

THE DYNAMICS OF CELLULOID ON THE ROAD TO INDEPENDENCE: UNILEVER AND SHELL IN NIGERIA

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CONTENTS

<i>Acknowledgements</i>	3
<i>Introduction</i>	4
Two Kinds of Oil	5
Researching Industrial Film	7
Changing the Frame	9
 <i>Chapter 1- Unilever and the United Africa Company</i>	 13
Filming Unilever	14
Cinema Use	19
Harvesting Oil	22
Modern Extracting	25
Planting History	28
Work and the Africanisation process	31
Trading for Nostalgia	33
Advertisements	36
Versions and Outlets	42
Government and Industrial Communications	43
 <i>Chapter 2- Royal Dutch Shell</i>	 48
The Search for Oil and The Rise of Changes	49
Communicating Oil and the Company	53
The Shell Film Unit	56
Creating an International Audience	60
The Shell Film Unit in Nigeria	64
Synoptic Views	69
Moving Oil	74
Highlife, Calypso, and Local Voices	80
Global Views	84
 <i>Chapter 3 - Framing Nation and Enterprises</i>	 89
Building Nigeria	89
Framing of a Nation	98
 <i>Conclusion</i>	 106
<i>Filmography</i>	111
<i>Notes</i>	116
<i>Bibliography</i>	138

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INTRODUCTION

“A [sponsored] film about Nigeria, or any other African state for that matter, is front-page news in the national dailies circulating there! It wins immense prestige for the sponsor, for the reader believes in his goodwill without ever having seen the film, or, until then, heard of it. There is proof enough for him in the mere fact that he is reported as having made a film about *us*.”¹

This very enthusiastic statement from a British *Film User* correspondent in 1971 probably should not be taken at face value. It does however illustrate a few things about the use in Nigeria of sponsored or, as they will be called in this research, industrial film, meaning films commissioned by corporations and business associations that often follow a documentary format while serving as a promotion for a product, process, or company.² The statement points to a distinction, decades long, that still plays an important role in Nigeria: that of race and nation. This distinction can be seen within the colonial films made in the early twentieth century, but it continued through the industrial films of later date, creating tension within their projected corporate identity. The statement also shows that industrial film could, according to this British correspondent, receive positive attention in Nigeria. It was seen as worthwhile to note in a British film journal that Nigerians and the Nigerian newspapers would be impressed when a company tried to incorporate a view of their country, creating an instant reliable image. This comment paints a rather simple interpretation of Nigerians and the Nigerian film industry, seemingly unfamiliar with sponsored and industrial film and impressed with any attention. As we shall see, this was hardly the case as industrial films already had been a quite familiar sight. Though industrial films would indeed be made again in Nigeria by international companies in 1971, once the three-year long Biafran War concluded and reconstruction could begin, it was however not at the rate of earlier times. Especially from the late nineteen fifties onwards, at about the time of Nigerian independence, a most significant time

in Nigerian history, many industrial films were made by international companies. They were seen as a powerful deployment of media in a difficult transitional period. Thus in 1962 the new film from Unilever's subsidiary United Africa Company (UAC), showing the contributions made by the company to Nigeria, was announced in a daily Nigerian newspaper.³ More than any sign of goodwill, what seemed more newsworthy was the fact that many prominent guests from government had attended this especially arranged screening. Given its crucial role, I will focus on this period.

TWO KINDS OF OIL

After the Second World War the African nationalist movement grew in force and the prospect of independence concerned foreign companies situated in West Africa. Modern-day Nigeria originated from British colonial rule and the merger of the British Southern and Northern Nigerian protectorates in 1914. The decolonisation process gained momentum in Nigeria after Britain granted self-government to the Western and Eastern regions in August 1957, followed by the Northern region in March 1959. After the general election in December 1959, the regions obtained independence within a united federal Nigeria on 1 October 1960. Though now independent from its coloniser, multinational corporations, mostly connected to Britain, still encompassed at that time the most important sectors of the national economy, such as petroleum, agriculture, mining, banking, construction, and transport. In their public relations and advertising output, companies tried to combine their international identity with that of a national Nigerian identity, seeking to justify their presence in the changing country. Film was an important medium to use to get this message across. Corporations carefully tried to control visual representations, often foregrounding positive social change and their important investments to the country.

There has been a growing interest in how Western business behaved before and during decolonisation in Africa and Asia, including older business histories on

Unilever/UAC and Royal Dutch Shell in Nigeria.⁴ However with some exception these studies hardly take into account the media surrounding these companies, especially neglecting the use of film.⁵ While commercial film is a well-established field of academic research and education, an important category of films has largely been overlooked as an object of study in business history and media studies alike, because they were perceived to be of little artistic interest and often did not use established theatrical distribution patterns. Since the introduction of cinema, however, tens of thousands of scientific, educational, and industrial films have been produced and viewed by hundreds of millions of people all over the world, usually for free. These often ephemeral films were used by corporations, governments, organisations and institutions for purposes of education, research and promotion, and were shown in schools, universities, societies, factories, festivals, and fairs.⁶ In recent years industrial films and non-theatrical cinema have been internationally acknowledged as an important new area of research, as they offer a wealth of subjects and issues still to be developed.⁷ A significant body of work that has come out of this has been on the use of film by the British government as part of their colonial rule (*Empire and Film* and *Film and the End of Empire*, 2011).⁸ This project will combine and build on the studies of business history in the (post)colonial period as well as those concerning governmental film in West Africa, making it possible to research more clearly the close relationship between the Nigerian government, British businesses and the British government during its imperial sunset.

This research will look at the films from two companies both dealing with oil, one petroleum, Royal Dutch Shell, the other vegetable, Unilever's subsidiary UAC, just before and after the Nigerian independence. Concentrating on films (that also deal with products other than oil) from this period enables us to consider a set of representations that reflect the ideas of the company on a local and international scale as films were used to promote their reputation and legitimise their work. Modernity, scientific innovation, and technology were

often used in terms of visual aesthetics, shaping a collective imagination of the industry, the country in which it resided and the people who were its employees. By researching these films we can develop a better understanding of branding strategies, especially within a (post) colonial setting, give new insights into global and local market perspectives, create a new view on the transnational dynamics of a modern media, and deepen our awareness of non-fiction industrial film. As films communicate a brand identity and its accompanying values to consumers and audiences, researching their multiple forms and uses from a historical and cross-cultural perspective, as well as from a corporate viewpoint, deepens our understanding of the important international, national and local circulation and influence of multimedia practices.

RESEARCHING INDUSTRIAL FILM

Many international companies, especially in the 1950s and the 1960s, used film to contribute to their brand image by showing the company's history, manufacturing processes and products, or by explaining more general scientific processes. It was not always necessary to push a specific product or service related to the company directly as long as a positive image was attached to the brand name. Companies like General Electric, Imperial Chemical Industries, and Royal Dutch Shell, made hundreds of films, printed film catalogues and set up film libraries all over the world where their films could be rented for free. Films could be shown before a feature in the cinema, but these kinds of films were shown more often in non-theatrical settings. Industrial films could reach millions of viewers and function as a blend of advertising, education, public relations, industrial or training film. Exhibiting such films was not so easily done in Nigeria in the late 1950s, where viewing equipment was not readily available, film distribution had to cover many miles to reach less populated areas, language barriers existed, and decolonisation was in progress. However, as Nigerian markets grew and opportunities for bigger market share emerged, as

independence approached, several international companies ventured producing films in Nigeria, such as Royal Dutch Shell, BP, Unilever, and the Imperial Tobacco Company.

As noted by Thomas Elsaesser, when researching and interpreting industrial and other kinds of utility films (such as educational and scientific films), three A's come into play. There is the *Auftraggeber* or commissioner that ordered the production of the film, the *Anlass* or the occasion for which the film was made, and the *Adressat* or the audience and the use for which it was destined.⁹ Industrial films cannot be separated from the conditions of their production and the context in which they were used. They have to be understood in terms of their purpose, which might even change according to whom and where they were shown. These films were always commissioned for specific reasons and, in order to understand their function, these must be found. Contrary to feature films, industrial films only reveal their main function (e.g. education or promotion) through their use within a context (e.g. classroom or fair). Often industrial films were changed, shortened, made longer, or made with a different voiceover and music according to the different exhibition purposes. Industry sponsored films are distributed through many different exhibition types and methods while they are linked with other industry produced media to carry their corporate message further. It is important to know if a film was meant for internal or external distribution, but also if it was meant for general distribution or for specific target groups, like the World Health Organization, the United Nations, embassies, or government departments from various countries. As Vinzenz Hediger and Patrick Vonderau argue, film (as well as other media) also contributes to the establishment and governance of industrial organisations in three areas - the three R's. Industrial film provides a *record* and can act as a corporation's institutional memory, for instance, when recording events or production processes; it can use *rhetoric* for an argument, often stimulating cooperation by projecting a corporate identity meant for inside or outside consumption; and

it can use *rationalisation* for improving performance, for instance, for material testing, instructions for new modes of production, the handling of machines, or advertisements that are meant to improve sales and thus enhance productivity.¹⁰

Unfortunately these A's and R's are not always easy to identify or track down, sometimes the film has survived but no other information can be found, as no advertisements were made (as they were not shown in regular cinemas) and no reviews were written. Fortunately, some traces of information concerning the production and exhibition context can be found buried deep within company files, such as minutes, memos, or balance sheets. The access and survival of archive materials is therefore necessary to partly reconstruct their meaning and use at least. For this research finding Dutch related archive materials was made more difficult as no access was granted to the Dutch company archives of both Unilever and Royal Dutch Shell. Thus though some of the Nigerian films made by the British side of these Anglo/Dutch companies were released in the Netherlands (in Dutch language versions), hardly anything is known about their distribution or reception in the Netherlands or, besides Nigeria and Britain, in other countries. As access was however granted by the British side of the company archives and additional information on the production, distribution and reception of these films could be found in various British libraries and film archives (though still scarce), this research will mainly focus on the British and Nigerian connection, and will barely involve the perspective from other countries.

CHANGING THE FRAME

Shell and Unilever have been chosen for this research as they both made extensive use of films as an important tool in their publicity and in their corporate identity, not only on a local level in Nigeria (and elsewhere), but also on an international one, thereby addressing different audiences.¹¹ Many of their films are still available for research. In 1999 Shell Britain donated over three hundred film titles to the BFI, though this did not comprise their entire catalogue as their

locally produced films are often missing. Unilever in the Netherlands donated their film collection to the EYE Film Institute, while their UK division is digitising several titles themselves. Until this point, hardly any archival research has been done into the Shell and Unilever films, making screenings a laborious undertaking, as sometimes the films' content was unclear beforehand. Several of these Shell and Unilever films are also located in the Netherlands Institute for Sound and Vision, especially in the collections that had educational purposes.

The focus on Nigeria was chosen mainly for two reasons. First, independence from colonial rule occurred at a time when industrial films were made and units were set up for the first time in this country. Just prior to independence, expatriate companies started film production when they were also changing such operations as commercial strategies, staffing policy, or local and global public relations and advertisement strategies. Restructuring their corporate image was important if they wanted to remain in Nigeria after independence. Secondly, the specific intersection of the two companies to the history and future of Nigeria are important here. Nigeria in 1960, still an agricultural country, was on the brink of rapid industrialisation. During this time two kinds of oil were crucial for the country, one old and almost discarded, the other new and full of promise. In Nigerian agriculture palm oil had played a historically important role as a source of food and income. The export trade in palm produce had developed towards the end of the nineteenth century, when European industry began to use it as substitute for animal fat in the manufacture of soap and margarine. The other kind of oil, petroleum, was avidly sought after in the early 1900s but was only found in Nigeria in large quantities in 1956. Petroleum oil would quickly change the country's development thereafter. Only in recent years has palm oil returned as an important product for Nigeria after large-scale production was stimulated by the World Bank among others. However like petroleum oil, the modern production of palm oil has involved the destruction of nature and been met with severe criticism.¹² The historical development of Nigeria and the connection

to these companies still plays an important role to the international corporate image of these companies. Possible additional research on the Nigerian films and advertising made by Unilever and, even more so, Shell from the mid 1960s to the 1980s would most likely further uncover new and strong connections, frictions, interactions, conflicts, and cooperations in relation to important political, economical, social and environmental issues; some of them already visible in these first films during independence.

This monograph consists of three chapters, each exploring a specific time frame. The first chapter deals with the first films made by the Unilever's UAC in the years prior to the independence though connections to films made by Unilever from earlier times will be made as well. Chapter two focuses on the first films made by Shell in Nigeria that were distributed shortly after independence. The last chapter looks at both post-independence UAC and Shell film productions. By researching industrial films and advertisements as well as important national changes that accompanied and modified the economic, political and social situation around the time of independence, exchanges emerged that connected the colonial past with the post-colonial future. Expatriate companies clearly copied distribution and exhibition patterns that were first practised by the colonial government, targeting both African audiences for education as well as higher level audiences (such as ministers, business delegates or teachers), while also attending to an international audience. Post-independence industries continued to use, like the earlier colonial government, documentary style films as a tool in international and local development. These chapters show the propagation of the modernisation thesis that non-Western societies could only develop by replicating the features of Western civilisation, while African cultures were often portrayed as inferior, primitive or backward. This idea is observable in colonial and industrial films before 1960 too, but after independence the industrial films were even more clearly influenced by the modernisation theory that Western economists pushed onto Nigeria from the late 1950s onwards. According to this theory all

societies could be laid out at different points on the same evolutionary scale with the Western world at the top.¹³ Underdevelopment was not seen as a result of exploitation, but as a condition that all societies had to pass through on their way to modernity.¹⁴ The decolonisation process was made a part of the modernisation process, therefore, undermining anti-imperialist arguments about the continuation of exploitation in a neo-colonial form.

The films produced in Nigeria by these two companies were meant not only for a local Nigerian audience, but were distributed internationally as well, addressing and promoting both the local and global corporate image. This provides insights into the use of international industry sponsored films within a local colonial setting, the various strategies and methods of using film in a changing country, the use of public relations through different media, as well as the important links between these forms of media and advertising. As these two Anglo-Dutch companies also advertised their products and services in newspapers and magazines concurrently, other media outlets than film will also be looked at.

This research shows that British and Dutch companies were much more than passive observers during the decolonisation process. As indigenous nationalist movements grew, expatriate companies sought ways to represent their interests to local Nigerian audiences as well as the global market, taking part in a complicated process of adaptation, propelling a positive image of modernisation based upon Western models of development and progress. This research underlines the dynamics and significance of researching industrial films. While serving as an advertisement for a product, process, or company, industrial films transmitted important technical and social discourses. This, then, opens up perspectives on the complex international, national and local construction of a corporate image, the dynamics of differentiated marketing communications, the cultural, social, economical and political dimensions of media forms, especially in the transition to a post-colonial setting, while at the same time creating important new insights into the history and influence of film.

CHAPTER 1 - UNILEVER AND THE UNITED AFRICA COMPANY

In 1930 the British soap making company Lever Brothers merged with Dutch Margarine Union to form Unilever, which remains until today one of the world's largest multi-national consumer goods company. At the time of its formation, Unilever's most important subsidiary was the United Africa Company (UAC) which concentrated on West African trade. Unilever sold its merchandise - from food products to clothing, from bicycles to building materials - in West Africa through UAC, and the subsidiary ensured that Unilever (as well as other traders) would get supplies of raw materials such as palm oil, cocoa, or groundnuts. Palm oil was a major raw material for both margarine and soap, and so supplies from the British West Africa (where Lever Brothers was already trading in the 1910s) were an important export product for Unilever. It was only after the Second World War that UAC also started to produce merchandise in West Africa. Nigeria, the most populous country in Africa, formed a very important import and export market for UAC. The company continued as a subsidiary of Unilever, with a minimum control, until 1987 when it was absorbed by its parent.¹

With a boycott by African consumers in 1947 over the high prices of imported goods and the Accra riots of 1948 in Ghana, which started as a peaceful protest but deteriorated into the plundering of European and Asian owned stores followed by several deaths, firms were forced to review their representative and internal policies for West Africa.² In their effort to make the public more aware of their many positive contributions for West Africa, international companies used advertising to promote such themes of industrialisation, sponsorship, training, and the emergence of a new middle class.³ For UAC the adjustment of their public relations strategy was important: UAC was the largest company in the West African consumer market and their stores had been especially targeted during the riots.⁴ UAC was not alone in using publicity in West African newspapers and magazines, but compared to other international companies, it employed positive

themes more frequently and earlier and they used film from 1956 on.

FILMING UNILEVER

In the Netherlands, both Van den Bergh and Jurgen, who later would form the Dutch Margarine Union, made several films early on when they were still competitors. These ranged from workers leaving the Van den Bergh's factory (1903) to at least two films showing the production of margarine in the 1910s, while short animated advertisements were made in the 1920s.⁵ The Lever Brothers, however, had an earlier and stronger interest in film. There were films used to promote Lever Brothers' soap already in 1896. Francois-Henri Lavanchy-Clark, the Swiss representative for the Sunlight brand of soap, distributed and shot several films for the Lumière brothers. *Washing Day* (1896) was a single shot film of around thirty seconds, showing several women washing their clothes in a washtub, with two cases of Sunlight soap conveniently facing the camera.⁶ This might be very well one of the first product placement films in history.⁷

Film was also used as a registration device by Lever. According to the Lever Brothers' house magazine, teachers were shown images of workers leaving the factory, girls leaving the Gladstone theatre, and the teachers themselves leaving the Port Sunlight schools, during an 1897 evening entertainment.⁸ It took until 1919 before a film was made on the process of soap making and its worldwide application, *Port Sunlight*. The film also included the community around Port Sunlight, the model village constructed by Lever Brothers near Liverpool for Sunlight soap factory workers.⁹ In the 1920s Lever Brothers continued its interest in film, producing several actualities related to Port Sunlight happenings and celebrations, featuring such processions and events as founder's day or Armistice Day. Films of a different kind were made by newsreel and topical cameraman Frederick Wilson in 1924, who produced five documentaries on Nigeria.¹⁰ A variety of subjects such as tin mining, palm oil, rubber, the railway, the Niger river, and Nigerian customs were dealt with, and were thus directly related to

dealings and operating functions of the Niger Company (bought by William Lever in 1920).¹¹ Films for advertising and publicity purposes were undertaken on a regular basis under Lintas, Unilever's advertising agency, a few years before the Second World War.¹²

Unilever's interest in documentary films, especially those designed to promote the brand name rather than a specific product, would not re-ignite until after the Second World War. In 1948 the Belgium film company Sofidoc produced the prestigious 50 minutes long *The Tree of Life* for Unilever.¹³ This black and white film provides an old-fashioned colonial and paternalistic overview of how Lord Leverhulme set up a palm oil mill in the Belgian Congo in 1911, showing the attendant benefits to the region in terms of health, housing and education since the natural resources were finally were put to good use by the British.¹⁴ Shortly after the production of *The Tree of Life*, the Unilever Film Section was set up in 1949 as part of their Information Division. The Film Section was a small administrative department in London's Watergate House with a small staff.¹⁵ Rather than producing its own films, the Film Section commissioned films from independent British production companies, usually Editorial Film Productions during the 1950s. Editorial Film supplied the cameraman, technicians, and scriptwriter. After two more films on the history of the company, other subjects were also undertaken, such as Eskimo life and their teeth, the harvesting of peas, and the importance of the forklift truck. From early on a blend of the three R's of *record*, *rhetoric* and *rationalisation* could be found easily in these films.

The first Unilever catalogue booklet was printed in 1954 and contained seven films and five Unilever Magazine films (each consisting of various individual subjects), usually 15-20 minutes long.¹⁶ The 16 or 35mm films could be rented for free for educational, industrial or household use (Figures 1.1-1.3).¹⁷ From the late 1950s production picked up and the films' subjects became more scientific as well. Films were made on how certain food or personal care products were made or explained general scientific or biological educational subjects.



Figures 1.1-1.3: From the late 1950s onwards more educational films were made by Unilever concerning scientific and biological subjects. *Your Skin*, dealing with the physiology of the skin, won in 1959 first prize at the Venice International Film Festival in the category of International Teaching Films (13-18 years). *Scientific Film Review*, Apr. 1960, 13; *Film User*, Dec. 1958, 550; Sept. 1959, 445.

For instance, in *Your Skin* (1959) the function of the skin was explained, while *Outline of Detergency* (1960) compared the qualities of hard and soft water, using animated diagrams to clarify the various reactions and functions. Some of these educational films never mentioned the Unilever brand name or showed Unilever products.

While the Unilever catalogue contained only twelve films in 1954, forty-two films could be rented ten years later.¹⁸ The majority of those had subjects of educational and technical interest. From the early 1960s onwards, more multiple language versions were made. Unfortunately not much is known about actual distribution and audience numbers. According to Unilever itself 70% of the bookings from the Unilever film library were for primary and secondary schools in the early 1960s, and the UK library had around 28.000 rentals a year with an estimated audience of 2.8 million. International rentals with copies on permanent loan to other organisations accounted for an additional two million viewers.(Figure 1.4).¹⁹

It was in the period of initial growth of the film catalogue that Unilever

New Home for Unilever Films

EFFICIENT and well equipped, Unilever Film Library copes smoothly with ever-increasing requests from borrowers, now running at more than 28,000 copies a year. During the twelve months ending May 1962 (the latest year for which figures are available) the audience reached was estimated at 2,893,000. This figure may be augmented by almost another two million when account is taken of the people who saw showings of copies deposited on permanent loan with organisations at home and overseas.

Of an initial print order of about 250, some half would be put into the library, 100 go to Unilever companies in Britain and abroad and the remainder be handed to the Central Office of Information and the British Council for foreign distribution. Foreign-language versions have been made of all Unilever films.

How does this large one-company library operate? In these photographs, starting with the sorting of bookings and concluding with the inspection of returned prints, it is seen at work.

2 The main booking section. From here confirmation forms are sent to borrowers and carbon copies to the dispatch department, which will send out the print at the appropriate time. Last year's most popular film was "Twilight Forest"; some 2,750 copies were sent out. Runners-up were "Surfboats of Accra" (over 2,500 copies) and "Your Skin" (2,238).



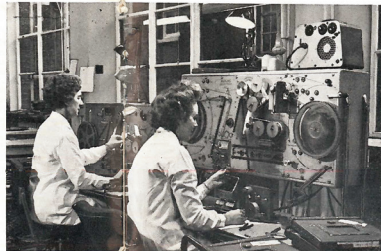
WHEN YOU BORROW A UNILEVER FILM

1 Is there a print available for the day the user wants it? Clerks examine register cards kept on every Unilever film to see if a booking can be accepted. Each of these cards bears part of the life-story of up to 50 prints (some films have three cards); bookings entered on them are marked Schools or Miscellaneous—over 70% are to schools.



3 In the foreground, films are being packed in the familiar Unilever transit cases, ready for dispatch. The staff of eight who work in this department handled over 28,000 prints during the twelve-month period ending May 1962.

4 When a print is returned to the library, it is checked for damage—usually by running it through one of these automatic inspect-O-Film machines. The model on the right runs at 450ft./sec.; the other, a later type, at 600ft./sec. The attachment on top of the nearer machine is for checking sound; when this is used the film is run at three times normal projection speed.



5 After every third or fourth booking, each print is examined by eye instead of automatically. This is so that a check can be kept on slow wear, such as scratching, which the machine operators may have missed. When there is substantial damage to more than a few frames, a reprint section is ordered and is spliced in by the library.



Figure 1.4: The article "When you Borrow a Unilever Film," gives a good insight in the some of the work done at the Unilever film library. *Film User*, Feb. 1963, 77.

made UAC's first film, *The Oil Rivers* (1956). Filming on several West African topics began in Nigeria and the Gold Coast in September 1955.²⁰ *The Oil Rivers*, Unilever's first colour film, deals with the harvesting of palm fruit and the production of palm oil in Nigeria. The film was quickly followed by two other films concerning Nigerian trade: *The Twilight Forest* on timber and *Traders in Leather* on hides and skins.²¹ All three films were made by the British film company Editorial Film Productions, which had worked for Unilever as well as for the Colonial Office.²² All technical personal came from the UK, with the same director, Sydney Latter (who would later work on several other UAC and Unilever films as well), and the same editor and producer. Each film cost each between £18,000 and £23,000, a large sum for non-theatrical subjects.²³

Film was used differently than straightforward advertisements of products and services. Print advertising aimed at African consumers was widespread after the Second World War. In a daily Nigerian newspaper such as *Daily Express* many international companies like KLM, Philips, Guinness, or Dunlop advertised with

images of happy and successful higher-class African men and women enjoying various products and services. Unilever presented brands like Pepsodent, Blue Band, Ovaltine, Omo, or Birds Eye frozen food.²⁴ The UAC films (as well as those from Shell) were usually not produced by advertising agencies, film production belonged to the company's Public Relations department.²⁵ While advertising is designed to sell a product or service through media exposure, public relations is more concerned with the creation and maintenance of a company's positive image and reputation within a society. According to UAC's public relations director D.H. Buckle, public relations is "a continuous effort [...] to promote the best possible understanding of its policy, activities and social attitudes among those outside who influence its development."²⁶ This kind of promotion could be done by producing press releases, booklets, exhibitions, company magazines, speeches, and films. Rather than requiring immediate results with advertising, long-term means and strategies were important for public relations. Especially during Nigeria's struggle for independence, the measured use of public relations was very important to direct the public carefully to better understand the company and its relation to the changing socio-political context, seeing the company as a good citizen playing an important role in economic and social development.²⁷

While the films were made first for local consumption, according to their opening credits, unfortunately information about audience reception in Nigeria is not known. Industrial film distribution in Nigeria was not easy. Commercial cinema catered in the 1950s and 1960s to mostly urban viewers in the big cities, showing American, Indian and British fiction films. However, in Nigeria commercial cinema was seen by mainstream Hausa society, and still is (especially in the North), as a lower-class and un-Islamic activity. A different form of film exhibition, which was socially legitimate, appreciated and used all over Nigeria at the time was mobile cinema.²⁸

CINEMA USE

Mobile cinema units were already used in Nigeria in the 1930s, but regularisation started when the British government created the Colonial Film Unit (CFU) as a pedagogical device for the colonial administration in 1939.²⁹ Between 1939 and 1950, the CFU had twelve production units working in eight territories in Africa. It produced more than 250 short films (with a total of 339 reels), and distributed 12,344 “show copies” throughout all the colonial territories.³⁰ Free film programs in Nigeria usually lasted between one and two hours and consisted of a series of short films, documentaries, newsreels and pedagogical dramas, intended to instruct and educate. Productions by the CFU could range from the production of cocoa by a Nigerian farmer and the positive effects of the cocoa co-operative society, to showing colonial troops in England participating in a victory parade, or the opening of the Nigerian legislative council. CFU films were made initially with the notion of African film “illiteracy,” thus using a slow pace, long sequences, no rapid transitions or camera tricks, as they assumed the uneducated and ‘primitive’ viewers would otherwise not understand.³¹ A commentator travelling with the cinema would translate the English script into different local dialects, allowing for the possibility (or risk) of an adjusted local version.³² Not all productions in the program were produced by the CFU; newsreels and films made by other governmental organisations were also used. To create more variety an entertaining short, such as a western or a Charlie Chaplin short, would be often added.³³ In 1949 the Nigerian Film Unit (NFU) grew out of the CFU, taking over its functions as a national unit, which in its turn was reorganised into regional units in 1954 as more Africans were brought into film production.³⁴

While over 2,5 million Nigerians were attending mobile cinema shows each year by 1946, according to Colonial Office reports this had grown to over 3,5 million by 1954.³⁵ Besides organising screenings in towns, villages, schools, centres and other institutions, NFU films were shown at special screenings for delegations and members of the House of Assembly or the Houses of

Representatives.³⁶ The NFU was, thus, very significant for further establishing the importance of film as a pedagogical and educational tool as well as letting Nigerians become familiar with the medium.³⁷ Films were also supplied for free to commercial cinemas in Nigeria, for which there existed forty-six in 1955. In 1955, besides mobile cinemas from the Information Service and the British Council, there was also one by “a commercial oil prospecting company,” most likely Shell/BP.³⁸

As mentioned above, according to the opening credits added for international distribution, UAC films were initially intended for screening in Africa.³⁹ Unfortunately not much is known about the distribution and exhibition of these films in Nigeria. A UAC mobile cinema system would only be established in 1960; until that time expenses were considered too high to send cinema vans to visit more remote villages and schools.⁴⁰ However, UAC probably did benefit from the familiarity of the non-theatrical presentation method used by the NFU. UAC public relation managers were equipped with 16mm projectors, enabling them to show films at staff clubs and to travel to a widespread audience.⁴¹ Each public relations office and trading branch, of which there were several around Nigeria, had a collection of films which could be loaned to schools. Film, film strips and related lectures were seen as very useful for giving information to schools about the company and its affairs as well as on economics, trade and other subjects that contributed to African education. A difference with the distribution in the UK was that Unilever films were shown to mostly primary and secondary schools there, in Nigeria they were also shown in universities.⁴² Politicians, traders, and teachers were seen as a key section of the community to win over, especially to make them realise “that our business is an integral part of the life of their constituency and that our Managers are available to give them an insight into the functioning of much of the economic life of their country.”⁴³ In the early 1960s there were official UAC film libraries in the north and south of Nigeria, in Lagos, Kano, Port Harcourt and Kaduna, while the UAC mobile film service

was in operation by then (Figure 1.5).⁴⁴ The films also appear to have been used by government, as the Eastern Nigeria Ministry of Information ordered several Unilever films to be screened by the governmental mobile units in 1961.⁴⁵

Both *The Oil Rivers* and *The Twilight Forest* were shown to Nigerian state commissioners in December 1956 and then went into general release in January 1957.⁴⁶ In March 1958 all three UAC

films were shown during a cocktail party in Lagos organised by UAC for all the members of the House of Representatives.⁴⁷ Commercial companies thus clearly followed the path created by the NFU, whereby films were used to connect to governmental officials. These screenings for officials would be progressively used by UAC and other companies in the years after Nigeria's independence.⁴⁸ Compared to Unilever's public relations in the UK, UAC in Nigeria used film on a more political level from the onset. To contact these groups, press releases, goodwill advertisements, staff magazines, and economic reviews also were used.⁴⁹

FILMS FOR EDUCATION ON FREE LOAN

Films are stimulating and powerful teaching aids bringing the world into the classroom. Over thirty 16mm. sound films, many in colour, are available on free loan from the U.A.C. Film Library. Some deal with modern developments in West Africa and in other parts of the world, reflecting the international nature of the Unilever Group of Companies. Others show the Group's interest in science, domestic science and hygiene.

A descriptive catalogue is now available containing assessments of each film by Professor John Lewis and Mrs. Helen Coppen, of the University of London Institute of Education, who also give suggestions on their use in the classroom. The catalogue will be sent free of charge on application to your nearest U.A.C. Film Library.

U.A.C. MOBILE FILM SERVICE

It may be possible in some areas for schools without projectors to be visited by the U.A.C. Mobile Film Service. Details are given in the catalogue.

U.A.C. FILM LIBRARY

NIGERIA	U.A.C. Film Library - The United Africa Company of Nigeria Ltd - Private Mail Bag 2216 - Lagos U.A.C. Film Library - P.O. Box 3 - Kano - Nigeria U.A.C. Film Library - P.O. Box 6 - Port Harcourt - Nigeria U.A.C. Film Library - P.O. Box 175 - Kaduna - Nigeria
GHANA	U.A.C. Film Library - The United Africa Company of Ghana Ltd - P.O. Box 1631 - Accra
SIERRA LEONE	U.A.C. Film Library - The United Africa Company of Sierra Leone Ltd - Freetown - Sierra Leone

UAC FILM LIBRARY

Figure 1.5: Over thirty Unilever films were available in the Nigerian UAC film library in the early 1960s, suggestions on their classroom use were supplied. Reproduced with kind permission of Unilever from an original in Unilever Archives. Advertisement file, UARM UAC/1/11/21/8

HARVESTING OIL

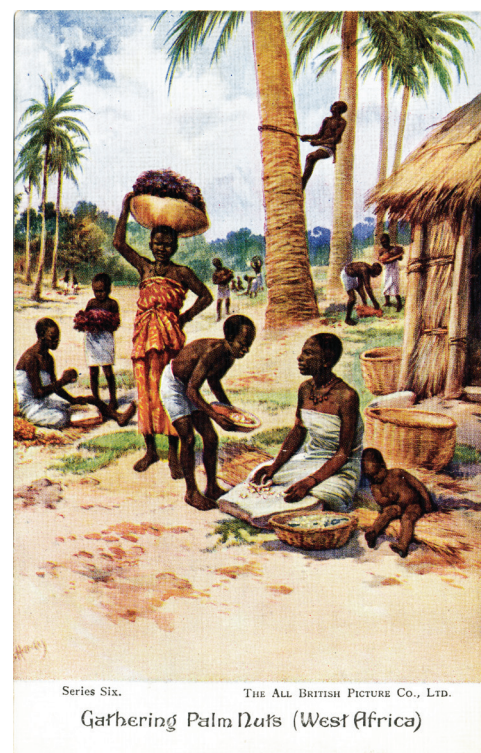
There are no local Nigerian language versions known for the UAC films, so translation by a commentator would sometimes have been necessary. The films make use of a typical British-sounding male voiceover, with clean and crisp diction, sustaining a decidedly western point of view. The three films showing three different UAC products in Nigeria deal with the positioning of old versus new, of old habits and crafts versus newly introduced technology and knowledge. As was common in colonial films, the UAC films underline the idea that through the help of the West (in the guise of an international company), an internal, progressive change was made possible, whereby the colony and its successor state could develop economically and modernise quickly along Western lines. As was also noted in the British press, the films hardly explained any scientific ideas, but functioned rather as “interest film” - an informative style documentary giving an overview of a trade.⁵⁰

In *The Oil Rivers* each time various centuries-old methods of growing, harvesting, and crushing palm kernels are presented, they are set against the modern press and mill, which are shown to work faster and to provide better quality and more quantity of product and against new factories and employment which are seen to raise living standards and knowledge. The equipment, the technology, and knowledge are clearly marked by the voiceover as coming from the West, and sometimes specifically from Britain.⁵¹ In order to convey the idea of the old fashioned and outmoded quality of native models of collection and production, *The Oil Rivers* uses especially two striking tropes that have been repeated in both film and other media outlets.

