

Nigeria

- I. Nigeria
 - a. It has the largest population in Africa, one fifth of Africans south of the Sahara are Nigerians, and larger than any European country
 - b. It is the world's seventh largest oil producer and the fifth largest oil supplier to the United States
 - c. Nigeria is attempting to install a democratic government, for the third time
- II. The Impact of the Past
 - a. Like Mexico was home to civilizations long before the arrival of Europeans
 - i. The Nok culture was adept at grain farming and iron smelting and created an inland kingdom around the time of Christ at the southern edge of the trade route from North Africa
 - ii. The Yoruba built a series of city states in the southwest
 - iii. Only the Igbo appear to have been stateless, they lived in egalitarian, self contained villages in the south east
 - iv. There was never a single kingdom of Nigeria
 - b. Islam arrived from the Sudan Region in the Sahel of northern Nigeria in the ninth century A.D. and converted the Hausa and Fulani peoples, now widely known as the Hausa-Fulani
 - c. Islam meant that Nigeria would be split between a Muslim north and a primarily Christian based south, the source of much conflict today
 - i. Today 29 percent of Nigerians are Hausa-Fulani, 21 percent Yoruba, 18 percent Igbo, and 10 percent Ijaw.
 1. These are the largest of Nigeria's approximately 250 different ethnic groups
- III. The Coming of the Europeans
 - a. Like Mexico, Nigeria was found by Europeans in search of glory and wealth
 - i. Portuguese navigators in their effort to find Asia were the first Europeans to reach what they would later call Nigeria in 1471
 - ii. They did not go far inland, climate and disease dissuaded them from diving further into unknown territory, but set up trading ports along the African coast
 - iii. Their chief item of trade was slaves
 1. Slavery had been practiced in Africa but were used locally, starting with the local African chiefs, the Portuguese raided and kidnapped villages and delivered them to what became know as the "slave coast"
 - iv. Portugal's colonies of Brazil and Spain's Cuba needed labor for their sugarcane fields, England's American colonies needed labor for their tobacco and cotton fields

1. From the 1530s to the 1850s Portuguese, Spanish, French, English and Americans shipped over 3.5 million African slaves across the Atlantic, chiefly to Brazil
 - a. Due to this trade many Americans, Brazilians and Cubans are of Yoruba or Igbo ancestry
- b. An Islamic jihad took place in 1804 to 1808 in the northern region of Nigeria and contributed to most problems it faces today
 - i. Islamic scholars found that the Muslim kingdom there was insufficiently pure and demanded their overthrow. With that done they set up the Sokoto Caliphate, a single political system much more powerful than any other in the region, and was motivated by Islamic fundamentalism. In less than a century it collided with British colonialism.
 - ii. Christian missionaries arrived to work with among the Yoruba, Igbo and others, setting up missionary posts on the coast. Missionaries were often the advance element of imperial expansion, as protecting them would soon require a military presence
 - iii. Britain's suppression of the slave trade led to the establishment of Nigeria
 1. Under pressure from British Christians, Parliament outlawed the shipping of slaves, but not slavery itself which was ended in 1834, in 1807
 2. To enforce the ban, the Royal Navy stationed a squadron in the Gulf of Guinea
 3. To replace the slave trade Britain encouraged trade in palm oil, used for soaps and lubricants
 - a. This made a need for more workers needed to produce and transport the palm oil, inadvertently leading to more slaves
 - i. To suppress this internal trade, Britain annexed the Yoruba's capital in 1861

IV. The Scramble for Africa

- a. Trade along the Niger River, the greatest river of West Africa, became profitable in the nineteenth century due mostly to cocoa.
- b. British business man George Goldie, known as the "father of Nigeria", set up the United Africa Company in 1879 and turned it into the chartered Royal Niger Company in 1886 after the Berlin Conference assigned borders to European powers in Africa
 - i. The Berlin Conference stated that no power could claim what it did not occupy, setting off a race to turn vague claims into colonies
 - ii. This "scramble for Africa" prompted the British to grab Nigeria before the French could

