

Death and the Textile Industry in Nigeria

Elisha P. Renne

First published in 2021

ISBN: 978-0-367-46552-0 (hbk)

ISBN: 978-1-003-05813-7 (ebk)

Conclusion

Death, deindustrialization, and time

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This OA chapter is funded by Elisha P. Renne.



 **Routledge**
Taylor & Francis Group
LONDON AND NEW YORK

Conclusion

Death, deindustrialization, and time

“We felt that society was dragging anchor and in danger of going adrift. Whether it would drift nobody could say, but all feared the rocks.”

Edward Bellamy, *Looking Backward, 2000–1887*

This volume focuses on the consequences of deindustrialization on the lives of former factory workers at the Kaduna Textile Ltd (KTL) mill in the Kakuri area of Kaduna and the “work of the dead” in ameliorating these changes. As such it addresses the question, “How is deindustrialization experienced differently by people in varied places, times, and circumstances?” (Cowie and Heathcott 2003: 5). As many of the workers at KTL came from rural towns and villages to the south of the city of Kaduna, their experience reflects many changes: from rural to urban living, from agricultural to industrial labor, and to new conceptions of time and work. Their experience has been complicated by the failure of the government to pay negotiated remittances owed to KTL workers following the company’s closure, which was not the case for most other Kaduna textile mills. Consequently, KTL workers, as members of the National Union of Textile Garment and Tailoring Workers of Nigeria, sought to pressure the company to release these funds in order to ease the difficulties of finding alternative sources of income and of paying for food and health care as well as supporting their families. As their entitlements were not forthcoming and former workers were dying, the Coalition of Closed Unpaid Textile Workers Association Nigeria was established in 2005 to maintain a list of textile mill workers who had died since KTL’s closing. Fifteen years later, their remittances have still not been paid and the list of the dead has grown as more have died and been buried in family compounds in their home villages as well as in family houses or cemeteries in Kaduna. Nor has textile manufacturing at the Kaduna Textiles Ltd mill been revived.

Several writers, both within Nigeria and abroad, have noted the difficulties of operating industrial textile mills where a tradition of large-scale manufacturing is hardly over 50 years old. Facilities and trained personnel for the manufacture of new spare parts do not exist, they must be imported. This situation is due, in part, to poor government planning but also due to more pressing needs

in terms of health and education. Furthermore, as Kaduna was only formally established as the capital of the Protectorate of Northern Nigeria in 1917, the provision of electricity only came sometime later. Presently, with growing demand, a deteriorating infrastructure, and a failing privatization scheme, electricity is irregularly available (Sunday 2019). Thus, countries in Europe, the Americas, and Asia have had an advantage in this regard. Even African countries, such as Ghana, where the provision of a steady supply of electricity is in place, have had difficulties competing with lower-priced Chinese textile imports, which are produced with the latest equipment and with various efficiencies of scale and manufacture.¹

Some scholars have argued that the fragility of Nigerian industries was undermined by the sort of neoliberal reforms that the Structural Adjustment Program represents (Akinrinade and Ogen 2008).² More recent trade agreements, such as the ending of World Trade Organization Multifibre Arrangement in 1994 and the implementation of GATT rules in 2005 which lifted trade restrictions on global textile exports and imports, have also affected Nigerian textile production.³ In a way, textile manufacturing and distribution practices in Nigeria have come full circle, approaching the situation in the early 1950s when Nigerians obtained their manufactured textiles from England (and to a lesser extent, from France and Japan) and when European agents working for foreign marketing firms distributed textiles to Nigerian traders. With the decline of Kaduna textile manufacturing, imported textiles once again dominate the market, although they are from China, not England. However, before the deindustrialization of the Kaduna textile industry took place, a particular history of industrialization occurred.

