

Perspectives on Migration, Urbanisation and Development in two ‘new’ African cities: trends, dynamics and post-colonial implications

By

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Abstract

Enugu and Port Harcourt, ‘new towns’ of tropical Africa which arose as a result of contact with Europe, are unique cities with historical connections. They witnessed ‘unprecedented’ population growth, radical cosmopolitanism and dramatic urbanisation from their colonial origins and well into the post-colonial era. These had, however, been fuelled by different passions and circumstances, and have equally had different impacts and implications on the cities’ development, peoples and relations among them. This paper explores migration, urbanisation and development trends in Enugu and Port Harcourt from a comparative perspective. It interrogates the transitions of the cities from origins, and the dynamics of urban development that engendered change, expansion and growth. It points to the influences of the global economy (the colliery, railway, seaport and petrobusiness) as the prime driving forces of these trends, while the diverse impacts and implications were shown as pervasive, significant and different for each city.

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Introduction

Enugu and Port Harcourt, two ‘new towns’ of tropical Africa which developed as a result of colonial contact, have had two distinct histories and trajectories that both converge and diverge in different ways and over a significant time. Although urbanism has been argued as not being new to Africa, while the modern city is (Wolpe, 1974:13), one thing for sure about these histories and trajectories is that both cities were galloping towards *urbanisation* and *development* (or what they were thought to be). While a few large human settlements predated the advent of colonialism in the area that is today Nigeria, as noted above, these two cities only developed an urban status in the first quarter of the 20th Century. Thus, unlike some other parts of pre-colonial African societies, most of their peoples in those periods of their human history lived in rural settings. Remarkably, urbanisation and development in Enugu and Port Harcourt have taken place, more or less, quite spontaneously, and with considerable consequences too – both for the sustainable development of the cities and the wellbeing of their inhabitants.

This paper examines the dynamics of urbanisation and development in Enugu and Port Harcourt cities, and further assesses the implications of these for their sustainable development. The study is concerned not only with the causes, but also the effects and nature of urbanisation and development in the cities, but from a comparative perspective. The need for this analysis is evidenced in the widely held suggestions that urban populations will continue to grow much faster than rural populations, even if the urban bias in development strategies were reversed. Thus, the many implications of urbanisation and development, especially as authentic African experiences, should be examined for a deeper understanding of the challenges and proffering of creative solutions.

This article proceeds in the following order. The second section tries to clarify the settings or areas of the study, giving a general understanding of their geo-politics and significance to the wider country. In the third section, the origins and growth of these cities are systematically articulated, showing the many different trends in development. The fourth section demonstrates some general directions of urbanisation in each of the cities, while the fifth section tries to articulate some of the many challenges faced by the cities on account of their urbanisation and development. Finally, concluding remarks are made in the last section of the paper. In all these, conscientious efforts are made to interrogate the issues involved in each section from a comparative perspective.

The Study Areas

Enugu is the city-capital of Enugu State, Southeastern Nigeria. It has been a major and well-known urban, coal-mining and commercial centre since its foundation in 1915. “Enugu”,

which means “Hill Top” (or “top of the hill”) indicates the topography of the city – about 763 feet above sea level (MIHA, 1972; Udo, 1981). It is also euphemistically referred to as the “Coal City” due to the significance of Coal for the city’s foundation and development: it is the only significant coal mining district in West Africa (PPV, 1966). Enugu was the administrative headquarters of the Southern Provinces in 1929, and that of the defunct secessionist state of the Republic of Biafra (1967-1970). The city’s economy is largely dominated by trading, commerce, and small-scale industry. In terms of ethnic provenances of its inhabitants, Enugu is dominated by the Igbo, one of Nigeria’s major groups, while most other groups are reflected in the city in varying degrees. Enugu has three university campuses and two major polytechnics, an airport, a sports stadium and a major railway terminus. The city had an estimated total population of about 465,000 in 1991 and a projected estimate of 557,584 in 1996 (NPC, 1991), 28 residential settlements (Ikejiofor, 2004) and covers an area of about 85 sq. km.

Port Harcourt, Nigeria’s Garden city, is a deepwater port city-capital of Rivers state and the largest and most significant urban centre in the Niger Delta of Nigeria. This city’s port is second in size only to that of Lagos. It lies at about 40 feet above sea level and a very few degrees above the equator. It is located on the edge of the Niger Delta’s mangrove foreshore and swamplands (Wolpe, 1974:15), with a very high biodiversity which contains diverse exotic/unique plants and animal species (Ibeanu, 2000:20). Port Harcourt is also an industrial and commercial centre where steel and aluminum products, pressed concrete, glass, tires, paint, footwear, furniture, and cigarettes are manufactured and bicycles and motor vehicles are assembled (WFE, 2007). The city possesses two seaports, two airports (one international with a local wing and one for the Nigerian Air Force), two oil refineries, two universities, two sports stadiums and a railway terminus. Its population has always been largely Igbo (Wolpe, 1974), with an admixture of several other indigenous ethnic minorities and others from elsewhere. As at 2006, Port Harcourt had a population of about 2,820,200 (Ohiagbuchi, 2007) with a population density of 2,844 persons *per* square kilometer. Port Harcourt municipality is Nigeria’s third largest commercial centre after Lagos and Kano, and the country’s most significant city because of large crude oil and refined petroleum investments.

New Towns’ ‘Origins and Growth

Indeed, migration has played a major part in shaping settlement patterns globally. Shack (1979:39) underlines an important feature of these migrations when he notes these individuals and groups as being “strangers...in societies other than their own. They came one day and were gone the next. Some, however, remained”. Within this framework, Hair (1954:3) reports of the pre-colonial presence of such “strangers” in what was to become Enugu city:

Before the coming of the white man, major trade in the city was in the hands of two groups of ‘foreigners’. The Aros, a branch of the Ibo tribe [sic] from Arochukwu in the south, and the Hausa from Northern Nigeria. While the Aros dealt mainly and controlled the trade in slaves, the Hausa however dealt mainly in horses, which were in demand in Iboland [sic] for ritual sacrifices.

However, no attention was paid to these migrations and their significances to social development and human relations, most probably because the population of the migrants was insignificant and the area was of no real ‘locational importance’ at the time.

The rise of Enugu as a modern city began with the active penetration of the area that later became Nigeria by the British colonialists in the first quarter of the twentieth century. A “Mineral Survey” was instituted in 1903, under the auspices and direction of the Imperial Institute, London, to explore the mineral resources of southern Nigeria (*Imperial Institute*, 1941:36; Akpala, 1965:241). This was the first geological enterprise in this area (Akpala, 1965) and particularly explored for silver and other valued mineral (MIHA, 1972; Hair, 1954). In 1909, an “accidental discovery” of real sub-bituminous coal was made in Udi and Okoga areas, and when the survey ended in 1913, it was definitely confirmed that extensive deposits, in commercial quantities, of reach seam of coal were in existence in the Udi Ridge axis, east of Ngwo village (*The Mining Magazine*, 1917:45). Indeed, Enugu owes its origins to this 1909 “discovery” by a geological exploration team led by Mr. Albert Ernest Kitson, a British mining engineer and scientist (PPV, 1966; Hair, 1954).

