Nigeria(ns) and the Sea

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By

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Preamble

This is the second Distinguished Professor Lecture delivered in the Faculty of Arts, the first having been delivered by Distinguished Professor Jim Ijenwa Unah of the Department of Philosophy. I therefore thank God Almighty for enabling me to deliver this lecture, the first by a Nigerian historian in this country. I deeply appreciate the University of Lagos for conferring on me the Distinguished Professorship through the Governing Council, the Senate, the Honours Committee, the Faculty of Arts and the Department of History and Strategic Studies. I am indebted to Professor Koleola Odusami, former Dean of the Faculty of Environmental Sciences, and Professor Olufunke Adeboye, former Dean of the Faculty of Arts, who nominated me twice for the award, and Professor Godwin Azenabor, who offered technical guidance. I sincerely thank members of my biological, spiritual, sociological and intellectual families – too numerous to mention one by one – for their support over several decades.

This lecture is affectionately dedicated to the memory of four women, out of many living and deceased in my family, who shaped my life from the cradle to the pinnacle of my academic career: my paternal grandmother, Mama Naomi Otitoyomi Olukoju, nee Daodu; my paternal great aunt, Mama Esther Tanimoowo Ologunaye (nee Olukoju); my mother, Princess Esther Adefolawe Olukoju (nee Odole of Idoani); and my late wife, Barrister Abosede Omowumi Olukoju, J.P. (nee Olorunda of Ikare-Akoko).

Introduction

Offshore water bodies cover three-quarters of the earth's surface and 90 percent of global trade is seaborne. This underscores the indispensability of the oceans and seas to humanity. While those classified as the Traditional Maritime Nations (TMNs), initially concentrated in the Global North, have harnessed inland and offshore water bodies to their advantage – for fishing, trade, transport, national security and empire building – many countries in the Global South have underutilized the maritime assets at their disposal. This is why this lecture takes on the subject of Nigeria(ns) and the sea, a combination of macro- and micro-level analyses of how the Nigerian state as an entity and individuals or groups of Nigerians at the communal or personal levels have interacted with the sea over time. This combination of the macro- and micro-level analyses permits a simultaneous top-down and bottom-up engagement with the subject. This pioneering assessment of Nigeria's engagement with the sea over the long durée complements a dated collection of African continental perspectives on the theme.[1]

Some scholars might argue that referring to "Nigeria(ns)" before the Amalgamation of 1914 is anachronistic. My response is that post-1914 Nigeria did not emerge in a historical vacuum but was both the culmination and link in the chain of events as the country emerged, like others, from the interplay of historical dynamics. To be sure, while there was no "Germany" before 1870, the nation had existed in fact if not in legal terms well before then. To address the concerns of the purists, we can limit "Nigeria" (specifically) or the State to the post-1914 period, and adopt "Nigerians" (generically) or the people to both the pre- and post-1914 epochs of Nigerian history.

That said, we also need to clarify the "sea" that Nigerians interacted with throughout history. The assumption that Nigerian peoples faced the Atlantic is only partially true because it ignores centuries-long commercial and cultural relations between peoples of the northern extremities of

Nigeria – Ancient Borno and Kasar Hausa – with the Mediterranean Sea. Ancient trans-Saharan trade routes connected the pre-nineteenth century states of Hausaland (especially Kano) and Borno to Tripoli on the Mediterranean coast of Africa in low-bulk high-value exotic products and luxury items such as ostrich feathers, and everyday goods such as textiles (calico) and natron/potash.[2]

Sea Blindness, Myopia and "Visibility"[3]

As aforementioned, many countries of the Global South have failed to harness the enormous economic assets in their maritime domain. One reason for this, according to scholars, is the phenomenon of "sea blindness," the tendency to focus almost exclusively on the terrestrial space to the near-total neglect of the sea. According to Duncan Redford, "sea blindness" is "the inability to connect with maritime issues either at an individual or political level."[4] For another commentator, it denotes the idea that "the public, and by extension Governments of nations do not understand the maritime domain, and do not understand the case for the maritime domain – not just from a military, but also from a wider sector perspective."[5]

A 2011 nationwide survey by Seafarers UK showed that a vast majority of Britons were ignorant of their island country's overwhelming dependence on the sea. The survey revealed that "general maritime knowledge among the public at large [was] … severely lacking, and 'sea blindness' is a huge problem. Even folk in the UK's major ports appear to have largely lost any sense of connection with the sea… [A]n alarming 20% [of adult Britons] … thought Calais was a port in the UK."[6] Even in Nigerian port cities, such as Lagos and Port Harcourt, many residents are oblivious to the nearness of the sea and its importance to their daily existence and livelihoods. This prompted an official of the Nigerian Maritime Administration and Security Agency (NIMASA) to charge the media to "liberate Nigerians from sea blindness by bring(ing) to the fore the vast investment opportunities in the maritime industry, especially in the face of dwindling value of fossil fuel

and its environmental hazards to the littoral states."[7] However, in an ironic twist, a survey by the UK Chamber of Shipping in 2017 reported that the majority of citizens regarded sea blindness as a myth.[8]

Be that as it may, sea blindness is a broad concept with near total blindness at one end of the spectrum, myopia in the middle and (limited) vision (sightedness) at the other end. However, it has been argued that "if we want to understand sea blindness, we need to think about it on a spectrum that would include … sea visibility."[9] According to this reading, sea blindness and sightedness produce contrasting emotions – blindness tends towards pessimism while increasing sightedness – catalysed by science and technology, the social media, films, music, marine conservation, Greenpeace and similar lobbies, the National Geographic, tsunamis, oil spills and other maritime disasters, with accompanying phenomena, such as beached whales – finds expression in ocean optimism.[10] That said, sea blindness is attributable to any of "negligence, ignorance or lack of interest or resources to address the issues" at stake in the maritime domain.[11] In effect, there could be selective sea blindness, where the protagonist could be wilfully blind or ignorantly blind to certain issues but not to others in the same domain.

While some littoral countries, such as in West Africa, have left their maritime domain under-protected and under-exploited for national development, advanced countries suffer from a narrow focus on an aspect of the maritime domain – such as security, narrowly defined, or fisheries or mining, without any interconnection or an integrated national maritime policy. In the case of the European Union (EU), it has been claimed that new members of the body suffer from "sea blindness" – or, better still, sea myopia - by their failure to modernise their navies.[12] Making a case for myopia rather than sea blindness from the perspective of the UK, where people are better aware of the sea and the importance of the Navy, a critic asserted that sea blindness was a construct from a narrow naval perspective. He argued that the term

> implies the Navy exists as a form of guide dog or white cane, to be used daily as an essential tool of existence. Rather [,] … the phrase 'Sea Myopia', … implies that the public are able to see the case for maritime power, for maritime investment and the importance of the maritime case, but that often it's a little bit blurry and fuzzy beyond their own close in vision. In this case the Navy should serve as a pair of reading glasses – able to bring clarity and vision when required, and which can easily be put to one side when not needed.[13]

Nigeria, for example, has narrowly focused on mining offshore hydrocarbons while under-exploiting her rich fisheries for her national good, thereby allowing various foreign exploiters to ravage her fisheries in what is known as Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing (IUU).

It is fascinating that some have argued that sea blindness is not an unmitigated evil after all. According to this view, the media had projected a negative view of shipping which outweighs its acclaimed benefits, among which is the cost-effectiveness of shipping compared to other modes: "shipping is so cheap that it is cost-effective to freeze Scottish-caught fish, ship them to China for processing, then freeze and ship them back to the UK for sale.… [O]ur high standards of living depend on cheap shipping."[14] The commentator, a retired sailor, acknowledged charges against shipping: it collectively pollutes the atmosphere, it disturbs the marine ecosystem – by generating noise inimical to whales and dolphins – and shipowners maltreat their crews. In defence, he argues that most owners treat their crew well and only a small percentage is maltreated, even as he notes that pollution has increased only in proportion to the doubling of global trade and shipping in the past decade. He further identifies the negative bent of media coverage of the shipping industry, which is made to "look like a cheap, dirty industry full of crooks exploiting their crews and spewing muck into the air and noise into the oceans." He asserted that "We don't see ourselves like that" and concluded tongue-in-cheek that sea blindness – outsiders' ignorance of what goes on in the industry – "may be a good thing after all."[15]

Sea blindness also takes the form of unconscious neglect of terrible developments in a particular sector of the maritime industry. A journalist who had been covering maritime disasters was blind to crimes in the same industry until he was jolted by the criminal activities of an old Greek-owned refrigerated ship, The *Dona Liberta,* whose crew, among other atrocities, cast two Tanzanian stowaways adrift on a rickety raft, apparently condemning them to sure death. However, while both of them survived a stormy night at sea and drifted ashore in Liberia, one of them later succumbed to the trauma. The journalist then made it a mission to track down the ship, which had changed names and ownership and had switched off its transponder to hide its movements, and bring it to justice. According to him, "The Dona Liberta cured me of my sea blindness."[16]

African littoral nations are no longer totally sea-blind. At least the threats of piracy and IUU have prompted those nations to focus more on their maritime domains. A number of maritime security and law enforcement measures on national, regional and intercontinental platforms effectively combatted sea piracy in the Horn of Africa and the Gulf of Guinea. However, it has been argued that while Africa, Nigeria inclusive, had been contending with sea blindness, it still fell victim to maritime "wealth blindness." Many littoral states are blind to the enormous wealth embedded in their maritime domain to the extent that criminal groups, which are better informed about that wealth, prey on it via IUU and piracy. The commentator cited instances of African states failing to negotiate from a position of strength and thereby selling themselves short in signing unfair fishing licences, commercial agreements and infrastructure (port, rail and roads) concessions. A particular African littoral state reportedly sold a block of fishing licences worth $55 million for a paltry $700,000. The said observer therefore counselled African states to "conduct marine biological, hydrographic, scientific and commercial studies to understand what they have, what it is worth, and how to exploit it in a sustainable fashion."[17]

Nigerians' engagement with the sea is varied. Beachcombers, who participate in seasonal recreation on sandy beaches, are at least aware of

the sea. However, this type of sea sightedness or sea awareness is limited to festive seasons or occasional celebratory events. Their vision of the sea is so narrow that it is at best sea myopia. Likewise, seaside communities in the Ilaje coast of Ondo State live with the daily threat of coastal erosion. Here is a case of sightedness that is narrowed down, however, to the community's survival in the face of habitat loss and endangering of fishing grounds. For the most part, the average Nigerian is oblivious of the sea except for those who are seafarers on ships, fishermen who traverse the Gulf of Guinea or oil-platform workers that directly engage with the sea and their immediate families, who may not necessarily be aware of the work environment of their kinsfolk.