The first one is introduced early on in *The Oil Rivers*. The film begins with women singing while canoeing down the river. The voiceover explains why the white man came to trade palm oil in Nigeria in the past and that the canoe was the transport method used for centuries. A small village with several wooden huts is shown. The voiceover says that the Nigerians themselves needed palm

oil for their living and extracted the rich oil by “primitive means.” As two men walk through the bush, one finds a suitable tree and starts to climb it. The voiceover underlines the height of the trees, as well as that it was “a slow and dangerous business, with broken limbs or a broken neck for penalty for failure.” The music by Elisabeth Lutyens changes from uplifting to more serious and dramatic as the harvester climbs higher and higher into the tree.⁵² The other man watches from below as the climber, in a medium shot, hacks into the top of the tree trying to sever the fruit. When the fruit falls, the climber is shown in long shot that underscores again the tree’s height. The music then changes to friendly and calming while the voiceover explains that that was the methods Nigerians used to harvest palm oil for centuries, accentuating their never changing habits.

Similar images of palm tree climbers have been used well before the advent of cinema. They are mentioned in various books from the eighteenth century, alongside details of travels or descriptions of Africa and its inhabitants. Drawings of climbers were sometimes placed next to the text.⁵³ More recently, in the 1910s



Figures 1.6 -1.7: Palm climbers were a popular subject on postcards in the 1910s and 1920s, depicted through photographs (date unknown) or drawings (posted Mar. 6, 1922).

and 1920s, these images could be found on various postcards produced for tourists in Britain as well as those abroad, with men not only climbing in Nigeria and West Africa, but also in India, South Africa, Ceylon, or Fiji (Figures 1.6 and 1.7).⁵⁴ The palm climbers functioned as a sign of bodily strength but also, with its link to colonial 'underdevelopment,' to foreignness and primitiveness.

In the 1924 film, *Palm Oil, Lumber and Rubber in Southern Nigeria* the first image one sees is that of a man at the top of a palm tree, cutting fruits with his machete. The man and the tree are shown within an oval iris from some distance to underline the tree's height. The next shot dissolves into a closer shot of the man hacking the palm fruits from their stem. The man is naked except for a small loincloth. The rope around his waist, secured behind the trunk, enables him to stand in an almost 90 degree angle on the tree trunk. The scene functions as an acrobatic act, showing the flexibility and strength of this foreign body. The film was produced by Lever Brothers, shot by Frederick Wilson, and probably would have functioned as an advertisement in cinemas. The link with Unilever is made clear from the outset: the main title shows an illustration of two African boys with a case of Sunlight soap.

Dealing with Unilever in the Congo, both *The Tree of Life* and its commercial re-edited shortened version, *Congo Harvest* (1951), introduce the ancient method of gathering of palm fruits and the extraction of oil, stressing primitiveness and slowness, foreshadowing that this was a product the whole world would need. Not unsurprisingly the advertising pamphlet of *Congo Harvest* depicts, underneath the slogan that it was "a new and excitingly entertaining" two-reel film, a hand-drawn palm tree climber standing on the tree trunk. It is an exact replica from the film scene. The diagonally grown tree fills the pamphlet's front page, the climber clearly defying gravity. Many years later, the Unilever advertisement for *The Oil Palm* (1970), which was part of a series on oil bearing crops, featured a photograph of a fully clothed palm tree climber (supposedly from Cameroon), even though this exact image is not in the film (Figure 1.8).

The film only explains the history of the palm oil very briefly, illustrating it with a few seconds of a bare-chested tree climber.⁵⁵ The tree climber is thus a powerful and striking image used several times by Unilever throughout their film history.

After the climbing and the cutting down of the palm fruits, *The Oil Rivers* returns to the women in their canoes travelling on the river. The camera pans to the left to reveal a

modern industry, a foreign structure of metal and steel in the tropical forest: the mill. The climbing thus functions as a flashback, set against new opportunities and new wealth creation, while at the same time harkening back to a familiar colonial visual marker of the foreign body. The film here also raises an important question in the viewer's mind of whether this method of collecting by a single body high up in the trees would be enough to fulfil the worlds' palm oil needs.

MODERN EXTRACTING

Palm oil preparation is another trope that is often used within British colonial documentaries, one that can again be linked with the display of the body and hard work, but also to old methods of production. The images shown in *The Oil*



Figure 1.8: A photograph of a palm tree climber was used for the advertisement of *The Oil Palm*; this exact image is not featured in the film. *Film User*, May 1970, 12.

Rivers of villagers extracting the oil are quite similar to those shown in *Palm Oil, Lumber and Rubber in Southern Nigeria* more than thirty years earlier: pounding the pericarps, sifting the kernels by hand, and mashing the kernels in wooden mortars by hand or in troughs by bare foot. The images in *Palm Oil, Lumber and Rubber* are not labelled explicitly as negative, but the film underlines that this was “the native” way of preparation, though no other method was shown or suggested. Similar images are again repeated in the 1928 film *Oil Palm of Nigeria*, this time however, palm oil preparation was labelled by the intertitle as done “in a crude and primitive way”. The first shot shows two men crushing the fruits rhythmically in a mortar, even more impressively the next shot shows at least twenty people thrusting their pestles at great speed and force. The two images, though differing in scale, become even more impressive as the film recounts the millions of pounds of oil shipped annually to Britain to produce margarine, soap and glycerine. Though a method for more practical and efficient extraction is not suggested in the film, the solution certainly circulated in Britain at the time.⁵⁶ A *Times* article from 1928 written by O.T. Faulkner, Nigeria’s director of Agriculture, declared that in Nigeria “nearly 100,000 tons of oil is wasted annually owing to the inefficiency of the native methods of extraction.” Nigeria needed factories and modern methods for oil extraction.⁵⁷ The same kind of images of primitive palm oil production were also used in *West Africa Calling* (1927), a propaganda film by the Conservative Party in Britain, that sought to convince British voters that their party’s protectionist policies would create more jobs at home. Here, however, the shots of palm oil extraction function only to focus on the hard work and primitive living conditions, underlining the intertitles’ message: “The Natives lived in primitive huts. The natural wealth of the country barely clothed and fed the native population. British enterprise has changed all this.” The filmic presentation of palm oil is from early on connected to the colonial views of native life, one that was seen as primitive and inefficient for producing goods needed in the United Kingdom.

The Oil Rivers, however, does present a solution and acknowledges that with the arrival of modern technology changes would take place since the old, ingrained methods of production and extraction were not easily replaced in the village life. Pioneer oil mills were set up by the colonial government after the war, numbering 145 by 1960. They met with great initial resistance, especially from women farmers who rightfully believed that the mills threatened their ownership of palm kernels. Traditionally women were responsible for processing and selling the fruit that were cultivated and harvested by the men. With the arrival of the mills, the husbands began to sell the fruit to them directly, shifting the economic power base.⁵⁸ As is shown in the film, everybody in the village works to extract the oil. Feet are seen squashing the palm fruits while African village music is heard and the voiceover explains the men and women's strict tasks. More active change in the villages came with the arrival of hand presses, enabling villagers to produce better oil for the companies.⁵⁹ Nevertheless, it becomes clear to the viewer that with the mills' arrival this would change as well. The film acknowledges the disturbance of the mills to the village life, and noted that while the changes should "not destroy the basis of village life," it was inevitable that "change had to come." How village life was not to be destroyed is not made clear, as only a minute after this acknowledgment the film underlines again the need for mills as a necessity for the future: "The pounding feet and chanted rhythm of yesterday, will increasingly make way of the steel presses of today."

The first two UAC films are clearly related to the older colonial films, continuing the same focus of the foreign body and the patronising look at production practices as well as the rhetoric of technological progress and tradition. Though elements of *record* as well *rationalisation* can be seen, the UAC films functioned mostly by projecting a positive corporate identity and pushing their argument for change. *The Oil Rivers* presents change through the introduction of the mill, where the amount of oil obtained from a kernel could be doubled, which would bring wealth to the world and Nigeria. The old ways

of obtaining the palm fruits, climbing in trees within the forests, dangerous, but also slow work, is set against the need for constant supply of large quantities produced by the mill, thus demanding further development. As the voiceover notes, as a mill could not rely on the supply obtained “at the inclination of the villager”, the logical step for further change was presented: a plantation.

PLANTING HISTORY

Though *The Oil Rivers* focuses on the use of a plantation, comparing the old harvesting versus the new, there were only a few plantations in Nigeria. UAC owned only two palm oil plantations, both obtained before the 1930s.⁶⁰ In contrast to other African countries, West African peasants were capable of producing ample amounts for export without needing the intervention of European plantation capital; they also did it cheaply. As a result the colonial government of Nigeria accepted it as a rule that Europeans should not be allowed to control significant areas of land needed for plantations, in order not to disturb the indigenous society. European style plantations were thus not possible. As Faulkner already complained in 1928, this meant that “no farmer is big enough to have capital to pay for labour-saving machinery.”⁶¹ Additionally the trade in palm products was very unpredictable. From the 1920s on the Nigeria's position in the world market for palm products was deteriorating. Prices continued to drop and the overall percentage of Nigerian palm oil on the world market shrank, in part because of competition from plantations in the Belgian Congo and the Dutch East Indies.⁶² Also, Nigerian palm oil was considered of lesser quality to that of their competitors due to the low standards of the palms and the inefficient method of extracting the oil.⁶³ A proposal by UAC in 1944 to counteract the situation by setting up a cooperative program between farmers, government, and industry was blocked by the colonial government. As a result the Nigerian oil palm industry continued to lag increasingly behind industries in other countries where

plantations were used.⁶⁴ Colonial rules and paternalistic ideas of governing thus caused friction with expatriate views on modernisation and the consequences of sticking to the old ways of native peasants.

The Oil Rivers thus shows a Unilever plantation with thousands of acres of cultivated plants, easy access (no need to climb into the trees) and the best palm species available, enabling better competition. However, the plantation turns out to be primarily a research centre for seedlings and diseases, which make its findings “available to the African for his own economic and sociological advancement.”⁶⁵ The Unilever plantation functions here as a source for better techniques, safety, speed, and growth, and was not a standard practise of palm exploitation. According to the film, the growth of the Nigerian palm oil industry lay in the application of plantation methods which was controlled by the government. As the film was shown to state commissioners, perhaps it was used by UAC to bargain for more plantations, even if it was between farmer, government and industry. In the early 1960s subsidies by the new post-colonial government improved palm seedlings and fertiliser, and the advice of extension workers was made available to farmers.⁶⁶ However, most palms still grew wild and were cultivated by small farmers, with plantation production accounting for less than 7% of the total. As a result many of the mills worked below capacity, as the increase in production did not take place.⁶⁷

The mills and the palm trees cultivated in plantations are positioned in the 1957 film as the new and modern-thinking Nigeria, ready to leave the past behind, ready for the future, thanks to new methods and mechanical equipment from abroad. The voiceover makes this link to old history very clear, telling us that the new palms are “bearing heavier crops and yielding more oil fruit for fruit than their wild and undomesticated ancestors.” However, UAC would very quickly change its mind about the trading of palm oil in Nigeria after the release of the film.

Before the Second World War the colonial governments were generally

hostile to industrialization in West Africa, out of fear for its effects on social structures and urban agglomerations. After the war colonial administrators gradually came to accept that industrialization was inevitable. More money for major investments in road, schools, harbours, or hospitals were undertaken, which colonial governments hoped would offset local nationalisms by improving conditions of life. From early 1950s the transition to industrialization increasingly took shape and most of the earlier caution was discarded.⁶⁸ For UAC, as well as other foreign trading companies, this meant an important change, one that might constitute a danger. UAC's expertise had lain almost entirely in buying and selling, possessing no industrial technology of its own. It was not until 1956 that a strategy for industrialization emerged; before it had been more a defensive and opportunistic strategy that reacted against local firms either making products that UAC was accustomed to importing or trying to please new state or regional authorities.⁶⁹ Even when venturing into industrial projects, UAC still acted as a commercial intermediary between industrialist and consumer rather than becoming an industrialist itself.⁷⁰ Not long after the release of *The Oil River*, UAC started thinking of withdrawing from its main business of trading cocoa, groundnut, and palm products, and indeed would quit these and other produce businesses all together in Nigeria by 1961. According to Fieldhouse it was a reaction to increased competition, declining profit margins, and nationalist desire to end the dominant role of foreign firms.⁷¹ For UAC it became necessary to cease being a general trader and to specialise, forcing a dramatic change, a redeployment of its activities.⁷² *The Oil River* thus stood on a crossing and the film would lose its relevance quickly in Africa. Nevertheless the film, with its message of beneficial change, would have a very long life in the UK, proving very popular. As we shall see, it was, indeed, more geared for Western eyes.

WORK AND THE AFRICANISATION PROCESS

Though the voiceovers in *The Oil Rivers* and *The Twilight Forest* stress the British presence in Nigeria through their knowledge and mechanical ingenuity, the actual onscreen presence of the British is rather slim. This is different from Unilever's *The Tree of Life* where European authority figures are shown prominently and indigenous peoples are clearly in service of the British employer, waiting to be told what to do, waiting for their salary or being subjected to health inspections. In *The Oil Rivers* and *The Twilight Forest*, however, the European men remain in the background (Figures 1.9 and 1.10). Nevertheless, though the Nigerians seem to



Figures 1.9 and 1.10: In *The Twilight Forest* European men can be seen standing in the background. All screenshots within this research are from films available at The Netherlands Institute for Sound and Vision.

have responsible work, they do not perform any of the 'higher' (i.e. managerial) functions, and those who use modern equipment are trained by white personnel. Around the same time of the release of the three UAC films, companies like UAC/Unilever were advertising in a variety of newspapers and magazines using public relations themes instead of products. In these advertisements, the image of Africanisation (actively increasing the number of Africans working in a company) seems to be much more evident compared to the image presented in the films, or even in reality. In 1939 the number of African managers in UAC was 6.7%, which would slowly rise to 17.2% in 1956. According to memos, the company was not as criticised as much as others in the process of Africanisation in 1956. However as the technical side of business expanded, to the detriment

of trading, a larger number of men with specialised or technical knowledge had to be recruited. According to UAC there was a lack of advanced educational facilities in West Africa and the recruitment of Europeans remained high.⁷³

With the independence of Ghana in 1957 many companies printed celebratory advertisements in the March edition of *West African Review*, several of them relating it to industrialization and modernization.⁷⁴ UAC used an advertisement from its “Progress Through Teamwork” campaign, which it had begun that January.⁷⁵ Their advertisements symbolised the teamwork - from the slogan to showing a photograph of two hands, one black and one white, pulling either a rope or carrying a box, while focusing in the text on the mutual benefits of West Africa’s two-way commerce. A year later the “Seeds of Progress” slogan would be added, focusing less on exports, and more on the mastering of new skills, accepting technology, and the need for trained technicians (Figures 1.11 and 1.12). These new advertisements argue that the coloniser and colonised

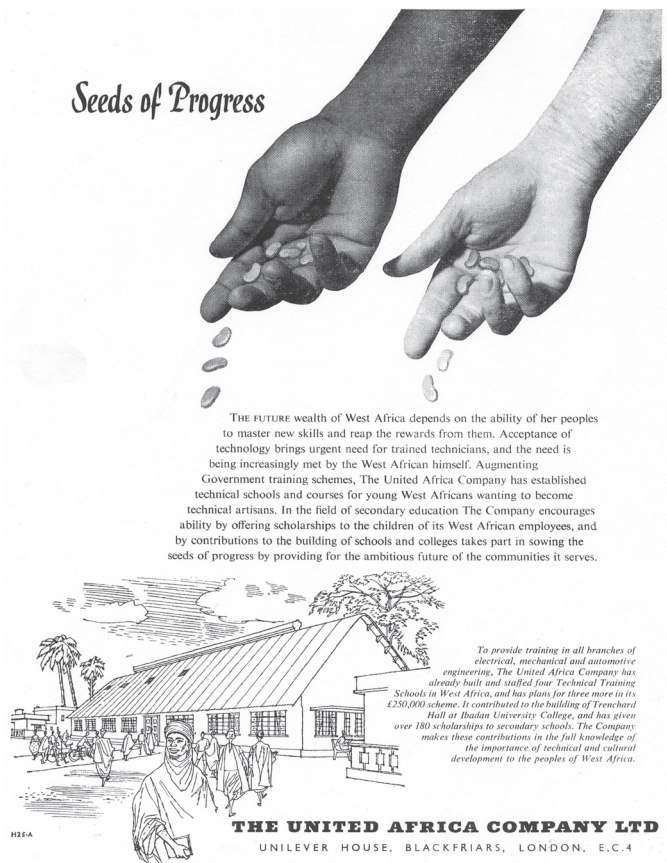


Progress through teamwork

For the peoples of West Africa the desire for political independence is matched by their determination to progress in new fields of commerce and industry. Hand in hand with them in their efforts and sharing faith in the achievement of their aim The United Africa Company is investing confidently in their future. Though primarily merchant traders, the Company also builds factories, provides transport services and introduces modern marketing facilities where the need arises; helps to provide social and educational amenities, and creates individual opportunities in many new spheres for the West African himself. Proud to take its place beside the people it serves The United Africa Company is lending its strength to the achievement of their ambition.

In recent years The United Africa Company has invested over £20 millions in West Africa. A recent addition to its long-term programme of building construction is the £350,000 Kingsway department store in Accra. This modern building incorporates the most advanced ideas from the United Kingdom, America and the Continent. It includes a 4,000 sq. feet Supermarket with air-conditioned Self-Service for refrigerated foods, a ladies' Fashion Salon, a Pharmacy with dispensing and photographic services, a spacious Restaurant and Cafeteria, and a Post Office. It is equipped with escalators and passenger lifts and provides parking space with service station facilities.

THE UNITED AFRICA COMPANY LTD
UNILEVER HOUSE, BLACKFRIARS, LONDON E.C.4



Seeds of Progress

THE FUTURE wealth of West Africa depends on the ability of her peoples to master new skills and reap the rewards from them. Acceptance of technology brings urgent need for trained technicians, and the need is being increasingly met by the West African himself. Augmenting Government training schemes, The United Africa Company has established technical schools and courses for young West Africans wanting to become technical artisans. In the field of secondary education The Company encourages ability by offering scholarships to the children of its West African employees, and by contributions to the building of schools and colleges takes part in sowing the seeds of progress by providing for the ambitious future of the communities it serves.

To provide training in all branches of electrical, mechanical and automotive engineering, The United Africa Company has already built and staffed four Technical Training Schools in West Africa, and has plans for three more in its £250,000 scheme. It contributed to the building of Trenchard Hall at Bodan University College, and has given over 180 scholarships to secondary schools. The Company makes these contributions in the full knowledge of the importance of technical and cultural development to the peoples of West Africa.

THE UNITED AFRICA COMPANY LTD
UNILEVER HOUSE, BLACKFRIARS, LONDON, E.C.4

Figures 1.11 and 1.12: UAC advertisements focused on teamwork between races, stimulating progress and creating a better future. *West African Review*, Jan. 1958, 40; Apr. 1958, 274.

would come together through technology (and the training to understand it). In the advertisement, two hands (again one black, one white) are sowing seeds, from which in a drawing a school comes forth with Nigerians students in the foreground.⁷⁷ The sowing hands seem to refer both to UAC and the government training schemes, as well as UAC and the newly trained technicians contributing to the future development of Nigeria. The ad claims UAC would, in a £250,000 scheme, build more of these technical training schools, while also offering scholarships.⁷⁸ Scholarships and donations to community projects were used by many foreign companies, designed to improve their public image, whose advertisement often referred to them.⁷⁹ UAC would use the “Progress” advertisements both in the monthly *West African Review* and weekly *West Africa* until the end of 1959. Both magazines were published in England and were meant for Africans and Europeans. *West Africa* was more high-quality, focusing directly on news relevant for businessmen, politicians, and intellectuals.⁷⁹

The release of the first two UAC films makes clear how international companies use different media. While portraying a progressive message of equality and positive progress in print newspapers, this is less clear in the films, which are still much more grounded in the imperial rhetoric and iconography of films from industries (*Palm Oil, Lumber and Rubber in Southern Nigeria*) and governments alike (*West Africa Calling*). This made the UAC films suitable for immediate general consumption in the West.

TRADING FOR NOSTALGIA

In contrast to the previous two Nigerian UAC films, in *Traders in Leather*, no foreign or western products or machines can be seen besides a few sewing machines. The film focuses instead on the creation of a world market for hides set within a traditional Nigeria. The trade in hide and skins was a small industry. In 1961 when export value had risen from three million pounds worth in 1958 to four million pounds, it only consisted of less than 2.5% of total Nigerian exports.⁸⁰

According to the film, the growing trade of skins are part of a dynamic process, stimulated by the UAC in cooperation with the Nigerian government, “bringing Africa out of history, into the industrial world.” This industrial world is only spoken of, however, quickly creating a friction between image and text.

The film begins with the calling of the faithful at dawn and shows several people praying. The voiceover introduces the Fulani herdsman, “a strange nomadic people,” who live their “simple pastoral life,” while nobody knows much about their origins or customs which “are buried in the ages before history.” This ethnographic interest was a popular one, focusing on the ancient traditions of Africa, easily recognizable by viewers abroad. As the Fulani village is introduced, harmonious Western string music is played, which turns into the sound of joyous plucking violins as a woman carries a bowl on her head.⁸¹ It places the woman in a humorous aural surrounding which, together with the condescending voiceover, seems to be done for the Western viewer. As other local women are shown, pouring milk from a calabash container, singing while stamping their ore, the voiceover states that “they” with their ancient practises are also now part of a new Africa, as new ideas are everywhere in Nigeria and that these are steadily raising living standards.

One of these new ideas is the trading of hides. According to the voiceover hides used to be left mostly to rot in the burning sun.⁸² Now, the trading of hides has become one of Nigeria’s most important exports, an industry even. The images remain calm and show camel herders walking on their way to trade their supplies in Kano. Kano is then introduced as an ancient city, known for its defensive mud gates and the Kurmi market, with its crafts and old dye pits. As the caravan enters the old city, the voiceover mentions that the transportation of goods does not stop there, but would continue to Europe via the jet plane. Despite the fact that the Kano airport is the oldest in Nigeria, built in 1936 (and beginning international operations in 1947), and was very important for international trade, this type of transportation is not shown. In the film,

transportation is conducted on foot, by donkey, or by camel caravan. The film seems to refrain explicitly from showing modern technology.⁸³ Some modern signs are still present though; electricity poles and a pile of concrete building blocks can be seen in the background. The mentioning and showing of modern sewing machines that “replace the patient tugs of the tailor’s needle,” are the only exception, though this is immediately followed by the assertion that the traditions and tools of the market-men of silverworkers, swordmakers, and leatherworkers have not changed for a thousand years. Thus, while *The Oil Rivers* and *The Tree of Life* (as well as *The Twilight Forest*) contain very direct visual markers of the positive interaction of tradition and Western technology and people, *Traders in Leather* does so only by its voiceover while visually emphasising only traditional markers. This lack of technological change and Western influence becomes, as the film continues, rather overtly missing since, in reality, next to the mud walls of Kano existed the modern Kano, organised by the British.

After the British captured Kano in 1903, the city was divided into the walled *birni* (old city) and a modern city or township. In the *birni*, with its important Kurmi market, pre-British customs remained strong among the Hausa people. While the *birni* grew, the modern Kano, with its European sections, grew enormously under colonial rule, comprising companies, banks, a railway station, a post office, and also restaurants and beer parlours.⁸⁴ With on-going urban development and extensive trading with European and American economies, the economic importance of the *birni*, once one of the most important West African trading centres, was eclipsed. The urban space of the modern city, enforced by the British administration, created a politically charged segregation that was defined by area. As the British promised to protect the Hausa from Westernization, European companies were not allowed to trade in the *birni*.⁸⁵ In *Traders of Leather*, besides the architecture and surroundings of the old space, religion is also introduced by the voiceover as something that will never change, as it is a “strong and simple faith,” while images of a mosque with hundreds of bowing

men are shown. Progress might be slow, but thanks to new trade (introduced by the West) the gates of the city were “now open to the caravan of change.” The mosque shown was, however, rebuilt several times. In fact it was only rebuilt a few years earlier with British sponsorship in gratitude for the Nigerians’ participation in the Second World War. Thus though the image and voiceover suggest an ancient city, where many things do not change, this is not so. Even faith was not a stable and constant presence for centuries, as Islam was only firmly established in Kano in the early nineteenth century.⁸⁶ The film shows, therefore, only the traditional and old city of Kano, the mud walls, the narrow alleys, and the busy market, a place where the British did not venture physically or architecturally. As a whole the film becomes more of a travelogue meant for foreign viewers, mirroring the convention of colonial travelogues that show a remote and exotic world which was positioned at the same time as primitive. One wonders if and how the film would be used within Nigeria itself as it uses mostly stereotypical images.

The three UAC films make clear two important sides of colonial and industrial films, namely the setting of tradition against industrialization (including the pride of modernization) and the more romantic primitive folklore. In the films this is often present as part of a balancing act, using recognizable traditional colonial images while also wanting to show change. However, when the films were distributed and advertised in Britain, they were framed mostly as a farewell, a salute to the country’s primitive way of life, a colonial image of a nostalgic time.

ADVERTISEMENTS

The advertisements for the three films in the British film trade magazines all follow the same layout with a drawing on the left side and a text on the right. The advertisements are all in the name of Unilever, UAC is not mentioned at all. The first advertisement was for *The Oil Rivers*. The left side of the advertisement (with

the headline “Palm Oil from Nigeria”) features a drawing of a bare-chested and barefooted Nigerian carrying two baskets filled with palm fruits (Figure 1.13).⁸⁷ By showing the naked body, strength and hard work is underlined while the image also suggests a foreign place and habits. While the film itself extols modern technology, the visual parts of the ad make no reference to modernity. The text section, on the other hand, offers a familiar narrative of progress through technology: for centuries the Nigerians used palm oil as an essential food, but when worldwide demand for oil rose, both the local population of Nigeria as well as England reaped the benefits with the help of the company and their modern techniques.⁸⁸

For *The Twilight Forest* the drawing on the left side depicts three men busy cutting down a giant mahogany tree by hand while standing on a wooden structure high above the ground (Figure 1.14).⁸⁹ The advertising shows the men from a distance, similar to the film, and bare-chested and barefooted; their faces cannot be seen. In the film, the scene showing the cutting down of the tree is certainly impressive, one of human endurance and strength.⁹⁰ In the film, however,

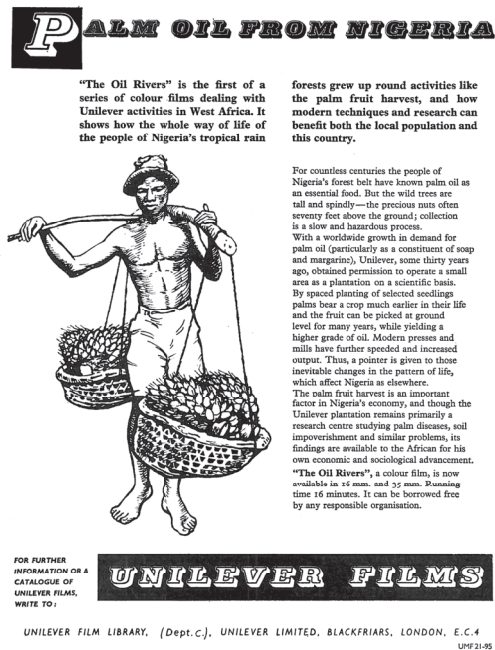


Figure 1.13: The UK advertisements for the first three UAC films conjure up a pre-industrial world, in line with traditional colonial images. *Film User*, Mar. 1957, 93.

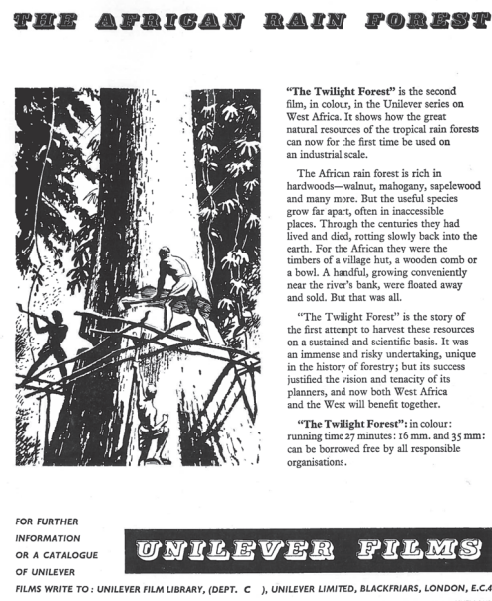


Figure 1.14: *Film User*, Oct. 1957, 421.



Figures 1.15-1.18: In *The Twilight Forest* images of human endurance and strength are alternated with images of industrial mechanization brought on by the West.

the scene is presented next to the mechanization of many of the operations, of mathematically calculated harvest routes and of tractors and trucks carrying away the huge timber to modern plywood mills and sawmills recently built in Sapele, Nigeria (Figures 1.15-1.18).⁹¹ So again, an image of older traditions and methods is signalled in the drawing. The text next to the drawing explains that the film shows how “the great natural resources of the tropical rain forests can now for the first time be used on an industrial scale”, leaving behind the centuries of not utilizing the timber to its fullest use. Because of it, according to the text, both West Africa and the West would benefit together.

Traders in Leather shows a drawing of a hide-trader clothed entirely in black, sitting on a camel entering a walled city (Figure 1.19).⁹² The text mentions that in medieval times, when tanned skins from Kano were traded already to Europeans by way of “ancient” caravan routes. Like the previous advertisements, the text is in opposition with the main image, as Nigeria was also “a territory

whose rapid development within the Commonwealth, Britain is fostering." With the use of the word "fostering" the text is even more infused with a patronizing tone than the other advertisements. It was because the West brought access to new research and new techniques that hides and skins were now in demand worldwide and it was this "increasing demand that underlined the interdependence of Africa and the West."

An advertisement for the three Nigerian films together finally further illustrates the complicated issues around the reuse of Nigerian films in Britain.⁹³ In October 1958 an advertisement entitled "The New Face of Africa" showed a drawn image of one of the most famous images in African art, the sixteenth century bronze head of Queen Mother Idia, a powerful monarch

HIDES FROM THE WALLED CITY



"Traders in Leather" continues the series of Unilever colour films on West Africa. It is set against the background of the burning northern plains of Nigeria, a territory whose rapid development within the Commonwealth, Britain is fostering.

The ancient walled city of Kano has always been the focus of the plains, a centre of Mohammedan culture and craftsmanship. As long ago as mediaeval times tanned skins from Kano crossed the deserts by the ancient caravan routes to the western shores of the Mediterranean, there to be known by European traders as morocco leather.

To-day, as a result of research and the adoption of new techniques, Nigerian raw hides and skins command a high price in the markets of the world; and increasing demand for what is now an important and growing export underlines the interdependence of Africa and the West.

"Traders in Leather", in colour, 16 and 35 mm: running time 14 minutes: can be borrowed free by all responsible organizations: available from December.

FOR FURTHER
INFORMATION
OR A CATALOGUE
OF UNILEVER FILMS
WRITE TO: UNILEVER FILM LIBRARY (DEPT. C), UNILEVER LIMITED, BLACKFRIARS, LONDON, E.C.4

UNILEVER FILMS

UNL 12-648

Figure 1.19: *Film User*, Nov. 1957, n.p.



The new 1958-59 Unilever Catalogue, containing details of these films, is available on request to:

The New Face of Africa

The superb technical and artistic qualities of the recently discovered Benin Bronzes leave little doubt that a highly developed culture flourished in West Africa during the 16th and 17th centuries. According to Benin tradition, casting was introduced to the Benin Court as far back as the 13th century, originating from life, the holy city of the Yoruba people. Today, West Africa is emerging from a long period of obscurity, with British ideas and techniques contributing to a new social and cultural order. Listed below are three of a series of Unilever films which deal with West African life at this critical period of development.

