

NIGERIA in Perspective

An Orientation Guide



Technology Integration Division
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DEFENSE LANGUAGE INSTITUTE FOREIGN LANGUAGE CENTER

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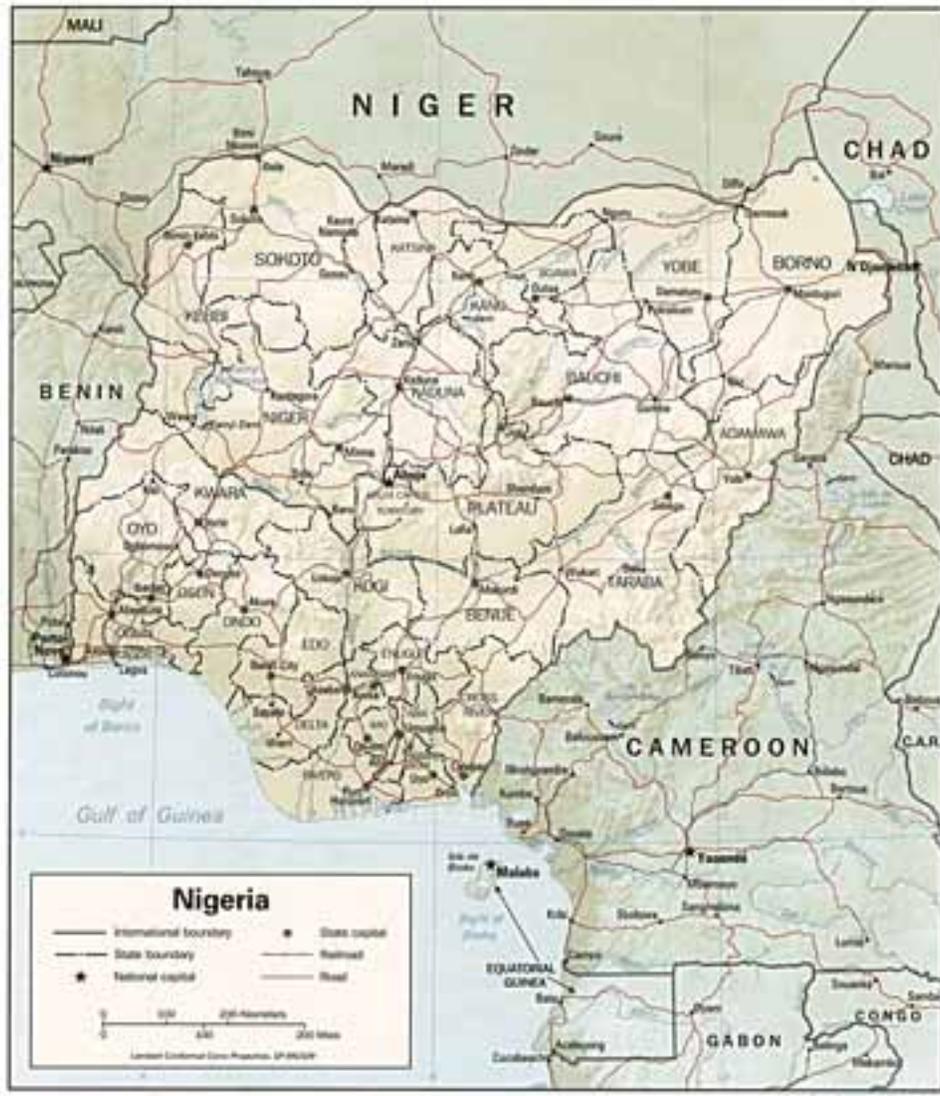
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Map of Nigeria



Chapter 1 Profile

Introduction

Situated on the coast of West Africa, Nigeria has long held geopolitical significance. The region was home to multiple organized kingdoms and city-states by the time Europeans arrived in the 15th century. European merchants exploited the area's existing trade networks and ultimately transformed the West African coast into a major hub of the trans-Atlantic slave trade. As Europeans spread Christianity in southern regions, the practice of Islam grew dominant in the north. Today, the nation's population, the largest in Africa, is divided almost evenly between Muslims and Christians, with longstanding tensions between the two groups resulting in periodic outbreaks of violence. The diverse Nigerian population is further delineated along a vast number of ethnic and linguistic lines, with the Hausa-Fulani, Yoruba, and Igbo peoples forming the largest and most powerful groups.



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Oil platforms flaring gas at night

In terms of both onshore and offshore resources, Nigeria possesses one of the world's largest hydrocarbon deposits. Accordingly, oil extraction has played a major role in the nation's development since its independence from Britain in 1960. Today, Nigeria is one of the top ten oil-producing countries in the world. However, as a large portion of the nation's oil revenues has been lost to corruption or waste, the country has seen its oil-dependent economy contract and its standard of living fall. As a result, the majority of the nation's population is poor and largely dependent upon an underdeveloped agricultural sector or the informal economy. Poverty and corruption have exacerbated tensions between different tribes and sociopolitical regions, with the oil-producing Niger Delta a major site of conflict between local, federal, and international interests. The nation's fledgling democratic government faces these and other challenges as it remains in need of reform after years of corrupt administration and military rule.¹

Facts and Figures²

Population:

146,255,312

Note: Estimates for this country explicitly take into account the effects of excess mortality due to AIDS. This can result in lower life expectancy, higher infant mortality and death rates, lower population growth rates, and changes in the distribution of population by age and sex than would otherwise be expected. (July 2008 est.)

¹ Bureau of African Affairs, U.S. Department of State. "Background Note: Nigeria." December 2008. <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2836.htm>

² All information from this section is taken from the following source: Central Intelligence Agency. *The World Factbook*. "Nigeria." 22 January 2009. <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ni.html>

Nationality:

Noun: Nigerian(s)

Adjective: Nigerian

Ethnic Groups:

Africa's most populous country, Nigeria is composed of more than 250 ethnic groups. The following are the most populous and politically influential: Hausa and Fulani 29%, Yoruba 21%, Igbo (Ibo) 18%, Ijaw 10%, Kanuri 4%, Ibibio 3.5%, Tiv 2.5%

Religions:

Muslim 50%, Christian 40%, indigenous beliefs 10%

Languages:

English (official), Hausa, Yoruba, Igbo (Ibo), Fulani

Literacy:

Definition: age 15 and over can read and write

Total population: 68%

Male: 75.7%

Female: 60.6% (2003 est.)

**Age Structure:**

0–14 years: 41.7% (male 31,171,949/female 29,806,204)

15–64 years: 55.3% (male 41,243,003/female 39,611,565)

65 years and over: 3% (male 2,152,318/female 2,270,267) (2008 est.)

Median Age:

18.9 years (2008 est.)

Population Growth Rate:

2.025% (2008 est.)

Birth Rate:

37.23 births/1,000 population (2008 est.)

Death Rate:

16.88 deaths/1,000 population (2008 est.)

Net Migration Ratio:

-0.1 migrant(s)/1,000 population (2008 est.)

Sex Ratio:

At birth: 1.03 male(s)/female

Under 15 years: 1.05 male(s)/female

15–64 years: 1.04 male(s)/female

65 years and over: 0.95 male(s)/female

Total population: 1.04 male(s)/female (2008 est.)

Infant Mortality Rate:

Total: 95.74 deaths/1,000 live births

Male: 101.83 deaths/1,000 live births

Female: 89.28 deaths/1,000 live births (2008 est.)

Life Expectancy at Birth:

Total population: 46.53 years

Male: 45.78 years

Female: 47.32 years (2008 est.)



© pythar 05 / flickr.com
Children in Nigeria's Central Region

Total Fertility Rate:

5.01 children born/woman (2008 est.)

HIV/AIDS – Adult Prevalence Rate:

5.4% (2003 est.)

HIV/AIDS – People Living with HIV/AIDS:

3.6 million (2003 est.)

HIV/AIDS – Deaths:

310,000 (2003 est.)

Major Infectious Diseases:

Degree of risk: very high

Food or waterborne diseases: bacterial and protozoal diarrhea, hepatitis A, and typhoid fever

Vectorborne disease: malaria and yellow fever

Respiratory disease: meningococcal meningitis

Aerosolized dust or soil contact disease: one of the most highly endemic areas for Lassa fever

Water contact disease: leptospirosis and schistosomiasis

Note: Highly pathogenic H5N1 avian influenza has been identified in this country; it poses a negligible risk with extremely rare cases possible among US citizens who have close contact with birds.

Country Name:

Conventional long form: Federal Republic of Nigeria

Conventional short form: Nigeria

Government Type:

Federal republic

Capital:

Abuja

Administrative Divisions:

36 states and 1 territory*; Abia, Adamawa, Akwa Ibom, Anambra, Bauchi, Bayelsa, Benue, Borno, Cross River, Delta, Ebonyi, Edo, Ekiti, Enugu, Federal Capital Territory*, Gombe, Imo, Jigawa, Kaduna, Kano, Katsina, Kebbi, Kogi, Kwara, Lagos, Nassarawa, Niger, Ogun, Ondo, Osun, Oyo, Plateau, Rivers, Sokoto, Taraba, Yobe, Zamfara

Independence:

1 October 1960 (from UK)

National Holiday:

Independence Day (National Day), 1 October 1960

Constitution:

New constitution adopted 5 May 1999; effective 29 May 1999



© PineApple / Med Africa
Nigerian Independence Day parade

Legal System:

Based on English common law, Islamic law (in 12 northern states), and traditional law; accepts compulsory ICJ jurisdiction with reservations

Suffrage:

18 years of age; universal

Executive Branch:

Chief of state: President Umaru Musa Yar'adua (since 29 May 2007); *note:* the president is both the chief of state and head of government

Cabinet: Federal Executive Council

Elections: the president is elected by popular vote for a four-year term (eligible for a second term); elections were last held 21 April 2007 (next to be held in April 2011)

Legislative Branch:

The bicameral National Assembly consists of the Senate (109 seats, three from each state plus one from Abuja; members elected by popular vote to serve four-year terms) and House of Representatives (360 seats; members elected by popular vote to serve four-year terms).

Judicial Branch:

Supreme Court (judges recommended by the National Judicial Council and appointed by the President); Federal Court of Appeal (judges are appointed by the federal government from a pool of judges recommended by the National Judicial Council)

Diplomatic Representation in the US:

Chief of mission: Ambassador Oluwole Rotimi

Chancery: 3519 International Court NW, Washington, DC 20008

Telephone: [1] (202) 986-8400

FAX: [1] (202) 775-1385

Consulate(s) general: Atlanta, New York

Diplomatic Representation in Nigeria:

Chief of mission: Ambassador Robin Sanders

Embassy: 1075 Diplomatic Drive, Central District Area, Abuja

Mailing address: P.O. Box 5760, Garki, Abuja

Telephone: [234] (9) 461-4000

FAX: [234] (9) 461-4036

International Organization Participation:

African, Caribbean, and Pacific Group of States (ACP), African Development Bank (AfDB), African Union (AU), Commonwealth (C), Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), Group of 15 (G-15), Group of 24 (G-24), Group of 77 (G-77), International Atomic Energy Association (IAEA), International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), International Chamber of Commerce (ICC), International Criminal Court (ICt), International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (ICRM), International Development Association (IDA), Islamic Development Bank (IDB), International Fund for Agriculture Development (IFAD), International Finance Corporation (IFC), International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS), International Hydrographic Organization (IHO), International Labor Organization (ILO), International Monetary Fund (IMF), International Maritime Organization (IMO), International Mobile Satellite Organization (IMSO), International Criminal Police Organization (Interpol), International Olympic Committee (IOC), International Organization for Migration (IOM), Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), International Standardization Organization (ISO), International Telecommunication Union (ITU), International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA), United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad (MINURCAT), United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO), United Nations Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUC), Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), Organization of American States (OAS) (observer), Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), Organization of Petroleum Exporting Nations (OPEC), Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA), United Nations (UN), African Union/United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID), United Nations Conference on Trade & Development (UNCTAD), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), United Nations High Commissioner of Refugees (UNHCR), United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL), United Nations Mission in Sudan (UNMIS), United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI), United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia (UNOMIG), United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), Universal Postal Union (UPU), World Customs Organization (WCO), World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU), World Health Organization (WHO), World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), World Meteorological Organization (WMO), World Trade Organization (WTO).

GDP – Real Growth Rate:

6.2% (2008 est.)

GDP – Per Capita (PPP):

\$2,200 (2008 est.)

GDP – Composition by Sector:

Agriculture: 18%

Industry: 50.9%

Services: 31.1% (2008 est.)

Labor Force:

51.04 million (2008 est.)

Labor Force – by Occupation:

Agriculture: 70%

Industry: 10%

Services: 20% (1999 est.)

Public Debt:

12.2% of GDP (2008 est.)

Inflation Rate (Consumer Prices):

10.6% (2008 est.)

Communications:

General assessment: Further expansion and modernization of the fixed-line telephone network is needed.

Domestic: The addition of a second fixed-line provider in 2002 resulted in faster growth but subscribership remains only about 1 per 100 persons. Wireless telephony has grown rapidly, in part responding to the shortcomings of the fixed-line network. Multiple service providers operate nationally. Mobile-cellular teledensity reached 30 per 100 persons in 2007.

International: country code - 234; landing point for the SAT-3/WASC fiber-optic submarine cable that provides connectivity to Europe and Asia; satellite earth stations - 3 Intelsat (2 Atlantic Ocean and 1 Indian Ocean) (2007)

Military Branches:

Nigerian Armed Forces: Army, Navy, Air Force (2008)

Military Service Age and Obligation:

18 years of age for voluntary military service (2007)

Manpower Available for Military Service:

Males age 16–49: 31,929,204

Females age 16–49: 30,638,979 (2008 est.)

Military Expenditures:

1.5% of GDP (2006)

Chapter 2 Geography

Introduction

Nigeria is located on the coast of West Africa, near the northeastern corner of the Gulf of Guinea. The most populated country on the African continent, it is home to over 146 million people.³ The nation's terrain ranges from coastal swamps and lowlands to rolling plains and occasional mountain ranges. The Niger River, the third longest river in Africa, enters the country in the northwest and ultimately flows to the southern coast, where it empties into the gulf through a vast delta region. The climate ranges from equatorial to semi-arid as one moves from the coast in the south to the plains in the north.⁴



© Martin Ruder
View of Enugu, Nigeria

Area

Nigeria shares land borders with four countries. Benin lies to the west, Niger to the north, Chad to the northeast, and Cameroon to the east and southeast. To the south lies the Gulf of Guinea, part of the South Atlantic Ocean. Encompassing over 923,000 sq km (356,000 sq mi) of total area, Nigeria is more than twice the size of California.⁵

Topography

The Nigerian landscape is dominated by plains and plateaus, with rolling hills, escarpments, and occasional granitic mountains rising from the surface. The country's highest points are found in the Jos Plateau—located in the center of the country—and the Cameroon Highlands of the southeast. Chappal Waddi, the country's highest peak, is located along the Cameroon border with an altitude of 2,419 m (7,936 ft).⁶ There is also a low range in the southwest.

These highland areas are separated by the Niger and Benue river basins, which cut across the country from the northwest and northeast, respectively. The waters of these two rivers merge in south-central Nigeria and ultimately flow out to the gulf through the massive Niger River Delta, one of the largest deltas in the world. Overall, the combined paths of the Niger and the Benue form a large Y-shaped pattern. The delta region consists of swamplands intersected by numerous small channels.

Coastal plains spread out along the gulf on each side of the Niger River Delta. Plains are also prevalent in the northwest and northeast, where stretches of savannah (grassland with scattered trees) dominate. In the far northeast, an expanse of drier grassland—known

³ Central Intelligence Agency. *The World Factbook*. "Nigeria." 22 January 2009. <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ni.html>

⁴ World InfoZone. "Nigeria Information – Page 1." c.1997–2009. <http://www.worldinfozone.com/country.php?country=Nigeria#population>

⁵ Central Intelligence Agency. *The World Factbook*. "Nigeria." 22 January 2009. <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ni.html>

⁶ Encyclopædia Britannica Online. "Nigeria: Land: Relief." 2009. <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/414840/Nigeria>

as the Sahel—represents the transitional zone between the Sahara Desert to the north and the savannah region to the south.⁷

Geographic Divisions

Nigeria can be divided into four geographic regions based on vegetation and climate: the Coast, the Forest Belt, the Savannah, and the Sahel.

The Coast

Nigeria's southern coastline runs approximately 835 km (519 mi) alongside the Gulf of Guinea. Along the coast, a swath of low-lying mangrove forests and swamps extend inland. In most places, these areas are 15 km (9 mi) wide, but in the Niger Delta, they may stretch as far as 100 km (62 mi) from the coast. Waterways and lagoons intersect these areas, portions of which are heavily developed and populated.⁸

The Forest Belt

Inland from the coastal region is a belt of tropical and transitional forests that ultimately merges into the savannah of northern Nigeria. A portion of this region—in the southwest—is one of the most densely populated areas in Africa. Not surprisingly, human development has led to severe deforestation in many areas, leaving the region's existing forests fragmented and threatened by further activity.⁹



The Savannah

The West Sudanian Savannah covers a broad swath of northern Nigeria. Typically hot and dry, the savannah supports scattered trees—ranging from tall to stunted—and a variety of grasses.¹⁰ Areas of this vast plain are dotted with outcroppings of granite. Overall, the region is the site of significant agricultural activity, leaving many areas degraded.¹¹

The Sahel

Covering a small portion of northeastern Nigeria, the Sahel Region represents a dry transitional stage between the savannah and the Sahara Desert to the north. The greater Sahel region stretches east to west across Africa from the Atlantic Ocean to the Red Sea. This area sees only small amounts of rainfall—between 10–20 cm (4–8 in) per year—and

⁷ Federal Research Division, Library of Congress. *A Country Study: Nigeria*. "Chapter 2: The Society and Its Environment: Physical Setting ." 1991. Metz, Helen Chapin, ed. Cohen, Ronald and Abe Goldman. <http://countrystudies.us/nigeria/32.htm>

⁸ International Mire Conservation Group. "Nigeria (Federal Republic of)." 31 January 2004. <http://www.imcg.net/gbd/africa/nigeria.pdf>

⁹ Encyclopedia of Earth/World Wildlife Fund. "Nigerian Lowland Forests." McGinley, Mark, ed. 19 March 2007. http://www.eoearth.org/article/Nigerian_lowland_forests

¹⁰ The Encyclopedia of Earth/World Wildlife Fund. McGinley, Mark, ed. "West Sudanian Savanna." 21 March 2007. http://www.eoearth.org/article/West_Sudanian_savanna

¹¹ International Mire Conservation Group. "Nigeria (Federal Republic of)." 31 January 2004. <http://www.imcg.net/gbd/africa/nigeria.pdf>

is sparsely vegetated. Because only a few crops will grow here, such as peanuts and millet, many people earn their livelihood as nomadic herders.¹²

Climate

Nigeria has a tropical climate with regional variations according to latitude. In general, the country experiences increasing precipitation as one moves north to south. This pattern of rainfall—which largely defines the country’s climate—is controlled by two air masses, the dry, northeast trade winds flowing south from the continent and the humid, southwest monsoon flowing north from the Atlantic Ocean. The flow of these air masses determines the country’s dry and rainy seasons, which vary in length according to region.

The rainy season begins in the south around February or March and gradually moves northward, hitting the central river valleys in April or May, and then the northern areas in June or July. The rainy season peaks in the northern areas around August, while the southern regions experience decreased precipitation during this time. In the south, precipitation ranges from 1,200–4,000 mm (47–157 in) of rain per year, with the southeastern areas receiving substantially more rainfall than the southwestern areas. The northern areas of the savannah receive 500–750 mm (20–30 in) of rain per year. Climate conditions for the rest of the year are influenced by the *harmattan*, the northeast trade winds that bring dust from the Sahara.