The Nigerian Colonial State and the Sea

As Nigeria was an appendage of imperial Britain well before 1914 and up until 1960, we can discern some level of sightedness or awareness on the part of the State during the first six decades of the twentieth century. Shipping had cemented the economic, political and social ties between colony and metropolis. British and foreign shipping had established links with "Nigeria" as far back as the 1850s, the onset of the Age of Steam. Regular services were operated but the liner services were complemented by tramp shipping, which can be likened to unregistered taxi cabs (*kabukabu*) in contemporary Lagos.[18] Ships became bigger and technology improved but access to Nigerian ports was limited by the shallow entrances and long approach channels from the open sea. Indeed, all of the Nigerian ports were river ports. At Lagos, access to ocean liners was impeded by the sand bar at the mouth of the harbour, the target of intensive harbour works between 1892 and 1914. By the latter date, coincidentally the year of the Amalgamation and the outbreak of World War I, the sand bar had been removed and the harbour had been dredged to maintain a steady draught of between 17 and 20 feet.[19]

Port development at Lagos, coupled with railway construction and operation from 1895, gave the port an edge over rival ports.[20] Whereas

Lagos had a natural harbour, other river ports lacking rail access soon receded in the port hierarchy, thus ensuring the overwhelming dominance of Lagos until the construction of Port Harcourt (named after Secretary of State Lewis Harcourt) between 1913 and 1926. Port Harcourt was developed as the coastal outlet for the coal mines of Enugu and the tin mines of the Jos Plateau. From its inception to date, the port has played second fiddle to Lagos port.[21]

A significant consequence of the Lagos port and its connection to Kano by rail from 1914 was the re-orientation of that ancient commercial and industrial centre from the Mediterranean to the Atlantic seaboard. Kano had been a major centre of the trans-Saharan trade, with outlets in Tripoli and other Maghreb ports up till the emergence of British rule. Nigeria's colonial ruler, Frederick Lugard, had sought to divert that desert trade to the Atlantic coast but away from Lagos. His preferred outlet was the Niger Delta ports of Burutu and Forcados, for which he constructed a rail line from Kano to Baro on the Niger. Freight conveyed on the Kano-Baro Railway (BKR) was to be shipped down the river to coastal outlets in the Niger Delta rather than by rail on the Lagos-Baro line. In spite of heavy investment of hope and capital in the Kano-Baro-Niger intermodal route, the scheme failed because of the seasonality of the River Niger, causing low draught during the dry season, which expensive dredging could not ameliorate. Thus, reality forced the merger of the competing rail schemes from Lagos and Kano, a situation that further reinforced the hegemony of Lagos in the Nigerian maritime space from 1914. This made Lagos unassailable in its competition with the Niger Delta ports.[22] In effect, Northern Nigeria's engagement with the sea finally shifted wholesale to the Atlantic Coast via the Lagos-Kano and the Jos-Port-Harcourt rail lines.

However, beyond port engineering, the State was directly involved in the political and financial administration of Nigerian ports. As public infrastructure, the ports were a node in the transport links, hence the enforced cooperation of different Departments and Agencies, such as Marine, Port Engineering, Customs and Railways. As noted by Professor

Babafemi Ogundana, there was a *multiplicity of port authorities* as listed but there was also a *duality of control* by the government and the private sector. For, in addition to government-owned ports, a private firm – the Niger Company – also controlled the port of Sapele, which was the outlet for its timber and plywood trade. Nigerian ports were thus a contested terrain, which generated conflict and overlap of functions and operations. It was for this reason that the government instituted commissions of inquiry to examine the best way to resolve the confusion in the sector. Eventually, the Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA) was established in 1954 to coordinate and harmonise the activities of Departments, Agencies and other stakeholders.[23] We shall see presently that the establishment of the NPA did not resolve all issues for all time.

A corollary of port administration is the financial management of the ports. From the 1920s to date, Nigerian ports have been notorious for charging uncompetitive port tariffs. This was why Lagos was dubbed "an expensive" port compared to similar ports across the Global South.[24] The notoriety of Nigerian seaports for levying uncompetitive port charges was reinforced by a recent 15 per cent hike in berthing charges that raised the levy from $150,000 to $200,000. Compared to the rates at other West African ports – Tema ($15,000), Lome ($26,000), Cotonou ($27,000) and Abidjan ($60,000), and the Asian giants of Shanghai ($21,000) and Singapore ($29,000), Nigerian ports are totally uncompetitive and this has led to a loss of trade to Cotonou and Lome, in particular.[25] To be sure, the cost of port engineering and harbour works (including dredging) and port operations had always been burdensome, necessitating higher tariffs. Yet, revenue had never matched the cost of construction and operation of Lagos and other ports. This has caused the loss of traffic to the ports of neighbouring countries that manage to charge lower tariffs for more efficient services. That said, corruption in port management, multiplicity of government agencies and contrived delays also contribute to the poor performance of Lagos and other Nigerian ports vis-à-vis their foreign competitors.

In essence, the colonial state was not sea-blind. Its survival as an economic proposition was contingent upon maintenance of maritime links between Britain and Nigeria. Even at the height of two global conflicts – World Wars I & II – it kept the sea lanes open and maritime trade flowing by means of the convoy system and the policy of port concentration.[26] It also ensured that the ports received ocean liners by maintaining the appropriate bar draught across seasons and years.

The Nigerian State and the Sea since Independence

By design and default, the successor Nigerian State at independence hardly differed from its predecessor in its broad economic policies and attitude towards the sea. In terms of the latter, seaports and shipping remained the major windows to the sea. Nigerian trade was largely directed towards Europe, especially Britain. However, there was a significant policy shift on the eve of independence when the transition to independence was virtually completed. This was in respect of the establishment of the Nigerian National Shipping Line (NNSL), the exemplar of maritime economic nationalism.[27] It had been established to register the flag – Nigeria's presence – in the comity of maritime nations. Nationalists envisioned it as a means of retaining the capital taken by foreign lines. The NNSL was also expected to develop human capacity in the maritime sector and to reverse the ill-treatment of Nigerians serving on foreign vessels.

However, while the NNSL was supposed to have delivered Nigeria from the stranglehold of the shipping cartel – the Conference Lines (Elder Dempster and other foreign lines), it is a great irony that the line was birthed under the mentorship of the same Elder Dempster shipping line. In contrast, Ghana's Black Star Line was birthed by the Israeli Zim Line. As subsequent scholars have shown, the NNSL hardly survived the first decade of independence. From inception, it was bedevilled by a number of contradictions, such as the very act of joining a cartel that it was established to fight. Worse, it was run as a parastatal rather than as a commercial venture, with the result that nepotism, political interference, systemic

corruption and cronyism strangulated the budding firm. To compound matters, there was indiscipline among the officers and men on board, characterised by large-scale private trading at the expense of the shipping line. In the end, the company was liquidated with heavy losses in the 1990s. It may be noted in passing that the corruption and mismanagement that killed the NNSL also led to the physical death of a ship, its captain and some other persons. This was the disaster of the *M.V. Gurara*, which sank in 1989. Although efforts were made to cover up serious financial and managerial incompetence leading to the loss of vessel, cargo and human lives (including those of the captain and crew of the doomed ship), the critical factors in the preventable calamity were the insolvency of the shipping line (which rendered it impotent to act to save the ship at different stages of distress), the theft ("barratry") or adulteration of the ship's bunker, leading to the inadequacy of lubrication oil and hence the "knocking" of the ship's engine.[28]

In the meantime, the ports sector was similarly not spared the corruption and incompetence that brought the entire public sector to its knees. For security reasons, the Nigerian Civil War had forced the adoption of a policy of concentration, with Lagos as sole outlet. In the aftermath of the war and the massive reconstruction occasioned by the war and massive imports fuelled by the heavy windfall from the oil boom caused by the Arab-Israeli war of 1973, Lagos port was overwhelmed to breaking point. The notorious cement armada of the post-civil war years imposed huge capital flight through real and fake demurrage payments as ships lined up to discharge cement imports far beyond the installed capacity of the port. This necessitated port expansion in Lagos and the rise of other ports in the Delta, especially to cope with oil exports.

Port construction by the Nigerian State is a preoccupation that best illustrates its engagement with the sea. Following the schema proposed by Professor Babafemi Ogundana, port development in Nigeria since the 1960s has oscillated between diffusion and concentration. Post-civil war developments in Lagos (Tin Can and, most recently, Lekki) and Onne have

tended towards diffusion of ports, although not necessarily in a spatial sense. The biggest ports are still clustered in Lagos (Apapa, Tin Can and Lekki), which handles the bulk of Nigeria's external trade. In effect, even in periods of relative prosperity and diffusion of port outlets, activities are clustered in a few ports, especially in the Lagos area. This phenomenon has often been explained away as a further illustration of the marginalisation of eastern Nigeria, especially the South East geopolitical zone. Without foreclosing the merit of this perspective, it is difficult to imagine that any rational government would neglect certain port outlets on mere political grounds when such outlets are the best, being the most efficient and the most cost-effective to operate.

Although one cannot put anything past the federal government of Nigeria at its worst, the argument of deliberate neglect of ports in any region is too far-fetched. What is more plausible is that those ports are disadvantaged by site and situation factors.[29] They are river ports, sited a considerable distance from the open sea and accessible by narrow and shallow approach channels. Given those circumstances, as well as the ever-present need to dredge them to maintain requisite draught for ships, the cost of port-working would make the ports uncompetitive in relation to other ports even within Nigeria. That said, even if access were to be maintained at some cost, the ports would be unable to receive vessels bigger than the approach channels and draught would permit. As bigger ships are being pressed into service, the river ports with limited draught would be driven to the margins irrespective of government policy or investment. Converting them into outright artificial deep sea ports might not justify the cost. Furthermore, with regard to Calabar, the international boundary with Cameroon has cut it off from its natural hinterland, thus robbing it of the traffic needed to make it a viable port.