Prior to the time of “discovery”, Hair (1954:284) suggests that “no real human life and/or activities existed” or were noticed in this area:

If a person had been standing on top of Milliken Hill ... in the year 1900, he would have had good reason to doubt that a township of about 140,000 could ever find a home below. Before him to the east and south lay a plain, 500 feet below the ridge top, intersected by small streams. The smoke rising from the tiny village of Ogui-Nike, an off-shoot of the Nike Community, was the only visible sign that human life existed.

This Hair's claim is, however, quite contestable. Indeed, it is as doubtful as it is entirely Eurocentric. It resonates such claims of the Whiteman being the "founder", "pioneer" and/or "discoverer" of almost all things in Africa, even in the face of incontestable evidence that the indigenous populations had had contact with and usage of the "founded" or "discovered" centuries before the coming of the Whiteman. That people lived away from their family or communal farmlands cannot translate to the land having no real human life or activities, as Hair (1954) declares. Without a doubt, the parameters for judging standards for social spaces are not the same the world over; in sub-Saharan Africa, for instance, "the village is our city" is a common belief among diverse peoples.

Ogbuagu's (1961:241) account buttresses this point of 'assessment error' and reports of human life and activities in existence in the area. He further refutes the finding of coal in the area as both "accidental" and a "discovery":

Hitherto, very little was known of this piece of land. The people of the little town of Ngwo on the edge of the escarpment of the Udi ridge went down the slope of the hill to fetch drinking-water. The bed of the streams instead of white sand and smooth gravels, carried a mass of hard black rock – rock that was of no value to the people themselves.

In other words, the European ethnographic historian (Hair) would have defined the social space and its physical endowments differently based on his standards and what he, probably wanted people to believe.

The coal deposits Mr. Kitson and his team 'met' in the area in 1909 was later to stimulate development there and transform it into the only significant coal mining district in West Africa (PPV, 1966). About five years after Mr. Kitson communicated what he saw in the area to his superiors in England (probably, sometime in late 1914 or early 1915), Mr. W.J. Leck, in the company of a few other whites and some indigenous peoples, came to stay. The indigenous peoples came from Onitsha as labourers and were led by a certain Alfred Inoma. In early 1915, the colonial government began talks with the indigenes (owners of the lands which later became Enugu) on the acquisition of lands. These were for the colliery, the railways and the development of a large part of what is now Enugu Township (Akpala, 1965:336).

With the conclusion of land acquisitions³, at least to the colonial government's satisfaction, Mr. Leck and his few White colleagues made their first home in temporary "bush-housing"⁴ on the top of the Milliken Hill ridge. Alfred Inoma and the indigenous labourers, on the other hand, established their own settlement of a range of mud-houses on a spur 200 feet up the ridge. Perched like a castle on the steep hillside, this famous little settlement was known as "Alfred's Camp"⁵, after the group's leader (Hair, 1954:1). Both settlements were the very first set of houses to be set up in what is today known as Enugu city. Thus, to Mr. Leck, Under-manager and subsequently, Manager of Enugu Colliery – who lived uninterruptedly in the town from 1914 to 1942, except for periods of his leave (Hair, 1954) – and Mr. Alfred Inoma, and their teams of both Europeans and indigenous peoples, must go the honour of being the first permanent inhabitants and, indeed, 'founders' of the new labour settlement, which eventually metamorphosed into the present-day Enugu city.

Coal mining started in the area by mid 1915. The effective exploitation of the coal fields required the development of a transportation distribution network since the need for an outlet for the mined coal was felt as soon as work began in earnest at the colliery. The search for a site that would be suitable both as a seaport and as a railway terminus (for coal evacuation and eventual export) led to the exploration of the Bonny River and eventually, to Igwe Ocha, a natural harbour along the Bight of Biafra. By mid-1915, a railway line linking Enugu with the coast at Igwe Ocha was begun from the latter's end and was completed by the end of 1915. This natural harbour was to become "the economic *raison d'être* of one of Nigeria's most important commercial and industrial centres" (Wolpe, 1974:14).

Originally known as Igwe Ocha, this port and the city that eventually developed there due to migrations and enhanced economic activities of the railway were re-named Port Harcourt. It was re-named after the then Secretary of State for the Colonies (1910-15), Lewis (Viscount) Harcourt (Wolpe, 1974; Dixon-Fyle, 1989:126). Frederick Lugard, in a letter addressed to Lewis Harcourt in 1913, notes thus:

...I have the honour to enclose for your information charts of the estuaries and rivers in the neighbourhood of the proposed port and terminus of the Eastern Railway at Diobu or more correctly

³ For an interesting discourse on the acquisitions of Enugu's land, see Isichie, E. 1976; 1983; Njoku, 2001 and Akpala, 1965. The *Lagos Weekly Records* (1923:4-11, 18-25) describes the incidents as "one of the greatest land swindling acts recorded in the history of West Africa".

⁴ European/colonial synonyms for Igbo traditional mud-houses.

⁵ Another source, Ikejiofor (2004), however, has the name of the later settlement as "Ugwu Alfred" ('Alfred's Hill'), evidently in reference to its location on the hill. Nonetheless, this settlement is presently known as "Alfred's Camp", while the hill on which it sits was called "Ugwu Alfred".

Iguocha...In the absence of any convenient local name, I would respectfully ask your permission to call this Port Harcourt, and I anticipate, that, in future, it will be one of the most important ports in the coast of West Africa...⁶

One disconcerting fact about this whole development and arrangement was the seeming inability, or maybe refusal, of Lugard to adopt a suitable local name for the port and the city. Like he rightly mentioned in his letter, the proposed railway terminus was to be located at “Diobu” or more correctly, “Iguocha” (a corruption of Igwe Ocha). One then wonders why and how these local names of the pre-1913 community that existed there were unsuitable or not “convenient” for the emerging city’s name. The choice of a name after Lewis Harcourt is arguably in line with the colonial racist ideology of viewing the colonised as inferior and dominated; thus, physical features within their domain could arbitrarily be re-named to suit the colonisers, and/or supplanted with “better”, “more convenient” and “suitable” names in their thinking. This was the experience all over sub-Saharan African colonial history.

Some significant points to note about the origins and foundations of the Enugu and Port Harcourt cities is that, for Enugu the human population had settled and developed on ‘virgin’ lands, arguably the farmlands of indigenous communities. On the other hand, Port Harcourt had to develop out of an extant village-community, Igwe Ocha, whose origins dated back to pre-colonial times. Secondly, the point of the intersection and historical links between the two cities has to be borne on mind: Port Harcourt developed as a by-product of the founding of Enugu and its coal mining activities. In other words, Port Harcourt was established to permit the evacuation of the Enugu coal to the port for export purposes. Thirdly, Enugu’s colliery and the railway industries that linked it with Port Harcourt were colonial projects. Again, they were being developed immediately after the period when the northern and southern protectorates were being amalgamated into one entity called Nigeria. Thus, having been inspired by European commercial or administrative interests, they were frequently organized and administered in the European image (Wolpe, 1974:14). Even as they were founded at and near the site of indigenous settlements/communities respectively, they quickly became cosmopolitan centres comprised of large, often culturally heterogeneous immigrant populations. This is partly explained by the unprecedented waves of migration the new towns experienced at the time and in addition to the fact that the colonialists necessarily employed Nigerians from a diversity of ethnic groups for work in these new towns.