A period of transition

The attempt to provide simple models for one single, supposedly-neutral, technologically-determined, process known as “industrialization”...is also suspect...[For] there has never been any single type of “the transition”. The stress of the transition falls upon the whole culture: resistance to change and assent to change arise from the whole culture. And this culture includes the systems of power, property-relations, religious institutions, etc., inattention to which merely flattens phenomena and trivializes analysis...What we are examining here are not only changes in manufacturing technique which demand greater synchronization of labour and a greater exactitude in time-routines in *any* society; but also these changes as they were lived through in the society of nascent industrial capitalism.

(Thompson 1967: 80).

KTL workers and their families have lived through many changes in their lives associated with the industrialization of Kaduna, beginning in the late 1950s. Many moved to Kaduna from rural villages to the south of the city. They became accustomed to particular time regimens, to new sources and types of

food, and to new social organizations—such as the National Union of Textile Garment and Tailoring Workers of Nigeria and ethnic associations. Despite these processes of urbanization, many returned to their village homes for family affairs and ultimately for burial. Yet what Thompson has noted regarding the sociocultural specificities of industrialization is also relevant to the process of deindustrialization, which began in Kaduna in the early 21st century. While some former KTL workers and some KTL widows have returned to farming on the outskirts of Kaduna, this modified version of urban–rural migration has little appeal to many of their children who were born and raised in Kaduna. For as Orwell (1937 [1958]: 200) has observed, “No human being ever wants to do anything in a more cumbersome way than is necessary.” Buying a variety of foodstuff from the market with income from a salaried job is the preference of these children, not the slowness and tedium of farm work.

Yet it is important to realize that while the challenges faced during such transitional periods may be different, they are not new, as Bellamy (1887 [1951]: 36) noted more than a hundred years ago:

You must, at least, have realized that the widespread industrial and social troubles, and the underlying dissatisfaction of all classes with the inequalities of society, and the general misery of mankind, were portents of great changes of some sort.

In the novel, *Looking Backward*, Bellamy describes a utopian society where these “great changes” included the ending of private ownership, government provision of food to the needy, and where the problem of socioeconomic inequality has been addressed.⁴ Precisely how these “great changes of some sort” will play out with respect to the textile industry in northern Nigeria is unclear, for it is not private ownership, but government ownership by the 19 Northern Nigerian states that has contributed to the ongoing problems of former KTL workers, widows, and their children.

Establishing small-to-medium scale industries

Yet aside from the uncertain possibilities of reviving textile manufacturing at Kaduna Textiles Ltd, there have been numerous discussions of the possibility of renovating the site to include several related medium-sized textile operations such as the manufacture of military and workers’ uniforms.⁵ Indeed, in Kano, some medium-sized textile businesses have been able to continue manufacturing, as Sa’idu Adhama, the owner of Adhama Textiles, which has been in operation since 1979, explains:

Textile industry, the best we can do as far as I learned in the 70s, was upper medium [size operations]. Anything above upper medium had [a limited] lifespan...Industries—in the northern part of the country, some of these units can operate with solar, you don’t have to the national grid to operate

the sewing department, you don't have to the national grid to operate the printing department, you don't have to the national grid to give you your light...In small to medium industries, you can operate with solar. So, you see, the issue of electricity is 75% taken care of.

(Interview: 27 January 2020, Kano)⁶

Aside from the manufacture of textiles, Adhama mentioned other small to medium-sized businesses, such as soap and sanitary napkin manufacturing, that could be profitably run in Kano, were the initial capital and government administrative support available.

In addition to the promotion of small to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), the Nigerian and several state governments as well as private industrial firms have been actively involved in job-training programs. For example, the Dangote Group collaborated with the Kano State Government to build the Aliko Dangote Ultra Modern Skills Acquisition Centre just south of Kano. One area of training will focus on cement use and construction (Ibrahim 2019). Other programs, such as the National Directorate of Employment program in Zamfara State, will train over 400 unemployed young people in the state in tailoring, knitting, confectionary, GSM repairs, and computer use (Umar 2020). Training in the repair of GSM [cell phones] and use of computers is particularly appropriate as another aspect of this transitional era is the dominance of digital technology. Indeed, computer literacy is one of the programs offered by vocational training programs in several northern Nigerian states. For the children of KTL workers who can afford digital phones and are computer-literate are more likely to pursue this line of work, even if they may not receive a regular salary. Other types of training include tailoring, hair-dressing, and barbering, while work in the informal economy, such as drivers and food-sellers, has continued.

