Regional Impacts of European Colonialism & Development

Colonial Racism & Ethnic Genocide in Rwanda & Burundi

1. Three ethnic groups: Hutu (87%); Tutsi (12%) Twa (1%)
2. Peaceful coexistence pre colonialism despite an aristocratic (Tutsi) herding class & servant (Hutu) farmer class
3. Belgium colonial possession post (WWI)
4. Tutsi designated superior race by colonial power → best jobs, education & “governance”
5. Hutus gain political power (they are the largest population), 1962
6. Mass slaughter/genocide of Tutsi → Tutsi gained power again → Hutu flee

Orphaned refugee children, Burundi

Belgians created a racial hierarchy – the Twa (hunter/gathers were relegated to the bottom, owing to their “small, chunky, muscular, and hairy” characteristics. The Hutu were described as “generally short, thick set, with wide noses” – thus, placed into the middle of the hierarchy. The Tutsi became the privileged class because they were “tall, slender, graceful,, intelligent and perhaps were of African-Aryan stock”
Declining Development in Nigeria: The Geopolitics of Oil & Ethnic Strife

Nigeria was once viewed as Africa’s democratic & economic giant? Not true! Why?

1. Rapid population increase with a falling GNP per capita ($300)
2. Mineral wealth has actually hurt development
   → oil equates to 95% of export earnings
   → a volatile world market & foreign run oil industry (> ½ oil market is controlled by Dutch Shell) has hindered development and has lead to Nigeria having to import oil despite tremendous reserves.

3. Environmental destruction (timber/oil)
   - 40% of Shell’s oil spills occur here
   - ex. Ogoni tribe on Niger Delta (lookup more information on this topic → Ogoni and Oil)
   - Ogoni Bill of Rights, 1990
   - Government razed & killed oil opposition, 1993

Ken Saro-Wiwa, playwright, Activist, Nobel Peace Prize nominee – hanged 1995
Declining Development in Nigeria: The Geopolitics of Oil & Ethnic Strife

4. Ethnic Strife (300 ethnic groups)
- colonialist left a federated state
- Western, Eastern Northern, 1960
- civil war & N/S & Balkanization
- Conflict is based upon ethnicity, religion, degree of development, and hegemony. The north is Islamic (Hausa); the East is traditional Animistic and Christian (Ibo) and the far west and the center of colonial development is largely Christian

5. Military rule → since independence seeking material & political opportunities - not for the good of the people. In 1993 democratic elections nullified/political parties banned

Nigeria’s present underdevelopment is thus almost entirely a product of the wasting of human & mineral resources.