© Pipp Jones
Harmattan Haze

Throughout Nigeria, temperatures are generally high, although during the rainy season they are moderated by the southwest monsoon. The city of Lagos, located on the southwestern coast, experiences average highs of 31° C (87.8° F) during the late dry season and average lows of 23° C (73.4° F) near the end of the rainy season. Inland areas experience greater extremes than the coast, with temperatures in the northeast rising to 44° C (111.2° F) before the rains reach the area, and falling to 6° C (42.8° F) from December to February.¹³

Bodies of Water

Niger River

The Niger River, with a total length of about 4,200 km (2,610 mi), is the third longest river in Africa and the longest and largest river in West Africa. Its source lies in the Fouta Djallon Mountains in Guinea to the west. Flowing eastward, the Niger passes through the countries of Mali and Niger before entering Nigeria from the northwest. From there, it flows generally southeast until it merges with the Benue River. The combined waters of

¹² University of Omaha. Schmidt, Christi and Michael Smith. “Sahel and the Horn of Africa.” 1996–1997. http://maps.unomaha.edu/peterson/funda/Notes/Notes_Exam4/Sahel.html

¹³ Federal Research Division, Library of Congress. *A Country Study: Nigeria*. “Chapter 2: The Society and Its Environment: Physical Setting: Climate.” 1991. Metz, Helen Chapin, ed. Cohen, Ronald and Abe Goldman. <http://countrystudies.us/nigeria/33.htm>

the two rivers flow south and ultimately empty in the Atlantic Ocean through the fan shaped distributaries of the Niger River Delta.¹⁴

The Niger's original name, *egerou n-igereou*, means the "river of rivers." For centuries, this river has provided regional inhabitants with a source of income, food, and water, even in times of drought. It is home to almost 250 species of fish, including 20 species that can only be found in the Niger. The floodplains of the river also help to sustain pastures for livestock and allow for the cultivation of rice. However, as populations along the river's drainage area have grown and desertification has increased, the river has come under intense environmental pressures.¹⁵

Benue River

The Benue River is the chief tributary of the Niger. Approximately 1,083 km (673 mi) in length, its initial 240 km (150 mi) leg begins in neighboring Cameroon. After descending more than 600 m (2,000 ft) over numerous falls and rapids, the remainder of its route is largely unobstructed. As it is navigable almost year round, the Benue is an important trade route for cotton, peanuts, and petroleum.¹⁶



© Mike Squires
Farin Ruwa Falls, northern Nigeria

Niger Delta

The Niger Delta covers an area of approximately 70,000 sq km (27,027 sq mi), according to definitions of the region made by the Nigerian government. This area comprises 7.5% of Nigeria's land mass.¹⁷ The river's many small distributaries weave their way through the delta and provide nourishment for the soil and the large number of animals that live in and off the river.

The delta sits atop light, sweet crude oil that needs very little refining. About two million barrels of oil are pulled from this region each day. However, the people who live off this land subsist on fishing and farming. Seventy percent of the population lives on less than USD 1 per day.¹⁸

¹⁴ World Wildlife Fund. Global 200 Ecoregions. "Niger River Delta." 2001.

<http://www.worldwildlife.org/wildworld/profiles/g200/g155.html>

¹⁵ World Wildlife Fund. WWF in West Africa: The Niger River. "Egerou N-Igereou – West Africa's Mightiest River." 5 November 2007.

http://www.panda.org/about_wwf/where_we_work/africa/where/niger/wwf_niger_our_solutions/niger_river/

¹⁶ Encyclopædia Britannica Online. "Benue River." 2009.

<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/61238/Benue-River>

¹⁷ Niger Delta Foundation. "Niger Delta Region." 2005.

<http://www.nigerdeltafoundation.org/nigerdeltaregion.html>

¹⁸ Amnesty International. "Nigeria: Oil, Poverty and Violence." August 2006.

<http://web.amnesty.org/library/Index/ENGAFR440172006?open&of=ENG-NGA>

Major Cities

Abuja

Abuja, Nigeria's capital, is located in the central part of the country, in the administrative division known as the Federal Capital Territory (FCT). In the late 1970s, officials decided to move the nation's capital away from Lagos, where it had been for most of the 20th century. The area that is now Abuja FCT was selected for a variety of reasons, including its accessible central location and low population density.¹⁹ Abuja officially became the Nigerian capital in 1991. Efforts to create a modern urban profile have included a ban on *okada* (commercial motorcycles), the importation of London cabs, and the demolition of illegal squatter settlements in and around the city.²⁰ The city's population is approximately 500,000.²¹

Lagos

Situated on the southwestern coast of Nigeria, Lagos, the former national capital, was originally settled in the 15th century by Yoruba tribes, who called it Oko.²² In recent decades, the city has experienced rapid population growth. From 300,000 in 1950,²³ the city's population has now grown to over nine million,²⁴ with several million more living in the surrounding area outside the city proper. The metropolitan area,



© Ulf Hyttgens
Golden Plaza in Lagos

comprising an estimated 300 sq km (115.8 sq mi), is a group of islands connected by bridges. Automobile gridlock is a major problem in Lagos, where it can take hours to travel relatively short distances throughout the urban area.²⁵ Other issues, such as poor sanitation and air and water pollution, have exacerbated the problems of urbanization. Moreover, the city's population has grown faster than its network of services can provide.

Ibadan

Also located in southwestern Nigeria, Ibadan is the capital city of Oyo state; it is home to a population of about 3.5 million.²⁶ The city is an important commercial and industrial hub, as well as a major point of transport between the coast and inner Nigeria. It also

¹⁹ Encyclopædia Britannica Online. "Abuja." 2009.

<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/2397/Abuja/>

²⁰ Chicken Bones: A Journal. Nworah, Uche. "Rebranding Nigeria's Cities." 29 October 2006.

<http://www.nathanielturner.com/rebrandingnigeriascities.htm>

²¹ Bureau of African Affairs, U.S. Department of State. "Background Note: Nigeria." December 2008.

<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2836.htm>

²² Embassy of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Washington, DC. "History and People." 2004.

<http://www.nigeriaembassyusa.org/history.shtml>

²³ National Geographic. *National Geographic Atlas of the World*, 8th ed. "Lagos, Nigeria." 2004.

http://www3.nationalgeographic.com/places/cities/city_lagos.html

²⁴ Bureau of African Affairs, U.S. Department of State. "Background Note: Nigeria." December 2008.

<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2836.htm>

²⁵ Cyber School Bus, United Nations. "City Profiles: Lagos, Nigeria." No date.

<http://www.un.org/cyberschoolbus/habitat/profiles/lagos.asp>

²⁶ Bureau of African Affairs, U.S. Department of State. "Background Note: Nigeria." December 2008.

<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2836.htm>

retains a sizable agricultural production and processing industry, with regional products including cacao, cotton, and palm oil. Marketplaces are located throughout the city,²⁷ as are a major university and several research institutions.²⁸

Kano

Located in northern Nigeria, Kano is home to over three million people.²⁹ It was once a powerful Hausa city-state but is now the core industrial city and shipping hub for the North. Its industry revolves around peanuts, cotton, leatherwork, steel, and concrete. As a historic site of Islamic learning, it was one of the 14 northern states to introduce strict Shari'a law. This caused sectarian riots between the Muslim population and the region's religious minorities.³⁰

Port Harcourt

Port Harcourt is the capital of Rivers State in southern Nigeria and has a population of over one million people.³¹ It was built along the Bonny River, an eastern offshoot of the Niger, 66 km (41 mi) upstream from the Gulf of Guinea. This deep-water port serves to export petroleum, coal, palm products, cocoa, and groundnuts.



Wildlife

Nigeria was once home to an abundance of savanna animals as well as marine life, but human population growth, development, pollution, and other manmade environmental pressures have threatened many species. The Niger River Delta has the third largest contiguous mangrove forest in the world, which has historically supported a diverse variety of plants and birds, along with crabs, lizards, and snakes.³² Pollution from the oil industry has had a devastating effect on the delta's delicate ecosystem, however.

Most large animals such as elephants, and even smaller ones like chimpanzees, largely survive in minimally guarded national wildlife preserves. Since Nigeria never developed a safari tourism industry, there is little economic incentive for indigent farmers to maintain regions of natural habitat. Poaching is common, and both live animals, which can be trafficked to countries where they are considered a delicacy, and bush meat from endangered species can be found in rural markets.³³

²⁷ Encyclopædia Britannica Online. "Ibadan." 2009.

<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/280508/Ibadan>

²⁸ MSN Encarta. "Ibadan." 2008. http://uk.encyclopedia.msn.com/encyclopedia_761555938/ibadan.html

²⁹ City Population. Brinkhoff, Thomas. "The Principal Agglomerations of the World." 30 December 2008. <http://www.citypopulation.de/World.html>

³⁰ BBC News, International Version. "Kano: Nigeria's Ancient City-State." 20 May 2004.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/3708309.stm>

³¹ City Population. Brinkhoff, Thomas. "The Principal Agglomerations of the World." 30 December 2008.

<http://www.citypopulation.de/World.html>

³² Mangrove Action Project. "Niger Delta Vista." No date.

<http://www.mangroveactionproject.org/issues/petroleum/niger-delta-visit>

³³ Straight.com. Morris, Dale. "Bush-meat Traders Threaten Nigeria's Chimps." 3 November 2005.

<http://www.straight.com/article/bush-meat-traders-threaten-nigerias-chimps>

Environmental Concerns

In the Niger Delta, environmental issues tied to the extraction of oil remain a source of tension. When oil companies need to dispose of unwanted or unused gas, they burn it, which not only wastes energy but causes substantial environmental damage. These gas flares often burn at ground level, thereby spewing toxins into neighboring communities. Some flares are so large as to be visible from space. In any case, such flares emit large amounts of carbon dioxide, leading to acid rain and air pollution. As a ban on gas flaring has been continuously postponed, the Nigerian government's response has simply been to raise the amount of fines levied against oil companies who engage in the practice. However, these fines remain less than the cost that would be required to manage the fuel in an environmentally-responsible manner, and thus they remain largely ineffective in halting the practice.³⁴

Deforestation is also a significant problem. According to the United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organization, Nigeria has the world's highest rate of deforestation of primary (natural, untouched) forests, leading to the loss of 55.7% of its forests between 2000 and 2005. This is due to logging, the collection of firewood, and the continuous expansion of subsistence farming needed to feed an ever increasing population.³⁵

Nigeria experiences recurrent droughts that, along with the impact of a rapidly growing human population, have decimated what was once the sixth-largest lake in the world, Lake Chad. Formerly situated on the borders of Nigeria, Chad, and Cameroon, Lake Chad has decreased in area from 22,000 sq km (8,494 sq mi) to 300 sq km (115 sq mi) over the last four decades.³⁶ Experts predict further decline of the lake as a water resource. Today, the lake has receded from Nigeria's northeastern corner and most of the water is found in Chad.³⁷

While drought leads to desertification of arable land, floods are ruining coastal farmland. In terms of the former, rainfall in northern Nigeria has been declining steadily for over 40 years. This not only leads to a loss of farmland, but also of lakes and rivers, as well as food.³⁸ For example, the Sahel Drought lasted from 1968 to 1987, with the drought of 1972–73 resulting in famine after 300,000 animals perished and farm yields declined by



© Philippe Gemanaz
Nigeria-Cameroon border

³⁴ Scoop.co.nz. U.S. State Department. Sampson, Akanimo. "Gas Flaring: Nigerian Govt Under Pressure." 16 December 2008. <http://www.scoop.co.nz/stories/WO0812/S00359.htm>

³⁵ Monga Bay. Butler, Rhett A. "Nigeria Has Worst Deforestation Rate, FAO Revises Figures." 17 November 2005. <http://news.mongabay.com/2005/1117-forests.html>

³⁶ African Studies Center, University of Pennsylvania. United Nations Environmental Programme. *Africa's Lakes: Atlas of Our Changing Environment*. "Africa: Africa's Lakes." 10 September 2006. <http://www.africa.upenn.edu/afrifocus/afrifocus091006.html>

³⁷ National Geographic News. Mayell, Hillary. "Shrinking African Lake Offers Lesson on Finite Resources." 26 April 2001. http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2001/04/0426_lakechadshrinks.html

³⁸ Friends of the Earth International. "Climate Change in Africa." No date. <http://www.foei.org/en/campaigns/climate/impacts/nigeria.html>

60%.³⁹ Flooding causes different kinds of economic and environmental damage. Most recently, in August and September 2006, seasonal rains caused flooding across Africa's Sahel region. During this time, rainfall also ruptured a dam in northwestern Nigeria, resulting in flooding that washed away over 500 homes and left 98 people missing.⁴⁰

³⁹ International Green Charter Movement. University of Lagos, Nigeria. Okorie, Fidelis Chinazor. "Studies on Drought in the Sub-Saharan Region of Nigeria Using Satellite Remote Sensing and Precipitation Data." 2003. <http://www.mathaba.net/gci/docs/research/nigeria-drought.htm>

⁴⁰ Earth Observatory, NASA. "Floods Across Africa's Sahel." 22 September 2008. <http://earthobservatory.nasa.gov/NaturalHazards/view.php?id=17217>

Chapter 3 History

Introduction

The Nigerian population is comprised of three major tribes, the Muslim Hausa-Fulani in the North, and the Igbo and Yoruba in the South. While by no means homogenous, the subgroups of each of the three major groups share a common ancestry and mother tongue. Prior to colonialism in the 19th century, the Hausa-Fulani had established the Sokoto Caliphate, which, by the standards of sub-Saharan Africa, was a highly developed political entity that exercised authority over what is now present-day northern Nigeria. It had established trade links with North Africa. In the South, governments with looser types of structure had evolved. British colonization was unevenly felt by the two regions.⁴¹ The North remained isolated and governed under Islam, while the South was integrated into the emerging global economy through the slave trade and the introduction of Western education by Christian missionaries. These disparities and their repercussions continue to impede the development of a functioning national government in Nigeria, and have remained a source of ethnic conflict and tension.

Prehistory and Early Civilizations

Archeological evidence suggests that the region comprising modern day Nigeria hosted human settlement by at least 9000 B.C.E.⁴² Evidence of societal development during these early millennia is scattered and inconclusive. The oldest developed culture for which there is substantial evidence is the Nok culture, which dates from 500 B.C.E.–200 C.E., and takes its name from the main site of archeological discovery. Spread throughout the Jos Plateau and the Benue River Valley, the Nok civilization produced finely-crafted terracotta sculptures while working in agriculture and animal husbandry.⁴³ Evidence has also been found of another early culture, inhabitants of the Igbo Ukwu in southeastern Nigeria, dating from around 800 C.E. High quality bronzes are the primary form of evidence left by this society.⁴⁴

The Development of City-States and Kingdoms

Long home to diverse cultures, the Nigerian region saw the rise of numerous organized societies and kingdoms throughout the last millennia. Of these, the various city-states and kingdoms of the Yoruba, Igbo, Hausa-Fulani, and Benin (Edo) are the most significant in terms of size, authority, and lasting historical importance.



Courtesy of UNICEF
Monoliths at Hidis Palace, Sukur

⁴¹ *State-Directed Development: Political Power and Industrialization in the Global Periphery*. Kohli, Atul. "Chapter Eight: "Colonial Nigeria: Origins of a Neopatrimonial State and a Commodity-Exporting Economy [p. 313]." 2004. New York: Cambridge University Press.

⁴² MSN Encarta. "Nigeria: History." 2008.

http://encarta.msn.com/encyclopedia_761557915_9/Nigeria.html#s150

⁴³ Encyclopædia Britannica Online. "Nigeria: History: Early Nigerian Cultures: Nok Culture." 2009. <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/414840/Nigeria>

⁴⁴ Encyclopædia Britannica Online. "Nigeria: History: Early Nigerian Cultures: Igbo Ukwu." 2009. <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/414840/Nigeria>

The Hausa-Fulani

Little has been verified about the origins of the Hausa city-state civilization of northern Nigeria. Local lore holds that Bayajidda, a native of Baghdad who had quarreled with his father, left home and ultimately traveled to the northern state of Daura, near the present-day city of Kano. There, he married the Queen of Daura and they had seven sons. Each one is believed to have founded one of the walled Hausa states: Kano, Rano, Biram, Zaria, Katsina, Daura, and Gobir—known as the seven Hausa City-States.

Historically, the Hausa people migrated to the area between 500 and 700 C.E., and their city-states grew to consolidate power over the greater region by 1200.⁴⁵ As the Hausa cities developed, their local governments created a specialized division of labor that reflected the geographical strengths of their respective locations and natural resource endowments. Kano and Rano became known as the “Chiefs of Indigo.” These vast plain states harnessed the region’s prime agricultural conditions for cotton cultivation. Over time they became production centers of cloth, which was shipped out on caravans traveling to other Hausaland states and regions beyond.

The seat of the government of Hausaland was initially located in Biram. Zaria, known as the “Chief of Slaves,” provided labor. Because Katsina and Daura’s respective locations put them on the route used by caravans crossing the desert from the north, they were known as the “Chiefs of the Market.” Located in the west, Gobir was the “Chief of War,” as it had the responsibility of protecting the Hausa Empire from Ghana and Songhai, kingdoms bent on conquest.⁴⁶ In the 14th century, the practice of Islam grew increasingly prevalent in the urban centers of Hausaland,⁴⁷ after the religion had slowly been introduced to the area by travelers on the northern trade routes.

Originating in the Senegal River Valley, the Fulani people had gradually established themselves throughout Hausaland beginning in the 13th century. In 1804, a Fulani Muslim preacher, Usman dan Fodio, initiated a holy war (*jihad*) against the Hausa in order to fully establish the practice of Islam in the area. This war resulted in the occupation of the old Hausa city-states of northern Nigeria and their incorporation into the Fulani Sokoto Caliphate. Despite the fact that they were the victorious party, it was the Fulani who adopted the Hausa language, likely as a result of intermarriage with the Hausa tribes over the centuries. The Fulani’s ascendancy over the Hausa led to the widespread conversion of the northern populations to Islam.

With respect to governance, the Fulani simply assumed the high positions of authority within the Hausa system. At the top were states, known as *emirates*, ruled by an *emir*, or prince. A council of clerics, known as *mallamai*, chose the *emirs* from the ruling families.

45 Art and Life in Africa, School of Art and Art History, University of Iowa. “Hausa Information.” 3 November 1998. <http://www.uiowa.edu/~africart/toc/people/Hausa.html>

46 Art and Life in Africa, School of Art and Art History, University of Iowa. “Hausa Information.” 3 November 1998. <http://www.uiowa.edu/~africart/toc/people/Hausa.html>

47 Encyclopædia Britannica Online. “Nigeria: History: Kingdoms and Empires of Precolonial Nigeria: Hausaland.” 2009. <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/414840/Nigeria>

They possessed the ultimate authority in administrative and judicial affairs of the state, but delegated the actual administrative work to subordinates.⁴⁸

The Yoruba and Benin

The Yoruba tribes trace their history back to the Ife and Oyo kingdoms, both based out of Western Nigeria. Dominant in the southwestern forests from the 11th to 15th centuries, the Ife kingdom established the precedents of monarchical rule and polytheistic worship that remained integral to Yoruba culture in the coming centuries. Located to the north of Ife, in the savanna west of the Niger River, the Oyo kingdom emerged in the 14th century and ultimately grew more powerful than its southern neighbor. Ife, however, remained an important religious center. Buttressed by a strong cavalry force, the Oyo developed an expansive trade network that involved shipping goods between northern and southern entities, the latter of which included the Benin, (or Edo) kingdom, based out of south-central Nigeria.⁴⁹ The western territories populated by the Yoruba tribes became known as Yorubaland. Meanwhile, the Benin kingdom expanded its reach to control much of southwestern Nigeria (west of the Niger) by the 16th and 17th centuries.⁵⁰

The Igbo

While Yoruba society developed in the west, Igbo communities predominated in the east, with some of the earliest substantial evidence of Igbo society—the findings at Igbo Ukwu—dating to the 8th or 9th centuries. While evidence is limited, historians typically characterize these pre-colonial Igbo communities as “stateless,” or lacking a centralized administrative structure. Igbo society is thought to have instead consisted primarily of autonomous villages or egalitarian coalitions of regional communities. Exceptions to this pattern include the Nri kingdom, which may have developed as early as the 9th or 10th century, and some of the communities in the western Igbo region that drew influence from Benin.⁵¹

European Powers and the Transatlantic Slave Trade

From the outset, relations between Europe and Africa were driven by the lure of economic benefits. Motivated by a search for gold and other commodities, Portuguese merchants arrived in West Africa in the late 1400s.⁵² In addition to gold, West African merchants provided



© 2007 clipart.com
Ivory being transported to the coast

⁴⁸ Jamtan Fulani. “Hausa-Fulani.” No date.