In addition, the Nigerian government's programs for agricultural training and produce processing have also provided opportunities for some, despite the disinterest in farming expressed by many KTL workers' children. For example, the government's promotion of rice farming (and the closure of borders for rice imports from neighboring countries) has led to a surge in rice production and processing, as may be seen in many small rice mills in Kura, in Kano State (Adebayo and Al-Kassim 2015). There, young people who have left their family farms have returned to reclaim their patrimony in order to participate in this thriving rice economy. As the chairman of the Rice Producers Association of Kura explained, such support for agricultural production has social as well as economic benefits:

If government can assist farmers, a lot of people will have means of sustenance for their families and we will have less street urchins causing havoc across the states, because everyone will have a legitimate business to do. Poverty and ignorance are the two major causes of most of the problems in this country. If people are learned in their respective fields and have

capital, no matter how little, to run their businesses, they would be unwilling to be involved in violence.

(Adebayo and Al-Kassim 2015)

Most recently, the Central Bank of Nigeria has announced a program to provide financial support for small-scale farmers throughout Nigeria and “apart from funding, the bank will also provide the farmers with high yielding seedlings and extension services to ensure that they succeed” (Owuamanam 2020). Similarly, in Kaduna, the ground-breaking ceremony for the Tomato Jos Farming and Processing business in the Igabi Local Government Area (just east of Kaduna) represents the partnership of government and private citizens, in this case between the Kaduna State Government and private firms. According to the company’s general manager: “The current employment of the company is about 2,000 people and they are mainly sourced from the surrounding communities, adding that ‘once [the] processing plant is completed, more than 5,000 people will be employed’” (*Daily Trust* 2020: 22).⁷ Plans for expanding ginger cultivation in southern Kaduna State for export have also been reported (*Daily Trust* 2019a).

There is a difference, however, between planning projects and their actual implementation and completion. For example, one plan discussed for reviving the Kaduna Textile Ltd mill in Kaduna, based on an assessment made by the Swiss consulting firm, GHERZI, in 2016, exemplifies such “development on paper.” To date, nothing has been done to follow up on the firm’s recommendation of renovating a portion of the mill for the manufacture of polypropylene bags at the KTL site (GHERZI 2016b).⁸ Yet the discussion of the need to support medium-sized industries that can more efficiently produce jute bags and polypropylene bags as well as textiles and clothing is an important first step. Furthermore, if these plans move forward, they will constitute a new era of textile production in northern Nigeria. For when considering textile manufacturing in northern Nigeria in the early 21st century, factories in Kaduna, such as the Chellco Textile Industries Ltd—a blanket factory in Kaduna (Bashir 2013)—and the Adhama Textiles factory in Kano, that continue manufacturing are smaller and more specialized operations.

The digitization of textile-production processes has also contributed to this downsizing and specialization of textile production. Indeed, smaller operations that are attuned to local demand may be the way that textile manufacturing in Nigeria will continue. For with the liberalization of imported textiles, Chinese textile companies and trading firms with overseas offices in Kano and Lagos now distribute to Nigerian wholesale brokers who sell textiles to Nigerian traders. Perhaps new efforts to revitalize Kaduna textile manufacturing with small to medium manufacturing firms will succeed, following the past example of the origin of Kaduna Textiles Ltd, which represented the collaboration of Nigerian political leaders, government agencies, and foreign manufacturing partners (Maiwada and Renne 2013). Perhaps political leaders, such as Ahmadu Bello, will emerge who will bring about a new era of small to medium textile manufacturing in Kaduna.⁹

