dangers and destruction." He argues that identifying these ethnic groups "as victims would place them in their rightful position in the nation's history."[4]

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[1] Victor Olumide Ekanade, "The Dynamics of Forced Neoliberalism in Nigeria Since the 1980s," *Journal of Retracing Africa* 1, Issue 1 (2014): 1.

[2] Ibid., 27.

[3] Arua Oko Omaka, "The Forgotten Victims: Ethnic Minorities in the Nigeria-Biafra War, 1967-1970," *Journal of Retracing Africa* 1, Issue 1 (2014): 1.

[4] Ibid., 45.

The two articles offered in this issue, coupled with nine book reviews, will undoubtedly engage our thinking about how global forces have intermingled with domestic elements to shape the political and economic landscape in Africa in the colonial and postcolonial era. You are encouraged to submit your best research papers to JORA. JORA is a no-fee, peer-reviewed, open access journal, and authors will enjoy wide readership from publishing in the journal. Open to different but rigorous research methodologies—and insisting on manuscripts that make original and compelling contribution to knowledge—JORA welcomes submissions focusing on African studies since the precolonial period.

This publication was made possible because of the dedication of JORA's managing editor, copy-editor, book review editors, members of the editorial board, the editorial assistant, authors, external reviewers, BePress, Eastern Kentucky University Libraries, Office of the Dean, University Programs, and the African & African-American Studies program at Eastern Kentucky University. We thank you. We will continue to count on you in what promises to be many more successful years of JORA.

Ogechi E. Anyanwu
Editor-in-Chief.

The Dynamics of Forced Neoliberalism in Nigeria Since the 1980s

Victor Olumide Ekanade
Redeemer's University, Nigeria

Abstract: Over the last 30 years, the logic of market liberalization has increasingly permeated the social and economic facets of political and economic discourse to such an extent that the core values about the responsibilities and obligations of nation-states to their citizens have been strained. The welfarist ethos featuring in the public finance of some European and North American countries for much of the twentieth century included values such as equity and access, which manifested in the subsidization and affordability of social amenities. The welfarist concept, premised on the experience of western European economies, was based on the logic that if a large proportion of the population could not afford clean water, health care, or education for their children, long-term corporate interests of the society would be undermined. State-subsidized provision of these essentials was thus fully embraced because of the understanding of the short and long-term public interest involved. However, by the 1980s, changes in international markets fostered a precipitous decline in African economies. Many governments thus jettisoned its state-centered economic strategy since it could no longer fund public expenditure on sustainable basis. Nowhere was the shift in economic policy more pronounced as in Nigeria. The drastic decline in national revenue due to a dip in international price of oil led to Nigeria's balance of payment deficit making the introduction of forced neoliberal economic policy inevitable. Analyzing the dynamics of policy formulation and implementation since the 1980s, this article argues that Nigeria's uncritical embrace of Western-styled neoliberal economic policy largely undermined the country's quest for a sustainable economic development.

Keywords: Nigeria; Neoliberalism; Social Welfare; Democracy; Poverty; Military Regimes; Economic Reforms; Privatization; Corruption.

Introduction

Nigeria's experience with neoliberal economic policy presents a classic example of a state which progressively shifted from a relative welfare state to ad-hoc welfarist state and full blown free market economy. The implementation of Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs) in the country between 1986 and early 1990s, in addition to neoliberal policies under civil regimes from 1999 until the present, have had colossal implications for Nigeria's national development. In

this neoliberal context, democracy was re-established to satisfy market demands without adequate regard to social needs. Neoliberal reforms were not concerned with social issues but with market efficiency, which worked against the basic tenets of human rights and constitutional safeguards for Nigerian citizens. Forced neoliberalism is state policy foisted on the people in a democracy without their due consent. This practice is typical of politics in post-colonial Africa.

Neoliberal economic policies and profound internal socio-political convulsions are challenging African states, including Nigeria. Even though they are acknowledged as independent states within the global community, African countries have not adequately established themselves as nations with national identities. They also have not conquered the challenges of good governance and gained their economic autonomy. The post-Westphalian states of Europe treat African states as dependent associates, providing them with financial aid through international agencies such as the Bretton Woods institutions.[1] Nigeria for instance is a subordinate unit responsive to the policies of international organizations, and subject to the imposition of their programs such as the World Bank's SAPs based on neoliberal principles.[2] The SAP instituted in Nigeria in 1986 under General Ibrahim Babangida proved dreadful in terms of implementation and outcomes as it led to a drop in the standard of living of the majority of Nigerians as subsidies on essential commodities and services were removed, provoking a series of devastating riots. Furthermore, the outcomes of neoliberal policies established with the return of democratic regime of Chief Olusegun Obasanjo, between 1999 and 2007, were also disappointing. As a democratic regime, it was expected that the Obasanjo government would create conditions aimed at reducing poverty and inequality. Rather the established democracy abided with market standards without due consideration for the needs of the citizenry. This article examines the contradiction of the institutionalization of democracy in Nigeria as a moral value while at the same time negating the social rights of its citizens. It argues that the growth of electoral democracy occurred at the same time of heightened social problems in the country, and shows how neoliberalism since 1999 worsened the plight of a large segment of the Nigerian population, deepening poverty, inequality, unemployment, and social exclusion.

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[1] George Clement Bond, "Globalization, Neoliberalism, Historical Conditionalities," The Journal of African American History 88, no. 4 (Autumn, 2003): 330. Peter Lewis, "From Prebendalsim to Predation: The Political Economy of Decline in Nigeria," *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 34 no.1 (Mar, 1996), 81.

[2] Babawale Tunde and Onuoha Browne, "The State Corruption and the Challenges of Good Governance," in *Rich but Poor, Corruption and Good governance in Nigeria*, ed. Lai Olurode and Remi Anifowoshe (Lagos: University of Lagos, 2005), 64.

Conceptual Framework

The received wisdom in literature on neoliberalism in Africa and Latin America as posited by Graham Harrison, George Clement Bond, Margaret Hanson and James Hentz, Adebayo Olukoshi, Chibuzo Nwoke, and Pablo Gonzalez Casanova is that the failure of leadership in these continents and the need to revamp their distressed economies necessitated the introduction of neoliberal policies in the polities.[3] This amounts to a misreading of these societies, especially African states where neoliberalism is fundamentally in disharmony with African communal ways of life but finds relevance in the socialist mode of production. Another consensus in literature is that structural adjustment and neoliberal policies imposed on Africa and Latin America all carry a specific political and economic principle that is decisively anti-people- anti working class but pro-private capital. One of the many tragedies of neoliberalism is that in its bid to promote the forces of the market and long term interests of the private capitalist class, systematic assaults have been launched on the African and Latin American states' welfare, social, and public expenditure programs, which have in turn resulted in backlash. Thus it cannot be assumed that developmental needs of the state and citizenry will be served by simply turning to the market. The body of literature mentioned above does not however explain how neoliberalism interacted with the democratization process, corruption, and constitutional provisions in these states. This is a gap this article will attempt to fill in, using the context of the Nigerian state.

According to Adejumobi Said, historically the provision of social welfare services has been a state responsibility in both developed and developing countries. However the introduction of privatization, which was meant to help curtail government expenditure, creates new social problems or exacerbates existing ones which would require supplementary public spending in order to contain them.[4] For Jarret Alfred[5] and Claude Ake,[6] colonialism left behind a legacy of a social welfare system irrelevant to the social needs of the masses in Nigeria, as it was structured for profit maximization and essentially designed to

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[3] Graham Harrison, "Economic Faith, Social Project and a Misreading of African Society; the Travails of Neoliberalism in Africa," *Third World Quarterly* 26, no, 8 (2005): 1303-1320; Bond; Margaret Hanson and James Hentz, "Neocolonialism and Neoliberalism in South Africa and Zambia," *Political Science Quarterly* 114, no. 3 (1999): 479-502; Olukoshi Adebayo and Chibuzo. N. Nwoke, "The Theoretical and Conceptual Underpinnings of Structural Adjustment Programmes" in *Structural Adjustment in West Africa*, eds. Olukoshi Adebayo, Omotayo Olaniyan and Femi Aribisala (Lagos: NIIA, 1994), 11-27.

[4] Adejumobi Said, "Privatisation Policy and the Delivery of Social Welfare Services in Africa: A Nigerian Example," *Journal of Social Development in Africa* 14, no. 2 (1999): 87-108.

[5] Alfred A. Jarrett, "Problems and Prospects of the Social Welfare Systems of Sierra Leone and Nigeria," *International Social Work* 34, no. 2 (April, 1991): 143-157.

[6] Claude Ake, *A Political Economy of Africa* (New York: Longman, 1981).

meet not the needs of the colony but those of the colonial masters. Thus it did not encourage investment in social welfare schemes for the African population. After independence, Nigeria inherited the outdated social welfare system left behind by the colonial order. This had serious implications for structural adaptation, cost efficiency, and effectiveness of these public corporations in terms of delivery of welfare services since most of the public corporations were centrally controlled. For Arowosegbe Jeremiah, the inherent character of the "imported state," oriented exclusively towards maintenance of law and order, explains the overdeveloped status of the state's apparatuses of violence, which was a tool for maximizing colonial exploitation, relative to its educational, health, and other welfare systems. Local elites under successive regimes in Nigeria have not innovatively engaged with reinventing the state but have continued along the same trajectory.[7]

Historical Background of Neo-liberalism

Neoliberalism is rooted in the classical liberal ideas of Adam Smith and David Ricardo. Both viewed the market as a self-regulating mechanism tending towards equilibrium of supply and demand, thus securing the most efficient allocation of resources. These British economists and philosophers considered that any constraint on free competition would interfere with the natural efficiency of market mechanisms, inevitably leading to social stagnation, political corruption, and the creation of unresponsive state bureaucracies.[8] In modern times, neoliberalism emerged as a synonym for the mainly externally directed attempt to remove the state from the economy. The World Bank's Berg Report claimed that many of Africa's economic problems emanated from excessive inefficient state intervention in the economy.[9]

Neoliberalism is steeped in a system of economic, social, and political ideals that are rightwing versions of the modern post-enlightenment themes of rationality, democracy, and individual freedom. Neoclassical economics rethought these eighteenth and nineteenth century principles of economic modernism and for a while reluctantly abandoned pure market determination for limited state regulation during the Keynesian interlude of post-war period. During the 1970's when widespread problems of stagflation were deemed beyond the reach of Keynesian fiscal policy, nineteenth century liberalism was revived as a rightwing

[7] Jeremiah Arowosegbe, "Claude Ake: Political Integration and the Challenges of Nationhood in Africa," *Development and Change* 42, no. 1 (January, 2011): 349-365.

[8] Steger Manfred, Globalization: *A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003).

[9] Harrison, "Economic Faith, Social Project," 1303-1304.

version of neoliberalism.[10]

Neoliberalism now emerged as monetarism in the 1970s, a reflection of the triumph in the west of the monetarist shade of neo-classical economics, which was against Keynesianism and all it stood for. Monetarism is essentially about ascendency of the market and "peripheralization" of the state, which in the monetarists' view had become too large, unfit and inefficient, and excessively interventionist. As part of the effort to reduce the size and role of the state, they called for the withdrawal of a host of subsidies that were introduced at the height of the Keynesian revolution, the elimination of subventions to public enterprises and privatization of those enterprises.[11]

The globalization of the monetarist agenda was skillfully assisted with the coming to power in the early 1980s of conservative governments dedicated to the cause of monetarism in the leading western countries that dominate the world capitalist economy. The most prominent of these governments were those of Margaret Thatcher in Britain, Ronald Reagan in the United States, Helmut Kohl in West Germany, and later Brian Mulroney in Canada.[12] They all dismantled their welfare states in response to the global economic crisis of the 1970's, the rising costs of labor in Europe and USA, and the rapid development of capitalism in newly industrialized countries (NICs) of Asia that led to increased competition, reduced profit rate, and the crises of overproduction. The resultant effect of the emergence of these rightwing governments, unrepentant in the pursuit of monetarism, was the reorientation of the dominant outlook within the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank. These two key institutions shed their Keynesian toga and embraced monetarist principles.[13]

The outcome of this reorientation in the IMF and World Bank had fundamental and colossal consequences for developing countries. By 1983/1984, the African debt crisis was serious as debt servicing alone consumed about a third of all their foreign receipts and moved them into severe depression.[14] Thus, the World Bank and IMF were able to use the debt crisis in Africa to gain substantial leverage over

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[10] Elaine Hartwick and Richard Peet, "Rethinking Sustainable Development: Neoliberalism and Nature: The case of the WTO," *Annals of American Academy of Political and Social Science* 590 (November, 2003): 188-211.

[11] Adebayo and Chibuzo, "The Theoretical and Conceptual Underpinnings of Structural Adjustment Programmes," 14.

[12] Rick Rowden, "An Overview of the Increased Coordination of the International Monetary Fund, World Bank and World Trade, Trade Liberalization Policies," *2nd draft working paper*, Washington DC, October, 2009.

[13] Adebayo and Nwoke, "The Theoretical and Conceptual Underpinnings of Structural Adjustment programme,"14-15.

[14] Richard Sandbrook, *The Politics of Africa's Economic Stagnation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 24.

economic policies in Africa which hitherto was limited. In their attempt to come to terms with the crisis of their local economies, developing countries approached the World Bank and IMF for financial aid, giving the United States the chance to sell them the Brady Plan.[15] Western countries that dominate these financial bodies such as the United States not only ensured that the two institutions fell in line with their new economic thinking but also encouraged them to make the acceptance and implementation of market reforms a pre-condition for financial assistance to debtor nations.[16] Given the comatose state of most post-colonial third world economies, they embraced the new policies and conditions. The 1980s was the era of monetarists' domination of economic policies in the third world. The IMF and the World Bank effectively imposed their policies of SAP as a panacea of economic transformation throughout developing countries, including Nigeria.

Nigeria's Experience with Structural Adjustment

As a major oil-producing nation, Nigeria enjoyed almost a decade of unprecedented revenue boom arising from the petroleum price increases of the 1970's. One remarkable characteristic of Nigeria's expenditure during this period was its "welfarist" orientation with government domestic investments and concentrated provision of a massive transport system, road networks, public buildings, and health infrastructure. Employment rates soared, coupled with increases in subsidies on food, transport, health, fuel, and education.[17] The Shehu Shagari regime (1979-1983) systematized the subsidized sale and distribution of specific commodities known as essential commodities to Nigerians. These included rice, milk, beef, sugar, among other items. These products were imported by the Nigerian government through the Nigerian National Supply Company and sold to Nigerians at rates below prevailing market prices. These subsidies remained all through the Shagari era but terminated with the introduction of SAPs in 1986, which led to the removal of subsidies, reduction of public expenditures,

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[15] John T. Rourke, *International Politics on World Stage* (New York: Mc Graw Hill, 2000), 467- 468. The Brady Plan emphasized that bank creditors should grant debt relief to debtor states in exchange for greater assurance of collectability in the form of principal and interest collateral. Also, debt relief for debtor states needed to be linked to some assurance of economic reform and the resulting debt should be highly tradeable to allow creditors to diversify risk more widely throughout the financial and investment community. See EMTA, "The Brady Plan," accessed April 22, 2013, http://www.emta.org/template. aspx?id=35&terms=brady+plan.

[16] David .K. Leonard and Scott Strauss, *Africa's Stalled Development: International Causes and Cures* (London: Lynne Reinner Publishers, 2003), 25-26. See also Elmar Alvater, "Postneoliberalism or Postcapitalism? The Failure of Neoliberalism in the Financial Market Crisis," *Development Dialogue Uppsala* no. 51 (January, 2009): 73-88.

[17] Thandika Mkandawire, "Fiscal Structure, State Contraction and Political Responses from Africa," in *Between Liberalisation and Oppression: The Politics of Structural Adjustment in Africa,* eds. Mkandiawire Thandika and Olukoshi Adebayo (Dakar: Codesria, 1995), 37.

privatization, and devaluation of domestic currency.[18]

Part of the reason for the introduction of SAPs was the economic decline that started in the early 1980s. The international source of the crisis was the dramatic flagging of the oil markets in the first half of the 1980s, which made the country's financial position deteriorate. Export revenues plunged by 53 percent between 1980 and 1982, from US$27.1 billion to US$12.7 billion.[19] At the same time, the value of internal public debt increased by 72 percent from US$8.5 billion in 1979 to $26.9 billion in 1983 while external debt was estimated at $14.13 billion during this period.[20] As commitments accumulated, short-term borrowing increased, and interest rates escalated. On the domestic scene, the downturn was accentuated by the monocultural nature of the economy, the character of the politicians during the return of the civilian governments in the early 1908s, who were flippant with federal funds, and the endemic corruption of the same class and gross mismanagement of the national treasury. The crisis raised questions of sustainability of state subsidy as social services suffered due to underfunding. The industrial sector shut down 50 percent of its firms and thousands of its workers were laid off.[21] These multifaceted crises provided the immediate domestic context for the adoption by the Nigerian state of an orthodox program of structural adjustment sponsored by the Bretton Woods institutions.[22]

The first serious attempt to examine the role of the state in the Nigerian economy came in 1981 when the Shehu Shagari regime appointed a presidential commission of inquiry to examine the parastatals. The commission's report recommended an increased role for the private sector in administering the partially government-owned organizations. This recommendation was to cut government expenditure at the expense of the masses. In the context of the debt problems, the Shagari administration in April 1982 introduced the Economic Stabilization Act to control imports, introduce more discipline into the monetary system, and narrow the gap between public expenditure and income through cuts in government

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[18] Ikubolajeh, Logan and Kidane Mengisteab, "Introduction," in *Beyond Economic Liberalization in Africa: Structural Adjustments and Alternatives*, eds. Kidane Mengisteab and Ikubolajeh Logan (London: Zed, 1995), 3.

[19] Lewis Peter, "The Dysfunctional State of Nigeria," in *Short of the Goal: U.S. Policy and Poorly Performing States*, eds. Nancy Birdsall, Milan Vaishnav, and Robert L. Ayres (Washington D.C: Center for Global Development 2006), 83-116.

[20] James Guseh and Emmanuel Oritsejafor, "Government Size, Political Freedom and Economic Growth in Nigeria, 1960-2000," *Journal of Third World Studies* xxiv, no 1 (2007): 142.