<http://www.jamtan.com/jamtan/fulani.cfm?chap=4&linksPage=356>

⁴⁹ Encyclopædia Britannica Online. “Nigeria: History: Kingdoms and Empires of Precolonial Nigeria: Yorubaland and Benin.” 2009. <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/414840/Nigeria>

⁵⁰ Country Studies. Federal Research Division, Library of Congress. Metz, Helen Chapin, ed. *Nigeria: A Country Study*. Lovejoy, Paul E. “Chapter 1: Historical Setting: Early History: Early States Before 1500: Yoruba Kingdoms and Benin.” 1991. <http://countrystudies.us/nigeria/5.htm>

⁵¹ Federal Research Division, Library of Congress. Metz, Helen Chapin, ed. *Nigeria: A Country Study*. Lovejoy, Paul E. “Chapter 1: Historical Setting: Early History: Early States Before 1500: The Igbo: A Stateless Society?” 1991. <http://countrystudies.us/nigeria/5.htm>

⁵² Applied History Research Group, University of Calgary. “The European Voyages of Discovery: Africa.” 1997. http://www.ucalgary.ca/applied_history/tutor/eurvoya/africa.html

peppers, ivory, and various other goods—all of which were already traded internally in Africa—to their European trading partners.⁵³ From the beginning, human captives were a major component of the trade relationship, and the Nigerian coast soon became an important center for the North Atlantic slave trade. Although the practice was pre-existing in Africa, the expansion of the slave trade to a transatlantic scale vastly increased the market and imparted a heightened level of commercialization and cruelty to the process.⁵⁴

As European slave traders established ports along the West African coast, their African trading partners expanded their slave-collecting operations in the interior. Europeans were not typically involved in the actual capturing of slaves, as such operations were conducted largely by native kingdoms and tribes (who often captured slaves in war) and indigenous slave trading networks.⁵⁵ In the Nigerian region, the Yoruba and Igbo participated in the capture and delivery of slaves to European traders, as did the Benin kingdom until the 18th century, when it largely quit the practice.⁵⁶ The demand for slaves came to dominate the economy of the southern coast in the late 17th and early 18th centuries. As a result, many parts of Africa, particularly Nigeria, were engulfed in violence.⁵⁷ Inland, it became extremely dangerous for people to venture far from home, as small or dispersed ethnic groups were often the targets of slave raids.⁵⁸



© 2007 clipart.com
British explorer venturing inland

Britain, which had come to dominate the trading operations in the region, abolished its transatlantic slave trade in 1807 and subsequently imposed a naval blockade to enforce the ban. However, the ban was not very effective, as the demand for slave labor, particularly in the New World, remained strong.⁵⁹ Furthermore, because the blockade served to limit the supply to some extent, captives that were successfully smuggled to the New

⁵³ Africa Economic Analysis, African Business Information Services. Obadina, Tunde. “Slave Trade: A Root of Contemporary African Crisis.” 2000. <http://www.afbis.com/analysis/slave.htm>

⁵⁴ Africa Action. “Nigeria’s Country Profile.” November 1996 (revised 26 April 1997). <http://www.africaaction.org/bp/nigerall.html>

⁵⁵ Africa Economic Analysis, African Business Information Services. Obadina, Tunde. “Slave Trade: A Root of Contemporary African Crisis.” 2000. <http://www.afbis.com/analysis/slave.htm>

⁵⁶ Encyclopædia Britannica Online. “Nigeria: History: Kingdoms and Empires of Precolonial Nigeria: Igboland and the Delta City-States.” 2009. <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/414840/Nigeria>

⁵⁷ Country Studies. Federal Research Division, Library of Congress. Metz, Helen Chapin, ed. *Nigeria: A Country Study*. Lovejoy, Paul E. “Chapter 1: Historical Setting: European Slave Trade in West Africa.” 1991. <http://countrystudies.us/nigeria/7.htm>

⁵⁸ Geographic Alliance of Iowa, Northern Iowa University. “Nigeria Background Information: Standard 17: Historical Geography of Nigeria.” No date given. <http://www.uni.edu/gai/Nigeria/Background/Standard17.html>

⁵⁹ Humanities Department, Central Oregon Community College. Agatucci, Cora. “Part III: African Slave Trade & European Imperialism, AD / CE 15th – Early 19th Centuries.” 27 December 2005. <http://web.cocc.edu/cagatucci/classes/hum211/timelines/htimeline3.htm>

World increased in value.⁶⁰ Overall, during the centuries-long transatlantic slave trade, an estimated 3.5 million slaves were shipped out of Nigeria alone,⁶¹ with a minimum of 12 million exported from greater Africa to the Americas.⁶²

As the campaign to eradicate the lucrative slave trade—which included attempts to shift emphasis to other commodities, such as palm oil and timber—proved difficult,⁶³ the British increasingly intervened in the internal affairs of the Nigerian coastal region during the 19th century. Ultimately, this led to the Crown’s decision to assume jurisdiction over the coastal area.⁶⁴

Colonization

Lagos, located in southwestern Nigeria, became a British colony in 1861. The settlement served as a center for the expansion of trade, missions, and political influence. Inland, Britain encouraged missionary societies to explore and trade along the Niger River. In 1886, in an effort to forestall competition from France and Germany, the British Crown granted the Royal Niger Company a charter to control commerce on the river, administer internal territories, and extract mineral wealth.⁶⁵ The protectorate was extended north in 1900.

The Yoruba tribe in the southwest had a centralized administrative hierarchy that was amenable to indirect rule. On the other hand, the Igbo in the southeast had a decentralized system. As a result, the British imposed chieftaincies, and they selected local leaders who were loyal to the Crown as chiefs. Numerous smaller ethnic groups were also subjugated in this way.⁶⁶ In sum, power was exercised through a form of indirect rule that left actual governance to indigenous authorities.⁶⁷

⁶⁰ Africa Economic Analysis, African Business Information Services. Obadina, Tunde. “Slave Trade: A Root of Contemporary African Crisis.” 2000. <http://www.afbis.com/analysis/slave.htm>.

⁶¹ Country Studies. Federal Research Division, Library of Congress. Metz, Helen Chapin, ed. *Nigeria: A Country Study*. Lovejoy, Paul E. “Chapter 1: Historical Setting: European Slave Trade in West Africa.” 1991. <http://countrystudies.us/nigeria/7.htm>

⁶² BBC News. “Focus on the Slave Trade.” 3 September 2001. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/1523100.stm>

⁶³ Art and Life in Africa, School of Art and Art History, University of Iowa. “Nigeria Information.” 15 October 1998. <http://www.uiowa.edu/~africart/toc/countries/Nigeria.html>

⁶⁴ Country Studies. Federal Research Division, Library of Congress. Metz, Helen Chapin, ed. *Nigeria: A Country Study*. Lovejoy, Paul E. “Chapter 1: Historical Setting: The 19th Century: Revolution and Radical Adjustment: Abolition of the Slave Trade.” 1991. <http://countrystudies.us/nigeria/11.htm>

⁶⁵ Private companies were part of the European colonization program for Africa. They were formed by businessmen interested in exploiting the natural resources. But they were also responsible for the administrative expenses that created an incentive to maximize revenues through such policies as forced labor. African Studies Center, Michigan State University. Exploring Africa: “Unit Two: Studying Africa through the Social Studies.” <http://exploringafrica.matrix.msu.edu/students/curriculum/m7b/activity2.php>

⁶⁶ IRIN News, UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. “Nigeria: A History of Conflicts.” 1 April 2003. <http://www.irinnews.org/InDepthMain.aspx?InDepthId=30&ReportId=70458>

⁶⁷ African Studies Quarterly. Center for African Studies, University of Florida. Chege, Michael. Review of *Citizen and Subject: Contemporary Africa and the Legacy of Late Colonialism*, by Mahmood Mamdani (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996). 1997. <http://web.africa.ufl.edu/asq/v1/1/4.htm>

After British involvement, the selection of an *emir* in Hausaland had to be approved by the colonial government. Ultimately, however, this served to reinforce the position of the ruling Muslim elite, as they remained in control of an established system of taxation and administration from which the British were able to draw benefits.⁶⁸ Their jurisdiction of authority was also extended; the British put the northern minorities under the control of the Sokoto Caliphate for reasons of administrative efficiency.

One of the major British concessions was to officially discourage Christian missionary activity in Muslim northern Nigeria. This coincided with the interests of northern elites who, for obvious reasons, did not want European missionaries proselytizing since it could undermine the theocratic authority of the ruling Muslim class. The institution of separate governments in the North and the South was intended to strengthen British colonial control by preempting any coalition resistance efforts.⁶⁹ However, it also had the unintended consequence of propelling the two regions in very different developmental directions.⁷⁰

Unification

In 1914, the Protectorate of Northern Nigeria and the Colony and Protectorate of Southern Nigeria were merged into one colony by Sir Frederick Lugard, the first Governor General. This move once again weakened any possibility of unified resistance. Ethnic groups were isolated from one another through the creation of multiple administrative units. Frequent administrative reclassifications marked the 60 years of British colonial rule. The example of Nigeria illustrates the difficulties colonial powers find in uniting a tribal territory into a single, yet compliant, entity.⁷¹



© by / flickr.com
Tribute to first Nigerian engineer

Direct political exchange between the North and the South did not take place until 1946, when the British introduced a constitution that divided Nigeria into three regions: the North, the West, and the East.⁷² Southern Nigerians, who had embraced the educational opportunities offered by Christian missionaries, were beginning to clamor for independence. Accordingly, the British split the South into two regions, leaving the North intact as a single region. In effect, this move established the conditions for northern

⁶⁸ BBC News, International Version. Issacs, Dan. "Islam in Nigeria: Simmering Tensions." 24 September 2003. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/3155279.stm>

⁶⁹ Beyond Intractability. Annotated Conflict Cases. Irobi, Emmy Godwin. "Ethnic Conflict Management in Africa: A Comparative Case Study of Nigeria and South Africa." May 2005. http://www.beyondintractability.org/case_studies/nigeria_south-africa.jsp?nid=6720

⁷⁰ Geographic Alliance of Iowa, University of Northern Iowa. "Nigeria Background Information: Standard 17: Historical Geography of Nigeria." No date. <http://www.uni.edu/gai/Nigeria/Background/Standard17.html>

⁷¹ History World. "History of Nigeria." No date. <http://www.historyworld.net/wrldhis/PlainTextHistories.asp?historyid=ad41>

⁷² African Studies Centre, Leiden. Kastfelt, Niels. "The Politics of History in Northern Nigeria." 27 April 2006. <http://www.ascleiden.nl/Pdf/paper-NielsKastfelt.pdf>

dominance in the political system.⁷³ It also set a precedent in which the administrative structure and hierarchy of the government was continually remade in an effort to create a peaceful polity.

The Ibadan General Constitutional Conference of 1950 marked the beginning of a collaborative effort between the educated political class and the British to create the outlines of a constitution for an independent, self-governing state. During the conference, northern delegates lobbied for seats in a proposed legislature to be allocated according to population, which would have accorded them 50%. Southerners, by contrast, called for regional representation. Moreover, northerners favored allocation of resources on a per capita basis, which was more favorable to them, while southerners, playing to their advantages, argued that volume of trade or need should be the determining factors.⁷⁴

Independence

When it gained independence on 1 October 1960, the new nation of Nigeria possessed all the makings of a democratic government. Its federal constitution provided a large measure of autonomy for three (later four) regions. A parliamentary system modeled along British lines emphasized majority rule, and a functioning, although regionally based, multi-party system, stood in marked contrast to neighboring African states that adopted single party systems.⁷⁵



Yet, this was not enough to guarantee the survival of the republic, owing to specific structural weaknesses. Gaps in economic development and educational opportunities between the regions quickly amplified their longstanding ethnic and religious tensions.⁷⁶ The South was ahead in virtually every quantifiable measure of modernization, including education, per capita income, off-farm employment, and industrialization.

In 1951, for example, there was only one university graduate among the northerners. There were, however, hundreds of Yorubas, Igbos, and other southerners who had earned graduate and even postgraduate degrees during that same year.⁷⁷ Education had enabled

⁷³ IRIN News, UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. "Nigeria: A History of Conflicts." 1 April 2003. <http://www.irinnews.org/InDepthMain.aspx?InDepthId=30&ReportId=70458>

⁷⁴ *Nigerian Political Parties: Power in an Emergent African Nation*. Sklar, Richard. "Chapter Three: Regionalism and the Emergence of a Three Party System [p. 88]." 2004 (originally 1963). New Jersey: Africa World Press. http://books.google.com/books?id=Oi0aVR4YkmUC&pg=PA87&lpg=PA87&dq=ibadan+conference+1950+power&source=web&ots=xkq7F8K3oO&sig=LFzK0zhJA-RK2IWclL43cGif48w&hl=en&sa=X&oi=book_result&resnum=1&ct=result#PPA88,M1

⁷⁵ Country Studies. Federal Research Division, Library of Congress. Metz, Helen Chapin, ed. *Nigeria: A Country Study*. Osaghae, Eghosa. "Chapter 4: Government and Politics: The First Republic." 1991. <http://countrystudies.us/nigeria/68.htm>

⁷⁶ Art and Life in Africa, School of Art and Art History, University of Iowa. "Nigeria Information." 15 October 1998. <http://www.uiowa.edu/~africart/toc/countries/Nigeria.html>

⁷⁷ *Federalism and Ethnic Conflict in Nigeria*. Suberu, Rotini. "Chapter Two: The Evolution of the Nigerian Federation [p. 22]." 2001. Washington, DC: U.S. Institute of Peace Press.

them to get administrative jobs under the British. The northerners feared the southerners' continued overrepresentation in the government, while southerners feared that the northern Muslims could marshal a numerical majority and rule the country.⁷⁸

Nigeria's three regional states were outwardly united as a federation, but each state was controlled by a single, dominant, ethnic-based political party. This alignment produced destructively centrifugal tendencies. Each party utilized all of the resources at the regional level to enable its group to monopolize political power. The Nigerian government was thus inherently subject to internal competition and strife between parties.⁷⁹ On the sidelines were the 200-plus minority tribes, who were relegated to mere spectator status as the three major groups divided up the nation's spoils.

Civil War

On 15 January 1966, a small group of army officers—mostly Igbos from the southeast—and their leader, General Aguiyi-Ironsi, staged a coup. Under their leadership, the Nigerian administrative structure was reshuffled into a national military government that consolidated regional and federal public services. The new arrangement placed northerners at a disadvantage since they could not compete against the better-educated southerners for positions in a unified civil service.

Rising tensions led to a counter-coup six months later in which Aguiyi-Ironsi was killed.⁸⁰ After thousands of Igbo in the Muslim north were killed in a massacre stemming from the counter-coup, hundreds of thousands of them migrated to the Christian southeast.⁸¹ In January 1967, this oil-rich area declared its independence as the Republic of Biafra.⁸²

The Federation would allow Biafra to claim revenues from the oil, which was located within its declared borders. The government, however, launched a counterattack against the secessionists only after the Shell oil company, which was extracting oil in the contested region, agreed to pay royalties to Biafra, not Nigeria.⁸³ The military government drafted the Petroleum Act of 1969, which vested the Nigerian federal government with



© Peter Lockyer
Tank from civil war

⁷⁸ *Hegemony and Culture: Politics and Religious Change among the Yoruba*. Laitin, David "Chapter One: The Two Faces of Culture [p. 6]." 1986. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

⁷⁹ *Untapped: The Scramble for Africa's Oil*. Ghazvinian, John. "Chapter One: The Onshore Effect [p. 22]." 2007. New York: Harcourt, 2007.

⁸⁰ Bureau of African Affairs, U.S. Department of State. "Background Note: Nigeria." December 2008. <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2836.htm>

⁸¹ Chatham House. "Fostering Unity in a Fragmented Nation: The Role of Religion in Nigeria." 19 March 2007. http://www.chathamhouse.org.uk/files/9132_190307nigeria.pdf

⁸² BBC News. "Nigeria: A History of Coups." 15 February 1999. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/83449.stm>

⁸³ *Violent Environments*. Peluso, Nancy Lee and Michael Watts, eds. Fairhead, James. "Chapter Nine: International Dimensions of Conflict over Natural and Environmental Resources [p. 223]." 2001. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

ownership of all oil and gas within the country's borders, including its territorial waters and continental shelf.⁸⁴

Before the surrender of the short-lived independent Biafran government in January 1970, a naval, land, and air blockade of the Igbo homeland resulted in mass starvation and, ultimately, charges of genocide.⁸⁵ Between 500,000 and two million Biafran civilians died from starvation during the three-year civil conflict.⁸⁶

Late 20th Century

Following the civil war, the government turned to the task of economic development. Foreign exchange earnings and government revenues increased dramatically with the rising oil prices of 1973–74. A bloodless coup brought General Murtala Muhammed to power in 1975. He announced a timetable for the resumption of civilian rule by 1 October 1979.

Under the 1979 constitution promulgated by the military leadership, the first elections were held on schedule in July and August 1979. Power was handed over to a new civilian government headed by President Shehu Shagari on 1 October 1979.

Nigeria's Second Republic came into existence in the midst of great expectations. Oil prices were high and thus government revenues were on the rise. The promise of prosperity, however, proved short-lived amid the recession of the early 1980s; plunging oil prices precipitated an economic decline. Widespread corruption also undermined public confidence in the Shagari government. The Second Republic did not survive its infancy.

After the military overthrew the Second Republic at the end of 1983, Nigeria was governed by a succession of military leaders for the next 16 years.⁸⁷ Under military rule, Muslim northerners who held dominant positions in the armed forces were given federal post appointments on the basis of patronage rather than merit.

⁸⁴ Under the 1960 and 1963 Constitutions, most natural resources including mines, minerals, oil fields, and petroleum surveys were all under federal government authority. There was, however, a generous revenue-sharing formula that returned 50% of tax proceeds from the extracted resources back to the home region.

⁸⁵ While famine and battle raged, the Biafran government hired a PR firm to make their case internationally and counter the campaign of the firms hired by the Nigerian government. *The Marketing of Rebellion: Insurgents, Media, and International Activism*. Clifford, Bob. "Chapter Two: Power, Exchange, and Marketing [p. 25]." 2005. New York: Cambridge University.

⁸⁶ American University, Inventory of Conflict & Environment Case Studies. "ICE Case Studies: The Biafran War." November 1997. <http://www.american.edu/TED/ice/biafra.htm>

⁸⁷ One scholar has explained the culture of violence that permeates contemporary Nigeria as the result of years of military dictatorship. Specifically, Hassan Kukah argues in *Religion, Politics and Power in Northern Nigeria* (1994) that military rule shut off access to other channels of organized opposition and imposed severe limitations on the ability of disaffected groups to negotiate with the state. In effect, violence was the only means of gaining the attention of military regimes. Cited by Ogbu Kalu, "Who is Marginalizing Nigerian Muslims," USA/Africa Dialogue Series. No date. <http://www.utexas.edu/conferences/africa/ads/694.html>

General Muhammadu Buhari surfaced as the leader of Nigeria's new ruling body, the Supreme Military Council (SMC). His government was, in turn, overthrown in a bloodless coup by the SMC's third-ranking member, Army Chief of Staff General Ibrahim Babangida, in August 1985.