⁶ Nigeria 183, CO. 583/4/Vol.3. Sir Frederick Lugard to the Rt. Hon. Lewis Harcourt, Secretary of State for the Colonies, 18 August 1913, Public Records Office, London.

It was the pressing need for labour and services in both the colliery and the railway that made the new colonial towns to witness unprecedented migration of peoples from diverse ethnic origins and occupational backgrounds. This dramatic upsurge in the towns' population also meant the gradual development of permanent cosmopolitan societies. Over time, they widened in scope and became more accommodating to people from far and near due to their alluring pull factors – the colliery in Enugu, the sea port in Port Harcourt and the railway linking both. One remarkable point to note about these migrations is that they were largely unrestricted, unregulated and not monitored. Broadly speaking, officialdom showed little interest in the peopling of these towns. This was quite unlike the cases in Eastern and Southern Africa, or even in some other West African towns, where migrations into such new colonial towns were actively regulated and controlled. Thus, for the two towns, this meant higher volumes of uncontrolled migrations for wage-earning jobs and city life.

Trends in and Dynamics of Urban Development

Throughout Africa, societies that had been predominantly rural for most of their history were experiencing a rapid and profound reorientation of their social and economic lives toward cities and urbanism (Annon. ND). As ever greater numbers of people moved to a small number of rapidly expanding cities, the fabric of life in both urban and rural areas changed in massive ways. Unlike most other nations, however, Nigeria had not just one or two but several other cities of major size and importance, a number of which were larger than most other national capitals in Africa. In areas such as south-eastern Nigeria, which had few urban centers before the colonial period, there was a massive growth of new cities since 1915, so that these areas in 1960 were quite urban and had become highly so by the late 1990 (Odoemene, 2007). Some of these urban areas in the southeast are Enugu and Port Harcourt. Enugu experienced the phenomenon of urbanisation as thoroughly as Port Harcourt, but their experiences and trajectories have been uniquely different – in scale, pervasiveness, and historical antecedents.

This section would begin with an analysis of the developmental trends that underlined Enugu's rapid urbanisation, and then go further from that point to evaluate the Port Harcourt case. Seeming conflation periods of the two cities would then be interrogated.

a. Enugu city

Due to its fast pace of urbanisation, development and the consequent unprecedented immigration, Enugu attained second-class township status in 1917, just two years after its

foundation, with the name “Enugu Ngwo”,⁷ under Lugard’s Township Ordinance⁸ (Ikejiofor, 2004; Hair, 1954). A plan of Enugu drawn up in 1917 showed that the town’s main features were an “African Quarter” which was established the same year on the Coal Camp site and an almost empty “European Reservation Area”, which was further extended north and east, occupying most of the land between the *Obwetti*, *Asata* and *Aria* streams (PPV, 1966). The African and European quarters were separated by a stream and open stretch of land, in keeping with the then colonial racist policy of segregating blacks and whites, ostensibly “for health reasons” (Hair, 1954). Indeed, buttressing this fact of rapid growth, an administrative report of 1919 simply notes that “Enugu was...improving fast” (NAE, 1919). By 1920, the first European firms arrived in Enugu – one banking concern and five trading concerns, all British, except for one French trading concern (Hair, 1954). In a few years afterwards, several other European firms took over plots in the European Reservation Area, while the colliery and the railway were also building permanent quarter for their white staff in the same reservation (NAE, 1920).

Until 1929 when Enugu became the administrative headquarter for the southern provinces of Nigeria, the only labour employers in Enugu were the colliery and railway. Thus, each of the events associated with the expansion of these sectors in Enugu added to its development and population growth. With the opening and expansion of every new coal mine, the population of miners grew rapidly. Similarly, the importance of the railway in Enugu transcended its original role as a means of transporting coal to the seaport at Port Harcourt. As it became the operational headquarters of the Railway Corporation in Eastern Nigeria, there was tremendous population movement into the town. Again, the 1928 opening of the Enugu – Kano railway line boosted the migration and settlement of northerners in the town.⁹ The railway also stimulated the development of other transport tributaries and feeder roads needed to bring migrants and wares to Enugu, thus linked it by road to all the major population centres in Nigeria (Ikejiofor, 2004). Furthermore, the activities of these two establishments overtime also kept attracting other categories of migrants – diverse service providers – to the town.

With the opening of the second coal mine, Iva mine, in 1917, the population of miners grew rapidly. As the coal mine attracted more workers, a second settlement for indigenous workers was established on the southern side of *Ogbete* stream. This formed the nucleus of present day “Coal Camp”, otherwise known as Ogbete (Ikejiofor, 2004). As the transformative

⁷ The name “Ngwo” is the name of the nearest village on the ridge where Enugu was founded. In 1928, “Ngwo” was dropped to distinguish the township (Enugu) from Ngwo village (Ikejiofor, 2004; Hair, 1954).

⁸ This was by an Order in Council, No. 19 of 1917; and by another Order in Council, No. 2 of 1924, the new town was declared a Supreme Court Area (Ogbuagu, 1961:241).

⁹ It was usually a preferred place of settlement for these northern groups due to its neutral weather, link to a ‘convenient’ means of transportation (the railway) and proximity to the north.

effects of the colliery and railway kept attracting waves of migrants to the new town, the need to expand became very evident and people began to look eastwards. On the east side of Asata River¹⁰ lay the farmland of Ogui-Nike village, which was not within the township, but needed to be incorporated if expansion was to continue. It was also urged that the farmland called “Ogui Overside” be incorporated, but this was opposed by administrative authorities on the grounds that the Ogui-Nike natives could not afford to lose their valuable farmland (PPV, 1966). This feeling led to the agreement that the “Neutral Zone” be slimmed down, and from there another “native location” was built on the west bank of the Asata River rather than on the east. As a result, “Ogui Overside” was left alone, while Ogui and Asata Layouts were authorised in-between the neutral zone and the Asata River (Hair, 1954). Similarly, the urgent need for accommodation also made the railway authorities to commence the building of permanent quarters for colliery workers at “China Town” in 1923 (Ikejiofor, 2004).

From 1929 when Enugu became an administrative headquarter for the Southern Province under the post-World War II constitutions, the number of government departments represented in the town increased tremendously. This development attracted diverse migrants for the many opportunities thus created. Thus, during the early 1930s, the building of houses in Ogui Layout continued as did the development of permanent colliery dwellings in Asata Layout. The desperate situation and indiscriminate nature of the build-up of these new areas led to the inauguration of a Building Ordinance (NAE, 1932), which was essentially for maintaining some kind of control over the situation. Also, within this period, the neutral zone was abandoned and the European Reservation was renamed “Senior Service Reservation”. Few years after, the township’s attention was once again turned to “Ogui Overside” due to population pressure and housing need, but not without opposition (Hair, 1954:49). Notwithstanding this development, people in desperation began to filter across the river in search of housing and the situation became uncontrollable for the authorities. Consequently, in 1940, “Ogui Overside” was declared an “Urban Area” (PPV, 1966).

