

Nigeria in the Twentieth Century

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This book focuses on the major issues in the history of Nigeria during the twentieth century, showing how the country was created and governed under different regimes. While recognizing the role of external influences, notably the establishment of colonial rule by the British, the Cold War, and contemporary global politics, the book stresses the contributions of Nigerians to the development of their country. The leading themes explored in the book are historiography and methods; politics and economy; creativity and literature; and the burdens of the nation-state.

The contributors represent a new crop of Nigerian scholars whose ideas will shape many of the discussions on the country in the next fifty years. Inscribing their aspirations into the analyses and narratives, they see both challenges and optimism as they and their country travel slowly to a future whose conditions are hard to predict.

The importance of Nigeria cannot be exaggerated: one in five Africans is a Nigerian; it is a leading African country with the second largest economy; and it remains a regional power, an influential actor in world politics, and a hugely populated country whose restless citizens will not relent in their demands for progress, political stability, and interethnic harmony.