President Babangida pledged to restore civilian rule by 1990. This date was subsequently postponed until January 1993. On 12 June 1993, elections were held, with many independent observers judging them as the fairest in Nigeria's short history as a nation. Early returns predicted that M.K.O. Abiola, a wealthy Yoruba businessman, would win.⁸⁸ However, later in the month, Babangida annulled the election results, citing several pending lawsuits as a pretext. This caused widespread social unrest as Nigerians confronted the possibility that any election could be annulled.⁸⁹ Riots ensued, leading to the deaths of more than 100 people. On 27 August, Babangida agreed to hand over power to an "interim government" headed by Ernest Shonekan.⁹⁰

In November, Defense Minister Sani Abacha stepped in to assume power amid the chaos. Although he promised to return the country to civilian rule, he first disbanded all democratic political institutions, and he placed military officers in government positions previously held by elected officials. His harsh rule, which included the execution of Ken Saro-Wiwa, an environmental and Ogoni tribal rights activist who many viewed as a victim of trumped up charges, led most Western aid donors, including the Peace Corps, to withdraw from Nigeria. Abacha did not provide a timetable for a return to civilian governance until his 1 October 1995 Independence Day address, when he announced plans for a three-year transition from military to civilian rule.

In preparation for the 1998 elections, Abacha approved only five political parties. Each of these parties nominated him as their presidential candidate. Declarations of "No Abacha, No Nigeria" and "General Abacha is the best thing that ever happened to this country" were made by leading politicians. Even television sets with Abacha's picture embossed on them appeared in March 1998.⁹¹ He was expected to succeed himself as a civilian president on 1 October 1998, but he died on 8 June of that year.



A Democratic Nigeria

A new democratic era began when Olusegun Obasanjo assumed office in May 1999. Obasanjo, a former general, had garnered public respect for his stand against the Abacha

⁸⁸ U.S. Department of State Geographic Bureaus, Electronic Research Collection, University of Illinois at Chicago. Bureau of African Affairs, U.S. Department of State. "Testimony: George Moose on Nigeria." 20 July 1995. <http://dosfan.lib.uic.edu/ERC/bureaus/afr/950720Nigeria.html>

⁸⁹ Holler Africa. Osha, Sanya. "Nigeria's Democracy Project: Lessons from the Abacha Regime." 2005. <http://www.hollerafrica.com/showArticle.php?artId=161&catId=1>

⁹⁰ Bureau of African Affairs, U.S. Department of State. "Background Note: Nigeria." December 2008. <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2836.htm>

⁹¹ Chippla's Weblog. "Nigerian Presidential Election 2007: Abacha's Ghost." 27 December 2005. <http://chippla.blogspot.com/2005/12/nigerian-presidential-election-2007.html> (password protected)

regime and its legendary human rights abuses. He also received acclaim for his 1979 attempt to restore civilian rule and his promise to look past religious differences in order to represent all Nigerians.

The elected president immediately confronted many problems, including economic stagnation, a bureaucracy staffed by patronage appointments, and decrepit infrastructure. In responding to these challenges, Obasanjo divested the civilian government of hundreds of military officers, created a panel to investigate the Abacha regime's human rights abuses, released people who had been detained without reason, withdrew questionable contracts allocated by previous governments, and attempted to recover millions of dollars in public funds.⁹²



Before Obasanjo took office in 1999, there was talk of alternating the presidency between the Christian South and the Muslim North. The eight years of Obasanjo's two-term presidency symbolized Christian control. For the 2007 elections, all of the country's major political parties chose Muslim candidates.⁹³

However, most of the political parties have been described as "relatively weak," with few distinguishing factors among them. Their appeal depends upon the personalities that lead them.⁹⁴ Furthermore, in late 2006, 33 of Nigeria's 36 state governors were under investigation for corruption, money laundering, or other financial crimes.⁹⁵

Recent Events

The Nigerian constitution imposes a two-term limit on the president as well as state governors. After winning a second term, President Obasanjo tried to change the constitution so he could remain in office for a third term. However, he was thwarted by the Nigerian Senate.

The consensus of outside observers is that the April 2007 election did not meet international standards for fairness and transparency.⁹⁶ On Election Day, some polling

⁹² Bureau of African Affairs, U.S. State Department. "Background Note: Nigeria." December 2008. <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2836.htm#history>

⁹³ The Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life. Ruby, Robert and Timothy Samuel Shah. "Nigeria's Presidential Election: The Christian-Muslim Divide." 21 March 2007. <http://pewforum.org/docs/?DocID=182>

⁹⁴ International Republican Institute. "2007 Nigeria National Elections: Pre-Election Assessment Final Report." 1 February 2007. <http://www.iri.org/africa/nigeria/pdfs/2007-02-01-Pre-electionAssessment.pdf>

⁹⁵ This in turn has become a rallying cry to consolidate the country into six administrative regions in order to reduce the number of officials, which now includes not only the 36 governors, but 36 deputy governors, an unknown number of permanent secretaries, and political advisors, etc. All of them live in the capital of Abuja at public expense. *The House Has Fallen: Nigeria in Crisis*. Maier, Karl. "Epilogue [p. 300]." 2003. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

⁹⁶ BBC News. "What Nigerian Election Observers Say." 23 April 2007. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/6582979.stm>

places did not open on time, if at all, or they ran short of ballots. The pre-election environment, moreover, was marred by attempts to selectively disqualify candidates based on the preferences of those already in power.⁹⁷ Voter registration used untested, direct capture technology of which neither voters nor government officials had much understanding.⁹⁸ Finally, there was evidence of systematic collusion between the ruling People's Democratic Party (PDP), the Independent National Election Commission (INEC), and local law enforcement agencies to intimidate voters and influence the election.⁹⁹

The new president, Umaru Yar'Adua, is a Hausa Muslim and, as a member of the PDP, was Obasanjo's preferred successor. Yar'Adua, however, faces significant challenges in governance, particularly since the election was not considered free and fair. He immediately promised electoral reforms to prevent the problems that characterized the election of 2007 from reoccurring in the future.¹⁰⁰

Since he assumed office, Yar'Adua has moved slowly, to the disappointment of many. His time in power has also been plagued by health problems, resulting in behind the scenes power struggles. Some observers have claimed that northerners in the government are more concerned with holding onto power than resolving issues that continue to hobble Nigeria's economic growth.¹⁰¹

⁹⁷ International Republican Institute. "Nigeria's Elections Below Acceptable Standards: Preliminary Findings of IRI's International Election Observation Mission." 22 April 2007. <http://www.iri.org/africa/nigeria/2007-04-22-nigeria.asp>

⁹⁸ International Foundation for Electoral Systems. Van Dusen, Nathan. "From the Field: Nigerian Elections: What Went Wrong?" 2 May 2007. [http://www.ifes.org/features.html?title=From the Field %25 Nigerian Elections %25 What Went Wrong%25](http://www.ifes.org/features.html?title=From%20the%20Field%20Nigerian%20Elections%20What%20Went%20Wrong%25)

⁹⁹ African Policy Forum, Center for Strategic and International Studies. Joseph, Richard, et al. "Joint Statement on Nigeria's Recent Elections." 17 May 2007. <http://forums.csis.org/africa/?p=36>

¹⁰⁰ Voice of America News. Da Costa, Gilbert. "Nigeria Begins Election Reform Process." 12 May 2008. <http://www.voanews.com/english/archive/2008-05/2008-05-12-voa34.cfm?CFID=88927537&CFTOKEN=12983692>

¹⁰¹ The Economist. "Nigeria's President: Please Hurry Up." 23 October 2008. http://www.economist.com/world/mideast-africa/displaystory.cfm?story_id=12480913

Time Line of Nigerian History

11th Century C.E. - Formation of Hausa Kingdom city-states.

1472 - Portuguese explorers land on Nigerian coast.

16th–18th Centuries - Millions of Nigerians forcibly sent to the Americas as part of Transatlantic slave trade.

1809 - Single Islamic state, the Sokoto Caliphate, is founded in the North.

1850s - British establish presence around Lagos.

1861–1914 - Britain consolidates its hold over what it names the Colony and Protectorate of Nigeria. Governance model based on “indirect rule” through local leaders.

1960 - Nigeria gains independence as a federal republic.

1966 January - Prime Minister killed in coup. Major-General Johnson Aguiyi-Ironsi heads military administration.

1966 July - Major-General Aguiyi-Ironsi killed in counter-coup.

1967 - **Three eastern states secede as the Republic of Biafra, sparking bloody civil war.**

1970 - Biafra surrenders and is reintegrated into the country.

1983 - Major-General Muhammad Buhari seizes power in bloodless coup.

1985 - General Ibrahim Babangida seizes power in bloodless coup, curtails political activity.

1993 June - Military government annuls elections to remain in power, prompting the United States to put sanctions on Nigeria.

1993 August - Power transferred to Interim National Government.

1993 November - General Sani Abacha, Nigeria’s seventh military leader, seizes power and suppresses opposition.

1995 - Ken Saro-Wiwa, poet, environmentalist, and tribal rights activist, is executed after a show trial.

1998 - Abacha dies before he can be sworn in as president, following a rigged election.

1999 - Olusegun Obasanjo assumes office as the first democratically elected president in two decades.

2000 - *Shari'a* criminal code is adopted by several northern states despite opposition from resident non-Muslims. Violence results in hundreds of deaths.

2002 - More than 200 deaths in four-day riot stoked by Muslim fury over Nigeria's hosting of Miss World Beauty Pageant in Kaduna. Event relocated to Britain.

2003 19 April – Nigeria holds its first civilian-organized presidential elections since the end of military rule. Olusegun Obasanjo is reelected to another term with more than 60% of the vote.

2004 May - State of emergency declared in Central Plateau State after 200 Muslims killed in Yelwa by Christian militia; revenge attacks launched by Muslim youths in Kano.

2005 Paris Club agrees to write off one-half of Nigeria's USD 36 billion foreign debt.

2006 January onwards - Militants in the Niger Delta attack pipelines and other oil facilities; kidnap foreign oil workers. The rebels demand more control over the delta's oil wealth.

2006 April - Buoyed by record oil prices, Nigeria becomes the first African nation to pay off its debt to the Paris Club.

2006 May - The Nigerian Senate rejects proposed changes to the constitution that would have allowed President Obasanjo to stand for a third term in the 2007 election.

2007 April - Umaru Yar'Adua of the ruling People's Democratic Party is declared winner of the presidential election, although many observers find irregularities in the voting process.

2008 February – Henry Okah, alleged head of a militant group responsible for repeated attacks on oil pipeline infrastructure, is extradited from Angola to Nigeria to face trial.

2008 August - Nigeria complies with International Court of Justice ruling and relinquishes sovereignty of Bakassi Peninsula to Cameroon, ending decades-old dispute.

2008 November - Fighting between Muslims and Christians in the central Plateau state town of Jos results in several hundred casualties.

Chapter 4 Economy

Introduction

Nigeria has long been involved in the global economy. In the past, the transatlantic slave trade saw 3.5 million people taken from present-day Nigeria to the New World before the practice was abolished.¹⁰² After the discovery of oil, petroleum extraction became the mainstay of the economy. A manufacturing base was not developed under British colonial rule, and since the nation's independence in 1960, little industrial development has occurred. This lack of diversity renders the Nigerian economy vulnerable to price swings in the international oil market. It has also resulted in a low rate of off-farm job creation, thereby spawning a large informal economy as a source of both goods and employment opportunities.¹⁰³ Untaxed, unregulated, and, in some cases, illicit enterprises provide most urban Nigerians, particularly in Lagos, with the means to eke out a living.



Standard of Living

Given its large oil reserves, Nigeria has the potential to become a very prosperous society, at least in theory. However, extreme poverty is widespread, with basic social indicators placing Nigeria among the 20 poorest nations in the world.¹⁰⁴ The wealth garnered from oil extraction has not filtered down to improve the lives of the majority of its growing population. Instead, it has been squandered on lavish consumption or lost to corruption.

One result of this lavish consumption is the marginalization of agriculture. In a country that suddenly becomes flush with foreign exchange, crop farmers and cattle herders ironically find fewer customers for their products, as wealthier consumers tend to prefer high-quality imported fare. This prompts many to abandon their failing agricultural livelihoods and move to the cities, where tales of making big money abound.¹⁰⁵ Once there, however, they confront a far different reality in which financial security is extremely difficult to attain.¹⁰⁶ Popular vocations include hawking cheap goods to

¹⁰² Country Studies. Federal Research Division, Library of Congress. Metz, Helen Chapin, ed. *Nigeria: A Country Study*. Lovejoy, Paul E. "Chapter 1: Historical Setting: European Slave Trade in West Africa." 1991. <http://countrystudies.us/nigeria/5.htm>

¹⁰³ BBC News. "Nigeria 'Fuelled' by Black Economy." 3 December 2001. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/business/1689165.stm>

¹⁰⁴ BBC News. Hale, Briony. "Nigeria's Economy Dominated by Oil." 16 January 2002. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/business/1763464.stm>

¹⁰⁵ Black Herbals. Ekwowusi, Sonnie. "Population Not Cause of Our Problem." 25 September 2002. http://www.blackherbals.com/overpopulation_is_not_the_problem.htm

¹⁰⁶ For example, Benin City is home to one million people, 90% of whom are unemployed. In the past, the city was the site of significant commercial activity, with major products including wood, rubber, manufactured furniture, and bronze figures. However, in recent years, Benin City has become known as a source of trafficked humans, most notably young girls from impoverished families who venture abroad as indentured servants in the sex trade. Spiegel Online International. Brinkbäumer, Klaus. "An African Odyssey Part III: Surviving the Sahara on the Way to Europe." 29 January 2007. <http://www.spiegel.de/international/spiegel/0,1518,462089,00.html>

passing motorists or, in more fortunate circumstances, driving a cab. Ironically, the collapse of the traditional agrarian sector has forced the government to import food staples in order to feed its growing population. Farmers grow only 500,000 tons of rice, far short of the annual consumption requirement of 2.5 million tons.¹⁰⁷

Nigeria's economic deterioration, in spite of its energy revenues, is evidenced in the drop in per capita income over the last several decades. In 1965, it stood at USD 1,000. By 1998, it was only USD 300,¹⁰⁸ and by 2007, it was USD 920, still below the 1965 mark.¹⁰⁹ The number of people who fall below the poverty line has also risen from 43% in 1985 to 66% in 2002.¹¹⁰ In addition to population growth, disinvestment in education and the loss of skilled professionals to other countries have contributed to this decline.¹¹¹

Agriculture

Agriculture accounts for one-third of Nigeria's GDP and employs two-thirds of the labor force.¹¹² Most farmers cultivate small plots that rely on rain rather than irrigation, thereby resulting in low crop yields. The sector has suffered from mismanagement, poor policies, and a lack of basic infrastructure.

Nigeria's high export earnings from oil sales and its then-overvalued currency, the *naira*, allowed it to finance large-scale food imports during the 1970s and early 1980s.¹¹³ However, the worldwide recession in the 1980s caused the Nigerian economy to collapse, leaving the government heavily in debt for food purchases it had made on credit. A subsequent ban on imports has led to improved crop yields since the mid 1980s. This has been the result of increasing the amount of land area under cultivation, rather than improvements in productivity, however.¹¹⁴ Farmers must, moreover, cope with land



¹⁰⁷ IRIN News, UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. "Nigeria: Rice Imports Planned." 2 May 2008. <http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=78035>

¹⁰⁸ Overseas Development Institute. Blench, Roger. "Nigeria: Maximising pro-poor growth: regenerating the socio-economic database." 16–17 June 2004.

http://www.odi.org.uk/speeches/nigeria_2004/Blench%20Nigeria%20%20paper%20web.pdf

¹⁰⁹ The World Bank. "Nigeria at a Glance." 24 September 2008.

http://devdata.worldbank.org/AAG/nga_aag.pdf

¹¹⁰ BBC News. Hale, Briony. "Nigeria's Economy Dominated by Oil." 16 January 2002.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/business/1763464.stm>

¹¹¹ Africa Renewal (formerly Africa Recovery), Department of Public Information, United Nations. *Africa Recovery*, Vol. 17, No. 2. Mutume, Gumisai. "Reversing Africa's 'Brain Drain': New Initiatives Tap Skills of African Expatriates." July 2003.

<http://www.un.org/ecosocdev/geninfo/afrec/vol17no2/172brain.htm>

¹¹² Bureau of African Affairs, U.S. Department of State. "Background Note: Nigeria." December 2008.

<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2836.htm#econ>

¹¹³ Economics and Trade Branch, United Nations Environment Programme. The Nigerian Institute of Social and Economic Research. Akande, "Tunji. "An Overview of the Nigerian Rice Economy." No date. <http://www.unep.ch/etu/etp/events/Agriculture/nigeria.pdf>

¹¹⁴ Central Bank of Nigeria. *Economic and Financial Review*. Okuneye, P.A. "Rising Cost of Food Prices and Food Insecurity in Nigeria and Its Implications for Poverty Reduction." 2002.

<http://www.cenbank.org/OUT/PUBLICATIONS/EFR/RD/2002/EFVOL39-4-6.PDF>

degradation due to desertification and drought in the North and heavy rain, flooding, and oil pollution in the South.¹¹⁵

Foreign Investment

Until recently, Nigeria was Africa's most indebted nation. This owed in part to the fact that the country's oil reserves enabled it to receive a much higher credit rating than it otherwise would have warranted between 1973 and 1985, a period during which the international price of oil fell while the government borrowed heavily.¹¹⁶

The sheer size and overwhelming economic insecurity of the Nigerian population—over two-thirds of which (about 100 million people) lives on less than one dollar a day—and the country's efforts to institute reforms as a burgeoning democracy seemed to make it a viable claimant for debt relief. However, owing in large part to its oil revenues, Nigeria's financial situation was not perceived to be as dire as some other countries.¹¹⁷

In 2005, Nigeria finally reached a deal with the Paris Club to cancel roughly half of its USD 36 billion debt.¹¹⁸ By 2006, the country had paid off the rest of its Paris Club debt, making it the first African nation to do so. This ensured Nigeria's removal from an international debt blacklist, enabling the government to borrow money on favorable terms.¹¹⁹

This positive development should make Nigeria more attractive to investors. Nonetheless, the country's unreliable infrastructure, which leads to frequent power outages, and the financial insecurity of much of its population are strong disincentives for foreign investment in any sector except oil extraction.¹²⁰



© Hasso Rabehert
Niger Delta view

Trade and Economic Integration

Nigeria ranks as OPEC's fifth-largest oil producer, which assigned it a daily quota of 2.3 million barrels.¹²¹ Yet the revenues generated from the industry have given rise to what is

¹¹⁵ Rural Poverty Portal, International Fund for Agricultural Development. "Rural Poverty in Nigeria." No date. <http://operations.ifad.org/web/guest/country/home/tags/nigeria>

¹¹⁶ Department of Economics, Stanford University. Rewane, Misan. "Overrated? The Impact of Oil Revenue on Nigeria's Creditworthiness, Debt Profile & Sustainability, 1973–2004 [p. 20]." May 2007. http://www-econ.stanford.edu/academics/Honors_Theses/Theses_2007/Rewane2007.pdf

¹¹⁷ Center for Global Development. "Debt Relief for Nigeria." c.2009. http://www.cgdev.org/section/initiatives/_archive/nigeriandebtreief

¹¹⁸ The Paris Club is an informal group of creditor nations that was formed in 1956. Representatives meet with debtor countries on a monthly basis in Paris in order to reach agreements on restructuring their debts. American Friends Service Committee. "Nigeria's Debt Cancelled in Paris Club Deal." October 2005. <http://www.afsc.org/AfricaLifeOverDebt/ht/d/ContentDetails/i/3746>

¹¹⁹ BBC News, International Version. "Nigeria Settles Paris Club Debt." 21 April 2006. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/business/4926966.stm>

¹²⁰ BBC News, International Version. "Country Profile: Nigeria." 5 December 2008. http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/country_profiles/1064557.stm

¹²¹ Yale Global Online, Yale Center for the Study of Globalization, Yale University. Tripathi, Salil. "In Nigeria, Oil Wealth Delivers Grief." 10 June 2008. <http://yaleglobal.yale.edu/display.article?id=10921>

known as “Dutch Disease.” This is a phenomenon in which the influx of foreign exchange from a natural resource—in this case oil revenues—makes other economic activities less attractive as imports flood the local market.¹²²

This trend reflects a change in consumer spending when a country suddenly finds itself awash in hard currency from selling a highly valuable commodity on the international market. In short, those who have access to hard currency start to buy imported goods, which are perceived (usually accurately) to be of better quality than their domestic counterparts. As a result, domestic manufacturing and even agriculture decline in competitiveness.