The non-cooperation of the native land owners in permitting a planned layout led to government authorities, especially the medical department, refusing to approve all the buildings that had been erected in the area. Theoretically, building in the area should have stopped, but the acute shortage of housing and accommodation made such a ‘theoretical postulation’ unfeasible (NAE, 1952). This was, however, not the situation in other parts of the city; indeed, it was the diametrical opposite. “Organised town planning was systematically carried out with the result that good housing was erected and streets were well laid” (PPV,

¹⁰ Due to a series of agreements between the villagers and the Crown Authority, the Asata River was the boundary of the “Neutral Zone” and lay between the African Quarters and the European Reservation for “Health Reasons” (PPV, 1966).

1966:12). The make-up of most of the housing in these other areas was what one would expect of a budding colonial city at the time – well made, permanent and semi-permanent buildings. Between 1940 and 1945, the town experienced a ‘war-boom’ due to the World War II. Increased activity on the railway and in the colliery and a great increase in the military estate brought tens of thousands of new migrant-settlers to Enugu. These increased the demand for housing and as a result, the natives began to lease their lands more freely, and since the township building regulations were not applicable to native lands, an unorganised and unpleasant slum¹¹ emerged (Hair, 1954:4).

Although the colliery and railways provided residential quarters for its staff, these could only accommodate a small proportion of their employees. This, together with the need to house increasing numbers of other migrants, added to the demand for more housing land in and around Enugu and thus, the development of other residential settlements (Ikejiofor, 2004). Disturbed by the rate of over-crowding in the town, the Local Authority took ‘a one-man count’ – the “Dewhurst Census” – in 1945 (NAE, 1945), which put Enugu’s population at 35,000. And when it became evident that this overflow population was going to create more “Ogui Oversides”, arrangements were promptly made for a new layout to be established. Conceived in the early 1940s, the area, now called Uwani Layout, was acquired in 1947 (Hair, 1954:49). From 1949 onward, a period during which the town was the capital of the Eastern Region of Nigeria, a boom of ‘official buildings’ hit the town: the Secretariat and the adjoining offices were extended and modernised; various other new government buildings were erected, new Railway Quarters were built, more Colliery Quarters were constructed and a Government Trade Center (GTC) was opened in 1949. In 1952, a Women’s Teachers-training College (WTC) was opened, while the College of Arts, Science and Technology¹² and Queens School were established in 1954 (Hair, 1954).

By these developments, the emerging city took a new immigration turn. The ‘army of bureaucrats’ became larger than ever before, while new crops of students for the newly-established schools moved into Enugu. These meant great population movements. For instance, the 1953 census figures of Enugu shows that in eight years (since 1945), the population had increased from 35,000 to 63,000, mainly due to the increase in government activities. Following these developments, substantially built private houses started appearing in Coal Camp, Asata and Ogui, while Uwani, Enugu’s newest housing site at the time, had expanded by 1953 to over 100 houses with accommodation for about 5,000 people (PPV, 1966:13). The town also benefited from the general prosperity of Nigeria: production at the colliery was

¹¹ This has also been noted as the most striking feature of the war-time expansion of Enugu town. See PPV (1966).

¹² Since 1961 this became the University of Nigeria, Enugu Campus.

stepped up and more workers taken on, while the railway handled new high volume of traffic (NAE, 1945:10).

By the mid 1960s, Nigeria experienced dislocating political crisis which affected the population of Enugu, as it did the whole of the then Eastern Region. One outcome of the crisis – an “Igbo pogrom” in the north – led to a panicky massive ‘home-coming’ of the Igbo from other regions to a safer Igboland. In this regard, Enugu city was the primary ‘choice destination’ of most of these urban home-comers. Conversely, people of non-Igbo stock resident in Enugu emigrated arguably to cities/towns in their own regions which seemed safer in the crisis and confusion of the time. In other words, while Enugu witnessed an inflow of great magnitude by Igbo refugees during this period, it also experienced, as never before in the country’s history, an ‘exit-migration’ of all non-Igbo settlers. The crisis eventually snowballed into the gruesome 30-month Nigerian civil war (1967-1970), during which period Enugu witnessed no migrations, except if one is to consider the indiscriminate flows or trickles of displaced persons who sought safety from the perils of war. Additionally, the eventual capture of Enugu by federal troops during the war meant mass-killings and dislodgement/displacement of the city’s core populations.

With the end of the civil war in 1970, people moved back to Enugu to seek jobs, livelihoods and new lives. Thus the city again witnessed a ‘rush-migration’ (Nzimiro, 2001), a trend Udo (1981:14) notes as having been very rapid over a couple of years. However, this post-civil war growth was mainly an ‘Igbo affair’, as most of other ethnic groups’ members were wary of migrating to *Igboland* due to the disaffections and mistrusts entrenched by the war. This situation has not changed much since the end of the civil war up till 1990 (Okwudiba Nnoli; Sule Haruna; Ade Adeyelu, 2005: PC), and was further reinforced by Enugu’s decline in the post-civil war era, metamorphosing from a major industrial centre to principally an administrative and educational centre. It is noteworthy that the two all-important establishments on which the city was founded and thrived went moribund: in the late 1970s, the coal industry and its mines ‘died out’, while the railways was almost grounded, becoming a shadow of its former status. Similarly, planned efforts to develop in the city and at various times, secondary industries around the colliery – tin-smelting, glass-works, lime-works, and so on – all collapsed (Hair, 1954).

In terms of urban amenities, such as electricity, pipe borne water, sanitation system, and so on, Enugu’s story, right from the days of its early beginnings, has been that of dichotomous distribution based on the society’s class structure. While those living in the European areas, including African who began to occupy them from the late 1940’s and fully with the exit of the Europeans in 1960, enjoyed electricity, pipe-borne water and had good sanitation systems and

play grounds, the same could not be said of the many Africans in the city who lived in diverse socio-infrastructureal conditions. Especially deplorable were drainage and sanitary facilities, while bucket latrines were all too common amongst them. General conditions in these African enclaves, however, rapidly improved from the 1970s, following the end of the civil war and the seeming benefits of the oil boom era in the city (Odoemene, 2008a). As modern structures began to emerge in the city since the 1980s, social amenities received major concern, though the city is largely without pipe-borne water still.

A point to underline about Enugu's growth is that the town was rapidly and radically transformed into an urban area (2nd class town) within two years, and twelve years after was too significant that it became the headquarter of the Southern Province, over and above many other urban areas which had developed decades and centuries before it. This transformation was as significant as it has been vital, at least to the historical sociology and development of the region – including the founding of Port Harcourt city.

