

February 2014

The Editor's Preface

Follow this and additional works at: <https://encompass.eku.edu/jora>



Part of the [African Languages and Societies Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

. "The Editor's Preface." *Journal of Retracing Africa*: Vol. 1, Issue 1 (2014). <https://encompass.eku.edu/jora/vol1/iss1/12>

This Editor's Preface is brought to you for free and open access by Encompass. It has been accepted for inclusion in Journal of Retracing Africa by an authorized editor of Encompass. For more information, please contact Linda.Sizemore@eku.edu.

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

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.