A noteworthy development in the engagement of the Nigerian State with the sea has been the involvement of sub-national entities especially in the twenty-first century. However, much earlier in the 1950s, the Western Region was the first sub-national entity to intrude into the maritime domain

by seeking to establish its own shipping line. As I demonstrated in the piece on the politics of the establishment of the NNSL, the regional government engaged the Israeli government to set up its shipping line as the federal government was working on its own line. However, that move was clearly unconstitutional because shipping was on the Exclusive List of subjects under the sole prerogative of the federal government. A constitutional crisis was averted through a compromise solution that placated the regional government and ensured that Nigeria pursued a single scheme, even as Ghana (the newly independent Gold Coast) had established its own Black Star Line.[30] If the constitutional provision deterred sub-national participation in maritime affairs from the late colonial period up to the 2000s, deregulation in contemporary times has permitted states to venture into areas that were exclusive preserves of the federal government under a long era of centrist military governments – communications, aviation, electronic broadcasting, university education and the railways. Today state governments can build seaports, having earlier been empowered to build and operate airports. This is why Lagos, Ogun, Ondo, Edo and Akwa Ibom have embarked on various seaport projects with varying degrees of success.

Two major developments in the contemporary history of the Nigerian State's engagement with the sea in the ports sector will now be addressed. The first is the construction of the Eko Atlantic City, an ambitious multibillion dollar project involving foreign capital, the Nigerian State and local investors. Prime real estate was created from a reclaimed waterfront to extend the megacity of Lagos into the Atlantic and to create a world-class business district housing, among others, the biggest United States Consulate in the world. Paradoxically, the development of the Eko Atlantic City, a major waterfront project in Lagos, has permanently altered the marine and littoral ecosystems. Artisanal fishermen and sand miners have been displaced by the emergence of the behemoth, which should ordinarily be a bulwark against coastal erosion and flooding. The effect is that the Bar Beach, which used to be the recreational commons of Lagos, has been obliterated and access to the sea has become largely constrained for

majority of those who used to frequent the waterfront. It might be argued in defence of the government, however, that the development of the new city has shifted the coastline outwards to the sea and expanded the city of Lagos, and that other waterfront facilities are available further east and west of Lagos Atlantic City.

The second major development was the creation of the Lekki Deep Seaport, the biggest port in West Africa. It is situated in the Lekki Free Trade Zone which houses, among others, the Dangote Refinery, the biggest of its kind in the world. In effect, a public-private partnership has domesticated in Nigeria a maritime industrial and commercial district in a new area of Lagos, further reinforcing the port city's pre-eminence in the West African sub-region and indeed, in Equatorial Africa. As in the case of the Eko Atlantic project, the jury is out on the net benefits of this grand initiative, which would manifest in the short, medium and long term. What is not in dispute is the epochal change wrought by these developments. Yet, issues have been raised about port planning and projections – issues bordering on the need for integrated policy encompassing the maritime and ancillary sectors. For example, it is befuddling that such a project was conceived without the accompanying rail transport to feed and relieve it, given the disaster that overdependence on road transport has been for the vicinity of the ports (as in Apapa) and the entire urban, regional and national road transport sector, real estate and the environment.

A third initiative of the Nigerian State in relation to the sea was the creation, for the first time in the country's history, of a dedicated Federal Ministry of Marine and Blue Economy. This development is significant for two reasons: the clamour for and the response to the creation of the Ministry, and the parallel experience of another continental economic powerhouse, the Republic of South Africa.

Perhaps galvanised by Nigeria's pioneering initiative or, at any rate, the peculiar situation in South Africa, a columnist in a major newspaper articulated the imperative of a South African Maritime Affairs Ministry.

This is paradoxical given that South Africa had launched an ambitious maritime policy – Operation Phakisa – to kick-start the country's wholesale exploitation of its vast blue-economy resources. The dismal state of the South African blue economy is detailed as follows:

> Rather than the anticipated growth in the maritime sector in the post-Phakisa era, the opposite has occurred. The ports have experienced challenging times; railway infrastructure linking the ports to markets and exporters' facilities with the ports has faded; the last major South African shipowner moved offshore, taking with it the jobs of umpteen seafarers, while an adverse court ruling stopped prospecting for undersea oil and/or gas off the east coast, thereby culling the hopes of a boom in offshore operations. Apart from small tonnages of mineral exports, all South African imports and exports are carried by foreign-flagged, foreign-owned, foreign-crewed, foreign-financed and foreign-insured ships whose profits go to foreign banks. Contrary to the days when the vibrant Unicorn and small coasting companies moved local interport cargoes, all coastal cargoes are carried by foreign ships – to the benefit of foreign owners.[31]

The foregoing could have been stated without a single exception for Nigeria's maritime economy. It might be said as mitigation that Nigeria did not have a policy in place as the South Africans had had for nine years and that Nigeria had created a dedicated ministry to coordinate and govern maritime affairs. But the sad reality is that both well-endowed maritime powers had under-performed compared to their potential and the successes recorded by Global South powers, such as Singapore and Dubai (United Arab Emirates), which ranked significantly lower than either Nigeria or South Africa by the mid-1960s.

The critic acknowledged that South Africa had made positive moves in some directions – harbour tug replacement, cruise terminal construction and more private-sector involvement in the ports sector – but called for more shipping-sector projects that would generate thousands of new jobs. He also strongly recommended the creation of a Ministry of Maritime

Affairs populated by "energetic and visionary people who have experience in the maritime industry," led by a Minister who is a technocrat rather than a ruling party loyalist, someone preferably below forty years old. The Minister, in league with the Finance Minister, should introduce "a shipowner-friendly tax regime and implement other positive provisions to attract shipping to South Africa," taking advantage of the country's strategic location on a major shipping route.[32]

There is much to reflect on in the foregoing analysis of the state of South Africa's blue-economy governance. It could be claimed with some justification that the Nigerian State is much more aware than it used to be about the potential of the blue economy and that it is taking steps to fully realise that potential. At least, for the first time, the country has a dedicated ministry that coordinates all maritime affairs, even as its institution and capacity-building efforts amount to work-in-progress. Second, a national policy has finally been developed but it has yet to be unveiled for public analysis, engagement and buy-in by stakeholders. Its success will depend partly on government's commitment in terms of governance, policy direction and funding and partly on partnership with non-state stakeholders, especially the domestic and foreign business community. Thus far, the Nigerian State has demonstrated great awareness and sightedness in relation to the sea. It has expectedly fared better than average Nigerians, including those inhabiting the port cities and other coastal settlements.

Nigerians and the Sea

Nigerians' encounters with the sea long antedated the formal creation of the Nigerian State. Communities and people living along the coast or those inland with a commercial or diplomatic interest in or links with seaborne trade and actors have related with visiting ships and sailed across the seas themselves. The kingdoms of Benin and Warri had had commercial, religious and diplomatic relations with the Portuguese and the Dutch as early as the sixteenth century, with enduring results.[33]

It is important to stress that the sea meant different things to the different peoples. While some considered it a threat or a force for evil (coastal erosion and loss of wrecked ships), others considered it a window of opportunity, a vent to the world. I have advanced the proposition that what people conceived of the sea – a symbol of fear and a barrier or a fresh field to conquer and exploit – determined what they did with it. One group feared and venerated the sea as an object of worship (as on the Nigerian littoral), while others saw it as an escape route from their poorly endowed homeland (such as the Portuguese).[34]

Individual Nigerians have been going out to the open sea on fishing expeditions since the precolonial period. For example, the Ilaje and the Ijo are spread across the Gulf of Guinea, where they have traded, fished, fought and settled over the centuries. Permanent settlements of these groups dot the landscape and their cultural artefacts and assets are found in places beyond their Niger Delta homeland.

Surely, Nigerian seafarers joined the services of European shipping lines, especially Elder Dempster. As documented by various scholars,[35] these sailors were generally unskilled and, therefore occupied the lowest rung of the employment ladder aboard the ships that traversed the world's seas. These pioneers suffered exploitation and racial discrimination, as reflected in poor wages and harsh work environments. They were the least paid but did the most arduous and hazardous jobs on the lower decks, especially the boiler room, where they worked as literal donkeys to feed coal into the furnace that powered the steam engines. In response to abuse aboard ship or in hopes of better prospects, these proletarian seafarers often deserted or got abandoned by vessel captains whenever it was economically tempting to abandon the low-grade sailors to cut costs.

An interesting finding about Nigerian seafarers of the colonial period is that many of them did not originate from seaside communities. Some came from inland communities driven by the "push" factor of adverse conditions in those places and the "pull" factor of the lure of the proverbial golden

fleece. Most of these did not leave records and were lost in the anonymity of the crowd. However, we can glean insights from snippets of the accounts of stranded Nigerian seamen during the 1930s. One of them hailed from a remote village in what is now Akoko-Edo in Edo State, a place not so far from mine and far removed from the sea. There were also accidental seafarers, specifically those who stowed away to Europe or the United States. Only a few ever identified themselves and one of them became a prominent Nigerian politician who chose that path to the United States.

A different category of Nigerians who engaged the sea during the colonial period were merchants and shipowners. One of the most remarkable was Captain J.P.L. Davies, a Saro Lagosian, who was a trained mariner and owner of ships.[36]

Overcoming Sea Blindness and Optimizing the Blue Economy

The Nigerian State cannot be fairly accused of complete sea blindness but its sight needs to be (re)focused on optimal engagement with the sea. We shall attempt to highlight what we consider as useful priorities for the Nigerian State.

First, Nigeria is in dire need of a comprehensive maritime-sector policy. Without prejudice to the one that the Minister is working on, we urge the government to draw inspiration from what happened in the past in our country and what other countries have done or failed to do. In contemporary times, we may consider South Africa's "Operation Phakisa" as a model national policy for the marine and blue economy sector.[37] A leading expert commented on the formulation and implementation of the policy as follows: "Phakisa's oceans focus is inclusive and maps out clear outcomes. From the outset, government cultivated active participation by diverse actors – government, non-governmental, industry and academia – to bring about the attributes of clustered governance."[38]

On Ports

That said, in the specific area of ports policy, we propose certain guiding principles. First, there should be strict regulation of seaport development to check unbridled proliferation as has been the case in the aviation sector. Observers have lamented Nigerian state governors' penchant for building airports as if they were bus terminals. It has been estimated, for example, that state governments in Nigeria's South West alone have sunk more than N250 billion in unviable airport projects.[39] This is reminiscent of the craze for private jets by Second Republic politicians, who then built unviable airports in their state capitals to support their indulgence. It is clear that, even in the best socio-economic milieu, Nigeria cannot afford to operate the number of deep seaports that are sprouting all over the coastal belt. We need to learn from history and scholarly research. For example, it is known in the academic literature that the bane of Calabar port is not merely that it is a river port located some distance from the open sea but that its natural hinterland is in Cameroon, with all the implications of that fact.[40] How could that be mitigated by constructing a deep seaport there?