In capturing what seems like a summary of the phenomenal growth, Ikejiofor (2004:12), remarks that the city "...had grown two and a half folds between 1963 and 1986 and at about 6% *per annum* between 1986 and 1991". This peopling of Enugu, like in the periods between 1915 and 1962 which was even more significant, has been of an unplanned, undirected and unregulated nature – an operation in the old world spirit of *laissez-faire* – which has foundations in the early handling of the area, resulting in what the colonial officials referred to as a "regrettable necessity" (Hair, 1954). As a District Officer put it in a colonial report of the late 1940s: "Enugu, like Topsy, has 'just grow'd. Its population growth in each decade (except perhaps the first) has been unplanned and largely unpredicted" (Hair, 1954:13). This astronomic population growth is clearly indicated in its census figures over the years: 1916 – ±400; 1926 – 3,200; 1931 – 13,000; 1939 – between 18,000 and 23,000; 1945 – 35,000; 1953 – 63,000; 1963 – 138,500; 1986 – 342,800; 1991 – 465,000 and 1996 – 557,584 (estimate).

b. Port Harcourt city

Port Harcourt city has had an interesting and intriguing history – one of a *mélange* of gold and rust, and of oil and blood. Its proper take-off towards an urban development started in 1914, following closely with the re-naming of the original community, Igwe Ocha. The first main activity of the colonial administrators there was the construction of a railway link to the Udi coalfields of what later became Enugu. In contrast with the strategy at Enugu of using, at first prisoners and later the indigenous peoples as free labourers for the construction of colonial projects like in the colliery and railway (Hair, 1954; MIHA, 1972:4), there is abundant evidence which suggests that coerced and forced labour of indigenous peoples was widely used

on the Port Harcourt railway project which started in 1915. Wolpe (1974:57) notes that this was even a constant source of irritation to the local colonial administrators, who expressed feelings of disapproval in different memoranda sent to the Port Harcourt District Office and to Provincial Commissioners.

Like Enugu city, the growth of Port Harcourt both in population (1915 – 500; 1944 – 30,200; 1963 – 180,000; 1973 – 231,000; 1982 – 911,731 [estimate]; growth rate of 8.45% *per annum* between 1963 and 1982) and area extent has been very fast (Izeogu, 1989:59; Izeogu and Salau, 1985). In terms of population composition, by 1973, migrants to the city of Port Harcourt accounted for about 72% of its population. Out of these, 66% migrated from the rural areas. This lends credence to the fact the rural – urban migration contributed substantially to the city's rapid rate of urbanisation. Apart from rapid population growth as a result of migration, Port Harcourt expanded physically at a fast rate too. This growth was, nonetheless, associated with uncontrolled urban development, especially in the rural – urban fringe to the north and the waterfronts to the south (Izeogu, 1989:60).

The railway and seaport created a vibrant socio-economic scenario in Port Harcourt, and this encouraged various European commercial concerns to establish branches in the town. The many job opportunities these establishments provided stimulated African migrant-labour from the local populations as well as other parts of the colonial territory. Several non-Nigerian Africans also came and gave a cosmopolitan atmosphere to the population (Dixon-Fyle, 1989:126-127). It's growth and development also has much to do with its status and position in the country's geo-politics: Nigeria's second largest seaport, one of the two foremost industrial and commercial cities (the other being Enugu) in the old Eastern Region of Nigeria and the social and economic headquarter of the oil-rich Niger Delta. However, the railway and the harbour provide only one part of the explanation for the city's rapid urban development and economic significance: petroleum and natural gas round out the equation (Wolpe, 1974:22). In other words, with rail, road, sea and airport facilities, there developed an industrial labour force, and the discovery of oil in the Niger Delta area in the mid 1950s led to an influx of expatriate multi-national *petrobusinesses* and other service groups (Ezedinma and Chukuezi, 1999:137). These aided tremendously in the radical transformation of the city.

The development of Port Harcourt, right from 1915, had been planned, though not all parts of the metropolis were affected by planning regulations (Izeogu, 1989:61). Thus, there existed in the city some sections which were well-built up in modern styles and others, mostly make-shift shanties, which were made of corrugated iron sheets, plywood, and in some cases, cement and sand blocks, readily found in spontaneous settlements, especially in waterfront areas and on reclaimed lands. There are forty-seven of such waterfront shanty towns in Port

Harcourt today. The earlier neighborhoods, usually off-shoots of the colonial era segregated Government Reserved Area (GRA), were usually inhabited by the rich business executives, oil workers and high-ranking civil servants resident in the city. In the colonial era this area consisted of European-style housing, hospital, educational, recreational, and religious facilities for the British colonials and the more prominent European trading community formed an expatriate enclave, which was deliberately separated from the indigenous Nigerian areas for health reasons.

After independence, these areas generally became upper income suburbs, which sometimes spread outward into surrounding farmlands as well as inward to fill in the space that formerly separated the GRA from the rest of the city. The later, on the other hand, typically provided affordable shelter and home to rural migrants, low income workers and indigenous peoples (Ezedinma and Chukuezi, 1999; Izeogu, 1989) and had exceptionally high occupancy rates. This sharply contrasts from that of Enugu situation, in the sense that in Enugu, such shanties did exist but were inhabited strictly by strangers. These were mostly migrants of Hausa and Fulani extraction who, on their own volition, preferred somewhat segregated neighborhoods, ostensibly for religious and cultural reasons.¹³ Similarly, Port Harcourt developed and incorporated enclaves of rural settlements and indigenous semi-rural communities within its built-up area. Such rural and semi-rural communities (in Port Harcourt) as Elekohia, Umuomasi, Umuokoroshe, Umueme, Umuola, Oroworukwo, Oromerizimbu and Orogbum were engulfed by the expanding city, while its fringes in the process of city development extended to Iriebe, Umuolumeni, Choba, Umuokoro, Diobu, Oroworukwo, Mkpogu and Umuomasi (Izeogu, 1989:60). This situation is also a similar experience in Enugu city, where substantial (farm) lands of neighbouring rural communities of Ogui, Nike and Awkunanaw have been incorporated into the ever growing city (Odoemene, 2008b).

As was also the case in Enugu in the mid 1960s when the country witnessed some disruptive political crisis, the population was affected in two different ways. All persons in the city that were not of the Eastern Region were made to leave for their own abode, while many of those from the region, who had left antagonistic environments especially in the Northern parts, moved into Port Harcourt. Thus the city witnessed both an 'in-migration' as well as an 'exit-migration' during the early stages of the crisis (Odoemene, 2007). The period of the civil war posed yet another migration situation in the city, as people moved indiscriminately within the area. This was more so as Port Harcourt was the first to witness the war, and the first of the Biafran (then Eastern Region) side to fall to the Federal troops. The anti-Igbo sentiments of the

¹³ For some discussions on the evolution and nature of such segregated settlements in Nigeria, see Albert, 1993a; 1993b; Osaghae, 1994 and Olaniyi, 2003.

period and antagonistic posture, even among former traditional sub-groups and allies of the Igbo within Port Harcourt area, also meant the exit of many ethnic Igbo from Port Harcourt, a hitherto foremost “Igbo city” (Wolpe, 1974), to other Igbo communities in the hinterlands. Arguably, this period also witnessed no development, in terms of urbanisation, in the Port Harcourt city (Odoemene, 2007).

In the period after the civil war, the incorporation of rural settlements within the city sphere became very necessary, and especially so, due to heightened migrations into the city strongly stimulated by the oil boom of the 1970s. Of course, this came with all of the opportunities that era brought for making fortunes in cities such as the oil-rich Port Harcourt. The role of public policy in the urban development process in Port Harcourt, particularly in the areas of provision of basic urban infrastructure and services, location of economic activities, housing development, and urban planning has been at the expense of the rural areas as well as the medium and small urban centres. More than 80% of the manufacturing industries in Rivers State are located in Port Harcourt. Nearly 50% of all government housing is located in Port Harcourt (Izeogu, 1989:60). One other very interesting urban development of the post-civil war Port Harcourt was the re-naming or re-branding of some of its communities in an effort to deny their Igbo origins or ownership, as the Igbo lost the war. This followed a wave of anti-Igbo sentiments, even among groups that had earlier claimed to be ethnic Igbo sub-groups, especially in the Port Harcourt axis. Thus, communities such as Umuomasi, Umuokoroshe, Umueme, Umuola, Umuolumeni, Umuokoro and Umuomasi, which were typically Igbo names of communities, had “R” which stood for “Rivers”¹⁴, prefixed to them. With this development, the communities came to be known as: *Rumuomasi*, *Rumuokoroshe*, *Rumueme*, *Rumuola*, *Rumuolumeni*, *Rumuokoro* and *Rumuomasi* respectively. This has remained till date.