Furthermore, the accumulation of wealth is often perceived as the outcome of luck rather than hard work. By extension, upward mobility becomes a matter of establishing connections with the right people, whose easy-living lifestyle is widely glamorized.¹²³ “The animating principle among Lagos’ poor,” journalist George Packer writes, “is the inevitability of *oga*, or no salvation without patronage.” As another observer described the situation, “You find people who think, it’s more worth my while to associate with this man who doles out some money to me from time to time rather than congregate with likeminded, like-situated people who are not that well-to-do.”¹²⁴

Such a calculation reflects the preeminence of a *rentier* class. The term refers to people whose income is derived not from manual labor or professional employment, but from collecting rental income on property they already own. It has been extended to a nation in which citizens, or a select few, become, in effect, landlords. In Nigeria their livelihood is secured through payments from foreign oil companies, which exploit land that has since ceased to support farmers, laborers, skilled artisans, or entrepreneurs.¹²⁵



Severing the link between work and remuneration, this trend has a deeply destructive impact on the economy. At all levels of society, a cynical, short-term, “grab-it-while-you-can” mentality propels people into speculative activities. Since the advent of the internet, for example, Nigeria has rapidly become the online scam capital of the world. The most common is the “419 scam”—named after the applicable section of the Nigerian

¹²² The term “Dutch disease” refers to the first time this phenomenon was observed when the Netherlands discovered and developed North Sea oil resources. The oil boom, in short, induced a decline in its other export industries, which resulted in their ultimate disappearance in many cases. Global Studies, University of Wisconsin. Garber, David S. “Oil, Dutch Disease, and Development: The Case of Chad.” 2004. <http://global.wisc.edu/skj/fellows/reports/2004-travel-garber.pdf>

¹²³ *High Stakes and Stakeholders: Oil Conflict and Security in Nigeria*. Omeje, Kenneth. “Introduction: The Rentier Space [p. 7].” 2006. New York: Ashgate Publishing.

¹²⁴ The New Yorker. Packer, George. “The Megacity: Decoding the Chaos of Lagos.” 13 November 2006. http://www.newyorker.com/archive/2006/11/13/061113fa_fact_packer

¹²⁵ *Untapped: The Scramble for Africa’s Oil*. Ghazvinian, John. “Chapter Two: The Offshore Illusion [p. 103].” 2007. New York: Harcourt.

criminal code—which involves forgery, deception, and impersonation.¹²⁶ Specifically, this type of fraud often involves a person who falsely represents himself as a public official in order to solicit money from someone overseas via the internet.¹²⁷

In effect, the “Nigerian Scam,” as it is also known, utilizes the globalized banking system to cash in on the Nigerian government’s reputation for corruption. Unsuspecting victims are enticed with the expectation that a cut of the millions siphoned off by corrupt officials can be had simply by providing a foreign bank account and fund release authorization to cover a transaction fee. Instead, their bank accounts are drained.¹²⁸ The 419 scam is estimated to have cost U.S. residents as much as USD 100 million per year.¹²⁹ Its longevity owes to the ability of perpetrators to continuously create more sophisticated scams. This practice has tarnished Nigeria’s reputation to the extent that it has foreclosed the possibility of trying to establish a legitimate internet business relying on international customers.¹³⁰

Banking

In 2006, Nigeria completed an overhaul of its banking system, reducing the number of banks from 89 to 25.¹³¹ Prior to the 13-point reforms introduced in 2005, the Nigerian banking industry was characterized by weak oversight. This was evident in widespread lack of compliance with regulatory requirements, late or non-publication of annual accounts, insider abuse, and real lending rates above 10%.¹³² The reforms also consolidated the industry and increased the percentage of deposits that banks must keep in liquid assets.



Unconnected individuals stand little chance of receiving loans. Even though banking billboards crowd city streets, less than 10% of lending goes to individuals. Banks prefer to extend loans to businesses with assets rather than enter the riskier market of consumer

¹²⁶ The number itself has become a Nigerian metaphor for deception. For example, a betrayed lover will say, “S/he played me for a 419.” *A Culture of Corruption: Everyday Deception and Popular Discontent in Nigeria*. Smith, Daniel Jordan. “Introduction [pp. 20–24.]” 2007. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

¹²⁷ Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation. FDIC Consumer News: Winter 2001/2002. “If it Sounds too Good to be True.” 5 March 2002.

<http://www.fdic.gov/consumers/consumer/news/cnwin0102/TooGood.html>

¹²⁸ GlobalScams.com. “Renowned Psychiatrist Duped by Nigerian Scam.” 3 March 2006.

<http://www.globalscams.com/php/showNews.php?newsid=9&linkid=7&PHPSESSID=2...f9fed...>

¹²⁹ San Francisco Chronicle. Emery, David. “The Nigerian E-mail Hoax: West African Scammers Take to the Net.” 14 March 2002. [http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-](http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?file=/gate/archive/2002/03/14/nigerscam.DTL)

[bin/article.cgi?file=/gate/archive/2002/03/14/nigerscam.DTL](http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?file=/gate/archive/2002/03/14/nigerscam.DTL)

¹³⁰ The New Yorker. Packer, George. “The Megacity: Decoding the Chaos of Lagos.” 13 November 2006.

http://www.newyorker.com/archive/2006/11/13/061113fa_fact_packer

¹³¹ Bureau of African Affairs, U.S. Department of State. “Background Notes: Nigeria.” December 2008.

<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2836.htm>

¹³² The Statesmen. Atafori, Ayuure Kapini. “Should Ghana Emulate Nigeria’s Banking Reforms?” 18 April 2007. http://www.thestatesmanonline.com/pages/news_detail.php?newsid=3147§ion=7

lending.¹³³ As a result, roughly 65% of the population utilizes the informal sector, which includes private money lenders, friends, and credit unions, for access to cash.¹³⁴ Microcredit enables individuals, particularly women, who lack collateral but have a business plan, to acquire the capital needed to actualize their proposal.¹³⁵ Currently, this is mainly the purview of international nonprofits.¹³⁶

Business Culture

While outsiders see corruption as pervasive, Nigerians themselves view it as taking two different forms.¹³⁷ One involves public officials who solicit bribes that go directly into their own pockets.¹³⁸ The other is the deeply embedded culture of patronage that operates down to the village level.¹³⁹

The latter form is seen as legitimate, whereas the former often fuels social discontent. Pulling strings to help a relative or friend get a job is seen as fulfilling one's obligation as a relation of that person. In addition to kin, this practice extends to those who share the same community of origin or who maintain other ties across the social hierarchy. This patron-client system has long functioned as a substitute for civil service hiring and the transparent distribution of public goods. In effect, it offers the group informal access to resources.¹⁴⁰



By contrast, the solicitation of bribes by officials, be it from passing motorists or a foreign investor looking to land a lucrative contract, is not viewed as a legitimate practice. Thus, when Nigerians complain about corruption, they are really speaking of the self-

¹³³ Access My Library. The Banker. "Special Supplement: Nigeria- Unexplored Territory- With 84% of Money in Circulation Outside the Banking System, Banks Have Little Impact on Nigeria's Population, Providing Few Consumer Retail Services and Virtually No Consumer Lending." 1 April 2006.

http://www.accessmylibrary.com/coms2/summary_0286-15212298_ITM

¹³⁴ Bureau of African Affairs, U.S. Department of State. "Background Note: Nigeria." December 2008.

<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2836.htm>

¹³⁵ This situation was addressed by Herman de Soto in *The Mystery of Capital: Why Capitalism Triumphs in the West and Fails Everywhere Else* (New York: Basic Books, 2000). He argues that a haphazard regulatory environment forces the poor into the underground economy, which does not allow them to count their assets, such as housing, as capital.

¹³⁶ Inter-governmental Group of Twenty Four. G24 Workshop. Anyanwu, C.M. "Microfinance Institutions in Nigeria: Policy, Practice, and Potentials." November 2004. <http://www.g24.org/anyanwu.pdf>

¹³⁷ Center for Human Rights Research and Development. CHRRD Research Review, No. 1. Erubami, Mashood and Ian R. Young. "Nigeria's Corruption and Related Economic Behavior in Their Global Context." September 2003. <http://www.chrrd.kabissa.org/nigeria-corruption-review.htm>

¹³⁸ The Corner House. Hawley, Sue. "Exporting Corruption: Privatisation, Multinationals and Bribery." June 2000. <http://www.thecornerhouse.org.uk/pdf/briefing/19bribe.pdf>

¹³⁹ Peace Corps Writers. Strain, David. Review of *A Culture of Corruption: Everyday Deception and Popular Discontent in Nigeria*, by Daniel Jordan Smith (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006). 2007. <http://peacecorpswriters.org/pages/2007/0701/701rv-culture.html>

¹⁴⁰ *A Culture of Corruption: Everyday Deception and Popular Discontent in Nigeria*. Smith, Daniel Jordan. "Introduction [pp. 18–19]." 2007. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

enrichment form and how this has displaced the tradition of helping others when one is in a position to do so. In their eyes, this trend has contributed to a decline in morality.¹⁴¹

Tourism

While the country's tourist attractions, such as its nature reserves and museums, are well maintained by African standards, the Nigerian government has put little investment into promoting the nation as a place to visit. As a result, tourist revenues are not a major contributor to the economy.¹⁴²



Nigeria was designated the host of the Miss World Pageant in 2002 after its candidate had won the previous competition. Hosting this pageant offered the prospect of free publicity for the nation's tourism industry. Muslims, however, immediately expressed unease over the competition, condemning it as an indecent spectacle. The situation was further complicated by the event's planned location, Kaduna, a city in the predominantly Muslim North. Contest organizers tried to placate the Muslim community by postponing the pageant, as it was originally scheduled to be held during the Muslim holy month of Ramadan.

Outside Nigeria, some contestants withdrew in a show of solidarity with a campaign to spare the life of a Nigerian Muslim woman. She faced an automatic death-by-stoning sentence after giving birth outside marriage. Her sentence was later commuted.

Inside the country, violence erupted after a young female fashion writer based in Lagos speculated in print that the Prophet Mohammed probably would have chosen one of the beautiful Miss World contestants as his wife.¹⁴³ Her column set off riots in Kaduna, and the trouble later spread to the capital, Abuja. In the end, the death toll exceeded 200 people, with hundreds of others reported injured. The pageant was ultimately relocated to London in order to ensure participant safety.¹⁴⁴

¹⁴¹ This is the argument of James Scott in *The Moral Economy of the Peasant: Rebellion and Subsistence in Southeast Asia* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1976). Scott has observed that farmers place subsistence considerations above all else. Out of this come the norms of reciprocity that enable the group to survive.

¹⁴² IMDiversity. "Thinking About Your Next Vacation Spot? Consider a Trip to Nigeria." 2007. http://www.imdiversity.com/villages/global/Global_Tourism/TourismNigeria.asp

¹⁴³ BBC News, World Edition. "Nigeria Riots Spread to Capital." 22 November 2002. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/2501893.stm>

¹⁴⁴ Frontline/World, PBS News. "The Show Must Go On." January 2003. <http://www.pbs.org/frontlineworld/stories/nigeria/2000s.html>

Chapter 5 Society

Introduction

Nigerian culture is noteworthy for its diversity, as the country is home to over 250 ethnic groups.¹⁴⁵ The vast differences between these groups are expressed in this quotation: “The Niger Delta man, the Ogoni man, the Ijaw man, is as far from the Yoruba man or the Hausa man culturally, linguistically, and even physically, as Spain is from Norway, or as Portugal is from England.”¹⁴⁶ Yet the cultures frequently blend when different groups live in close proximity, and the boundaries between them often prove quite fluid. All groups share a commitment to preserving traditional, cultural rituals. Indigenous festivals, music, storytelling, and dance performances remain popular, particularly in rural areas.

Ethnic Groups

Ethnic population figures for Nigeria are unreliable and contentious due to measurement problems and political manipulation. According to some estimates, the Hausa-Fulani in the North represent 29% of the population, the Yoruba in the southwest constitute 21%, and the Igbo in the southeast comprise 19%.¹⁴⁷



© Lisa Goldman
Yoruban women

Yoruba

The encompassing designation “Yoruba” does not refer to a cohesive ethnic group, but rather smaller communities that are loosely linked by geography, language, history, and religion.¹⁴⁸ As a whole, the Yoruba people have long been urban dwellers, establishing numerous centralized kingdoms over the centuries. Traditionally, the king (*oba*) presiding over each kingdom lived in a centrally located palace in the capital city, which was typically large and densely populated.¹⁴⁹ The Yoruba people remain one of Nigeria’s most urban groups, as evidenced in Lagos, where they make up the majority of the population.¹⁵⁰ As residents of urban environments, they often specialize in skilled trades or provide services for others. However, many will also migrate to rural areas to engage in agricultural activities for portions of the year.

The Yoruba have embraced both Christianity and Islam, but they have also maintained many of their beliefs in Yoruban deities, known as *Orisha*. Yoruban culture can also be

¹⁴⁵ Bureau of African Affairs, U.S. Department of State. “Background Notes: Nigeria.” December 2008. <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2836.htm>

¹⁴⁶ *Untapped: The Scramble for Africa’s Oil*. Ghazvinian, John. “Chapter One: The Onshore Effect [p. 69].” 2007. New York: Harcourt.

¹⁴⁷ National Geographic. *National Geographic’s Atlas of the World*, 8th ed. “Nigeria: Nigeria Information and History.” 2004. http://www3.nationalgeographic.com/places/countries/country_nigeria.html

¹⁴⁸ School of Fine Arts, Indiana University. “Cutting to the Essence: History.” 29 March 1995.

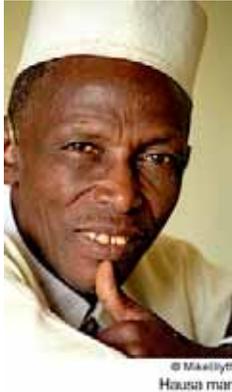
<http://www.fa.indiana.edu/~conner/yoruba/cut.html>

¹⁴⁹ World Museum Liverpool. “Yoruba, Nigeria.” No date.

<http://www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/wml/humanworld/worldcultures/africa/nigeria/yoruba/>

¹⁵⁰ The Online NewsHour, PBS. “Oil and Politics in Nigeria: Background Report: Ethnicity in Nigeria.” 5 April 2007. http://www.pbs.org/newshour/indepth_coverage/africa/nigeria/ethnic.html

seen in the Caribbean and other areas of the world, as many Yoruba were taken in the trans-Atlantic slave trade.¹⁵¹



Hausa

The name Hausa refers to people who may come from different cultural origins but who share the Hausa language and, for the most part, the Islamic faith. In northern Nigeria, Hausa is the native language of the majority of the population and the regional tongue regardless of a resident's first language.¹⁵² The Hausa have long been based out of southern Niger and northern Nigeria, but they have also established communities in such countries as Ghana and Sudan.¹⁵³ They are the largest ethnic group in West Africa.

Igbo

The Igbo have traditionally prized individual enterprise, a trait that has sometimes been used as an explanation for their prosperity and social mobility. During the socialization process, they are encouraged to succeed in an environment in which open competition is acceptable and those with skills are rewarded with higher status.¹⁵⁴

In contrast to the Hausa and Yoruba administrative hierarchy, Igbo society was traditionally egalitarian and decentralized. Observers have noted that this social structure made it easier for European missionaries to convert the Igbo people to Christianity, which remains the dominant faith among the Igbo today. Broadly, Igbo people played a large part in Nigerian politics during the British colonial era and the establishment of Nigerian independence. However, their presence in politics has declined in recent decades.¹⁵⁵

Ijaw

The Ijaw are the fourth largest ethnic group in Nigeria, comprising approximately 10% of the population.¹⁵⁶ They are divided, however, into numerous subgroups who speak mutually unintelligible dialects of the Ijaw language. This is because the Niger Delta historically made travel among its disparate regions difficult, thereby ensuring that the

¹⁵¹ World Museum Liverpool. "Yoruba, Nigeria." No date.

<http://www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/wml/humanworld/worldcultures/africa/nigeriayoruba/>

¹⁵² University of California, Los Angeles. "Who are the Hausas?: The Range of Hausas." 20 August 2008.

<http://www.humnet.ucla.edu/humnet/aflang/Hausa/Language/bg.html>

¹⁵³ Indiana University Press, Indiana University. *Africa Today*, Vol. 46, No. 3/4. O'Brien, Susan.

"Pilgrimage, Power, and Identity: The Role of the *Hajj* in the Lives of Nigerian Hausa *Bori* Adepts."

<http://www.iupress.indiana.edu/journals/africatoday/afr46-3.html>

¹⁵⁴ Country-data.com. Federal Research Division, Library of Congress. Metz, Helen Chapin, ed. *Nigeria: A Country Study*. Cohen, Ronald and Abe Goldman. "Chapter 2: The Society and Its Environment: Ethnicity: Regional Groupings: The Southern Area." June 1991. <http://www.country-data.com/cgi-bin/query/r-9377.html>

¹⁵⁵ The Online NewsHour, PBS. "Oil and Politics in Nigeria: Background Report: Ethnicity in Nigeria." 5 April 2007. http://www.pbs.org/newshour/indepth_coverage/africa/nigeria/ethnic.html

¹⁵⁶ Central Intelligence Agency. *The World Factbook*. "Nigeria." 22 January 2009.

<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ni.html>

local communities were largely self-contained. The Ijaw homeland comprises much of the territory where Nigerian sweet crude oil is located.¹⁵⁷

Languages

British colonial rule introduced English as the medium of exchange for official business. The subsequent adoption of English as the official language of independent Nigeria precluded the need to select one tribal dialect among the many spoken in the country. The language selected would have likely been the mother tongue of whichever ethnic group had the most power at the time. Such a selection would have elevated that language's status above the others and likely added to ethnic unrest.¹⁵⁸ Nigerians from different linguistic groups typically communicate in English, although proficiency in two or more native languages is common.¹⁵⁹ Hausa is spoken as a *koine*, or common language, in the North.¹⁶⁰ Igbo is the primary language in the southeast while Yoruba is the most prevalent language in the southwest.¹⁶¹

Religion

The respective sizes of Nigeria's substantial Muslim and Christian populations have been a sensitive subject of consideration. The government chose not to place a question about religious affiliation in the national census of 2006, the first to be held since 1991.¹⁶² Christians and Muslims are generally considered to claim an approximately equal number of adherents in Nigeria.

The east-west middle belt is the transition zone between the Christian-dominated South and the Muslim North. This region is inhabited by dozens of small minority ethnic groups. This makes it the focus of intense competition between Muslim and Christian organizations seeking converts. Although the term missionary is often associated with white foreign nationals, the majority of missionaries, either Christian or Muslim, are African.¹⁶³



¹⁵⁷ Human Rights Watch. Manby, Bronwen. *The Price of Oil: Corporate Responsibility and Human Rights Violations in Nigeria's Oil Producing Communities*. "Oil Companies and the Oil Producing Communities." 1999. <http://www.hrw.org/reports/1999/nigeria/Nigew991-06.htm>

¹⁵⁸ Geographic Alliance of Iowa, University of Northern Iowa. Shields, Aaron. "Nigeria Background Information: Why Study Nigeria?" No date. http://www.uni.edu/gai/Nigeria/Background/why_study_nigeria.html

¹⁵⁹ Bureau of African Affairs, U.S. Department of State. "Background Note: Nigeria." December 2008. <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2836.htm>

¹⁶⁰ Xavier University of Louisiana. Sacred and Secular in the African Americas Project. McCord-Rotondo, J. "Hausaland: Introduction." 1998. <http://webusers.xula.edu/jrotondo/Kingdoms/Hausaland/HausaHistNarr.htm>

¹⁶¹ Bureau of African Affairs, U.S. Department of State. "Background Note: Nigeria." December 2008.. <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2836.htm>

¹⁶² Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life, Pew Research Center. Ruby, Robert and Timothy Samuel Shah. "Nigeria's Presidential Election: The Christian-Muslim Divide." 22 March 2007. <http://pewresearch.org/pubs/435/nigeria-presidential-election>

¹⁶³ Geographic Alliance of Iowa, University of Northern Iowa. "Nigeria Background Information: Standard 5: Regions Used to Interpret the Complexity of Nigeria." No date.