"The Oil Rivers"—Production of palm oil in Nigeria by plantation and village methods.

"Traders in Leathers"—The growing trade in hides and skins, centred around Kano in Northern Nigeria.

"The Twilight Forest"—Extraction of hardwoods from the tropical rain forests. Awarded the Grand Milan Fair Prize for documentary films.

Two further films in this series are to be completed. The first, the release of which will be announced about the end of the year, shows the traditional surf boats of Ghana.

These and other Unilever films of wide general interest may be borrowed by all responsible organisations from the Unilever Film Library.

UNILEVER FILMS

UNILEVER FILM LIBRARY (DEPT.C), UNILEVER LIMITED, BLACKFRIARS, LONDON E.C.4 UNL 12-648

Figure 1.20: The new face of Africa is according to Unilever represented by the 16th century bronze head of Queen Mother Idia, emerging from a long period of obscurity. *Film User*, Oct. 1958, n.p.

at the Benin court at that time (Figure 1.20).⁹⁴ The Benin Empire was located in what is now southern Nigeria and was one of the oldest and most developed regions in West Africa, dating back to the twelfth century. The head is slightly turned, showing off the naturalistic details of the face against a clean white background. The adjacent text tells of the “recently discovered Benin bronzes” showing a “highly developed culture” with “superb technical and artistic qualities.” Functioning as a link to the films that also showcase these qualities, the text explains how “today, West Africa is emerging from a long period of obscurity, with British ideas and techniques contributing to a new social and cultural order.”

The advertising image of the head is in fact a reversed drawn copy of an often-used photograph (with some added lines across the face). The anonymous photograph was first used in the British Museum’s *Handbook to the Ethnographical Collections* (1910) and would be reprinted in several books during the 1910s and 1920s, such as Carl Einstein’s famous *Negerplastik* (1915). This picture would, together with other images of African statues, help to promote new ways of seeing non-Western images in a modern and avant-garde light, and influence Cubism and German Expressionism, in the years after its publication.⁹⁵ One has to realise, however, that within the photographed and drawn image is embedded an important colonial history, one that also relates directly to the trading of palm oil. The bronze head was given to the British Museum by Sir William Ingram in 1897 after a “punitive expedition” was formed to capture the king and destroy the city Benin in the Benin Empire, which had until then managed to retain its independence. The expedition was in response to the defeat of a previous British invasion in 1896, brought about by a Benin trade embargo of palm oil against the British.⁹⁶ As a result the city and the palace were looted and much of it burned down. Some 2000 artefacts were sent to Europe, where they were auctioned to the most prominent world museums, galleries, and private collection in order to finance the expedition.⁹⁷

The image of the bronze head is embedded, therefore, in a very troubled and

violent colonial past. Both the photograph and the drawing represent not just the bronze head, but refer to and reiterate the manner in which African artefacts were re-used and repurposed within a modern Western society, away from its original place and use. Through its use in the advertisement, the recycled drawn image of the Benin bronze, recognizable for British people at the time as African art, was further recoded and reframed to underline a modern image of West Africa that was aided by the Commonwealth.

The UK advertisements for the three films bring to the foreground the re-use of images for western viewers, conveying old sentiments and referring to traditional colonial images or artefacts from the past, a pre-industrial world, while trying to add additional meanings. But they also tell us about different audiences. It is striking that Unilever uses more traditional images for these films than they did with their corporate advertising in newspapers and magazines that was focused on West Africa. At the same time as these films were promoted by Unilever in the UK, UAC used the “The Men of Tomorrow” ad campaign (taking over the “Progress” campaign) (Figure 1.21). This campaign highlights the notion of progress through manufacturing, mechanisation, and marketing through various drawings of African men who were eagerly sought on the modern job market after having taken the company’s training.⁹⁸



Figure 1.21: One of the four different advertisements for UAC’s “The Men of Tomorrow” ad-campaign, showing modern Africans in important active and responsible positions. *West Africa*, Dec. 1959, 1130.

VERSIONS AND OUTLETS

While industrial film in Nigeria was very important in creating an interest among the select primary audience of politicians, traders, and teachers (and secondly the larger audience of schools and universities), in the UK films were used to focus first on primary and secondary schools, including re-edited versions for the general public. The films seem to have been fairly popular in the UK. In 1957 *The Twilight Forest* received 1450 bookings for private showings and a total of 150,000 people, mostly school children, were estimated to have seen the film.⁹⁹ According to Unilever the three films were requested 3500 times in 1958.¹⁰⁰ In 1960 the three films did even better with a total of 4985 showings.¹⁰¹ In 1962 *The Twilight Forest* was still the most popular of the three, with 2750 rentals.¹⁰²

Films also could be loaned to institutions for longer periods, thus not turning up in records as rentals. A 35mm copy of *The Twilight Forest* was held at Buckingham Palace, while another was taken on Prince Philip's 1959 tour aboard the royal yacht *Britannia*.¹⁰³ They could be also shown on special occasions, as when all three UAC films were used during an eight day exhibition in 1960 organised by The War on Want, a UK non-governmental organisation, campaigning against poverty and inequality in the world. Unilever had a stand called "Unilever in Africa" and at the free cinema the three UAC films were shown, enabling the company to stress their contributions.¹⁰⁴

Besides using an advertisement scheme that appeared to articulate the colonial feelings of the past, there were also re-edited versions made for general release on the commercial cinema circuit. Unfortunately how these versions were advertised is mostly unknown. In the UK *The Oil Rivers* was released as *The Seeds of Change* (1957), distributed by Eros Films, an independent distributor for British and American film productions.¹⁰⁵ All references to Unilever/UAC were gone and a different voiceover was used. Eros also distributed different versions of *The Twilight Forest*, retitled *The Unknown Forest*, and *Traders in Leather*, retitled *South of the Sahara*.¹⁰⁶ For *South of the Sahara* scenes were

added and additional material was used, creating a version that was ten minutes longer and that had a different structure, voiceover and music.¹⁰⁷ The focus in this version was less on leather trading. According to an Eros publicity brochure, the film presented the “fascinating mosaic of life” of the Fulani people who lived south of the Sahara. Besides Kano, it showed the life of the farmers, “barbaric customs” such as the whipping of boys when they approach manhood, as well as polygamy, items not seen in *Traders in Leather*. *South of the Sahara* received a middling review from *Monthly Film Bulletin*, as it “rarely rises above the level of a travelogue, its observation of the people being limited mainly to conventional views of Kano, the capital of the territory, its markets and local customs.” The review noted that the added music conflicted with the scenes, perhaps similar in style as the vase-carrying scene in *Traders in Leather*, as in a scene where Muslims at their evening prayers was accompanied “by a noisy Western dance tune.”¹⁰⁸

Not long after the release of the three films in Nigeria and the UK, the UAC started slowly withdrawing from trading its central commodities, cocoa, groundnut, and palm products, and would quit these and other produce businesses by 1961.¹⁰⁹ However, as late as 1965 the films were still used in schools to teach geography and current affairs.¹¹⁰ According to the 1967 Unilever catalogue *Traders in Leather* was an “example of the way in which British knowledge and resources have helped a young and recently developed territory towards a greater prosperity and self-reliance.”¹¹¹ The films continued to be shown in the West, solidifying the assertion, like the advertisements, that Unilever had provided knowledge and opportunities to Nigeria, even though the country’s descent into civil war in 1967 quickly rendered this representation obsolete.

GOVERNMENT AND INDUSTRIAL COMMUNICATIONS

One worldwide distribution outlet has not been mentioned so far, one which further exemplifies the role that the British government played in the use of films

in Nigeria and the constant connections to British industry. An important section of the audience was not reached through Unilever's (or UAC's) distribution itself, but was instead through the British government's marketing and communications agency: the Central Office of Information (COI). The COI, which provided both general and specialist information services for the UK and overseas countries, was established in 1946 as a successor to the wartime Ministry of Information. It had as part of its operations a close co-operation with industrial firms. For instance, it sent out thousands of COI export promotional leaflets to different industries, arranged company visits to the COI, distributed prestige printed material from industry itself (over 250.000 copies annually), and organised conferences and trade fairs.¹¹²

The Films Division of the COI produced, via independently contracted companies, many informational, instructional and educational documentary films on behalf of various government departments, often related to information campaigns on health, education, and welfare.¹¹³ The COI sometimes sought contributions by industry for major film projects for overseas use, despite the fact that direct advertising was not allowed.¹¹⁴ A non-theatrical distribution service was put in place with lending libraries, mobile projection units and local film offices. These films were available from the Central Film Library for hire (for a small fee) and sale, mostly in 16mm, to schools, universities, local authorities and industries.¹¹⁵ The COI also supplied prints to more than 150 British embassies and consulates abroad and to High Commission offices and colonial governments throughout the Commonwealth.¹¹⁶ The Central Film Library claimed to be the oldest non-theatrical film library in existence, together with its two affiliated libraries in Scotland and Wales, having over 30.000 registered borrowers and 2000 titles (with 700 titles in its industrial section).¹¹⁷

The COI additionally acquired films made by non-government institutions and companies. New industrial film titles were added to the overseas film libraries at the rate of about 170 each year.¹¹⁸ Through this scheme, the COI could offer

hundreds of films about Britain and the Commonwealth, from those that covered general information on the country and people, to subjects on agriculture, arts, health, industry, safety, transport, communication, education, and engineering. The COI printed various film catalogues for use in the UK and abroad, some of them concentrating solely on special subjects, such as industrial or scientific films, or films that could be shown on television.¹¹⁹ During the 1957/1958 season, around 48.000 film prints were dispatched from the Central Film Library, not including those from the Overseas Film Library. In 1959, of the total 20.000 registered borrowers, schools, universities and other educational institutions formed the largest single group of nearly 5000; next came industrial users (17%), adult education groups (15%), and health and medical groups (9%).¹²⁰ In 1961 most borrowers were coming from industry, however, with around 19.000 bookings, followed by hospitals, schools, local authorities and public corporations with around 7000 each.¹²¹ Through budget cuts and a shifting emphasis towards television, the number of films produced by the COI would lessen. As a result the COI would become less concentrated on public information films and more on trade promotional films.¹²² A survey revealed in 1968 that the COI had to be careful not become too centred on export promotion, "because it would become identifiable as a purely commercial operation designed to sell British goods hard and to do nothing else."¹²³ In the 1960s around 40.000 prints were distributed annually (including to television) to overseas posts by the Overseas Distribution section of the Films Division.¹²⁴ Those interested abroad, such as businessmen, could contact the Information Officer at the British embassy and consular posts, as they offered facilities to show these promotional and prestige industrial films.¹²⁵ Language versions were available on loan from the Overseas Film Library, if not already in the COI's library within the country.¹²⁶

Several Unilever films were available within the COI's film library, including the three UAC films on Nigeria. In the Central Film Library's 1961 catalogue, there were eight films on Nigeria. Three were made by the COI prior 1950, two by the

Nigerian Film Unit, and the other three were the UAC films.¹²⁷ It is unclear how popular were these UAC films, however, both in 1959/60 and 1960/61 *The Twilight Forest* was requested over one hundred times, where one booking could represent several showings, taking the seventy-second spot of most popular rentals.¹²⁸ For *Traders in Leather* German and French (presumably for French speaking Africa and Congo) versions were made by the COI, while *The Twilight Forest* existed in German and Spanish for the Latin American market.¹²⁹ The COI also arranged television broadcasts for the three films, thus *The Twilight Forest* was shown in Australia, Gibraltar, Spain, Argentina, Dominican Republic, Mexico, Salvador, Venezuela, Curacao, and Surinam.¹³⁰

The films from UAC fit government's interest, being delegated into the Commonwealth sections of "economic development", "industry and labour", and "development of natural resources". The films show that care was taken by the British company for the inhabitants and the British fostered development, thus displaying the "new methods in mill and plantation, without disrupting what is valuable traditional ways of village life" and justifying "the vision of its planners, benefiting both West Africa and the wider world."¹³¹ This fit the objectives of the British information services to support and encourage exports, British industry and technology overseas, while projecting Britain's governmental policies and attitudes.¹³²

It is not surprising that companies were interested in being included in the COI film catalogues, as it offered them opportunities to present the films to possible business partners and local governments, enabling them to further create a positive corporate image. Just like the British government itself, the companies sought to present themselves to outside partners as a stable, forward looking, technologically advanced trading partner. This form of propaganda made companies willingly give copies of their films freely to the COI, sometimes accounting for the overseas rights and paying for the handling and shipping, as was the case with Unilever and Shell films.¹³³ Outside producers

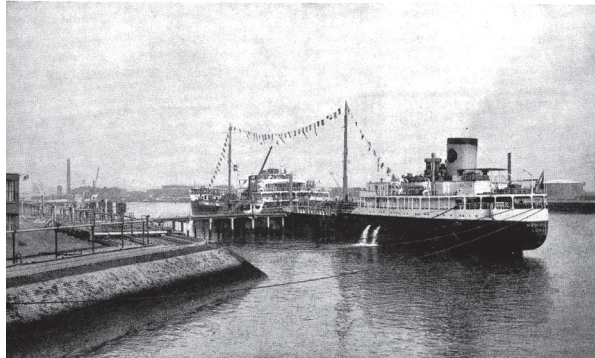
and companies even consulted the COI's Film Division in the early stages of their own productions to ensure their suitability for the catalogue and create a higher chance to be taken into distribution, influencing production.¹³⁴ One of the recommendations by the COI was to make use of voiceover commentary, instead of direct speech, allowing for easier dubbing into a range of languages.¹³⁵ The COI was also responsible for submitting entries to the various international specialist documentary festivals on industry, science and technology, which proliferated in the 1960s.¹³⁶ Participation in these festivals helped to maintain international recognition of British documentary filmmaking and their projecting of British know-how. Winning prizes, as several Unilever and Shell films did, helped enhance overseas distribution.¹³⁷ Besides the UAC films, other Unilever films could be rented as well, such as on the production of margarine and the workings of fat, the importance of the fork lift truck, or the electronic computer. Due to these various subjects, Unilever's films could be found across the catalogue in several categories, consisting of seventeen films in the 1964 catalogue, 40% of Unilever's total film collection on offer at that time. Other companies like BP, Mullard, Dunlop, Rover, or Ford also had many of their films included, as did various institutes, foundations and councils. That year the company with the largest number of titles was Shell, with forty-one films available to rent.¹³⁸ Shell dominated the Science and Technology section: out of the sixty-two films offered in this section, almost 30% were from Shell.¹³⁹ The section on Nigeria had twenty-three films; most were government sponsored. Commercial companies provided nine out of those twenty-three. Unilever had the most with four, including *Enterprise in Nigeria* (which is discussed in chapter three), while Shell had two: *The Search For Oil in Nigeria* and *Oilman's Move*.¹⁴⁰

CHAPTER 2 - ROYAL DUTCH SHELL

On 18 February 1958 the tanker *Hemifusus* left Port Harcourt with the first shipment of Nigerian crude oil, pumped from oil wells discovered two years earlier. The 8.500 tons of oil arrived twenty days later in Rotterdam to be refined in the Royal Dutch Shell refineries at Pernis (Figures 2.1 and 2.2).¹ With this event Nigeria entered the ranks of oil producing countries. The search for Nigerian oil had started many decades ago, in 1903.

From that time onwards several international oil companies had tried to locate and exploit mineral oil in on the territory of what was

later to become Nigeria, largely to no avail. Nigerian oil is of good quality and in high demand for cheap processing into gasoline and high quality diesel, however, it lies underneath an area of mangroves, swamps and tropical forests, making production and transport difficult. It was not until the 1930s that the phase began that would lead eventually to the discovery and commercial production of oil by Shell-BP.² Under the colonial administration, the (partly) British-owned companies Shell and BP were given preferential treatment, but with independence looming in the 1950s, Shell and BP had to adapt to more political instability and to adjust to a greater degree of indigenous scrutiny of expatriate corporations. Both the Nigerian government and new competitors posed potential threats to Shell-BP's



Figures 2.1 and 2.2: The Shell tanker *Hemifusus* with the first shipment of Nigerian crude oil arrived at the Shell refinery in Pernis, near Rotterdam in the Netherlands, on 8 March 1958. Captain G.A.C. Nelson assisted Matthew Mbu, Nigerian federal commissioner in the UK, in opening up the valves to start the flow of oil into the refinery. "Nigerian Oil Reaches Europe," *West African Review*, May 1958, 338.

dominant position. One way of dealing with these insecurities was through film.

THE SEARCH FOR OIL AND THE RISE OF CHANGES

In 1936 Royal Dutch Shell, an Anglo-Dutch multinational, set up with the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company (renamed the British Petroleum Company in 1954), the joint venture Shell D'Arcy Exploration Parties in order to search for oil in Nigeria.³ Though owned equally by the two companies, Anglo-Iranian's interest was low key and more financial than operational. It was Shell that provided the management and technical advice.⁴ A year later, the joint venture obtained a licence from the colonial government to prospect for oil throughout the whole country, a total of 357,000 square miles. All other companies that previously had prospected for oil in Nigeria had withdrawn, Shell/D'Arcy was the sole company still having a licence. However, only preliminary reconnaissance could be carried before the Second World War broke out, eventually causing exploration to be suspended in 1941.⁵ After the war, two field geological parties resumed work in 1946, but it took still many more years of searching and over 25 million pounds of financial investment, when in May 1956 their joint-venture, which for public relations purposes changed its name to the Shell-BP Petroleum Development Company of Nigeria (hereafter, including the D'Arcy period, Shell-BP), discovered oil in commercial quantities in the Niger delta, signalling the start of oil production.⁶ Along with independence in 1960, there were several important changes prior to and afterwards that would influence Shell-BP's Nigerian operations. With these changes the European company most likely realised the usefulness of public relations in Nigeria.

From the early 1950s Shell-BP had been aware of looming competition in oil production, especially after the discovery of oil at the Akata-1 well in 1953, though this well contained oil only in limited quantities. The first well of commercial quantity and quality was discovered by Shell-BP in January 1956 at Oloibiri, west of Port Harcourt in the middle of the mangrove swamps. Oil

production, though it was still a small field, started there in December 1957. Two months later the company was producing 6000 barrels per day.⁷ The total amount of oil produced would increase with each year as more productive fields were found in the area. In 1960 Shell-BP produced 17,200 barrels per day (ten million barrels cumulative since the start of production in 1956); this still constituted, however, in the first half of that year less than one thousandth of the total worldwide production. Shell-BP had optimistic projections to produce 100,000 barrels per day in 1965. Having spent over sixty-three million pounds over the previous twenty years by the end of 1960, Shell-BP needed to increase production.⁸ However, competition would soon arrive as a result of Britain's new diversification policy.

Partly under American pressure, the first non Shell-BP oil exploration license was granted to the American oil company Socony-Vacuum Oil (later Mobil, now Exxon) in 1955, though Nigerian legislation still formally barred the entry of non-British oil companies.⁹ Mobil would relinquish ultimately most of their concessions in northern Nigeria, applying instead for a small exploration licence in the Western Region in 1957.¹⁰ At the time of Nigeria's independence, the Tennessee Gas and Transmission Company (Tenneco), had joined Mobil as Shell-BP's competition. The search for oil in Nigeria had become international. In 1961 the newly independent Nigerian state also granted oil exploration licences to Gulf (later Chevron/Texaco) and American Overseas (Amoseas). Agip, SAFRAP (later Elf/Total), Phillips, and Esso would join in in the following years.¹¹ Among the competitors, Gulf would strike oil first and began production in 1965. Shell-BP had been actively securing its competitive advantage before independence and before competition arrived by increasing its exploration and drilling, which had systematically commenced in 1951 with its first deep exploration wells (turning out to be dry).¹² As a result, Shell-BP was able to utilise its information and experience to examine the commercial prospects of various exploration areas before the arrival of its competitors.¹³ Newcomers were thus limited to less

promising areas already abandoned by Shell-BP.

Another important change in 1960 was that the five-year Oil Prospecting Licences (OPL) that had been given to Shell-BP by the colonial government and which allowed the company to explore, search, and drill for oil as well as produce it, would expire henceforth. The OPL licence could however be followed by the most important licence available, the Oil Mining License (OML), a long-term agreement between the company and the government to produce oil, giving exclusive privilege to produce oil in the OPL area for at least thirty years.¹⁴ However, only 50% of the OPL licenses could be chosen for conversion, the rest had to be given back to the government, explaining the increase of exploration and drilling in these areas prior to expiration.¹⁵ Just before and after Nigeria's independence, Shell-BP obtained 46 OMLs in the most promising areas, 15,000 square miles of the 357,000 that had originally been obtained in 1938, giving them a huge advantage in exploration and production for the long-term future.¹⁶

Thus, both the OPLs and the competition caused a rapid increase of exploration and drilling between 1957 and 1960. In 1958 over 12.000 kilometres of seismic lines (a cable with attached geophones to register seismographic echoes) were used, an equal amount of lines that had accumulated over the years until 1957. In 1959 there were 4500 kilometres of lines, but nearly 11.000 kilometres in 1960.¹⁷ The number of wells drilled (both appraisal as exploration) also increased sharply, from ten in 1957 to thirty-one a year later and hitting more than fifty in 1959.¹⁸ At the time oil was struck at Oloibiri, four seismic parties were at work, four years later this had doubled with around 2000 men working on exploration alone.¹⁹

The colonial government also passed the Petroleum Profits Tax Ordinance in 1959, laying down the assessment of the oil company's taxable profits and the distribution of these profits between the Government and the companies.²⁰ On 1 June 1959 the federal government and Shell-BP signed contractual agreements, whereby any profits from the company's operations would be divided equally

between the Nigerian government and Shell-BP.²¹ Oil profits were seen as very important for the coming independence. As Chief F.S. Okotie-Eboh, Federal Minister of Finance, signing for the Federal Government, said: "We are today taking a significant step forward towards achieving the economic independence upon which plans of political and social advance so greatly depend."²² The close relationship with the government officials continued after independence and was publicly announced. For instance, in a speech at the 1961 opening of a Shell-BP office building near Port Harcourt, prime minister Alhaji Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa stressed the company's importance for the country and announced "that the Federal Government has a tremendous responsibility to all the people of Nigeria for ensuring that [the mineral oil] is not wasted but used to the best advantage of our country."²³ Balewa hoped other industrial concerns would follow Shell-BP's example of investing money into Nigeria and into oil production (mentioning the 72 million pounds Shell-BP had spent at that time as well as their training programmes): "I am satisfied [...] that the terms of the agreement by which this oil is being won are fair both to the Government and to the company and I welcome this opportunity of assuring the company that they have nothing to fear."²⁴

The oil companies would indeed invest more money in the retraction of crude oil in the years to come, having an important effect on the Nigerian economy. The profit tax started to take effect from 1964, and, along with royalties, would quickly replace rentals and incentives as the major sources of government revenue.²⁵ In the past agricultural products had a dominant role in Nigerian commodity exports, amounting to more than 90% in 1956, with groundnuts, palm oil and cocoa dominating besides raw cotton, hides, rubber, timber, and plywood. The proportion of crude oil in the total export increased annually, from 0.8% in 1958 to 33% in 1966, reaching a value of 92 million Nigerian pounds. In a short time crude oil had become the country's most important export and would become even more so.²⁶

COMMUNICATING OIL AND THE COMPANY

Shell-BP had had a clear lack of communication with local communities in the 1940s, which came mainly from the colonial legislative context in which they operated in Nigeria. The colonial government gave their full support to Shell-BP in their dealings with local communities. According to the Mineral Oils Ordinance the joint venture did not need to obtain permission from any landowners to conduct exploratory work. Also, the exploration parties were protected from any person who might interfere and who would, upon conviction, suffer fines or imprisonment. Only compensation for the destruction of economically valuable trees and crops by exploration parties was possible, and the rates were by the district officer.²⁷ The company did not explain oil exploration, either the technical process or the economic mission, to local residents, nor did the colonial government do so, causing friction between officials and indigenous residents.²⁸ Also, as leaders from the nationalist movement, who supported the anti Shell-BP protests at first, realised the potential of oil in securing the financial viability of a future independent Nigeria, they shifted their full support to Shell-BP in their dealings with local communities. As a result, local interest in and protests against the oil companies' exploration activities was minimised in the 1950s.²⁹

However, we can see a slight shift in the company's communication strategy in the early 1950s, as they increasingly promoted the search for oil and its methods, showing that it was also to the benefit of the country and its people, while constantly pointing out the enormous costs and equipment provided for by Shell-BP. In 1953 a Shell-BP produced a booklet, *Search for Petroleum in Nigeria*. The booklet had little text, being mainly composed of twenty-two photographs that showed the methods of searching and exploring, even though no oil had yet been found. The photographs and sparse text acknowledge the hard work that was taking place in very muddy and wet conditions. In the Oloibiri region rainfall averaged 100-140 inches a year, with the wet season lasting up to six months. In the dry season temperatures rose to 38 Celsius, while high

humidity still persisted.³⁰ Many black workers are seen carrying boxes on their heads through rivers, working on clearing the roads, drilling holes, and building a derrick. Sometimes a single white person can be seen standing by. This section on exploration takes up two-thirds of the booklet and ends with an erect derrick against the sky on a cleared field within the forest, in the foreground young children watch the structure. All the work had however been futile, as the text explains the first test well was abandoned as a dry hole. "Drilling still goes on at other likely sites in the hope that oil in commercial quantities will be found."³¹

The next section mentions the company benefits at the Owerri base camp, its "homes, and quarters for staff, a medical centre, shops and good recreational facilities." The photographs show just that: the large houses in a clearing, a white patient being treated by both a white female as well a black male, a tennis court with white men and women playing together with Nigerians, and shopping Nigerians. The booklet ends showing the Shell-BP schools, which were put up "to train Nigerians to play their part in the development of the natural resources of their country." Here several students are seen reading books, examining geological and seismographic data and, finally, listening to instructions from a white instructor on the working of an engine.

The photographs mark differences in race and education, though images of whites and blacks actually working together are slight. The company's colonial origins are not mentioned and the high-level white personnel are mostly in the background, though the final text on the back cover does place the relations between the company and the indigenous people into perspective: "The search for oil in Nigeria may or may not be successful, but whatever the issue the costly venture will have given education and technical training to many Nigerians and will have provided another instance of harmonious working between races – things that will not be lost."³² While the booklet makes clear the difficult and hard work of oil prospecting, positioning the company as benefactor that provides jobs, homes, care, food and even leisure for Nigerians (though not necessarily for

those already living in the production area), its underlying narrative is that of racial difference. One can wonder, of course, how many of the indigenous workers who were hired for their physical labour, as seen in the first section, were truly benefitting from what was shown in the second.

During the early 1950s European enterprises were encouraged to adopt Africanisation policies, however there was no official governmental policy to guide this process. Consequently the Nigerianisation of European companies tended to proceed at a snail's pace.³³ Shell-BP was no exception. By 1954 the company listed only three Nigerians as occupying senior level positions out of a total workforce of over 2,000. African environmental historian Phia Steyn suggests the slow tempo was the result of a deliberate decision to train only a few senior-grade Nigerians for integration with the European staff.³⁴ Unfortunately sources are very limited on this subject.

The booklet also points to another underlying element that is perhaps more noticeable from today's perspective, which is presented as merely factual: The production of oil clearly coincides with the destruction of and changes to the natural environment. No signs of oil can be seen in the 1953 booklet. Indeed, oil spillage was a rare event in the early exploration periods, as the volume of crude oil handled was very low.³⁵ However, the alteration of the environment from exploration and drilling can be seen clearly in the pictures showing massive machines travelling on wide roads through the jungle, clearing land for settlements and derricks, or the building of transport pipes. Exploration and drilling (and subsequently production) was a very intrusive process, causing damage and significant physical changes to the environment, which can be greater, in its cumulative effect, than a large oil spill. After the initial seismic surveying, clearing small paths across the swamps and bushes, and using explosives for obtaining maps of underground formation, further exploration required moving heavy equipment into remote environments, and clearing land for roads and platforms which could lead to deforestation and erosion.³⁶ Oloibiri,

where the first commercial well was found, is in the heart of the mangrove swamps, and the forty-five miles journey from Port Harcourt took up to thirty-six hours by road and river-craft. The total weight imports dealt with through Port Harcourt were some 120 ships (or 20,000 tons) in 1957.³⁷ Helicopters were used to move drilling equipment as well.

Drilling explorations (as well as extraction) also produce voluminous amounts of solid wastes and use large quantities of water, with discharges from petroleum waste, drilling fluids, drill cuttings and mud, most likely containing a range of chemicals. They cause long-term harm to animal populations and create human health and safety risks for neighbouring communities and oil industry workers.³⁸ Some of these effects on local communities and environments were present within the booklet. It would take well over a decade before these kinds of environmental changes would be addressed as public scrutiny to environmental problems would rise; consequently, environmental impacts would become less present in promotional material.³⁹ During the 1950s and early 1960s images of environmental change were still a strong part of the visual conventions and spectacle of oil production and helped to construct the notion of modernity. As the presence of oil production and its intrusion into local communities would become more intense in years to come, as we shall see, film was used to justify the companies' presence to a large audience, paradoxically by showing the intrusion. By providing positively labelled images of modernity and change, film could display the company's good citizenship and create a positive global and local brand identity.

THE SHELL FILM UNIT

In this section, we will discuss mainly the film unit from Shell, not BP, as the Nigerian Shell-BP films under investigation were made only by Shell. The recording of Anglo Iranian/BP's activities on film date back to the First World

War, but it was not until 1948 that the company formed a special film branch to look after production and distribution.⁴⁰ Like Shell, most often it did not make direct advertising films but dealt with scientific and technological subjects. Unlike Shell, however, BP did not employ its own film unit, but commissioned films from producers. Some of the films were shown in public cinemas, but most were rented for free for non-theatrical screenings. The worldwide distribution of the Nigerian Shell-BP films was not controlled by BP, nor does it seem to have been fulfilled by Shell-Mex (the Shell-BP marketing firm for the UK), but only through Shell and several specialised libraries.⁴¹

Like other major companies, Shell developed a keen interest in the moving image as early as the 1920s. Shell management recognised film as an ideal medium for reaching out and building public support for its activities. In fact, as Patrick Russell and James Piers Taylor note “no sector of society made more enthusiastic use of the sponsored film than the oil companies; no medium was more enthusiastically embraced by them than the documentary film.”⁴² For several decades Shell would produce hundreds of documentaries, often dealing with scientific and technological subjects.⁴³ Many of the Shell films were celebrated worldwide and the production unit that made them was held in very high regard.

Probably one of the earliest moving images of Shell employees in the Dutch East Indies can be seen in Willy Mullens' *Bataafsche Petroleum Film* (1924). The three-hour Dutch documentary film was commissioned by the Bataafsche Petroleum Maatschappij, an operating company of Royal Dutch Shell.⁴⁴ A classical example of both the *record* and *rhetoric* functions of industrial films, the film documents company activities with the aim of inducing acceptance by the public. Combining images of the colonies that exhibit exotic nature with promotional sections that present the company as an important player in the world market, the film also had a clear educational function, displaying the production of crude oil, oil products, and the uses to which they were put.⁴⁵ In the United Kingdom interest for film was sparked by the newly formed marketing

company Shell-Mex & BP. Head of publicity Jack Beddington was responsible for sponsoring several promotional films, such as *Liquid History* (1932), Paul Rotha's *Contact* (1932/33), or Len Lye's *The Birth of the Robot* (1935).⁴⁶ When in 1933 the advertising policy of the Shell group was under review, Beddington was consulted on whom to suggest for writing a report on the potential use of film. Having met John Grierson during a pre-screening of *Contact*, the choice was quickly made.⁴⁷ Grierson was the head of the General Post Office Film Unit and had already become an influential figure in British documentary film making.⁴⁸

In October 1933 Grierson submitted his report, recommending a central film production unit to serve all the areas of the Shell company. Instead of the costly method of purchasing space in public cinemas, the films had to be distributed mainly non-theatrically in cooperation with educational and cultural organisations. Six types of production were suggested: general propaganda films that dramatised dominant themes in the oil industry, sales-promotion films, popular science films, technical films for specialised audiences, staff department information films, and a Shell newsreel. By the end of the year the managing directors had endorsed the plan for the Shell Film Unit (SFU).⁴⁹

On Grierson's recommendation, Edgar Anstey, one of the documentary filmmakers from the General Post Office Film Unit, became the first producer of the SFU. The Unit's first film was *Airport* (1935) documenting a 'day in the life' of Croydon Airport, at that time London's airport and one of the world's busiest. The film linked Shell with the new glamour and excitement of flying while it presented a record of the air transport infrastructure. Anstey, however, finding the slow rate of progress and political implications of working for an oil company difficult to endure, had by that time already left the Unit; he would return a few years later.⁵⁰ As problems arose with his departure, a new production policy was adopted. Though Shell had its own Film Unit, the planning and supervision of the films would be done by the Film Centre, set up by Grierson to function as a liaison between documentary filmmakers and sponsors.⁵¹ This gave the films a

sense of being detached from the Shell group, making them more universal. The arrangement of the Film Centre and Shell would last until the early 1970s when the films became more commercial.