Several decades ago, the pioneer port geographer, the aforementioned Professor Ogundana, had studied the dynamics of port development and proposed the concepts of port **concentration** and port **diffusion**. The former entailed concentrating foreign trade outlets at a few ports during emergencies (e.g. warfare) or during periods of global economic adversity (e.g. the Great Depression of the 1930s). The latter was typical of times of economic prosperity when a country could afford to operate multiple ports to handle booming external trade. Of course, each policy option had its shortcomings: concentration could lead to under-capacity in the event of a sudden reversal of political and economic fortunes, while diffusion could create excess capacity if boom turned to bust. In effect, the policy should be proactive and flexible to make it adaptable to and anticipate the best- and worst-case scenarios. To cite a recent example, several ports found themselves totally unprepared for the ripple effects of the disruption of Red

Sea shipping, which potentially created opportunities for others on the Atlantic seaboard of Africa. For Cape Town, it was a missed opportunity to make the best of its historic role as a refuelling station – a role it could not perform because of unresolved issues in the port setting.

A second fundamental principle of ports policy for Nigeria is the benchmark of economic viability. Ports should be seen as essentially economic enterprises that should break even in the short and medium terms, even though they are also required to play strategic, political and economic roles, for which reason the Japanese call them "developer ports."[41] Like Nigeria's airports, many of our seaports are underutilized and, therefore, unviable in the short run; in fact, they are subsidised by the few viable ones. Unless there is a sudden change in the political and economic milieu in which they operate, such ports are white elephant drainpipes, saddling the sector with idle capacity and a growing debt burden. The principle of viability will ensure that seaport projects are not embarked upon for vanity or cheap popularity. Their promoters should be made to provide convincing evidence that the projects have sound long-term prospects before they are approved for development. We can learn from the Western Nigeria Local Government Law of 1952, which allowed communities to determine in which administrative entities they wished to belong so long as they would be self-financing. The temporary triumph of "autonomy", which the emergence of several Local and District Councils represented, soon met with the harsh reality of financial (un)viability. Many unviable local government units collapsed without government subvention and reverted to the direct control of the Ministry of Local Government.[42]

A third fundamental principle should be "no rail, no ports," meaning that going forward, no port project without aligned rail links will be approved or undertaken. A glaring example is the Lekki Deep Seaport that has everything but rail connections with the hinterland.[43] All the other proposed or ongoing ports at Badagry, Ibaka, Benin or Agbabu suffer the same disability, thus indicating how we put the cart before the horse. Without

rail links, there is no evidence of the efficiency or sustainability of these ports in terms of throughput in either direction. Given the effect of haulage on our often inadequately designed and constructed highways, as well as of the gridlock and accidents caused by haulage trucks, how do the promoters expect these ports to function optimally and generate the required multiplier developmental impact? The federal government finally woke up to this imperative in February 2025 by approving the construction of railway lines to link the western ports in the Lagos region to the hinterland, connected to the northern line going all the way to Maradi in Niger Republic.[44] Though late in the day, it is gratifying that officials had finally seen what scholars like this writer had known all along.

The port-rail nexus is also critical to an important dimension of our blue economy – the operation of functional dry ports. In a country with a vast hinterland, and with the delay at the seaports due to cumbersome customs clearance and undue delays from security and port health procedures, dry ports are the safety valves that should be kept functioning if we are to make the best of our seaports and maritime trade. Unfortunately, given the state of our energy sector and rail transport sector, many of the planned dry ports have failed to function. The good news, according to Pius Ukeyima Akutah, Executive Secretary and Chief Executive Officer of the Nigerian Shippers Council, is that the Dala (Kano), Kaduna and Funtua Inland Dry Ports in the North West are justifying their existence.[45] This appears to be the result of consultation and collaboration with stakeholders, including state governors, in that part of Nigeria. This is an indication that a combination of stakeholder engagement and sensitisation, a stable policy framework involving the provision of functional power and rail transport infrastructure by government, and private-sector commitment would produce similar results in other parts of the country. That much was acknowledged by Ahmad Rabiu, Managing Director of the Dala Dry Port, who "boasted that the rail line linking the port to Lagos among others is … (its) selling point and also a game changer."[46] This was in spite of the delay in getting a fully

established customs command and effective transfer of cargo to operate in the Dala IDP.

Fourth, we should consciously develop indigenous capacity and adopt relevant technology. The Japanese experience in constructing Nobiru port during the nineteenth century offers us some lessons. The Japanese employed Dutch engineers whose expertise was based on the peculiarity of their country's coastal landscape. However, the wholesale adoption of their technology to the different seascape of Japan proved disastrous. The Japanese learnt, as we should also learn, that foreign technology is useful only when it is adaptable to local circumstances. Subsequently, the Japanese developed their own local capacity, which laid the foundation for Japanese port engineering that has performed great feats since then. It is imperative to embrace and invest in the latest applicable technologies that can grow the entire maritime sector, especially the digitisation of documentation and the automation of all systems and processes.[47]

Fifth, we should prioritize the efficiency rather than the proliferation of our seaports. As is well known, Nigerian ports are uncompetitive relative to their counterparts in West and Central Africa. The direct consequence is the loss of traffic to neighbouring ports which charge lower tariffs and offer better services to shippers. As has already been shown with regard to Lagos between the post-World War I years and the aftermath of World War II, this problem is not new. The situation was such that Lagos, Nigeria and West Africa's premier port, was dubbed "an expensive port."[48] Our port administrators should understudy what transpired in the past and explore sustainable ways of making our ports competitive and capable of holding their own in terms of national shipping and the transhipment traffic. Otherwise, this trend of massive loss of trade to neighbouring ports, reported on recently, will continue. Kyari Bukar, a former Chair of the influential Nigerian Economic Summit Group (NESG), argued that cumbersome customs procedures were responsible for this avoidable calamity. He therefore encouraged the organisation to focus on trade

facilitation and development rather than revenue generation. "Customs bureaucracy at the ports and the bottlenecks," he contended, "are part of the vicious circle [sic] of corruption."[49]

Finally, our ports policy should be encoded in a specific ports and harbours legislation, which, among others, classifies Nigerian ports according to their size, functions and strategic value. The Japanese, for example, enacted a fundamental Port and Harbour Law of 1950, which has been applied with suitable amendments till date.[50]

Shipping Policy

The second major dimension of the marine and blue economy relates to shipping. As a supplement to the overarching sector policy, shipping deserves an update of laws relating to it to cope with unfolding events in a volatile sector in particular and the world at large. This requires a positive working relationship with the National Assembly to update all extant laws to address emerging realities and to anticipate future exigencies. The Ministry of Marine and Blue Economy has been enjoined to maintain "constant liaison with the National Assembly to update the nation's maritime laws with particular reference to the Merchant Shipping Act."[51] It is generally agreed that Nigeria needs a national fleet with a national registry. As we foreclose an open registry, we should draw inspiration from the experiences of other nations to see what is transferable or adaptable to our peculiar circumstances. Worth noting in this instance are ongoing efforts by NIMASA to get all NLNG vessels to fly the Nigerian flag. Hopefully, painstaking efforts, due process and best practices would inform whatever decision is taken in the country's best interest.[52]

We must understand that maritime nationalism powered by state-led fleet development is fraught with some challenges. For, whereas some nations, such as Japan in the nineteenth century and South Korea and Singapore in the twentieth, made a success of theirs, other countries in the Global South have failed miserably. The point is that state-led fleet development in itself

is not the problem but the political economy that underpins it. This much has been demonstrated in an authoritative study by Professor Okechukwu Iheduru and other scholars, who studied the Black Star Lines (BSL) and the Nigerian National Shipping Line (NNSL).[53] The countries that failed in this regard did so largely because their shipping lines were run as political schemes rather than business enterprises. The otherwise well-conceived schemes collapsed under the weight of political patronage, systemic corruption, inexperience, wrong policies, cronyism, indiscipline (private trading by officers and men) and impunity.

Countries that succeeded did so because of policy choices and patriotism on the part of officials and entrepreneurs. In the case of Meiji Japan, the state decided to support private shipping lines to displace foreign competitors from the coastal trade and the lucrative Shanghai-Osaka route. This was done by giving subsidies and other incentives with which the Japanese lines, NYK and OSK, defeated the powerful British P&O in a rate war. The government had earlier adopted the counter-intuitive policy of "supporting the strong against the weak" by forcing the big shipping lines to acquire smaller ones in enforced consolidation. Consolidation to create stronger viable entities has been a great success in the Nigerian banking sector, and that template should be applied to the maritime sector. The emergence of two strong government-backed private shipping lines was in line with the government's policy of creating strong indigenous firms with state support to overcome foreign competition in the national interest. In the case of Singapore, its Neptune Orient Line (NOL) survived and thrived because it was run as a pure business enterprise, which voluntarily weaned itself of state support in preference for raising capital on the open market.

As a rule of thumb, given our peculiar circumstances in Nigeria, government should refrain from owning a national shipping line.[54] At best it could own a minority stake of not more than 10% in any such enterprise.[55] We would like to recommend a two-step approach as follows. The first is to revisit the Ship Acquisition and Building Fund of the 1980s-90s to draw lessons from the abortive scheme and devise necessary safeguards. The

second step is to disburse the accumulated accruals in the Cabotage Vessel Financing Fund through a matching grant formula while ensuring that the recipients are consolidated entities capable of operating in the long run. Such firms should have a national spread in their ownership structure and be capable of financing a certain number of vessels on their own. The government could then match the amount once it has verified that such a body has deposited the money where it could not be round-tripped. Industry experts should also be involved in the acquisition of the right type and number of ships, learning from the fate that befell the NNSL when it was stuck with vessels of a particular configuration that all became obsolete in one fell swoop. Surely, a mix of vessels in the fleet to cater to different demands would make business sense.

Marine Resources and Renewable Energy

The third aspect of our marine and blue economy is the sustainable development of our marine resources, such as fisheries and mining. A healthy balance should be struck between optimal exploitation on the one hand and environmental and social justice on the other. The following strategies are worth considering to develop the sector to its full potential: promoting sustainable aquaculture, sustainable management of fish stock, combating IUU, and collaboration among critical stakeholders – including different tiers of government, coastal fishing communities and international organisations – to develop and implement policies for the long-term sustainability of the sector.[56] Aquaponics, which combines fish farming and vegetable farming, is a major blue-economy initiative that has been harnessed to great effect by China, India, Vietnam, Thailand, and Indonesia in producing cultured fish, while Australia is a leading producer of hydroponics technology, which is suitable for backyard or micro enterprise in the sector.[57]

Achieving success in these endeavours will require the collaboration of government and private interests alongside the security forces. To be sure, it would be necessary to secure the active support of the Navy to curb the

losses arising from security threats and IUU. Private capital will be required for needed investment in shipping, port and coastal infrastructure, as well as for technology and human capital development. Requisite port facilities and a national fishing fleet are required to drive this sector to success. For instance, the Japanese had dedicated fishing ports. In terms of mining activities, the institution and enforcement of sector-specific regulations will be required to curtail criminal enterprise and the degradation of the environment through unsustainable mining practices that pollute the environment.