The return to civilian rule in 1999 resulted in a new constitution that recognized collective religious rights and granted a greater degree of self-rule for each region. Several Muslim-dominated states in the North then opted to introduce Shari'a, or Islamic law, as the regional criminal code.¹⁶⁴ This move was overwhelmingly endorsed by the Muslim public, who saw it as a means to maintain order given the ineffectiveness of the distant federal government.¹⁶⁵ However, the Christian minorities in the northern cities feared that these laws would be imposed on them. In Kaduna, the proposed introduction of the Shari'a criminal code sparked violence between Christian demonstrators and Muslim bystanders, resulting in the deaths of several hundred people.¹⁶⁶ One observer noted that the application of Shari'a only resulted in violence in places where ethnic tensions were already evident.¹⁶⁷



The institution of the Shari'a criminal code undeniably created a constitutional problem. The Nigerian constitution guarantees a secular state and freedom of religion. Yet, under Shari'a law, the religious activities of non-Muslims are highly circumscribed. The promotion of the Christian religion is strictly prohibited, and renouncing Islam for another religion is a crime punishable by death.¹⁶⁸ Thus, at both constitutional and practical levels, the guarantee of religious freedom remains incompatible with Shari'a, as Islam rejects the separation of governmental and religious authority.¹⁶⁹ Indeed, a governor of a state that enforces Shari'a law declared that non-Muslims do not have the prerogative to judge its legitimacy.¹⁷⁰

However, some Muslims have questioned the role of Shari'a law in the twelve states that have put it into effect. Specifically, Shehu Sani, a Muslim playwright and human rights

<http://www.uni.edu/gai/Nigeria/Background/Standard5.html>

¹⁶⁴ Some aspects of Islamic civil law were integrated into the legal system in northern Nigeria during the early British colonial period. The extension of these laws in the North to include harsh criminal punishments has generated a lot of controversy. BBC News, International Version. Issacs, Dan. "Islam in Nigeria: Simmering Tensions." 24 September 2003. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/3155279.stm>

¹⁶⁵ Africa Program, Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars. Khadiagala, Gilbert. "Islam and Democratic Transition in Nigeria: Paradoxes and Predicaments." 11 April 2002.

http://www.wilsoncenter.org/index.cfm?topic_id=1417&categoryid=09B6BF65-65BF-E7DC-40F567F157F96E15&fuseaction=topics.events_item_topics&event_id=6243

¹⁶⁶ BBC News. Pearce, Justin. "Religion: Nigeria's Latest Flashpoint." 22 February 2000.

<http://newsvote.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/652118.stm>

¹⁶⁷ The unrest occurred precisely because the proposed extension of Shari'a into criminal matters inflamed the already tense relations between the Christian minority tribes in the North and the Hausa-Fulani majority who dominate the state government. Oslo Coalition on Freedom of Religion or Belief, University of Oslo. Lumu, B. Aisha. "Religious Education in Nigeria: A Case Study." 2002.

<http://folk.uio.no/leirvik/OsloCoalition/AishaLemu.htm>

¹⁶⁸ The Globalist. Jenkins, Phillip. "Nigeria as a Global Trouble Spot." (Excerpt from *The Next Christendom*.) 6 December 2002. <http://www.theglobalist.com/StoryId.aspx?StoryId=2874>

¹⁶⁹ Diversity Watch, Ryerson University School of Journalism. Van Vierzen, Rosanne. "Group Backgrounds: Muslims." No date. <http://www.diversitywatch.ryerson.ca/backgrounds/muslims.htm>

¹⁷⁰ BBC News. "Nigeria Sharia Architect Defends Law." 21 March 2002.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/1885052.stm>

activist, had public performances of his work, a parody of the application of Shari'a law in Nigeria, banned in 2007.¹⁷¹ In it he expressed the view that the poor had been unjustly victimized by harsh punishments for minor sins, such as possessing ostensibly immoral material or drinking alcohol, while the more serious transgressions committed by elected officials, such as plundering public funds, went unprosecuted.¹⁷² In turn, Sani sued the government on grounds of freedom of expression.

Gender Issues

Violence against women at the hands of their male family members is reputed to be widespread in Nigeria. The practice is often tolerated due to the public perception that such occurrences are a private matter for the household, in which women traditionally play a subordinate role. This "culture of silence" reinforces the stigma that women must confront if they acknowledge their abuse to outsiders, let alone seek legal help. Despite being victims of abuse, they are often seen as the guilty party.¹⁷³

Female genital mutilation (FGM) is practiced by many tribes in Nigeria, regardless of religion. Some form of FGM affects an estimated 60% of the total female population, although some experts agree that the real numbers may be much higher.¹⁷⁴

FGM is regarded as an initiation rite that every girl must undergo in order to be an attractive candidate for marriage, which in most cases is the only way she can secure her future. The common belief is that a woman who has not been circumcised will be "promiscuous, unclean, unmarriageable, undesirable," and may pose health risks to themselves or their children. Traditional practitioners, who may lack either medical training or formal knowledge about anatomy and human hygiene, often carry out the procedure without the use of anesthesia, which is only given in hospitals. Severe complications, including death, can ensue, but the practice remains widespread.¹⁷⁵

Educational campaigns have spread word throughout Nigeria about the dangers of FGM. The Nigerian government has also publicly opposed the practice, but there is no federal

¹⁷¹ BBC News, International Version. "Nigerian Sharia Court Bans Play." 8 October 2007. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/7033502.stm>

¹⁷² The Nigerian Village Square. Abati, Reuben. "Shehu Sani and the Sharia Establishment." 18 October 2007. <http://www.nigeriavillagesquare.com/articles/reuben-abati/shehu-sani-and-the-sharia-establis-2.html>

¹⁷³ The Nigerian Village Square. Amnesty International. "Nigeria's Unheard Voices: Widespread Violence Against Women in the Family." 3 May 2007. <http://www.nigeriavillagesquare.com/features/nigeria-in-global-news/nigerias-unheard-voices.html>

¹⁷⁴ AsylumLaw.org. Office of the Senior Coordinator for International Women's Issues, U.S. Department of State. "Nigeria: Report on Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) or Female Genital Cutting (FGC)." 1 June 2001. http://www.asylumlaw.org/docs/nigeria/usdos01_fgm_Nigeria.pdf

¹⁷⁵ Understanding FGM requires an interdisciplinary background involving anthropology, ethnology, political science, law, health, and medical specialties. Women's Studies Librarian's Office, The University of Wisconsin. *Feminist Connections*. Levin, Tobe. "Internet-Based Resources on Female Genital Mutilation." 1 August 2002. <http://www.library.wisc.edu/libraries/WomensStudies/fc/fcwebfgm.htm>

law banning it. Some states have drafted their own laws, with consequences ranging from fines to imprisonment.¹⁷⁶

Some Nigerian women have chosen to pursue their gender-specific concerns through associations affiliated with their own ethnicity and religious beliefs. These organizations include the Federation for Muslim Women's Associations and the Federation of Ogoni Women's Associations. The divisions among these associations, however, make it more difficult to mobilize women on a national basis against the legal and informal discrimination they face in regards to such issues as employment and inheritance.¹⁷⁷

Traditional Celebrations

Egungun

The *Egungun* festival falls near the end of April when the ancestral spirits are invited to appear in physical form. *Egungun* (ancestors) have individual names that are usually chosen to commemorate prominent members of the community from the past. They are collectively known as *Ara Orun*, or "Dwellers of Heaven." The supernatural power that they have over the community is conveyed through dances.¹⁷⁸

Dancers masquerade in costumes made of overlapping and stitched segments of fabric.¹⁷⁹ They move in a circular fashion, allowing the costume, which is adorned with pieces of decorated cloth, to fly through the air and occasionally touch members of the audience. This practice is meant to symbolize the presence of the ancestors.¹⁸⁰

New Yam Festival

Typically held in August, the New Yam Festival is a major celebration for the Igbo people. The event marks the transition from one agricultural cycle to the next, with the primary Igbo food staple, the yam, taking precedence in the festivities.¹⁸¹ On the last night before the celebration, the prior year's yams are discarded, as the new year must begin with yams from the latest harvest. The Igbo offer the yam harvest to God and their ancestors before distributing the bounty among the community.¹⁸² The community leader tastes the first yam as part of a traditional rite, and the public shares a multitude of yam

¹⁷⁶ AsylumLaw.org. Office of the Senior Coordinator for International Women's Issues, U.S. Department of State. "Nigeria: Report on Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) or Female Genital Cutting (FGC)." 1 June 2001. http://www.asylumlaw.org/docs/nigeria/usdos01_fgm_Nigeria.pdf

¹⁷⁷ Centre for Research on Inequality, Human Security, and Ethnicity, University of Oxford. Osaghae, Eghosa E. and Rotimi T. Suberu. "A History of Identities, Violence, and Stability in Nigeria." January 2005. <http://www.crise.ox.ac.uk/pubs/workingpaper6.pdf>

¹⁷⁸ Roots and Rooted. Oyeilumi, Babalorisa Adeyemi Efundeji. "What is *Egungun*?" 25 March 2008. <http://www.rootsandrooted.org/?p=3>

¹⁷⁹ MotherlandNigeria.com. "Festivals: Egungun Festival." c.1998–2002. <http://www.motherlandnigeria.com/festivals.html>

¹⁸⁰ Michael C. Carlos Museum, Emory University. "Africa: Ritual and Ceremony: Egungun." No date. http://www.carlos.emory.edu/ODYSSEY/AFRICA/AF_rit_cerem_mask_egungun.html

¹⁸¹ African yams are very large, pale-colored, and marginally sweet. They are distinct from American sweet potatoes, which are sometimes also referred to as yams.

¹⁸² MotherlandNigeria.com. "Festivals: New Yam Festival." c.1998–2002. <http://www.motherlandnigeria.com/festivals.html>

dishes in the accompanying feast. Dancing and other rites and festive activities also take place as part of the harvest celebration.¹⁸³

Cuisine

Nigerian cuisine varies according to ethnic group and location. In the South, peppery stews are common, as is palm wine, an alcoholic beverage made from palm trees. Grains and beef comprise a large share of the diet in the North. Palm oil is used as a basic cooking ingredient throughout the country. Fried yam chips, plantains, vegetable soup (*efo*), goat head pepper soup (*isi-ewu*), and a meal called *tuwo*, which is made from maize, rice, or millet, are all popular Nigerian dishes.¹⁸⁴ Originating with the Hausa, *suya*, a form of barbecued meat, is also popular throughout the country.¹⁸⁵

Nigeria produces more cassava than any other country in the world.¹⁸⁶ Accordingly, the cassava, a tuber, is a staple of the diet of many Nigerians. A common dish made from the cassava is *gari*, which consists of toasted cassava flour granules served with a variety of sauces. As *gari* has grown in popularity in Nigeria's densely populated urban centers (where few can afford imported food products), the cassava industry has expanded.¹⁸⁷

Fulani

The Fulani of northern Nigeria are semi-nomadic pastoralists whose dietary intake contains relatively large amounts of fat derived from dairy products and cooking oils. While such a high saturated fat intake would seemingly predispose the Fulani to cardiovascular problems, their active lifestyle helps offset this aspect of their diet. They also rarely smoke or consume alcohol, and they are usually slender.¹⁸⁸

Hausa

Millet, maize, and sorghum are the primary staple crops grown by the Hausa. Combining ground grain and maize, they produce a type of flour that is used to make a variety of different dishes. Porridge, which is served with every meal, is one such dish. Beans and peanuts are a major part of the Hausa diet; meat dishes are less common.¹⁸⁹

¹⁸³ BBC, Birmingham. "Community Features: Celebrating Iwa-ji (New Yam) Festival, 2005." 18 August 2005. http://www.bbc.co.uk/birmingham/content/articles/2005/08/16/iwaji_festival2005_feature.shtml

¹⁸⁴ Rice University. Herrman, Margot and Roma Patel. "Nigeria." No date. <http://www.owl.net.rice.edu/~rpatel/>

¹⁸⁵ Project Syndicate. Okonta, Ike. "Pulling Nigeria Back From the Brink." September 2002. <http://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/okonta1>

¹⁸⁶ UN FAO Corporate Document Repository. Phillips, Truman P., et al. "A Cassava Industrial Revolution in Nigeria: The Potential for a New Industrial Crop." 2004. <http://www.fao.org/docrep/007/y5548e/y5548e01.htm>

¹⁸⁷ UN FAO Corporate Document Repository. "The State of Food Insecurity in the World 2000." 2000. <http://www.fao.org/docrep/x8200e/x8200e05.htm>

¹⁸⁸ The American Journal of Clinical Nutrition. "Cardiovascular disease risk factors and diet of Fulani pastoralists of northern Nigeria." December 2001. <http://www.ajcn.org/cgi/content/full/74/6/730?maxtoshow=&HITS=10&hits=10&RESULTFORMAT=&author1=Glew&searchid=1&FIRSTINDEX=0&fdate=//&resourcetype=HWCIT>

¹⁸⁹ eMuseum, Minnesota State University, Mankato. Martin, Carrie. "Hausa." No date. <http://www.mnsu.edu/emuseum/cultural/oldworld/africa/hausa.html>

Dress Codes

Nigerians are smart dressers and it is not unusual to see business suits in the large cities of the South, even in the high heat. This is a sign of respect. Traditional Nigerian attire is also common. Overall, modes of dress differ depending on the region and ethnic group, although the central theme is modesty, especially for women.

Traditional Dress

Men in the North wear *caftans*, which are long, loose-fitting garments that are typically paired with a colorfully embroidered hat or turban. In the South, Western-style clothing is seen along with traditional dress. Men wear a *buba*,¹⁹⁰ a loose-fitting shirt that reaches mid-thighs, with *sokoto*, or trousers. The round cap often seen on men is called a *fila*.¹⁹¹

Women wear wrap-around skirts or dresses, not pants. Long rectangular pieces of cloth, known as *iro*, are wrapped around the waist and folded. The *iro* is accompanied by a *buba*, a loose top with an open neckline and long sleeves. These garments, as well as their corresponding head-ties or scarves, are made of colorful materials.¹⁹²

Ceremonial Dress

A common form of dress in Nigeria is a flowing, loose-fitting robe known as an *agbada* (in Yoruba) or a *riga* (in Hausa). These robes are typically full-length, with wide sleeves and richly decorated patterns. Pants and an undershirt accompany the robe. Traditionally, *agbada* are worn by men of stature, although today they are often donned for special occasions, such as weddings and funerals.¹⁹³



© PineApple / Mad African
Ceremonial dress

The Arts

Dance

Bata is a collaborative form of dance and music in Yoruban culture. It is traditionally performed in honor of Sango, a legendary Yoruban king associated with the Oyo and Ife dynasties. According to Yoruban lore, Sango's wife, Oya, provided him with a magic potion to make thunder and lightning, which he used to defeat his enemies in battle. Accordingly, Sango is honored as the god of thunder and lightning.

¹⁹⁰ The names of the clothing pieces listed in this section are Yoruban and may be different in the other languages of Nigeria.

¹⁹¹ MotherlandNigeria.com. "Attire." c.1998–2002. <http://motherlandnigeria.com/attire.html>

¹⁹² MSN Encarta Online Encyclopedia. "Nigeria: The People of Nigeria: Way of Life." 2007. http://encarta.msn.com/encyclopedia_761557915_4/Nigeria.html

¹⁹³ Adire African Textiles. "Agbada: Men's Robes and Tunics." No date. <http://www.adireafricantextiles.com/agbadainfo.htm>



This theme is reflected in the dance itself, which consists of quick, jerky movements intended to mimic strikes of lightning, while the corresponding drumming approximates the sound of thunder. The dancers carry a small staff (ose) depicting a female figure whose head supports a double axe; the axe is symbolic of the bolts of lightning summoned by Sango.¹⁹⁴ The bata drums are sacred objects, as only special deer or goat hides may be used in their construction and only trained drummers may handle them.¹⁹⁵ Today, bata is performed on many special occasions, including weddings and child-naming ceremonies.¹⁹⁶ Variants of this dance are found in the New World, such as in Cuba, where the descendants of slaves have preserved their Yoruban dance heritage.

Literature

Nigeria's most famous work of fiction, *Things Fall Apart* by Chinua Achebe, has sold more than ten million copies since it was published in 1958. The novel is set in an eastern Igbo village in the late 1800s and early 1900s. Achebe, winner of the 2007 Booker Prize for literature, depicts a world in which violence, conflict, and suffering are prevalent. These conditions are balanced, however, by a strong sense of tradition, ritual, and social cohesion.¹⁹⁷ The title refers to a verse in William Yeats' poem, "The Second Coming," which describes a world spinning out of control: "Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold." By linking his novel to the poem, the African author demonstrated his awareness that he, too, was chronicling a period of sweeping change.¹⁹⁸

As the narrative progresses, the reader experiences the sea of change which swept through village life after the arrival of colonial administrators and Christian missionaries. Non-Africans who read this novel are educated about the cultural traditions of the Igbos. Readers come to appreciate that the tribal heritage common to Africans is rich in tradition. In Achebe's day, too many of his compatriots were ready to accept the European judgment that their continent had no history or culture to speak of.¹⁹⁹

Folklore

All cultures produce stories that offer both children and adults different ways of making sense of life's events. These folktales are found in written literature and oral tradition.

¹⁹⁴ Flickr.com. "Yoruba Ose Sango Dance Wand." 27 November 2008.

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/avmoble/3063851816/> (photo to be removed)

¹⁹⁵ Daily Trust. Omotayo, Otitoju. "How Well Do You Know Yoruba Drums?" 13 December 2008.

http://www.dailytrust.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=863&Itemid=22

¹⁹⁶ Department of Dance Studies, University of Surrey. Jones, Jean Johnson and Peter Badejo. 10 June 2006.

<http://www.surrey.ac.uk/Dance/ahrb/Jean-Peter-full-paper.DOC>

¹⁹⁷ BBC News, International Edition. "Nigeria Author Wins Booker Honour." 13 June 2007.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/entertainment/6745609.stm>

¹⁹⁸ The Economist. "'Things Fall Apart: A Golden Jubilee.'" 23 October 2008.

http://www.economist.com/displayStory.cfm?story_id=12459705

¹⁹⁹ Washington State University. Brians, Paul. "Chinua Achebe: *Things Fall Apart* Study Guide." 13 December 2005. <http://www.wsu.edu:8080/~brians/anglophone/achebe.html>

The Tortoise and the Birds,” for example, appears in *Things Fall Apart*. In brief, it is a tale about a feast in the sky at which a tortoise manages to trick birds out of their food, but then falls to the ground and cracks his shell. The story offers an explanation for why his shell is not smooth, and, in the process, it makes a moral point about his character. The tortoise is greedy and cunning, and he gets his comeuppance. He is not considered irredeemable, however. A medicine man patches him up, and he is reintegrated into society as a contributing member.

There are a number of variations on this tale that offer different explanations for how the tortoise cracked his shell. This reflects the difference between oral tradition and text. If a story loses its relevance because of changing social mores and living conditions, for example, it can be discarded or modified in a way that a library book cannot. This enables new stories to address changing realities. *Griots* (storytellers) typically mix established tales with improvisation. The training they receive enables them to adapt stories to fit the occasion and the specific interests of the audience.²⁰⁰

Sports

A chronic lack of funding for athletics has affected Nigeria in a number of ways. Talented track and field stars, for example, have left Nigeria to become naturalized citizens of countries that can offer them better training prospects, as well as the opportunity to make more money. This has drained the talent pool in many fields.²⁰¹ Furthermore, Nigeria failed in its bid to host the 2014 Commonwealth games owing, in part, to an unwillingness to underwrite the games to the extent that other locales were willing to do so.²⁰²

Soccer

Soccer is the sport that captures the most public attention in Nigeria. Its universal appeal is rooted in the fact that the game can be played anywhere without the need for special equipment.²⁰³ The Nigerian national team, known as the Super Eagles, has demonstrated significant success on the international stage, winning the Olympic gold in 1996 and twice winning the African Nations Cup. A World Cup title, however, has remained elusive for the team.