Under the guidance of Arthur Elton, who until his death in 1973 would remain an important figure for the Unit, several other short documentaries were made during the 1930s. These 35mm films, usually lasting ten to twenty minutes, dealt with scientific and technological subjects related to Shell products and research. The innovative use of animated drawings or diagrams helped to explain difficult technical processes clearly. With some exceptions until the late 1970s, rather than through outright propaganda, Shell films sought to increase the company's prestige and standing through association. The company name appeared only in the credit titles. The SFU films, however, were not to be an end in themselves, but were still considered in relation to other media and sales promotion to create goodwill, improve demand for Shell products, and improve efficiency and knowledge within Shell as well.⁵²

For Shell, filming in 35mm was the rule. They depended on the sturdy and reliable Newman Sinclair camera, which had a maximum capacity of 200 feet (recording 3 minutes and 20 seconds) (Figures 2.3 and 2.4). The big advantage of the Newman Sinclair was the spring clockwork motor, freeing the cameraman from relying on electricity or carrying heavy batteries and generators. Most of the filming was mute, post-synchronised

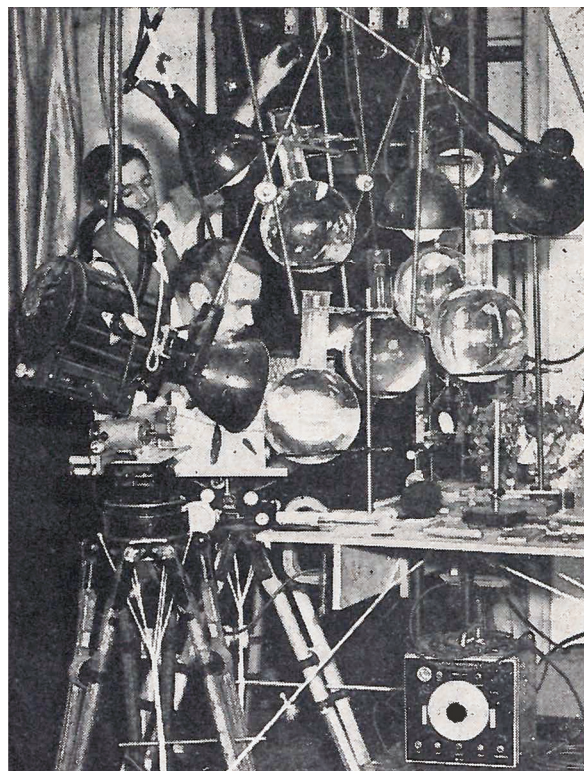


Figure 2.3: Cameraman Sidney Beadle and his assistant Ronnie Whitehouse use for *The Rival World* a Newman Sinclair camera to film in the studio a moth breaking out of its cocoon.

film; sound shooting was almost never undertaken. Until the early 1950s all sound recording used the 35mm optical RCA variable-area system (requiring a heavy sound truck). Despite its wealth the SFU did not possess an Arriflex or a magnetic tape recorder until 1956. With the use of the Arriflex camera, the reflex mirror shutter and zoom-lenses became available.⁵³

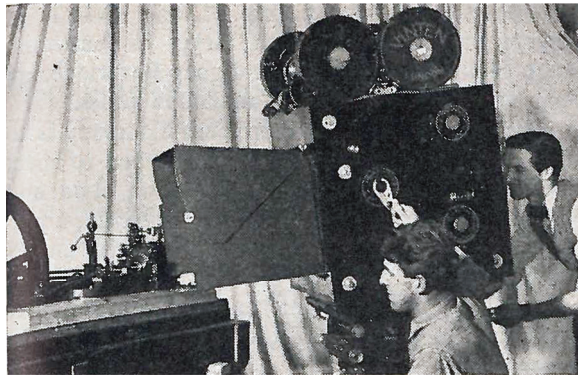
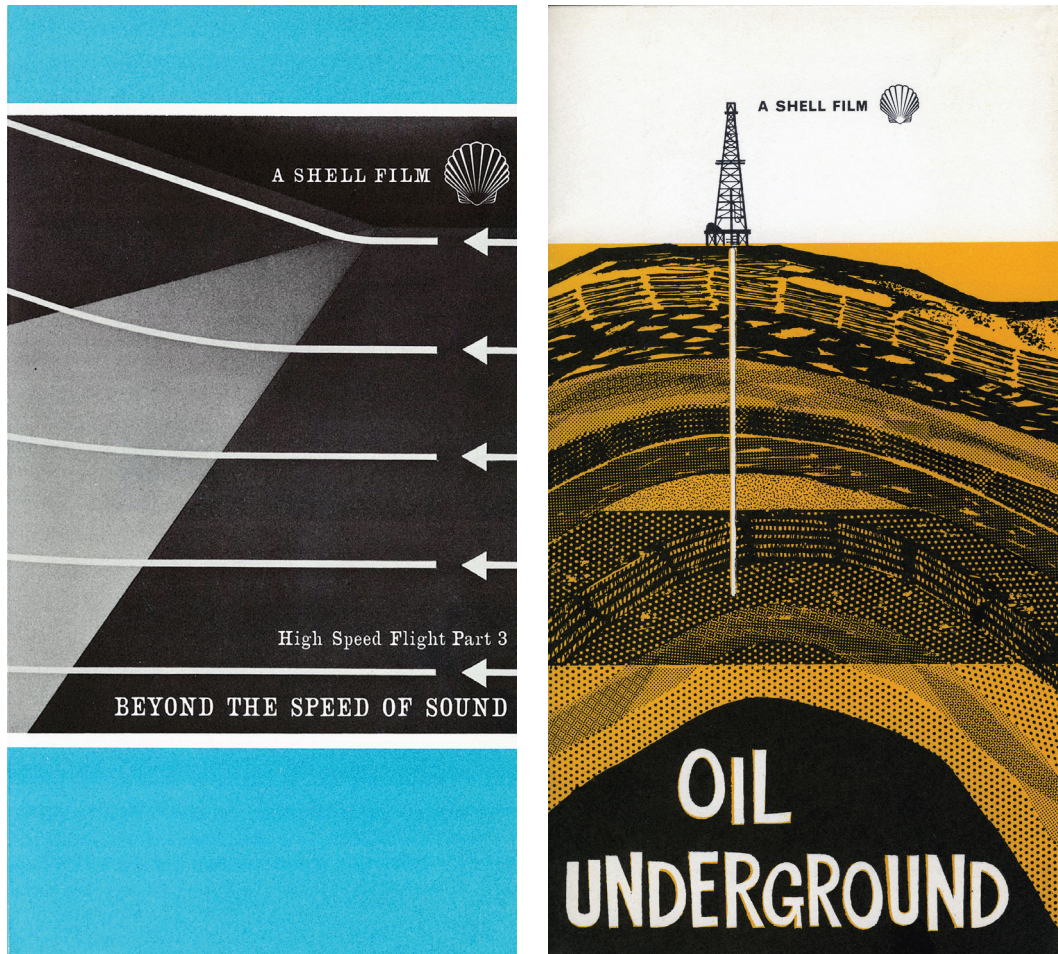


Figure 2.4: Sometimes other new cameras were used. Such as the Spottiswoode stereo camera, for filming 3-D mechanical models in the Science Museum, *Power in Perspective* (1955). Arthur Elton, "How We Use Films: In Shell," *Film User*, Aug. 1956, 347.

CREATING AN INTERNATIONAL AUDIENCE

With the start of the Second World War the Film Unit was closed down. This inactivity, however, did not last very long. In view of the likely shortage of film production, Shell decided in early 1940 to place the services of the Film Unit at the disposal of various government and national agencies that required films. During the war the Unit produced over forty films to support the war effort, with such subjects as the production of Stirling bombers, malaria control, mobilising procedures, debris tunnelling, and confidential Admiralty training films on asdic and radar. Most were made for the newly formed Ministry of Information, which showed the films in theatres or lent them at no charge to schools and institutions. Films were also distributed to theatres in neutral countries through commercial and non-theatrical channels, carried out by the British Council.⁵⁴

After the war scientific subjects continued to be featured in SFU films. Technical, chemical, or physical processes that related to Shell products and research were shown. There were also the very popular films on the principles of flight, used as training films by the air forces of various countries, as well as several films on car and motorcycle racing (Figures 2.5 and 2.6). From that time onwards, the Film Unit also became more international in its operations.



Figures 2.5 and 2.6: Promotional brochures for *High Speed Flight, Part 3: Beyond the Speed of Sound* (1959) and *Oil Underground* (1960).

More foreign language versions were made and Film Libraries were set up all over the world, loaning 16mm films at no charge to educational and technological institutions (Figure 2.7). Films that had *rationalisation* as their main focus were most often only used for internal use, thus films on handling new machines and processes or important safety instruction films, were usually not available within these libraries.

Through the use of the non-theatrical distribution system, a Shell film was aimed at a specific, limited audience already interested



Figure 2.7: An advertisement for the Shell Film Library and its films. The library already contained over 120 films in 1956. *Science and Film*, June 1956, 2.

in the subject. Shell companies, such as those in the Netherlands, France, Germany, or the US, continued to sponsor selected films that were to be made by local film companies as they had also done before the war. In most cases this was done in consultation with the SFU during international film meetings. These locally produced films were intended for local distribution, but sometimes they could also receive international distribution through the SFU.

Non-theatrical distribution within the UK was, besides the Central Film Library, also carried out by the Petroleum Films Bureau (PFB), an organization serving film distribution associated with the petroleum trade, of all brands. In 1952 the bureau had over 200 titles on its shelves and lent out over 54.000 films to schools, clubs, and technical institutes.⁵⁵ In 1953 roughly 3500 films a month were shown under PFB auspices, and for Shell's partner BP this meant 600-800 showings of their films per month.⁵⁶ In 1962 there were 162,193 bookings, with an average of 500 bookings per week. Shell's *Captive River* (1961), a relatively new film on the building of the Kariba Dam in Southern Rhodesia (later Zimbabwe), had in July 1962 through PFB a total of 607 showings.⁵⁷

With the widening international interest in Shell films, influenced by the ever-growing global spread of the company, additional units were set up. They were staffed initially by key creative and technical personnel from London, whom were to be taken over originally by trained local staff. The Australian Shell Film Unit was established in 1948 and Venezuela followed in 1952. Other Units were set up in Egypt, Nigeria, India, and South-East Asia. In these regions the films were often shown in a theatrical setting, but mobile units were sometimes used. Though the films of the national units were made for local consumption, some were distributed internationally, gaining fame and winning international film awards. With so much activity going on, it is perhaps no wonder that during the 1950s more than 130 Shell documentary films were made worldwide. In 1951 there were almost 160,000 screenings around the world with an audience of more than 8.5 million. In 1960 the international audience for the company's films

had grown to forty-five million, with films showing on a regular basis in around thirty countries.⁵⁸ Unfortunately these audience numbers are according to Shell's own public relations research at the time, so it is difficult to verify their accuracy.

Shell's growing awareness of worldwide social and economic problems can first be seen with the SFU production *The Rival World* (1955), directed by the Dutch filmmaker Bert Haanstra, who had already made several industrial films for the Bataafsche company.⁵⁹ Shot in East Africa, Sudan, and Egypt, *The Rival World* shows man's battle against the insect as a pest and bearer of disease. A vital part of controlling the insect enemies was chemicals and insecticide, relating to the business of Shell Chemicals, one of the film's sponsors. With its mix of public relations, commercial interest, and social concern, *The Rival World* is a landmark among the Shell films. It was the Unit's first production in Eastman colour and was produced in twenty-seven languages. Its cinematography received a great deal of praise and won several international film awards. *The Rival World* is still one of the best-known Shell films.

While producer Arthur Elton focused more on the technical aspects of Shell, it was Stuart Legg who, from *The Rival World* on, stimulated a new stream of films dealing with themes related to world health, food research, agrarian development, and environmental problems. These films were often produced with the assistance of various government institutions and United Nations agencies. Besides these social issue films, many documentaries in the 1960s were also made that related more clearly to the company's main business. Films were made that dealt with modern refining processes, plastics and their place in modern industry, the history of motor racing, or the history of paint. In 1962 over seventy countries received films, while 4,500 prints were ordered for distribution by operating companies.⁶⁰ The audience numbers that saw an SFU film also continued to grow. In 1965 in Europe a total audience of over ten million had seen an SFU film (in 196,000 screenings), while in America this was nearly eighteen million.⁶¹ Each year around eight films were made.

THE SHELL FILM UNIT IN NIGERIA

The national film units were set up to help expand trade. According to an internal memo from Royal Dutch Shell it was in the so-called Emergent World where 25% of their trade was done; the rest was done in Europe and North America. It was, however, in the Emergent World where one of the great expansions could potentially be made, but where most of the public relation problems were.⁶²

Films made by local units were seen as a most useful tool to be used within these emergent world countries for several reasons: showing the company's contribution to economic prosperity; securing its reputation as outstanding and understanding practitioner which raised productivity, income and technical practise; and presenting the company as a valuable presence, giving information on Shell activities and achievements within the region, calculated to increase its stature.⁶³ An important feature of Shell's overseas film programme was also that it allowed the company to establish government contacts at a very high level, which can be seen in Nigeria as well.⁶⁴ The Nigerian educated audience was the primary target of the Nigerian SFU, with film screenings especially arranged for the intelligentsia, bearing in mind, however, "that there is an increasing body of highly educated Nigerians who eschew European connections and this group must not be overlooked." Students and secondary school pupils came next, to whom also the international technical and training films were shown. Additionally, especially in the areas where Shell was active, the uneducated could not be ignored, as in "both town and country there is the ever present danger of political exploitation of ignorance."⁶⁵ This caution for the uneducated from non-urban areas seems to indicate that Shell's was concerned with possible local protests against oil companies' exploration.

The Nigerian Shell film unit was set up in 1959, initially for two years, but it would last for four, centred in Lagos. Douglas Gordon had joined the SFU as a trainee in 1954 and had been assistant director to Haanstra's *The Rival World* before directing several Shell films himself, such as *The Ruthless One* (1956) and

Oil in Asia (1958). Gordon was sent with a small crew to Nigeria to train Nigerian technicians, mostly students, and act as manager and producer.⁶⁶ The films would be made by a self-contained unit in Nigeria. Only the final stages of the film post-production and sound editing would, together with adding the commentary and music recording, be done in London.⁶⁷ Though more localised compared to the setup by Unilever, where the whole crew was from the UK, the 'local' Nigerian films still had to travel to London before they could be screened in Nigeria (similarly like the governmental CFU productions).⁶⁸ The Unit would consist of an expatriate producer as well as a director, cameraman and editor, each having a Nigerian assistant (among them the later accomplished film producer and documentary maker Levi Ezeasor). The expatriate staff would train the assistants in directing, camera work and editing. Originally it was thought that Nigerian assistants might eventually take over their jobs, but it never seems to have gotten that far. Other staff members were a projectionist/handyman, a clerk, and a driver, all from Africa.⁶⁹

In general the message to be conveyed by the films was that Shell-BP had its roots in Nigeria while having international contacts as well; that technical and organisational know-how could overcome insuperable difficulties; that the company created opportunities in employment and training, wanting Nigerian participation on all levels; that the company integrated its activities within Nigerian life with care, permanently contributing to public amenities; and that the economic value of oil production was important to Nigeria and fundamental to its material progress. At the start of the film unit Douglas Gordon recommended several subjects through which these messages could be transmitted. These suggestions ran from films on the various company operations in Nigeria, Nigerianisation, the Nigerian oil operation within the international oil business, and on the prospects of Nigerian development in general.⁷⁰

The cost of the Nigerian film unit was estimated at around 50.000 pounds a year.⁷¹ The unit was set up to secure and propel Shell-BP's image as a

benefactor that brought vital economic assets to the country and had a wealth of experience which, according to the company, were both needed by Nigeria. As Douglas Gordon wrote: "The successful 'projection' of this image may well prove an essential factor in the Company's unhampered prosecution of its business."⁷² The fact that Nigerians were working on these films was seen as beneficial to Shell-BP's public image as well.⁷³ Film was, according to Gordon, particularly suited for this job. The first films would be made "to win general approval rather than detailed understanding. [...] The emphasis should be on movement, drama, human interest, and technical intricacies [should be] studiously avoided."⁷⁴ For this reason Gordon choose the feature director Frank Nesbitt as he "was not in the Shell vein or in the classic documentary vein because we knew we had to make films for African audiences in a different way."⁷⁵ The films had to be made in English, but spoken by a Nigerian, avoiding "detailed technical exposition and concentrate rather on dramatic action and human interest, but otherwise make no special allowances which might give the appearance of condescension."⁷⁶ This personal touch and dramatic focus was rather different from the traditional Shell film made by the Unit in London, which were indeed more technical overall. The Nigerian unit was set up in Lagos, instead of the oil town Port Harcourt, as Gordon said: "no, if I'm going to do a public relations job with the Nigerian public, I mustn't become an oil field man." Thereby Gordon imitated Grierson's notion of detachment, as could also be seen in the arrangement between the Film Centre and Shell. In its four years of existence, the Nigerian unit would make around ten films.⁷⁷ The first two, made by the same team of a British director, cameraman, and editor, each having a Nigerian assistant, were *The Search For Oil in Nigeria* and *Oilman's Move*, both released in 1961. The two films were shown, according to Gordon, first at several Independence Festival celebrations in Nigeria.⁷⁸

Douglas Gordon talked about finding and training the Nigerian crew: *"We had to try and find what we could because the difficulty was that because we were there only on initially a two year contract, we couldn't attract the really high flyers because they were being mopped up by Government and broadcasting and so forth, the big names of the young bright student, the playwrights, the directors. So we had to look literally around for likely lads with often very little education. Then we actually found them eventually. But it was a sweat" [...] "Now after their four years with us, if you find them now, one is head cameraman at the Federal Film Unit and another is head of films at Western region television and so on. They've got very good jobs and we trained them on the job of course as we were trained ourselves. And they couldn't understand that. The expectation was that if you were recruited for training you went to England [...]"*⁷⁹

Both films made clear to Nigerian audiences the difficulties of searching for oil and showing Shell as having the skills and knowledge to pull it off, which is also stressed in an internal circulation for the first film, explaining why it was made:

1. to bring to the notice of the Nigerian public the tremendous amount of planning and preparatory work that has to be undertaken over a period of many years [in an enterprise concerned with the development of natural resources]
2. to promote goodwill by associating the oil companies with the newly independent Nigeria.⁸⁰

The Search For Oil in Nigeria deals with the work of a seismic exploration party in the difficult swamp country of the Niger Delta. The most often used prospecting method was that of seismic reflection. Shot holes were drilled by hand or mechanically at pre-determined intervals.⁸¹ The small charge of dynamite generated shock waves that were recorded by instruments enabling the creation of seismographic echo prints. Compared to films made by the SFU in London, the film focuses a lot more on the human interaction, instead of various technical and scientific methods of discovering oil. The use of technique and equipment is in *The Search For Oil in Nigeria* mostly linked with human endurance, of crossing swamps, drilling, setting off explosives, printing and reading seismographic echo prints, and continuing further along the swamp. Indeed, when in 1964 the SFU

re-used footage from this film and other films by the Nigerian unit to explain the discovery and drilling for oil, it added more of its familiar technical exposition and accompanied it with illustrating models, animated drawings, and diagrams.⁸³ Another focus of the SFU that was also not present in the Nigerian films was that of a more global and general view, with an interest in global international affairs and their impact on people.⁸⁴

In *The Search For Oil in Nigeria* both Nigerian and Europeans work together, though those in overall charge are European and mostly British. The first persons to be shown in the film are those from an expedition in a jungle, sitting up front in a boat on the river. As the boat arrives from afar the voiceover tells us that the expedition's leaders are in the boat. The first person to receive a close up is a white man in charge of the surveying, followed by a close up of his white partner, the head of the exploration party, who is sitting next to him. They have white clean shirts and wear distinct sunglasses. Both are introduced by name, after which their Nigerian assistant who is sitting behind them (and doesn't get an individual close up) is introduced as well. The authority of the group is thus made very clear, being presented as the source of planning know-how and oversight, working together closely with Nigerians.

The racial differences and cross-cultural cooperation are elements of the film which were, indeed, seen as important by Shell, as the film was thought especially suitable for screenings "to students both from an educational and recruitment point of view, particularly in countries where there is a colour as well as a white population."⁸⁴ Other on-screen workers, reporting under the British managers, are also introduced by name by the voiceover, though they are not seen working together within the frame. The idea of black and white cooperation is however exemplified by the brochure that accompanied the film. On the front side, a Nigerian employer is looking at the recording of an echo picture and points to something; on the back, a white Shell employer holds the other end of the print

and looks at where his colleague is pointing (Figure 2.8). As could also be seen in Unilever's "Progress Through Teamwork" campaign, as well as other advertisements by expatriate companies, the message was that through technology and tools the coloniser and colonised would



Figure 2.8: Back and front of the promotional brochure for *The Search for Oil in Nigeria*.

come together. In the film, however, it is clearly that the roles are reversed. The Nigerian merely helps to hold the long end of the echo print and has no active part in analysing it. Only the white employer seems to study it, and the Nigerian employer is not pointing anything out.

SYNOPTIC VIEWS

The follow up to *The Search for Oil in Nigeria* was *Oilman's Move*, this time on the drilling of wells and the moving of a drilling platform to the next site when the well turned out to be dry. Both films were made by the same team, again having a British director, cameraman, and editor, all three having a Nigerian assistant. *Oilman's Move's* first scene is that of a drilling rig seen from below, underlining the height of the 150-foot derrick, standing high above the palm trees in a cleared area in the Elemenwa forest in the Port Harcourt province. "When

you see it for the first time it is quite marvellous, and almost frightening,” the voiceover tells the viewer as the derrick is lowered by a European operator. From a slightly elevated angle four curious African children are excitedly looking up, while a scratchy and mildly unsettling jazz tune can be heard (Figures 2.9-2.12). The amazement of new strange objects and technology within the forest are constantly stressed in this film. The enormous and impressive equipment is seen



Figures 2.09-2.12: Technology, like this huge oil derrick that is slowly lowered, can incite awe, wonder and fear. Screenshots from *Oilman's Move*.

carried through the forests and swamps, hindered by floods. The film does not mention that technology from the West was used. A so-called ‘Water Buffalo’ that is presented as the solution to difficult transport along the Nigerian mud and rain roads, was “developed in other parts of the world”. It was in fact the British Albion Motors Company that had made a trailer with low ground pressure tracked bogies especially for Shell/BP Nigeria, being able to carry a payload of twenty-eight tons of machinery through boggy swamp grounds.⁸⁵ This was the first time the machine was filmed carrying an oil rig. Effacing the trailer’s exact origins might have been due to the filmmakers’ desire to balance the need of producing

amazement at the new technological development being offered by this foreign company (which origins are also not mentioned) with offsetting potential negative feelings towards the UK and its colonial past.

The British colonial government often legitimated the Nigerians' political subjection in return for technological progress, while displaying this progress and scientific superiority in various media. As noted by Brian Larkin, using infrastructural technologies in colonial rule was to provoke feelings of the sublime through the work of humankind, remaking landscapes and building large structures. From 1901 onward, when Nigeria became a British protectorate, new infrastructural transformations such as the coming of electricity, the building of roads, or the railway, were noted in newspapers. The amazed reactions of Nigerians also were recorded and described, binding and fetishizing the relationship between technology, colonial rule and the sublime.⁸⁶ The awe seen in the display of colonial and governmental workings can also be seen in those created by international companies. Technology can be used to incite awe, wonder and fear, but with it also marking what separates the coloniser from the colonised.⁸⁷ *Oilman's Move* especially focuses on the use of technology, underlining the enormous willpower, energy and money to find and produce oil. The technology portrayed is however not neutral.

When in *Oilman's Move* the machines and the trucks pass a small village, villagers, often half naked, are shown watching in amazement and awe. Filmed from above, the trucks and equipment dwarf the village houses while in the process they leave behind a torn up muddy road. Like in the promotional booklet of 1953, what lingers most from this film is the difficulty of the terrain, the wetness and mud through which the enormous equipment must be moved (Figures 2.13-2.15). Normal existing roads were not sufficient and extra wide new roads had to be made and bridges be built to carry the loads. The film presents new technology designed to enter a hostile and difficult environment. At the end of the film when the derrick is put up again, the amazement of the



Figures 2.13-2.15: In *Oilman's Move* enormous trucks and machines are used to carry a derrick along muddy roads, passing rural villages, to its new destination in the tropical forest.

onscreen viewers is stressed repeatedly. Mothers, children, and men watch from the forest where they come from, looking at the open field where all the huge equipment is gathered (Figures 2.16-2.18). The voiceover acknowledges that “on the first day at the new location, the rig is already beginning to take its place in the lives of the people from the nearby village.” What these changes might be is not clear, as besides the act of watching, nothing else is shown. What is also not mentioned is that the site must have been prepared in the weeks before, as a large part of the forest had to be taken down, and flattened for the equipment,



Figures 2.16-2.18: Similar like at the beginning of *Oilman's Move*, the amazement at the intruding technology and equipment is stressed near the end of the film.

vehicles and cabins. The new location was thus already having an impact that is revealed in the last shot of the film, shot from a helicopter, encircling the derrick (Figure 2.19).



Figure 2.19: The last shot in *Oilman's Move*, showing the erect derrick and the forest from above.

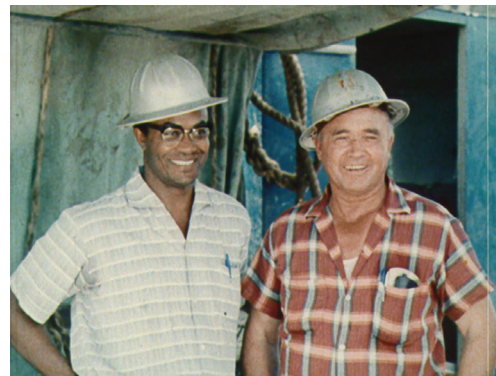
In *Oilman's Move* the derrick and its transport become a symbol of the enormity of the challenges to overcome for the production of oil to start, but with the final synoptic image from the helicopter, the huge cleared area of virgin jungle immediately takes over this function.⁸⁸ What indeed mostly stands out is the large rectangular almost-empty area with no trees and a large white road leading into it. The elevated rig is dwarfed by the scale of the empty area as well as the looming forest that continues to the horizon line. The industrial construction is shown as almost being overtaken by the landscape that was left over, stressing the enormity of the challenges that had been overcome to make the derrick's relocation possible. This exact synoptic image was also available as a publicity photograph by Shell, which could be ordered from the publicity department, having the description: "The new drilling site, literally carved out of the jungle." The forest was presented as an object that could be invaded by humans and their machines, leaving carved out roads and production sites needed for oil exploitation and the consequent betterment of the country in the guise of change. While the international film version fades to the Shell logo as the helicopter flies along the site, in the original Nigerian version during the end credits the helicopter flies even further away, making the stripped place smaller and smaller among the vast forest, before ascending into the clouds.⁸⁹

The aerial overview given by the helicopter to the camera helps to construct and install meanings of industrialization and change onto the geographical space below, just like photographs and drawn maps had done before.⁹⁰ The viewpoint

from a helicopter, being able to hover in the air and manoeuvre fairly easily in different directions, was still reasonably new and was used to provoke amazement in the viewer by creating a smooth God's eye view. In the years to come, it would become more frequent in Shell films.⁹¹ The space still present could be seen as immense or as the opposite - the original space that was devoured by massive industrial constructions, dwarfing humans and stripping landscapes. Both presentations, however, celebrated the immensity of scale.

MOVING OIL

The first person shown in *Oilman's Move* is Guy Mayes, a "tool pusher" (manager in charge of the rig), coming out of his caravan's door to inspect the work and gives orders to workmen stacking cement, as the voiceover tells us "for a guy like Guy Mayes the job is never done." He walks in long white trousers and a sleeveless shirt; most of the Nigerians workers wear shorts. Guy goes to see the petroleum engineer Onyeabor Ogodazi. The two men are set up as the main characters, to which the film will return every now and then. The film will also end with them laughing together after the successful rig move (Figures 2.20 and 2.21). Unlike *The Search For Oil in Nigeria*, the brochure for *Oilman's Move*



Figures 2.20 and 2.21: Guy Mayes and Onyeabor Ogodazi at the beginning and end of *Oilman's Move*.

does not focus on working together but shows many Nigerians working. On this brochure almost only Nigerians are seen (Figure 2.22). The whiteness comes

mostly from their shirts which in the film is a sign of more important job functions as manager or coordinator - those who do not get very dirty. This film's intended focus was the company's Africanisation policy. For Shell it showed "very clearly that Nigerians are employed in responsible and senior positions. This should be very helpful in promoting the 'partners in progress' theme."⁹² (Figure 2.23)



Figure 2.22: Back and front of the promotional brochure for *Oilman's Move*.




Figure 2.23: Shell promoted the 'partners in progress' theme in *West African Review*, claiming Shell helped make modern living a reality. *West African Review*, Dec. 1959, 864.

Since 1959 Shell had been promoting this theme in advertisements meant for Nigerian newspapers and magazines, as they pointed out that through Shell the benefits of modernisation came to Nigeria as a result of the products needed to keep the country literally running but also because they enabled the extraction of oil through its technical and scientific resources.⁹³ It was a promotion that also was linked with a different Nigerian ad-campaign, called *Shell People. Ability and Experience* which focused on Shell employees' personal experiences and educational histories before they became, say, an aviation superintendent, a public relations spokesperson, or manager of distribution and supplies.⁹⁴ A large photograph of the person was featured in these series of advertisements,

thus focusing on the personal (Figures 2.24 and 2.25). This way of presenting Nigerians who assumed senior positions or received overseas training within Shell-BP was quite common within the Shell-BP's Nigerian monthly magazine, *Shell-BP Bulletin* (later renamed *Oil Search Bulletin*). These magazines were produced for the general public, presenting news of the company's operations,

SHELL PEOPLE

ABILITY
AND EXPERIENCE



Most people want a career which offers work worth doing well and a challenge to their ambition and initiative. Men like Mr. Badejo, epitomise Shell's recruitment policy: the right qualifications, good training, planned experience and the proper rewards for a job well done. Mr. D. A. Badejo joined Shell in 1944. He went to U.S.A. and took a B.Sc. (Maths.) at Virginia Union University, Richmond, and later an M.Sc. (C.E.) at Massachusetts Institute of Technology. After further training in the U.K., Mr. Badejo returned to Nigeria in 1954 to serve as Depot Manager, Kano. He is now in charge of Construction and Maintenance in Operations Department, Lagos.

SHELL COMPANY OF WEST AFRICA LIMITED P.M.B. 2052 LAGOS

SHELL PEOPLE

ABILITY
AND EXPERIENCE



Most people want a career which offers work worth doing well and a challenge to their ambition and initiative. People like Mrs. T. O. A. Sodeinde, Public Relations Department, epitomise Shell's recruitment policy: the right qualifications, good training, planned experience and the proper rewards for a job well done. Mrs. Sodeinde, who gained a Teaching Diploma at West Hill College, Birmingham and was the Colonial Office Liaison Officer for Nigerian Women Students in U.K. from 1953/55 joined Shell in 1956. She is responsible for schools education programmes, a job in which her wide experience is invaluable.

SHELL COMPANY OF WEST AFRICA LIMITED P.M.B. 2052 LAGOS

Figures 2.24 and 2.25: The personal experience and history of Mr. Badejo and Mrs. Sodeinde were an important part of this Shell advertisement campaign, making them part of 'Shell People'. *West African Review*, Oct. 1959, 640; Nov. 1959, 744.

explaining techniques and problems of oil exploration, and having a circulation of around 10,000. Often on the front-page, photographic portraits of employees were printed with a short biography of their lives and where they worked within Shell-BP (Figure 2.26).⁹⁵ Thus together these campaigns could promote the company's technological resources, their contribution to the country by actively hiring Nigerians while creating a sense of community among Shell people. Compared to UAC's *Men of Tomorrow* campaign (printed in the same



SHELL-BP BULLETIN



No. 14
FREE
APRIL 1965

MORE NIGERIANS ASSUME SENIOR POSITIONS IN SHELL-BP

MORE Nigerians have been appointed to senior positions in Shell-BP. They include Hezekiah Ofurum, formerly Head of Industrial Relations who is now Management Representative, Personnel in Lagos; Chikezie Onyia, oil terminal, Bonny, where extensions costing millions of pounds are in progress and Ben Osuno, who is a seismic party chief at the early age of 29.

A former mathematics master at King's College, Lagos, and a graduate of London University, Ofurum joined the Company in 1957, and has since had experience in both Public Relations and Personnel Departments.

In his present position, Ofurum will represent the Company in the Federal Capital on matters affecting personnel and industrial relations. In addition, he will continue to represent Nigerian Employers in the governing body of the International Labour Organisation, Geneva, and lead the Company's bargaining team during negotiations with the workers' union.

Onyia, who joined the Company also in 1957, after graduating in Economics from the University of Wales, Swansea, will in his capacity as Head of Personnel Services Department,

employees have attended various training courses overseas.