Renewable energy is a fourth frontier of the blue economy that Nigeria could harness for its development. Given the natural advantages of offshore wind, tidal and wave energy along the West African seaboard, there is scope for investment in clean and sustainable energy that would wean Nigeria off the unhealthy dependence on fossil fuels while creating new job opportunities and mitigating climate change.[58] Investment in green hydrogen facilities in coastal industrial zones would contribute to a reduction in greenhouse emissions.

Policy Coordination

A fifth plank of our blue economy platform is our external trade policy, which should copy the United Kingdom's World War II and post-war policy of "Buy British, Sell Foreign."[59] Even if Nigeria has the most efficient seaports and maritime administration and a virile merchant fleet, it will not benefit from its maritime endowments if all it does is to import what it can produce or it continues to return empty containers, or indeed if its exports are unprocessed, with no value added. Maritime policy should therefore be coordinated with other sectoral policies.

In terms of the blue economy, Nigeria needs to develop short-, medium- and long-term strategic plans to manage expectations against realities. This calls for identifying the most important or strategic areas to be prioritized to fully harness Nigeria's comparative advantage in the short, medium and

long terms. Certainly, everything cannot be fixed or accomplished in one, two or even ten years. It is well-nigh impossible to build from scratch and operate a credible fleet in six months or complete a functional deep seaport in one year no matter the pressure or urgency of the situation. Scientific, cross-disciplinary research, wide consultations, impact assessment and planning should precede policy roll-outs at each stage.

We should endeavour to domesticate or localise the blue-economy initiative. This is illustrated by Kutuh, a coastal village in Bali, Indonesia, which was poverty-stricken because of soil infertility. However, it fought its way out of poverty by domesticating the blue economy through seaweed farming. Seaweed enjoyed world market demand because it could be used in the production of toothpaste, fertilizers, baby food, medicine, and cosmetics, among others.[60]

A corollary on policy coordination is inter-agency synergy, the lack of which continues to hobble the best of government intentions. This is particularly important in the ports sector, where different agencies have statutory functions to perform. But, as we can learn from the background to the establishment of the NPA, too many cooks spoil the broth and in this case inflict painful and costly delays on shippers and other stakeholders. For the record, the Railways, Marine, Port Engineering Department and Customs jostled for the control of Nigerian ports up to 1954. Some pruning was done following an inquiry in the 1920s but it took the Flere and Strong Report of 1949 to make recommendations leading to the establishment of the NPA as the sole authority in control of Nigerian ports. It remains to be seen whether the challenge of multiplicity of agencies, overlap of authority and wasteful duplication of human and material resources will be minimised or surmounted by the creation of the Ministry of Marine and Blue Economy.

Beyond the ports, on the outward or foreland side, maritime administration relies on the Navy and the Coastguards to secure the shipping lines and the

persons and materials transported on them. Happily, there is a record of amicable partnership between NIMASA and the Navy in curbing insecurity, IUU and other criminal acts by merchant ships and pirates. The immediate past chief executive of NIMASA lauded the Navy "for their efforts in tracking erring vessels that switched off their Automatic Identification System, [and] … called for improved synergy among all organs of government in the maritime sector."[61] What we can add to that submission is the need for regular interface with all stakeholders, including coastal communities and state governments. Coastal states, such as Lagos (Lekki deep seaport and FTZ), Ogun, Ondo, Edo, Delta (Koko and Kwale FTZs) and Cross River (Bakassi Deep Seaport Integrated Project), have launched ambitious blue-economy schemes centred on free trade zones in partnership with domestic and foreign investors.[62] The results might take time to manifest and the optimism and ambitions might need curbing in some respects; however, with proper management, their impact should be salutary.[63] This is a potentially fruitful area of collaboration. The blunt reality is that the Ministry of Marine and Blue Economy cannot operate in isolation. It is mutually dependent on the power/energy sector, the railways and roads, customs, immigration, industry and commerce, and other agencies to achieve results.

A further corollary to domestic coordination is the need to collaborate externally with friendly countries and institutional partners, such as researchers. Nigeria is a member of several multilateral bodies, including ECOWAS, the Gulf of Guinea Commission, the African Union and the United Nations Organization. These bodies have institutional channels for maritime cooperation and coordination, the membership of which confers on Nigeria access to data and technology and vast experiences in the sector. As indicated earlier by a US envoy, Nigeria stands to gain from its association with the 32 countries on the Atlantic Basin in the framework of the Declaration of Atlantic Cooperation.[64]

Community or Popular Engagement

Given the general indifference to the sea by most Nigerians, the cure for sea blindness lies in the creation of awareness. Conscious efforts should be made to create awareness on all media platforms. Nigerians can draw inspiration from a Kenyan radio station devoted to getting the new generation (GenZ) to care about the future of the oceans, which means caring about their own future.[65]

Coastal communities should create awareness of their maritime heritage through street or popular art. Cape Town exemplifies how sea-themed murals promote waterfront tourism, which is a net contributor to the domestic and national economies.[66]

Port cities, as exemplified by London, Liverpool, Amsterdam and Sydney, develop maritime museums, where relics of wrecked or obsolete ships, such as anchors, and artefacts of underwater archaeology (a discipline which should be promoted and funded), and paraphernalia of seafaring are displayed with accompanying contextual narrative. This also boosts tourism and preserves a community's heritage.

Moreover, around major port cities – e.g. Cape Town – will be found dedicated waterfront recreational and business districts, complete with shopping malls, restaurants, live music entertainment and tours, including local sea cruises (i.e. "A Feel of the Sea").[67] The Lagos-Badagry axis could take a lead in this direction.

Institutional and Corporate Engagement with the Sea

Public and private organisations, e.g. secondary and tertiary institutions, need to engage with the sea in a systematic way. Universities should insert maritime history courses into the curricula across all levels, especially the undergraduate level. I have blazed the trail in Nigeria and Germany and the seed planted at Osun State University has sprouted. Tertiary institutions should teach maritime history alongside maritime geography and

economics as core courses. A major challenge is the writing of relevant texts which combine local and global maritime histories and are liberally illustrated to elicit interest and deepen knowledge. At the pre-university level, schools can organise exhibitions and excursions in conjunction with museums and art galleries. In this connexion, the electronic media could be critical to popularising maritime issues in dedicated columns or special programmes. In this regard, the trailblazing initiative of Ms Ezinne Chinwe Azunna, Chief Executive of Maritime Television, is highly instructive. She organises an annual African Maritime Art Exhibition and runs regular television programmes with concurrent translation into French. To the best of my knowledge, this is the most impactful maritime awareness initiative in Nigeria.

Institutional libraries and public archives should collect and archive private papers of retired and serving ship captains and seafarers, retired and serving ports authority executives and personnel, and other persons who have had connections to the sea. Such repositories will aid maritime history research in the future.

Relevant centres of maritime research should encourage the writing of biographies and memoirs of notable actors in the ports, security/naval and shipping sectors of the maritime ecosystem. This trend has begun and should be sustained.[68]

Institutions should coordinate with communities and corporate organisations to engage experts in various fields to map the Nigerian littoral and identify micro ecosystems along the coast, then develop them into ecotourism nodes with the help of the local communities in accordance with local dynamics (cultures, ecologies, livelihoods, cosmologies) and global trends. This has implications for ecotourism, grassroots empowerment and community engagement.

Intellectual Engagement with the Sea: A Personal Score Card

It might seem immodest to assess my individual contribution to Nigerian scholars' intellectual engagement with the sea. However, I believe it is necessary to place on record – for the sake of posterity – what grace has enabled me to contribute to the field.

First, I should acknowledge my indebtedness to the pioneers on whose shoulders I stand. My interest in seaports was kindled by the pioneering studies on Lagos by Professors B.W. Hodder and Babafemi Ogundana, whose publications and contributions I have acknowledged in my relevant publications and Inaugural. It was from these port geographers that I learnt the spatial dimensions of the port-hinterland-foreland nexus.

On the global front, I was much encouraged by two editors who published my articles and became my great mentors – Professor John Armstrong, Editor of the *Journal of Transport History*, the only journal in the field until recently, and Professor Lewis "Skip" Fischer, Editor-in-Chief of the *International Journal of Maritime History*, the flagship journal of maritime history, published by the International Maritime History Association, on the executive committee of which body I served as the first African of any nationality. I duly acknowledge Dr Graydon Henning, Editor of *The Great Circle: Journal of the Australian Association for Maritime History*. Furthermore, Professor Peter N. Davies, author of the influential book on West African shipping, *The Trade Makers: Elder Dempster in West Africa, 1852-1972, 1973-89* (Liverpool, 2000), who introduced me to Professor Tomohei Chida, my mentor in Japan, contributed to my career-long engagement with the sea.

However, I might never have been a maritime historian if Professor Omoniyi Adewoye, one of my teachers in the 1981/82 MA Class at Ibadan, had not directed me to "look for a more challenging (Ph.D.) topic." He duly endorsed what became my tentative thesis title on the Lagos port and the hinterland, which he wrote in red ink on a piece of paper that I have kept till this day.

That said, let me state for the record the following landmarks, including several 'firsts,' of my intellectual engagement with the sea in its widest sense, including the littoral.

- I was the first Nigerian historian to complete a thesis on seaports and shipping in the Nigerian context.[69] Arising from this, I was the first to publish on the port engineering projects at major Nigerian ports and to write on inter-port competition, an enduring issue.[70]
- I was the first Nigerian scholar to inject "maritime" into Nigerian historiography and to analyse Nigeria's maritime trade during the first half of the twentieth century, which witnessed two world wars, trade fluctuations and the Great Depression. My major work on this is *The 'Liverpool' of West Africa: The Dynamics and Impact of Maritime Trade in Lagos, 1900-1950*, Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 2004.[71]
- As the first Nigerian historian to specialize in this sub-field and attain the full Professorship in it, I duly delivered the first Inaugural on a maritime topic by a Nigerian historian.[72]
- I was the first Nigerian scholar to publish on the background to and the establishment of the Nigerian Ports Authority, highlighting the politics of port administration in colonial Nigeria.[73] Till date, this is the only authoritative publication on this subject, based on archival sources.
- I was the first scholar to study port finances and tariffs focusing on Lagos as an "expensive port" in comparison with Global South ports in Africa and South Asia.[74] It is also a stand-alone contribution to knowledge, based on hitherto unexploited primary sources, for those who wish to know the antecedents of current developments.
- I was the first – and still the only – Nigerian scholar to undertake a comparative study of Nigerian and Japanese ports. I was the first scholar to publish in English an article on Japan's port and harbour law of 1950, which has been cited by Japanese colleagues.[75] I also recently utilised a 2024 STIAS Fellowship at Stellenbosch

University to compare Nigerian and Angolan seaports and developmental impacts.