[21] Olukoshi Adebayo, "The Politics of Structural Adjustment in Nigeria," in *Between Liberalisation and Oppression: The Politics of Structural Adjustment in Africa*, eds. P. Thandika Mkandiawire and Adebayo Olukoshi (Dakar: Codesria, 1995), 163-164.

[22] Adebayo Olukoshi, "From Crisis to Adjustment in Nigeria," in *The Politics of Structural Adjustment in Nigeria* (London: James Currey and Heinemann, 1993), 1.

expenditure.[23] The stabilization program failed because the regime was reluctant to remove subsidies and commercialize public enterprises. Many stalwarts of the ruling National Party of Nigeria (NPN) owed their enormous wealth to their direct control over the parastatals, marketing of rice, fertilizer, and petroleum products.[24] Consequently, the Shagari government approached the IMF for an extended fund facility of between N1.9 and N2.4 billion. The IMF insisted on certain conditions including privatization, a curb on government spending, trade liberalization, and introduction of sales tax. [25] No concrete agreement was reached with the IMF before the government was overthrown on December 31, 1983. [26]

The successive regime of Muhammadu Buhari agreed with the IMF on the need for fundamental reforms in the Nigerian economy but was unwilling to accept part of the IMF's recommendations such as currency devaluation, privatization, liberalization of trade, and withdrawal of the petroleum subsidy. It nevertheless embraced the policy of commercialization but insisted on state regulations. This resulted in a stalemate and the outcome was the tightening of the boycott of Nigeria by western banks and export credit guarantee agencies. The leading financial institutions insisted that the government had to obtain a clean bill of health from the IMF before the country's debt, put at about $20 billion in 1984, could be rescheduled and fresh capital injections authorized.[27] The second approach adopted by Buhari's government, in its bid to mitigate the effects of the disparate pressing demands by the IMF and Nigerians on the economy, was the introduction of the policy of counter trade, a modern day variant of trade by barter, with Brazil and some West European states. The scale of the counter trade deals was however too small and costly relative to the magnitude of the country's economic problems[28] Thus, the regime introduced a comprehensive package of austerity measures as part of its own stabilization efforts with severe restriction

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[23] Adebayo Olukoshi, "The Management of Nigeria's External Debt: Issues and Problems" in *Nigerian External Debt Crisis: Its Management,* ed. Adebayo Olukoshi (Lagos: Malthouse,1990), 31.

[24] Ibid. See also Adebayo Olukoshi and Tajudeen Abdulraheem, "Nigeria, Crisis Management under the Buhari Administration," *Review of African Political Economy* no. 34 (1985): 95-96.

[25] Robert. H. Bates, John H. Coates and Jeffrey G. Williamson, "Lost Decades; Lessons from Post-Independence Latin America for Today's Africa," *NBER Working Paper 12610,* National Bureau of Economic Research, Cambridge, Massachusetts (2006), 20.

[26] Yahaya Sheu, "State Versus Market: The Privatization Program of the Nigerian State," in *The Politics of Structural Adjustment,* ed. Adebayo Olukoshi (London: James Currey and Heinemann, 1993), 17-18.

[27] Adebayo Olukoshi, "The Politics of Structural Adjustment in Nigeria," 170-171. See also Yahaya Sheu, "State Versus Market: The Privatization Programme of the Nigerian State," in *The Politics of Structural Adjustment*, 17-19.

[28] Olukoshi, "The Politics of Structural Adjustment in Nigeria," 170-171.

on imports. This made it difficult for local industries to procure essential imported raw materials forcing many of them to close shop. Subsequently, many workers were laid off, and the government itself retrenched many employees to increase its "cost effectiveness." All of these actions were accompanied by high inflation. The price of basic food items rose, and life became increasingly difficult for the masses and even the affluent.[29]

Adequate health care is critical for the worker to maintain his productivity while education is important in order to improve the quality of that productivity. Cost recovery measures introduced in health and education sectors by the Buhari regime had a reverberating impact on the citizenry. The Nigerian constitution stipulates that federal, state, and local governments should fund, in a coordinated manner, a three-tier system of health care. However, total health expenditure in real terms declined sharply from a total of N825.5 million in 1980 to N128.3 million in 1984 representing a fall of about eighty-five percent. The negative impact of this manifested in the increase of the under five-year-old mortality rate which moved from 181.1 per 1,000 live births in 1980 to 192.4 per 1,000 live births in 1985.[30] The illness rate in rural areas also approached 100 per thousand, particularly among children and the aged people in the 1983-1984 period. The education sector also worsened and with it came employees' inability to benefit from educational policy[31]. The total number of secondary schools in the country fell from 38,211 in 1984 to 35,281 in 1985. In addition, the government imposed heavy levies, indiscriminately on parents of school children. At the tertiary level, the government withdrew the feeding program of students, thus increasing the cost for students and their parents[32] Buhari's legitimacy was soon dissipated by his authoritarian nature and he was deposed by General Ibrahim Babangida in

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[29] Peter Lewis, "From Prebendalism to Predation: The Political Economy of Decline in Nigeria," *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 34, no. 1 (Mar, 1996): 79-103. See also Adebayo Olukoshi, "The Politics of Structural Adjustment in Nigeria," 157-185. Between 1979 and 1989 the price of garri increased by 700 percent, rice by 1,700 percent, beans by 1,350 percent yams 3,000 percent, frozen fish 900 percent, beer 350 percent milk 1,500 percent, bread 2,000 percent, and palm oil 300 percent. See *The Financial Post*, Lagos, October 1- 4, 1989, 9.

[30] L.A Amaghionyeodiwe, "Fiscal Federalism, Health Care Spending and National Development: The Nigerian Experience," in *Fiscal Federalism and Nigeria's Economic Development*, ed., Ben

Aigbokhan (Ibadan: Nigerian Economic Society, 1999), 394. See also *Nigeria Demographic and Health Survey*, 1990.

[31] Ibeanu Okechukwu, "The Deteriorating Condition of The Nigerian Peasantry," in *Dead-End to Nigerian Development: An Investigation on the Social, Economic and Political Crisis in Nigeria,* ed. Okwudiba Nnoli (Dakar: Codesria, 1993), 142.

[32] Okwudiba Nnoli, "The Deteriorating Condition of the Nigerian Working Class," in *Dead-End to Nigerian Development: An Investigation on the Social, Economic and Political Crisis in Nigeria*, 169.

August, 1985.

In 1985, Nigeria was still reeling under a heavy debt burden with declining oil revenues, and Babangida opened a national debate on whether Nigeria should take the IMF loan or not and the role the government should play in managing the economic crisis. The premeditated decision of the regime prevailed as Babangida, despite the people's protests, adopted a supposedly homegrown adjustment program akin to the IMF prescriptions. It was obvious that the debate was a smokescreen because Babangida had earlier appointed Chief Olu Falae, a pro-IMF personality as the nation's finance minister and Babangida himself had insisted on the necessity to adjust the naira to its 'realistic' value.[33] This was the SAP, which Babangida claimed would halt economic stagnation and revitalize growth. The SAP was a package of neoliberal economic reforms, primarily aimed at strengthening market forces and retrenching the state. This had dire consequences for the Nigerian political economy and its peoples, state, agriculture, and industry.[34] For instance, the public sector carried out its program of retrenchment through sackings and various other means. One of these was to disband existing public enterprises such as the Nigerian National Supply Company and the various commodity boards. Another was to merge enterprises. Reorganization in corporations such as Nigeria Railway Corporation, Nigeria Airways, and Nigeria Airport Authorities led to the retrenchment of 8,000, 2,500, and 2,000 workers respectively in 1988. In same year, 1988, 32,000 workers in the textile industry were retrenched as spasmodic and eventual permanent closure of industries ensued.[35]

Faced with ever declining standards of living and without resources that formerly co-opted oppositions and nurtured clients, the state under General Babangida increasingly relied on coercion to implement structural adjustment plans.[36] General Babangida sought to assuage popular opposition to adjustment through selective provisioning of certain welfare facilities through institutions such as Directorate for food, roads, and rural infrastructure (DFRRI) to provide special assistance to rural areas, networks of Peopleand Community Banks to extend credit to small scale and local borrowers. The Better Life Programme sponsored by the First Lady was also intended to promote the production of craft works

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[33] Olukoshi Adebayo and Tajudeen Abdulraheem, "Nigeria, Crisis Management under the Buhari Administration," *Review of African Political Economy* 12, no. 34 (1985): 101.

[34] Attahiru Jega, "The State and Identity Transformation under Structural Adjustment in Nigeria," in *Identity Transformation and Identity Politics under Structural Adjustment in Nigeria*. ed. Attahiru Jega, (Uppsala: Nordiska African Institute and Centre for Research and Documentation, 2003), 31-33.

[35] Okwudiba Nnoli, "The Deteriorating Condition of the Nigerian Working Class," 162.

[36] M. Paul Lubeck, "The Crisis of African Development: Conflicting Interpretations and Resolutions," *Annual Review of Sociology*, 18 (1992): 519-540.

among the poor, especially women. These initiatives were mostly underfunded, ephemeral, or suffused with corruption, and their impact on popular welfare was questionable.[37]

Education was consistently underfunded at less than 6 percent of total expenditure of the sector during this regime. In previous years though, especially between 1978 and 1982 the federal government spent more than 6 percent of total expenditure on the educational sector. However, in 1992, the federal government spent less than 1 percent of its total expenditure on the sector.[38] This had severe repercussions for infrastructure, teaching, and research activities, and on the quality of students produced. It affected the morale of teachers who were owed arrears of salaries for several months and who had to abandon their duties out of necessity to seek other means of sustenance.[39] Healthcare equally suffered due to the withdrawal of subsidy from that sector under Babangida. Infant mortality increased from 87.2 per 1,000 live births in 1985 to 191 per 100 live births in 1993 as access to safe water also diminished from 45 per 1,000 in 1985 to 40 per 1,000 in 1993 when he stepped aside. By 1991, debt servicing ate up 47 percent of the overall federal budget and remained so in 1992 and 1993. By 1993, the deficit Babangida accumulated was put at N90-N100 billion. The annual budget for that year was N120 billion. One is left to wonder how a country that was adjusting could afford to amass huge deficit year after year, especially after 1989.[40] Thus, the SAP rather than helping to revamp the economy simply fed into the existing dynamic of decline, thereby becoming an integral factor in the continuation of Nigeria's economic crisis. Cumulatively, the SAP produced considerable hardship, poverty, and discontentment across the Nigerian society. The middle class was overwhelmed by declining purchasing power and unemployment. Coping mechanisms for some workers included running their private cars as taxis to augment income after the day's work, while low income urban dwellers were driven to subsistence levels and school children had to hawk wares to supplement family incomes.[41]

The SAP was eventually discontinued in 1994 under the General Sani Abacha regime as part of his legitimization schemes. It was replaced with a policy

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[37] Lewis, "From Prebendalism to Predation," 88.

[38] Dipo Busari and Olaniyan Olanrewaju, "Decentralisation and Education in Nigeria: Issues and Options, in *Fiscal Federalism and Nigeria's Economic Development*, ed. Aigbokhan Ben (Ibadan: Nigerian Economic Society, 1999), 516.

[39] Cyril Daddieh, "Education Adjustment Under Severe Recessionary Pressures: The Case of Ghana," in *Beyond Economic Liberalisation in Africa: Structural Adjustment and the Alternatives*, ed. Kidane Mengisteab and Ikubolajeh Logan (London: Zed Books, 1995), 42.

[40] Adedayo Oluyemi-Kusa, "The Structural Adjustment Program of the Nigerian State", in, *Structural Adjustment in West Africa*, ed. Olukoshi Adebayo, Omotayo Olaniyan and Femi Aribisala (Lagos: Pumark Publishers, NIIA, 1994), 91.

[41] Lewis, "From Prebendalism to Predation," 98.

of guided deregulation meant to enhance economic development by appropriate discretionary interventions from the government.[42] According to Kunle Amuwo, the Abacha regime actually favored a statist economic policy, but certainly not a nationalist agenda. Amuwo noted further that "this way Abacha set the tone and tenor to pocket the economy and privatize state finances."[43]

Abacha, Neoliberalism, and the Nigerian Textile Industry

The application of neoliberal policies in the Nigerian textile sector can be used to dramatize the government's wholesale mortgage of indigenous industrial fortunes and their potential benefits. General Sani Abacha compounded the economic misfortunes of the Nigerian manufacturing sector by extending the frontiers of the neoliberal agenda to the textile sector with his decision to take Nigeria into the World Trade Organisation (WTO) in 1994 without providing safeguards.[44] The WTO agreement opened Nigerian markets to all kinds of imported goods and turned Nigeria into a dumping ground for frivolous imports. The agreement was endorsed for political reasons – personally for Abacha to garner support and sympathy from the international community, which had turned Nigeria into a pariah state and perhaps to provide patronage for his cronies. No sooner had Nigeria signed the WTO pact than Nigerian industries, including 135% textile firms began crumbling like a pack of cards.[45] The negative effect of unbridled importation subsequently led to a drastic decline in the contribution of the manufacturing sector to Nigeria's GDP.[46] Cheap Chinese-made textiles against which Nigerian firms could not favorably compete flooded Nigerian markets. Not even the African Growth and Opportunities Act (AGOA) passed in the twilight days of Clinton's administration in the United States could reassure them.[47] This unbridled importation of textiles impoverished cotton farmers and brought untold hardships on textile industry workers who were subsequently laid off because locally produced textiles could not favorably compete with Chinese textiles which were cheap.

No nation has developed without a textile industry. The textile industry was one that set Britain on a path of sustainable economic growth in the mid

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[42] Ifamose Folasade, "The Fourth Republic Economic Reforms in Nigeria and the Millennium Development Goal One: A perspective," *African Studies Review* 9 (June 2010): 410.

[43] Kunle Amuwo, "Transition as democratic regression," in *Nigeria during the Abacha Years: 1993 – 1998: The Domestic and International Politics of Democratization.* eds. Kunle Amuwo, Daniel Bach and Yann Lebeau (Ibadan: IFRA, 2001), 5.

[44] *The Guardian* (Lagos), October 28, 2007, 37.

[45] *The Guardian* (Lagos), September 4, 2005, 16-17.

[46] *The Punch Editorial* (Lagos), August 2, 2006, 16.

[47] *The Guardian* (Lagos), September 4, 2005, 16.

nineteenth century. The textile industry uses relatively simple technology and it is an industry well suited for Nigeria with its huge population and rich cotton growing culture. Nigerian-made textiles had popularity in the export market and gained prominence in places as distant as Dakar. In the mid-1980s, the industry had about 350,000 people in over 200 mills. As of 2010, however, the Nigerian textile industries had less than 2,000 persons in their employ.[48] Nigeria's public enterprises were a serious drain on the national budget in the immediate post-SAP years.[49] Abacha did not change their fortunes in any positive way. According to Kunle Amuwo, "a predatory regime like Abacha's was characterized by a distinctive pattern of economic management, including arbitrary change, deficit financing, and capital flight. More importantly in the realm of social choice, the "rationality" of the market was vitiated by the "logic" of rent seeking.[50]

The Abacha regime also made attempts to implement welfare policies and programs to mitigate the adverse impact of its economic policy. A key model here was the Petroleum Trust fund meant to rehabilitate public roads, fund education, and provide critical infrastructure in the health sector. Its implementation was skewed as it mediated well in the Northern part of Nigeria with marginal presence in the Southern part. In all, it merely served to help perpetuate and legitimize Abacha's regime in Nigeria, who died in office in 1998.

In General Abdulsalami Abubakar's attempt to administer the privatization program, he affirmed in his independence speech of October 1, 1998 that "the public sector investments in the provision of services, utilities and goods have yielded little dividends."[51] He subsequently set up the Bureau of Public enterprises (BPE) to oversee the supervision of the sale of these public enterprises. The exercise did not gain popular support because of the command nature of the military and the incoming civilian administration of President Olusegun Obasanjo literally scrapped the Abubakar privatization program.

The Neoliberal Agenda of the Obasanjo Years

By 1999, the annual Gross Domestic product (GDP) in Nigeria averaged 2.25 percent while population growth averaged 2.8 percent. This mismatch was a guarantee of mass poverty as the index was put at 67 percent, meaning no less than eighty million Nigerians were absolutely poor. The cumulative effects of years of mis-governance had translated to economic stagnation, marked by a low GDP, galloping inflation, high unemployment, falling per capita income,

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[48] *The Punch Editorial* , (Lagos), November 22, 2010, 14.

[49] Gary Moser, Scot Rogers and Reinold Ventil, "Nigeria's experience with SAP," *Occasional Paper 148* (Washington. D.C. : IMF publication, March 1997), 43.

Kunle Amuwo, "Transition as Democratic Regression", in *Nigeria during the Abacha Years*, 5.

[51] *The News Magazine* (Lagos), March 29, 1999, 16-17.

an energy crisis, and declining industrial capacity. Thus, in 1999, Obasanjo inherited not only a fragile state and economy, but also a political economy driven cyclically by trade shocks brought about by its dependence on oil. The regime also inherited a collapsed industrial support infrastructure.[52] The dysfunctional state of federal utilities, which had been organizationally crippled by corruption, inefficiency, and indebtedness, with many of them not having audited accounts for many years, eventually informed Olusegun Obasanjo's adoption of neoliberal principles. Obasanjo invited the IMF and the World Bank to help provide second level quality checks for his macroeconomic policies. Specifically, he invited the International Finance Corporation (IFC), the private sector arm of the Bretton Woods institutions to advise the nation on privatization.[53] According to the Bureau for Public Enterprises (BPE), the IFC served as the sole adviser of the Federal Government with respect to the effective implementation of its privatization program from its inception in 1999.[54] However the IFC pulled out of Nigeria in early 2001. It cited the auction of Nigeria's international air traffic rights by the Nigerian government as one of the main reasons for its withdrawal.[55] Based on these challenges, Obasanjo justified his privatization program as an exercise that would reposition the government to concentrate resources on its core functions and responsibilities while enforcing rules and policies so that markets can work efficiently. The objective was to make the government leaner and more efficient, reduce waste and corruption, free up resources tied down by public enterprises, and improve service delivery to the people. It was hoped that privatization would introduce new capital, technical, and managerial efficiency in the privatized enterprises, thereby reviving them, creating new jobs, and adding value to the economy. A fundamental plank for implementation of the neoliberal ideology is the Public-Private Partnership, an alternative source of infrastructure financing, which is rooted in a complex but contractual relationship between government and private sector organizations. Here, the private sector makes available the social welfare services, and the government simply regulates such services and provides an enabling environment. Just as Hanson and Hentz linked the adoption

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[52] *The Nation Newspaper* (Lagos), May 29, 2001, 36.