V. The Colonial Interlude

- a. Fredrick Lugard

- i. Englishman who dedicated his life to furthering British colonial rule and the vision of a British Empire that brought peace and prosperity to the world
 - 1. Often used Britain's new Maxim guns to achieve this
 - ii. Lugard consolidated the areas of Yoruba and Igbo into two British protectorates and in 1900 moved into the Muslim north with military force
 - iii. Captured Kano and Sokoto in 1903 to form the Protectorate of Northern Nigeria. He was knighted in 1914 and combined Southern and Northern Nigeria into nearly its present day form under a governor-general in Lagos.
 - 1. Lugard invented the name Nigeria along with his wife who was a journalist
- b. Two styles of British colonial rule, indirect rule and divide and rule
 - i. Indirect rule- British colonial governance through native hereditary rulers
 - ii. Divide and Rule- Roman and British imperial ruling method of setting subjects against each other
 - 1. Logic behind this method, "If you keep them divided you can easily rule them. United they could throw you out."
 - 2. Under this policy colonialist officials emphasized the distinctiveness of cultures, powers, and territories of existing tribes to set them against each other
 - a. Tribes always existed in Africa but some scholars claim that the Europeans hyped tribalism to facilitate their rule. The often murderous tribalism found today owes something to colonist manipulations
 - iii. With only a few hundred white men the British ran colonies as cast as India by working with and through the local chiefs and princes, often buying them off with titles and honors
 - 1. The French were reluctant to turn local responsibilities over to natives and needed thousands of Frenchmen to staff their colonies, the British were far more efficient
- c. The theory of pan-Africanism sought to unite all of Africa and to liberate the continent from European domination.
 - i. British strategy for handling growing political claims from Africans was to cede them local and partial political power in small steps. In 1914 the British established a Nigerian Legislative Council and enlarged it with elected members in 1922.
 - 1. It had limited powers and did not include the north
 - 2. Britain's gradual hand off of power may have actually prevented the worst of violence, the Belgians gave the Congolese nothing and as a result, after Belgium granted the Congolese independence in 1960, the nation erupted into civil war and is to this day torn

- VI. Independence
- a. Decolonization came as a result of World War II, the European empires could no longer afford to keep their distant colonies of unlike peoples both materially and psychologically
 - i. Nigerian soldiers served in the British army and made subject peoples ask what the struggle against fascism meant when they still lived under authoritarian colonial regimes, the British had no good answer
 - b. Herbert Macaulay
 - i. Grandson of a prominent African Christian minister founded the Nigerian National Democratic party
 - ii. Now known as the father of Nigerian independence
 - iii. He and Nnamdi Azikiwe, a U.S. educated Igbo, brought together more than forty groups to form the National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons (NCNC) in 1944
 - c. The British strategy was to give way piecemeal.
 - i. In 1947 they set up a federal system as a solution to Nigeria's regional differences as well as their ethnic differences
 - ii. In 1951 they set up a national House of Representatives but it fell apart over the question of who represented what
 - iii. In 1954 they made the Nigerian federation self-governing with a Muslim prime minister from the north, Western and Eastern regions got internal self-government, the East under Azikiwe and the NCNC and the West under Chief Obafemi Awolowo, a lawyer who founded the Action Group, a party for the Yoruba
 1. Parties in Africa tend to form along tribal lines
 - d. Nigeria's problem was clear, how to make the huge Muslim Northern province and the two primarily Christian Southern provinces into one Nigeria
 - i. Similar to the problem in India, the Muslim population there eventually split into Pakistan
 - e. Britain officially granted Nigeria independence on October 1, 1960.
 - i. Imperialists take much of the blame for Nigeria's troubles, they deranged it with a massive slave trade, took it over with blunt military force, pitted tribes against each other, and finally left
 - ii. Nigeria would soon collapse into a series of military dictatorships, the story of many nations created out of imperialism

The Key Institutions

- I. The U.S. Model
 - a. Nigerian federalism resembles that of the United States, Nigeria's rulers increased the number of states to the present thirty six
 - i. Every few years the map of Nigeria is redrawn, done to calm the many ethnic groups who often feel trapped in a state dominated by another group