Revitalization of cotton farming

While there have been numerous studies of the textile industry in Nigeria and recommendations for its revival,¹⁰ one related initiative is being implemented by the federal government. This program involves the introduction of two varieties of high-yielding genetically-modified BT cotton and the distribution of hybrid cotton seed to farmers (Sa'idu 2018). In late 2019, Mr. Anibe Achimugu, the national president of the National Cotton Association of Nigeria, observed that “We are praying that farmers would be encouraged with the yield you can see; and of course, the quality of the cotton would encourage the textile industry, the spinners, even the ginners, to be able to sustain the businesses” (Daily Trust 2019b). The availability of locally grown cotton for the remaining textile mills in the country will perhaps encourage the renovation of portions of older mills in Kaduna such as KTL and UNTL (Renne 2019). This situation raises the question of whether textile production for domestic markets by national textile industries using local labor and raw materials is a worthy social as well as an economic goal.

Local philanthropy and personal acts of kindness

Nigerian newspapers regularly carry stories about wealthy patrons and astute politicians who provide financial support and food aid to those who have experienced various sorts of disasters. For example, on 7 February 2020, a fire at the Government Girls' Secondary School—Kawo in Kaduna destroyed dormitory buildings, leaving students and some staff without clothing, bedding, or books. Senator Uba Sani immediately donated one million naira to them to enable them to carry on with their studies and teaching (Ahmadu-Suka 2020).

Yet while there have been several stories about NGOs and groups which have provided food and clothing to widows, such as the Nigerian Army Officers Wives Association, which donated “rice, cooking oil, spaghetti and [cloth] wrappers” to widows throughout Nigeria (Hunkuyi 2020), none of the KTL widows interviewed had received aid from such groups. Rather, many Christian widows mentioned the distribution of foodstuff (e.g., rice, corn, and Maggi bouillon cubes) by their churches during the Christmas season. However, in some Kaduna neighborhoods where several widows live, individual women have taken responsibility for looking out for their neighbors in need, as Hassana Sylvester explained:

There was one woman who helped widows in our area, Maraba Rido. She was living in the neighborhood and was working for the government during Governor Yakowa's time. She brought rice and distributed it to widows—it was her own initiative, not government—she was a widow herself. But two years ago, she moved to another area so she's not distributing food again.

(Interview: 15 January 2020, Kaduna)¹¹

In another case, a former KTL supervisor, Haruna Joshua, witnessed the sort of individual generosity that sometimes occurs:

I saw an old man—he was KTL staff—last year at the First Bank. He was inside the bank and was crying. So I asked him why he was crying. He said that he had a loan, that he couldn't pay the loan to the bank and now the loan has multiplied two times. So now they already had buyers for his house. They called him to bring his papers, that he will have to sell the house the following day.

Then one very large young man who was standing behind me said to me, "I don't hear English but what is this man saying?" I explained to him. So he said, "Let's go to the manager." So myself, the owner of the house, and that young man went and he asked the manager, "The loan—how much is the money?" "N1.2 million," the manager said. That young man paid the amount.

So you see? God is working, He used me. I didn't ask that young man and he didn't pay me anything! If I had known I would have cried. Maybe he would have likely given something to me! So, I came out empty. On the way out, they gave the old man his papers. So you see, it depends on God only.

(Interview: 10 May 2018, Kaduna)

These examples of individual generosity, along with the giving of food and clothing to the needy by wealthy individuals and political leaders, are commendable. However, without regular government programs that provide food for the unemployed and destitute, their actions cannot stop the flood of hunger and food poverty experienced by many in northern Nigeria. And of course, the payment by state-owned companies such as Kaduna Textiles Ltd of agreed-upon benefits such as worker remittances after factory closures, is another aspect of government responsibility.

Deindustrialization and poverty, corruption, and mortality

The closure of the Kaduna Textile Ltd mill and many other textile mills in Nigeria is related to the decline of textile manufacturing in the UK and in the US. What appears to be happening in Nigeria is being experienced in various ways elsewhere in the world, although within a particular historical and cultural context. This situation raises the larger global issue of mill closures and deindustrialization more generally (Freeman 2018; Minchin 2013). For as Walley (2013) has discussed, mill closures—be they steel mills or textile mills—have had a profound effect on unemployed workers and their families. "Deindustrialization is a process, a historical transformation that marks not just a quantitative and qualitative change in employment, but a fundamental change in the social fabric on a par with industrialization itself" (Cowie and Heathcott 2003: 6).