- I was the first scholar to write on the establishment of the Nigerian National Shipping Line (NNSL), using hitherto unexploited archival material in The National Archives of the United Kingdom.[76] The article is fundamental to any study of that defunct entity.
- I have written on shipping more than any other Nigerian historian and was the first scholar to publish on passenger shipping ("official passages") in colonial Nigeria, highlighting the secret deal between Elder Dempster and the British West African colonial governments.[77] I also wrote on the interface between shipping and ports at a critical stage in Nigerian history – the use of lighters and the accompanying business politics.[78]
- I was also the first scholar to deal with seafaring, with reference to shipwrecked, destitute and abandoned seamen and fishermen of Nigerian and foreign origins.[79]
- I was the first scholar to research and publish on the development of Port Harcourt, Nigeria's second major port.[80]
- I made original contributions to external trade policies during the colonial period both on inter-war fiscal protectionism and the Second World War import policy, my article on the latter being the first on the subject, as noted by one of the reviewers.[81]
- I have also made contributions to Nigeria's global trade in bilateral and multilateral perspectives, especially during the colonial period.[82]
- I was the first scholar to unearth the wartime expedient of "scale tons" in place of gross tons in allocation of scarce shipping space during the First World War, a point noted by one of the reviewers.[83] In the same vein, I have contributed to the politics of shipping not only in wartime but also in peacetime intra-British commercial warfare.[84]

- No Nigerian scholar has studied the role of business pressure groups, especially chambers of commerce – an important aspect of maritime trade – as much as I have done.[85] Perhaps my most significant contribution is the recent focus on federated chambers of commerce at the colonial-imperial-global interface.[86]
- In the same vein, I was also the first scholar to conceptualize and operationalize the *duumvirate model of business leadership* epitomised by Timothy and Jimoh Odutola (before they split), Fola Adeola and Tayo Aderinokun at Guaranty Trust Bank, and their mentees and former employees, Aigboje Aig-Imoukhuede and Herbert Wigwe, at Access Bank.[87]
- I have also written on maritime security, the neglect of which had been noted by a critic of my pre-2008 contribution to maritime scholarship.[88] My relevant publications dealt with maritime piracy and maritime terrorism in different epochs.[89] In that context, I was also the first to propose that piracy be recognized and studied in context: lacustrine piracy (lakes), riparian piracy (rivers), littoral piracy (lagoons and the coast) and maritime piracy (high seas).[90]
- I have extended coverage to the littoral both within the port-city interface and the wider Nigerian and West African coastal space.[91]
- I have made noteworthy contributions to the field at the continental level in two major publications, one a revised version of a Keynote delivered in Las Palmas, Spain[92] and the other a commissioned book on African seaports of which I was the lead editor.[93] The book on African seaports, co-edited with a dynamic Spanish collaborator and protégé, was the first of its kind in fifty years after the publication of a landmark collection on the subject.[94]
- On the global stage, I was invited to contribute to a Blue Compendium for global marine policy and action.[95] I had delivered keynotes at Liverpool in 2008 and Las Palmas in 2008, 2017 and 2019 through the good auspices of Professors Dmitri Van Den

Bersselaar, Miguel Suarez Bosa and Daniel Castillo Hidalgo respectively.[96]

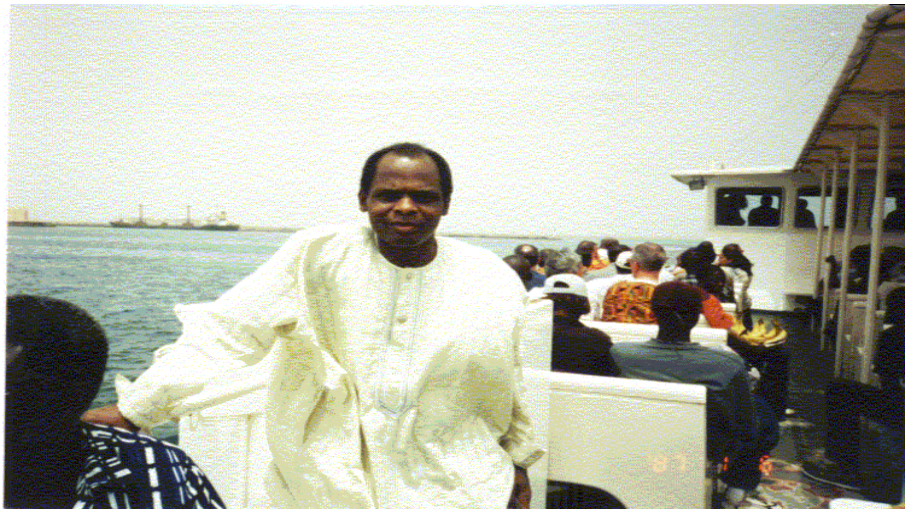
- Though on a limited scale, I have been engaged in producing policy-relevant publications in relevant outlets.[97] I thank the Nigerian Economic Summit Group (through the good offices of my former student, Professor Obichere Iwuagwu) and *The Conversation* (through one of the editors, Mr. Wale Fatade, an alumnus of the Ford Foundation International Fellowships Programme, of which I was Chair of the Nigerian Selection Committee for six years). I thank both men for access to these platforms.
- It is also on record that I submitted an expert witness affidavit as a maritime historian in support of the suit filed by Lagos and other Littoral States against the Nigerian federal government. I was mentioned by name as a credible expert witness in the judgment given in favour of the plaintiffs.[98]
- Finally, I pioneered the teaching of maritime history courses in Nigerian universities – here at the University of Lagos in 2005/06, and at Osun State University as a Visiting Professor in 2010 - and at Bayreuth University, where I was a DAAD Guest Professor of African Economic History in 2022. I have taught undergraduate and postgraduate courses, and supervised M.A. research projects and a doctoral thesis in maritime history at the University of Lagos. It is most gratifying that my former student at the University of Lagos, Professor Jonathan Babatunde Decker, took it upon himself to sustain my legacy by continuing to teach the course at Osun State University after I initiated it there. Capacity development in the field might be my most enduring legacy in addition to my publications.

Conclusion

Nigeria and Nigerians have had a long, chequered relationship with the sea. In general, most Nigerians, even those living in coastal cities, have been blissfully unaware of the significance of the sea to their lives. My observation that the Yoruba of Western Nigeria are riparian landlubbers, essentially focused on rivers and the hinterland,[99] is broadly applicable to the broad mass of Nigerian peoples. Even along the coastal belt, only the Ijo, Ilaje, Egun and Efik had contacts in varying proportions with the Atlantic, as most coastal peoples hardly ventured beyond the littoral and its lagoon network.

In the context of the concept of sea blindness, it can be concluded that every nation, including the traditional maritime nations, suffers from a semblance of sea blindness considering the broad spectrum of issues under the rubric of the maritime domain. Thus, while some nations have 18/20 vision, some have as low as 08/20 vision, comparable to early-stage glaucoma, whereas others suffer from short- or long-sightedness. In the Nigerian context, we can generalize that the Nigerian State, especially in the current century, is less sea-blind than the average Nigerian citizen. But this is hardly a fulsome compliment. It could mean that, by creating a dedicated Ministry of Marine and Blue Economy, the State is just moving from myopia towards full sightedness but it remains to be seen how long it is able to maintain focus, and what results can be achieved in the short, medium and long term.

APPENDIX 1
A MARITIME ODYSSEY



Ferry ride to Gorée Island, Senegal, 2002

Saint Louis, Senegal, 2002

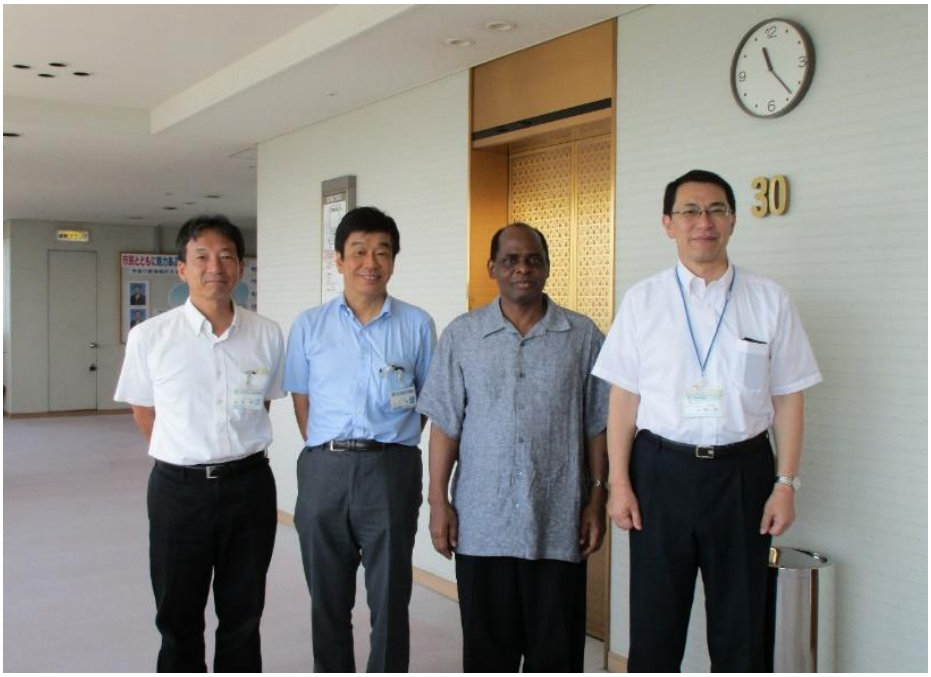
Dakar, Senegal, 2002

Melakka, Malaysia, 2002 (The Straits in the background)