1. Usually leads to less violence
 - b. The British set up Nigeria on the Westminster model with a prime minister as chief of government but the 1979 constitution turned Nigeria into a U.S. style presidential system
 - i. The British system depends on one party winning a majority of seats in Commons
 1. Does not work in Nigeria as they have many parties and could fall easily to votes of no confidence
 - ii. A U.S. style presidential system can have a president govern without the majority support in the legislature. Presidents stay until the end of their terms and cannot be easily removed. Like in the U.S., the Nigerian president combines head of state with chief of government for a maximum of two four-year terms
- II. The National Assembly
- a. U.S. model evident in Nigeria's legislative branch as well
 - i. Bicameral National Assembly
 - ii. Senate has 109 seats; each of the thirty six states has three Senate seats plus one for the Federal Capital Territory
 - iii. House of Representatives has 360 seats, ten for each state, each representing a single member district. Both houses are elected for four year terms at the same time
 1. Differs from that of the U.S. because its states get the same amount of seats regardless of population, done to appease the many smaller ethnic groups within each state
 - a. More populous states feel underrepresented as a result
 - b. Creates the problem of hyperfederalism, of the formation of a system which tries too hard to represent every ethnic group
- III. Nigeria's Parties
- a. PDP bills itself as a centrist party but to a considerable extent is the personalistic vehicle of President Obasanjo
 - b. ANPP gets its strongest following from the Northern Muslims; some of its leaders supported the dictatorship of Sani Abacha during the 90's and got rich doing so
 - c. The Alliance for a Democracy (AD) is a Yoruba party that does well in its home on the southwest but is weaker elsewhere
 - d. The evolution of Nigeria's party system is a good sign

Nigerian Political Culture

- I. Nigerian Fragmentation
 - a. Half of Nigeria is Muslim, another forty percent are Christian and ten percent practice indigenous faiths, i.e. the Yoruba religion

- b. The North is characterized by being poor, isolated, traditional and Muslim. It has never liked being ruled by Christians, either British or southern Nigerian and has sought to be its own rulers
 - i. Islam can be rigid and intolerant, strong fundamentalist movements in the North demand that Muslim religious based laws should become state laws (sharia), and several Northern states have done so
 - 1. This does not sit well with Nigerian Christians and federal authorities because it means that states can override national laws. Christians living in states under that sharia would have to face, for example, stoning to death for adulterous women.
 - a. A country with two very different legal systems would be nearly impossible to control
 - i. Compromise might be possible, sharia for family law in the North, secular law for everything else; however Muslims insist that sharia is God's law and must not be mixed with other legal systems
 - ii. An example of the rift between Muslims and Christians is evident in the 2002 Miss World pageant, which was scheduled to be held in Abuja, Nigeria. Riots broke out and the pageant was relocated to London. The smallest of incidents can set off mass riots between the two conflicting religions and has been a touchy subject for Nigeria in particular.
- c. Other regions also present problems, one of the worst regional incidents was with the Biafra War during the late 1960's in which the Igbo of Eastern Nigeria attempted to break away with their own country Biafra. The Ijaw and Itsekiri tribes fight constantly over control of the oil terminals in the Niger Delta, just two examples of regional violence.

II. The Igbo and Biafra

- a. A prime example of Nigerian interethnic violence is with the Igbo people of southeast Nigerian in the late 60's.
- b. Under British rule the Igbo eagerly took to self advancement through business, education, the civil service, and military. Nearly all Christian, the Igbo scattered throughout all of Nigeria and dominated much of the commercial life in Northern Nigeria where they were despised for both their wealth and religion, some calling them the "Jews of Nigeria"
 - i. They were the most modern and educated Nigerians but were culturally at odds with more traditional Nigerians
- c. In response to the fraudulent elections of October 1965, a group of army officers, mainly Igbo, attempted a coup. Prime Minister Abubakar Tafwa

Balewa, a Northern Muslim, was assassinated. General Johnson Aguiyi-Ironsi, an Igbo, took over Nigeria and turned it from a federal system into a unitary system in an attempt to save the country