In Nigeria, some continue to speak of the importance of industrializing the country in order to bring it into the realm of modern, developed economies. For example, Haraguchi et al. (2017: 293) have argued that despite “premature deindustrialization” in many developing countries, the manufacturing sector in some countries, such as China, has supported the country’s economic development for the period from 1970 to 1990 (Haraguchi et al. 2017: 306–307). Yet it was precisely the upsurge in Chinese textile manufacturing and exports during this period that contributed to the decline in textile manufacturing in Nigeria. While there are discussions to involve Chinese companies in textile manufacturing in Nigeria, they have yet to be implemented.¹² However, other forms of industrial production have continued or have commenced, such as the production of tomato-based goods in Nigeria by the Jos Tomato Jos Farming and Processing business (*Daily Trust* 2020). But rather than pursuing the construction or revival of huge manufacturing plants, new forms of production need to be imagined and pursued. For as Freeman (2018: xv) has noted:

Understanding the history of giant factories can help us to think about what kind of future we want...Today, as we may well be witnessing the historic apogee of the giant factory, economic and ecological conditions suggest that we need to rethink the meaning of modernity and whether or not it should continue to be equated with ever more material production in vast, hierarchically organized industrial facilities of the kind that were the bane and the glory of the past.

Thus, many Northern Nigerian business leaders, such as Sa’idu Adhama see industrial development in the medium-sized industries as the way forward. This position does not deny the benefits of industrialization—such as the support for local value chains and employment for countries such as Nigeria—but rather considers the importance of more efficient and environmentally sound manufacturing practices.

Indeed, Orwell (1937 [1958]: 204), in his discussion of textile manufacturing in the UK, noted the allure of mechanization: “Wherever you look you will see some slick machine-made article triumphing over the old-fashioned article.” Yet as Livingston (2019) has observed in her discussion of “self-devouring growth,” such mechanization can entail detrimental and destructive consequences for families and society. For example, the expanded building of roads for the use of cars and trucks which distribute manufactured goods throughout the country has also contributed to many road-related deaths and injuries.¹³ Several KTL widows have experienced the consequences of road accidents which have affected their husbands or children. Most recently, Alisabatu Babu mourned for her son, who was killed in a motor accident on his way back to Kaduna from Zaria:

I have a problem because my son who died recently, they buried him close to my husband’s grave in our house in Kaduna. Seeing his grave makes

me cry all the time. I told them not to bury him in the house but they refused. Because he was the one child—I spent all my money to educate him, the other children didn’t go to school. He was the only one who was educated and he had just received his degree from the Pastor’s School in the Wusasa area of Zaria.

(Interview: 22 January 2020, Kaduna)

Yet one cannot expect Nigerians to deny themselves the use of cars when those in the West are hardly divesting themselves of travelling by road in cars and buses or of using roads to transport locally manufactured and imported products. While efforts are being made to develop more extensive public transport and encourage the use of bicycles in cities in the West, for long distance travel and trade, the use of cars and trucks on large interstate highways is still preferred by many.