Japan Maritime Research Institute Library, Tokyo, 2003

Sydney, Australia, 2005

Las Palmas, Spain, 2008



With officials of Port of Kobe, Japan, 2015

New England Waterfront, USA, 2018

Freetown, Sierra Leone, 2023

Saldanha Bay, South Africa, 2024

Cape Town Waterfront, South Africa, 2024

APPENDIX 2

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS

- Member, Advisory Board, *Journal of Historical Criminology* (Plymouth, UK), 2025-
- STIAS Fellow, Stellenbosch University, South Africa, January-June 2024
- **DAAD Guest Professor** (African Economic History), Bayreuth University, Germany, Spring Term, **2022**
- Member, Advisory Board, *Journal of Global History* (Cambridge, UK), 2021-date
- **Pro-Chancellor and Chairman of Governing Council**, Chrisland University, Abeokuta, Nigeria, **2019-date**
- **Distinguished Professor**, University of Lagos, **2018**
- Member, Advisory Board, African Peacebuilding Network, Social Science Research Council, New York, 2016-2018
- Member, Advisory Board, *Journal of African History* (Cambridge, UK), 2011-2015
- **Fellow**, Nigerian Academy of Letters, **2011**
- Member, Advisory Board, *History in Africa: A Journal of Method* (Cambridge, UK), 2010-2015
- **Member**, Governing Council, Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, **2011-12**
- **Vice Chancellor**, Caleb University, Imota, Lagos State, **2010-16 (two terms)**
- **Consultant/Resource Person**, UNESCO General History of Africa, Volume 7, **2010**
- University of Lagos Best Researcher (Arts and Humanities), 2009
- Member, UCL Urban Laboratory Board, University College, London, 2009-date
- Elected Member, Executive Committee, International Maritime Economic History Association, 2008-12
- University of Lagos Best Researcher (Arts and Humanities), 2006
- **Dean** of Arts, University of Lagos, **2005-2009 (two terms)**

- WARA Resident Scholar, Emory University, 2005
- DAAD Visiting Research Fellow, University of Mainz, Germany, 2005
- **Head**, Department of History, University of Lagos, **2001-2004**
- **Chair**, Ford Foundation International Fellowship Program (IFP) Selection Committee for Nigeria **2000-2002, 2007-10**
- Member, Editorial Board, *Afrika Zamani*, Journal of the Association of African Historians (Dakar), 2000-2007
- Member, Advisory Board, *African Economic History* (Madison, WI), 1998-2002
- British Academy Visiting Research Fellow, Institute of Commonwealth Studies (ICS), University of London, 1999
- **Professor**, University of Lagos, **1 October 1998**
- Henry Charles Chapman Fellow, ICS, University of London, 1998
- Leventis Foundation Fellow, SOAS, University of London, 1998
- Visiting Research Fellow, Institute of Developing Economies (I.D.E.), Tokyo, 1993/94
- Japan Foundation Fellow, I.D.E., Tokyo, 1993-94.

APPENDIX 3

PUBLICATIONS

**** Publications assessed for appointment as Professor are asterisked.***

2025a. "UAC and/in the Archives: Silences and Gaps," in Ian Jackson, Ewan Harrison, Michelle Tezon, Rixt Woudstra & Claire Tunstall (eds.), **Architecture, Empire and Trade: The United Africa Company**, New York: Bloomsbury Visual Arts.

2025b. "Shit Business is Serious Business: Isaac Durojaye Agbetusin ('Otunba Gaddafi') and the Business of Mobile Toilets in Lagos (Nigeria) since the 1990s," in Ed Emery (ed.), **The SOAS Shit Reader: Proceedings of the conference 'Merde Alors! - An interdisciplinary conference on excrement, past, present, and future',** London: Red Notes. (*ISBN: 9780906305263*)

2025c. "'The Most Important Commercial Body Within the Empire:' The Federation of Chambers of Commerce of the British Empire, 1925-50," **The International History Review** (London), 1-18. https://doi.org/10.1080/07075332.2024.2439020

2025d. (with Daniel Castillo Hidalgo) "From Steam Shipping to the Steel Box: Seaport Evolution in West Africa in the Long Durée," in Kenneth Morgan (ed.), **The Routledge History of the Modern Maritime World since 1500**, London: Routledge, pp. 189-207.

2025e. "Crises and Adaptation: The Colonial Currency System in Lagos and Its Hinterland, ca.1900-1930," **African Economic History** (Madison, WI), Special Issue on "Currency Transitions in Africa," vol. 53, no. 2.

2024a. "Creating 'An Air Sense:' Governor Hugh Clifford and the Beginnings of Civil Aviation in Nigeria, 1919-1920," **African Identities** (London), vol. 22, no. 3, pp. 620-633, DOI: 10.1080/14725843.2022.2096566

2024b. "Business Ethics and Corporate Governance: Nigeria's Guaranty Trust Bank, ca. 1990-2004," **Zeitschrift für Unternehmensgeschichte (Journal of Business History)** (Berlin), Special Issue on "African Business," vol. 69, no. 2, pp. 213-241, DOI: https://doi.org/10.1515/zug-2023-0031

2024c. "Kokutai, Hataraku and Atarashi: Reflections on Culture, Innovation and Development in Japan," **Lagos Notes and Records**, vol. 30, pp. 1-16.

2024d. "Archives, Sustainable Development and Nation-Building: A Nigerian Perspective," **Lagos Historical Review**, vol. 24, pp. 1-14.

2023a. "Officials, Commercial Interests, and Civil Aviation Policy Initiatives in Inter-War British West Africa," **African Economic History**, vol. 51, no.1, pp.1-23. https://www.muse.jhu.edu/article/896858.

2023b. "An Imperial Clearing House for Commercial Information and Suggestions:" The British Imperial Council of Commerce, 1911–1925," **Itinerario: Journal of Imperial and Global Interactions** (Cambridge, UK), vol. 47, no. 2, pp. 240-256. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0165115323000128

2023c. "Littoral Piracy in Colonial Nigeria: The Lagos Lagoon in the Inter-War Years," **Journal of Global South Studies** (Gainesville, FL), vol. 40, no.2, pp.358-382 https://doi.org/10.1353/gss.2023.a917369.

2023d. Politics, Economy and Society in Twentieth-Century Nigeria, London: Lexington Books (Edited with Tokunbo Aderemi Ayoola).
ISBN13: 9781666929966 **ISBN10:** 1666929964

2023e. "Introduction," in Olukoju & Ayoola (eds.), **Politics, Economy and Society in Twentieth-Century Nigeria**, pp.1-8 (With Tokunbo Aderemi Ayoola).

2023f. "Wale Oyemakinde: The Scholar and Public Policy Engagement," in Olukoju & Ayoola (eds.), **Politics, Economy and Society in Twentieth-Century Nigeria**, pp.11-26.

2023g. "Between Diversification and Dissolution: Family Firms in Twentieth-Century Western Nigeria," in Olukoju & Ayoola (eds.), **Politics, Economy and Society in Twentieth-Century Nigeria**, pp. 79-97.

2023h. "The Human Relationship with Our Ocean Planet," in Jane Lubchenco & Peter M. Haugan (eds.), **The Blue Compendium from Knowledge to Action for a Sustainable Ocean Economy**, Cham, Switzerland: Springer, pp. 393-444. ISBN 978-3-031-16276-3 ISBN 978-3-031-16277-0 (eBook) https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-16277-0 (with Edward H. Allison, John

Kurien, Yoshitaka Ota, Dedi S. Adhuri, J. Maarten Bavinck, Andrés Cisneros-Montemayor, Michael Fabinyi, Svein Jentoft, Sallie Lau, Tabitha Grace Mallory, Ingrid van Putten, Natasha Stacey, Michelle Voyer, and Nireka Weeratunge)

2022a. "Abolition, Legitimate Commerce, and Christianity," in Matthew Heaton and Toyin Falola (eds.), **The Oxford Handbook of Nigerian History**, New York: Oxford University Press, pp.223-241.

2022b. "'Squandered Potential:' Reflections on Critical Turning Points in a Century of Nigerian History," in Olufunke Adeboye, Benjamin Anaemene and Bernard Fyanka (eds.), **Africa and the Challenge of Development: Essays in Honour of Professor Emeritus Akinjide Osuntokun**, Ede: Redeemer's University Press, pp.15-27.

2022c. "Sir Alan Cobham and Civil Aviation Development in Interwar Nigeria," **Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana**, New Series, no. 21, pp. 29-45.

2022d. "Chinese Capital and Technology, and the Development of African Maritime and Rail Transport Infrastructure," **Atlantica: Journal of History and Diplomacy** (Port Harcourt, Nigeria), vol. 1, pp.69-90.

2021a. "Education, Youth Agency and National Development," in Bisi Ogunjobi (ed.), **Imperatives for Youth Empowerment and National Development**, Lagos: May University Press Limited, pp. 2-17.

2021b. "The Dynamics of Indigenous Farming in Western Nigeria from the 1850s to the 1920s," **Agricultural History Review** (Cambridge, UK), vol. 69, no.1, pp. 97-110.

2021c. "Social Prestige, Agency and Criminality: Economic Depression and Currency Counterfeiting in Inter-War British West Africa," **International Journal of African Historical Studies** (Boston, USA), vol. 45, no.2, pp. 149-173.

2021d. "Minutes and the Man: J.E.W. Flood and British Imperial Economic Policy at the Colonial Office in the Interwar Years," **History in Africa: A Journal of Debates, Methods and Source Analysis** (Cambridge, UK), vol. 48, pp. 337-353. DOI:10.1017/hia.2021.3.

2020a. "African Seaports and Development in Historical Perspective," **International Journal of Maritime History** (Hull, UK), vol. 32, no.1, pp.185-200. DOI:https://doi.org/10.1177/0843871419886806

2020b. "'The Service had to Come First:' Leave and Ocean Passages of British Officials and their Dependants in Inter-War West Africa," **Canadian Journal of African Studies/Revue canadienne des études africaines** (Toronto, Canada), Vol. 54, no. 3, pp. 541-556. DOI: 10.1080/00083968.2020.1717563.

2020c. **African Seaports and Maritime Economics in Historical Perspective**, London: Palgrave Macmillan (Co-edited with Daniel Castillo Hidalgo) (xviii+239pp). ISBN 978-3-030-41398-9 DOI: *10.1007/978-3-030-41399-6*

2020d. "Introduction" in Olukoju and Castillo Hidalgo (eds.), **African Seaports and Maritime Economics in Historical Perspective** (Co-authored with Daniel Castillo Hidalgo), pp. 1-15.