[53] *The Guardian Newspaper* (Lagos) April 6, 2002.

[54] Samuel Aluko, "Federal Reform Agenda and the Nigerian Economy, 1999-2007: A Critical Assessment,"2008, accessed January 23, 2013,
http://www.nigerianmuse.com/opessays/?u=Sam_Aluko_Federal_Government_Reform_Agenda_and_the_Nigerian_Economy_1999_2007_A_Critical_Assessment.htm.

[55] In excerpts of a letter to Obasanjo, IFC vice president Peter Woicke said that "the opportunity for a successful near-term privatisation of Nigeria Airways has been diminished by the auctioning act," accessed April 15, 2013, http://www.ipsnews.net/2001/05/finance-nigeria-international-finance-corporation-pulls-out-of-privatisation-venture/.

of neoliberal policies in South Africa and Zambia to domestic dynamics within those jurisdictions, Nigeria's adoption of neoliberal principles followed the same logic because the policy obtained domestic support from the emerging middle and elite class, as they possessed the finance capital to buy into the privatized firms, with little or no support from the masses who saw it as further impoverishment.

The template for the framework of the economic reform agenda of President Obasanjo was largely influenced by the IMF and World Bank (WB).[56] Their core prescriptions for Nigeria were: (a) Unbundling and privatization of the state electricity company; (b) Legislation and technical assistance to promote domestic gas sector reforms; (c) Liberalization of the down stream petroleum sector; (d) Funding to address key infrastructure constraints; and (e) Legislations for bill on fiscal responsibility, procurement and the extractive industries transparency initiative. To drive this reform agenda, technocrats from these international financial institutions who had neoliberal inclinations were brought on board of President Obasanjo's economic team. They included Ngozi Okonjo Iweala, Oby Ezekwesili, and Soludo Charles who later became Governor of the Central Bank of Nigeria. Their policy agenda was encapsulated in National Economic Empowerment Development Strategy (NEEDS). The IMF and World Bank were heavily involved in funding the reform agenda. Since 2001, the World Bank has given approximately $300 million in International Development Association (IDA) credits for reform and privatization of Nigeria's energy sector. However, the key ingredients of the International Financial Institution's policy advice meant to shape Nigeria's economic policies have so far led to a dysfunctional electricity privatization process failing to effectively provide pro-poor energy and encouraged kleptocracy in the oil sector as they helped in perpetuating the conditions that enable companies operating in the Niger Delta to maintain a monopoly over the country's natural resources.[57]

On privatization, Nigeria started a four-phased privatization program in July 1999. The first phase involved the sale of the government's shareholdings in a dozen of commercially viable enterprises, including banks, petroleum marketing, cement, and insurance companies. This was completed in December 2000. The second phase, which was to be completed in 2001, rather started late. One salutary impact of privatization was that all economic sectors and activities were exposed to competition and private initiative. Privatization has created a large pool of

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[56] Obiora Chinedu Okafor, "The Precarious Place of Labour Rights and Movement in Nigeria's Dual Economic and Political Transition, 1999-2005," *Journal of African Law* 51, no. 1 (April, 2007), 77.

[57] Lucy Baker, "Facilitating Whose Power? The IFI Policy Influence in Nigeria's Energy sector," (2008), accessed January 22, 2013,

http://www.brettonwoodsproject.org/update/60/bwupdt60_ai.pdf.

new shareholders in Nigeria, bridging both income and geopolitical divides. It has changed the structure and depth of the Nigerian capital market and created awareness of the virtue of shared ownership as a form of savings. The program has relieved the federal government of the huge and growing burden of financing debts and deficits of public enterprises. It has in a way improved the allocative efficiency of the national economy and enhanced the volume of corporate taxes accruing in the national treasury.[58]

The downside of the privatization played out with the dynamics of the privatization of Nigerian Telecommunications Limited (NITEL) a key item in the second phase.[59] The Obasanjo regime in February 2001 successfully auctioned three Global Satellite Mobile (GSM) licenses and got expressions of interest from strategic investors in NITEL. However ten years down the line, efforts at selling NITEL had been bungled repeatedly as China Unicom, the preferred bidder, had not been able to raise sufficient funds to unbundle and revitalize it.[60] NITEL was hastily sold to Transcorp which rationalized NITEL staff by 70 percent, that is 7,000 of the 10,000 staff were retrenched because of the privatization exercise. Ex-President Obasanjo handed Transcorp back to the late President Yar'adua on May 27, 2007.[61] The Obasanjo (1999-2007) regime virtually sealed the destruction of the land telephony system in order to privatize it. In other countries, particularly the industrialized ones, the land telephony is the main communication system with the mobile telephone system serving as a subsidiary and emergency outfit to complement the land telephone system.

The mobile telephone system has taken away much revenue from Nigerians and from the economy to their providers within and outside Nigeria. The flight of capital it has occasioned is excessive and most of the employment they created is in the informal sector. By 1999, the estimated share of the urban labor force in the informal sector in Lagos, Nigeria was 50 percent, Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire, 31 percent, Nairobi, Kenya 44 percent and Tunis, Tunisia 34 percent. Nigeria had the highest figure.[62] Under Obasanjo, the informal sector thrived and witnessed real explosion in the mid-2000s as an enormous proportion of Nigeria's population was

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[58] Zayyad, H.R, "Privatization and Commercialization in Nigeria," accessed January 22, 2013, http://wiki.projectszoo.com/projectswiki/images/3/39/Privatisation_and_commercialisation_in_Nigeria.pdf.

[59] OECD, *African Economic Outlook*: *2001-2002*, African Development Bank, Development Centre for the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development, France, 2002, 230.

[60] *Nigerian Tribune Editorial* (Ibadan), February 24, 2010.

[61] Akinpelu Olutayo and Ayokunle Omobowale, "Public Service Reforms and the Nigerian Telecommunications (NITEL) PLC," *Development and Society* 40, no. 2 (December, 2011): 340.

[62] Michael Todaro, "Urbanization, Unemployment and Migration in Africa; Theory and Policy" in *Renewing Social and Economic Programs in Africa,* ed Dharaim Ghai (London: Macmillan Press, 2003), 69.

employed in this sector. This was parallel to the development of the crisis and the implementation of the SAP that led to massive layoffs. The share of people in the informal economy in Nigeria is one of the highest in Africa and represented nearly 75 percent of non-oil GNP in 2003. This is a typical indicator of poverty[63]. The world development indicator also gives credence to this assertion as employment-to-population ratio in Nigeria fell from 52 percent in 1991 to 51 percent in 2007, and the population below global poverty line remained at an all-time high of 86.4 percent.[64]

Nigeria entered the third phase of privatization in 2004 by privatizing nineteen enterprises. In 2005, it entered the fourth phase under Irene Chigbue, privatizing forty six enterprises and thirty eight others in 2006. In the fourth phase, major utilities such as the Power Holding Company of Nigeria (PHCN) was unbundled into seventeen successor companies and established the National Electricity Regulation Commission (NERC), which set the framework and paved the way for the privatization of the electricity sector.[65] Up to 2005, about N225 billion of taxpayers' funds were pumped into the power sector to revive it alongside the unbundling program[66]. The result however is that the reforms in the power sector have not translated into any meaningful changes. Power supplies remained epileptic as no conscious attempts were made to build new power generation and transmission plants. This development has had adverse effects on the manufacturing sector and small scale businesses where production cost is high thereby making finished goods uncompetitive with their imported counterparts. Another fall out of the spasmodic nature of the public power supply in Nigeria is the job loss in the manufacturing sector. This has been massive given the exorbitant production costs. In addition, considering the huge population trapped in the informal sector, a substantial number of these artisans depend on electricity to run their businesses. With frequent power outages, and the hike in power tariffs by President Goodluck Jonathan (from N8.00 to N40.00 per kilowatt)[67] the challenges of the masses is further compounded, and they are left jobless. A substantial number have resorted to criminal activities in the nation. This explains in part why arson, kidnapping, and other criminal activities and social vices are thriving in the Niger Delta region and other parts of the Nigerian state.

It is also important to note that the Obasanjo regime's inability to handle

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[63] Danielle Obono, "Workers and Popular Masses in Nigeria" (paper presented at the Conference of African alternatives: Initiative and Creativity Beyond Current Constraints, Leiden, Netherlands, July 11-14, 2007), 2.

[64] World Bank, *World Development Indicators* (Washington, D.C.: World Bank, April, 2009), 37

[65] *TELL Magazine* (Lagos) May, 2007, 7

[66] *TELL Magazine* (Lagos), June 26, 2006, 50.

[67] *Nigerian Tribune*, (Ibadan), July 1, 2011, 1.

problems in the power sector defeated its initiative of an export substitution policy in Nigeria.[68] In fact, the import substitution industries (ISI) policy is the preferred model for development in advanced economies as it encourages local production instead of the importation of essential products. In terms of economic performance, the structural transformation of Nigeria has been slow in the area of privatization. Privatization itself has not worked well because of bad governance, corruption, non-tariff barriers, and an inadequate regulatory framework.[69]

In his last days in office President Obasanjo, sold the Kaduna and Port Harcourt refineries valued at $800 billion in May 2007 for a paltry $500 million to Blue Star Oil Service Limited, a consortium close to him.[70] In addition, Eleme Petrochemicals Plant in Port Harcourt, the largest of its kind in Africa was sold for $225 million, an amount not even worth its spare parts. The unfortunate aspect is that the Nigerian government was supposed to maintain a minimum share of 49 percent. However, Indorama, the buyer was given a 75 percent equity stake in Eleme. The same occurred with the sale of Egbin Power Station, (the largest generating station operated by Power Holding Corporation of Nigeria) which was also grossly underpriced and sold off at a paltry N280 million or $2 million.[71]

Interestingly, the Nigerian Senate committee investigating the privatization of public enterprises since 1999 came up with appalling revelations about the Obasanjo regime. The committee discovered, through its public hearing that the regime sold the Aluminum Smelting Company of Nigeria built at the cost of $3.2 billion to Russal, a Russian firm at the cost of $250 million. Only $130 million of the said $250 million has been paid, leaving a balance of $120 million, which was supposed to be used to dredge the Imo River as stated in the share purchase agreement. Six years after the sale, the dredging is yet to begin and the government has not been paid the balance of the money. In addition, no one has queried Russal for failing to fulfill its obligations. Even if the cost of building the smelter was inflated through the procurement process, there is no justifiable reason why an asset worth $3.2 billion should be sold for $250 million.[72]

Delta Steel Company Limited presents another dimension of the fraud and irregularities involved in the sale of Nigeria's public enterprises under the Obasanjo regime. Global Steel Infrastructure Limited, a company that did not participate in the bidding process, except that it submitted an expression of

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[68] *TELL Magazine* (Lagos), May 2007, 6.

[69] Cyril Nweze, *CBN Magazine* (Lagos), November 2001, 47.

[70] Baker, Facilitating whose Power?"

[71] Ibid.

[72] Odey Adiza, "Privatization of Public Enterprises and Productivity: Nigeria's Dilemma," *Journal of Emerging Trends in Economics and Management Sciences* 2, no. 6 (2011): 493-494.

interest, was declared the winner. BUA, which did the follow up with a technical bid, did not get the benefit of the bid. The then Director General of the BPE, Julius Bala rationalized this untoward act with the assertion that "there is a difference between 'the winner of a bid' and 'the preferred winner' as there is the need for approval from council."[73] To compound matters, Delta Steel was valued by BPE at N225 billion but was sold for a paltry N 4.5 billion. These privatized enterprises have not added any meaningful value to the state and people of Nigeria.

A total sum of N146.6 billion earned from the privatization process has been remitted to the coffers of the Nigerian government since 1999. This is a paltry sum considering that investments by the government in these enterprises run into trillions of naira. The assets of the privatized enterprises were deliberately undervalued, as rules and regulations governing the due process were subverted, and this has allowed corruption to fester. Those who withstand the worst of the government's ineptitude now are the masses in the Nigerian state.[74]

Neoliberalism and Constitutionalism

The Nigerian state embraced planned and balanced economic development before 1985. Systematic development plans were made. Planning of the Nigerian economy ceased when the Babangida regime introduced the IMF and World Bank imposed SAPs in 1986. However, poor economic planning has been more greatly accentuated since 1999, through the deregulation, privatization, and downsizing of the public service and general reform agenda of the Obasanjo regime, all encapsulated in his National Economic Empowerment Development Strategy (NEEDS).[75] The economic philosophy of the government was hinged on the fact that the "market" has violated the Nigerian constitution, not only by abdicating the control of the major sectors of the Nigerian economy, but also by offering Nigeria for sale to domestic and foreign private interests. By 2006, the government had divested from 116 enterprises.[76] President Obasanjo's government's economic philosophy was premised on the mistaken assumption that, for the federal government to govern efficiently, it had to concentrate solely on governance. It neglected the fact that a government that cannot manage an industry successfully cannot govern efficiently.[77]

Part of the fallout of the privatization program which has been unpopular with the Nigerian citizenry include the reversal of pension benefits of public

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[73] *Punch*, (Lagos), August 17, 2011, 45

[74] Ibid.

[75] Folasade, "The Fourth Republic Economic Reforms in Nigeria," 410.

[76] *The Nation* (Lagos), May 29, 2009, 86.

[77] Aluko, "Federal Reform Agenda and the Nigerian Economy."

servants under the Pension Reform Act of 2004 and the deduction from their monthly wages for pension. Equally appalling are the non-payment of pensions and gratuities, the non-creation of employment opportunities and the non-payment of unemployment benefits to those forced into unemployment. [78] These are violations of Article 16, section 2(d) of the Nigerian Constitution.[79] The imposition of a contributory pension scheme on public servants in the name of pension reform is a violation of Article 173 of the Constitution, which seeks to protect the existing pension rights of public servants.[80] In the words of Lai Olurode, when pension rights are not guaranteed, individuals exercise no scruples at engaging in corrupt behavior in order to make ends meet. Thus, the denial of pension rights has further deepened the challenge of endemic corruption prevalent in Nigeria

The neoliberal agenda of the Obasanjo regime also went against the spirit and tenets of the Constitution on issues of educational objectives of the country. Article 18, section 3 of the 1999 Constitution provides that government shall strive to eradicate illiteracy and to this end, government shall, as and when practicable, provide, free compulsory and universal primary education, free secondary education, free university education and free adult literacy program.[81] However, the government worked at cross purposes by introducing public-private partnership (PPP) administration in unity schools (public schools). Fees were consequently introduced in primary and secondary schools and, very exorbitant fees in tertiary institutions alongside private universities. While the introduction of fees progressively were reduced, budgetary allocation for education fell from 11.2 percent in 1999 to 1.8 percent in 2003, all against UNESCO's recommendation of 26 percent for developing countries. Budgetary shortfalls undermined productivity of Nigerian intellectuals, starved knowledge institutions of vital resources for research, and adversely affected the quality of teaching and learning. Cumulatively, it has led to the peripheralization for the country's intellectual community as an aspect of the general strategy of strengthening neocolonial imperialism in Nigeria. Furthermore, it has created a knowledge weak Nigerian state in a century that is knowledge driven. [82] Overall, the cumulative impact of all these actions and inactions of government are that education at all levels is now becoming increasingly less and less available to a decreasing percentage of the Nigerian population, further deepening the impoverishment of not just the people

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[78] *The Guardian* (Lagos), November 14, 2006, 57.

[79] Republic of Nigeria, *The 1999 Constitution of Federal Republic of Nigeria* (Lagos Printer, 1999), 11.

[80] Ibid., 69.

[81] Ibid., 13.

[82] Okpeh Okpeh, "Neoliberal Reforms, the Nigerian University System and the Challenges of the 21st century," in *Quill Pen*, vol. 6 (Ibadan: Recard Publisher, 2007), 52-53.

but also the nation as a whole. Thus, Nigeria stands the risk of being delinked from the gains and prospects of an increasingly globalized and competitive world.

Retrenchment in the Public Sector and Precarization of Labor

From the outset, a central thrust of neoliberal policies was wage and social austerity for workers to restore the profitability of capitalist firms and the capacity of the state to assist in economic restructuring.[83] In line with this thinking, since the inception of the Obasanjo regime in 1999, about 4.8 million Nigerians in the civil service, statutory corporations, state owned companies, in the banks, and insurance companies have been retrenched through the reform agenda of re-engineering the public sector of the economy and minimizing the economic role of government. It has continued to place emphasis on the private sector as the engine of growth of the Nigerian economy, whereas the private sector in Nigeria is very weak and depends on the public sector for its survival and continued growth. Given the warped reform policy, the downsizing of the public sector has consequently led to the downsizing of the private sector, because the economic managers in government do not appreciate that a decelerating public sector also leads to a decelerating private sector, and vice versa. All sensible reformers in history have increased rather than reduced employment quantum in very significant manner. Neoliberalism, market fundamentalism, privatization, commercialization, and minimization of the role of the government in the economy do not collectively offer effective results for reducing poverty, because they do not sufficiently build or rebuild human capital. The type of privatization pursued by the successive Nigerian regimes has allowed cronyism, the plundering of national assets for the benefit of the few in the elite class.[84] The policy model itself offers very little and warrants little or no support as a sufficient economic policy directive for serious people-oriented policies. It does not address nor promote equitable income distribution, or a decent economic and social environment. The regime overlooked the political and social context of the malfunctioning public service. The reforms do not address substantive issues of equity and social justice in light of the distributive consequences of the restructuring. Consequently, the mere change of ownership from public to private has not guaranteed change in productivity and efficiency. This is besides the question of corruption and institutional crisis, which may equally bedevil a private company. In fact, several private firms have not performed much better than public companies in Nigeria [85]

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[83] Gregory Albo, "The Crisis of Neoliberalism and the Impasse of the Union Movement," *Development Dialogue,* 5 (January 2009):119-132.