Poverty and roads

Hence it is not surprising that many Nigerian federal and state political leaders are using development funds to build roads. Thus, in early 2020, when the US government announced the return of 308 million dollars (US) to Nigeria, stolen money which had been placed in overseas accounts by the former president of Nigeria, Sani Abacha, the Buhari administration announced that the funds would be used in “expediting the construction of the three major infrastructure projects across Nigeria—namely Lagos–Ibadan expressway, Abuja–Kano expressway and the second Niger bridge” (Odeyemi 2020).¹⁴ Yet as Sen (1998) and others have suggested, presuming that these funds can be genuinely monitored, they might be better spent on a national government program to provide food subsidies for widows and children as well as primary health care. In addition, primary and secondary education for students throughout the country will enable them to take up new forms of employment, such as information and communication technology and electrical installation (Muhammad 2020). Dr. Akinwumi Adesina, the president of the African Development Bank, similarly has observed that “growth without food for the poor will worsen the poverty level on the continent,” while education for young people is also critically important: “Only by developing our workforce will we make a dent in poverty, close the income gap between rich and poor, and adopt new technologies to create jobs in knowledge-intensive sectors” (Hanan Morsy, ABD, cited by Akinmutimi 2020). For while the expansion of railroad transportation is environmentally sound, train fares are beyond the reach of many who must travel by road. Such roads, no matter how well-paved, are frequented by robbers and kidnapers in many parts of the country, which reflects the consequences of unemployment and desperate poverty. Indeed, the social problems associated with unemployment and poverty have been frequently discussed in Nigeria, in part, as they have been linked with continuing insecurity—robbery and kidnapping—in many parts of the country (Oke 2020).

Corruption and insecurity

One might also add that this insecurity is an outcome of corruption on several levels. On the local level, kidnappers may bribe police not to pursue investigations of particular cases. Police officers may also be directly involved in such incidents.¹⁵ At the state and national levels, several politicians and business people have been convicted of the misuse of government funds, which end up in their own bank accounts or as palatial houses (Oxfam 2017).¹⁶ And, as the Country Representative for the MacArthur Foundation, Dr. Kole Shettima, has noted: “Nigerian politicians wasted over N60 trillion budgeted for the country’s development from 1999 to 2018” (Jimoh 2020). Some of these development funds also end up in overseas bank accounts, as was the case with the enormous sums of money held in banks in Switzerland, France, the UK, the Isle of Jersey, and the US (Azu 2019). Yet even when these funds have been returned to the Nigerian government, they may be embezzled again, thus repeating the cycle of corruption.¹⁷ It is not surprising then that some see this form of indirect violence as legitimating their own, more overtly violent means, of acquiring resources.¹⁸ How these types of theft can be stopped is a major challenge. But if the country is to move forward, a means must be found to keep political corruption in check if the problems of insecurity are to be solved.¹⁹

Urbanization and mortality

This study also provides clarification as to why high rates of mortality exist in urban areas in many parts of sub-Saharan Africa, such as Nigeria, associated with industrialization as the study of Demographic Health Survey data from 18 sub-Saharan African countries suggests. While the study by Günther and Harttgen (2012) does not include Nigeria, the situation they document suggests the conditions in Kaduna, as they have noted:

High rates of urbanization combined with limited progress in some developing countries have led to a growing concern deteriorating health conditions and increasing mortality rates in urban areas. Some observers see a pattern that may repeat the nineteenth-century of today’s industrialized countries... where rapid and unplanned urban high population densities and insufficient environmental and health in combination with large wealth inequalities, led to an “urban penalty”.

(Günther and Harttgen 2012: 469)

According to their analysis:

On average, we find adult mortality rates of 14.1 percent in urban areas and 12.4 percent in rural areas. This means that for adults the negative impact of an urban disease environment overshadows the positive effects

of the usually higher material well-being and superior health infrastructure available in urban areas.

(Günther and Harttgen 2012: 470)

While Kaduna may indeed have a better health infrastructure than the villages from which many KTL workers and their widows came, once the mill closed, they no longer had access to the KTL clinic nor the means for prolonged hospital stays in Kaduna. This situation may be seen in the tragic consequences experienced by the family of James Agene (Figure C.1).

James Agene died on 15 August 2009, almost seven years after KTL closed; his name is number 78 on the Coalition of Closed Unpaid Textile Workers Association Nigeria list. I interviewed his wife, Josephine James, on 30 April 2018, outside her rooms in the Television area of Kaduna.²⁰ Her description of her husband's illness before he died reflects the family's impoverished state and their difficulties in obtaining health care in Kaduna once the KTL had closed:

The sickness he developed was hypertension, so we took him to the hospital. But before that, we gave him traditional medicine but it didn't work. So, we took him to Nasarawa Hospital; the day we took him to the hospital was the day he died. Before we thought it was typhoid but we didn't have money for the medicine. I remember my husband when he was sick, I was sympathizing with him because we didn't have money to treat him.