Two other Nigerians, Bethel Njoku and Dr. Ephraim Essien, are currently on development assignments in Uganda and Trinidad, respectively.

PROVIDING FOR THE FUTURE

Realising, like other major employers in the country, that growing one's "own timber" is often the surest way of providing for the future supply of trained manpower, the Company already awarded this year 23 engineering and geology scholarship to the candidates listed below. They were selected from secondary schools in various parts of the country offering Higher School Certificate courses:

M. C. Egbuonye, Government College, Umuahia; O. C. Iloje, Government College, Umuahia; C. N. Achara, Government College, Afikpo; A. Onwelu, Government College, Afikpo; E. E. Anyanwu, Government College, Owerri; J. N. Akomi, Government College, Owerri; S. O. I. Onowighose, Government College, Ughelli; T. I. Imasuen, Government College, Ughelli; M. A. Ohuyomi, Government College, Ughelli; T. Yusuf, King's College, Lagos; S. C. Okafor, King's College, Lagos; O. Ohi, Igbo College, Lagos; O. George, Igbo College, Lagos; I. Akwari, Christ the King College, Onitsha; I. Utoh, Christ the King College, Onitsha; E. Imomoh, College of the Immaculate Conception, Enugu; C. Ogwu, St. Gregory's College, Lagos; E. Ejiogu, Dennis Memorial Grammar School, Onitsha; A. I. Aliyu, Okene Secondary School, Okene; S. S. Ogunola, Government College, Ibadan; P. N. Ejoh, Federal School of Science, Lagos; E. N. Ejoh, Federal School of Science, Lagos; E. N. Tawo, Hope Waddell Training Institute, Calabar; E. F. Dike, Government College, Afikpo.



C. Onyia
who becomes Head of Personnel Services Department; J. Babalola Kumolu, who is working as a Project Engineer at the Shell-BP crude



H. M. Ofurum
be responsible for the running of the established services of Personnel as well as the Company's extensive welfare schemes for employees such as housing and retirement benefits.

STANLEY GRAY SHIELD ON DISPLAY



GIRLS of the Archdeacon Crowther Memorial Girls School, Elelewa, near Port Harcourt, were the lucky winners of the Stanley Gray Shield for music, during the recent Port Harcourt Festival of the Arts competition. Armed with this shield, the girls are optimistic about winning greater honours at the regional finals of the Festival of the Arts competition to be held in Enugu.

The students, obviously elated by their success, are seen in the photograph below admiring the shield. At the extreme right is the Principal of the school, Miss E. G. Shepherd.



The Stanley Gray Shield



B. Osuno
duties as seismic party chief include the planning, co-ordinating and controlling the activities of a field seismic party of over a hundred men and ensuring that the techniques and methods employed in the party are designed to produce the best possible seismic methods.

TRAINING OVERSEAS

Simultaneous with these moves, a number of Nigerian senior staff employees of the Company are attending training courses overseas. They are I. H. Ozigbu, who is undergoing an extensive one year training course in Holland and which includes participation in an international course in hydraulic engineering at the Technical University, Delft, Holland; Cyprian Nwuba, who is attending an organisation and production course in the London Office; while David Sokunbi and Joseph Basse are undergoing production staff development courses in Holland and the United Kingdom. So far, over sixty Nigerian



J. B. Kumolu

MD Back From Leave

THE Managing Director of Shell-BP, Mr. Stanley Gray, who had been on leave since March 27, is due to resume duty in the first week of May.

Figure 2.26: Pictures of the persons receiving senior positions within Shell-BP or going abroad for training, were often printed together with a short biography on the cover of the Nigerian Shell-BP magazine. "More Nigerians Assume Senior Positions in Shell-BP", *Shell-BP Bulletin*, Apr. 1965, no. 14, 1.

magazine, only two pages away from that of Shell), with their drawn Nigerians in important active and responsible positions, "the manager", "the sales manager", "the accountant" and "the technician," Shell's seem less sophisticated, but also more down to earth, belonging to an exciting time already taking place (instead of a possible tomorrow) and, of course, more personal (Figure 2.27).⁹⁶

As noted earlier, the Nigerianisation of European companies tended to proceed slowly during the 1950s. Oil companies with OPLs were obligated to train Nigerians as skilled labour, and technical and administrative staff. According to Ludwig Schätzl this was done to prevent additional strain on the Nigerian labour market that had a scarcity of skilled workers. However, again, the law only gave general directions to train skilled

workers, and did not define the extent of this obligation.⁹⁷ In January 1959 Shell proudly claimed to have forty Nigerians in senior staff positions. Considering that over 5000 people worked for the company in Nigeria, this was not that impressive.⁹⁸ Shell complained, however, that the training schools had difficulty attracting students as those “with the right qualifications and aptitude have not been forthcoming in sufficient numbers.”⁹⁹

Presumably after *The Search For Oil in Nigeria*, Shell-BP made a Nigerian-specific film that targeted this potential, yet underdeveloped, labour market: *Nigeria's Oilmen*. This colour film functioned as an advertisement and promotion to show the employment opportunities and training schemes for Nigerians who wanted to assume responsible positions within Shell-BP, rather than a film with an educational or informational interest at its basis. From the beginning Shell-BP's name is mentioned, logos are shown, and the Shell-BP centre in Port Harcourt and Shell-BP people are introduced. This film clearly was not meant to be seen outside its Nigerian context and it seems never to have been released in



Figure 2.27: This UAC advertisement of 'the accountant' was placed two pages before Shell's advertisement featuring Mr. Badejo. *West African Review*, Oct. 1959, 638.

the UK or any other country. *Rationalisation*, often seen in industrial films that are not intended for general audiences, was thus an important factor; the film was set up as an advertisement to gather a Nigerian workforce that would improve productivity.

After mentioning that the oil in Nigeria was found by the men of Shell-BP, the Nigerian voiceover asks what skills are necessary to bring this oil successfully onto the world market. *Nigeria's Oilmen* then follows loosely a group of apprentices who have just arrived at the Shell-BP trade school in Port Harcourt, supposedly chosen out of 20.000 applicants. They are first welcomed by the Dutch principal of the Shell/BP trade school. Through the group of apprentices the film illustrates the various skills and jobs needed by the company and the training courses they offer to Nigerians. In a four minute sequence set to only upbeat music, the apprentices are shown being taught theory and practise by several white (presumably Dutch) lecturers. The sequence ends with them playing soccer together. Then, the voiceover returns and introduces specialised skills, each receiving a short explanation, mostly related to new equipment and mechanization processes (from punch card machines, radios, microscopic research, to drilling equipment). These instructors (such as a drill pipe handler, a petroleum engineer, a telecommunication engineer, or a transport supervisor) are introduced by name. For those from Nigeria, and during this section most of them are black, usually a short background history is given, underlining their growth within the company, reminiscent of the *Shell-BP Bulletin*. Walter Okala, also seen in *Oilman's Move*, is thus introduced as: "He has come a long way in the Company's service since he joined in 1948. Then he was clerk to an exploration party. Now he is transport supervisor – a specialist with experience of land vehicles, aircraft, and water transport."

During the colonial period the British government offered Nigeria technological progress, promoting the idea it would raise Africans' educational, political and social level to that of the modern world. The aforementioned idea of 'colo-

nial sublime' carries two modes of colonial rule. On the one hand it incites awe while creating a separation between coloniser and colonised, but it also offers technology as a mode of development. As David Nye writes, "the technological sublime [...] manifests a split between those who understand and control machines and those who do not."¹⁰⁰ Technology could be seen as helping a society to evolve and mature. Through the training on and mastering of new technologies, technology could – some day – even bring together coloniser and colonised. The colonial sublime is thus fragile and could only be maintained for a short duration; once it was familiarised, it was destroyed.¹⁰¹ *Nigeria's Oilmen* undermines the sublime by offering training on these new machines and techniques; however, like the colonial regime itself, it makes clear (though more indirectly) that progress still comes from a foreign entity and from foreign knowledge. Technology and its mastery thus remained in the possession of the European powers and was foregrounded to make distinctions with its colonial and post-colonial subjects. The film that began with the Dutch principal of the Shell/BP trade school welcoming new students ends with the Dutch toolpusher waving goodbye to three Nigerian undergraduates as they leave the drilling location by helicopter. The voiceover does not fail to mention it was their first trip by helicopter.

HIGHLIFE, CALYPSO, AND LOCAL VOICES

Like all Shell films from that period there is usually no synchronised speech within the frame and commentators are only heard, not seen. This might have been a consequence of the many international language versions that were needed, making it much easier to change the language of the unseen voiceovers. Most Shell commentaries explained scientific and technological advances to the audience by using a voiceover in 'received pronunciation', the standard English accent spoken in the South of England. These commentators were never given credit in the titles, even though some of the voice talent in those Shell films

made and released in Britain must have been known to the audience, such as Stephen Murray, Michael Goodliffe, Andrew Faulds, James McKechnie, or Gary Watson, who worked in theatre, television, or for BBC radio. However, most of the voices used during the 1950s-60s era are not known.¹⁰² It is possible that colleagues from the production team were employed to read voiceovers, as was also the standard practise with the films produced by the GPO.¹⁰³ Thus for the English versions of the Venezuelan Shell films, the director R.K. Neilson Baxter was asked to provide a voiceover for *Caracas* (1956), and Stuart Legg did the commentary for *Land of Grace* (*Rostros de Venezuela*, 1964). For the Nigerian films, however, a different strategy was used, one that also underlined the production talent's collaboration with Nigerians.

The Search For Oil in Nigeria is not narrated by a native British speaker but by the Nigerian writer and political activist Wole Soyinka (who later received the Nobel price for literature).¹⁰⁴ Using local voice talent for internationally released films was a very recent development. In local Shell unit films that were internationally released, like *Caracas*, *Lake Pipeline* (1958), or *Oil in Asia* (made by Gordon), British voiceover talent was still used. From the early 1960s, however, it became common practice within Shell (and also in UAC) to use local voiceover talent for at least the English version (as several other language versions also existed), communicating for viewers that they were seeing an authentic portrayal of Nigerians working in the oil industry.¹⁰⁵ The local voiceover also lessened the colonial feel many of the CFU and federal film units still had. The international Shell version for *The Search For Oil in Nigeria* left the credit sequence of the original Shell-BP version intact, stating the name of the narrator. For *Oilman's Move* there was a shorter international version made. These credits were adjusted and moved to the beginning of the film, with it the narrator Adamu Mohammed and calypso singer Sammy (Samuel) Akpabot lost their credits.¹⁰⁶

Like the voiceover, the music used in these Shell films was related to Nigeria. With *The Search For Oil in Nigeria*, Shell used music by the Nigerian-born Akin

Euba, whom in the early 1950s had studied piano and composition at the Trinity College of Music, London. Euba returned to Nigeria in 1957 and started working for the Nigerian Broadcasting Corporation while composing music.¹⁰⁷ Throughout the film, drums and flute are mostly used, especially when Nigerians are shown working, making musical linkages to more traditional and tribal music for the Western viewer. The music for *Oilman's Move* used a more varied musical palette, performed by the highlife bands of Ambrose Campbell and Fitzroy Coleman.¹⁰⁸ Highlife music is characterised by jazzy horns and multiple guitars that lead the band. The term came into use when prestige entertainment bands added versions of local dance tunes to their repertoire of European music, blending traditional rhythms and melodies with European musical elements, and thus transcended class and cultural markers. Ambrose Campbell was born in Nigeria and arrived in London during the war. There, he became the leader of the West African Rhythm Brothers, associated with Caribbean musicians, and had a great influence on London's highlife and jazz community.¹⁰⁹ Fitzroy Coleman came originally from Trinidad and played guitar on many West Indian records made in London in the 1950s. The highlife music Campbell and Coleman played developed in the 1920s and 1930s, first in Ghana then in Lagos and western Nigeria, where it had a long lasting impact on popular music.¹¹⁰ In Nigeria highlife symbolised progress, modernity and internationalism. The music was especially associated with the economic boom between 1945 and Independence, thereby making it an interesting, but fitting choice for Shell to use in their promotional campaign.¹¹¹

In *Oilman's Move*, the music (percussions and trumpet, backed by singing) starts during the opening credits and continues as the relocation of an oilrig and its destination are explained by the voiceover. During the film up-tempo music with its rhythmic jazz motifs returns every now and then, mostly when showing the slow moving transport of trucks, making the work seem more flowing. When the oil rig tower is raised, a trumpet mimics the raising by playing ever-higher

notes. In the middle of the film the Nigerian-born Sammy Akpabot sings a calypso song and explains the troubles the trucks have travelling on the watery roads, and even getting stuck (Figure 2.28). A calypso is a type of music that originated in the West Indies, notably in Trinidad, having



Figure 2.28: As heard in the *Oilman's Move* calypso: "In spite of our toil and sweat we couldn't get out of this situation. The rains defied all the skills that we could try and when our lorries were stuck we had to find a new solution."

their origins in the West African *griot* tradition (an oral historian, storyteller, poet) and is characterised by improvised lyrics on topical, political or broadly humorous subjects.¹¹² Like Campbell and Coleman, Akpabot had studied and played in London. Virtually all of his work is typified by a recurring approach in which elements of highlife music is combined with those of his traditional culture.¹¹³ It seems likely that the use of highlife and calypso music in *Oilman's Move* was influenced by the use of Akpabot's extremely popular song in the Ghanaian short Barclay bank commercial *Put Una Money for There* (1956).¹¹⁴ The Barclay commercial won first prize at the Cannes film festival for advertising. Akpabot would continue to make calypsos for industry. In UAC's *The New Traders* (1962) Akpabot's prominently placed calypso comments (at times humorously) on the new opportunities of trading in West-Africa.

The music in *The Search For Oil in Nigeria* and *Oilman's Move* thus weaves the sounds and music of immigrants together with those influenced by British and Western culture, tapping into a rich cultural mixture of high and low, the old and new, urban progress and the rural, the local and the foreign. The use of non-received pronunciation, using dialects, even the heavy accents in the calypso, must also have related to the idea of intimacy and authenticity, qualities Grierson advocated as the ideal aim of a good commentary.¹¹⁵ Thus just by

listening to the commentary track and music, Nigerian Shell films signalled they were not something from the typical Shell mould.¹¹⁶

GLOBAL VIEWS

Unfortunately, little is known about the initial release of the first Shell-BP films in Nigeria. *Shell-BP Bulletin* or regional Nigerian newspapers contain no advertisements for these films, and they are barely mentioned. *The Search For Oil in Nigeria* did feature in the Nigerian newspaper *Daily Times*, when it was announced as one of the first of a series of films on the Nigerian oil search. It did not mention how or where the film could be seen.¹¹⁷ A short explanation of the content of the film was accompanied by three photographs showing the work in the swamps (such as drilling holes and setting off explosives). These pictures are not stills from the film. The text near the pictures stresses the hard work, noting also that the assistants to the film unit were Nigerians trained on the job.

According to a newspaper article both Shell and BP started to use separate mobile cinema vans in 1961. Shell gave their first show for an audience of 350 in Ebute-Metta (a suburb of Lagos) on 10 May 1961, with many educationalists, students and politicians present. The Shell cinema van would tour the surrounding districts and Western region of Nigeria, to “further economic, social and educational progress.” (Figure 2.29) BP had two land rovers, one equipped with a 16mm projector, a generator and a collapsible screen on



Figure 2.29: One of Shell-BP's 'cinerovers' that would tour various districts and regions of Nigeria with a 16mm projector, a generator, speakers and a collapsible screen on the roof. "More Requests for Films," *Shell-BP Bulletin*, May 1963, no. 1, 3.

the roof, the other to carry the camping equipment and the gear for the operator and the two drivers. It also would tow “a trailer which can be opened up to make a display stand for BP products.”¹¹⁸ The BP mobile film unit would be used “to show the films about the oil industry in Nigeria to the people.” The film van would, according to the BP public relations manager, tour all the remote parts of the country, especially those areas where there was no electricity. It seems likely that the Shell-BP films were also shown with both these mobile film units.¹¹⁹ As mentioned earlier, already in 1954, the Colonial Office’s report that mentioned that besides the mobile cinemas from the Information Service and the British Council, there was also one by “a commercial oil prospecting company.” Since no other oil companies were prospecting in Nigeria that year, this most likely means a mobile cinema unit from BP and/or Shell.¹²⁰ Mobile cinemas remained popular for a long time, drawing crowds well into in the 1960s.¹²¹

In Britain, Shell used Nigeria in their public relations material aimed at schools. In June 1960, just prior to the release of the films and Nigerian Independence, a new programme within their “Aids for Teachers” campaign was advertised which would present “the country of Nigeria through the eyes of people working in the pioneer oil industry there.”¹²² For the cost of ten pence, schools would receive nine illustrated newsletters throughout the school year with topical information on Nigeria as told by a helicopter pilot who gets in contact with different people throughout the country. An additional folder would contain more background information, maps, a geological clock, and a blueprint of a drilling rig. Notes for teachers and other aids, such as an eyewitness account of Independence Day, would be used as well. The advertisement for this campaign used a drawn image that is similar to the final image of *Oilman’s Move*. A helicopter hovers above a forest where a road is cut out of endless rows of trees, leading to an open spot where some houses, oil storage tankers and a tall rig is standing. No people or other villages can be seen. The image shows the human-altered landscape, accessed through technology, which Shell is controlling from

the land and from above.

The films from the Nigerian Shell film unit were not advertised within a special Nigerian programme in the UK, but were seen as fit for a general audience and could be used in schools, where “teachers in schools may well find them useful as a supplementary aid in geography teaching.” The films could also be used in relation to other booklets and charts on oil drilling and oil in general.¹²³ *The Search For Oil in Nigeria* was advertised in specialised film magazines, with ads showing a drawing of a Shell tour operator inviting everybody to see the world with Shell, highlighting stills from three exotic looking films (Figure 2.30).¹²⁴

See the world with Shell

Three recent films from Shell take us on a grand tour of two continents. In *'The Captive River'* we go to Africa to witness the preliminary work and actual building of the Kariba Dam – the project in the valley of the great Zambesi which, by 1963, will have produced a lake in Africa the size of Devon.

In the second of these films, *'The Search for Oil in Nigeria'*, we watch the painstaking work which a seismic exploration party carries out before sinking a test well in the heart of the Nigerian jungle.

In *'The Golden Lands'* we take a journey through South-East Asia, where we see in Thailand, Viet-nam, Malaya, Borneo, the Philippines and Hong Kong the growth of industrialisation and rising living standards which are playing such an important part in world affairs.

Shell films are loaned free of charge in 35 mm. or 16 mm. gauge to all kinds of societies and institutions. And a catalogue also free, can be obtained from Shell International Petroleum Company Limited (PR/131), Shell Centre, London, SE1.

Write for the catalogue **'SHELL FILMS'**

SHELL INTERNATIONAL PETROLEUM CO. LTD. (PR/131), SHELL CENTRE, LONDON, SE1

Figure 2.30: Shell's tour operator invites everybody to take a journey to far away exotic lands. *Film User*, Nov. 1962, 567.

These films were all made by local film units. The still for *The Search For Oil in Nigeria* displays three Nigerians working on an explosive device in the jungle. The still from *The Captive River* shows the colossal structure of the Kariba Dam in Zimbabwe, built by and with the aid of Western countries. The Cambodian Royal Court dancers from *The Golden Lands* (1961) display a travelogue

sensibility, of showing different cultures through exotic customs and habits, even though this film mostly deals with the growth of industrialisation and rising living standards. The advertisement thus positioned the local films mostly within an exotic framework, suggesting that they allow the viewer to travel in the cinema to experience unknown cultures and different people.

The films themselves hardly were given any reviews. In the film magazines geared to industrial and non-theatrical film, *The Search For Oil in Nigeria* received only a few general comments. *Industrial Screen* thought the film would be successful in Nigeria, receiving the mark of “superior”.¹²⁵ *Film User* also thought the film would be more suitable in Nigeria. “While the film is presumably of considerable value for Nigerian audiences it adds nothing to the information non-specialist audiences here possess of such work. However the impressive picture of the delta conditions, and some local atmosphere which it captures, makes this useful material for the geography teacher.”¹²⁶

There exist two versions for *The Search For Oil in Nigeria*, a Shell-BP version as well as a slightly adjusted Shell version for international release. The voice over in the international version does not mention Shell-BP anymore (originally four times). As noted earlier, this elision of branding was common for many Shell films at the time, so it is logical they would also do this to the original Shell-BP version. Additionally, in the main title Shell-BP is replaced by Shell and the film ends with a Shell logo. Apparently Shell did not have any obligations towards BP as the film’s international distributor, as BP is thus completely excluded in this international version. For the international release of *Oilman’s Move*, the original version was re-edited and shortened, trimming several extended shots and reducing redundant scenes. Originally 30 minutes, the international version of *Oilman’s Move* was 8 minutes shorter. The original Shell-BP film is much more clear about its sponsorship, mentioning Shell-BP several times in the voiceover as well in the calypso song. It even mentions the name of the Dutch drilling contractor from whom the rig belonged. Besides the use of branding

and references to specific well known locations in Nigeria (in order to explain the depth being drilled), the longer version also incorporates more children and villagers watching in awe at the rig's construction and transport, Walter Okala receives a longer and earlier introduction, and several Nigerian lorry drivers get more screen time. The original version also references local points of interest and specific towns, showing more Nigerian workers and villagers as well as making clear it is about Shell-BP. Similar to the international version of *The Search For Oil in Nigeria*, in the international version of *Oilman's Move* only Shell is mentioned in the credits.

Again, like the UAC films, there was a clear distinction between the use of and the rhetoric attached to the films for national and international distribution. Both *The Search For Oil in Nigeria* and *Oilman's Move* had a long distribution history; in 1971 they were still listed in Shell's international film catalogue.

CHAPTER 3 - FRAMING NATION AND ENTERPRISES

Shortly after independence in October 1960, Nigerian politics disintegrated into instability when a power struggle developed in 1961. The federal government intervened in 1962 by declaring a state of emergency in the Western region and by abolishing its regional governmental structures. By the time of the 1964-65 elections the country's politics had become very polarised and was characterised by corruption and violence.¹ During this difficult period both Shell and UAC continued to make films, but when looking at the films made after independence, something had changed. They both used localised voiceovers, were more focused on showing a modern side of an independent working Nigeria, and displayed a higher level of commitment to the region and interest in the people. They both also tried harder to reach important viewers, especially government officials, industry leaders, and teachers.

BUILDING NIGERIA

At the end of 1961 UAC released the first of three new films on West Africa. The three films had a different focus than those of 1957. *Enterprise in Nigeria* was the first to be released and was the only one that dealt exclusively with Nigeria.² The film was in colour, 21 minutes long, and was available in 16 and 35mm. It was made by a different team and production company than the first three UAC films, though Sydney Latter returned as director. *Enterprise in Nigeria* was previewed in London in November 1961, not at UAC but in the Unilever House that had a cinema room. The high commissioner for the federation of Nigeria in the UK was present, as were representatives from Northern and Western Nigeria, and Sierra Leone.³ A month later the film was shown several times in Nigeria at the private residence of J.B. Davies, the chairman of UAC, where the state ruler of Lagos was present, as well as several Federal Nigerian ministers

and business delegates. Among them was future president of Nigeria during the Second Republic (1979 to 1983), Shehu Shagari, at that time Federal minister of Establishments.⁴ After these private showings, the film was also shown at the Government House in Ibadan, and in various other cities of Western Nigeria, Ilesha, Benin and Warri, where other state rulers, government officials and industry leaders saw it as well (Figures 3.1 and 3.2).⁵ In the UK the film was officially released on 30 January 1962.

**UAC Gets
New Film**

THE latest film of the United Africa Company of Nigeria Ltd., entitled "Enterprise In Nigeria" was shown privately by the Chairman of the Company Mr. J. B. Davies, O.B.E. to the Federal Minister of Commerce and Industry Alhaji the Hon. Zanna Dipcharima, M.P., and



HON. ZANNA DIPCHARIMA
the Federal Minister of Establishments, Alhaji the Hon. Shehu Shagari M.P., at Mr. Davies's residence in Ikoyi last week.

The film depicts some of the contributions made by U.A.C. to the development of Industry in all Regions of Nigeria.

It has now been released for public showing in Federal Territory.



"ENTERPRISE IN NIGERIA"

The Company's latest film "Enterprise in Nigeria" has been shown in the three districts of The United Africa Company of Nigeria Limited in Western Nigeria — Ibadan, Ilesha and Benin/Warri. In Ibadan the film was shown to His Excellency the Governor, the Premier and other distinguished personalities. Above are some of the pictures taken during the shows: Top: the Regional Director — Mr. W. Hardy being received by His Excellency the Governor Sir Adesoji Aderemi at a private showing at Government House. Middle: The Oba of Benin, Akenzua II, was one of the guests at the party which preceded the showing of the film at Benin. Bottom: The Owa of Ilesha, Oba Biladu III, and President of the Western House of Chiefs, watching the film at a special showing in Ilesha with other distinguished personalities in the town.

Figures 3.1 and 3.2: An industrial film about Nigeria was newsworthy, though it was mainly so because of the many prominent guests from government that had attended the especially arranged screening of *Enterprise in Nigeria*. After the premiere, the film toured several districts in Western Nigeria and was shown to other state rulers and government officials. "UAC Get New Film," *Daily Telegraph*, Jan. 24, 1962; "Enterprise in Nigeria," *UAC News* 11, no. 2 (Feb. 1962), 10. UARM UAC/2/19/3/6/1/1 and UAC/1/11/3/2/1. Reproduced with kind permission of Unilever from an original in Unilever Archives.

Part of the change in the three new UAC films is due to the different focus taken up within the public relations department. According to internal communications, a re-examination of the public relations programme was needed with the onset of independence, re-tuning its activities to present events and the future of an independent Africa. The communications conclude that “a disproportionate effort has been spent on the leaders who brought in Independence, losing sight of those treading upon their heels.” It was seen that the “the second flight of nationalists” rejected colonial companies more easily, viewing a company’s history and track records mostly from the time of Independence. Thereby UAC saw itself losing the half-century of history before the independence, despite the fact that according to public relations UAC had proved that it had always been standing behind the country’s policy and actions.⁶ The activities of UAC’s public relations had concentrated until then on establishing contacts with the MPs and ministers, district councillors, civil servants, schoolteachers and other professionals. In 1960 the public relations department concluded that more effort had to be given to a second focus group, those that would make the leaders of tomorrow: students, African business men, and others from trade unions, tribal cultural societies, and professional organisations. To contact these groups, besides film, press releases, goodwill advertisements, staff magazines, economic reviews had to be used. By making this group more aware of the importance of the company’s operations, the department thought they could prevent the company from being characterised as “an unhealthy anachronism in an independent African Country.”⁷ Thus, much more than in 1957, film was treated actively within public relations, with premieres for relatively small groups, while the mobile cinema and the film library were used to reach larger numbers (Figure 3.3).⁸

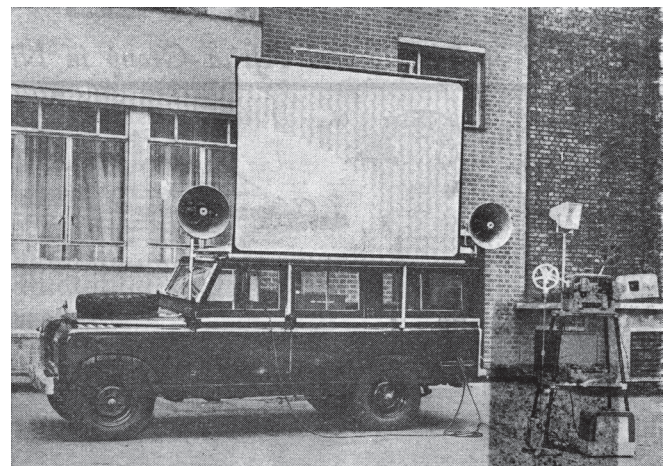


Figure 3.3: UAC had the same model Rover as Shell-BP, here shown with the projector and speakers set up for inspection. “Film Rover for Nigeria,” *UAC News* 10, no. 1 (Jan. 1961), 2. UARM UAC/2/19/3/6/1/1. Reproduced with kind permission of Unilever from an original in Unilever Archives.

The English version of the film starts with a map of Africa, over which is projected “Today in Nigeria great changes are taking place. This film, originally made for African audiences presents a picture of a fast developing country through the eyes of the Nigerian himself.” Compared to the earlier UAC films (as well as the Shell films) the film clearly is set in modern Nigeria. In *The Oil Rivers* and *The Twilight Forest* new factories and buildings were presented, but they were set against small towns and small villages, or situated in the tropical forest; *Traders in Leather* only took place in the old part of Kano. Now, the city of Lagos takes centre stage. Lagos was the scene of very rapid urbanization: in 1951 the city had an estimated population of 274,000, by 1963 this had grown to 675,000. Lagos and other cities became attractive symbols of a new modern Nigeria, away from traditional rural life.⁹ Clearly signifying progress through speed and modern architecture, *Enterprise in Nigeria* starts with a moving front shot of a Nigerian on a motorcycle driving through the city (Figure 3.4). The shot lasts one minute during which the credits are shown and relaxed jazzy music is heard, written by the London-based Jamaican-born jazz pianist Yorke de Souza. The man on the motorcycle stops and enters the Niger house, headquarters of the UAC, and the voiceover begins.



Figure 3.4: The first shot of *Enterprise in Nigeria* shows the city of Lagos as modern and full of progress.

The voiceover is by the Nigerian-born Eldred Fiberesima who worked at Radio Lagos, and whom would later produce several plays. While images of new buildings such as a school, university, and hospital are shown, the voiceover explains that the predecessors of UAC had been in Nigeria trading from the

seventeenth century (trading with “their friends”) and have helped Nigeria to prosper while growing up together. Then a long section, which takes up most of the film, introduces the viewer to various factories. According to the voiceover these factories, making cement, plastics, bicycles, mattresses, or beer, now played an increasingly important role in the country’s economy. The voiceover repeats throughout the film that these products are not imported anymore, but due to rising prosperity and demand are produced in Nigeria itself. Concrete and plastic are particularly presented as standing for “the new age of today”. The new concrete buildings and factories that are shown in succession help to underline this new era. Plastics, cheap and in abundance, exemplified modern technology and scientific progress, but as highlighted in the film plastic was also tied to independence as millions of plastic cups were given away on Independence Day.¹⁰

As *Enterprise in Nigeria* focuses much of its time on different industries, most having a relation with or owned by UAC, the film plays nicely in tandem with the campaign UAC was using in newspapers and magazines at the time: “UAC promotes key industries” and “Industries speed national progress.”¹¹ UAC was from the mid-1950s slowly more focused on import-substituting industrialisation which satisfied the regime and preserved its commercial interests; thus it made sense to advertise these industries as much as possible.¹² In big headlines the advertisements try to overwhelm (as does the film’s voiceover) with impressive production numbers: 200,000 tons of cement and 230,000 tons of timber were produced in factories where UAC was a shareholder. According to the UK advertisements for *Enterprise in Nigeria*, one could witness “the birth of a new industrial revolution” helped by resources and technological experiences of the West. The new industries are the ones that give the African the opportunity “to learn new techniques and fitting him for his role in the modern world.”¹³ The tension between old values and the transformation to modern life - the cliché of colonial rule - seems to be subsiding in this film, but is still present. The old ways

are introduced by reusing images showing the herdsmen from *Traders in Leather* and the harvesting of non-plantation palm trees from *The Oil Rivers*, cutting down the kernels from dangerous heights. However, this section only lasts for two minutes and is sandwiched between the overview of new production processes and factories and the training of workers (Figures 3.5-3.8).



Figures 3.5-3.8: Images from *Traders in Leather* and *The Oil Rivers* are used in *Enterprise in Nigeria* to place the traditional Nigeria in contrast to the modern one.

The training section starts by mentioning that there is a place for everyone, both for men and women. If you use your skill you can be a pot maker in the village or a worker in the laboratory of Star Beer. While the three films of 1957 hardly mentioned training, here it is featured, thereby being in line with other UAC promotions in Nigeria. Similarly with the promotion of industries, UAC printed large page advertisements that noted in large headline lettering that “UAC has spent £204,000 building seven Technical Training Schools in Nigeria” and that “UAC is a training ground for vital technical, commercial and managerial skills.” Using repetitive slogans like “Prosperity goes-in-hand with a nation’s skill!” and “A

nation's wealth is in the skill of its people," UAC drove the point home that the company brought prosperity to Nigeria (Figure 3.9).¹⁴ The mention of high investment costs and yields are reminiscent of what film historian Brian Larkin noted about the colonial government's emphasis on modernisation in Nigeria, "turning infrastructural projects into representational objects' and with it propelling the colonial sublime."¹⁵ The film's presentation of modern Lagos

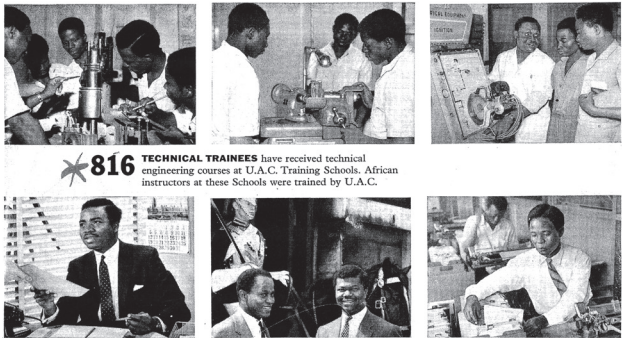
and the various factories underlined this further.