[84] Folasade, "The Fourth Republic Economic Reforms in Nigeria," 411.

[85] David Adeyemo, Adeleke Salami, Lanre Adeyemi, "An Appraisal of Economic Reforms in Nigeria," *Contemporary Management Research*, 4, no. 2 (June 2008): 129.

Most of the resources derived from privatizing public enterprises, for instance, has not been directed toward building human capital through education and training, to stimulate productivity in the economy. Retrenchment of workers with productive application of revenue further depressed the economy. In an ideal situation, new competent workers would be employed and that would stimulate the economy. Downsizing of the public sector has negative multiplier effects. Retrenchment leads to reduced consumer demand, which reduces the propensity to produce, and in turn leads to a reduction in the rate of growth of the gross domestic product. It is a suicidal economic policy.

Nigeria's adoption of the New Economic Partnership for Development (NEPAD), which is based on some classic pillars of neoliberal economic policies, helps to dramatize the negative impact of privatization, using the activities of South African firms in Nigeria as a case study. [86] NEPAD was adopted by African states in October 2001 with the objective of regenerating and integrating African economies.[87] Under Obasanjo's regime, then South African President Thabo Mbeki surreptitiously used NEPAD as a platform to open up Nigeria's economy to South African investments and exports. The implications of this South African penetration have been inimical to the robust growth of the Nigerian economy. Joseph Stiglitz, a renowned economist and Nobel Prize winner, affirmed that neither theory nor economic evidence supports the claim that opening up your market can assure robust economic growth.[88] A case in point is the Nigerian telecommunication sector where the South African firm, MTN is about the biggest player. MTN obtained its operating license in Nigeria in 2001 after paying over $285 million as license fee and another $1 billion to set up operations. In 2004 alone, MTN recorded an after tax profit of over $2.4 billion in Nigeria.[89] This amounts to over profiteering and massive exploitation of Nigerians who are the subscribers.

A number of South African companies have also entered the fast food business in Nigeria, controlling almost 50 percent of the international fast food franchises in Nigeria. They are also making huge profits. In the media and entertainment industry in Nigeria, a South African company such as DSTV accounts for 80

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[86] Aluko Olokun, *The AU and NEPAD in Foreign Policy in Nigeria's Democratic Transition* (Abuja: Presidential Advisory Council on International Relations, 2005), 152-154.

[87] Adeolu Durotoye, "The Politics of Globalisation" in *Topics and Issues in International Relations*, ed. Adegbulu Femi (Ogun: Babcock University Press, 2011), 131.

[88] Joseph Stiglitz, *Globalization and its Discontents.* (New York: Norton, 2002), 21. See also Kurt Bayer, "Neoliberalism and Development Policy: Dogma or Progress," *Development Dialogue* 51 (January 2009): 89-102.

[89] Shawn Hattingh, South Africa's Role in Nigeria and the Nigerian Elections, International Labor Research and Information Group, Cape Town South, 2010, accessed February 25, 2012, http://mrzine.monthlyreview.org/2007/hattingh260607.html, 5.

percent of the viewers that watch satellite television in Nigeria.[90] Despite all these investments by South Africa in Nigeria, the people of Nigeria have not benefitted much. This is partly because South African corporations operating in Nigeria are allowed to repatriate the profits they make out of Nigeria. The majority of South African firms in Nigeria also source most of the products that they use or sell in Nigeria through South Africa and not locally, negating the creation of upstream or downstream industries in Nigeria. South African companies operating in Nigeria have also created very few jobs. The few they have created have tended to be casual. Though not peculiar to South African companies, many Nigerians who work in South African owned firms have been denied the right to join trade unions. For example, MTN has only about 500 permanent jobs.[91] Most of its employees are casual or temporary workers.

Conclusion

Nigeria's National Development Plans between 1962 and 1980 emphasized the central role of the government in economic planning. This ensured progressive development and stability of the economy and society. Military intervention truncated the entire process as it progressively eclipsed public provision of social welfare services, substituted it with ad-hoc welfare structures to legitimize and perpetuate successive military rules, setting in motion the wholesale marketization of social welfare services. The neoliberal orthodoxy was perpetuated paradoxically by subsequent democratic regimes without the consent of the citizens. The civil regimes privatized the state and substituted public good as private good, overlooking the fact that governance is a social contract in which the individual abrogates some of his rights to the state and in return enjoys some social benefits, which fundamentally include protection of life, human dignity, and social welfare. The neglect of the welfare of the citizenry has contributed immensely to the crisis of development. More importantly, the proponents of neoliberal policies have confessed that they did not consider the African or Asian economic scenes when they propounded their economic manifesto, believing same to be valid for all places and at all times. The proponents also admit that liberalization does not necessarily imply a swing to market fundamentalism and a minimalist role for government.[92] For instance, the sponsors of the Bretton Woods institutions ensure that neoliberalism coexists with strong protectionism and a desire to heavily subsidize some markets in the United States.[93] Neoliberalism has promoted

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[90] Hattingh, "South Africa's Role in Nigeria and the Nigerian Elections."

[91] Hattingh, "South Africa's Role in Nigeria and the Nigerian Elections." See also *The Punch* (Lagos), April 7, 2012.

[92] Aluko, "Federal Reform Agenda and the Nigerian Economy."

[93] Harrison, "Economic Faith, Social Project," 1305.

various lock-in mechanisms to insulate economic policy from democratic rule and popular accountability. This has encouraged capital flight, authoritarianism, corruption, the mushrooming of the informal sector, coupled with unprecedented casualization and precarization of labor. All of these have cumulatively deepened poverty and crime in Nigeria, thus undermining the very essence of a democratic state which ought to uphold social rights.

Rather than stick to the principles outlined by the Bretton Woods institutions, a new economic policy should be employed that more adequately reflects the goals of development and enhances the chances of local rather than foreign ownership of the means of production for more rapid and equitable economic growth. The government must practice home-grown development policies that fulfil the developmental aspirations of the masses. Under the reign of neoliberalism in Nigeria, capital and wealth have been largely distributed upwards, while civic virtues have been undermined by a mindless celebration of the free market as the model for organizing all facets of everyday life. Under attack is the social contract with its emphasis on enlarging the public good and expanding social provisions such as access to adequate health care, housing, employment, public transportation, and education, all of which provided both safety nets and a set of conditions upon which democracy could be experienced and critical citizenship engaged.[94]

Notes on Contributor

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[94] Henry Giroux, "The Terror of Neoliberalism and Rethinking the Significance of Cultural Politics," *College Literature* 32, no. 1 (2005): 1-19.

The Forgotten Victims: Ethnic Minorities in the Nigeria-Biafra War, 1967-1970

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Abstract: The Nigeria-Biafra War attracted enormous international attention not just for the brutal events of the period, but also because of how the conflict was interpreted, especially by foreigners. The ghastly images of victims of the war dominated the international media and roused the world's conscience. The conflict took a toll on human lives on both the Igbo and the ethnic minorities in Biafra. While the Igbo tragedy was largely perpetrated in Northern Nigeria, that of the Biafran minorities – Efik, Ijaw, Ogoja, Ibibio – occurred mainly in their homelands. The gory experiences suffered by the Biafran minorities have largely been neglected in the historiography of the Biafra War. This paper examines the experiences of the ethnic minorities in Biafra during the war between July 1967 and January 1970. It argues that the minorities suffered a high degree of persecution, molestation, injustice, psychological torture and other forms of suffering which have not been fully examined in existing literature. The war subjected them to layers of loyalty and disloyalty both to the federal authority and the Biafran government. The paper asserts that these minority groups in Biafra were as much victims of the war as the Igbo. Hence, they should be accorded due recognition in the historiography of victimhood in the Nigeria-Biafra War.

Keywords: Biafra; Ethnic; Igbo; Massacre; Minorities; Nigeria; Victims; War.

Introduction

The idea of "minority" is a concept that has posed some definitional problems among scholars. Owing to the fluidity of the concept, there has not been any internationally accepted definition. The earliest attempt to provide a definition for the term was made in 1977 by Francesco Capotorti, the former Special Rapporteur of the United Nations, who defined minority as:

A group numerically inferior to the rest of the population of a State, in a non-dominant position, whose members – being nationals of the State – possess ethnic, religious or linguistic characteristics differing from those of the rest of the population and show, if only implicitly, a sense of solidarity, directed towards preserving their culture, traditions,

religion or language.[1]
The problem with this definition is that it only covers persons belonging to ethnic, religious, or linguistic minorities. There is no provision for other minority groups in terms of different social categories grounded in sexuality, gender, age, class, race, etc.

Article 1 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities adopted in 1992 recognizes minorities as a group of people with similar national or ethnic, cultural, religious, and linguistic identity, and provides that states should protect their existence.[2] The article makes reference to the same groups already identified by Capotorti. But other groups such as sexual minorities, gender minorities, age minorities, and other minorities who also need rights, are omitted and consequently appear voiceless and unprotected. With the rapidity of socio-cultural, political, and economic changes taking place all over the world, the concept of minority continues to pose more questions than can easily be answered. A more workable definition of minority should thus be seen in terms of context. Based on this, I define minority quite broadly as any group of people that is disadvantaged when compared to the rest of the population. The "minoritization" of a group should therefore be seen in terms of the situation and not just numerical weakness. For instance, a group can be a majority in terms of numerical strength but a minority in terms of political representation. In this situation, the group sees itself as a political minority and agitates for equality and justice. The minorities referred to in this paper are the ethnic minorities in Nigeria, and they are minorities because of both their numerical weakness and poor representation in the national politics.

The Igbo Victims

The Nigeria-Biafra War started on July 6, 1967 and ended on January 15, 1970. The former Eastern Region of Nigeria seceded from Nigeria and declared its independence on May 30, 1967, following the massacre of the Igbo people who were living in the northern parts of Nigeria. The federal government of Nigeria responded to the secession with "police action," that is, a partial military operation designed to crush what it perceived as a rebellion. These actions were the beginning of a war that lasted about thirty months. But what was originally interpreted as a

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[1] Francesco Capotorti quoted in Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), "Minority Rights: International Standards and Guidance for Implementation" HR/PUB/10/3, accessed August 5, 2012, http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Publications/MinorityRights_en.pdf, 2.

[2] OHCHR, "Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities Adopted by the General Assembly Resolution 47/135 of December 18, 1992," accessed February 28, 2013, http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Publications/MinorityRights en.pdf.

domestic conflict later took on an international dimension as state and non-state actors like Britain, the USSR, France, the Red Cross, and the World Council of Churches became involved in the conflict. The war received one of the highest humanitarian interventions in recent history. The massive number of children and women facing starvation attracted the attention of groups like the World Council of Churches, the International Committee of the Red Cross, *Caritas Internationalis*, Interreligious Affairs for the American Jewish Committee, and UNICEF.[3] The relief effort resulted in unusual Jewish-Christian co-operation.[4] Countries like the United States, Germany, France, and the Nordic Countries made enormous contributions towards the relief effort.[5] The international media also highlighted the humanitarian crisis in the war-torn region and successfully brought this part of the world into global focus. *The New York Times*, *The London Times*, *La Stampa of Italy*, and *Le Monde of France* were some of the newspapers that effectively covered the war.

The dominant argument in the historiography of the Nigeria-Biafra War, both within academia and the popular media, is that the Igbo were targeted for extermination by the Muslim north. A year before the war, during the 1966 massacres of Easterners in Northern Nigeria, the alleged indiscriminate bombing of civilian targets and the widespread hunger in secessionist Biafra did a lot to rouse the world's conscience to the humanitarian crisis facing Biafran peoples. The international media played a significant role in exposing the humanitarian tragedies, especially in the Igbo-speaking parts of Biafra. And many years after the war, scholarly accounts of the war, mostly by scholars from the Igbo-speaking parts of Baifra, have privileged insights into some of the most hideous acts unleashed on Biafrans during the war. Yet, not much has been reported about the atrocities perpetrated against the minorities in Biafra, both by the Nigerian military forces and the Biafran militias. This is a gap in Biafra's history.

Newsweek, in one of its reports titled "The Resurrection of Biafra," stated that "some of the worst massacres of the war, in fact, occurred when federal troops captured minority regions -whereupon the minority tribesmen turned on the Ibos in bloody fury."[6] This quote presents the Igbo as the victims in the hands of the minority groups, without reference to any experience the minorities might have

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[3] National Archives Enugu (NAE) MSP/6 Catholic Relief Services, Special Issue: Nigeria/Biafra Relief, Summer Edition, 1968.

[4] NAE, MSP/6 Catholic Relief Services, Special Issue: Nigeria/Biafra Relief, Summer Edition, 1968.

[5] The Nordic countries comprise of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden and their associated territories, the Faroe Islands, Greenland, Svalbard, and Åland Islands.

[6] "The Resurrection of Biafra," *Newsweek*, March 24, 1969. Ibo refers to the same group as Igbo. Ibo was commonly used in colonial writings.

had in the Igbo-dominated region before the arrival of the federal troops. Another report claimed that "in some areas outside the East which were temporarily held by Biafran forces, as in Benin and the Mid-Western Region, Ibos were killed by the local people with at least the acquiescence of the federal force: about 1,000 Ibo civilians perished at Benin in this way."[7] Nigerian troops were said to have hunted and killed Igbo males above the age of five, leaving the impression that the war was waged in a genocidal spirit.[8] Colin Legum, a Commonwealth correspondent for *The Observer*, London, also noted that "the worst killing occurring among the Ibos has come from the struggle itself that inevitably produced conditions of famine."[9] Peter Enahoro, who seemed to have sympathised with Biafra wrote: "The Ibos are bearing the burden that rightly belongs to all who sought progress for Nigeria."[10] Gordon Wainman, a volunteer for the Canadian University Service Overseas at Kurra Falls in Nigeria, reported the massacre of 30,000 Igbos in Northern Nigeria.[11] Wainman said that many of those who were killed were either buried in mass graves or left to rot in the fields with a thin layer of dirt thrown over them to reduce the stench of the decaying flesh.

While not denying the gruesome atrocities committed against the Igbo during the Biafra War, there is an error in the representation of the victims of the massacres. For instance, some of the victims of the 1966 massacre in Northern Nigeria were members of minority groups but were generally grouped with Igbos. The report of the G. C. M. Onyiuke-led tribunal clearly shows that many people belonging to ethnic minority groups in Eastern and Mid-Western Nigeria were victims of the May 1966 attack perpetrated by Northerners.[12] Members of the minority groups were easily mistaken for Igbos because it was difficult to differentiate between the two by mere physical appearance. There were no facial marks as could be found among the Hausa and the Yoruba, and the pattern of dressing, mostly western, was similar. N. U. Akpan, Secretary of Government, Republic of Biafra, noted:

The killings in North in 1966, particularly those which occurred from

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[7] Conor Cruise O'Brien, "A Condemned People," *The New York Review* ix, no. 11, December 21, 1967.

[8] Ibid.

[9] Colin Legum, "Nigeria vs. Biafra: On Taking Sides," *Christianity and Crisis: A Christian Journal of Opinion*, xxix, no. 9 (March 26, 1969): 151.

[10] Peter Enahoro, "A Night of Deep Waters" *Nigeria/Biafra*, April 1969. Peter Enahoro was the brother of late Anthony Enahoro, former Federal Commissioner for Information and Labour under General Gowon. Peter's support or sympathy appears to have been with Biafra.

[11] Gordon Wainman, "I had a Ringside Seat at a Nigerian Massacre," *Toronto Daily Star*, December 14, 1968.

[12] Report of the Atrocities Tribunal: Appendix B: Eyewitness Accounts of the 1966 Pogrom, December 1966.

> the end of September, were indiscriminately directed against people from Eastern Nigeria, known in the North by the generic name of *Yameri*...The subsequent attempts in the North to distinguish between the Ibos and other peoples of Eastern Nigeria came too late to make any impression on the non-Ibo members of Eastern Nigeria, who now shared the same fears and dread of the North as the Ibos.[13]

The indiscriminate killing of members of Eastern Nigeria accounted for the divided loyalty of the minority leaders. While some supported the Biafran secession, others felt it was better to remain as Nigerians.

The Politics of Ethnic Minorities in Nigeria

Nigeria, like most African countries, is a multiethnic society with many ethnic minorities. The ethnic minority groups in Biafra include, but are not limited to Efik, Ibibio, and Ijaw, and are located along the Eastern border and the oil rich southern coast. They are found in the present-day Cross River, Akwa-Ibom, Rivers, and Bayelsa States, forming a larger part of the area now known as the Niger-Delta region. In 1966, they constituted about 40 percent of the population of Biafra, formerly Eastern Nigeria, while the Igbo made up the remaining 60 percent. Although these designated minority groups belonged to the Igbo-dominated Biafra, they still maintained their distinct ethnic identities throughout the war. All the minority ethnic groups had their separate historical origin, distinct language, and cultural practices.