In terms of social amenities, except for the ‘privileged’ areas of the city where ‘the rich and powerful’ lived, there was a near total lack of public services and infrastructure such as piped water, electricity and residential access roads in parts of the city. There was also no provision of sanitation and drainage facilities, or children’s play ground, while many of the houses had bucket latrine. Overcrowding in these parts was also usual and expected (Odoemene, 2007). These facilities, it should be noted, existed in the other ‘privileged areas’ right from the onset because the houses were mostly occupied by the colonialists and such provisions were deemed a necessity for their survival in the city. Thus, the indigenes peoples who later came to stay in these areas also enjoyed such ostentatious privileges. One needs to

¹⁴ The name of the wartime new state with headquarters at Port Harcourt, granted to the people of the area. This ‘statehood’ was primarily granted to weaken the Biafran side by giving semblance of ‘freedom’ to groups who had groaned under the Igbo influence.

point out that this situation has largely changed since the mid 1970s, with rapid urbanisation and industrialisation that hit the city in the period (Odoemene, 2007).

Port Harcourt city is often referred to as the 'Garden city' because of dwellers' flair for nurturing flower gardens around their houses, a result of the influence of the early White settlers who decorated their homes and environment with ornamentals (Ogionwo, 1979). Arguably, the city stood out as Nigeria's best planned city and its beauty, cleanliness and freshness was unrivalled. Archibong's (2004) report captures a summary of these allurements:

Here, there and everywhere, the city looked planned and designed with aesthetics and sanitary considerations in mind. Apart from its famed nightlife, many parts of Port Harcourt had playgrounds; noise level was low, taps flowed with water and streetlights were taken for granted. Roads, especially in the "Township" and Government Reservation Area (GRA) were in good shape. That is how Port Harcourt came to be foisted with the Garden City sobriquet.

However, things totally fell apart along the line. This was caused by corruption, mis-governance and industrial irresponsibility (devastation by environmental and ecological degradation) in the 1970s and 1980s in the city, the Niger Delta area and Nigeria in general. This set the stage for tensions and conflicts in Port Harcourt. This became even more complicated with dire implications because of some notable factors: the very delicate nature of the Niger Delta region ecosystem, total negligence by governments and *petrobusinesses* operating there, and the status of the region in Nigeria's political economy – produces crude oil which accounts for up to 95% of the country's export earnings and over 80% of its foreign revenue. In all, the woes of Port Harcourt are that of corruption which is rooted in the oil of the delta region.

Urbanisation: Some Implications for Development

This section would interrogate some of the profound post-colonial implications of urbanisation and development based on the cities' experiences over the years. These experiences are explored under six main themes, while some comparisons between the cases are also demonstrated.

a. Formation of Ethnic Unions

A prominent by-product of the urbanisation process in Enugu and Port Harcourt was the establishment of many organised ethnic unions¹⁵, fashioned to deal with the vagaries of urban life and existence – guarantying adequate welfare and security – as it affects their members (Mabogunje, 1976; Osaghae, 1994). These unions, which were possible because of the cities’ ethnic provenances, have survived till date. Indeed, almost every man and woman in Enugu was a member of at least one such society. The existence of such societies is a consequence of the weakening of family roles, nuclear and/or extended, due to the exigencies of migration. The term ‘ethnic’ indicates their fundamental nature, while their functions and achievements mark them out. Mabogunje (1976:23) sheds more light:

...perhaps the most important ... in many African cities is the ethnic or town association. This consists of people who have migrated from the same ethnic group or the same area. These associations perform a variety of functions which have come to cover large areas of life of many migrants. They serve as a reception body to welcome the new migrant to the city. They help him to find accommodation and very often too, to find employment.

However, beyond finding accommodation and employment for the new migrants, ethnic unions quickly diversified their activities to include various kinds of community development projects in their rural areas. Such projects included scholarship schemes, electricity and water supply, building of community resource centres, etc. Without a doubt, ethnic unions deserve to be considered a success story in colonial and post-colonial Nigeria, as it is frequently possible to spot these associations’ contributions to developmental processes, especially in the south-eastern parts of Nigeria (Okwudiba Nnoli, 2005: PC).

b. Social Life Organisation: The Rural – Urban Interconnections

Cities are not only independent centers of concentrated human population and activity; they also exert a potent influence on the rural landscape, more especially in Africa. Rural – urban migration has remained largely one-way, leading to increases in the population of urban centres like Enugu and Port Harcourt. Among the most important interactions between rural areas and these urban centres right from the 1920s were, however, not only demographic but also developmental. Indeed, they have historically exerted potent influences on rural areas

¹⁵ For a discussion on the evolution of “Ethnic Unions” and/or “Migrant Ethnic Empires” in Nigeria, see Osaghae, 1994.

through a network of rural – urban linkages for rural development. This is facilitated by the nature of migrants' relations with the rural homeland, both as individuals and as groups through the various ethnic unions.

Studies reveal that movement from the rural areas to the city did not mean a break with migrants' community of origin: migrants never really broke ties with the rural areas where they came from. Although in the process of moving between villages and cities individuals develop new social relationships, old ones are seldom dissolved. Rather they are merely altered (Chant and Radcliffe, 1992; Potts, 1997). Thus, migrants, like those in Enugu and Port Harcourt, continued to regard themselves as part of their original household in the rural areas. They made frequent visits to their home places, fulfilled some obligations and extended financial assistance to those left behind in the rural. They planned to eventually return 'home' permanently. They lived in a dual system characterised by one family but two households. This fact guided Oucho's (1996) conclusion that urbanisation in Africa divided families into two geographically separated but mutually supportive households; one in the urban and the other in the rural. The reluctance to break permanently with the rural community of origin was as a result of certain factors, including land tenure, often seen as security when there is no employment in urban areas (Lesetedi, 2003) or after retirement.

Indeed, it appeared few migrants into Enugu and Port Harcourt acquired more than a tangential identification with their community of adoption. In their politics, as in their personal and social lives, they were instrumentally oriented to what the city could offer in the way of material advantages, but they remained expressively oriented to their communities of origin and to their rural-centered kinship ties and institutions. They participated in social activities including funerals and weddings, and in civic activities such as attending their home towns' union meetings in their rural communities (Wolpe, 1974; Jamil Sola Lawal; Anayo Nkimdirim; Sani Mohammed; Yesuf Sambo; 2005:PC). Also, most of the migrants in Enugu owned property in their rural villages and were involved in various types of economic activities. The strength of attachment to rural areas by migrants was not only manifested through these practices but also through a desire to return to the village in the future. People were in these towns for the money they earned and planned to leave upon retirement and wished to be buried in their rural areas (villages) of origin. For them, life in town was temporary and the village was their actual home.