One specific mode of address in the film becomes strikingly clear when one compares *Enterprise in Nigeria* to the Dutch version *Nigeria bouwt aan zijn toekomst* (Nigeria is building its future). The English version seems especially keen on speaking to the viewer on an intimate level, connecting the government, citizens and workers to the company; this is much less so in the Dutch version.¹⁶ The voiceover is by a white Dutch person, speaking standard Dutch, and instead of "we" and "you" he uses "them" and "they". While the voiceover in the English version tells about the history of Nigeria and the country's relation with UAC, of growing up together, of learning the value to youth of being young in a young land, in the Dutch version the accompanying images of new buildings are shown without any commentary. In the English version, images of plastic water pipes being laid by Nigerians, are accompanied by the following commentary: "Made

*** A NATION'S WEALTH IS IN THE SKILL OF ITS PEOPLE**

For continued economic progress the new nations of West Africa rely increasingly on the abilities of their own people. The United Africa Company equips many thousands of men and women with essential skills.

UAC is a training ground for vital technical, commercial and managerial skills



*** 816 TECHNICAL TRAINEES** have received technical engineering courses at U.A.C. Training Schools. African instructors at these Schools were trained by U.A.C.

*** 396 MANAGERS** U.A.C. provides great scope for African managerial talent, and promotion to the highest levels. Overseas tours are included in management training.

*** 8,766 GRADED CLERICAL STAFF** Thousands of office workers have been trained in modern business methods by U.A.C.

THE UNITED AFRICA COMPANY LIMITED

Figure 3.9: UAC used large page advertisements in daily Nigerian newspapers and weekly West African magazines to underline that the company brought knowledge and prosperity to Nigeria and West Africa. *West Africa*, June 16 1962, 671.

by Nigerians, laid by Nigerians, used by Nigerians. Look as you ride by, the new age might be under your feet.” The Dutch voiceover condenses this into the observation that the pipes are “made in the country itself”. Instead of trying to link the basic products on which the wealth of Nigeria was once built, such as palm oil, with the fruitful history of UAC trading, the Dutch version merely mentions them as another source of income, though primitive. Where the English version claims that “every tree that falls brings prosperity for everyone: Government, company and worker”, in the Dutch version the tree just brings “economic prosperity.” And, finally, when the English version claims that the skills learnt will makes the trainees “an asset to the nation”, no such mention occurs in the Dutch version. Much more than in the earlier UAC films or to the Dutch version, the English version of *Enterprise in Nigeria* strives to forge a bond with the African viewer, actively addressing her and making connections to the company, creating positive feelings for a unified national identity where postcolonial companies were a welcome part of society.

Enterprise in Nigeria ends by showing the abundance of variety and luxury products now available thanks to new industries and skills providing a higher standard of living and wages. The modern way of luxury living was obtainable, for example at the UAC’s Kingsway department store and supermarket, “leading the way to modern luxury living.” There, refrigerators, televisions, radios, face powder, lipstick, and exotic food are all available. The final scene shows a young child trying on some new shoes at the Kingsway department store, with the voiceover telling us: “This is the young Nigeria, trying on the seven-league boots, striding into the twentieth century.” (Figures 3.10-3.12) While this film presents a more balanced view of Nigeria compared to earlier UAC and governmental films, it still suggested strongly that the magical boots with which the wearer obtains great speed, are borrowed from the West and that Nigeria was still a dependent child in need of care.



Figures 3.10-3.12: UAC's Kingsway department store featured prominently at the end of *Enterprise in Nigeria*, showcasing the many luxury products now available in Nigeria.

FRAMING OF A NATION

After producing *The World - Our Market* (1963), which dealt with Nigeria's efforts from oil exploration to oil production, the Shell Nigerian film unit finished their likely final film, *Framework for a Nation* (1963) (Figure 3.13). *Framework for a Nation* was only available for international distribution, does not seem to have been available for general distribution and was not

mentioned in any of the Dutch or UK Shell film catalogues.¹⁷ Within its half hour running time, the film provides an interpretation of Nigeria's first six-year national Development Plan, which was launched in 1962. Development planning was seen as an effective means to modernise the economies of newly independent African countries. The Six-Year Development Plan would include rough economic forecasts, policies towards the private sector, and a list of proposed public expenditures on development and productivity enhancing projects. Designed to increase the standard of living, it sought to help Nigeria transit from an agricultural economy to a mixed one of agriculture and industry. Public expenditures would concentrate on roads, administration, education, agriculture, production facilities (such as for steel, cement, fertilisers) and water.¹⁸ But the first plan also provided



A group of MPs watching the film—"The World—Our Market" at the Victoria Island flats.

MPs WATCH SHELL-BP FILM PREMIERE

THIS year's budget session of the Nigerian Parliament 'shifted' temporarily from the Parliament Buildings in Lagos to Victoria Islands, as MPs took time off to watch Shell-BP's latest film, "The World—Our Market."

The film, which is the last in the current series of films on Nigeria's oil industry, was shown to more than 200 members of the Federal Parliament. About the same number of people

watched the film when it was later shown to members of the Umukoro- she Club in Port Harcourt.

"The World—Our Market" begins with a summary of the oil industry

Thousands of people have watched films on various aspects of the activities of the Company since 1960.

Two other films, "Nigeria's Natural Resources" and a series of cinemagazines will soon be launched and will be shown in various centres in Nigeria.



Figure 3.13: Similarly like UAC, Shell-BP targeted state rulers and government officials. Here, for the premiere of *The World- Our Market*, Shell-BP was apparently able to secure 200 members of the Nigerian parliament. "MPs Watch Shell-BP Film Premiere," *Shell-BP Bulletin*, May 1963, no. 1, 3.

opportunities to replace “primitive technologies” by modern ones imported from abroad in order to hasten Nigeria’s transition from traditional to modern market economy.¹⁹

The first development plan was prepared by the Minister of Economic Development, but foreign economists were very influential. In reality the American Wolfgang Stolper was the main architect of the plan, together with two other American experts and the Indian Narayan Prasad who acted as an economic adviser to the Nigerian Prime Minister.²⁰ None of these experts were specialists on Africa, nor did they have first-hand experience there; Stolper was also known for having a low opinion of Nigerian history and culture. Highly trained Nigerian economists were confined to peripheral roles.²¹ The Western experts were sent by American and Western governments as well as aid agencies to assist in bringing about rapid modernization by introducing modern national development planning. The World Bank, in collaboration with Western aid and development agencies (such as the Ford Foundation) also organised workshops during the preparation of the plan.²² It is important to note that during the construction of the plan, Rostow’s stages of growth theory was actively exported and propagated in African countries, idealizing Western capitalist societies through modernization, while trying to retain the spread of communism.²³ According to his theory all societies could be laid out at different points on the same evolutionary scale, with the Western world at the top. Primarily drawing from data of Western capitalist economies, Rostow defined five stages of economic development: the traditional society; the setting of the pre-conditions for take-off; the take-off into self-sustained growth; the drive to economic maturity; and the age of high mass-consumption.²⁴ In this system underdevelopment was not seen as a result of exploitation but as a condition that all societies had to pass through on their way to maturity.²⁵ Non-Western societies could only develop by replicating the features of Western civilization, while African cultures were portrayed as inferior, primitive or backward. Decolonisation thus became part of the process of the

pre-condition period, undermining anti-imperialist arguments about exploitation continuing in neo-colonial form.²⁶ The stages of economic growth theory would become the only accepted gospel for promoting economic development in Nigeria and the take-off was seen as the most important component of this.²⁷ The attainment of a particular target of growth became the overriding concern of development economists. Rostow's ideas must have been known during the time of the Six-Year Plan's development. Stolper, the main architect, was a fellow MIT associate of Rostow and he had actively provided Rostow with valuable insights into Nigeria's development prospects needed for setting up a possible American aid program.²⁸

Framework for a Nation was filmed in colour and begins with a shot of the Lagos harbour from a distance, while drum rhythms appear on the soundtrack. Time passes from dawn to morning and several Nigerian women walk by, carrying bundles on their heads. They are followed by two boys pulling two goats along before a hard cut shows the overhead view of an oil truck passing by on its way to the city (it is difficult to register, but it is indeed a Shell truck), replacing the sound of drums with traffic noise. The English speaking Nigerian voice, speaking in the plural "we", introduces the viewer to the cityscape, its traffic and the modern architecture of office buildings, similar to *Enterprise in Nigeria*. After the "symbols of the prosperity we all want and the pride we feel as an independent nation", another face of Nigeria is shown, where two men with water jugs on their heads are walking to a well in an Northern village. "Here, things haven't changed much in a hundred years", the voiceover tells us, showing the Fulani herdsmen and fishermen trying to get by. The showing of old and new ways, which positions Northern Nigeria against Western Nigeria, continues throughout the film. Images of older methods of harvesting are still shown, such as the obligatory climbing of the palm tree with fruits falling from great heights, or the oil hand presses. However, the voiceover seems a little more careful and does not call it "primitive" but "out of date", something which could improve with the proper research and

funding. After explaining quickly the problems in the city and the country (poverty, disease, unemployment, shortage of teachers, shortage of houses), the film underlines the need for a development plan.

According to Douglas Gordon *Framework for a Nation* was “literally a gift from Shell-BP to the Government.”²⁹ The film was shown to senior government officials and leaders and industrialists and educationists, and was also actively distributed to Nigerian embassies abroad “to help the Nigerian Governments in their bid to attract foreign investors, while the vernacular versions of the film will enhance local education.”³⁰ The film probably also toured with mobile cinema vans throughout the country, as was done with other Shell-BP films. Gordon saw *Framework for a Nation* as having a positive influence by promoting goodwill toward the company: “The Nigerians who worked on it were very proud of it and even the journalists who were anti-Shell-BP because they were radical, they came to me and they said we didn’t realise you could do something like that and were very grateful.”³¹

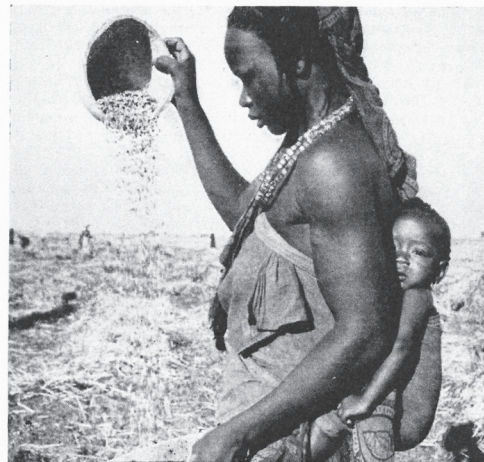
The film was mentioned in the introduction of a promotional booklet on Shell-BP in Nigeria, published in 1965, that stressed the joint effort of the company and the government to realise the Development Plan and to develop the benefits for the community with new oil revenues: “Shell BP is growing with Nigeria and is her partner in progress.”³² This relationship between the government and Shell is not as pronounced as in the film. In the film Shell’s name is not mentioned or shown, though its facilities (without any signs or logos) are shown. The oil industry in general is mentioned and is positioned as the motor of progress: “We need oil today because we need extra power and more machines. And more than that, we need the money which the export of oil can earn for us abroad.”³³ Such an open admission of Shell’s active part in national politics was not unknown, and had been done in other national film units before such as in Venezuela where several films were designed to show the impact of oil on the Venezuelan economy with proceeds going to social services and industrial development.³⁴ This was

done by showing that the government was already investing the oil proceeds in these ways, though at the time this does not seem to have been the case. In Nigeria, these examples *do* seem to stem from the intentions of the Development Plan, but were still presented within a speculative focus. Thus the possible benefits of the plan are shown, such as a dam construction, mills, an oil refinery, more roads and better infrastructure, modernised telecommunications, and the extension of the Nigerian railways.

Though the film is mostly a visualisation of modern Nigeria, Shell used for the international promotion a still of a woman standing in the field, removing chaff from rice, with a baby in a sling on her back. The still is taken from the short section on the Fulani people with their struggle against poverty and their wariness over change. This 'traditional' image contrasted with the text underneath that highlighted the benefits of the Six-Year Development Plan and the changes going on in Nigeria. According to the advertisement, the Six Year Plan was

"designed to provide the framework within which a modern economy and a modern way of life can be achieved in a world dominated by science."³⁵

(Figure 3.14) When offered for distribution in the Petroleum Films Bureau catalogue, where oil related films could be rented for free, the film was described as setting "out to provide a background against which



Framework for a nation

Throughout the Republic of Nigeria, the way of life is changing—these changes are bringing problems which can only be overcome by planning and co-ordination. This 30-minute colour film, available in either 35mm or 16mm, looks at the broader issues of the country's development following the

publication of the comprehensive Six Year Plan. This plan is designed to provide the framework within which a modern economy and a modern way of life can be achieved in a world dominated by science. Nigeria is rich in natural resources and the people are now taking stock of their great potential.

For full information about this and other Shell films, write to your local Shell company or, in the U.K., to:—
Petroleum Films Bureau, 4 Brook Street, London, W.1.



Figure 3.14: Not long after the advertisement for *Framework for a Nation* appeared in the *International Film Guide 1966*, the Six Year Development Plan ended prematurely as the First Republic collapsed by a military coup. *International Film Guide 1966*, ed. Peter Cowie, (London: Tantivy Press, 1966), 194.

Nigerians can see their own problems more clearly and determine which are the most important issues.”³⁶ This was quite different from the film’s description in the Shell/BP public relations booklet for Nigeria, as it “tells the story of Nigeria’s resources, the efforts to develop them, the problems involved, progress made so far, and the signs of future success.”³⁷ Thus again, for Western eyes, this film presented a foreign vision on how things should be done (modernisation along Western lines) while using distinctly non-modern imagery. However, when these films were advertised and made available for international distribution, the Development Plan was already in trouble and the First Republic would soon come to an end.

The Development Plan relied on exports for foreign exchange and public finance, and expected foreign capital for its investments. These expectations were based on an ages-long assumptions from the heyday of colonial rule that, according to Toyin Falola, “without foreign investment, neither public nor private endeavour can achieve the rate of growth that the Nigerian people desire.”³⁸ *Framework for a Nation* also underlined that foreign investment was needed, which corresponds with Gordon’s claim that the film was meant to attract foreign investors to Nigeria. As a group of men walk towards a building under construction (two of them white), the Nigerian voiceover tells us: “We don’t yet posses enough skill and capital to do all we want to do quickly enough. So we invite foreign investment. We need this and all the other help we can get.”

Here Rostow’s modernisation theory makes its formal entrance. According to *Framework for a Nation*, Nigeria was in the stage where the pre-conditions for take-off were prepared, thus at a time when a great increase in investments was needed. The film directly copies Rostow’s metaphor of the airplane that generates speed on the runway and, ignited by the engine of growth, takes off, taking the country to the ultimate destiny of high mass-consumption. After the scene at the construction site, the film cuts to a close up of the jet engines of a Nigeria Airways airplane just as it begins to taxi on the runway, and the voiceover says:

“Think of our economy as a giant airline, setting out for its far destination with a heavy load of passengers and cargo. At first it moves slowly as it taxis off towards the runway. But to lift the aircraft off the ground it needs a massive boost of power from its engines. This is what the economist means when he talks of the process of ‘economic take-off.’ Once it’s airborne, an economy becomes self-supporting.” The airplane is seen taking off, slowly disappearing in the distance. “For us, however, the moment of ‘take-off’ is still a far-away dream.” With this explanation Nigeria’s economic situation is presented as something natural, a kind of maturation, of finding speed to get off the runway. It also presents the “take-off” as the right method whereby the continued need from foreign investment was naturalised.

It is not strange that Rostow’s ideas appeared in the film, Gordon had been in close contact with the economic advisor to the Nigerian government’s Chief Economic Planner, the Indian Narayan Prasad who had been sent to Nigeria by the World Bank.³⁹ According to Gordon, the film unit was actively assisted by the Nigerian government, as Prasad knew the Film Centre’s production on Indian electrification for Associated Electrical Industries, *The Peaceful Revolution* (1961). “Because he respected that film and knew that we were, as it were, honest brokers and we got in and made it [...]” Ultimately, however, the Development Plan failed to accomplish many of its goals. It assumed incorrectly that resources would be available for rapid economic development, huge funds of external money would come from abroad, and political decentralization and regional rivalries would not occur while during the execution phase that was based on mostly inadequate data.⁴⁰ The growth of the gross domestic product during the first (and second) plan did, however, exceed the projections. Nevertheless this did not translate into any meaningful improvement in Nigeria’s economic situation and the standard of living did not improve for the majority of people.⁴¹ According to Jeremiah Dibia, the failure of development planning in post-colonial Nigeria was influenced by the subordination of the economy to the international capitalist

system that propelled modernization and developmentalism.⁴² Independence and the many changes that followed did not lead to immediate economic autonomy. British and other foreign companies maintained a great deal of control. Foreign companies still controlled Nigeria's trade, insurance, shipping, banking, and mining. Shell-BP dominated the oil exploration, while UAC (together with the other British corporation John Holt) controlled trade and manufacturing. The Nigerian economy was neo-colonial.⁴³

Not long after the release of *Framework for a Nation*, the Development Plan ended prematurely when the First Republic collapsed after a military coup in 1966. A devastating and brutal civil war followed. Shell remained in Nigeria though it did not produce much oil as many operations came temporarily to a halt.⁴⁴ It also refrained from producing film. In 1970 after the end of the civil war, the SFU, not a special Nigerian film unit, finished a new film, *Pipeline to Forcados*, for Shell-BP Nigeria. This film showed the construction of the export pipeline from the interior of the Niger Delta to Forcados through forest, swamps and rivers.⁴⁵ Oil indeed would flow in ever growing numbers again. However, Nigeria still had not become free from the grip of former colonial companies and became even more dependent on world markets, especially for oil (despite a partial nationalisation from 1973 onwards).⁴⁶ During the coming decades economic inequality, ethnic conflict, corruption, political instability, violence, and environmental damage grew and ravaged the country as military regimes alternated with civilian governments.

CONCLUSION

It is no secret that corporations try to influence perceptions about their products and image through marketing, branding, and advertising. They are very sensitive when it comes to their public image and carefully control media representations. In early 1998 Shell reportedly planned to spend 160 million dollars on “post-crisis advertising”, at a time when the managing director of Royal Dutch Shell claimed it was “in danger of losing the communications battle”.¹ Nowadays this “communications battle” is rarely done through the production of films. But before the 1970s, when public relation films without a clear ‘hard sell’ would be become increasingly difficult to produce and corporations would start to make and distribute fewer industrial films, film was a very common method to communicate a positive image of the company to a broader audience.

This research has looked into the use of industrial films by two major multinational corporations, UAC/Unilever and Shell, and how they responded to the uncertainty surrounding Nigeria’s transition to independence. Though nowhere near present day advertising budgets, both companies spent several millions of pounds in today’s currency making films that were produced in Nigeria and intended primarily for local use. Though it remains unclear how much these films contributed to achieving UAC/Unilever’s and Shell’s goal of seamless continued operations in Nigeria, my research has shown how invested these companies were in creating and adapting their corporate images to the shifting political and cultural landscape.

In Nigeria, UAC/Unilever and Shell films could be rented for free by interested parties. They were actively used by the companies’ public relation managers and shown with their own mobile film units, but they were also used by the government’s mobile film units. The films reached different audiences from schoolchildren, students, (future) employers, to highly sought after traders, teachers and high-level government officials. Some films were also screened

abroad by the companies themselves, as international company film libraries offered them for free for educational, industrial or household use. They existed in various languages and sometimes in re-edited versions. Less commonly, these films could be seen in the commercial theatre circuits or on television. In Britain, the Central Office of Information distributed many Unilever/UAC and Shell films, while sponsoring additional language versions to encourage exports and to support British industry and technology overseas. In this way, educational institutions, business partners, television stations, international film festivals, and local governments (through embassies and consular posts) could rent and show them freely. Through film Unilever and Shell could present themselves to local and worldwide audiences as a stable, forward looking, technology advanced trading partner that played an important positive role in Nigerian economic and social development.

Of the two companies, Shell was especially active in establishing high-level government contacts through film. This was not unusual since the company was, more than UAC/Unilever, searching for new ways to create positive connections with the Nigerian government through their public relations. Prospecting and mining licenses had to be secured and rentals, incentives, royalties and profit taxes coming from oil had to be negotiated. Shell also needed to spend millions of pounds per year to continue prospecting and producing oil as foreign competition arrived. Though Shell increased its exploration and drilling immensely at the start of their film program, this did not translate immediately into informational films especially made for local communities. From Shell's point of view, the educated Nigerians were the prime targets, not the villagers or landowners on whose land they did not need obtain any prior permission to conduct exploratory work. To educated and governmental Nigerian elites, Shell wanted to emphasise their economic assets, wealth of experience, and Nigerisation programs. Perhaps the existence of an actual film unit in Nigeria, rather than just flying over a film crew in from England (as was done by Unilever), made the Nigerian films

different from the usual Shell mould. From the start, the films were made “to win general approval rather than detailed understanding”. They showcased human interest stories and created a dramatic focus, rather than focus on the technical exposition that had been perfected by the Shell Film Unit in London. The fact that Nigerians were working on these films as assistants, learning from the Film Unit’s professionals, was also seen as a welcome beneficial element in promoting goodwill towards the company. Local voice talent and music with a connection to Africa and Nigeria were intended to authenticate the corporate image and support the claims of cooperation and joint growth made in the films. After independence, the use of sound becomes a key element in this strategy, also by UAC/Unilever and other companies.

For both Shell and Unilever the rhetoric framing and distribution strategies vary accordingly for national and international distribution. Some films were only meant for distribution in Nigeria, while others were produced in several different versions and launched with a different advertising campaign for international distribution. The first three UAC films *The Oil Rivers*, *The Twilight Forest* and *Traders in Leather* especially foreground the schism and the re-use of images for western audiences. Compared to the corporate advertising in West African newspapers and magazines, the films were much more grounded in imperial rhetoric and traditional colonial images. Released in Britain, the British ad-campaign for the films focused on images of a pre-industrial world, while the re-edited theatrical version of *Traders in Leather* was made into a old fashioned colonial travelogue, showing a remote and exotic African world. In Britain the films served a different purpose for their corporate image. Many years after their use in Nigeria, they were still distributed internationally by Unilever to show how the company had helped Nigeria “towards a greater prosperity and self-reliance” with their British knowledge and resources. A Shell film like *Oilman’s Move*, on the other hand, functioned in Nigeria more as an advertisement, mentioning Shell-BP and showing logos, which were edited out in the international versions made

by SFU. Films like Shell's *Nigeria's Oilmen* or UAC's *Enterprise in Nigeria* were specifically made for Nigeria to promote employment opportunities and training schemes and thus were less present on the international film market.

Change accelerated after Nigerian independence. UAC re-tuned their public relations activities and Shell wanted to associate the oil company with the newly independent nation. Films became more directed towards Nigerian audiences and they made less use of older (colonial) stereotypes of primitive and exotic native life. Nevertheless, as the films of the two companies became more concentrated on promoting progress, technology and science, they continued to propel the colonial sublime through altered landscapes of modern factories and buildings while promoting Western economics through the modernisation theory. The wonder of new, strange objects and technology were an important element in the Shell films, especially as they provoked feelings of the sublime through human labour, remaking landscapes and building large structures, as had been done during the colonial period, fetishising the relationship between the technology, colonial rule and the sublime. Both companies tried to create a positive atmosphere for a unified national identity where postcolonial companies were a welcome part of Nigerian society that embraced progress and modernity. The films did not function on their own, but often stood in relation to other publicity campaigns to create goodwill. UAC's publicity in Nigerian newspapers and magazines especially carried and re-iterated their films' messages that they brought prosperity to Nigeria, accelerating national progress through their industries and creating national wealth through training Nigerians. Through technology and its connected knowledge transfer, the coloniser and colonised would come together. Yet the industrial films were also still reminiscent of the colonial films from decades earlier, showing the beneficial influence of a foreign (Western) industry on a "backward" (non-Western) country that had not changed in centuries, that is, until the Western progress arrived.

From my research, it becomes clear that British and Dutch companies

were much more than passive observers during the decolonisation process. Films were used internationally by these corporations to maintain ties between Britain and British economic interests and the newly independent Nigeria. Their industrial films were planned and executed with explicit public relations objectives in mind and reveal a strong desire to forge a close bond between multi-national corporations and the (post) colonial governments. As Nigerian nationalist powers grew, expatriate companies sought ways to represent their interests to local Nigerian audiences as well as the global market. They constructed a positive image of modernisation, development and progress that was grounded on a Western model. Though many of these ideas, especially those connected with oil, have since become stained with negative associations, they show the cultural construction and framing strategies that have influenced perceptions on Nigerian development, as it was linked to modernisation, industry, nature and oil. My research underlines the significance of the processes and dynamics of industrial film. While serving as an advertisement or promotional spot for a product, process, or company, industrial films also transmit important technical, political, cultural and social discourses.

FILMOGRAPHY

FILMS BY UNILEVER FOR THE UNITED AFRICA COMPANY

The Oil Rivers (1956), Editorial Film Productions, Ltd., 16 minutes.

Dutch title: *De olierivieren*

Theatrical version, distribution Eros Films Ltd.: *The Seeds of Change* (1957)

Producer: James Mellor

Director: Sydney Latter

Photographer: Douglas Hill

Editor: Dudley Birch

Script/commentary: Elspeth Huxley

Commentator: David de Keyser

Music: Elizabeth Lutyens

Orchestra: Sinfonia of London

Conductor: Muir Mathieson

The Twilight Forest (1956), Editorial Film Productions, Ltd., 27 minutes.

Dutch title: *Het woud der schemering*

Theatrical version, distribution Eros Films Ltd.: *The Unknown Forest* (1957)

Producer: James Mellor

Director: Sydney Latter

Script: Laurence Mitchell

Photographer: Douglas Hill

Editor: Dudley Birch

Commentator: John Westbrook

Music: Elizabeth Lutyens

Orchestra: Sinfonia of London

Conductor: Muir Mathieson

Traders in Leather (1957), Editorial Film Productions, Ltd., 14 minutes.

Dutch title: *Handelaars in leer*

Theatrical version, distribution Eros Films Ltd.: *South of the Sahara* (1957), 24 minutes.

Producer: James Mellor

Director: Sydney Latter

Script: Julian Bond

Photographer: Douglas Hill

Editor: Dudley Birch

Commentator: David de Keyser (*South of the Sahara*: E.V.H. Emmett)

Music: Douglas Gamley

Orchestra: Sinfonia of London

Conductor: Muir Mathieson

Enterprise in Nigeria (1961), Gerard Holdsworth Productions, 21 minutes.

Dutch title: *Nigeria bouwt aan zijn toekomst*

Producer: Gerard Holdsworth

Co-producer: Don Kelly

Director: Sydney Latter

Photographer: Don Kelly

Commentary: James Cameron

Commentator: Eldred Fiberesima

Music: Yorke de Sousa

OTHER FILMS MADE FOR UAC, BUT NOT PRIMARILY DEALING WITH NIGERIA:

The Surf Boats of Accra (1958), Editorial Film Productions, Ltd., 15 minutes.

Dutch title: *De open haven van Accra*. Theatrical version: *Ten Men in a Boat*.

The New Traders (1962), Gerard Holdsworth Productions, 23 minutes.

African Awakening (1962), World Wide Pictures, Ltd., 36 minutes.

Towards the Highlife (1965), Birch-Hill Films Limited, 22 minutes.

FILMS BY THE SHELL-BP PETROLEUM DEVELOPMENT COMPANY OF NIGERIA LTD.

The Search for Oil in Nigeria (1961), Film Centre International Ltd., Lagos, 26 minutes.

Dutch title: *De opsporing van aardolie in Nigeria*

Producer: Douglas Gordon

Director: Frank Nesbitt and Adolph Ozoude

Photographer: Maurice Picot and Zacharia Diali

Editor: Roy Ayton and Levi Ezeasor

Music director: Akin Euba (courtesy Radio Nigeria)

Commentator: Wole Soyinka

Oilman's Move (1961), Film Centre International Ltd., Lagos, 30 minutes (international version 22 minutes).

Dutch title: *Een boortoren verhuist*

Producer: Douglas Gordon

Director: Frank Nesbitt and Adolph Ozoude

Photographer: Maurice Picot and Zephenia Diali

Editor: Roy Ayton and Levi Ezeasor

Music: Ambrose Campbell and Fitzroy Coleman, and their bands.

Calypso singer: Sammy (Samuel) Akpabot

Commentator: Adamu Mohammed

Nigeria's Oilmen (1962), Film Centre International Ltd., Lagos, 25 minutes

Producer: Douglas Gordon

Director: Frank Nesbitt and Adolph Ozoude

Photographer: Maurice Picot and Zacharia Diali

Editor: Roy Ayton and Levi Ezeasor

Music: Edward Williams

Commentator: Yemi Lijadu

Nigerian Harvest (1962/1963), Film Centre International Ltd., Lagos, 35 minutes

Producer: Douglas Gordon

Director: Frank Nesbitt and Peter Alumona

Photographer: Maurice Picot and Zephenia Diali

Editor: Roy Ayton

Sound: Mike Le Mare

Music: Freddie Phillips

Commentator: Olu Sowande

The World- Our Market (1963), Film Centre International Ltd., Lagos, 38 minutes

Producer: Douglas Gordon

Written and directed: Philip Owtram, assisted by Peter Alumona

Photographer: Maurice Picot, assisted by Kola Ogunbanwo

Editor: Roy Ayton, assisted by Gboyega Olagunju

Music: Edward Williams

Conductor: Marcus Dods

Nigeria's Natural Resources, announced in 1963. Perhaps this film was reworked/retitled into *Framework for a Nation*

Framework for a Nation (1963), Film Centre International Ltd., Lagos, 32 minutes (shortened version 31 minutes)

Producer: Douglas Gordon

Director: Philip Owtram, assisted by Livinus Okereafor

Photographer: Maurice Picot, assisted by Kola Ogunbanwo

Editor: Roy Ayton

Commentator: Yinka Olumide

Music: Thea Musgrave

Conductor: Marcus Dods

At least four *Shell-BP Cinemagazines*

Produced by the Shell Film Unit in London, compiled mainly from the Shell-BP Nigeria films *The Search for Oil in Nigeria*, *Oilman's Move*, *Nigeria's Oilmen*, *Nigerian Harvest* and *The World- Our Market*:

Getting Down to Oil. 1. Discovery (1964), Shell Film Unit, 21 minutes.

Getting Down to Oil. 2. Drilling (1964), Shell Film Unit, 19 minutes.

Written and edited: Alvin Bailey

Commentator: Patrick Wymark

Music: Edward Williams

Conductor: Marcus Dods

NOTES

NOTES TO THE INTRODUCTION

1. Kenneth Myer, "Films and Africa," *Film User*, May 1971, 19.
2. I will use the term industrial film, other common synonyms are "useful film," "sponsored film," "corporate film," or "business film." More on the different categories and types of the industrial film, see Yvonne Zimmermann, "'What Hollywood Is to America, the Corporate Film Is to Switzerland' Remarks on Industrial Film as Utility Film," in *Films That Work: Industrial Film and the Productivity of Media*, ed. Vinzenz Hediger and Patrick Vonderau (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2009), 104-05.
3. "UAC Get New Fi[l]m," *Daily Telegraph*, January 24, 1962. Unilever Archives & Records Management (UARM), United Africa Company collection (UAC), UAC/1/11/3/2/1.
4. L. J. Butler, *Copper Empire: Mining and the Colonial State in Northern Rhodesia, c.1930-64* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007). Sarah Stockwell, *The Business of Decolonization: British Business Strategies in the Gold Coast* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000). Nicholas J. White, *Business, Government, and the End of Empire: Malaya, 1942-1957* (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1997). David Kenneth Fieldhouse, *Merchant Capital and Economic Decolonization: The United Africa Company, 1929-1987* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994). Ludwig H. Schätzl, *Petroleum in Nigeria* (Ibadan: Oxford University Press, 1969).
5. The work of Ramamurthy and Larkin do take various media into account, including film. Anandi Ramamurthy, *Imperial Persuaders: Images of Africa and Asia in British Advertising* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003), 175. Brian Larkin, *Signal and Noise: Media, Infrastructure, and Urban Culture in Nigeria* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2008), 123-24.
6. Most of these sponsored or ephemeral film are forgotten, many of them lost. Rick Prelinger, *The Field Guide to Sponsored Films* (San Francisco: National Film Preservation Foundation, 2006), vi.
7. *Films That Work: Industrial Film and the Productivity of Media*, ed. Vinzenz Hediger and Patrick Vonderau (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2009). *Useful Cinema*, ed. Charles R. Acland and Haidee Wasson (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2011). *Learning with the Lights Off: Educational Film in the United States*, ed. Devin Orgeron, Marsha Orgeron, and Dan Streible (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012). Two special issues on utility film in *Montage/AV* 14, no. 2 (2005); 15, no. 1 (2006). Two special issues on nontheatrical film in *Film History* 19, no. 4 (2007); 25, no. 4 (2013).
8. Also, the impact of collective imaginaries of crude oil and petroleum products and their culture has become recently an important subject. *Oil Culture*, ed. Ross Barrett and Daniel Worden (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2014). Miguel Tinker Salas, *The Enduring Legacy: Oil, Culture, and Society in Venezuela* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2009). Andrew Apter, *The Pan-African Nation: Oil and the Spectacle of Culture in Nigeria* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005). Work by Canjels and Damluji focuses specifically on the history and impact of oil films: Rudmer Canjels, "From Oil to Celluloid: A History of Shell Films" in *A History of Royal Dutch Shell. Vol. 4*, ed. Jan Luiten van Zanden (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007). Mona Damluji, "The Image World of Middle Eastern Oil," in *Subterranean Estates: Life Worlds of Oil and Gas*, ed. Hannah Appel, Arthur Mason, and Michael Watts (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2015).; "The Oil City in Focus: The Cinematic Spaces of Abadan in the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company's Persian Story," *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 33, no. 1 (2013).

