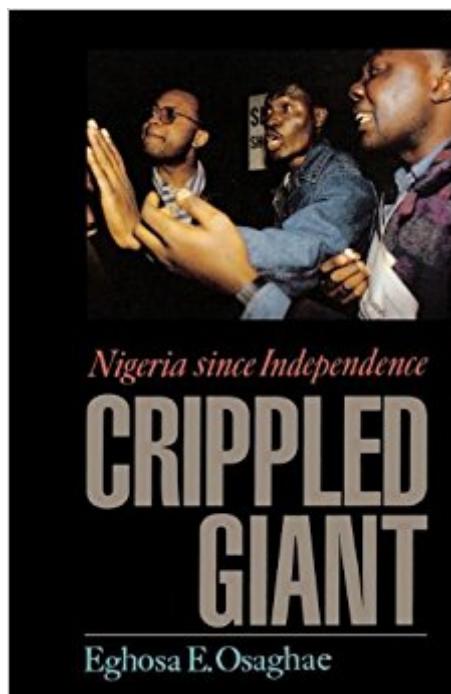


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The Crippled Giant: Nigeria Since Independence



Synopsis

"Crippled Giant is an excellent summary of Nigerian political history.... The work is notable for even-handed analysis of both history and theory. The result is an introduction of the highest quality to the study of Nigerian politics." *African Studies Review* "Osaghae, an academic with a refreshingly neutral and understated approach to the maddening follies of his government, has produced a highly readable overview of Nigeria's politics, economy, and foreign relations. Rich in detail, his account is also a useful tour of earlier thematic treatments of the subject." *Foreign Affairs* "... well-written, coherent narrative and thoughtful, balanced analysis of Nigeria's political history from 1960 to 1996." *A. H. M. Kirk-Greene, St. Antony's College, Oxford* Eghosa Osaghae's study leads him to the conclusion that Nigeria's problems are not of recent making but can be traced to structural impediments from colonial times.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Eghosa Osaghae recounts and analyzes the social, economic, and political spheres of post-independence Nigeria in 'Crippled Giant'. Osaghae's work is well-researched, his narrative well-reasoned. Anyone who wishes to understand Nigeria's current situation will do well to fully understand the country's contextual background, and Osaghae's book provides just that background. The book covers the period from independence through Abacha's regime, from the perspective of each regime's internal (economic and political) and foreign policy. Readers interested in analyses of the post-Abacha transition to civil rule and the subsequent civilian dispensation will need to look elsewhere. Overall, 'Crippled Giant' is a must-read for all Nigerians, as well as for

others interested in learning about Nigeria's travail.

Prof. Osaghae's book presents a scholarly, detailed, and well-referenced history of Nigerian politics from 1960, when the country became independent, up through the Abacha regime (1996). If you are interested in what happened and what is happening in Nigeria, this book is a must-read. Osaghae points out that the stability of the Nigerian state was certainly not helped by its boundaries, which included tribal groups of widely differing cultures and, in some instances, a history of conflict. Tribal and religious animosities, particularly between the Moslem North (Hausa, Fulani, etc.) and the mainly Christian South (Yoruba, Ibo, etc.) were exacerbated by a rapidly increasing population and resulted in the war of the Biafran secession. Osaghae documents the long string of inept, corrupt civilian governments, coups, and equally inept, corrupt military governments that followed.

Government was viewed as a source of wealth, to be sucked dry for the benefit of individuals, their relatives, and their tribe. The Nigerian people as a whole derived very little benefit from the enormous wealth being generated by oil in the Niger Delta, while the people living in the Delta suffered grievous environmental damage. One might hope that the present government, under Goodluck Johnson, will be able to turn things around, but the pressures of jihadist violence in the North, tribal animosities made worse by a desperate population problem, a long-standing tradition of corruption, and violence in the Niger Delta may make improvement in the situation impossible. The kidnapping of the aged mother of Johnson's very able finance minister Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala is certainly not a positive sign. We lived in Nigeria for a year shortly after independence, before, in Chinua Achebe's words, things fell apart. It was a wonderful, fascinating year, and we would have loved to go back. But we never dared to.

Any scholar of Nigeria or anyone interested in post-independence history of Nigeria should have this on their bookshelf. It's detailed, succinct, well-organized and well-researched. I refer to it all the time.

Wonderful book - very detailed on the politics and changes through eras in Nigeria. Definitely recommend this book to anyone trying to learn more about the country.

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