- i. Especially to the Muslim North, this looked like an Igbo conspiracy to seize control of the country
 1. In 1966 another coup took place, this time led by Colonel Yakubu Gowon, a Christian, overthrew and killed Ironsi
 2. During October 1966 riots against Igbo merchants and their families in the North killed some 20,000 and sent nearly a million Igbos back to their homeland.
 - a. An assembly of three Eastern states knowing that they had Nigeria's oilfields authorized an Igbo colonel, Odumegwu Ojukwu to set up a separate country. On May 30, 1967 Ojukwu proclaimed the Republic of Biafra.
 - b. The federal government knew where the oil was and tried to seize it, much of the Biafra War was over oil. The Biafrans at first did well but were eventually defeated in December 1969.
 - i. Igbo deaths, mostly from starvation, are estimated at half a million

III. The Trouble with Nigeria

- a. Nigeria has no shortage of intellectuals, two thirds of Nigerians are literate, and many Nigerians are college graduates, some from British and U.S. universities.
- b. Nigeria is referred to as a cleft country, which is, it is split between Islam and Christianity, displaying intercivilizational disunity.
- c. A poll taken in 2000 showed that 81 percent of Nigerians expressed support for democracy, however simply wanting democracy does not make it a reality. The problem is not in the number of Nigerians who understand and desire democracy, but it is the traditional tribes and religions that are limiting them. The terrible dilemma for Nigerian democrats is that they know that whenever Nigeria attempts democracy, it can easily fall amidst tribal and religious animosities, corruption and military coups.

Patterns of Interaction

I. Count the Coups

- a. Weak states often experience repeated military coups, a condition known as praetorism. It indicates the normal institutions of government (parliaments, parties, presidents, etc) have too little legitimacy and authority to stand up in times of stress. Most coups are easy and involve little fighting since the government has no mass support.
 - i. Oil revenues give a great incentive for Nigerian generals to think about coups

- ii. Disputes among ethnic groups is another apparent cause for a coup
- iii. Compared to Mexico, Nigeria is similar except for the fact that Mexico united under the PRI and Calles but Nigeria has yet to see a unified party and a strong leader arise
- b. Militarily ruled governments are unpopular, and often have little legitimacy and despite the incentives to stay in power, the general of head of government usually leaves office before they can be overthrown by either the people or a rival military officer

What Nigerians Quarrel About

- I. Upon independence in 1960, Nigeria had nearly the same GDP per capita as several East Asian countries but forty years later, most of these Asian countries are much richer than Nigeria, even with their vast oil revenues
 - a. One explanation is that human resources pay off in the long run versus material resources, there may even be an inverse relationship between natural resources and prosperity
 - b. Imperialism lead to much exploitation but is not the explanation for Nigeria's poor economy
- II. The Corruption Factor
 - a. Corruption in Nigeria is what is keeping foreign investors away
 - i. Called "sweetbread" or "dash", petty and small demands for cash are frequent in Nigeria, ranging from government officials to local merchants
 - 1. Some see petty corruption as an unofficial welfare system to redistribute the wealth from the better off to the poor, but it seldom goes to the truly needy and does not spare those with little money
 - b. Corruption of a grand scale,, or the use of an official position to siphon money, is much more dangerous
 - i. Corruption on a grand scale eats capital that should go for economic growth, health, and education
 - ii. It is a major factor in keeping the Third World poor
- III. Oil and Democracy
 - a. There is a strange correlation between petroleum wealth and democracy, one of the few democratic governments that produces oil is Norway but is has a long history of democracy and industry. Four major oil producing countries, Russia, Mexico, Nigeria and Iran, are all nondemocratic.
 - i. The oil produces great wealth but it is concentrated wealth, mostly in government hands and seldom benefits the whole society. Oil often becomes a great prize in politics and whoever controls the oil monopoly controls the power.
 - ii. Such is the story of Nigeria, where absolute poverty is occurring
 - 1. absolute poverty- living on \$1 a day or less