9. Thomas Elsaesser, "Die Stadt von Morgen: Filme zum Bauen und Wohnen," in *Geschiede des Dokumentarischen Films in Deutschland. Weimarer Republik 1918-1933*, ed. Klaus Kreimeier, Antje Ehmman, and Jeanpaul Goergen (Stuttgart: Reclam, 2005), 383.
10. Vinzenz Hediger and Patrick Vonderau, "Record, Rhetoric, Rationalization. Industrial Organization and Film," in *Films That Work: Industrial Film and the Productivity of Media*, ed. Vinzenz Hediger and Patrick Vonderau (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2009), 40.
11. The fact that both are British/Dutch companies, at least until the 2000s, is coincidental. For both companies it was the British side that took a far more active interest in using film, though in the Netherlands there was a flourishing documentary movement. Bert Hogenkamp, *De documentaire film 1945-1965. De bloei van een filmgenre in Nederland* (Rotterdam: Uitgeverij 010, 2003).
12. Thompson Ayodele, "The World Bank's Palm Oil Mistake," *The New York Times*, October 16, 2010, A19. Obiageli Ezekwesili, "Economy and Environment: The World Bank's View," *The New York Times*, October 23, 2010, A20.
13. Walt Whitman Rostow, *The Stages of Economic Growth: A Non-Communist Manifesto* (Cambridge: University of Cambridge, 1960).
14. Ramamurthy, *Imperial Persuaders*, 175.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 1

1. Fieldhouse, *Merchant Capital and Economic Decolonization*, 3-9.
2. Stockwell, *The Business of Decolonization*, 135-39.
3. Ramamurthy, *Imperial Persuaders*, 175-92.
4. Stephanie Decker, "Building up Goodwill: British Business, Development and Economic Nationalism in Ghana and Nigeria, 1945-1977," *Enterprise & Society* 9, no. 4 (2008): 137-38.
5. Hollandia Filmfabriek produced *Fabriek van Van den Bergh Limited in volle bedrijf* (1913), while Willy Mullens made for Haghe Films *Jurgens Grootbedrijf* (1918). Animator George Debels (alias Mac Djorski) made in the 1920s two short advertisements for Van den Bergh, *De eerste twist tusschen het jonge paar* and *Het geheim van den kok* (concerning Blue Band margarine).
6. *Washing Day* (1896) might be the first film shot for Unilever and was shown at the Geneva Exhibition in 1896 and afterwards throughout Switzerland. Competitions with prizes and free showings for children with a Sunlight proof of purchase were also organised by Lavanchy-Clarke. T.H. Lavanchy-Clarke, "The Cinema and Sunlight Soap. Early Enterprise of Mr. Lavanche-Clarke," *Progress*, vol. 22, no. 154 (April 1922), 89-90. Roland Cosandey and Jean-Marie Pastor, "Lavanchy-Clarke: Sunlight & Lumière, ou les débuts du cinématographie en Suisse," *Equinoxe*, no. 7 (1992). Roland Cosandey, "François-Henri Lavanchy-Clarke," in *Who's Who of Victorian Cinema*, ed. Stephen Herbert and Luke McKernan (London: British Film Institute, 1996), 79-80.
7. Jay Newell, Charles T. Salmon, and Susan Chang, "The Hidden History of Product Placement," *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media* 50, no. 4 (2006): 579.
8. "Twenty-five Years' Service to Education," *Progress*, vol. 22, no. 152 (January 1922), 24.
9. For more on the film *Port Sunlight*, see Amy Sargeant, "Lever, Lifebuoy and Ivory," *Early Popular Visual Culture* 9, no. 1 (2011).

10. Frederick Wilson was specialised in industrial and travel films, working in the 1910s and 1920s amongst others for Kineto, the War Office, Charles Urban's Kinograms, and Topical Budget. "Biography Frederick Wilson," accessed January 15, 2014, <http://ftvdb.bfi.org.uk/sift/individual/25837>.
11. The Niger Company would in 1929 merge together with other companies into UAC.
12. Before the 1930s according to Unilever film producer Laurence Mitchell there were only a few advertising films made, for instance for the Brussels Exhibition in 1910, and some in the 1920s. L.M. Mitchell, "How We Use Films: Unilever," *Film User*, December 1955, 502.
13. Sofidoc stood for Société du Film Documentaire. The film was directed by Gérard De Boe, assisted by Lucien Deroisy.
14. A British Pathé pamphlet of *Congo Harvest* reported: "The natives lived as had their ancestors for thousand of years, in ignorance, poverty and in fear of the witchdoctor. The wealth of Africa remained untouched in the soil and in the forest." *Congo Harvest* was a shortened version of 18 minutes of *The Tree of Life*. It received a theatrical release by British Pathé in 1951 as part of their series on 'The Wealth of the World.' *Congo Harvest* pamphlet, BFI Reuben Library.
15. In 1955 the Unilever Film Section had a staff of four: producer Laurence Mitchell, director Sid Latter who made several Magazine films around that time and would make many more Unilever films, a secretary (Diana Deakin) and a distribution manager (Mrs. Mary Eke). "Unilever Presents...", *Unilever House Magazine* 8, no. 5 (October-November 1955), 3.
16. The Magazine films usually contained two different subjects related to the industry, such as the importance of the research on radio-active isotopes for animal feeding products, the craft of herring fishing, or the shipping of cargo from and to Africa.
17. In the 1954-1955 catalogue there were 7 films and 5 Unilever Magazines, dealing with various subjects.
18. In the 1959-1960 catalogue the 27 films were divided into three sections: 9 with general interest subjects, 9 Unilever Magazines, and 9 films with educational and technical subjects. In the 1963/1964 catalogue, there were 13 films with general interest subjects, 7 Unilever Magazines, 22 with educational and technical subjects. *The Tree of Life*, *Unilever Magazine* 1 and 9, and *Maximum Crop* (1952) were taken out of this catalogue.
19. "When you Borrow a Unilever Film," *Film User*, February 1963, 77. In 1965 it was estimated 4,5 million people in the UK saw a Unilever film, with about 75% in schools, the rest was seen in film clubs, women's organisations, hospitals, industry and trade, and youth clubs. "Three Million at School," *Film User*, May 1965, 214.
20. "Unilever Presents...", *Unilever House Magazine* 8, 5.
21. In the 1950s in cooperation with UAC, *Design for Africa* within *Unilever Magazine* 2 (1956) and *The Surf Boats of Accra* (1958) were also made, dealing with the production and clothing design for Africa and documenting the fading tradition of using surf boats for cargo transport. As these films do not focus on Nigeria specifically, these films will not be dealt with.
22. Such as *The Purfleet Floods* (1954) for Unilever and *East African College* (1950) for the COI/Colonial Office.
23. In 2005 this would have been an equivalent of £330.000 and £400.000. D.H. Buckle, "UAC Public Relations Director," *Newsletter*, no. 3 (September 26, 1967), 1. UARM UAC/1/11/1/7/2. In 1966 a three-year budget of £250.000 (around 3 million pounds) for the Unilever Film Production (including those for the UAC) was proposed. D.H. Buckle, letter to

F.J. Pedler, March 2, 1966, 2. UARM UAC/1/3/3/6/1. Currency converter 1955/1965, The National Archives, accessed March 20, 2014, <http://apps.nationalarchives.gov.uk/currency/>

24. Dmitri Van Den Bersselaar, "Who Belongs to the 'Star People'? Negotiating Beer and Gin Advertisements in West Africa, 1949-75," *The Journal of African History* 52, no. 3 (2011): 391. Much of the advertising for West Africa was during the 1950s and 1960s still designed by European advertising agencies, mostly developed in London, and then handed over to African based agencies. Advertisement slogans used in Europe could thus be found unchanged in Nigerian oriented magazines. International slogans like 'You can be sure of Shell' and 'I'm going well, I'm using Shell', were for instance printed over a picture of a Nigerian costumer. Advertisement, *Daily Express*, January 24, 1961, 10.

25. There were exceptions of course. For instance, the Unilever Film Magazines were made by the publicity company Lintas for the Information Division of Unilever. At Shell, various departments, such as Shell Chemicals, could request films as well with the film division.

26. D.H. Buckle, *Newsletter*, no. 4 (October 31, 1967), 1-2. UARM UAC/1/11/1/7/2

27. Of course between public relations and advertising there was room for a joint operation, as the authority and reputation of the company could be brought into play to support a marketing operation or when advertising was needed for the films. However, they often belonged to different parts of the company and did not always function fluently, as evidenced by internal UAC memos reminding the departments of public relations, advertising, sales promotion and press to remember to co-ordinate and keep each other informed, while taking care of their own responsibilities. D.H. Buckle, "Public Relations and Advertising Services," October 30, 1967, 2. UARM UAC/1/11/1/7/2

28. Larkin, *Signal and Noise*, 123-24.

29. Rosaleen Smyth, "Grierson, the British Documentary Movement, and Colonial Cinema in British Colonial Africa," *Film History: An International Journal* 25, no. 4 (2013): 84.

30. Rosaleen Smyth, "The Post-War Career of the Colonial Film Unit in Africa: 1946-1955," *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television* 12, no. 2 (1992): 174.

31. *Colonial Office Advisory Committee on Education in the Colonies, Mass Education in African Society, Colonial no. 186* (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1944), 42. Quoted in Smyth, "Grierson, the British Documentary Movement," 90.

32. As the British colonised Nigeria, the official language was English. Dominant local dialects were Igbo, Hausa and Yoruba. Tom Rice, "From the Inside: The Colonial Film Unit and the Beginning of the End," in *Film and the End of Empire*, ed. Lee Grieveson and Colin MacCabe (London: BFI, 2011), 149.

33. In 1959 such a program still drew well over a thousand people in the open air. Larkin, *Signal and Noise*, 87.

34. More on the CFU in Smyth, "The Post-War Career"; "Images of Empires on Shifting Sands: The Colonial Film Unit in West Africa in the Post-War Period," in *Film and the End of Empire*, ed. Lee Grieveson and Colin MacCabe (London: BFI, 2011); Rice, "From the Inside."

35. Colonial Office, *Nigeria: Report for the Year 1954*, Colonial Annual Reports (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1958), 189.

36. "Vans Carry Visual Education to Rural Areas in Nigeria," *Colonial Cinema*, December 1952, 92-94.

37. Though the regional film units employed African technicians, Europeans headed them

and continued to promote a sense of national identity and Western democratic style government while remaining within the British Commonwealth. Smyth, "Grierson, the British Documentary Movement," 97.

38. *Nigeria: Report for the Year 1954*, 189. Lagos had 12 cinemas. *Nigeria: Report for the Year 1955*, Colonial Annual Reports (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1958), 171.

39. In an overview of UAC public relations, however, these films were noted to have been made initially for use in UK Secondary Schools but were received also favorably along the African coast. "Summary of Public Relations. Summary of Company's Public Relations Activities in Commonwealth West Africa," c. 1959, 8. UARM UAC/1/11/4/1/2,

40. "Summary of Public Relations. Proposals Previously Considered and Discarded," c. 1959. UARM UAC/1/11/4/1/2. "Film Rover for Nigeria," *UAC News* 10, no. 1 (January 1961), 2. UARM UAC/2/19/3/6/1/1

41. A UAC Staff Club programme could exist of a Charlie Chaplin film, country scenes from England, and news reels items on UK and local Nigerian news (for instance a Manchester football match or the installation of the emir of Yawuri). They could reach audience numbers of 400. "Film Shows at Kano," *UAC News* 5, no. 6, June 1956, 9. *The Twilight Forest* was shown in the Sapele Athletic Club for members of staff, after which it travelled to He-Ondo, Nikrowa and Sapoba areas. "Premiere of 'Twilight [sic] Forest' at Party for Chairman," *UAC News* 6, no. 12 (December 1957), 11. UARM UAC/2/19/3/6/1/1. "Summary of Public Relations in Commonwealth West Africa," 8.

42. Kenneth Myer, "Films and Africa," *Film User*, May 1971, 19.

43. "Summary of Public Relations in Commonwealth West Africa," 6-7.

44. Advertisement, UAC Film Library, c. 1960, UARM UAC/1/11/21/8.

45. Robson, "Report on Public Relations 1961/62," 1961, 7. UARM UAC/1/2/3/6/1.

46. Technical and Distribution Records *The Oil Rivers* and *The Twilight Forest*, UARM.

47. "Film Show For Federal Legislators," *West African Pilot*, March 12, 1958, 3.

48. "Premiere of 'Enterprise in Nigeria,'" *UAC News* 11, no. 1 (January 1962), 3 and 8. "'Enterprise in Nigeria' Launched in Ibadan," *UAC News* 11, no. 1 (January 1962), 10. "'African Awakening' Launched in Nigeria. Governor-General and Prime Minister at Special Premiere," *UAC News* 11, no. 8 (September 1962), 3. UARM UAC/2/19/3/6/1/1

49. J.L. Stanton, "Group Public Relations in Commonwealth West Africa," December 1, 1960, 4. UARM UAC/1/11/6/1.

50. "The Seeds of Change," *Monthly Film Bulletin*, 276/287 (1957), 36.

51. The voiceover commentary for *The Oil Rivers* was written by Elspeth Huxley, writer of many books on African history, just before the release of her best seller *The Flame Trees of Thika* (1959), based on her growing up on her fathers coffee plantation in colonial Kenya.

52. Lutyens would also write the score for *The Twilight Forest*. She was introduced into writing film scores by Muir Mathieson. Mathieson conducted the music for this film, as well as several others for UAC. Elisabeth Lutyens, *A Goldfish Bowl* (London: Cassell, 1972). S. J. Hetherington and Mark Brownrigg, Muir Mathieson, *1911-1975: A Life in Film Music* (Dalkeith, Scotland: Scottish Cultural Press, 2006).

53. Charles Theodore Middleton, *A New and Complete System of Geography: Containing a*

Full, Accurate, Authentic and Interesting Account and Description of Europe, Asia, Africa and America, 2 vols., vol. 1 (London: J. Cooke, 1777), 290-91. Sylvain Meinrad Xavier de Golbéry, *Travels in Africa Performed During the Years 1785, 1786 and 1787 in the Western Countries of That Continent*, 2 vols., vol. 2 (London: M. Jones, 1803), 283-86.

54. There are also postcards with climbers in other fruit tree, such as the coconut.

55. Advertisement, *Film User*, May 1970, 12. Within the opening titles of the series, a brief shot of a man cutting down the palm fruits is also shown; this shot is not shown in any of the films from the series.

56. More information on *West Africa Calling*, Tom Rice, "West Africa Calling," accessed January 27, 2014, <http://www.colonialfilm.org.uk/node/1329>. Lee Grieveson, "The Cinema and the (Common) Wealth of Nations," in *Empire and Film*, ed. Lee Grieveson and Colin MacCabe (London: BFI, 2011), 80-82.

57. O.T. Faulkner, "Agriculture in Nigeria," *The Times*, October 30, 1928, xix. Quoted by Tom Rice, "Oil Palm of Nigeria," accessed January 25, 2014, <http://www.colonialfilm.org.uk/node/487>. More on Faulkner in Ayodeji Olukkoja, "The Faulkner "Blueprint" and the Evolution of Agricultural Policy in Inter-War Colonial Nigeria," in *The Foundations of Nigeria: Essays in Honor of Toyin Falola*, ed. Adebayo Oyebadé (Trenton NJ: Africa World Press, 2003).

58. In the 1950s official loan schemes were set up to provide fund for farmers wishing to buy hand presses, but this scheme to improve smallholders processing techniques was with the emergence of the mills dampened. Susan M. Martin, *Palm Oil and Protest: An Economic History of the Ngwa Region, South-Eastern Nigeria, 1800-1980* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 128-29.

59. In the early 1940s UAC started to give away hand presses to woo small-scale farmers into mechanisation. *Ibid.*, 65.

60. Fieldhouse, *Merchant Capital and Economic Decolonization*, 208.

61. Faulkner, "Agriculture in Nigeria," xix.

62. In 1909-1913 palm products accounted for 92% of Nigeria's domestic exports, in 1922 this was 57%, by 1938 it was 34%. David Meredith, "Government and the Decline of the Nigerian Oil-Palm Export Industry, 1919-1939," *The Journal of African History* 25, no. 3 (1984): 312 and 325.

63. In the 1920s the government tried to stimulate the interest of foreign investors for setting up mills for mechanised pressing, but conditions were not good and with an absence of plantations for steady supply, there was no interest. *Ibid.*, 313-18.

64. Fieldhouse, *Merchant Capital and Economic Decolonization*, 211-14.

65. In the advertisement and film it is mentioned as a Unilever plantation, not UAC. One acre supplied the same amount of palms as 20 acres of bush, enough supply to keep a factory busy all the time.

66. Keith Carter, "Oil Palm Industry Faces Changes," *West African Review*, August 1962, 42-43. Martin, *Palm Oil and Protest*, 134.

67. Carter, "Oil Palm Industry," 42.

68. Fieldhouse, *Merchant Capital and Economic Decolonization*, 383.

69. *Ibid.*, 383-84.

70. Ibid., 391.

71. There was no direct causal connection between the withdrawal from produce (around 1958) and the industrialisation. Ibid., 391 and 447. N. Bonner Gash, "Lecture Notes. Problems of International Business in Developing Africa," February 1965, 1-2. UARM UAC/1/11/6/3.

72. UAC also dropped out of most of its trade in hardware and general provision, doing away with most of its general stores, concentrating more on specialised services such as the Kingsway department stores. Its residual trading activities focused on motor vehicles, chemist shops, cold storage and frozen food, technical hardware, and textiles. Fieldhouse, *Merchant Capital and Economic Decolonization*, 412.

73. While the percentage of African managers steadily increased over the years, after 1957 the number of European managers employed by UAC remained fairly stable, around 1140. The countries in each West African territory had different results. In 1958, Nigeria had with 19% the lowest percentage; Sierra Leone had the highest with 33%. D.H. Buckle, *Talking Point Paper no. 31: Africanisation*, April 17, 1961, 2. Buckle gave in an earlier paper different percentages: 8% in 1939 and nearly 27% in 1956. D.H. Buckle, *Talking Point Paper no. 9: Africanisation*, second revision, June 1956, 1-2. UARM UAC/1/11/1/7/1.

74. Philips advertised with an image of the world surrounded by scaffolding, with the slogan, "A gigantic job: Building a free and independent world!," implying that with the products of Philips one was able to attain that, connecting comfort with progress. John Holt, a competitor of UAC, published a drawing of an impressive structure being built, with black workers in the foreground. "This independent family merchant enterprise is always fully geared to the Western African development." Shell advertised with the slogan "partner in West Africa's progress" showing a photograph of a road construction through a forest. They wished Ghana good fortune and continued progress, noting the company was ready to contribute to this progress. Advertisements, *West African Review*, March 1957, 214; 301; 327.

75. Advertisement, *West African Review*, January 1957, 47; April 1957, 392.

76. Advertisement, *West African Review*, January 1958, 40.

77. UAC had assessed in 1952 the requirements for skilled personal, and as a result opened its first training school in Nigeria two years later. UAC offered a variety of training courses. Though job offers to start working at UAC would be made after completion, there was no requirement to accept. Stockwell, *The Business of Decolonization*, 142.

78. Ibid., 139. As Stephanie Decker shows in her research, UAC remained also in later years a forerunner with these kinds of advertisements focusing on development, making hardly any use of more traditional colonial imagery as was done by companies such as Barclays or Bank of West Africa. Stephanie Decker, "Corporate Legitimacy and Advertising: British Companies and the Rhetoric of Development in West Africa, 1950-1970," *Business History Review* 81, no. 1 (2007): 69-71. This campaign was also directly linked to the independence of Nigeria, indicated by the line "the future of Nigeria belongs to her people." Men of Tomorrow folder, UARM UAC/1/11/18/2/27

79. Decker, "Corporate Legitimacy and Advertising," 69. Other periodicals UAC advertised in (and which were also printed in the UK) were *African World*, *West African Annual* and *New Commonwealth*.

80. "Prospects for Hides and Skin," *West Africa*, February 16, 1963, 184.

81. Apparently there were two versions available for UK schools, one "virtually free from musical background", it is unclear if the violins were still present in this version. "Traders in Leather," *Visual Education*, August 1958, 10.

82. A similar message is made in *The Twilight Forest*, where fallen down trees are rotting away in the forest, unused, until UAC stimulated new methods.
83. The airport was shown more extensively in *Nigeria, The Making of a Nation* (1960), sponsored by the Central Office of Information.
84. Larkin, *Signal and Noise*, 127.
85. Ibid., 129.
86. Muhammad Sani Zahradeen, "The Place of Mosques in the History of Kano," in *Studies in the History of Kano*, ed. B. M. Barkindo (Ibadan: Heinemann educational Books, 1983), 58.
87. Advertisement, *Film User*, March 1957, 93. *Film User* was meant for those interested in the non-theatrical film market.
88. The text also stresses that already thirty years ago Unilever received permission to operate a plantation on a scientific basis, signalling the on-going positive relationship with Nigeria.
89. Advertisement, *Film User*, October 1957, 421.
90. A reviewer from the British Visual Aids Society wrote that "the close-up of the perspiring bodies and anxious faces [were] particularly striking." "Twilight Forest," *Visual Education*, February 1958.
91. "Timber and Plywood," *Unilever House Magazine* 8, no. 4 (August-September 1955), 3.
92. Advertisement, *Film User*, November 1957, n.p.
93. Another interesting drawn advertising can be found a year later. It blends five Unilever/UAC films together, with images of a palm tree climber, a hide trader, tree cutters, as well as a menacing elephant and a scary witch doctor. Though a witch doctor is shown in *The Tree of Life* (but not the elephant), he is not like the one in the advertisement who is drawn like a stereotypical witch doctor with large earrings, horns on his head, and a threatening skull-spear pointing at the viewer. Advertisement, *Film User*, December 1959, 623.
94. Advertisement, *Film User*, October 1958, n.p. John Mack, *Africa, Arts and Cultures* (London: British Museum Press, 2000), 14.
95. James J. Ross Archive of African Images, record no. 1032, accessed June 20, 2014, http://raai.library.yale.edu/site/index.php?globalnav=image_detail&image_id=650. Wendy A. Grossman, "From Ethnographic Object to Modernist Icon: Photographs of African and Oceanic Sculpture and the Rhetoric of the Image," *Visual Resources* 23, no. 4 (2007): 293-94.
96. Robert Home, *City of Blood Revisited: A New Look at the Benin Expedition of 1897* (London: Rex Collings, 1982), 27.
97. Ibid., 88-89 and 100-01. This history is still alive and relevant today. In 2010 Sotheby's cancelled the auction of a Benin mask after online protests. The auction was put up by the descendants of Lieutenant Colonel Sir Henry Lionel Gallwey whom had participated in the punitive expedition. Rob Sharp, "Sotheby's Cancels Sale of 'Looted' Benin Mask," December 29, 2010, *The Independent*, accessed August 10, 2014, <http://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/art/news/sothebys-cancels-sale-of-looted-benin-mask-2171125.html>.
98. Advertisements, *West African Review*, September 1959, 560; October 1959, 638. Advertisement, *West Africa*, December 1959, 1130.
99. "Wide Acclaim For The Twilight Forest," *UAC News* 7, no. 5 (May 1958), 6. UARM

UAC/2/19/3/6/1/1.

100. "Unilever Film Chosen For Royal Command Film Performance," *UAC News* 7, no. 2, (February 1959), 2. UARM UAC/2/19/3/6/1/1.

101. Unilever companies had a total of 248 copies; outside organisations had 273 copies. "Film Distribution June 1960-May 1961," *UAC News* 11, no. 1 (January 1962), 2. UARM UAC/2/19/3/6/1/1.

102. "When You Borrow a Unilever Film," 77.

103. Also included on the *Britannia* was *The Surf Boats of Accra*. "Unilever Film Chosen," 2.

104. Mark Luetchford and Peter Burns, *Waging the War on Want: 50 Years of Campaigning against World Poverty. An Authorised History* (London: War on Want, 2003), 40. Organisations such as UNICEF, Oxfam and the National Peace Council were also present, while countries such as Nigeria and Ghana were invited to show how they were developing their economies and social structures. Multinationals such as ICI and Unilever had stands, covering the cost of the exhibition, creating a curious, and perhaps diverging, interest. "International Exhibition "The War on Want" 1960," *UAC News* 9, no. 2 (February 1960), 2.

105. The company also reissued old Hollywood films. It went into liquidation in 1961. *Kinematograph Year Book 1954*, London: Odhams Press Limited, 76.

106. *The Surf Boats of Accra* also received a theatrical version, possibly by Rank Film Distributors, released as *Ten Men in a Boat* and shown before a main feature. "Unilever Film Chosen," 2.

107. Commentary was now spoken by the familiar Gaumont British newsreader, E.V.H. Emmett, instead of David de Keyser.

108. "South of Sahara," *Monthly Film Bulletin*, 276/287, 1957, 12.

109. Fieldhouse, *Merchant Capital and Economic Decolonization*, 391.

110. In 1962 *The Surf Boats of Accra*, *Traders in Leather*, and *The Twilight Forest* were used to stimulate third year primary school pupils to write original verses. Richard R.N. Lowe, "10 Tasks for Film in the Primary School," *Film User*, November 1962, 580. "Three Million at School," *Film User*, May 1965, 215.

111. *Unilever Films, Catalogue 1967-1968* (Ipswich, Suffolk: Unilever Limited, 1967), 8.

112. "C.O.I. Relations with Industry, Outline," February 10, 1960, 1-10. National Archives (NA), INF 12/803

113. Films from the Colonial Film Unit, the Nigerian Film Unit and Nigerian Information Services were also distributed.

114. "C.O.I. Relations with Industry, Outline," 7.

115. W.J. Colwill and W.F. Garnett, "Central Film Library: Films and Television Division," 1966, 2. NA, INF 12/826

116. "C.O.I. Booster for Exports," *The Times*, June 21, 1965, 16.

117. Films were admitted under the guidance of an advisory panel representing the British Employers' Confederation, the Federation of British Industries, the National Union of Manufacturers Inc., the T.U.C., the British Productivity Departments, and various Government

Departments. "The Central Film Library," *Industrial Screen*, September-October 1962, 124-125.

118. On behalf of the Foreign Office, Commonwealth Relations Office and Colonial Office the film division of the COI acquired these overseas rights. "C.O.I. Booster for Exports," 16.

119. Such as: *Industrial Films from Britain* (1962), *Films for Television* (1963), or *Films on Science, Technology, Industry* (1965).

120. "Who Uses Films?," *Film User*, September 1959, 457.

121. In 1964/1965 the number dispatched prints had risen to 67.000. W.J. Colwill and W.F. Garnett, "Central Film Library: Films and Television Division," 1966. "Central Film Library: Output and Complement Comparison," NA, INF 12/826.

122. "The British Council and Films. Staff Conference," 1969, 4. NA, BW 1/770 "The COI's film effort [...] is (in broad terms) concentrated on informational and prestige films [...] and the COI are now confining their film effort more and more to trade promotional films with the purpose of obtaining more orders for British goods overseas." L.W. Sayers, director Films Department, "Review of Information Media," February 6, 1969, 2. NA, BW 1/770. The decline also set in because the emphasis shifted to films for television. A.C. Hall, "Sponsored C.O.I./H.M.S.O. Services: A Survey. Films Division," July 1969, 2. NA, BW 1/770

123. In 1968 it was "still possible to maintain a very high proportion of hard trade projection but to camouflage it with general projection and to pretend that balanced programmes are offered." Hall, "Sponsored C.O.I./H.M.S.O. Services," 13.

124. Ibid., 4.

125. Notice for Insertion in the *Board of Trade Journal*, "Facilities for the Showing of Sales Promotion Films Overseas," n.d. NA, INF 12/969.

126. *Industrial Films from Britain* (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office/Mildner & Sons, 1962), 4.

127. *Central Film Library. Catalogue of Sound Films, 1961-62* (Swindon: Swindon Press/Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1961), 56-57.

128. One booking might represent several showings, as some were booked for a week. On average (on a conservative estimate by the CFL) one booking equalled one-and-a-half showings. Since the CFL sold films as well as hired them, it is not a complete account. A.A. Vesselo, "Issues of Films from C.F.L. 1960-61," August 1961. NA, INF 12/800

129. A film could have many different language versions. For instance, Unilever's *Room for Hygiene* (1961), a film on the importance of hygiene in the home had several versions in 16mm: Dutch, Finnish, Hindi, Sinhalese, Swedish, Tamil, Urdu, West Bengali, and Yoruba. The COI then also made versions in East Bengali, Italian, Brazilian Portuguese, Greek, Iban, and Swahili. Film production notes, *Room for Hygiene*, UARM.

130. The broadcasting of a complete film was not very common, especially if logos and products were shown within the production. In 1964 *The Twilight Forest* and *Traders in Leather* were shown several times on the BBC to provide colour broadcasting for use by television shops and engineers. Andrew Keys, "The Statistician's Guide to Trade Test Colour Films," accessed April 15, 2013, <http://www.testcardcircle.org.uk/ttcfstatistics.html>. Film production notes, *The Twilight Forest*, UARM.

131. Description from *The Oil Rivers* and *The Twilight Forest*. *Central Film Library. 1961-62*, 57. Three years later being picturesque was an important filmic quality too, as "modern methods of production are gradually being introduced, but special efforts are being made to avoid

disruption of the villagers' traditional and picturesque way of living." *Films from Britain, 1964-65* (Southampton: Cox and Sharland/Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1964), 344.

132. "In general, the BIS [the British Information Services, which COI was part of] seek[s] to influence important contacts in Government, trade and industry, the public utilities; the "media men"; and – in closest liaison with the British Council – political and economic departments of universities and centres of higher studies; and, where appropriate (such as in the African countries) sixth form students and their teachers." Hall, "Sponsored C.O.I./H.M.S.O. Services," 11.

133. Ibid., 3.

134. In 1968 80% of the acquisitions by COI for export promotion was from industrial and trade promotional. Ibid., 2.

135. This recommendation was already done in 1956 as Henry Brooke (Financial Secretary to the Treasury) notes: "The C.O.I. has extensive film activities. When its films are to go to non-English speaking countries, they are dubbed into a wide range of languages. For that reason, they are made with commentaries and without direct speech. I should like to point out that this is a matter for industry to watch when making films which it would like the C.O.I. to circulate overseas. I mean the point about using a commentary rather than direct speech." Henry Brooke, Commons Sitting, Motion British Information Services, December 14, 1956, accessed March 15, 2014, <http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1956/dec/14/british-information-services>. More information was in the special COI brochure *Let the World See Your Films* (1965), detailing the operating scheme and mentioning tips for when making a film for distribution overseas; unfortunately unavailable for this research. "C.O.I. Booster for Exports," 16. In 1968 the adaptation unit produced over 700 foreign versions of 270 films. Fife Clark, *The Central Office of Information* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1970), 78.

136. Festivals took place in Florence, Berlin, Oberhausen, Montevideo, Cannes, San Sebastian, Stratford, Montreal, Cork, Bilbao, Mogadishu, Trento, Tokyo, and Tours among others.

137. Hall, "Sponsored C.O.I./H.M.S.O. Services," 8.

138. Runner up was BP with 29 films.

139. The COI provided a mere 20% in the Science and Technology section; the rest were mostly (British) company films. *Films from Britain, 1964-65*.

140. Additionally, the construction operator Richard Costain had two, and BP one. Ibid., 340-345.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 2

1. The first shipment of Nigerian crude oil exports arrived at Rotterdam on 8 March 1958. "Nigerian Oil for Holland," *The Financial Times*, March 10, 1958, 7. "World Wide Publicity Given to First Nigerian Crude Oil Export," *Oil Search Bulletin*, April 1958, no. 24, 1. Jędrzej George Frynas, "Political Instability and Business: Focus on Shell in Nigeria," *Third World Quarterly* 19, no. 3 (1998): 470.