²⁰⁰ Central Oregon Community College. Agatucci, Cora. “African Storytelling.” 31 August 2008.

<http://web.cocc.edu/cagatucci/classes/hum211/afrstory.htm>

²⁰¹ Sporting Life. “Tough Times for Nigerian Sport.” 2006.

http://www.sportinglife.com/commonwealth2006/features/story_get.cgi?STORY_NAME=commonwealth/06/02/15/COMMONWEALTH_Nigeria_Overview.html

²⁰² African Loft. “2014 Commonwealth Games: Glasgow Wins, Nigeria Loses.” 10 November 2007.

<http://www.africanloft.com/2014-commonwealth-games-glasgow-wins-abuja-loses/>

²⁰³ National Geographic. Wilsey, Sean. “The Beautiful Game: Why Soccer Rules the World.” June 2006.

<http://www7.nationalgeographic.com/ngm/0606/feature1/index.html>

Dambe

Nigerian boxers have also fared well in international competition, perhaps because of the sport's similarity to an indigenous martial art.²⁰⁴ *Dambe*, a Hausa sport, has been described as both wrestling and kick boxing. One hand is bound into a fist and swung at the opponent's head, while the other is used to parry blows and maintain balance. Grappling and kicking are also allowed. The object is to make one's opponent lose his balance and fall to the ground.²⁰⁵ No protective gear is worn.

Traditionally, *dambe* was practiced mainly by butchers, who wanted to offset their lowly social status by distinguishing themselves at a sport that draws large crowds of spectators. Competitions were historically held at the end of the harvest seasons, when farmers, having earned money from crop sales, were able to pay for entertainment.²⁰⁶ Today, excelling at sports is one of the few channels for upward mobility in Nigeria. The prospect of winning cash prizes has enticed many boys to train for *dambe* competitions, which are now included at the All African Games.

²⁰⁴ Electronic Journals of Martial Arts and Sciences. *InYo: Journal of Alternative Perspectives on the Martial Arts and Sciences*. Green, Thomas. "Dambe: Traditional Nigerian Boxing." September 2005. http://ejmas.com/jalt/2005jalt/jcsart_Green_0905.html

²⁰⁵ Voice of America. Simpson, Sarah. "Traditional Boxing Offers Opportunities for Poor Young Men in Northern Nigeria." 19 June 2008. <http://www.voanews.com/english/archive/2008-06/2008-06-19-voa49.cfm>

²⁰⁶ Daily Times. "Traditional Butchers' Boxing is Reborn." 25 April 2002. http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=story_25-4-2002_pg2_7

Chapter 6 Security

Introduction

Nigeria's independence coincided with the escalation of the Cold War. The new nation was courted by both Washington and Moscow due to its size. Nigeria maintained a stance of non-alignment, and its relations with the world's rival superpowers were driven by economic interests, not ideology. A succession of military regimes governed Nigeria through much of its history, although intermittent elections, supported by the U.S., occasionally brought civilian leaders to power.

After an attempted secession movement led to civil war in the late 1960s, the government spearheaded the establishment of the Economic Community of West Africa (ECOWAS), an organization aimed at creating a common market. Since its formation, ECOWAS has also engaged in regional peace-keeping missions.²⁰⁷ Nigeria is surrounded by generally weaker neighbors; their vulnerability to external influence and pressure has the potential to affect Nigerian security. Internal problems have thus far prevented Nigeria from assuming the role of a regional power, which its population size—one in five Africans is a Nigerian—and natural resource base should accord it.

U.S.-Nigerian Relations

After the nullification of Nigeria's June 1993 presidential election by General Sani Abacha, whose government engaged in serious human rights abuses, the U.S. imposed selective sanctions on Nigeria, exempting the country's trade in crude oil.²⁰⁸ The prospect of stronger sanctions prompted Abacha to recruit high-profile Americans to speak out in his government's defense.²⁰⁹ He also hired prominent lobby firms to press his case, but such efforts were ultimately unsuccessful.²¹⁰



Obasanjo speaking at a conference in Abuja

Abacha's death in June 1998 ended a period of increasingly strained relations. It also provided an opening for a transition to democracy. This paved the way for closer ties between Washington and Abuja, with Nigeria serving as a key partner in the West African region and the continent as a whole. After the inauguration of the democratically elected Obasanjo government, bilateral relations continued to improve. The Nigerian government has been an adamant supporter of Washington's counter-terrorism efforts in

²⁰⁷ Peace and Conflict Monitor, University for Peace. Malu, Linus. "Collective Peace-keeping in West Africa." 28 July 2003. http://www.monitor.upeace.org/archive.cfm?id_article=61

²⁰⁸ BNET, CBS Interactive. *Journal of Third World Studies*. Ayam, John A. "The Development of Nigeria-U.S. Relations." Fall 2008. http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_qa3821/is_200810/ai_n30991224

²⁰⁹ Mother Jones. Cook. John. "Welcome to the NEW! And IMPROVED! Nigeria." January/February 1998. <http://www.motherjones.com/news/feature/1998/01/cook.html?welcome=true>

²¹⁰ African Studies Center, University of Pennsylvania. "Nigeria: Recent U.S. Actions," 13 October 1997. http://www.africa.upenn.edu/Urgent_Action/dc_101397.html

the aftermath of 11 September 2001. In official statements, Abuja condemned the terrorist attacks and supported military action against both the Taliban and Al Qaeda.²¹¹

While Obasanjo restored his country's standing on the world stage, he attempted to circumvent the constitution in order to remain in office for a third term. Nigeria's immense oil wealth afforded him substantial resources to buy off opponents.²¹² Although he was not successful in his bid to stay in power, his hand-picked successor, Umaru Yar'Adua, was swept into office in an election that was widely viewed as seriously flawed. Corruption in the Nigerian electoral process has been blamed on inept management within the supervisory agencies, most prominently the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), an organization that is perceived to be closely connected to the ruling party.²¹³

African countries are seen as an under-tapped source for oil in a tightening international market.²¹⁴ With political turmoil in other oil-exporting countries, particularly in the Middle East, U.S. policy-makers see Nigeria as an alternative source for its energy needs. By the same token, the U.S. is a large market for the Nigerian oil industry.²¹⁵ Yet the oil-rich Niger Delta is plagued by high unemployment, as oil extraction generates few local jobs and results in environmental degradation. As a consequence, the region is wracked with violence. As an expert observed, the U.S. "faces a difficult balancing act in managing the consequences of state weakness while pursuing a cooperative relationship with Nigerian leaders."²¹⁶ The inability of the Nigerian government to stabilize the situation in the Niger Delta has resulted in an increased U.S. military presence in the Gulf of Guinea.²¹⁷

Relations with Neighboring Countries

Cameroon

The bilateral relationship between Nigeria and Cameroon has historically been characterized by contention over conflicting territorial claims to the Bakassi Peninsula.

²¹¹ Federal Research Division, U.S. Department of State. "Background Note: Nigeria." December 2008. <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2836.htm>

²¹² Department of Economics, Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Acemoglu, Daron, James A. Robinson, and Thierry Verdier. "Kleptocracy and Divide-and-Rule: A Model of Personal Rule." July 2003. <http://econ-www.mit.edu/files/291>

²¹³ Center for Democracy and Election Management, School of Public Affairs, American University. "An Election Programmed to Fail: Preliminary Report on the Presidential and National Assembly Elections Held on Saturday, April 21, 2007." http://www.american.edu/ia/cdem/nigeria/report_070421.pdf

²¹⁴ *Untapped: The Scramble for Africa's Oil*. Ghazvinian, John. 2007. New York: Harcourt, Inc.

²¹⁵ Boston College Third World Law Journal, Boston College. Aka, Philip C. "The 'Dividend of Democracy': Analyzing U.S. Support for Nigerian Democratization." 2002.

http://www.bc.edu/schools/law/lawreviews/meta-elements/journals/bctwj/22_2/01_FMS.htm

²¹⁶ School of Advanced International Studies, Johns Hopkins University. SAISPHERE, Lewis, Peter.

"Struggling for Democracy in Nigeria." 2007. <http://www.sais-jhu.edu/pressroom/publications/saisphere/2007/lewis.htm>

²¹⁷ Global Security. USINFO. Crawley, Vince. "United States Seeks To Help Improve Security in Gulf of Guinea." 19 December 2006. <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/library/news/2006/12/mil-061219-usia01.htm>

The origins of the dispute date to the 19th century, when both Germany and Britain claimed the territory. Those overlapping claims were settled in a 1913 treaty, which Nigeria later disputed after it gained its independence. Nigeria's boundary with Cameroon—its longest international border—traverses a strategic waterway that controls access to the Calabar Port in Cross River State, which is used by commercial shippers and is the site of the Nigerian Eastern Naval Command.²¹⁸ The Bakassi peninsula is located in this region. The discovery of oil in the area heightened the stakes in the dispute, which had periodically escalated into armed clashes.²¹⁹ Cameroonian oil rigs set up in a neutral area posed a hazard to Nigerian vessels.

In October 2002, the International Court of Justice granted sovereignty over the peninsula to Cameroon. In 2004, Nigeria ceded the northern part of Bakassi, which faces inland and is therefore of limited strategic value, to Cameroon. However, it retained control of the outward projecting southern portion of the peninsula, which affords the sovereign power maritime jurisdiction over the Gulf of Guinea's potentially vast hydrocarbon deposits.²²⁰ Abuja,



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Yaounde, Cameroon

which predicted a collapse in law and order if its forces left, argued that the matter should be resolved through a “self-determination” vote. Those eligible to vote would have been some 300,000 inhabitants, 90% of whom were Nigerian fishermen leery of life under a different government.²²¹

In August 2006, Nigeria removed its armed forces from Bakassi but maintained a temporary civil authority presence in part of the region. Ultimately, residents were given the option of resettling in the Cross River State, where most had come from, or remaining under Cameroonian rule. In 2008, Nigeria officially relinquished full control of the peninsula to Cameroon, a peaceful resolution that was widely touted as a model for other African nations.^{222, 223}

²¹⁸ *Nigeria Foreign Policy Under Military Rule, 1966-1999*. Abegunrin, Olayiwola.

http://books.google.com/books?id=_sDeDWCnnRAC&pg=PA122&lpg=PA122&dq=nigeria+benin+relations&source=web&ots=zD8ZpQNXep&sig=jd1xa5xQkiUe1FO7SabcdfFzV2Q&hl=en&sa=X&oi=book_result&resnum=4&ct=result#PPA149,M1

²¹⁹ Inventory of Conflict and Environment Case Studies, American University. Price, Felicia. “The Bakassi Peninsula: The Border Dispute between Nigeria and Cameroon.” November 2005.

<http://www.american.edu/ted/ice/nigeria-cameroon.htm>

²²⁰ Stratfor. “Nigeria, Cameroon: A Peninsular Dispute over Offshore Oil.” 25 July 2008.

http://www.stratfor.com/analysis/nigeria_cameroon_peninsular_dispute_over_offshore_oil

²²¹ BBC News. “Bakassi Nigerians Promised Safety.” 22 August 2008.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/7576253.stm>

²²² Foreign and Commonwealth Office, United Kingdom. “Country Profile: Cameroon: International Relations.” 7 January 2008. <http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/about-the-fco/country-profiles/sub-saharan-africa/cameroon?profile=intRelations&pg=4>

²²³ Stratfor. “Cameroon, Nigeria: A Transfer with Strings Attached.” 14 August 2008.

http://www.stratfor.com/analysis/cameroon_nigeria_territorial_transfer_strings_attached

Benin

Nigeria's relations with Benin were long characterized by the inability of either government to adequately police their mutual border, which has been subject to a flourishing black market trade, particularly in oil smuggled from Nigeria into Benin.²²⁴ Since 2005, trade between the two countries has been regulated and restricted to companies with government licenses. After Nigeria lifted a ban on certain imports, such as textiles and palm oil, five Beninese companies received authorization to sell their products within the country.²²⁵ Cross-border criminal syndicates continue to operate, however. A steady flow of Beninese into Nigeria has focused attention on the problem of human trafficking, whose victims are typically women and children.²²⁶ Nigeria has periodically closed the border in an effort to deter cross-border crime.

Chad

Nigeria and Chad both attained independence in 1960. Relations between them were good until the late 1970s, when oil was discovered under Lake Chad, which serves as part of the border. The prospect of exploiting petroleum resources and the emergence of islands as the lake's waters receded led to competing jurisdictional claims. While these issues have been resolved, the lake's dramatic shrinkage due to irrigation demands and drought has created new disputes over water use rights.²²⁷ Nigerians, disproportionately affected by the lake's reduction, have become environmental refugees. Forced into Chadian or Cameroonian waters to fish, they can be fined for unauthorized entry and risk confiscation of their gear.

Approximately 30 million people rely on Lake Chad for their livelihoods,²²⁸ and there are an estimated 30 armed groups defending their interests in the area.²²⁹ A Lake Chad Basin Commission was established in the 1990s to regulate water usage. It comprises representatives from the five major countries that have an interest in the lake: Chad, Cameroon, Niger, Central African Republic, and Nigeria.

Equatorial Guinea

Equatorial Guinea is one of the smallest countries in Africa, both in terms of population, size, and area. Located off the southeastern coast of Nigeria in the Gulf of Guinea, the island of Bioko, formerly known as Fernando Po, is a territory of Equatorial Guinea. The island became a magnet for immigrants, particularly from Nigeria, in the 1920s when

²²⁴ BBC, International Version. "Nigeria Re-opens Benin border." 15 August 2003. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/3147989.stm>

²²⁵ Foreign and Commonwealth Office, United Kingdom. "Country Profile: Benin: International Relations." 3 January 2008. <http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/about-the-fco/country-profiles/sub-saharan-africa/benin?profile=intRelations&pg=4>

²²⁶ UNICEF. "Benin and Nigeria Pledge to Fight Human Trafficking." 9 June 2005. http://www.unicef.org/media/media_27309.html

²²⁷ BBC News, International Version. Murray, Senan. "Lake Chad Fishermen Pack up Their Nets." 15 January 2007. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/6261447.stm>

²²⁸ VOA News. Da Costa, Gilbert. "African Leaders Team Up to Rescue Lake Chad." 28 March 2008. <http://www.voanews.com/english/archive/2008-03/2008-03-28-voa33.cfm>

²²⁹ Henry L. Stimson Center. Patterson, Kendra. "The Endless Drought: Water Conflict in the Era of Climate Change." 20 June 2008. <http://www.stimson.org/pub.cfm?ID=631>

cocoa plantations were developed under Spanish colonial rule. After oil was discovered, immigration to the area continued, despite being illegal for many. Alleged mistreatment of Nigerian nationals became an irritant in relations between the two countries.

In 2000, Nigeria and Equatorial Guinea settled a boundary dispute without outside intervention. The pact allows companies from both countries to explore their side of the maritime border for oil.²³⁰ Abuja negotiated a deal that garners it 60% of the revenues from joint ventures to develop its neighbor's gas and oil reserves.²³¹

Niger

The border between Nigeria and Niger is one inhabited by the Hausa ethnic group. The common culture among the regional inhabitants, as well as the fact that the Hausa are the dominant force in Nigeria's federal government, have minimized conflicts between the two countries.

After the adoption of Shari'a law in the northern Nigerian states that abut the border, many illicit activities, such as prostitution, simply moved over to the Niger side, which remains under civil law.²³² The ease with which this was accomplished is indicative of the light security along the border. Likewise, the border has also been identified as part of a human trafficking route in which girls from southern Nigeria, many of whom are promised domestic jobs in Libya, are shipped to Europe to work as prostitutes.²³³

Military and Police Structure

The Nigerian military's biggest growth spurt occurred during the civil war for Biafran secession. The number of men in uniform went from 10,000 in 1967 to over 250,000 in 1970.²³⁴ The military did not win the war through combat, however, but rather through a blockade of the Biafran republic.²³⁵ Thus, although the military could not justify the need

²³⁰ BBC News. Dan-Ali, Mannir. "Oil Deal for Nigeria and Equatorial Guinea." 3 April 2002.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/business/1909455.stm>

²³¹ Stratfor. "Cameroon, Nigeria: A Territorial Transfer, With Strings Attached." 14 August 2008.

http://www.stratfor.com/analysis/cameroon_nigeria_territorial_transfer_strings_attached

²³² AllAcademic. Kirwin, Matthew. "Nigerian Shari'a and Its Effect on Nigeria-Niger Trans-Border Political Economy." 12 April 2004.

http://www.allacademic.com/meta/p_mla_apa_research_citation/0/8/3/6/7/pages83677/p83677-1.php

²³³ IRIN News, UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. "Niger-Nigeria: Porous Border Aids Human Trafficking." 21 May 2008. <http://www.irinnews.org/report.aspx?ReportId=78321>

²³⁴ *Budgeting for the Military Sector in Africa: The Process and Mechanisms of Control*. Omitoogun, Wuyi and Eboe Hutchful, eds. Omitoogun, Wuyi and Tunde Oduntan. "Chapter 9: Nigeria: The Military Sector [p. 157]." 2006. Oxford University Press.

http://books.google.com/books?id=7sBdAYXOrgAC&pg=PA157&lpg=PA157&dq=nigeria+armed+forces&source=web&ots=JZ5CY9u47S&sig=8qLwlmkA_XhvwwzwYe3RKKxcZGk&hl=en&sa=X&oi=book_result&resnum=6&ct=result#PPA157,M1

²³⁵ *Why Governments Waste Natural Resources*. Ascher, William. "Chapter Five: Distribution through Resource Abuses [p. 151]." 1999. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University.

http://books.google.com/books?id=BNN6-zkm5M8C&pg=PA181&lpg=PA181&dq=nigeria+armed+forces&source=web&ots=BDuJoUxfvx&sig=Eb8qwqbAoP9LkftIk21r5-AmZVw&hl=en&sa=X&oi=book_result&resnum=5&ct=result

of a large fighting force, they were nonetheless rewarded with budget increases under successive military dictatorships.