Leith-Ross' (1937:247) observations (though explicitly about Port Harcourt) underlining the essence of the rural – urban interconnections in cities, are instructive:

Port Harcourt is not, as might be expected, a melting pot where races and speeches, customs and character will fuse and mingle and out of which a new and stable people will emerge, but rather a railway platform with people coming and going, each family part holding closely together, contemptuous and suspicious of the others, and where nothing of importance to the real life of the family is allowed to happen. No one takes root in Port Harcourt, no one visualizes his future in Port Harcourt, no one hope to die in Port Harcourt. Men come to make money and have no thought of settling there for good. If they build houses it is only to save rent and to make more money by letting out rooms. The house of their ambition will be built in their own home town, within full view of their envious relations.

These traditional patterns of rural – urban linkages and interconnections have continued to be a deeply rooted facet of urban life and culture in both Enugu and Port Harcourt cities.

c. Urban Ethnicity: The Indigene – Settler Model

One of the most pervasive consequences of urbanisation in Enugu and Port Harcourt is the divisive “indigene – settler” politics in inter-ethnic relations, which has of recent hardened into a theory of ethnic exclusion and exclusiveness. The “indigene/settler dichotomy” in Nigeria is within the realm of citizenship, and is characterized by contradictions between indigeneity and citizenship in the constitutions (Nnoli, 2003)¹⁶ and is a nation-wide phenomenon. Indeed, this has been a domain of permanent contestation and conflicts, as “indigenes” seek the exclusion of those categorised as “settlers”, while those being excluded on the grounds of “settlement” resist it on claims of long residency and/or citizenship of the Nigerian State (Danfulani, nd; Egwu, 2005:12). In part, this shows most Nigerians see ethnicity as a ‘zero-sum game’, where benefit to one group equals harm to the other(s). However, this trend, a country-wide phenomenon, has acquired vast acceptability in the country.

Research has shown that in Enugu, ethnic relations have been remarkably harmonious and ‘peaceful’:

¹⁶ For instance, Section 147 of the 1999 Constitution, among other provisions governing the appointment of Ministers, states thus: “Provided that in giving effect to the provisions aforesaid, the President shall appoint at least one Minister from each state, who shall be an indigene of such a State.” However, Section 25.1(a) clearly defines a citizen of Nigeria as “every person born in Nigeria on or before the date of independence, either of whose parents or any of whose grand parents belongs or belonged to any community *indigenous* to Nigeria.” See FRN (1999).

With the end of the civil war, one would have expected that the relations between the Igbo in Enugu city and the other groups who were on the “Federal side” during the war would be anything but good. To the contrary, the reverse was the case: the city has witnessed a history of enduring inter-ethnic relations among the many diverse ethno-cultural groups in the city (Odoemene, 2008b:9).

This does not, however, mean that there were no ethnic conflicts in the city; it rather points to the fact that those conflicts were carefully transformed to have productive ends for the overall benefit of the city and its inhabitants. This achievement has not been without enormous challenges for the people, indigenes and settlers alike.

Though there were no cases of violent conflicts among ethnic groups in the city, especially between the indigenes and settlers (or any sub-group of it) apart from the civil war period, this is not to suggest that there were no moments of upset among the groups in the city. Indeed, ethnic stereotypes remained very strong while provocations were easily stirred up among the groups by derogatory stereotypes and mindsets about one another. Similarly, Tense and anxious moments among the various groups in the city, particularly between the Igbo hosts and the Hausa and Fulani migrants, always occurred in times of violent ethnic conflicts in the northern parts (Hausa and Fulani homelands), which often involved and adversely affected the Igbo, arguably the largest migrant ethnic group in most of the north. Alhaji Haruna Sule (2005: PC) reveals that in times of such violence in the north, settlers of northern extraction in Enugu did not feel relaxed, while some run away from the city for fear of what Shuaibu Usman (2005: PC) terms “uncertainties and usual ‘blanket categorisations’”: “In the event of any reprisals here in Enugu, that distinction of ‘this is Hausa’ or ‘that is Fulani’ or ‘this person is Igala’ would not be there”.

The latter’s observations and fears are genuine. Since the late 1990s, a new trend – “reprisal killings” – was introduced into the ethnic relations lexicon by the Igbo in many of the southeastern towns. This was in reaction to ethno-religious motivated killings in the north. This has, however, never taken place in Enugu notwithstanding the high propensity for such reactions. Despite these challenges of interrelations that confronted indigenes and settlers in the city, they learnt to, and did coexist and cooperate in many spheres of endeavour. This is not to say that inter-ethnic conflicts did not exist in Enugu. The point to note here, however, is that the residents went out of their ways in order to maintain peaceful coexistence among themselves, despite all conflicts, tensions and provocations.

In contradistinction, the indigene – settler phenomenon in Port Harcourt, however, developed into ‘xenophobic’ irritation and intolerance with hydra-headed consequences. This was so mainly because of the criminal neglect, cruel exploitation and environmental degradation that the Niger Delta region faced within the Nigerian project. In other words, the activism which the youths of the delta region pursued included the fight for resource control and the ‘sacking’ of all persons who are not from the Niger Delta from Port Harcourt. (This issue is discussed in *d* and *e* under). These have largely been focus on the State and *petrobusinesses* within Port Harcourt environs. Thus, unlike the case of Enugu, Port Harcourt, with time, became unreceptive to migrants and non-indigenes within its domain.

d. Environmental Degradation and Devastation

Unlike Enugu that has undergone years of ‘healing’ from environmental activities in the area owing to mine activities, Port Harcourt is still grappling with the devastating industrial activities and their consequences. Decades after the first gush of oil in the creek-side village of Oloibiri, 80 kilometers west of Port Harcourt city, was made (1956), *petrobusinesses* have transformed this remote wetland into industrial wilderness. Leaks from some 7,200 kilometers of pipelines and wells, the building of roads and canals, decades of oil spills from 159 oil fields and 275 flow stations and acid rain from un-abating gas flares visible day and night from miles away (O’neill, 2007), have also damaged the ecosystem. So severe has this devastation been that a 2006 UN report warns: “[T]he degree and rate of degradation are pushing the delta towards ecological disaster” (Ohiagbuchi, 2007:9). Thus, the Niger Delta has been subverted by the very thing that gave it promise – oil. A Chief from Oloibiri was reported as saying: “If we had never seen oil, we would have been better off” – a stark indictment on the government and *petrobusinesses* that have been plundering and exploiting the region for decades (O’neill, 2007). The cruelest twist is that half a century of oil extraction in the delta has failed to make the lives of the people better. Instead, they are poorer still, and more hopeless.

Due to neglect, social hopelessness and poverty, people started drifting to the outskirts of Port Harcourt to make a living, setting up more shanty neighbourhoods and slums, especially along the river banks. The once adorable city was worse for it. Gradually, the famed Garden City degenerated into a ‘Garbage City’, and its marvelous flowers proved no better than wreaths (Odoemene, 2011). O’neill (2007:2) further observes thus:

Dense, garbage-heaped slums stretch for miles. Choking black smoke from an open-air slaughterhouse rolls over housetops. Streets are cratered with potholes and ruts. Vicious gangs roam school grounds.