2. It was the British Nigeria Bitumen Corporation Company that was the most active and successful in exploring for oil in the early 1900s, though they failed to exploit their findings. For more on the early oil period see, Phia Steyn, "Oil Exploration in Colonial Nigeria, c.1903-58," *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 37, no. 2 (2009).

3. The joint application was submitted to the Colonial Office in the names of the Anglo-Iranian

Oil Company and the Anglo-Saxon Petroleum Company (a subsidiary of Royal Dutch Shell). At the end of 1937 the name Anglo-Saxon was substituted officially with that of the Shell Overseas Exploration Company Limited. In 1951 the company formed a locally incorporated company for the special purpose of developing Nigeria's oil resources, called the Shell/D'Arcy Petroleum Development Company of Nigeria, Limited. The Anglo-Persian Oil Company was an English company founded in 1908 following the discovery of a large oil field in Iran, it was renamed in 1935 as the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company. The D'Arcy Exploration Corporation was a wholly owned subsidiary of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company, already searching for oil in Nigeria in 1918. Shell-BP Petroleum Development Company of Nigeria, *The Shell-BP Story* (Port Harcourt, Nigeria: C.M.S. Nigeria Press, 1965), 8. Steyn, "Oil Exploration in Colonial Nigeria," 22.

4. James H. Bamberg, *British Petroleum and Global Oil: 1950-1975. The Challenge of Nationalism*, 3 vols., vol. 3, *The History of the British Petroleum Company* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 110.
5. According to Umejesi and Akpan, Shell-BP exploration activities did continue during the war. Ikechukwu Umejesi and Wilson Akpan, "Oil Exploration and Local Opposition in Colonial Nigeria: Understanding the Roots of Contemporary State-Community Conflict in the Niger Delta," *South African Review of Sociology* 44, no. 1 (2013): 118.
6. The name change became effective 1 May 1956. "Shell D'Arcy Company Changes Name," *Petroleum Times*, June 22, 1956. Schätzl, *Petroleum in Nigeria*, note 1, 42. The total figure of expense changes a lot with different sources (also those from within Shell). "The Oil Search in Nigeria. Entering Production-testing Phase after Twenty-one Years," *Petroleum Times*, October 22, 1957. "Nigeria's Oil Film for World Training Courses," *Shell-BP Bulletin*, July 1965, no. 16, 4. "Oil: Big Export Boom," *Daily Express*, June 8, 1961, 1. S.J. Webb, "Nigeria as an Oil Producer," *New Commonwealth*, November 1960, no. 38, 716. A Shell-BP General Manager, "The Financial History of Shell-BP," *Oil Search Bulletin*, 1962, no. 70, 3.
7. "Growing up with Nigeria," *Shell-BP Bulletin*, October 1963, no. 5, 1. In 2006 the total daily production of the oil industry in Nigeria was 2.4 million barrels per day. Soala Ariweriokuma, *The Political Economy of Oil and Gas in Africa: The Case of Nigeria* (New York: Routledge, 2009), 25.
8. Already deducted from this figure, were six million pounds coming from oil sales. Exploration Manager Shell-BP, R.H. Beck, "The Oil Search in Nigeria," *Oil Search Bulletin*, September 1960, no. 52, 2. The amount of (quickly rising) spending was often mentioned in publicity. In June 1959 it was 48 million, a year later it was 64 million. Indeed it was a costly business, one (unsuccessful) drilling in the swamp could cost 1,25 million pounds. "Shell-BP Here to Stay," *Oil Search Bulletin* June 1959, no. 38, 1. Webb, "Nigeria as an Oil Producer," 716-717.
9. Jędrzej George Frynas, Matthias P. Beck, and Kamel Mellahi, "Maintaining Corporate Dominance after Decolonization: The 'First Mover Advantage' of Shell BP in Nigeria," *Review of African Political Economy* 27, no. 85 (2000): 409-10. Donald Kingdon, *The Laws of the Federation of Nigeria and Lagos; in Force on the 1st Day of June, 1958*, 12 vols., vol. 4 (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1959), 2422.
10. Schätzl, *Petroleum in Nigeria*, 3-4. The company would in 1961 also return this concession to the government after expiration of the licensing contract, as the wells drilled had no promising results.
11. Ibid., 4. SAFRAP, a joint venture with biggest share held by SAFREP, (Société anonyme française de recherches et d'exploration de pétrole), later becoming Elf, was owned partly by the French government.
12. Ibid., 14. Eighteen wells were drilled between 1951 and 1956, turning out mostly dry
13. More on the early advantage of Shell in Frynas, Beck, and Mellahi, "Maintaining Corporate

Dominance.”

14. Schätzl, *Petroleum in Nigeria*, 1. Frynas, Beck, and Mellahi, “Maintaining Corporate Dominance,” 411. Webb, “Nigeria as an Oil Producer,” 716.

15. Schätzl, *Petroleum in Nigeria*, 14.

16. Exploration licenses came before OPL and were used for analysis of expected crude oil yield in its concession territory, using geological and geophysical methods of investigation. However, definite information as to whether crude oil was actually present only could be obtained through drilling operations. Exploration licences do not include the right to drill for oil. In 1951 Shell-BP's concessions covering the whole of Nigeria were reduced to 58.000 square miles, and were further reduced to 40,000 around 1957, concentrating on the Niger Delta. Ibid., 1.

17. In 1961 almost 8000 kilometres was reached; in the years after it remained between 3000 and 4000. *Shell-BP Story*, 11.

18. With the increased efficiency of drilling equipment and better adaptation to the conditions over the years a reduction in drilling time was made. While early exploration wells could take as long as a year to complete, it now became possible to drill in less than two weeks. Ibid., 16. Schätzl, *Petroleum in Nigeria*, 22.

19. However, six of the eight parties were operated by an independent firm hired by Shell-BP, Seismograph Services Limited. Another 3000 worked at drilling, engineering and supporting services. “Oil Exploration Stepped Up,” *Oil Search Bulletin*, 1960, no. 44, 2. *Shell-BP Story*, 12.

20. In 1949, when the company applied for an OPL license, the governor of Nigeria, John Stuart Macpherson, tried to propose a system whereby the Nigerian government would share in the profits earned by Shell-BP. However, the Executive Council voted to retain the existing method of the prospecting, only needing for standard payment of rents, royalties and taxes once oil exploitation and exportation commenced. Steyn, “Oil Exploration in Colonial Nigeria,” 30.

21. Schätzl, *Petroleum in Nigeria*, 83 and 91.

22. Okotie-Eboh was assassinated along with prime minister Tafawa Balewa during the 1966 military coup, which ended the First Republic. “Oil Agreement Speeches,” *Oil Search Bulletin*, June 1959, no. 38, 2. “The 50:50 Partnership,” *Oil Search Bulletin*, June 1959, no. 38, 1.

23. Dr. M. I. Okpara, premier of Eastern Nigeria, was also present. The Shell-BP building had cost £700,000. “Oil: Big Export Boom,” *Daily Express*, June 8, 1961, 1. “Shell-BP House,” *Daily Times*, June 9, 1961, 1. “10m. Barrels of Oil Exported,” *Daily Times*, June 8, 1961, 3.

24. “Oil: Big Export Boom,” 1.

25. Schätzl, *Petroleum in Nigeria*, 243. And with slightly different figures, Wouter Tims and World Bank, *Nigeria: Options for Long-Term Development* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1974), 249. Royalties were divided, whereby 50% would go to the region of origin (the East), 20% to the Federal Government for federal revenue, and 30% to the ‘distributable pool’ available to all governments. “Nigeria Strikes Oil,” *West Africa*, 14 November 1959, 959.

26. Schätzl, *Petroleum in Nigeria*, 152.

27. Steyn, “Oil Exploration in Colonial Nigeria,” 263. Kingdon, *Laws of the Federation of Nigeria*, 4, 2421-24.

28. Umejesi and Akpan, “Oil Exploration and Local Opposition in Colonial Nigeria,” 123-26.

29. Steyn, “Oil Exploration in Colonial Nigeria,” 263-64.

30. "The Oil Search in Nigeria. Entering Production-testing Phase after Twenty-one Years," *Petroleum Times*, October 22, 1957.
31. Shell-D'Arcy Petroleum Development Company of Nigeria, *Search for Petroleum in Nigeria* (London: Balding & Mansell, 1953), n.p..
32. Ibid.
33. Steyn, "Oil Exploration in Colonial Nigeria," 265.
34. Ibid.
35. Ariweriokuma, *Political Economy of Oil*, 37.
36. Dara O'Rourke and Sarah Connolly, "Just Oil? The Distribution of Environmental and Social Impacts of Oil Production and Consumption," *Annual Review of Environment and Resources* 28, no. 1 (2003): 594.
37. "The Oil Search in Nigeria," *Petroleum Times*.
38. O'Rourke and Connolly, "Just Oil?," 594.
39. Rachel Carson's important study *Silent Spring* on the environmental damage done by pesticides marked in 1962 the birth of the modern environmental movement. However, it took until around 1970 when more pro-active awareness about the importance of environmental measures (mostly concerning pollution) was put into place at Shell. Joost Jonker and Stephen Howarth, *Powering the Hydrocarbon Revolution, 1939-1973*, 4 vols., vol. 2, *A History of Royal Dutch Shell* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 441.
40. Ronald E. Tritton, "How We Use Films: At Anglo-Iranian," *Film User*, September 1953, vol. 7, no. 83, 464-465. Tritton was director of AIOC's public relations: "films can evoke feelings in an audience: they can make people feel well disposed towards a company or an industry and realize that it is a decent, honest, well-run and efficient organization."
41. Only *The Search For Oil in Nigeria* could according to one review be rented through the Petroleum Films Bureau as well as Shell-Mex. "The Search For Oil in Nigeria," *Film User*, September 1961, 487.
42. Patrick A. Russell and James Piers Taylor, *Shadows of Progress: Documentary Film in Post-War Britain* (London: BFI, 2010), 88.
43. For a historical overview of the SFU, see Canjels, "From Oil to Celluloid."
44. The original credit title is *Overzicht van de bedrijven van de Bataafsche Petroleum Maatschappij in Nederl. Oost-Indië*. At the time, as well as later, the film was usually referred to as the *Bataafsche Petroleum Film*. Roughly 40% of the film remains and is preserved at the EYE Filmmuseum Amsterdam.
45. As documentary films with a colonial viewpoint remained popular, new films were made in later years by re-editing used and unused scenes from the material shot in 1924.
46. The films of Shell-Mex & BP that were made from the early 1930s until 1975 will not be discussed here. These films were intended for the English market only and consisted mostly of promotional films, unlike the SFU films that were meant for public relations and prestige purposes.
47. Paul Rotha, *Documentary Diary: An Informal History of the British Documentary Film, 1928-1939* (London: Secker & Warburg, 1973), 90.

48. More on John Grierson in Ian Aitken, *Film and Reform: John Grierson and the Documentary Film Movement* (London: Routledge, 1990).; Forsyth Hardy, *John Grierson: A Documentary Biography* (London: Faber and Faber, 1979).; Paul Swann, *The British Documentary Film Movement 1926-1946* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989).; Elizabeth Sussex, *The Rise and Fall of British Documentary* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975).
49. "The Record of the Film Unit," (1951), 2-4. Shell Film & Video Unit archive (SFVU), PAC/21 B SFU 13. Unfortunately, Grierson's report and the various responses to it are lost.
50. Interview Edgar Anstey, transcript of an interview recorded February 10, 1983, 8-9. SFVU, PAC/21 B SFU 11.
51. The initial advisory agreement was made in 1936 with the newly formed Associated Realist Film Producers. Two years later the Film Centre emerged out of Associated Realist. More information on the Film Centre, Steven Foxon, "Film Centre (United Kingdom)," in *Encyclopedia of the Documentary Film*, vols. 3, vol. 1, ed. Ian Aitken (London: Routledge, 2006).
52. Memorandum Alexander Wolcough, 15 February 1937, quoted in "Record of the Film Unit," 7-8.
53. Michael Clarke, *Notes on the Shell Film Unit and Film Centre*, January 1994, 3. BFI Library
54. H.D. Waley, "British Documentaries and the War Effort," *The Public Opinion Quarterly* 6.4 (1942): 606-08.
55. "Reaching the Audience, Part 2," *Film User*, July 1953, v. 7, no. 81, 368.
56. Films were also used by British Government Information Services. Ronald E. Tritton, "At Anglo-Iranian," *Film User*, September 1953, v. 7, no. 83, 464-465.
57. C.E. Tiffin, "The Non-Theatric Audience," *Industrial Screen*, October 1963, 389.
58. John Drummond, "Shell Film Operations. Report by Head of Briefing and Media, Services Division, Public Relations," December 16, 1960, 2. SFVU, PAC 21 B SFU 14. Shell films were sometimes screened in their entirety on television, though most often only an excerpt was shown. In this overview, Shell's interest in television could not be looked into. With the new Shell Centre opening in 1961 a theatre was built into it, seating 335 persons, with maskings for Cinemascope, wide screen and standard academy ratio prints. It also included an orchestra pit. For work there was also a smaller cinema. Ken Moreman, "Shell Centre Theatre," *Industrial Screen*, October 1963, 405. Ken Moreman, "Shell Centre Cinema," *Industrial Screen*, November 1963, 447.
59. Haanstra had made *Dijkbouw* (1952), and in 1954 *Ontstaan en vergaan* (*The Changing Earth*), *De opsporing van aardolie* (*The Search for Oil*), *De verkenningsboring* (*The Wildcat*), and *Het olieveld* (*The Oilfield*).
60. *Films*, (S.I.P.C., 1963), 4. SFVU.
61. Shell Oil to S.I.P.C., "Film Statistics for 1965. Analysis of Total Film Distribution of European Countries in 1965," (revised July 1966). Bert Haanstra archive, EYE Filmmuseum Amsterdam (Haanstra archive), 136/A 6-4. A very rough worldwide estimate of 75 million was also quoted, but this may have included television viewers. "Statement of Film Policy," (1965). SFVU, PAC/21 B SFU 13.
62. Drummond, "Shell Film Operations," 6.
63. This included the units in South East Asia, West Africa, and Venezuela. Ibid.

64. Colin Burgess, "Sixty Years of Shell Film Sponsorship, 1934–94," *Journal of British Cinema and Television* 7, no. 2 (2010): 224. Another way of visual communication was by making exhibitions with photographs and models of drilling rigs. According to Shell/BP over 3000 persons visited their "Oil in Nigeria" exhibition, held in late 1958 in Enuga and later in early 1959 in Port Harcourt. It gave "the people of the municipality and surrounding areas the opportunity of understanding the Company's operations and some of the difficulties and problems associated with the search for oil in Nigeria". Ministers, chiefs, parliamentary secretaries, government officials, businessmen and students visited the exhibition, also helped by the British Council. "Oil in Nigeria Exhibition in Enugu," *Oil Search Bulletin*, December 1958, no. 32, 4. "£5 Million Spent in West Oil Search," *Oil Search Bulletin*, March 1959, no. 35, 1.
65. Douglas Gordon, "Films in Shell-BP. Interim Report," June 1959, 2. Haanstra archive.
66. His initial crew was editor Roy Ayton, director Frank Nesbitt, and cameraman Maurice Picot. Director Richard Taylor and Philip Owtram came later.
67. Gordon, "Films in Shell-BP," 5.
68. Rice, "From the Inside," 136.
69. Gordon, "Films in Shell-BP," 6.
70. *Ibid.*, 3-4.
71. In 2005 £50.000 would have been an equivalent of £765.000. Currency converter 1960, The National Archives, accessed March 20, 2014, <http://apps.nationalarchives.gov.uk/currency/>. "Minutes of 18th meeting, Group Film Committee," The Hague, July 2, 1959, 6. Haanstra archive.
72. "There is, in fact good reason to believe that a fruitful and harmonious relationship will develop [between the company and the leaders of Nigerian opinion], but this is by no means inevitable. The pressures to which their relationship could be subjected are many and varied; they form a part of the great question mark which is the future of Africa and its place in the world." Gordon, "Films in Shell-BP," 1.
73. "In securing its future position the Company has much in its favour. Not only are its operations a vital economic asset to Nigeria, but its organization and method of working offer an example of enlightened business-efficiency based on a wealth of experience of which Nigeria herself stands in most urgent need." *Ibid.*
74. *Ibid.*, 3.
75. Douglas Gordon, transcript of an interview recorded May 18, 1983, 8. SFVU, PAC/21 B SFU 11.
76. Gordon, "Films in Shell-BP," 2.
77. Gordon thinks there were eleven or twelve films produced. Gordon, transcript, 9-10. I have not been able to identify all of them, most were made and released within 1962-1963: *The Search for Oil in Nigeria*, *Oilman's Move*, *Nigeria's Oilmen*, *Nigerian Harvest*, *The World- Our Market*, and *Framework for a Nation*. There were also at least four Shell-BP Cinemagazines. Announced in 1963 was a production called *Nigeria's Natural Resources*, though perhaps this was later retitled into *Framework for a Nation*.
78. Gordon, transcript, 8.
79. *Ibid.*, 7-8.

80. Film note pamphlet, *The Search For Oil in Nigeria*, SFVU.
81. Shell-D'Arcy, *Search for Petroleum in Nigeria*, n.p.
82. Unfortunately both *Getting Down to Oil. 1. Discovery* (1964) and *Getting Down to Oil. 2. Drilling* (1964) could not be viewed for this research.
83. This focus started mainly under the guidance of Stuart Legg, producer at the Film Centre and the SFU from 1952.
84. Film note pamphlet, *The Search For Oil in Nigeria*.
85. The load on the Water Buffalo was spread so widely, the ground pressure was less than that of a man. "30-ton Amphibious Tractor for Nigeria," *The Commercial Motor*, June 20, 1958, 681; "New Special Trailers for Oil Exploration," *The Commercial Motor*, November 7, 1958, 541.
86. Larkin, *Signal and Noise*, 42.
87. Ibid., 36. According to Kant, judging objects in relation to other objects, the sublime indicates power and creates the feeling of submission. Immanuel Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, trans. Paul Guyer (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 146.
88. The derrick can also be seen in magazine advertisements by Shell meant for West Africa. Either seen from below or above, the strange but impressive object of the derrick stands erect above the tropical forest. Advertisements, *West African Review*, April 1958, 272; *West Africa*, March 1960, 348.
89. In the international version, the shortened credits are in the front of the film.
90. Joan M. Schwartz, "Photographic Reflections: Nature, Landscape, and Environment," *Environmental History* 12, no. 4 (2007).
91. With the introduction of the civilian helicopter in 1946 (the Bell 47), the helicopter would change aerial cinematography in the years to come. Indeed Shell was interested in helicopters early on, both for moving people and equipment to difficult to reach areas, but also for their films. In *Night Hop* (1949) and *The History of the Helicopter* (1950) helicopters play a vital part but are not directly connected to the production of oil. *Jungle Airlift* (1956) was the first Shell film whereby the use of the helicopter in oil production was shown, flying derrick and drilling equipment into the tropical forest of New Guinea.
92. Film note pamphlet, *Oilman's Move*.
93. Advertisement, *West African Review*, December 1959, 864. The same slogan "Partners in Progress" was also used in the early 1990s, when Shell was getting more negative publicity for the environmental damage done in the Niger Delta and its treatment of the Ogoni people.
94. Advertisements, *West African Review*, September 1959, 562; October 1959, 640; November 1959, 744. Advertisement *West Africa*, December 1959, 1108.
95. "More Nigerians Assume Senior Positions in Shell-BP," *Shell-BP Bulletin*, April 1965, no. 14, 1. "Nigerian Petroleum Engineer to Train at the Hague," *Oil Search Bulletin*, March 1959, no. 35, 1.
96. Advertisement, *West African Review*, October 1959, 638. The first Shell advertisement uses a drawn image as well, the later three use photographs.
97. Schätzl, *Petroleum in Nigeria*, 78-82. Oil companies had to draft plans stating, according to the expected demand for staff, the number of Nigerians to be trained.

98. "Training Nigeria's Own Oilmen," *Oil Search Bulletin*, January 1959, 2. "Oil Exploration Stepped Up," *Oil Search Bulletin*, 1960, no. 44, 2. "Growing up with Nigeria," *Shell-BP Bulletin*, October 1963, no. 5, 1.
99. "Training Nigeria's Own Oilmen," 2.
100. David E. Nye, *American Technological Sublime* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1994), 60.
101. Larkin, *Signal and Noise*, 36-37.
102. This information is also not written down within the Shell film data sheets, which contain production data and scripts. Available at the British Universities Film & Video Council, London.
103. Martin Stollery, "Voiceover/Commentary," in *The Projection of Britain: A History of the GPO Film Unit*, ed. Scott Anthony and James G. Mansell (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 170.
104. *African Awakening* (1962) from UAC would also use Soyinka's voice. Soyinka lived and worked in London during 1954-1959. In *African Awakening* scenes from one of Soyinka's plays performed in Ibadan can be seen. Biodun Jeyifo, *Wole Soyinka: Politics, Poetics and Postcolonialism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), xxv.
105. One exception is the films from Shell-Burmah. This local unit used in the 1950s Indian voice talent and showed their names in the credits, such as with *The Weavers of Maindargi* (1956) or *Maharajah Meets a Challenge* (1959). These were not released internationally.
106. In the international version the names of the Nigerian assistants were of the same size as those of Shell Unit; in the original the assistants names are smaller.
107. More on his life, Joshua Uzoigwe, *Akin Euba: An Introduction to the Life and Music of a Nigerian Composer* (Bayreuth: E. Breiting, 1992).
108. The music was conducted by composers Edward Williams and Marcus Dodd. Williams came in to the Film Unit by way of Lionel Cole, whom he knew from university. His first scoring was for *How an Aeroplane Flies, Part 4: Thrust* (1947). "Edward Williams: Oral History Transcription," February 8, 2007, accessed June 18, 2014, <http://www.wildfilmhistory.org/person/235/Edward+Williams.html>
109. Val Wilmer, "Obituary: Ambrose Campbell," July 8, 2006, *The Guardian* (2006), accessed June 20, 2014, <http://www.theguardian.com/news/2006/jul/08/guardianobituaries.mainsection>.
110. John Collins and Paul Richards, "Popular Music in West Africa," in *World Music, Politics and Social Change*, ed. Simon Frith (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1991), 26.
111. In Ghana, underclass youth began to see highlife as too connected to colonial and elite culture by the mid 1950s, turning to rock 'n' roll subcultures. Ibid., 26-27. Steven J. Salm, "'The Bukom Boys': Subcultures and Identity Transformation in Accra, Ghana" (Thesis (PhD), University of Texas at Austin, 2003), 23-24. More on highlife in Ghana, read John Collins, "A Social History of Ghanaian Popular Entertainment since Independence," *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana*, no. 9 (2005).
112. The Nigerian calypso derived from the West Indian calypso. E. M. Edet, "Music in Nigeria," *African Music* 3, no. 3 (1964).
113. In 1954 a scholarship enabled Akpabot to travel to England and enrol in the Royal College of Music in London. Besides the jingle for the Barclays' bank commercial, he also made the instrumental music for *Three Roads to Tomorrow* (1958), a BP film made by the British

Greenpark Productions on three Nigerian students from different corners of Nigeria coming to the Ibadan University. Akpabot returned to Nigeria in 1959 to become broadcaster at the Nigerian Broadcasting Corporation, while continuing his compositional career. Bode Omojola, *Nigerian Art Music* (Ibadan: Institut Français de Recherche en Afrique, 1995), 38-39. Samuel Ekpe Akpabot, *Foundation of Nigerian Traditional Music* (Ibadan: Spectrum, 1986).

114. Decker, "Corporate Legitimacy and Advertising," 66. Another influence for the use of highlife might be the success of the feature film *The Boy Kumasenu* (1952), made by the colonial Gold Coast Film Unit from Ghana, in which highlife (instrumental) music played an important role. Emma Sandon, "Cinema and Highlife in the Gold Coast: The Boy Kumasenu (1952)," *Social Dynamics* 39, no. 3 (2013).

115. Stollery, "Voiceover/Commentary," 172.

116. The two parts of *Getting Down to Oil* by the SFU (which re-used footage from the Nigerian film unit) did away with the local connections, using music by Edward Williams and choosing the voice of Patrick Wymark for the voiceover.

117. "Prospecting For Oil in the Delta Swamps," *Daily Times*, July 7, 1961, 8-9.

118. "All about Mobile Cinema. Shell and BP," *Daily Express*, June 14, 1961, 6.

119. "Alake sees B.P. Film," *Daily Times*, June 12, 1961, 2. In the UK, Shell-Mex & BP worked together, using eight mobile cinema vans to show 16mm demonstration and instructional films for garage personnel. "Sponsored Spools," *Film User*, March 1952, 125.

120. *Nigeria: Report for the Year 1954*, 189.

121. For instance, in May 1961 more than 5000 people saw in Lagos a mobile cinema program with subjects ranging from how a thermal reactor works, a London bus driver, to the Queen in India. "Films on British Life Shown in Lagos," *Daily Times*, June 22, 1961, 2.

122. Unfortunately this campaign material could not be found. Advertisement, *Visual Education*, June 1960. Shell (like Unilever) had in various countries an educational service with specially designed aids for teachers, which could contain diagrams, filmstrips, models, drawings, wall charts, booklets and films on various subjects.

123. Brochure, *Oilman's Move*, 2.

124. *Film User*, March 1962, 111; November 1962, 567.

125. "The Search For Oil in Nigeria," *Industrial Screen*, January/February 1962, 282. It was available also from the Petroleum Films Bureau.

126. "The Search For Oil in Nigeria," *Film User*, September 1961, 487.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 3

1. Toyin Falola and Matthew M. Heaton, *A History of Nigeria* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 167-69.

2. Because of this, the other two, *The New Traders* and *African Awakening* will not be dealt with in this research.

3. "London Preview of Enterprise in Nigeria," *UAC News* 11, no. 1 (January 1962), 2. UARM

UAC/2/19/3/6/1/1.

4. "Premiere of Enterprise in Nigeria," *UAC News* 11, no. 1 (January 1962), 3 and 8. UARM UAC/2/19/3/6/1/1.

5. "Enterprise in Nigeria Launched in Ibadan," *UAC News* 11, no. 1 (January 1962), 10. "Enterprise in Nigeria," *UAC News* 11, no. 2 (February 1962), 10. UARM UAC/2/19/3/6/1/1.

6. Stanton, "Group Public Relations," 1-2.

7. Ibid., 1-4.

8. Different focus groups would be worked out further in the years to come. Kenneth Myer, "Films and Africa," *Film User*, May 1971, 19. D.H. Buckle, "UAC Group Image Overseas," November 27, 1967, 4. UARM UAC/1/11/6/1. D.H. Buckle, "Newsletter no. 11, Public Relations," July 3, 1968. UARM UAC/1/11/1/9/2 Cinema vans were not used by the 1970s, then the focus was on distribution via television. "Film Rover for Nigeria," *UAC News* 10, no. 1 (January 1961), 2. UARM UAC/2/19/3/6/1/1. "Programme Outline 1972 PR Department," October 5, 1971, 3. UARM UAC/ 1/11/4/1/2

9. Falola and Heaton, *A History of Nigeria*, 155.

10. The relation of plastics to modern society is certainly not a novel idea. For instance, Shell made several industrial films concerning this subject. *Prospect for Plastics* (1962), mentioned that only three days of output from the chemical factory was enough to make 3,5 million freedom beakers, supposedly for every child in Nigeria.

11. Advertisements, *West Africa*, September 10, 1960, 1039; March 16, 1963, 311; and various advertisements in UARM UAC/1/11/21/8.

12. Fieldhouse, *Merchant Capital and Economic Decolonization*, 403.

13. The next film by UAC, *The New Traders* (1962), would take this further, focusing on "Western techniques of merchandizing and distribution are remoulding the habits, customs and outlook of the peoples of Ghana and Nigeria not only in the town but also in the up-country villages." Advertisement, *Film User*, February 1962.

14. Advertisements, *Daily Express*, June 27, 1961, 3; *Daily Times*, June 26, 1961, 4; *Daily Times*, June 29, 1961, 9; *West Africa*, June 16, 1962, 671.

15. Larkin, *Signal and Noise*, 18-19.

16. Apart from a Dutch voiceover and translated credits, no other alterations were made.

17. According to the Shell data sheets the production started in autumn 1962, finished in December 1963 and was released in June 1964. However there also seems to have existed a one minute shorter version of 31 minutes. Strangely, according to the data sheets this version was finished in May 1963 and released in July 1963. This version has some lines taken out that concerned the quality of products needed to be improved, the increasingly tough market of palm oil, the possible intensification of the cattle industry, and the uncertainty of exports which needed to be increased nonetheless. Viewed for this research was the longer version, available at the BFI. The shortened version was mentioned in Shell's 1966 catalogue of films in international circulation.

18. Toyin Falola, *Economic Reforms and Modernization in Nigeria, 1945-1965* (Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press, 2004), 178-80.

19. Larry Grubbs, *Secular Missionaries: Americans and African Development in the 1960s*

(Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2009), 82.

20. Jeremiah I. Dibia, *Development and Diffusionism: Looking Beyond Neopatrimonialism in Nigeria, 1962-1985* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 76.

21. Ibid., 77.

22. Additionally, increasing number of Nigerian social scientists were trained in American universities. Ibid., 20.

23. Ibid., 19.

24. Rostow, *Stages of Economic Growth*.

25. Ramamurthy, *Imperial Persuaders*, 175.

26. Ibid., 176.

27. Dibia, *Development and Diffusionism*, 30.

28. In March 1961 Rostow set in motion a collaboration between the Kennedy administration, MIT, the Ford Foundation, and the Nigerian federal government, in order to form an aid program to help in the development process of Nigeria. Grubbs, *Secular Missionaries*, 104.

29. Gordon, transcript, 10.

30. "Framework For A Nation," *Shell-BP Bulletin*, 1965, no. 12, 2.

31. Gordon, transcript, 11.

32. *Shell-BP Story*, 5 and 7.

33. Also shown are the benefits of chemicals produced from petroleum, such as fertilisers and pesticides (again, without Shell/BP product placements).

34. Such as *Horizontes nacionales* (*New Horizons*, 1949) and *Las bases del progreso* (*Harvest for Tomorrow*, 1950).

35. Advertisement, *International Film Guide 1966*, ed. Peter Cowie, (London: Tantivy Press, 1966), 194. The text was also printed in an overview of recent releases, *Film User*, July 1965, 371.

36. *A Catalogue of Films Distributed by PFB 1965-1966*, (London: B.B. Ltd), 78.

37. *Shell-BP Story*, 5.

38. Falola, *Economic Reforms and Modernization in Nigeria*, 157.

39. Gordon, transcript, 11.

40. Falola, *Economic Reforms and Modernization in Nigeria*, 175-80. The plan aimed for a total of 676 million pounds of capital outlays. Well over 300 million pounds was needed in the form of overseas public investment, plus 200 million in the form of private investment. "Nigeria's Year of Promise," *West Africa*, 5 January 1963, 11.

41. Dibia, *Development and Diffusionism*, 43.

42. Dibia goes beyond the typical argument of neopatrimonialism as the primal cause for

failure. Ibid., 22.

43. Falola, *Economic Reforms and Modernization in Nigeria*, 181.

44. Petroleum output dropped in July 1967 to less than 10% of its pre-war peak of 580.000 barrels per day. The refinery at Port Harcourt was put out of operation by military action. Onshore operations stopped for almost fifteen months. Tims, *Nigeria: Options for Long-Term Development*, 24.

45. Shooting had already begun in November 1968. Douglas Gordon produced with additional photography by the Federal Film Unit in Lagos. The pipeline has in recent years become mostly known being vandalised, for illegal oil refining as well as corrosion and the consequential environment damage due to oil spills.

46. Grubbs, *Secular Missionaries*, 121. In 1973 Shell/BP reached an agreement with the Nigerian government, giving the government 35 per cent interest. One year later government participation was increased to 55 per cent, reaching 60 per cent in 1979. Keetie Sluyterman, *Keeping Competitive in Turbulent Markets, 1973-2007*, 4 vols., vol. 3, A History of Royal Dutch Shell (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 32.

NOTES TO CONCLUSION

1. John Vidal, "Eco Soundings," *The Guardian*, March 25, 1998. In comparison, in 1971 six of the largest firms (Exxon, Shell, Amoco, Gulf, Mobil and Texaco) collectively spent more than 110 million dollars on advertising. Robert J. Samuelson, "The Oil Companies and the Press," *Columbia Journalism Review* 12, no. 5 (1974): 13.

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About the author

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The project Technology Exchange and Flow explored the relationship between creativity and innovation within the contemporary European media sector. The project asked how traffic between cultural forms in Europe, such as industrial film and new media arts on the one hand, and commercial exploitation of audiovisual media on the other hand, is radically transformed at key moments. The project brought together three expert teams and two significant archives in a research partnership which focuses on three distinct European examples of artistic practices and their commercial applications: early advertising and experimental film at a moment when the technologies of production become more widely available, post-war industrial films & early television commercials, and finally the emerging category of prosumers in contemporary distributive media consequent on games culture.



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