

Nigeria: 1, 2, 5

A key problem: “colonialism introduced a cultural dualism—a clash of customs, values, and political systems—between the traditions of social accountability in precolonial society, and emerging Western ideas of individualism. These pressures weakened indigenous democratic bases for the accountability of rulers and responsibility to the governed, along with age-old checks on abuses of office.”

Section 1: The Making of the Modern Nigerian State

Key dates: 1914, 1960, 1967-70, 1976, 1985, 1992, 1999, 2007

Key rulers: Gowon, Obasanjo, Babangida, Abacha, Yar’Adua

Why does the text say that Nigeria is an **unfinished state** marred by a low levels of popular **legitimacy** and **accountability**?

How were the Nigerian borders determined? (i.e., what distinguishes it from its four neighbors, Benin, Niger, Chad, and Cameroon?) Where do its three main ethnic groups (which together make up almost 70% of the country’s population, although over 250 ethnic groups exist in total), the Hausa-Fulani, the Yoruba, and the I(g)bo each reside? How does religious affiliation play out within each of these groups?

Precolonial period

- To give an idea of how far back tribal ethnicities go, the Yoruba people trace their identity back as far as 8500 BC.
- A part of the Fulani Empire during the 18th century (formed during an Islamic *jihād*, or holy war)
- Political authority was diffuse, with the result being “stateless” or **acephalous** societies

The Impact of Colonial Rule (1860-1960)

The Good

- The British “promoted the foundations of a democratic political system”

The Bad

- The British “Played off ethnic and social divisions to keep Nigerians from developing organized political resistance to colonial rule.”
- Nigerians eventually came to regard the state as an exploitative and predatory instrument (which is, in many respects, precisely what it became).

The First Republic (1960-1966): Westminster model adopted; Northerners dominating the government

Biafran Civil War and Subsequent Military Rule (1966-1979)

- 1967-70: Biafran war; a failed secession by the Eastern Ibo—a humanitarian disaster
- Yakubu Gowon in power from 1966-1975, overthrown by Murtala Muhammad, whose assassination brought General Olusegun Obasanjo to power, who ceded power to elections and endorsed the northerner Shehu Shagari (significant because Obasanjo is a Yoruba).

Second and Third Republics, and Military rule until 1999

- Following a half decade of (flawed and coerced) elections, military power arose again and cycled from Muhammadu Buhari to Ibrahim Babangida (1985-1993) to Ernest Shonekan to General Sani Abacha (1993-1998)

The (current) Fourth Republic: Obasanjo and Yar’Adua

Obasanjo

- Retired a number of military officials of power under previous military governments
- Generally ambitious reform agenda sullied by clientelism and corruption to get reelected in 2003

Section 2: Political Economy (“ambitious goals followed by lackluster implementation”)

How does dependence on the oil economy foster rent-seeking, and what effects does this have on the economy?

A formerly thriving agricultural sector has been weakened by the Biafran war (reduced palm oil production), severe drought, and the emphasis on the petroleum economy: food imports surged by 700% between 1970 and 1978

“Within three years of seizing power in 1993, General Abacha allowed all of Nigeria’s oil refineries to collapse, forcing this giant oil-exporting country into the absurd situation of having to import refined petroleum.” (see image on p. 387)

1985: Babangida’s **structural adjustment program** under IMF auspices. Prioritizes fiscal discipline, privatization, and controlling the country’s **balance of payments**.

To make matters worse, “potential foreign investors remain hesitant to risk significant capital in an environment characterized by political and social instability, unpredictability, economic policies, and endemic corruption.”

Abacha’s Vision 2010 (and later NEEDS under Obasanjo). Central goals include: lowering population growth, focusing on education, privatization, diversifying exports beyond oil, anticorruption and transparency.

Ongoing **ethnic and religious cleavages**...

Gender: women are generally prevented from owning land, only 8 of 469 national legislators are women

Section 5: “Nigerian politics must change in fundamental ways for democracy to become more stable and legitimate”.

What are the existing problems?

What are some possible solutions?