2020e. "Seaports of the Gulf of Guinea, c. 1970-2018: Developments and Transformations," in Olukoju and Castillo Hidalgo (eds.), **African Seaports and Maritime Economics in Historical Perspective** (Co-authored with Edmund Chilaka), pp.111-144.

2020f. "Afterword: The Past and Future of African Seaports" in Olukoju and Castillo Hidalgo (eds.), **African Seaports and Maritime Economics in Historical Perspective** (Co-authored with Daniel Castillo Hidalgo), pp. 219-225.

2020g. "Maritime Piracy in the Gulf of Guinea since the 1980s: Incidence and Countermeasures," in Akinjide Osuntokun (ed.), **Nigeria's Foreign Policy Unbound: Essays Presented to General Ike O. S. Nwachukwu at 80**, Uturu: Abia State University Press, pp. 249-74.

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2019a. "Currency Counterfeiting and 'Substantial Justice' in Colonial Nigeria: *Rex vs Tijani Ali*, 1931-33," in Rufus Akinyele and Ton Dietz (eds.), **Crime, Law and Society in Nigeria: Essays in Honour of Stephen Ellis**, Leiden: Brill Publishers, pp. 215-233. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004396289_011

2019b. "Lagos in the Nineteenth Century," in Thomas Spear (ed.), **The Oxford Research Encyclopedia of African History**, Oxford University Press. Article published May 2019. DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190277734.013.281.

2019c. "Private Universities and National Development: Reflections on the Nigerian Experience," in Siyan Oyeweso and Sola Akinrinade (eds.), **Perspectives on Higher Education and Good Governance in Nigeria**, Ibadan: Noirledge Publishing, pp.78-96.

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2018a. Security Challenges and Management in Modern Nigeria, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing (675pp.). (Co-edited with Abimbola Adesoji, Olutayo Adesina and Saheed Amusa).

2018b. "The Soft Underbelly: Ports, Shipping and National Security in Contemporary Nigeria," in Olukoju, Adesina, Adesoji and Amusa (eds.), **Security Challenges and Management in Modern Nigeria**, pp. 360-74.

2018c. "The Pressure Group Activity of Federated Chambers of Commerce: The Joint West Africa Committee and the Colonial Office, c. 1903-55," **African Economic History**, vol. 46, issue 2, pp. 93-116. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1353/aeh.2018.0007

2018d. "'Filthy Rich' and 'Dirt Poor': Social and Cultural Dimensions of Solid Waste Management (SWM) in Lagos," Special Issue on "Mediating Waste: Media and the Management of Waste in Lagos," **Social Dynamics: A Journal of African Studies** (Stellenbosch, South Africa), vol. 44, issue 1, pp.88-106; online version: https://doi.org/10.1080/02533952.2018.1430475

2018e. "Sit-Tight Syndrome and Tenure Elongation in African Politics," in Richard A. Olaniyan and Ehimika A. Ifidon (eds.), **Contemporary Issues in Africa's Development: Whither the African Renaissance?** Newcastle-upon-Tyne, UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, pp. 195-212 [republished from **Lagos Historical Review** (Lagos), vol. 14, 2014, pp. 117-134.]

2018f. "The Concept and Practice of Good Governance: Lessons from Nigerian History," **UNILAG Journal of Humanities** (Lagos), vol. 6, no.1, pp. 22-42.

2018g. "'They Spoke Portuguese and Understood Spanish:' Stranded Portuguese Fishermen in Nigeria, 1945-52," **Portuguese Studies Review** (Peterborough, ON, Canada), vol. 26, no. 2, pp. 25-43.

2018h. "We've Been There Before:" The Challenge of National Amnesia, Annual College Lecture Series, Ikire: College of Humanities and Culture, Osun State University (40pp.)

2018i. "Which Lagos, Whose (Hi)story?", **Lagos Notes and Records**, Vol. 24, pp. 140-70.

2017a. "Making Sense of the Yoruba Littoral," Special Issue on "Views from the Shoreline: Community, Trade and Religion in Coastal Yorubaland and the Western Niger Delta," **Yoruba Studies Review** (Austin, TX, USA), vol.2, no. 1, pp. 45-60. DOI: https://doi.org/10.32473/ysr.v2i1.129843 (Finalist for the Atanda Prize).

2017b. "Gentlemanly Capitalism and Entrepreneurial Management: Formation and Rise of Nigeria's Guaranty Trust Bank, 1990-2002," in Akinyinka Akinyoade, Ton Dietz and Chibuike Uche (eds.), **Entrepreneurship in Africa**,

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2017c. "Cultural and Technical Dimensions of Nigeria-Japan Relations Since 1960," in R.T. Akinyele (ed.), **History and Diplomacy: Essays in Honour of Ade Adefuye**, Glassboro, NJ: Goldline and Jacobs Publishing, pp.215-236.

2016a. **Restructuring and Rebirth: Salvaging Nigeria's Lost Century**, Convocation Lecture Series, Igbesa, Nigeria: Crawford University (21pp).
2016b. **The Challenge of Change: Nigeria in Comparative Perspective**, Convocation Lecture Series, Oyo: Ajayi Crowther University (36pp).

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2016d. "Engaging with Colonial Archives: Reflections of an End-User," **Vestiges: Traces of Record** (Oxford, UK), vol. 2, no.1, pp.1-12, DOI: 10.6084/m9.figshare.6248855 (http://www.vestiges-journal.info/).

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DOI: https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315734736

2015b. Exploring the Unnoticed Opportunities in Our Environment, Anniversary Lecture Series, Ijebu-Igbo: Diocese of Ijebu North (Anglican Communion) (15pp.).

2015c. "My Tenure as Head of Department, 2001-2004," in Olufunke Adeboye and Irene Osemeka (eds.), **A Historical Jubilee: A History of the Department of History and Strategic Studies, University of Lagos, 1965-2015**, Lagos: Department of History and Strategic Studies, University of Lagos, pp. 41-44.

2014a. Leadership, Economic Nationalism and Development: Nigeria and the Challenge from the Global South, Convocation Lecture Series, Abeokuta: Federal University of Agriculture (34pp).

2014b. **Flair, Versatility and the Historian's Craft: Reflections on Olakunle Lawal**, Ojo, Lagos: Department of History and International Studies, Lagos State

University (15pp.)

2014c. "The Newspaper as Witness and Window on Society: A Historian's Reflection," in Lai Osho, Rotimi Olatunji and Nosa Owens-Ibie (eds.), **Journalism and Media in Nigeria: Context, Issues and Practice**, Concord, Ontario, Canada: Canada University Press, pp. 32-39.

2014d. "Accumulation and Conspicuous Consumption: The Poverty of Entrepreneurship in Western Nigeria, ca. 1850-1930," in Emmanuel Akyeampong, Robert Bates, Nathan Nunn & James A. Robinson (eds.), **Africa's Development in Historical Perspective**, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 208-230. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781139644594.009

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2014f. "The Challenge of Sustainable Development in Nigeria," in Ifedayo Daramola, W.A Asekun, H. Anishere, Z. Prosper, K.O Ogunlami and B.O Ojomo (eds.), **Proceedings of International Conference on Sustainability of Political, Economic & Educational Systems in Developing Countries**, Ikorodu: Lagos State Polytechnic, pp.10-21.(**Conference Lead Paper**).

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2013b. (With C. Benit-Gbaffou, A. Dubresson, L. Fourchard, K. Ginisty, S. Jaglin, S. Owuor & J. Vivet) "Exploring the Role of Party Politics in the Governance of African Cities," in Simon Bekker and Laurent Fourchard (eds.), **Politics and Policies Governing Cities in Africa**, Cape Town: Human Sciences Research Council, pp.17-42.

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2012a. "South African Business in Nigeria: An Emergent Global South Neo-Imperialism?," **Global South** (New Delhi), vol. 8, no.4, pp. 35-44.

2012b. "Maritime Terrorism and Piracy, and US Interests in the Gulf of Guinea," in Leo Otoide (ed.), **History Unlimited: Essays in Honour of Professor Abednego Ekoko**, Benin City: Mindex, pp.15-41.

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2010b. "Economic Nationalism and Decolonization: West Africa in Comparative Perspective," **Hagar: Studies in Culture, Polity and Identities**, Special Issue on "Decolonization in Africa Reconsidered: Rebirths, Enclosures and Erasures," (Beer-Sheva, Israel), vol. 9, no.2, December, pp.134-153.

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2008b. "Towards Integrated Infrastructure Development in Greater Lagos," in Simon P. Sigue (ed.), **Global and Local Dynamics in African Business and Development**, Gainesville, FL: IAABD, pp.739-744.

2008c. "Economic Relations Between Nigeria and the United States of America in the Era of British Colonial Rule, ca.1900-1950," in Alusine Jalloh and Toyin Falola (eds.), **The United States and West Africa: Interactions and Relations**, Rochester, NY: Rochester University Press, pp. 90-111.

2008d. "Port Development and Modernisation on the West African Atlantic Coast in the Twentieth Century," in Miguel Suarez Bosa (ed.), **XVIII Coloquio Historia Canario-Americana**, Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, Spain: Casa de Colon, pp. 1192-98. Accessible at: http://prueba.grancanariajoven.es/index.php/CHCA/article/view/8986/8421.

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2007a. The Fourteenth Commissar of Works: The Life and Labour of Rauf Aregbesola, Lagos & Winnipeg: Bluesign Publications & Canadian Centre for Global Studies (viii, 200pp).

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emergencies and economic depression) and *diffusion* (in peacetime and economic boom), which coincided with trade contraction and expansion respectively. In the former, maritime trade was concentrated at a few ports, while in the latter, multiple ports functioned to cope with the boom. See Babafemi Ogundana, "Patterns and Problems of Seaport Evolution in Nigeria," in B.S. Hoyle and D. Hilling (eds.), *Seaports and Development in Tropical Africa*, London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1970, 167-182. See also, Babafemi Ogundana, "Seaport Development in Colonial Nigeria," in I.A. Akinjogbin and S.O. Osoba (eds.), *Topics in Nigerian Economic and Social History* (Ile-Ife: University of Ife Press, 1980), 159-181.

[27] Ayodeji Olukoju, "A 'Truly Nigerian Project'? The Politics of the Establishment of the Nigerian National Shipping Line (NNSL), 1957-59," *International Journal of Maritime History*, Vol. 15, No.1 (2003): 69-90. On maritime/economic nationalism, see Ayodeji Olukoju, "Economic Nationalism and Decolonization: West Africa in Comparative Perspective," *Hagar: Studies in Culture, Polity and Identities*, Vol. 9, No.2 (2010):134-153.

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