Part of the overarching argument about the war is that it was a war of two majority ethnic groups - the Hausa-Fulani and the Igbo.[14] This interpretation is simplistic and available evidence suggests otherwise. It was rather a war between the minorities and the majorities in Nigeria. The first and second military coups on January 15 and July 29, 1966 respectively, ushered in a historic moment in the history of the minorities in Nigeria. The Richard's Constitution of 1947 created a faulty regional structure that encouraged regionalism in Nigeria's post-independence politics. Apart from the fact that one of the regions was large enough to dominate the other two regions, the political parties in the federation were regionally oriented with politicians like Nnamdi Azikiwe, Obafemi Awolowo, and Ahmadu Bello, depending on ethnic and regional support to achieve national power. For instance, the NCNC led by Nnamdi Azikiwe, an Igbo, was seen as an Igbo party while the NPC led by Ahmadu Bello, a Hausa, was considered a Hausa-Fulani party. The Action Group was called a Yoruba party because its leader, Obafemi Awolowo, was Yoruba. Within the existing regional structure,

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[13] Ntieyong U. Akpan, *The Struggle for Secession, 1866-1970* (London: Frank Cass, 1972), 152.
[14] Conor Cruise O'Brien, "A Condemned People."

minority aspirations were sometimes ignored but could easily be used to promote party propaganda.[15] Leaders of the minority ethnic groups found themselves in a disadvantaged position in the entire federal political equation. It was against this background that minority leaders in different regions formed movements that started agitating for the creation of more states where their interests could be adequately protected. Some of the major movements that were formed before independence included the Calabar-Ogoja-River (COR) State Movement in the Eastern Region, the Mid-West State Movement in the Western Region, and the Middle-Belt State Movement in the Northern Region. These movements were neither cultural nor national groups but were "situationally" or circumstantially formed to agitate for minority rights in the larger state. Though not homogenous, the ethnic minorities were able to form formal structures that represented their groups, a development that challenges constructivist arguments that the "lack of pure identities means that groups are not homogenous and cannot be represented through formal structures."[16]

The leaders of these state creation movements believed that the formation of more states would eliminate their fears of domination by the majority ethnic groups. This concern led to the setting up of the Minorities Commission by the colonial authorities in 1957.[17] It was evident that state creation would allay the fears of the minorities and guarantee more stability in the federation, but the Commission pointed out that if new states were created, they would be given two years to settle down before independence could be granted to the country.[18] As events later revealed, the euphoria of gaining the long awaited independence blinded the national leaders to other realities. As the domination of the minorities continued, riots from minority areas like Tiv lingered. The Tiv under the leadership of Joseph Tarka had agitated for the creation of the Middle-Belt State. The Mid-West minorities in the former Western Region formed their own state as a result of the Northern People's Congress (NPC) and National Council of Nigeria and Cameroon (NCNC) plot against the Action Group (AG – a Yoruba-led party). The Mid-West creation was a way of weakening the influence of the Action Congress in the Western Region.

The growing agitations of groups dedicated to improving the fortunes of minorities in Nigeria received a remarkable boost by Nigeria's first and second

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[15] NAE (Unclassified document), "Understanding the Nigerian Crisis," Benin: Department of International Affairs and Information, Benin, 1968, 5.

[16] Stephen May et al., *Ethnicity, Nationalism and Minority Rights* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 8-9.

[17] Michael Crowder, *The Story of Nigeria* (London: Faber and Faber, 1978), 242.

[18] Nigeria Ministry of Information, *The Struggle for One Nigeria* (Lagos: Ministry of Information, 1967), 3.

coups of the late 1960s. While the first coup dismantled the influence of the Hausa-Fulani potentates, the second coup dislodged the Igbo from their positions of military control. These developments altered the balance of power and ethnic minorities in the army and civil service became central players in Nigerian politics. General Yakubu Gowon, who is Ngas, a minority ethnic group in the Northern Region, had Colonel Akahan, a Tiv, as his Chief of Staff. Some commentators interpreted the new leadership structure as the government of Middle-Belt minorities that emerged to dominate politics of Northern Nigeria.[19] When Lt. Colonel Joseph Akahan died in a plane crash, some leaders of the Middle-Belt region accused Northern leaders of masterminding his death.[20] Although there was no evidence linking Akahan's death to Northern leaders, the ensuing controversy led to the withdrawal of Tivs from different parts of the North to Tiv land. At the centre of the civil service were minority group members such as Allison Ayida, Philip Asiodu, and A. A. Atta, who were regarded as the "super-permanent secretaries" because of their influence. People also regarded these "super-permanent Secretaries" as members of the "Oxford tribe" because they had received their degrees from Oxford University.[21] Ayida and Asiodu, particularly, belonged to Gowon's three-member kitchen cabinet.[22] Edwin Ogbu, who was a Permanent Secretary in charge of External Affairs, was equally a minority from the Middle-Belt. Apart from Obafemi Awolowo, a Yoruba, some of the commissioners who largely championed the war politics were of minority ethnic origin. Anthony Enahoro, Commissioner, Ministry of Information and Okoi Arikpo Commissioner, Ministry of External Affairs were minority members. There were obviously other members of Gowon's cabinet from the majority ethnic groups but those of the minority ethnic groups appeared to have wielded more influence. The Nigeria-Biafra War era was perhaps the first time members of the minority groups could occupy many important positions in the military, politics, and civil service. The assistance provided to Gowon by the increased number of minorities in the civil service and army was critical in the administration's successful prosecution of the Nigerian civil war.

The minorities' ascendancy after the July 1966 coup created an opportunity for them to address the grievances which they had long expressed through their movements. The project of state creation came at a time when the country was in a political stalemate. The coups and countercoups, the massacres of Igbos in different

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[19] Department of State, Telegram, The Death of Akahan, August 1967.

[20] Ibid.

[21] John J. Stremlau, *The International Politics of the Nigerian Civil War 1967-1970* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977), 26.

[22] Ibid., 150.

parts of Nigeria, the failure to implement the Aburi Accord by the Nigerian government, the declaration of the Republic of Biafra, and the creation of twelve states by General Gowon worsened the tension between Nigeria and Biafra. It was a clash of rights, and both General Ojukwu and General Gowon seemed to have legitimate claims. Biafrans claimed the right to survival while Nigerians claimed the right to the corporate existence of the country. Two new states were carved out of the former Eastern Region, leaving it with a total of three states. This seemed to be a trump card for the federal government to court the minorities and forestall the Eastern secession. That was obviously the immediate objective but the long term goal of the minority leaders in state creation was to liberate the minorities from majority dominance. While the argument in favour of state creation was ostensibly to ensure stability and national unity, it was no less a struggle of the minorities against the old dominant majorities in the various regions. Within the Hausa-Fulani leadership, state creation was considered a dangerous development, but to the new states like Kwara and Benue-Plateau, it was an opportunity to get liberated from the Hausa-Fulani hegemony.[23] For some of the ethnic minorities in the former Eastern Region, state creation meant liberation from the alleged Igbo domination.

Ethnic Minorities as Victims in Biafra

Violent conflicts such as the Nigeria-Biafra War inflict serious injuries and create victims of all kinds. To the outside world, the known victims of the war were the Igbo who, apart from being targets of the 1966 massacres, also suffered indiscriminate bombings and monumental starvation that allegedly took about two million lives. Within the forty-two years since the war ended, more revelations about the war atrocities on the minorities have emerged. Surviving records and oral histories of the war suggest that minorities in Biafra became individual and collective victims of the war. These accounts also reveal how individuals and groups committed heinous atrocities under the pretext of either fighting a war of survival for Biafra or a war of national unity for Nigeria.

One recurrent question that comes up about the Biafran minorities is: what was the attitude of the minorities to the Biafran secession? This cannot be answered with certainty. While Biafra claimed that the minorities were wholeheartedly in support of the secession, the federal government maintained that the minorities had been longing to be liberated.[24] Suzanne Cronje, one of the most prolific journalists on the Biafra war, observed that "the feelings of the minorities were

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[23] National Archives United Kingdom (NAUK), FCO 38/222, Political Affairs, (Internal) Demonstration.

[24] O'Brien, "A Condemned People."

difficult to define."[25] In the first place, the anti-Igbo uprising which would have come from the minorities as people that needed liberation did not emerge, nor was there any noticeable form of unrest among the minorities under the Biafran administration. Loyalties were, in fact, divided. The supporters of the Biafran secession were those who felt that the Easterners as a group had shared the same fate as victims of the 1966 massacres and expulsion from the North, while those who joined the Nigerian government saw it as an opportunity to have a separate state of their own and be free from any domination. Although the ethnic minorities had clamoured for a separate state of their own, it was very difficult to determine what they actually wanted during the war. A plebiscite could have given them an opportunity to express themselves but the proposal was strongly rejected by the federal government who felt it would imply a withdrawal of the federal troops to the prewar boundaries.[26]

To understand the divergent attitudes of the minorities to the Biafran secession, an examination of oral histories from people who occupied positions of authority during the war as well as from ordinary people is necessary. The Ikun in the present day Cross River State presents a good example of the crimes committed against the minorities. The Ikun clan is in the Biase Local Government Area of Cross River State. The people share a common boundary with the Ohafia, an Igbo clan, in the present day Abia State. When the war broke out, Biafra stationed some of its troops in the Cross River region, including Ikun. According to a female survivor-victim of the Biafran occupation, the Ikun initially supported Biafra and had friendly relations with the soldiers, who were also accommodating. As time went on, tensions emerged. Some Ikun men were suspected of collaborating with Nigerian soldiers. This led to arrests, looting, rapes, and other atrocities in Ikun land.[27] William Norris of the *London Times* who visited Biafra, also reported an eye-witness account in which some men of Ibibio ethnic origin were beaten to death at Umuahia on April 2, 1968.[28] These Ibibios who included old men and young men were apparently suspected of collaborating with advancing Nigerian troops. They were reportedly frog-marched across an open space while the local people attacked them with sticks and clubs.[29] Oral testimony by the survivor-victim corroborates

[25] Suzanne Cronje, "Two Levels of Truth," *Nigeria/Biafra,* April 1969.

[26] U.S. National Archives, Nixon Presidential Library and Museum, Foreign Relations of the United States, 1969-1976, Volume E-5, Part 1, Documents on Sub-Saharan Africa, 1969-1972, Document 35.

[27] Anonymous, Oral Interview by Atu Charles at Amanki Village in Ikun Clan of Biase Local Government Area, April 14, 1994. Transcript in my custody. The informant is described as victim-survivor because, she lost her four day old baby and grandmother.

[28] Department of State, Telegram, Nigerian Rebel Atrocities, May 1968.

[29] Ibid.

this account. According to the eyewitness, Biafran soldiers allegedly took Ikun men to Ohafia for a meeting but never brought them back. The informant also alleged that the soldiers returned to the community and rounded up some men within their reach and shot them. This survivor who lost her four-day old son and her grandmother seemed to have suspected foul play from the Ohafia people who share a common boundary with her community. The victimization continued until the Biafran headquarters likely issued an order that people should not be killed again.[30] By this time, the remaining people had escaped the community, leaving behind only the soldiers, the Ohafia, and some Ikun who were said to be of mixed blood - half Ohafia and half Ikun. These remaining groups, according to the survivor-victim shared the fish ponds, forests, and farms belonging to Ikun people. [31]

In a related account, B. J. Ikpeme, a member of a minority group and retired Senior Medical Officer in the then Eastern Region revealed atrocities perpetrated by Biafran soldiers against the minorities in some towns in the present-day Cross River and Akwa- Ibom States. Ikpeme argued that Ojukwu's declaration of the Republic of Biafra had been issued against the wishes of the majority of the people of Calabar, Ogoja, and Rivers Provinces, who for many years had agitated for a separate state of their own. According to Ikpeme, the Igbo leadership, who did not like the minority agitation, decided either to force the five million non-Igbo minorities into the new republic or eliminate them. It was on this basis, claims Ikpeme, that Biafran soldiers were quickly sent to the minority areas to "keep down the people, detain or even kill all who dared raise a voice in protest against the idea of Biafra."[32] It was during this period that the non-Igbos started experiencing different forms of inhumane treatment, ranging from torture, detention, to killing. Ikpeme himself was detained in what he described as a "concentration camp" and was later transferred to a prison cell where he was given urine to drink when he demanded water.[33]

Ikpeme described instances where the Biafran soldiers allegedly perpetrated atrocities against some members of non-Igbo groups. In Asang town in Enyong, from where Ikpeme originated, about four hundred people were carried away to an unknown destination. Another town called Attan Onoyon in the same

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[30] Anonymous, Oral Interview by Atu Charles.

[31] Ibid.

[32] Presbyterian Church of Canada Archives (hereafter PCCA), "The Secessionist Regime and the Non-Ibo 'Minorities' in the East of Nigeria." This was a text of statements at the Peace Talks on the Nigerian Civil War, at Kampala, Uganda. Ikpeme who was a retired senior medical officer in the former Eastern Region also served as a member of the Federal Government delegation at the Kampala Peace Talks.

[33] Ibid.

Enyong was burnt down with many people killed by the Biafran soldiers. In Ikot Ekpenyong in the present day Akwa Ibom State, Biafran soldiers were said to have shot many villagers. Ikpeme also recounted that similar killings carried out by Biafran soldiers took place in places like Ikot Okpot and Idoro. He equally alleged that when the Nigerian troops landed in Calabar on October 18, 1967, about 169 civilians in detention were lined up and shot by Biafran soldiers. This same allegation had also been published in *The New York Times* as an informational advertisement by the Consulate General of the Federal Republic of Nigeria in New York.[34] These two accounts, given by the survivor-victim of Ikun and Dr. Ikpeme, portray similar pictures of gross atrocities but with different underlying objectives.

Biafra ran a special operations group known as the Biafran Organization of Freedom Fighter (BOFF). This was a paramilitary organization set up by the civil defence group in Bende.[35] This special operations group was instructed to suppress the enemy, but they apparently targeted some minorities in Cross River and Akwa Ibom States on the account of sabotage against the Biafran government.[36] Philip Effiong, who was from one of the ethnic minorities, probably ordered the BOFF's "combing" operations after the death of one Major Achibong. In an interview, the informant did not reveal the circumstances surrounding the death of Major Achibong who was equally a member of a minority group. He argued that if Effiong ordered any "combing" operation, it could not have been aimed at exterminating members of his ethnic group. What the informant's testimony reveals is that some members of the BOFF who also operated as the Bende Special Operations group could have taken advantage of the assignment to accomplish selfish interests. For instance, an intriguing revelation about the Bende Special Operations group shows that some of its members decapitated their victims for ritual purposes.[37] Head-hunting in warfare was a cultural practice in some parts of Biafra known as Old Bende. This tradition survived up to the beginning of the twentieth century. In the pre-colonial era, it was culturally acceptable for members of a certain age-grade to go to war and come back with human heads as trophies. Successful warriors who brought back trophies were highly honoured among members of their age-grades and in the whole community. The war situation might have created an opportunity for the warrior group to reactivate a tradition that had faded out as a result of Western influence.

Although all the minority groups suffered different forms atrocity, the

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[34] "The Nigerian Civil War: the Way Out," *The New York Times*, July 8, 1968.

[35] Bende area covers some local governments in the present-day Abia State.

[36] S. B. A. Atuloma, Oral Interview by Sydney Emezue at Umuahia, September 18, 1990. Transcript in my custody.

[37] Ibid.

minorities in the Rivers area seemed to be worse off. Apart from torture and other forms of human rights abuse, they were also evicted from their homes. For instance, when two strategic villages on the New Calabar and Sombriero Rivers fell to the federal troops in February 1968, the news that followed was that the majority of the soldiers that led the operation were Rivers young men, predominantly Kalabari. As a consequence, many people from Bakana, one of the major Kalabari towns, were removed and sent to Igbo towns like Umuahia, Owerri, Abiriba, and Ozuitem, most likely to avoid further infiltration of the enemies.[38] Chief Samuel Mbakwe, who served as Biafran Provincial Administrator for Okigwe Province, noted the influx of refugees from Port Harcourt but did not explain whether or not they were forcibly removed by the Biafran forces.[39] We do know that Biafrans tended to regard anyone who stayed at his post and was overrun by the federal advance as a collaborator. An Irish priest who served in Rivers State reported that the Igbo soldiers were suspicious of some Rivers people who sometimes led federal troops through their lines along hidden creeks.[40] This attitude, according to the priest, created a mixture of panic, fear, and hatred among the Biafran troops towards some indigenous people of Rivers State. People who were maltreated were said to have been involved in this act of "sabotage" against Biafra.

At Bolo and Ogu in Okirika, and Onne in Eleme, the villagers suffered the same fate. After the battle at Onne, Biafran troops removed the town inhabitants suspected to have collaborated with federal troops and sent them to the Rainbow Town headquarters of the Biafran 52 Brigade in Port Harcourt. Graham-Douglas, who was also thrown into detention, claimed to have seen about three hundred men detained in the Rainbow Town. He asserted that no fewer than six thousand Rivers people were sent to different refugee camps in Igboland.[41]

It is important to point out that propaganda played a prominent role in the Nigeria-Biafra war. Some of the pamphlets published by Nigeria and Biafra or their agents were loaded with misinformation. Commenting on a section of Graham-Douglas' pamphlet titled, *Ojukwu's Rebellion and World Opinion,* John Tilney of Liverpool observed, "That may be propaganda. What Graham-Douglas says may not be wholly true. But we are all plagued by propaganda by both sides." [42] Both Biafra and Nigeria professionally engaged propaganda as a potent tool in the war. While Biafra hired Markpress, Nigeria engaged the services of Galatzine Chant

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[38] Nabo B. Graham-Douglas, *Ojukwu's Rebellion and World Opinion* (Lagos: Nigerian National Press, 1968).

[39] Samuel Onunaka Mbakwe, Oral Interview by Sydney Emezue at Avutu/Etiti, September 18, 1990. Transcript in my custody.

[40] Donald Musgrave, "Priest Tells of War Atrocities," *The Irish Times*, May 23, 1968.

[41] Graham-Douglas, *Ojukwu's Rebellion*, 17.

[42] House of Commons Report on the Nigerian Situation, London, August 27, 1968.

Russell and Partners for the public relations job.[43] Graham-Douglas' story that the minorities in Biafra had suffered more hardships and molestations than the Igbo could claim to have suffered at the hands of Northern Nigerians was apparently part of Nigeria's propaganda which he also presented in London in August 1968.[44] Graham-Douglas' comments about Biafra had been criticised by an official of the British High Commission for lack of inside information about Biafra.[45] He was equally described as talking "out of the back of his head" because of unverifiable comments he made about the Catholic Church.[46]

J. O. J. Okezie observed that Graham-Douglas' switch to the Nigerian side might have led to the Igbo attitude of distrust towards the minorities. He pointed out however, that the sabotage accusation was not limited to the non-Igbo. The Onitsha people who were indisputably Igbo also suffered the same intimidation and humiliation. Many of their prominent leaders were said to have been detained by the Ojukwu-led government for allegedly contributing to the fall of Onitsha and Enugu.[47] A brigadier in the Biafran Army narrated his personal experience in the sabotage accusation. The officer stated that two members of a local militia had written an anonymous petition against him. When the writers were discovered, they confessed that they had undertaken to cut down his popularity. The two officers were brought before Ojukwu by Major General Effiong who ordered their execution. The officer in his magnanimity refused to execute the petition writers.[48] This illustrates how the sabotage syndrome assumed a life of its own and became an instrument of victimization against innocent persons. There is no doubt that many people lost their lives without substantial evidence, as is common during times of war whether in Africa or elsewhere.