Today, active duty military personnel number approximately 76,000. The army, the largest branch of service, claims 60,000 troops, most of whom are from the North. The army is complemented by an air force numbering 9,000 and a navy comprising 7,000 members.²³⁶

The Nigerian military has developed a reputation for dealing ruthlessly with civilians, a trend attributed to a “garrison mentality” reflecting the decades in which it ruled the country. In a recent instance that sparked public outrage, a woman was assaulted and stripped of her shirt on an Abuja street for failing to give way fast enough to a passing military convoy.²³⁷

Since the restoration of democracy in 1999, the federal Nigerian Police Force (NPF) has approximately doubled in size, expanding from 160,000 officers to over 300,000.²³⁸ Allegations of police brutality are common, as are official denials of mistreatment of prisoners. Over half of those incarcerated in Nigerian prisons have not been convicted of their alleged crimes; many cases may take between five and ten years to get to trial.²³⁹

In the twelve northern states that adopted Shari’a law, compliance is monitored by the unarmed Hisbah police, who lack the authority to issue warrants but may, in some cases, make arrests. Hisbah groups are required to register with the state government, and their powers, beyond questioning people whose behavior they deem suspicious, vary according to state law. Those suspected of violating laws governing Muslim conduct are turned over to the NPF since the Hisbah do not run their own detention facilities. Reports of Hisbah groups administering a vigilante brand of justice are not uncommon.²⁴⁰

Internal Threats

Terrorist Groups

The Niger Delta has long been a site of conflict between local groups, the federal government, and multinational oil corporations. Abuja makes no distinction between

²³⁶ Bureau of African Affairs, U.S. Department of State. “Background Note: Nigeria.” December 2008. <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2836.htm>

²³⁷ Agence France-Presse. “Nigeria’s Military: Officers but not Gentleman.” 15 November 2008. http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5hTh_YpLHbuM0JPAMtlMSAPihgrYA

²³⁸ Refworld, UNHCR. Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada. “Nigeria: Structure and Size of the Police Force; Availability of Complaint Mechanisms; Whether There is Communication Between the Divisions and Commands Across the Country; Whether Authorities in Sharia States Can Execute Their Warrants, Make Arrests and Lay Charges in Non-Sharia States.” 31 July 2008. <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/48d2237ac.html>

²³⁹ BBC News, International Version. “Nigerian Police Torture ‘Routine.’” 9 March 2007. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/6435787.stm>

²⁴⁰ Transnational and Non-State Armed Groups. “Hisbah Groups.” 2008. <http://www.armed-groups.org/6/section.aspx/ViewGroup?id=86>

peaceful and armed protest in the region.²⁴¹ The 1995 execution of playwright and Ogoni tribal rights activist Ken Saro-Wiwa, on what many viewed as trumped-up charges, represented a turning point from peaceful opposition to armed confrontation in the delta.²⁴² The most well known militant group in the region is the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND), which has been described as a “well-armed, well-organized group of youth who aim to localize control of the Niger Delta’s oil wealth.”²⁴³

MEND gained international attention in 2006, when they kidnapped a total of 13 foreign oil workers in the first two months of that year.²⁴⁴ By 2007, oil output in the Niger Delta had decreased by one-third after additional kidnappings and attacks on oil pipelines disrupted the supply.²⁴⁵ Although the group is largely clandestine, they have been successful at drawing international media attention to their cause.

A unified MEND had a vested interest in maintaining the long-term viability of Nigeria’s oil exporting capacity, which creates a self-imposed limitation on their attacks. The number of kidnappings escalated 200% over the first half of 2007, however.²⁴⁶ This reflects the expanding number of disparate and uncoordinated groups operating in the region.²⁴⁷ Gangs of disaffected youth have engaged in various criminal activities, including occupying flow stations, sabotaging pipelines to siphon oil (a practice known as “bunkering”), and kidnapping and even killing foreign oil corporation employees. In a 2006 incident, gunmen burst into a New Harcourt nightclub popular with expatriates and began shooting into the air. Four foreigners were abducted as bewildered security personnel watched.

²⁴¹ Eurodefense. Roell, Peter. “Countering Terrorism in Africa – Interview with Maxim Worcester.” 2008. http://www.eurodefense.de/Interview-Combating_Terrorism_Africa.pdf

²⁴² As scholar Kathryn Nwajiaku observed, in 1995 activism was viewed sympathetically as the Ogoni tribal people were seeking to protect their rights against a distant central government and various multinational corporations. By contrast, the contemporary portrait is a more menacing one in which armed youths kidnap foreign oil workers and destroy pipelines. Program of African Studies, Northwestern University. “Nigeria 2007: Political, Social and Economic Transitions.” 2007. <http://www.northwestern.edu/african-studies/Templates/Nigeria2007-ConferenceReport.pdf>

²⁴³ The Dominion. Lindsay, Hillary Bain. “Shell Shocked: People of the Niger Delta Fight Back Against Violence and Corruption.” 20 March 2006. http://www.dominionpaper.ca/environment/2006/03/20/shell_shoc.html

²⁴⁴ The Dominion. Lindsay, Hillary Bain. “Shell Shocked: People of the Niger Delta Fight Back Against Violence and Corruption.” 20 March 2006. http://www.dominionpaper.ca/environment/2006/03/20/shell_shoc.html

²⁴⁵ Council on Foreign Relations. Hanson, Stephanie. “MEND: The Niger Delta’s Umbrella Militant Group.” 22 March 2007. <http://www.cfr.org/publication/12920/>

²⁴⁶ JeffVail.net. “Nigeria Escalation.” 9 May 2007. <http://www.jeffvail.net/2007/05/nigeria-escalation.html>

²⁴⁷ International Herald Tribune. Mouawad, Jad. “Growing Unrest Posing a Threat to Nigerian Oil.” 21 April 2007. <http://iht.com/articles/2007/04/21/news/web-oil21.php>



In short, a market has emerged for entrepreneurial criminal gangs who are less motivated by political goals than by the prospect of a quick return on investment.²⁴⁸ They have been enticed by the ransom money that foreign oil companies now routinely pay for the return of abducted expatriate staff.²⁴⁹ As a security expert observed, “The saturation of small arms around the Niger Delta means that kind of criminality will continue.”²⁵⁰

Thus, the situation in the Niger Delta has muddied as militant groups with a political agenda, such as MEND, seek to differentiate themselves from the criminal gangs that are motivated purely by financial interests. All of these groups have already demonstrated the ability to disrupt oil production in the delta. Attacking off-shore installations—as MEND has begun to do—further ratchets up the costs for multinational oil companies, who in turn pass the costs along to consumers. Such attacks could even cause the oil companies to pull out of the region if the situation deteriorates further.²⁵¹ Overall, the increasing vulnerability of offshore rigs does not bode well for the further development of Nigerian oil. Although offshore production only accounted for 16% of Nigeria’s oil output in 2008, some observers have predicted that 90% of the industry’s future growth will be tied to offshore operations.²⁵²

Disruptions in the Nigerian oil industry have enabled Angola to become Africa’s biggest oil producer.²⁵³ According to official sources, the losses caused by the various criminal activities in the delta region add up to USD 60 billion annually.²⁵⁴ In Abuja the situation is viewed as a security problem rather than one driven by unequal access to the oil revenues and the destruction of the local environment.²⁵⁵ Accordingly, thousands of troops have been deployed to interdict smugglers.²⁵⁶ However, a militarized response runs the risk of uniting disparate groups against a common enemy.²⁵⁷ At the same time,

²⁴⁸ Global Guerrillas. Robb, John. “Nigerian Evolution.” 16 January 2006.

http://globalguerrillas.typepad.com/globalguerrillas/2006/01/nigerian_evolut.html

²⁴⁹ Any non-Nigerian national is a potential target. The Dong-A Ilbo. “Another Kidnapping of Koreans in Nigeria.” 4 May 2007. <http://english.donga.com/srv/service.php3?bicode=020000&biid=2007050414898>

²⁵⁰ BBC News. Walker, Andrew. “My Brother, the Niger Delta Militant.” 22 February 2008.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/7257363.stm>

²⁵¹ Foundation for Defense of Democracies. Pham, J. Peter. “Vulnerability of Nigerian Oil Infrastructure Threatens U.S. Interests.” 16 May 2007.

http://www.defenddemocracy.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=11779698&Itemid=0

²⁵² Oil Drum. Vail, Jeff. “Nigeria – The Significance of the Bonga Offshore Oil Platform Attack.” 24 June 2008. <http://www.theoil Drum.com/node/4196>

²⁵³ Telegraph. Blair, David. “Africa’s Oil Boom Shifts Balance of Power.” 4 September 2008.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/africaandindianocean/angola/2420477/Africas-oil-boom-shifts-balance-of-power.html>

²⁵⁴ Ground Report. Okoh, Hanson. “Nigeria Loses \$60b Oil Revenue to Bunkering.” 15 July 2008.

<http://www.groundreport.com/Business/Nigeria-Loses-60b-Oil-Revenue-To-Bunkering>

²⁵⁵ IRIN News, UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. “Nigeria: Under-development Continues to Fuel Oil Theft.” 17 November 2008. <http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=81507>

²⁵⁶ VOA News. Da Costa, Gilbert. “Nigerian Army Pursues Oil Thieves in Niger Delta Crackdown.” 26 November 2008. <http://www.voanews.com/english/2008-11-26-voa28.cfm>

²⁵⁷ The Economist. “Risky Toughness.” 18 September 2008.

http://www.economist.com/research/Backgrounders/displaystory.cfm?story_id=12267373

many members of the military are suspected of profiting from the widespread practice of bunkering, as are oil company employees.²⁵⁸ Moreover, the topography of the Niger Delta, a labyrinth of swamps and creeks in which 1,000 oil wells are connected by 6,035 km (3,750 mi) of pipeline, makes it logistically difficult to protect the country's oil infrastructure.²⁵⁹

Islamic Fundamentalism

While the Niger Delta crisis has received a great deal of coverage, it is not aimed at dismembering the Nigerian state.²⁶⁰ By contrast, Islamic radicalism in the North has a goal of establishing a separate Muslim enclave.²⁶¹ An autonomous region offers the prospect of a safe haven for militant Islamists in the heart of West Africa, where *salafist* movements are emerging in Mali, Chad, Mauritania, and Niger.²⁶²

The extension of Shari'a law into criminal matters after the restoration of democracy in 1999 was feared to offer just such an opening. Some observers hypothesized that a Shari'a criminal conviction appealed to the Supreme Court, where the sentence could be ruled unconstitutional and could generate outrage that would strengthen fundamentalism.

Legal pluralism is not a new phenomenon in Nigeria, as it has existed since the beginning of colonial rule.²⁶³ After independence in 1960, the new nation's leaders created a legal code that drew from both British common law and Shari'a, but maintained separate jurisdictions between the two. Criminal cases were tried in secular courts, where punishments were meted out in prison time rather than flogging or amputation. By contrast, family and civil matters, such as divorce, were handled by Shari'a courts for Muslims.

Yet it has become clear that the NPF has little interest in enforcing Shari'a law, and the Hisbah cannot challenge their authority. For those found guilty under the Shari'a penal code, public floggings are common; but harsher punishments, such as amputations, are rare. Novel strategies have been developed to give female defendants due process.²⁶⁴

²⁵⁸ Suite101.com. Odilile Ayodele "Crime in the Oil Business: Oil Bunkering in Nigeria." 5 December 2008. http://nigeria.suite101.com/article.cfm/crime_in_the_oil_business

²⁵⁹ Washington Post. Mufson, Steven. "Nigeria's Oil Morass." 1 February 2008. <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/01/31/AR2008013103634.html>

²⁶⁰ *The Marketing of Rebellion: Insurgents, Media, and International Activism*. Clifford, Bob. "Chapter Three: From Ethnic to Environmental Conflict: Nigeria's Ogoni Movement." 2005. New York: Cambridge University Press.

²⁶¹ In March 2004, for example, a Saudi-funded British-based charity *al-Muntada al-Islami* was accused of promulgating a Wahabi variant of Islam in Kano. BBC News. "Kano: Nigeria's ancient city-state." 20 May 2004. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/3708309.stm>

²⁶² *Salafism* calls for the restoration of a traditional form of Islam. Many Salafist extremists advocate violent jihad. CBC News. "The Fifth Estate: War Without Borders: The Salafist Movement." 1 December 2004. <http://www.cbc.ca/fifth/warwithoutborders/salafist.html>

²⁶³ Carr Center for Human Rights Policy, Harvard Kennedy School, Harvard University. Amadi, Sam. "Religion and Secular Constitution: Human Rights and the Challenge of Sharia [p. 8]." No date. <http://www.hks.harvard.edu/cchrp/pdf/Amadi.pdf>

²⁶⁴ The Harvard Crimson. Groll, Elias J. "Radcliffe Fellow Defends Nigerian Women Using Sharia Law." 24 November 2008. <http://www.thecrimson.com/article.aspx?ref=525580>

More importantly, the turn toward fundamentalism, which some expected after the implementation of Islamic law, has failed to materialize.²⁶⁵ Politicians saw the promotion of Shari'a as a wise career move after a gubernatorial candidate, who called for the institution of Shari'a, was rewarded at the ballot box.²⁶⁶ Yet many elected officials do not themselves adhere to the strict standards imposed by Shari'a, and therefore they have no interest in seeing it rigidly enforced.²⁶⁷ As someone observed in Kano's pleasure district, "As long as no-one sees you, you remain a good Muslim and the Hisbah can't come after you."²⁶⁸

Issues Affecting Stability

Poverty

Over 70% of the nation's population is classified as poor, with the average Nigerian subsisting on less than a dollar a day. This trend has worsened despite the fact that the country earns USD 2.2 million a day in oil revenues.²⁶⁹ Such profits have not been used to make investments in education, health care, and public works, which could in turn increase productivity, stimulate investment, and generate economic development for the benefit of all Nigerians.



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Waiting in long gas lines

Rather, the vast majority of energy profits has been pocketed by a privileged class of people who enjoy lavish lifestyles.²⁷⁰

The poor are disproportionately found in rural areas, which lack basic infrastructure and access to social services.²⁷¹ This creates incentives for residents to migrate to urban areas

²⁶⁵ The New York Times. Polgreen, Lydia. "Nigeria Turns From Harsher Side of Islamic Law." 1 December 2007. <http://www.nytimes.com/2007/12/01/world/africa/01shariah.html>

²⁶⁶ U.S. Institute of Peace. Dickson, David. "Political Islam in Sub-Saharan Africa: The Need for a New Research and Diplomatic Agenda." May 2005. <http://www.usip.org/pubs/specialreports/sr140.html>.

²⁶⁷ *Democratization and Islamic Law: The Sharia Conflict in Nigeria*. Harnischfeger, Johannes. "Introduction [p. 29]." Campus Verlag.

http://books.google.com/books?id=ftfXThvfQHkC&pg=PA29&lpg=PA29&dq=sharia+lite+economist&source=web&ots=ihRXi0uJ1a&sig=kSsbaA6brPuSAgl4iTXnPKapX3E&hl=en&sa=X&oi=book_result&resnum=10&ct=result#PPA31,M1

²⁶⁸ BBC News, International Version. Murray, Senan. "Cracking Down on Nigeria's 'Pleasure Island.'" 17 July 2007. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/6288480.stm>

²⁶⁹ National Public Radio. "Documenting the Paradox of Oil, Poverty in Nigeria." 6 July 2008. <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=92155119>

²⁷⁰ *The Spirit of Democracy: The Struggle to Build Free Societies Throughout the World*. Diamond, Larry. "Chapter Eleven: Africa: Overcoming Personal Rule [p. 248]." 2008. New York: MacMillan. http://books.google.com/books?id=IIX_gJFPJasC&pg=PA417&lpg=PA417&dq=larry+diamond+the+spirit+of+democracy&source=web&ots=ZeG-YKrbmv&sig=cJJPrRmlUkbBhjQOGqu-__EFMAuI&hl=en&sa=X&oi=book_result&resnum=3&ct=result#PPA247,M1

²⁷¹ Global Action on Aging. "Rural Poverty in Nigeria." 28 February 2008. <http://www.globalaging.org/ruralaging/world/2008/nigeria.htm>

where they can find work in the informal economy and have a marginally better life.²⁷² Even with a committed government, the volatility of oil prices in the international marketplace makes it hard to provide the long-term resources necessary to improve the socioeconomic situation of the impoverished majority.²⁷³

Corruption

The Nigerian Anti-Corruption Commission has estimated that around USD 380 billion of the country's oil revenues was squandered or outright stolen between 1960 and 1999. This figure corresponds to the value of roughly five years of the nation's oil output.²⁷⁴ While Nigeria has risen in the Transparency International country corruption rankings (after routinely ranking in the bottom five), the abrupt termination of the head of the bureau that was responsible for the nation's improvement led to questions about the government's commitment to rule of law.²⁷⁵

For those inside the halls of power, opportunities for enrichment are seen as a high-return, low-risk activity. Expectations about how public officials conduct business encourage ordinary citizens to cultivate those in power, thereby reinforcing the politics of personal rule.²⁷⁶ They become, in effect, clients of the rulers rather than citizens to whom public officials should be accountable.²⁷⁷

Citizen discontent with the status quo is unlikely to change these dynamics since the Nigerian government is a *rentier* state. This term refers to the government's source of revenues, which come from the sale of oil rather than through the taxation of productive activities. Simply put, when public officials do not need to tax their citizens, they become less concerned about what those citizens think of their leadership.²⁷⁸ Conversely, the fact that citizens pay little or nothing in taxes renders them less likely to follow politics closely. Instead, the cash-rich government is viewed by the people as a source of jobs, sweetheart deals, and easy favors, making it hard to introduce meaningful accountability.

²⁷² Irmgard Coninx Stiftung. Department of Sociology, University of Ibadan. Nwokocha, Ezeibunwa E. "Engaging the Burden of Rural-Urban Migration in a Non-regulatory System: The Case of Nigeria." 2006. http://www.irmgard-coninx-stiftung.de/fileadmin/user_upload/pdf/urbanplanet/Nwokocha.pdf

²⁷³ Department of Political Science, UCLA. Ross, Michael L. "Nigeria's Oil Sector and the Poor." 23 May 2003 [p. 4]. <http://www.sscnet.ucla.edu/polisci/faculty/ross/NigeriaOil.pdf>

²⁷⁴ Private Sector Development Blog, World Bank. Guest, Robert. "Nigeria's Corruption Price Tag at \$380 Billion." 3 May 2007. http://psdblog.worldbank.org/psdblog/2007/05/nigerias_corrup.html

²⁷⁵ Africa Blog, Reuters. Tostevin, Steven. "Can Africa Beat Corruption?" 23 September 2008. <http://blogs.reuters.com/africanews/2008/09/23/can-africa-beat-corruption/>

²⁷⁶ *Corruption by Design: Building Clean Government in Mainland China and Hong Kong*. Manion, Melanie. "Introduction [p. 5]." 2004. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

²⁷⁷ *African Politics in Comparative Perspective*. Hyden, Goran. "Chapter Five: Big Man Rule [p. 95]." 2006. New York: Cambridge University Press. http://books.google.com/books?id=KAFEKGhYejkC&pg=PA95&lpg=PA95&dq=nigeria+personal+rule&source=web&ots=_0NVRJZGce&sig=Ery70WVHfSbNfy1NqvbS0Cc4uFQ&hl=en&sa=X&oi=book_result&resnum=10&ct=result

²⁷⁸ A correspondent visiting Nigeria was told that since the price of oil started to rise in recent years, "civil liberties [have been] on a huge decline—people have been arbitrarily arrested, political opponents have been killed, and institutions of democracy have been crippled." Foreign Policy. Friedman, Thomas L. "The First Law of Petropolitics." May/June 2006.

http://www.foreignpolicy.com/story/cms.php?story_id=3426&page=3

Looking Ahead

Nigeria is often considered the bellwether for the rest of Africa, where stability has proved elusive.²⁷⁹ The 2007 presidential election was contested as flawed and unfair by many observers, both within and outside the country.²⁸⁰ Nonetheless, civilian rule appears firmly established after more than two decades of military dictatorship. Yet the benefits from this transition are not reflected in improved socioeconomic indicators for the vast majority of Nigerians, who remain mired in abject poverty despite the country's enormous oil wealth.



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Up in Arms over Flawed Elections, Nigeria 2007

As an expert observed with respect to this anomaly, “It is not enough to have cyclical, periodic elections, even if they are open, without confronting fundamental questions of citizenship, economic empowerment, and the demarginalization of oppressed groups.”²⁸¹ These questions have not been addressed effectively by Abuja, which continues to confront a volatile situation in the Niger Delta. The very real possibility of sustained disruption in global energy supplies, as engineered by groups like MEND, could have significant consequences for the oil-dependent industrialized world.

²⁷⁹ Program on Strengthening Africa's Security Mechanisms and Actors, International Peace Academy, University of Oxford. Nuamah, Rosemary. “Nigeria's Foreign Policy after the Cold War: Domestic, Regional and External Influences.” July 2003.

http://www.ipacademy.org/pdfs/NIGERIAS_FOREIGN_POLICY.pdf

²⁸⁰ International Herald Tribune. The Associated Press. “Nigerian Court Upholds 2007 Presidential Election.” 12 December 2008. <http://www.iht.com/articles/ap/2008/12/12/africa/AF-Nigeria-Elections.php>

²⁸¹ The Chronicle of Higher Education. Mutua, Makua. “Lessons from Kenya.” 16 May 2008. <http://chronicle.com/weekly/v54/i36/36b01801.htm>