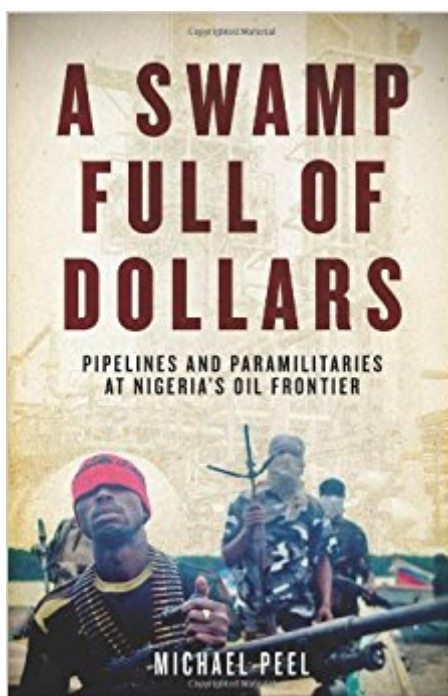


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A Swamp Full Of Dollars: Pipelines And Paramilitaries At Nigeria's Oil Frontier



Synopsis

The largest U.S. trading partner in sub-Saharan Africa, petroleum-rich Nigeria exports half its daily oil production to the United States. Like many African nations with natural resources coveted by the world's superpowers, the country has been shaped by foreign investment and intervention, conflicts among hundreds of ethnic and religious groups, and greed. Polio has boomed along with petroleum, small villages face off with giant oil companies, and scooter drivers run their own ministates. The oil-rich Niger Delta region at the heart of it all is a trouble spot as hot as the local pepper soup. Blending vivid reportage, history, and investigative journalism, in *A Swamp Full of Dollars* journalist Michael Peel tells the story of this extraordinary country, which grows ever more wild and lawless by the day as its refined petroleum pumps through our cities. Through a host of colorful characters--from the Area Boy gangsters of Lagos to a corrupt state governor who stashed money in his London penthouse, from the militants in their swamp forest hideouts to oil company executives--Peel makes the connection between Western energy consumption and the breakdown of the Nigerian state, where the corruption of the haves is matched only by the determination and ingenuity of the have-nots. What has happened to Nigeria is a stark warning to the United States and other economic powers as they grow increasingly frantic in their search for new oil sources: unbridled plunder eventually rebounds on those who have done the taking. *A Swamp Full of Dollars*--shortlisted for the Guardian First Book Award--shows that if the Arab world is the precarious eastern battle line in an intensifying world war for crude, then Nigeria has become the tumultuous western front.

Book Information

Hardcover: 256 pages

Publisher: Chicago Review Press (July 1, 2010)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1569762864

ISBN-13: 978-1569762868

Product Dimensions: 5.5 x 0.8 x 8.5 inches

Shipping Weight: 14.4 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.3 out of 5 stars 4 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #1,565,934 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #100 in [Books > History > Africa > Nigeria](#) #316 in [Books > History > Africa > Central Africa](#) #338 in [Books > History > Africa > West Africa](#)

Customer Reviews

"In this long-awaited book, Peel has told the history of Nigeria and oil in a way that makes this important subject accessible to all. In doing so, he has done a service to everyone who is interested in development and in Africa." — Joseph E. Stiglitz, Nobel Laureate, economics
"A dynamic exploration of the geopolitics of oil that link Nigeria with its two biggest customers, Great Britain and the United States, revealing the corruption and poverty—and vitality—that permeate that oil-rich country." — Kirkus Reviews
"A fascinating insight into Africa's wild west." — Giles Foden, author, *The Last King of Scotland*

The former West Africa correspondent for the Financial Times, Michael Peel is now the publication's legal correspondent. He has contributed articles on the region to a wide variety of publications, including the New Republic, the Christian Science Monitor, and the London Review of Books.

Having stayed in Nigeria for a long time, I can relate with the book. And I agree, Nigeria has the potential to break the shackles and become a nation all its citizens will be proud of.

The author was all over the place.

Peel does an excellent job of trying to capture the mess that is today's Nigeria. The history, the corruption, the creativity. Such a wealth of possibilities in the 60's sidelined by so many built-in negatives that worked against its becoming the Star of Africa. I lived there from 64-66 and visited in '72. My only complaint against the book is its small type. I don't need glasses for reading, but this book was a challenge at times.

The plunder by large oil companies in petroleum-rich Nigeria is a warning to the U.S., which receives the lion's share of Nigeria's oil exports. Michael Peel tells a fascinating story of what he discovered when traveling through Nigeria as an investigative reporter. Gangsters, corrupt officials, militias, greedy corporations, political, social, and economic chaos—and oil spills far larger than the BP disaster that wreaked havoc in America. As U.S. citizens we should know as much about this crisis as our domestic spill—this book will open your eyes!

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