Violence towards the minorities was not perpetrated only by the Biafran troops. The federal troops were equally culpable of this crime. In Andoni area of Rivers for example, an appeal was sent to the Biafran Head of State narrating how the villages were attacked on Sunday, March 31, 1968 as a result of their loyalty to Biafra. The report alleged that the attack was led by five collaborators who were likely members of the minority group. One of the victims of the attack was said to be an undergraduate student of the University of Ibadan who was a member of the Biafran Provincial Enlightenment Committee. Apart from burning down

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[43] NAUK, FCO 65/ 445/1, Nigeria Press: Biafran Propaganda.

[44] "Graham –Douglas Speaks," *West Africa*, August 17, 1968.

[45] NAUK FCO 23/182, Nigeria and Biafra, 1968.

[46] Ibid.

[47] J. O. J. Okezie, Oral Interview by Sydney Emezue at Umuahia, September 17, 1990. Transcript in my custody.He was a medical doctor and first republic politician.

[48] P. C. Amadi, Oral Interview by Sydney Emezue at Owerri, September 19, 1990. Transcript in my custody. Amadi was a brigadier in the Biafran Army.

houses and property, the petitioners also alleged that over 500 persons including children were killed. [49] Similarly, approximately 2,000 Efiks were reportedly killed in Calabar by the federal troops. The victims were said to be returnees who revolted against the federal occupation. The killing was reported to Gowon who subsequently appointed Dr. J. B. Ikpeme as Chief Justice when the killing had nearly been completed.[50]

The Nigerian Air Force left their own mark in the minorities' areas. They were accused of indiscriminate bombing of civilian occupied areas. William Norris of the London *Sunday Times* in an article titled, "Nightmare in Biafra," reported how the high-flying Russian Ilyushin jets dropped bombs in civilian centres in Biafra. He stated that,

> Slowly, but effectively, a reign of terror has been created. The ruins of Mary Slessor Memorial Hospital at Itu, of the hospital of Itigidi, and of the Cheshire Home at Port Harcourt, stand as a kind of grisly memorial to something that must be if words are to retain any meaning. It is certainly not war.[51]

These targets were all in the minority areas. Cronje similarly reported that the Nigerian Air Force had bombed the minorities as much, if not more than the Igbos.[52]

The plight of the minorities had been so alarming that several Nigerian students of Rivers State origin in London staged a peaceful protest against the killing and displacement of their people. In addition to a peaceful march from Trafalgar Square to the House of Commons in London, they also sent out petitions to the United Nations, the Organization of African Unity (OAU), His Holiness Pope Paul VI, Emperor Haile Selaisie, the British Prime Minister and other relevant groups, asking them to bring pressure on the warring parties to stop the senseless killing of innocent and defenceless people of Rivers State.[53] The petition may not have produced any direct result but must have contributed to the pressure on the warring parties to negotiate for peace.

The war had been fought not just for political reasons but also for economic motives with oil resources in mind. And for a national economy that had begun to depend on oil, control of the oil-bearing region that was inhabited by the ethnic minorities became crucial to winning the war. Recent discoveries by the Ministry

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[49] Eastern Nigeria, Ministry of Information, *The Case for Biafra*, first independence anniversary edition (Enugu: Ministry of Information, Republic of Biafra, June 12, 1968), 28-29.

[50] Ibid., 27-28.

[51] Quoted in Eastern Nigeria, Ministry of Information, 23.

[52] Suzanne Cronje, "Two Levels of Truth" *Nigeria/Biafra*, April 1969.

[53] NAUK, FCO 38/222, Demonstration.

of Defence-sponsored humanitarian demining project buttress the claim that the oil rich minority areas were hotly contested in the war. Although the war had ended, people in different parts of the then Biafra continued to die from accidental explosion of unexploded mines. According to Emeka Uhuegbu, the field administrator of the United Nations mandated demining project, the minority areas of Rivers State had the highest number of landmine victims. Akwa Ibom and Imo States follow on the list.[54] The demining team discovered 400 unexploded bombs in a forest in Rivers State. These bombs and landmines had killed several unsuspecting villagers who went to farm, resulting in the nickname, "evil forest."[55]

Conclusion

Brutal conflicts such as the Nigeria-Biafra War inflict painful injuries on all people. The few cases examined in this article show that the ethnic minorities were also individually and collectively victimized. Gowon's creation of new states and Ojukwu's declaration of the Republic of Biafra created a sharp division among ethnic minorities. This meant loyalties and disloyalties to the two warring parties. Upholding Nigeria's principle of twelve-state structure meant sabotage to Biafra, while supporting Biafra's secession implied rebellion to the Nigerian government. The minorities in the oil-rich region seemed to have been worse off in the war. The warring parties wanted to control the region and its oil resource. It was largely for this reason that the region assumed strategic importance and became a theatre of war.

General Gowon's declaration of "No Victor, No Vanquished" after Biafra's capitulation was a good social therapy that helped calm the war tensions among the groups that were involved in the conflict. Nevertheless, the vestiges of the war are still present in the minority areas. The unexploded bombs in these highly contested areas still pose a huge threat. People continue to lose their legs and lives following accidental explosions. The victims of these accidental explosions are yet to be given adequate rehabilitation.[56]

Despite the sufferings of the ethnic minorities during and in the aftermath of the war, their perspective in the civil war discourses remains almost forgotten. Their victimhood, like that of the Igbo, should be accorded a place in the historiography of the Nigeria-Biafra War. The struggle for Nigeria's unity wouldn't have been possible without the minorities. The struggle over control of the oil-rich region placed them in a disadvantaged position by exposing them to more dangers and

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[54] Emeka Uhegbu, interview by author, July 14, 2011. Field Administrator, Ministry of Defence-sponsored Humanitarian Demining Project. The project was mandated by the United Nations Organization under the Ottawa Convention of 2001.

[55] Uhegbu, interview by author.

[56] Ibid.

destruction. Recognizing the ethnic minorities as victims would place them in their rightful position in the nation's history.

Acknowledgements

Notes on Contributor

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BOOK REVIEWS

Dávila, Jerry. *Hotel Trópico: Brazil and the Challenge of African Decolonization, 1950–1980.* Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010, ix + 312 pp.

Jerry Dávila's *Hotel Trópico* is a masterful study of international relations through the lens of intercultural relations and is perhaps the most persuasive scholarship to demonstrate concretely the ways in which cultural factors can impact the direction of a nation-state's foreign policy. Two of the key themes that underpin Dávila's work are the ideas of "lusotropicalism" and "racial democracy." Lusotropicalism was a term coined by Brazilian sociologist Gilberto Freyre to describe the supposedly distinctive Portuguese mindset which made Portugal a better colonizer than other Europeans. According to Freyre, because of Portugal's warmer climate and closer proximity to the equator, the Portuguese were more adaptable to tropical climates, more open to the mixing of races, and thus had a more humane type of colonialism. For Freyre, and many others, Brazil stood as a shining example of the benevolence of Portuguese colonialism, particularly through its racial democracy, under which Brazilians purportedly lived in complete racial harmony in a society without racial discrimination. According to Dávila, "this set of beliefs was so powerful that it formed the conceptual framework not only of those Brazilians who supported Portuguese colonialism but even of those who shunned Portugal, favored decolonization, and sought ties with independent African nations" (21).

Dávila shows how at various times throughout the Cold War, most notably in 1961 as part of President Janio Qaudros's "Independent Foreign Policy" and in 1975 in its involvement in the Angolan civil war, the Brazilian government tried to use its historical ties to Africa in tandem with the ideas of lusotropicalism and racial democracy to help Brazil form relations with African states. According to Dávila, Brazil thought that "Africa was its natural sphere of influence, and racial democracy was its calling card. In turn, Africa would help propel Brazil industrially and bring autonomy from the cold war powers" (51). But this effort was complicated by the fact that the country was run by a conservative military dictatorship from 1964 to 1985, it largely supported Portuguese colonialism when nearly every other country in the developing world, especially in Africa, opposed it, and it eschewed neutrality to remain tied to the Western camp in the Cold War. These factors combined to make Brazil's outreach to Africa a limited success at best.

Despite obstacles along the way, Dávila argues that "the connections between Brazil and Africa endured" due to the fact that "Africa remained an

abstraction in Brazil, a canvas on which Brazilian national aspirations and racial values were rendered. This canvas is significant because of the perception that all Brazilians share an African heritage" (255). While *Brazil and The Challenge of African Decolonization* is a worthwhile read for Africanists and diplomatic historians as an intriguing study of Brazil's bilateral relations with sub-Saharan Africa during the middle of the Cold War, the book is more than that. It is also an impressive blend of the study of race and culture to examine how Brazilian foreign policy became conditioned by how white Brazilian elites perceived their place in the world. By projecting their constructed mythical image of a racially harmonious and discrimination-free Brazil onto Africa, Brazilian diplomats hoped that Afro-Brazilians would accept their government's portrait of national identity and domestic race relations. In reality, the opposite proved true. The few Afro-Brazilians who visited Africa learned of the fallacy of Brazilian racial democracy, and, at the same time, discovered that they were much more "Brazilian" than they were "African."

One interesting historiographical debate which emerges from the pages of *Hotel Trópico* is about the primary reason that Brazil decided to recognize the MPLA government in Angola in 1975 and the main protagonist of that decision. James Hershberg, whose work was not cited by Dávila, writing from an American perspective and as a diplomatic historian using both U.S. and Brazilian government documents, argues that Brasilia's decision for recognition of the MPLA stemmed from the declining Cold War consensus in Latin America and Brazil's cultural affinity for Angola. In short, the Brazilian leadership felt a Lusophonic kinship for Angola and by the mid-1970s no longer felt the need to keep in lock step with Washington's wishes.[1] Dávila, on the other hand, writing from a Brazilian perspective and as an expert of that country's racial and social history, emphasizes Brasilia's economic incentives for recognizing the MPLA government as a way to sustain Brazil's "economic miracle" of the 1970s. These interpretations do not necessarily contradict, but rather complement each other, providing greater nuance to our understanding of Brazilian decision-making. The two historians also seemingly disagree over who was the central force behind this policy, with Dávila focusing on Foreign Minister Antonio Azeredo da Silveira and Hershberg Italo Zappa, the head of the Brazilian Foreign Ministry's Africa and Asia Department, and each author barely mentioning the other in their accounts.

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[1] See James G. Hershberg, "'High-spirited Confusion': Brazil, the 1961 Belgrade Non-Aligned Conference, and the Limits of an 'Independent Foreign Policy during the High Cold War" *Cold War History*, 7, no. 3 (August 2007): 373-388 and especially Hershberg, "'No Longer Anyone's Sacristan': New Evidence on Brazil's Surprise Recognition of the MPLA Government in Angola" (paper presented at the Southern Africa in the Cold War Era Conference in Lisbon, Portugal, May 2009).

The book's strengths are numerous. Deeply researched, Dávila utilizes a vast array of sources including memoirs, oral histories, and interviews of diplomats involved in Brazilian relations with Africa; newspapers from three continents; and primary source research in more than fifteen different archives in Brazil and Portugal. The book is also well written and free of unnecessary academic jargon, making it an easy read for undergraduate students (indeed, I intend to assign it for use in future classes).

Unsurprisingly the book is heavily slanted towards the Brazilian viewpoint. While this is to be expected, the scholarship would have been stronger had Dávila made greater use of sources from the United States and especially from Africa. Without this perspective the reader is left wondering how the United States viewed Brasilia's attempt to break out from its shadow to pursue an independent foreign policy in sub-Saharan Africa and what, if anything, Washington did to try to prevent this. More importantly, I would have liked to have known more about how Africans perceived Brazilian attempts to re-orient their foreign policy towards their continent. It would have been particularly illuminating to know how effective Africans felt white Brazilian diplomats were in trying to self-identify themselves as culturally "African." These minor critiques aside, Dávila should be applauded for this scholarly achievement.

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Anyanwu, Ogechi E. *The Politics of Access: University Education and Nation-Building in Nigeria, 1948-1960.* Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2011, xvi + 298 pp.

Education is central to nation-building in Africa. The huge investment in mass education from the era of decolonization by African leaders and policy makers found expression in the pivotal role it is capable of playing in the development of the human and material capital of the continent. However, access to mass education did not take place overnight. Indeed, until the demise of colonial rule, higher education was only available to very few and remained largely an elitist project. In *The Politics of Access*, Ogechi Anyanwu, tackles for the first time, the history of the transition of higher education from an elitist project to a populist one. According to Anyanwu, the push for mass university education, i.e. massification, "is central to understanding Nigeria's postcolonial socio-economic and political history" (1). Anyanwu argues that the "the premise of building a modern Nigerian nation underscored the pursuit of mass university education policies by Nigeria's successive postcolonial governments" (1). Although a lot of books have been written on Nigeria's education history covering the colonial and postcolonial periods, none has tackled the change and continuity in the politics of access to higher education.

This brilliantly written seven-chapter book is organized chronologically to demonstrate how political and economic transformation since the period of colonial rule has influenced the politics of access to higher education and the character of each regime and individuals involved. Chapter one engages some familiar history of the introduction of Western education, and the nexus between colonialism and education policy, to contextualize the chapters that follow. Anyanwu gives a penetrating analysis of the role missionaries played in the introduction of education from the 1840s when mission schools were first introduced to southern Nigeria and the disposition of the colonial government to it. Although Western education helped the missionaries and the British colonial government to produce clerks and clergies for their religious and administrative work, the British government did not want it to be accessible to everyone. This double standard reflected the British conviction that the training of highly educated colonial subjects was detrimental to colonial hegemony. According to Anyanwu the education provided by the missionaries was "not relevant to the immediate needs of the people." But this prejudice towards education was not left unchallenged from the second half of the nineteenth century as leading African nationalists began to criticize the British for not doing enough to fulfil its mission to "civilize" Nigeria through Western-styled education.

In response to this criticism, the British, as Anynawu points out, established Yaba Higher College in 1934 to give Nigerians clerical and vocational training to meet the lower cadre of officials for the colonial service. But the nationalists would soon criticize Yaba because its graduates were rated as inferior to their counterparts trained outside the country. Moreover, access to the college was very restricted to very few "qualified" candidates. Fifteen years after Yaba was establish, the University College of Ibadan (UCI, later University of Ibadan) came into existence though local and international pressure on the government which continued to pay a lip service to higher education for Nigerians. But like the Yaba, the UCI, as Anyanwu demonstrates was an elitist project which instead of helping to address the long-standing problems of higher education and access, added new crises to the ethnic conflagration in the country.

After presenting the much-required information about higher education, its restrictiveness and as a tool of imperialism, and the early move by Nigerians to force the British to revise its curriculum to serve the needs of Nigerians, Anyanwu then begins to carefully plough through the postcolonial phase of the politics of access to university training. Chapters two and three focus on the nexus between decolonization and the critical role that education was capable of playing in nation building. According to Anyanwu, the constitutional arrangement in 1954 that gave birth to regionalization played a significant role in creating a new era of massification of education as the governments of each of the regions, following the recommendation of Ashby Commission set up in 1959 to "help chart the course for the country's educational expansion," began to make the provision of higher education as a significant element towards the drive for regional development. In these two chapters, Anyanwu devotes quality space and deep analyses to the numerous sentiments expressed by Nigerian nationalists and political leaders at federal and states levels about the need to use education to transform their polities. By 1962, Anyanwu notes that four new universities founded by regional governments of eastern, western, and northern Nigeria had been established to address education imbalances and the limited access that the UCI offered.

The end of the Civil War in the 1970s coincided with the unprecedented increase in Nigerian foreign exchange earnings through crude oil, as Anyanwu shows in chapter 4. The massive investment in university education during the 1970s found expression in the Gowon's drive to heal the wounds of hostility through increase in education opportunities needed to close the gap of educational achievement between the north and the south. Unlike in the 1960s when university education was deeply regionalized, the centralization of university education in the 1970s was a strategic tool to accelerate and forge greater national integration in an extremely polarized society. Anyanwu clearly pontificates that the new

universities of the 1970s and the old regional ones were expected to give new meanings to Nigeria's unity, while also helping to address the age-long problems of limited opportunity to higher education. Although this expansion fulfilled some of the core agenda of the three military administrations in the 1970s, access to university education remained elusive in a country of over 68 million people in 1968.

Anyanwu dedicates two chapters to the exploration of changes and continuity in the politics of education in the 1980s. New developments such as the provision of free education, the involvement of state governments in higher education, introduction of a quota system, and the transformation of university curricula to emphasize the governments' quest to industrialize the country through science, were among the numerous steps taken to increase Nigerians' access to higher education while attempting to balance long standing problems of ethnic division that characterizes the Nigerian states. But as Anyanwu demonstrates, the economic crises in the 1980s compelled the government to suspend the expansion of university education as it struggled to maintain the existing ones. The final chapter of this book tackles the developments in the 1990s, characterized by the resumption of an expansion of university education though the establishment of specialized universities of science and agriculture. The 1990s also witnessed the emergence of private universities that most people believed would reduce pressure on government universities and help increase Nigerians' access to quality higher education.

In all, Anyanwu has done a great service to Africanist studies with this book. He has given us a book that connects education to broader challenges of nation-building and the endless quest to balance the numerous primordial interests in the country. By connecting the history of access to education with broader challenges of nation-building, Anyanwu has helped validate the popular rhetoric that education is a significant factor in Africa's drive towards sustainable development. His sources, which include reports by local and international policy organization, leading educationists, military and civilians leaders, among other classes of highly influential people, are qualitatively and quantitatively adequate for a work of this scope—even though the gap is the author's inability to integrate more voices of "ordinary" Nigerians on access to university education.

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Arnfred, Signe. *Sexuality and Gender Politics in Mozambique: Rethinking Gender in Africa*. Suffolk, United Kingdom: James Currey, 2011, ix + 310 pp.

Are women oppressed in the same way around the world? Are feminists correct to assume that men universally discriminate against women? *Sexuality and Gender Politics in Mozambique* is an opportunity to re-conceptualize Western feminist analysis and theory. The author explains that during the Second Wave of feminism in the 1970s, Western feminists did not think "that gender relations might be different elsewhere in the world, and that we could possibly learn about different, more balanced gender relations, by studying other cultures" (10). After reading the criticisms of Western feminism by African gender studies scholars, Arnfred concludes that Western scholarship partriarchalized African cultures. The book is her effort to provide a new way of examining and understanding gender and sexuality, using the Mozambiquan context as an example.