During the interview, Josephine James was seated on a long bench, in the center of the house courtyard, where several young people had gathered. Two of her sons were with her, including her eldest son, Ezekiel Levinus (Figure C.2), who was disabled.

The following year, I was told that Josephine James had died and had been buried, as was her husband, in the Television Cemetery (Figure C.3). They were not taken to their home village in southern Kaduna State due to a lack

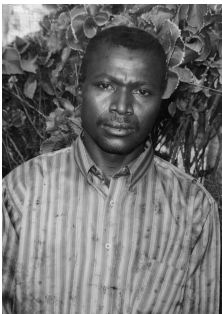


Figure C.1 Photograph of the former KTL worker, James Agene, who died in August 2009, Kaduna (Photograph of photograph by E.P. Renne).



Figure C.2 Ezekiel Levinus was interviewed on 17 July 2019. He died in February 2020, a second generation of KTL deaths, 17 July 2019, Kaduna (Photograph by E.P. Renne).



Figure C.3 Television Cemetery, where James Agene and members of his family are buried, 9 May 2018, Kaduna (Photograph by E.P. Renne).

of funds; rather they were buried in a large public cemetery in Kaduna—as earlier colonial officials would have approved. Later, in July 2019, I interviewed her eldest son, Ezekiel, who explained his situation after the death of his mother:

My mother's relatives took us back to our hometown, but I ran away back to Kaduna. Because I can't farm, I'm not in good health. Because I was born in Kaduna and lived in Kaduna, that is the reason I want to stay here.
(Interview: 17 July 2019, Kaduna)

However, with neither family support nor the physical capacity or educational training to find work in Kaduna, Ezekiel was suffering: “I’m not schooling and I don’t even have enough clothes. Even food, unless somebody helps us...and some of my friends would run away when they see me, because they think I will ask them for something.”

Ezekiel Levinus died in February 2020. I was told that his condition had worsened, mainly due to lack of food. He was also buried in Television Cemetery. For Ezekiel, the modicum of assistance from his family required that he remain in his mother’s home village, something that he was unwilling to do. Yet his younger brother, Collin, did return there and supported himself making *fanke* (a small pancake-like cake). Thus, continued family connections may be maintained by some, but not all, KTL children. Their return to their parents’ homes villages may be reinforced by the presence of the graves of their grandparents, and for some, the graves of their parents, underscoring the continuing importance of the work of the dead in Nigeria.

Conclusion

This volume represents a memorial for the men who worked at KTL who have died since the closing of the Kaduna Textiles Ltd mill without being paid their entitlements, many of whom had their names included on the list compiled by the Coalition of Closed Unpaid Textile Workers Association Nigeria. This listing of names, along with their graves, funeral programs, and death certificates constitute “the work of the dead” in redressing some of the failures of their government and their society. As one of the widows of these men described their continued meetings with the Coalition:

We are coming together to talk about the ways we can get our husbands’ remittances in order to get something to help ourselves and our children. But here in Nigeria, they make us feel like we are not part of Nigeria, we have no dignity, we have no respect.

(Interview: Fatu Tom, 22 January 2020, Kaduna)

Stories such as those told by the widow, Josephine James, and her eldest son, Ezekiel, of their husband and father, James Agene, underscore the disrespect of many wealthy individuals for the impoverished members of their communities. The food and health care which the Agene family lacked are the minimum requirements needed for a decent life. The deaths of many former KTL workers reflect this situation as does the scarcity of paying factory jobs. While there is talk of reviving the textile industry in Kaduna, government funds for improving the power grid and for providing new equipment as well as controlling customs duties on imported textiles are yet to be put in place.