Peddlers and beggars rush up to vehicles stalled in gas lines. This is Port Harcourt, Nigeria's oil hub,...smack-dab in the middle of oil reserves bigger than the United States' and Mexico's combined. Port Harcourt should gleam; instead, it rots.

Urban growth and development have recently also resulted in problems of urban congestion or over crowding, housing deficiencies, poor environmental sanitation and waste disposal, inadequate drainage systems and flood protection (sometimes causing urban flooding), massive youth unemployment, crimes and other social vices which have come to characterise Nigeria's large urban centres, including Enugu and Port Harcourt cities (Abam *et al.*, 2000). Unlike the serene atmosphere in Enugu, however, chaos and noise pollution has been a relative problem in Port Harcourt city. Similarly, Port Harcourt, which used to be “Green” has lost its ‘greenness’, while Enugu, formerly reputed for such green-unfriendly activities, is at present going green.

e. Over Population and Traffic Congestion

Typical of most other cities of post-colonial Nigeria, both Enugu and Port Harcourt were quite over populated. As have equally been the case in several other post-colonial African urban social spaces, continuous over population led to the emergence of informal settlements in the cities (Odoemene, 2011; 2008b). Especially notorious were those in Port Harcourt, popularly known as “Waterfronts.” About forty-seven such settlements existed all around Port Harcourt until about 2009 when the government demolished a good number of them (Odoemene, 2011; Obed, 2010; MLCN, 2009). Enugu’s informal settlements came in the form of segregated neighbourhoods which housed most people of northern extraction in the city. They went by such names as *Garki* (at Awkunanaw and Emene), *Ama Awusa* (at Asata), and Hausa Quarters (at “9th Mile Corner) (Odoemene, 2008b). Due to the over populations, there were severe traffic congestions in the cities (UN-HABITAT, 2009; Odoemene, 2008b), especially during specific periods that were designated as “rush hours.” These have included periods of movement of populations to or return from work, as well as those for students. Due to the structuring of these cities, traffic congestions occurred particularly on certain specific roads, while their occurrences were largely predictable, thus somewhat manageable.

f. High Unemployment Rate and Urban Criminality

Having left the rural centres for city life, most migrants also necessarily acquitted themselves of their traditional rural employments, such as fishing, farming and crafts-making.

And since work in the urban areas often required some measure of skills acquisition, most of these migrants became largely unemployable in their new settings (Odoemene, 2008b). Again, due to the pull factors of such urban social spaces as Enugu and Port Harcourt, many skilled youth were naturally drawn to them, a good number of whom were not employed due to limited job opportunities. Thus, with these situations on ground, the two cities began to harbor an increasing number of unemployed youth, many of whom roamed the streets looking for jobs. Another very important consequence of these was the growing criminality and insecurity witnessed in both cities (Odoemene, 2011; 2008b). Such acts of criminality have included different acts of robbery and armed robbery (both in private homes and establishments, as well as in banks and other public domains), militancy, kidnappings for ransoms, violent youth street cultures (which included the formation of different criminal gangs) and high levels of prostitution (still very much considered a criminal offence in Nigeria) (Odoemene, 2011; 2008b). Indeed, the correlation between youth unemployment and rise in criminality is well documented, and the case is amply exemplified in our areas of study. Furthermore, on a balance of probability, it was discovered that Port Harcourt was reasonably more prone to such criminal acts than Enugu (cf. Odoemene, 2011; 2008b).

Conclusion

Unlike Port Harcourt city, Enugu is typically a ‘colonial construction’, and its history as a human community is entirely a history of migrations with diverse trends, and not unconnected with the exploitation of coal deposits in the area almost a century ago. In contrast, but highly related, Port Harcourt grew out of farming and fishing communities (where agriculture had, in the past, been the major occupation of the inhabitants) due to the exigencies of the Enugu coal mining activities. But it expanded very rapidly as a result of the exploitation of crude oil found in the area less than a century ago – a phenomenon which also benefited Enugu, though in a lesser proportion. Three establishments – the coal industry (in Enugu), the seaport activities (in Port Harcourt) and the railway (in both) – all propelled by global (colonial) economy, were remarkable in laying the foundation for the economic take-off of both cities. Together with other socio-economic activities they ‘caused into being’, they stimulated a vibrant socio-economic life in the area, attracting waves of migrations of diverse peoples and cultures into the new towns. These resulted in tremendous changes not only in the relative locational importance of the new towns, but also in their internal characteristics and sociology. Indeed, the story of these two cities can never be told without the mention of the enormous contributions of these establishments and their diverse workers. They engendered

growth and development, transforming Enugu and Port Harcourt from a 'labour settlement' and network of rural farming communities respectively into cosmopolitan cities.

Indeed, the growth of the cities was truly phenomenal: as at 1931 there were no settlements around the defunct Eastern Region with a population exceeding 20,000; but by 1952, each of Eastern Nigeria's four major cities, prominent among them Enugu and Port Harcourt, possessed a total urban population well in excess of 50,000 (Wolpe, 1974:26). Additionally, Coleman (1958:75-76) notes that between 1921 and 1952, Eastern Nigeria's urban growth rate of 68% far surpassed that of the country's other regions. Arguably, Enugu and Port Harcourt were primarily responsible for this statistics. Their expansion in terms of size was equally and characteristically exceptional, 'eating up' adjoining rural farming communities and settlements in their respective areas of influence. These – growth, urbanisation and development – have however, come with some reasonable price for the two cities.

Due to these trends, Enugu and Port Harcourt currently harbour undeniable risks for violence and dislocation, but also have the potential of transforming these to create new and truly civilizing arrangements that could result in urban flourishing. Indeed, the social pendulums in the cities have the potentials of swinging to any one of these options. But the cities also possess the inclination of harbouring possibilities of both. The eventual course would, however, be largely dependent on the approach to their different socio-political problems. For Enugu, which still faces major challenges in terms of ethnic relations, despite the gains of productive inter-ethnic relations, potential complications could emanate from different fronts. One main area of concern is the spate of violent ethno-religious conflicts in Nigeria, which must be carefully stemmed. Already, violent reactions to killings of the Igbo in any part of the country have introduced another dangerous dimension – "reprisal killings" – to the already volatile inter-ethnic situation in the country. Though Enugu city has not so far reacted in such a manner, its patience should not be tried any further, especially as it is very strategic to both the Igbo and ethnic relations in Igboland. These intermittent violent conflicts in which Enugu indigenes' 'relations' get killed, if not stemmed, could compromise the city's tradition of ethnic tolerance and good will.

In the case of Port Harcourt, continued neglect, alienation and the suppression of its people by either the government or *petrobusinesses*, or both as has been the case for a while, would be a recipe for disaster, and could make the 'prophesy' of Rowell *et al* (2005) of the Niger Delta developing into "the Next Gulf" realisable. On the other hand, an honest appraisal of the crisis and the sincerity of the State in dealing with them, or what Ibeanu (2000) describes as "oiling the friction", could turn the city away from its destructive drift. It is only then that the potentials of the city to truly create new arrangements and human organizations through

which a viable chance for citizens to pursue their aspirations could be effectively realised. The failure to tow this line portends disaster for the city, and its implications would be grave, especially as its significance both for the Niger Delta region and Nigeria is prominent. These hard facts must have to be borne in mind, constantly and consciously too.

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