The book began more than 30 years ago after Arnfred heard the first president of Mozambique, Samora Machel, speak on the necessity of women's liberation in 1975. She worked and lived in Mozambique in the 1980s. She returned in the 1990s and 2000s to collect data and participate in several academic, professional, and social events in the country. This book is presented in three parts, with an introduction and epilogue. Using observations and interviews, the author discusses gender and sexuality in Mozambique from the perspective and experiences of people in the rural areas. She also describes and reflects on her mental journey regarding gender and sexuality.

The first part of the book has five chapters and explores the policies, assumptions, and interpretations that guided gender politics in Mozambique since the colonial period. In chapter one, Arnfred tells the story of Mozambican women's participation in the struggle for independence. The women's accounts here add a fascinating, and sometimes comical, dimension to the book. The events and issues that defined and redefined gender and sexuality in Mozambique underscores the importance of considering historical, social, and economic contexts in examining and understanding different societies. It is a true strength to hear these women tell their stories in their own words as few African studies have "her-stories."

In part two, which also has five chapters, Arnfred explores a subject that fascinated her during her time in Mozambique – women's initiation rituals. She states that the sojourn enabled her to find meanings and interpretations for these rituals to understand the women and herself. Initially, she had interpreted the ritual as humiliating and oppressive. However, when she conceptualized it this way for the women, it meant something else to them. For the women, the initiation

ceremony was "about the creation of women" (145). In Mozambique, under the light of the moon, girls become women, not through physical and biological changes, but through "tests, trials, dances, performances and passing-on of secret knowledge" (145). Focusing on this lesser known and probably misunderstood custom in this way allowed the author to re-conceptualize/interpret the initiation ritual as an empowering tradition. Chapter 10 is a really helpful tool here. In it, the author discusses gender from the perspectives of Nigerian gender scholars like Oyèrónké Oyewùmí, Ifi Amadiume, and Nkiru Nzegwu. She applies their arguments to the discussion to facilitate or aid one's re-conceptualizations of gender and sexuality. For instance, the section titled "situational gender," emphasizes gender as a fluid concept. The term "woman" is presented as being overloaded "with implications and associations which are irrelevant and disturbing in African contexts" (205). This chapter has information to reframe the issue of womanhood in feminist scholarship.

Part three of the book has four chapters and here, Arnfred examines other issues. In chapter 11, one reads of male mythologies, chapter 12 of gendered power and land ownership, and chapter 13 of sex, food, and female power. This part could be described as the "fun" part of the book as one learns more about Mozambique's cultures and traditions. Some of the topics are also regionally or ethnically contextualized. For instance, while northern Mozambique is matrilineal, southern Mozambique is patrilineal. Since little research exists on matrilineal societies in Africa, this part is a refreshing addition to the book. More importantly, it documents this issue from a political, economic, historical, and spiritual perspective. This part will definitely add to the discourse on issues like empowerment and development projects as it requires one to recognize the place and role of men and women.

Overall, *Sexuality and Gender Politics in Mozambique* does a wonderful job of providing an opportunity to see the subject matter from another standpoint. The author succeeds in her goal of challenging the reader to see gender and sexuality in a new way. However, the author sometimes generalizes her arguments and findings about Mozambique to Africa as a whole. When one wants others to contextualize gender and sexuality, why still believe that what pertains to Mozambique pertains to the entire continent? This ties in with the use of the term empirical to describe the data. Empirical suggests that the information observed or found is true. However, like all things human, empirical data is also influenced by previous beliefs. While one must applaud her efforts to be objective in her analysis of certain issues, there were times when criticism was called for.

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Vansina, Jan. *Being Colonized: The Kuba Experience in Rural Congo, 1880-1960*. **Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2010, v + 342 pp.**

Scholars are increasingly paying attention to the complex, diverse, and shared colonial experiences of various African peoples and societies. In *Being Colonized*, Jan Vansina retraces the colonial life of the Kuba people and argues that a focus on the people's "shared experiences bring[s] us closer than any other approach to a concrete understanding of what life was actually like in that colonial period" (328). As he shows in the book, the process by which the Congo became a Belgium colony was long; it followed decades of exploring Africa which saw King Leopold creating an international African association and sponsoring numerous expeditions to the central African region. The Congo was colonized shortly after the conclusion of the Berlin Conference on February 23, 1885. Governed initially by Belgium's absolute ruler, King Leopold II, and later taken over by the Belgian government following a media campaign against Leopold's atrocities that E.D. Morel championed, Congo grew "eighty times larger than its metropolis" (18). According to the author, this feat was achieved because Belgium "was the second biggest industrial power in Europe, a power equal to that of the United States" (18-19). *Being Colonized* is a comprehensive account of the people's engagement with the complex and dynamic colonial structures, exploring the mostly destructive social, political, and economic transformation resulting from Belgian colonial rule.

As the author reveals in the book, the relationship between European administrators, missionaries, traders, explorers, and the Kuba throughout the colonial period was unequal. It was a relationship that was "backed by force, but ultimately did not rest on force" (4). The author analyzes the social and economic devastation that followed the conquest of the kingdom by the Compagnie du Kasai, a concession company of the Congo Free State, the wealth and suffering that rubber brought to Belgian and Kuba respectively, the exploitative administrative tactics employed to exploit the people — driven, of course, by the mindless pursuit of profit and revenue by colonial officials. According to the author, "it was not the trading of rubber by itself that somehow brought destruction with it, but the combination of a commercial monopoly allied to a complete abdication of any oversight by the state" (85).

Vansina reveals in the book that both the 1910 decree on the indirect rule system of governance and the 1917 decree on compulsory labor considerably reshaped the history of colonial Kuba. Aided effectively by the Kuba, Belgian colonial officials "decided what kinds of crops over what acreage each adult male villager was compelled to grow," and, worst still was that the dehumanization, high deaths rates, and punishments following non-compliance was such that "by the 1950s about one of every ten men spent time in jail each year and that most men had done so at one time or another" (215). Although the colonial authorities believed that the economic pressure visited upon the Kuba would result in "development," the author preferred to use the word "exploitation" to characterize the reality of the Kuba colonial experience. "By the end of colonial rule practically," the author insists, "no Kuba village was better off than when the era began. . . . Surely, had they known the word, the villagers would not have called this development but rather the contrary: underdevelopment" (243).

The uniqueness of this book derives from the author's ability to weave interviews of elders, local news, gossip, and dreams in reconstructing the colonial experiences of the people. This bottom-up approach is largely missing in Eurocentric writings about African history. The author's anticipated hopes for this book is well placed. According to him, if the book "manages to capture the imagination and the interests of most if its readers, and thereby raises greater understanding, awareness, and perhaps sympathy for the lives of Congolese then and now, it will not have been written nor read in vain" (331). Anyone who thoughtfully reads this book will agree that the author realized his hope.

No historical account will adequately put into words the brutalities with which European colonists treated Africans during the colonial rule. Congo's mistreatment, both in the hands of the notorious King Leopold II and the Belgium government arguably raised European barbarism against innocent Africans to a frightening level. That the European colonial powers have not fully acknowledged or compensated for the crimes they committed against colonial subjects is inconceivable. Movements to seek redress for colonial injustices have continued, however. For instance, after many years of legal wrangling, the ruling of the United Kingdom's High Court in 2012 permitted Kenyans to seek legal redress for colonial-era abuses. Britain opted to settle out of court in 2013, providing $30.5 million in compensation to 5,200 victims. The British Foreign Secretary, William Hague, expressed regret over what he described as "abhorrent violations of human dignity" committed more than fifty years ago by his country.[1] This landmark case,

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[1] James Reinl, "Kenyans Celebrate Mau Mau Compensation Win," *Aljazeera*, June 7, 2013, accessed August 30, 2013, http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2013/06/201366133052307633.html.

I hope, will not only open a doorway to similar claims by millions of Africans who suffered unimaginable crimes in the hands of colonial officials but also open the minds of former colonial governments of the inevitability of acknowledging their past wrongs in the interest of justice which they so often promote. This is critical for, according to Paul Muite, a lawyer for the Mau Mau veterans, "If we are going to end impunity around the globe, each nation, each person, must acknowledge their wrongdoing."[2]

The author's neglect to cite most of the primary sources he used in the book is not an ideal example of how historians should write. Further, although the author argues that the atrocities committed against the Kuba "are far from the whole story of colonial Congo" (58), his book clearly demonstrates that those atrocious crimes unquestionably remain at the core of any meaningful understanding of the country's colonial and post-colonial economic, political, and social tragedies. That notwithstanding, this book serves as a reminder that colonial abuses, far from being exhausted, continue to be explored in different ways by historians. Suited for scholars, graduate students, and general readers eager to understand the enduring impact of colonial exploitative policies and practices on African societies, this book is highly sophisticated and intellectually stimulating; it is sure to make a great impression in the field of history and international relations.

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[2] Ibid.

Bruder, Edith, ed. *The Black Jews of Africa: History, Religion, Identity.* Oxford: University Press, 2011, xii + 283 pp.

The past couple of decades have seen a rising interest in scholarly discourses on Jewish Diasporas although the wider global trend is yet to be adequately covered in mainstream African studies and African Diaspora studies. Much of this lacuna may be attributed to the eminent Nigerian historian, Adiele E. Afigbo, who on the strength of his works on the Igbo, authoritatively branded related studies connecting Igbo origins to Jewish descent as a desperate search for "noble ancestry."[3] Thus, in spite of Afigbo, Edith Bruder's *The Black Jews of Africa* is a courageous adventure in migration history, cultural crossbreeding, and identity formation. Africans have come upon Jewish tradition and legends in diverse circumstances and contexts. Gradually, some African groups have used these to articulate a new Jewish identity joined with that of the Diaspora. Bruder's book is therefore a timely rebirth of this field of scholarship; it presents readers with a solid narrative situated in a transnational context. The author perceptively reflects on the complex strands of evidence tending to connect both the sub-Saharan "African Jews" and their "cousins" in China, India, Middle East, Europe, and North America with their supposed motherland in Palestine.

Being one of the very few recent studies to track the dispersion of Jews continent-wide, the vast scope of coverage and methodological approach is one of the distinguishing markers of Bruder's work. The ten chapters of the book are chronologically and thematically organized in three parts with an absorbing "Epilogue." I consider Part One (Chapters 1-4), which explores the prehistory of the Jewish settlements on the continent, an outstanding coverage of migration, ethnicity, and political identity formation. Evidently, Bruder struggled to winnow through Biblical prophesies, hearsays, myths, and legends that have followed the trail of the globetrotting Jews across diverse times and geographical spaces. Among the most popular myths linked with the so-called "Lost Tribe of Israel" are the Solomon and Queen of Sheba love fest, the Biblical children of Kush, and the Western-fabled depiction of Ethiopia and Africa as the homeland of a ghostly noble man identified by fifteenth century Portuguese fortune hunters as Prester John. As the author points out, "Biblical narratives and prophesies that mentioned the putative existence of Jews in the land of Kush (i.e. Africa) provided the scriptural foundations for subsequent complex connections between Jews and Africa" (17).

Part two (chapters 5-7) details the variety of connections between Judaism

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[3] See Adiele E. Afigbo, *Igbo History and Society: The Essays of Adiele Afigbo*, ed. Toyin Falola (Trenton, NJ: African World Press, 2005), 8-9.

and blackness. The foci of discussion in chapters 5 and 6 is the development, in Western accounts, of Jews and blacks as the archetypal "Other" whose "discovery and invention reinforced and perhaps established the notion of Europe by focusing on it and surrounding it with a strange periphery" (37). This construction of otherness gained popular acclaim in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries as Europeans in Africa tried to force their thoughts and ways of life into the heads and minds of Africans. Bruder methodically runs a reality check on the role played by the early European missionaries, soldiers, and scholars—particularly the anthropologists such as M. D. Jeffreys, and Thomas Basden and others—who in the idiom of now discredited Hamitic hypothesis, saw the vision of outside influences, particularly Jewish ones, in every significant cultural element existing in Africa. Bruder provides the reader with a very rare insight into the motives behind such colonial inventions and how these ideological interjections interacted with their local African sub-strata to create new projections that were appropriated and popularized by black thinkers like Edward W. Blyden, James Africanus Horton, W. E. B. Du Bois, Marcus Garvey, to mention but four, whose writings and speeches were primarily aimed to dismiss the European-held notion that people of African descent were inferior (39-77).

Part three (chapters 8-10) articulates a historical account of Jewish influences in sub-Saharan Africa. As Bruder stated in chapter 8, the penchant for "genealogical dreams" have seen several African societies "stage their arrival in Africa through elements of an original "otherness" (97). Chapters 9 and 10 detail a number of African groups that have self-identified as Jews. These communities range from the widely known Ethiopians and Igbos, to the lesser known Zakhor of Mali, Balula Jews of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Lembe found in South Africa and Zimbabwe, the Jews of Rusape found in Zambia, the Tutsi of Rwanda and Burundi, the Kasuku of Kenya, and the Abayudaya of Uganda. Of particular interest are the motivations that led these ethnic groups in western, eastern, central, and southern regions of the continent to assert Jewish genealogy. Among other things, these groups wanted to connect kinships with the Patriarch Abraham, identified in the Holy Bible as the chosen friend of God Almighty (161-185).

The epilogue "Ancient Myths and Modern Phenomenon" is a summary of the various catalysts broadly explaining the political, economic, and sociocultural magnets that prompted the rise of these mythical-genealogical connects and their interjections with the Judo-Christian ideology. The pertinent question remains: why is it that this particular period of African history should witness a rebirth of Judaizing movements and which factors should be taken into consideration to understand their dynamics? In answer, the author concludes that critical "social

and technological developments" have given the various groups self-identifying as "African Jews" new opportunities and encouragement in forms of websites and access to rare books and periodicals now helping researchers to chase further this rather romantic idea of godly ancestry (188).

Overall, Bruder's new book has reopened an interesting topic that both students of transnational studies and ethnic politics will want to explore further. Although it did not break the bank in answering most of the lingering questions on the authenticity of Afro-Jewish kinship, I strongly urge those interested in Diaspora studies in general and African and Jewish studies in particularly to read *The Black Jews of Africa*.

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Allina, Eric. *Slavery by Any Other Name: African Life under Company Rule in Colonial Mozambique.* Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2012, xiii + 255 pp.

In *Slavery by Any Other Name,* Eric Allina gives an impressive account of life in Mozambique during the time of its colonization by Portugal. Mozambique is historically significant largely because it had the most extensive as well as the longest Portuguese colonial presence in Africa. Allina's argument that the Mozambican colonial experience was not fundamentally different from that which had prevailed elsewhere in colonial Africa pales in the face of the magnitude, length, and dominance of the conscripted or forced labor system adopted by the Portuguese administration, especially in the Manica and Sofala territories. Allina uses official documents and records from the long-lost and unexplored colonial archive as well as interviews from more than one hundred surviving Mozambicans to gain an understanding of both the process and consequences of colonization and forced labor for Mozambique. These documents reveal the depth of colonial brutality, the ideologies that informed the Portuguese colonial attitude towards Africans, the complex and calculated process through which company officials and colonial administrators negotiated and sustained colonial policies, the impact of forced labor on African lives and the various strategies Africans used to subvert colonial policies.

The book is divided into eight chapters, with substantial introductory and concluding chapters. The chapters offer progressive accounts of the substance and length of the colonial servitude imposed upon the Mozambicans, which Allina unequivocally defines as enslavement for the benefit of the white settler populations who required both local knowledge of agriculture and labor to farm and sustain the cultivation of maize and, then cotton, and also hut taxes from the inhabitants of the region to fund the colonial administration. Allina argues that while slave masters in South Carolina's rice plantations or Jamaica's sugar plantations were unpretentious about their slave dealing enterprise, colonial officials in Mozambique "camouflaged their coercion of Africans behind the legal fiction of 'contracts'…The Portuguese administrators who oversaw subcontracted slave labor claimed that compelling Africans to work [for the benefit of empire], 'by force if necessary,' would improve their moral and material well-being" (6).

Chapter one traces the history of Portugal's settlement in southeast Africa, heralded by the arrival of Vasco da Gama and his crew on the east coast of Africa in 1498, on their way to India. By the end of the sixteenth century, Portugal had shifted its attention to the interiors of south-central Africa, famed for its abundance

of gold. Although met with malaria and fierce resistance by the locals, by mid-nineteenth century, Portugal would succeed in establishing its colonial stronghold in Mozambique, clothed in its two-pronged rhetoric of "suppressing slavery" in the African hinterlands and "civilizing the blacks." For Portugal, this process of "civilizing Africans" was conducted through forced or conscripted labor. As the author notes, "Africans in Mozambique—and, indeed, all 'natives' throughout the Portuguese empire—were required to work for a period of time required by local authorities" (33). "Work" for the African was defined as forced labor in vast estates owned by white farmers for little or no pay for a period of six out of twelve months, with inadequate shelter, insufficient food, and little or no medical care.

Chapter two documents the vastness and brutality of the forced labor practices in Mozambique during the colonial period. According to Allina, "the territory's enormous demand for African labor, employers' unwillingness to pay wages sufficient to draw voluntary workers, the company's political and financial investment in the concession-holder's success, and the near-total autonomy of local administrators all meant that there was little to stand in the way of pervasive enslavement of the African population" (47). And, contrary to the colonial rhetoric of forced work as needed to improve and advance Africans, many reports point to the opposite effect. The inhumane treatment of the Mozambicans led to the death of many, as well as the impoverishment of African communities deprived of much needed labor since their most abled and skilled men were conscripted to work for the colonial government and Portuguese owned farms, even during the planting seasons.

In Chapter three, Allina documents the failure of the League of Nations to effectively address the question of contract or forced labor (slavery) when the issue was brought before it during the early part of the twentieth century. Neither the 1924 nor the 1930 Convention of Slavery succeeded in curtailing forced or slave labor, primarily because those charged with evaluating the question and drafting the resolutions consisted of colonial agents who themselves were well aware of European reliance on forced labor in colonial Africa and, hence, were unwilling to oppose it. Chapters four and five deftly tackle the challenges of forced labor and the various tactics employed by locals to subvert and circumvent colonial policies of enslaving Africans in their own homelands. Tactics included "melting" or disappearing into the hills, flights and border crossings. Since these strategies resulted in the loss of labor and tax revenues for the colonial government, the Portuguese countered by instituting laws and practices to limit freedom of movement and other forms of resistance. Offenders received punishment that ranged from brutal flogging to unpaid forced correctional labor for up to forty years. Rebellions were squelched decisively and with terrorizing force. Services

of chiefs in recruiting and maintaining conscripted labor were obtained either through force, intimidation, or voluntary compliance due to fear of reprisal.

In chapters six, seven, and eight, Allina traces the political and social impact of forced servitude on African lives in the Mozambique. Forced labor did not only relegate Africans to the positions of slaves in their own country, but it also effectively thwarted the precolonial political relations that had existed in the communities. The heavy reliance on able men for conscription undermined traditional respect for elders who were now deemed "weak" and "useless" in their customary role as protectors of the youth and the community. The tendency of older men to offer up their young in order to avoid slavery severely damaged the communal system of support by which elders nurtured and groomed the youth, and the youth respected the elders in return. If the elders lacked integrity to protect the youth, the youth felt they could no longer rely on the elders to protect them.

The narrative Allina provides in *Slavery by Any Other Name* is a bit redundant, and the focus of the book is rather narrow. Exploring primarily how official documents illuminate the complex ideologies and influences that initiated and helped sustain Portugal's extensive forced labor systems in Africa, the book neglects to examine the roles Africans played in helping to extricate themselves from the clutches of colonial slavery and exploitation. Allina does suggest that an essential aspect of the narrative is its inclusion of African voices and reflections on their experiences. But, those perspectives focus largely on general disgust for forced labor, complaints, and strategies used to withstand oppression. The narrative fails to address the nature, extent and roles played by the nationalistic movements that eventually won independence for Mozambique in 1975, and, hence, effectively ended Portuguese direct rule and the forced labor system. Additionally, the book's concluding chapter raises more questions than it addresses. The chapter offers cursory mention of the role of the Christian missionaries in colonial Mozambique as well as the negative impact of colonial legacies on post-independence Mozambique's economic and political policies and practices. Mentioning these pivotal topics in the conclusion, without adequate examination, is problematic. For instance, it is never clear if the missionaries had been there all along during the colonial regime, serving as both agents and critiques of empire, or if they became a later introduction as Portuguese colonial rule began to wane in the 1960s and 1970s.

Nonetheless, despite its weaknesses, *Slavery by Any Other Name* is useful in placing the story of Mozambique within the larger framework of African colonial history. In spite of the substantial existing scholarship on the European colonization of the African continent, the depth and extent of the phenomenon and its impact on the African experience are yet to be fully explored or understood. This

book draws attention to that fact. The recovery of the Mozambique's Company's colonial archives might also prove useful, as Allina suggests, in assisting scholars to uncover the relatively still unknown biographies of the men who helped perpetrate such atrocities on Africa and its peoples, and their larger role in Africa's colonial history.

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Honwana, Alcinda. *The Time of Youth: Work, Social Change, and Politics in Africa.* Sterling, VA: Kumarian Press, 2012, xiv + 222 pp.

In *The Time of Youth,* anthropologist Alcinda Honwana focuses on youth experiences of what she terms waithood, that is that prolonged stage between childhood and adulthood, a phenomenon resulting from failed neoliberal and global socioeconomic and political crises. Organized around eight chapters, this book tells a very coherent story of how youth that are undergoing the prevailing challenges of globalization are seeking "creative" ways of managing their lives. In articulating this story, Honwana focuses on the phenomenon of waithood and argues that it encompasses the lives of the majority of young Africans regardless of where they live. It shows that the class dimension provides an important window through which to understand the experiences of youth in the global south. But she also notes that despite the constraints youth face, waithood is both creative and transformative. Using data collected from Mozambique, South Africa, Senegal, and Tunisia, Honwana does a good job of providing useful historical contexts of these countries that allow readers to understand her arguments without losing the ethnographic narrative.

In chapter one, Honwana frames her book within existing studies of youth, and defines youth and waitood before providing historical contexts of the four African countries on which she focuses and the interconnectedness of the stories of their youth. In the second chapter, she expands on her use of the phenomenon of waithhood as it affects not only youth in Africa but also in developed countries. In chapters three and four, we respectively get an analysis of the specific aspirations youth have as they face the challenges of waithood and the coping mechanisms they apply. Chapter five focuses on sexuality and intimacy as new ways of coping with waithood. Honwana then provides an analysis of how youth reject old-fashioned party politics (chapter 6) through social movements that bring about social change in Tunisia (chapter 7) and the ways that waithood is assuming a global phenomenon that affects youth in Madrid, London, New York, and Dakar, among other global locations (chapter 8).

Honwana writes well and is able to balance theory with ethnographic data that she gathered in the field while acknowledging and engaging with vast strands of literature on the topic. Her analysis of waithood is centered on experiences of African youth but she is also able to show both its particularities and similarities with other continents and varied ways youth respond to it. Some of the common strategies for coping with waithood include: "border crossing," exemplified by the physical crossing of national borders for immigrants from Guinea trying to eke a

living on the streets of Dakar, Senegal; young women traders bringing goods into Mozambique from South Africa and trying to pay as little tax as possible or none at all; and Senegalese youth crossing through the Mediterranean Sea to Europe in search of greener pastures. There are youth also who are living in waithood despite being in formal work, as is the case of young Tunisian young females Honwana interviewed who were working in European telemarketing call centers located in Tunisia that hire university graduates to meet customer relations needs for the European market. Outside of these coping strategies employed by youth in both informal and formal sectors, Honwana devotes a chapter on intimacy, a phenomenon that entails the reconfiguration of masculine and feminine identities. Men who traditionally have had power over women because of their ability to provide materially now cannot project such masculine identities because their economic instability does not allow them to be "real men." As a result, Honwana argues that because unemployed young men in waithood lack the economic advantage that employed men have over women, sexual power becomes the only tool left to them (102). On the other hand, young women through intimate relations with multiple men strategically engineer sexual relationships to achieve their goals and maximize their gains (93). Further, by ensuring that the material benefits of sexual engagements do not come from a single man who could exercise control over them, these women try to guarantee their relative independence.

There are two other discussions that Honwana makes that are very important in understanding youth in Africa today—citizenship and social change. Regarding citizenship, Honwana shows that youth have rejected formal party politics but have rallied behind movements that seek to right the social ills caused by corruption, bad governance, failed political promises, and other administrative challenges. Here Honwana provides examples of youth engagement in hip-hop music that challenge the status quo and of social movements that change political arrangements as happened in Senegal and Tunisia. In this way, Honwana confronts traditional theories of citizenship that tended to understand it as the gradual (and passive) acquisition of civil, political, and social rights. The stories that she provides of youth across Africa show that rights are not a given but rather something that youth have to fight for, which leads to an approach to rights that encompasses both rights and participation.

Finally, Honwana shows that youth do not just participate in social movements but also bring about much needed social change. By providing a detailed account of the processes that led to Tunisia's political change, including the careful coalition that youth were able to form with workers, politicians, and other social groups, Honwana shows what it takes for youth social movements to bring about change. When Tunisian youth's desire for social change became relevant to

the broader spectrum of Tunisia's population, Tunisian youth were able to bring about the fall of Ben Ali's regime. Although this book is engaging, repeating some information in different chapters is unhelpful. Nonetheless, anyone working on issues of youth in both in Africa in particular and other continents in general will find this book useful.

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Yewah, Emmanuel and Dimeji Togunde, eds. *Across the Atlantic: African Immigrants in the United States Diaspora.* Illinois: Common Ground, 2010, vii + 174 pp.

Although the total number of African immigrants in the United States is not as large as other immigrant groups, they have increased substantially over the years. According to the U.S. Census, of the 37,961,000 foreign-born population in the U.S. in 2008, 20,150,000 were from Latin America; 10,356,000 from Asia; 4,969,000 from Europe; and 1,436,000 from Africa. In 1960, there were only 35,000 African immigrants in the United States. *Across the Atlantic: African I*mmigrants in the United States Diaspora edited by Emmanuel Yewah and Dimeji Togunde, has made an important contribution to the understanding of the new African Diaspora in the United States. According Yewah and Togunde, "pre-migration characteristics such as media and literary representation of the United States, socialization experiences including exposure to oral traditions, religious identity and pluralism which become important tools for immigrants to cope and to navigate through the complexities of their new society have received little or no attention in the literature"(3).

Before reading this book, I expected to find answers to the following seven questions: (1) How many African immigrants have emigrated to the U.S. in the post-World War II era and what countries are they from?; (2) What are the factors that caused them to emigrate to the U.S.?; (3) What are the educational, social and economic characteristics of these new African immigrants in the U.S.?; (4) Are there negative implications to Africa for losing this highly selected group of emigrants?; (5) Are there benefits to Africa due to this "brain drain," or do they maintain connections with their homelands?; (6) How do they adapt and cope in their new communities in the U.S.? Or do they maintain their ethnic/racial, religious/spiritual, and class identities?; What are their settlement patterns?; and (7) What is their impact on the host society?

The nine chapters of this book did an excellent scholarly job answering all of the above questions. For example, chapters one, two, three and five answered questions one and two; chapters four, five, six, and eight answered questions three and six; and chapters seven and nine answered questions four and five.

While answering all of these important questions, many interesting interrelated sub-themes emerged out of the book under the central theme of culture: culture as ethnicity or language; culture as religion; culture as food; culture as home community development (remittances for school fees, food, house building, etc.); culture as internet use; culture as political participation in homeland affairs; or culture as media (newspapers, television, movies) and literature (books and

public intellectual publications).

Pertaining to culture as ethnicity or language, Anthony A. Olorunnisola presents useful information in chapter six on how ethnic/linguistic characteristics tend to remain permanent. He shows that just as ethnicity plays a central role in relations in Africa, it also plays a central role in the lives of African immigrants in their assimilation and pluralism experiences in the U.S.: "we argue that African émigrés enter the United States more specifically as Ogonis or Hausas (of Nigeria); as Hutus or Tutsis (of Rwanda); as Afrikaners or Zulus (of South Africa)" (105). Connecting this to religion, Emmanuel K. Twesigye also notes in chapter 8 how Christian or Muslim African immigrants in the U.S. would establish their own Churches or Mosques, and that "some Africans wanted to establish their own churches and mosques in order to serve as the leaders and determine their liturgy, language and preaching style as well as the topics and cultural or moral content of the sermons" (139-140).

In chapter seven, Ayokunle Olumuyiwa Omobowale, Mofeyisara Oluwatoyin Omobowale and Olawale Olufolahan Ajani present useful information about the rapid increase in the amount of remittances to Africa, which are now more than foreign aid from the West, and they reveal the various economic, educational, and social benefits to family members and communities in African nations. However, in chapter nine Okechukwu Iheduru explains the difficulty that Africans in the Diaspora are experiencing from political leaders in their home countries in attaining dual citizenship and voting rights at home. As a result, African immigrants find themselves not attaining U.S. citizenship because it could cost them their citizenship at home, but they also tend not to run for political office in the U.S. due to the same lack of citizenship. On January 16, 2011, Jeremy Hay wrote an article in the *Press Democrat* about a rare development whereby a Nigerian immigrant banker, Amy Ahanotu, in California won a seat on the Rohnert Park City Council.[1]

One visible limitation of the book is the lack of information on non-black African immigrants in the U.S. and how they relate to their black counterparts. Bridget Teboh notes in chapter five that 23 percent of the 881,300 African immigrants in the U.S. in 2000 were categorized as white and that "the end of apartheid in South Africa and Zimbabwe appears to count for the presence of white Africans" (80-81). Another group of Africans also categorized as white in the U.S. is Arabs with hair texture and skin color such as those of the prominent Lebanese American, Ralph Nader. But as Amadu Kaba points out, the late black president of Egypt, Anwar Sadat, is categorized as black in the U.S., just as the

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[1] Jeremy Hay, "Rohnert Park Councilman's Journey from Civil War to Civic Role," *The Press Democrat,* January 16, 2011, accessed February 19, 2011, http://www.pressdemocrat.com/article/20110116/ARTICLES/110119598.

leader of Egypt and Commander in Chief of the Egyptian military from February 2011 to June 2012, Field Marshal Mohamed Hussein Tantawi, is considered a black man in the U.S., but his immediate predecessor, Hosni Mubarak, is seen as a white man.[2] Two of the three leaders of Egypt since the 1970s are considered both black men and Arabs, Arab being their culture. Anthony A. Olorunnisola discusses this racial categorization belief system of white Americans in chapter six (108-109).

Across the Atlantic: African Immigrants in the United States Diaspora has made a useful contribution to the body of knowledge on the African Diaspora in the New World, especially the United States. It presents an overview of the numbers and characteristics of African immigrants in the United States. The book illustrates the influence of culture on African immigrants in the United States. The author conceptualizes and utilizes culture to explain how ethnicity, language, food, family, remittances, and politics impact the day-to-day lives of African immigrants in the United States and their home countries in Africa.

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[2] Amadu Jacky Kaba, "Explaining President Barack Obama's First Visit to Africa (Egypt): Three Phenomena of Africa and Africans as the Core of U.S.-Arab/Muslim Relations," *African Renaissance* 6, no. 2 (2009): 103-106.

Barz, Gregory and Cohen, Judah M., eds. *The Culture of AIDS in Africa: Hope and Healing through Music and the Arts.* New York: Oxford, 2011, xvii + 538 pp.

There is a sizeable literature that exists on HIV/AIDS in Africa. The majority of these works focus on the impact of the disease in Africa and the efforts of Western organizations and scholars to fight the pandemic. Very few discuss the intervention efforts and programs Africans themselves have made regarding this disease. *The Culture of AIDS in Africa* addresses this dearth by exposing the approaches Africans and non-Africans have used in the fight against HIV/AIDS. Specifically, according to Barz and Cohen, the thirty two chapters show the "many pathways by which music and other expressive forms gained prominence in Africa as agents for addressing HIV and AIDS, helping individuals and communities address the local and international conversations coursing through their lives in the process" (5). More importantly, one learns the African meaning of HIV/AIDS and understands the disease and its impact from an African context. The book uses examples, descriptions, and analyses of projects conducted mostly in eastern and southern Africa.

The book is divided into an introduction, six sections, and a conclusion. Each section is separated from the other by an interlude, which is a short personal essay or song. The chapters discuss the use of various media such as newspaper cartoons, drama, puppet shows, and photography in health-intervention and education programs. Most of the chapters focus on the use of music.

The first section consists of four essays that discuss music's effective role in describing the devastation the disease has wrought and the hope that remains. These chapters offer not just discussions and descriptions, but actual lyrics, personal experiences, and scripts as well. For instance, *Born in Africa*, one of the first documentaries on the epidemic in Africa, is transcribed in chapter three. The second section has three chapters. Here, one learns from authors who have developed and carried out arts-based health intervention programs from music to youth forums. These touching and interesting accounts give powerful and useful insights from the perspectives of people who worked in Africa. One learns that fighting the disease in the continent requires understanding the individual, communal, and political perceptions that exist.

The five essays in the third section discuss the use of edutainment media in several countries, including South Africa, Cote d'Ivoire, Togo, and Botswana. For people interested in developing campaigns on the disease, these essays provide great insight into multimedia approaches. In chapter 12, Eckhard Breitinger suggests that campaigns could succeed if governments are positively involved.

Specifically, the chapter discusses Malawi's use of posters to fight the epidemic. The chapter also includes photographs that show the importance of considering a country's unique cultural characteristics and values in creating messages. As the author puts it, "displaying moral, ethical, and aesthetic values that are current" in countries "offer one strategy for government intervention in a multi-front battle against a devastating and vexing pandemic" (143). The fourth section has five essays that examine the contributions of individual artistes/creators like Ugandan singer Vilimina Nakiranda, South African photojournalist Gideon Mendel, Zimbabwean singer Oliver Mtukudzi, and singers and playwrights from Kenya and Tanzania. The essays demonstrate how these performers have used culturally unique symbols and language to reach their audiences and contribute to the discourse.

Part five of the book examines HIV/AIDs responses from a group perspective. Here, one learns of the contributions of performance groups, such as choirs, drama groups, and circuses in four chapters. Leah Niederstadt's essay, "'I'm a Rich Man, How Can I Die?' Circus Performance as a Means of HIV/AIDS Education in Ethiopia," gives a fascinating account of the activist and entertainment roles of circuses. Though faced with a number of challenges, circuses are an important part of Ethiopian culture. Authentically Ethiopian circuses use culturally specific folktales, clothes, songs, and dance to highlight ethnic identity. Niederstadt explains that Ethiopian circus performance is similar to theatrical performance. Economic and social issues like HIV/AIDS in the 1990s made the circus a "theatre of necessity" (325). Using a combination of skits, acrobatics, juggling, and more, circus members perform with edutainment goals. The Circus in Ethiopia organization also publishes a magazine that spreads information on HIV/AIDS. The final section of the book has four essays, which are case studies using various research approaches. Here, the authors explore different art forms or artistes, such as South Africa's *kwaito* music and female hip-hop artistes in Uganda, and their contributions to the fight.

Overall, this collection of essays makes an important contribution, not only to health-intervention or cultural studies, but also to various areas in the humanities, social sciences, and more. Readers will learn of campaigns and strategies that have worked. For the most part, however, the authors do not take a critical view of their work. There is little or no discussion of what was done wrong, what could have been done better. Such information would be helpful in knowing what to avoid. The collection also lacks a contribution on the influence or use of social media and the internet, which have gained ground in different parts of Africa and have been beneficial to the fight against the pandemic. Nevertheless, the collection has fascinating and useful information that shed light on what Africans are doing for

Africans through the arts in the case of HIV/AIDS.

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The African & African-American Studies program, through its high quality courses and special events, offers opportunities for students to engage in interdisciplinary analysis of past and present social, political, economic, and cultural issues that have impacted peoples of African descent in Africa and throughout the Diaspora. It understands that at the foundation of all discourses on race, class, and ethnicity is the fundamental question of what it means to be human and a contributing member of a civil society. As such, it seeks to prepare students of all ethnic backgrounds for effective participation in our fast changing world, by providing them training in diversity and empowering them as informed thinkers.

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