However, those affected by the closing of the Kaduna Textile Ltd mill and the deindustrialization of the Nigerian textile industry are not alone. This situation has occurred in other parts of the world—even in the relatively wealthy

US where the hopes for healthy, educated, and well-fed lives have gone astray.²¹ As Walley (2013: 14) has observed, it is important to document the consequences of the decline of industrial production:

Thinking through these kinds of stories and the challenges to them, from an era in which deindustrialization still seemed unfathomable to an era in which it may seem inevitable, can help us make sense of a past that we need to understand both to comprehend the roots of our country's expanded inequality and to create alternative paths for the future.²²

The stories of KTL widows and their children underscore the conditions of their shattered lives and reflect the growing disparity in wealth—with ever greater inequality—in Nigeria. Whether this situation may be lessened through the reduction of corruption and whether government programs for widespread food, health care, and education can be implemented remain to be seen.

Nonetheless, many Nigerians are considering the creation of alternative paths to well-being. Through the numerous programs proposed for increasing youth employment—training and support for small and medium enterprises, agricultural programs, and more efficient and environmentally sound smaller-scale industries, the possibilities for a new deindustrialized era are being imagined and may be pursued. For as the sayings often painted on the back of trucks traveling the highways between Kaduna and Kano suggest: “*Lokacin ne*—It’s Time.”

Notes

- 1 Rose Skelton (2012), in the article, “Ghana: Motifs for Survival,” examines the difficulties of preventing Chinese-manufactured textiles from being sold in Ghana and strategies for protecting Ghanaian textile manufacturing.
- 2 For a discussion of the failure of structural adjustment programs to limit unofficial trans-border trade which also affects industries such as textile manufacturing, see Meagher (2003).
- 3 See Muhammad (2019) on the consequences of the WTO agreement.
- 4 While Bellamy’s vision of the future referred to the situation in the United States, his aspirations for a more humane and just society has been supported by others—even if such aspirations have not been achieved in the 21st century.
- 5 The Swiss consulting firm, GHERZI, assessed the possibilities of establishing a garment factory to produce workforce uniforms as part of a revival scheme for the Kaduna Textile Ltd site (GHERZI 2016a). The following year, “In August 2017, the Turkish textile firm SUR entered into an agreement with the [New Nigeria Development Corporation] to renovate the textile manufacturing company, Kaduna Textiles Limited. Initially, the company was to refurbish the mill with updated equipment to produce military uniforms, then it was expected that other garments would also be manufactured... While parties involved planned to move forward on this project, the SUR management’s insistence that a large prepaid contract for uniforms from the Ministry of Defence be provided led to the abandonment of the project” (Waziri et al. 2020: 108).
- 6 The reliance on solar power, however, is not without its own problems. In Kaduna and Anambra states, for example, two rural communities with stand-alone solar projects “still suffer outages over the poor condition of the facilities” (Iloani 2019). Solar equipment

- needs regular cleaning and maintenance, something which may have been lacking at these sites.
- 7 The private firms include Arlan, a Danish mill processing company, and the Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association. Earlier, in March 2019, the Dangote tomato processing plant began production (Giginya 2019).
 - 8 The report mentions that during Phase I of the project, 14,166 square meters would be required for its operations (GHERZI 2016b), which is a fraction of the size of the KTL complex.
 - 9 It is worth noting that Kaduna Textile Ltd's partner, David Whitehead & Sons, is no longer manufacturing textiles either, as it did in the past. Bernard Laverty and his wife, present co-owners of David Whitehead & Sons, bought the capital of David Whitehead & Sons in 1996 and operate the business from an office in Parbold, Lancashire (Bernard Laverty, Parbold, Lancashire, 27 February 2012, interview by Jaclyn Kline).
 - 10 These include the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) technical report, "Diagnostic Appraisal For Rehabilitation of Kaduna Textiles Ltd" (1988); and the UNIDO/Federal Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Nigeria report, "Update of the Textile and Garment Industry Sector Study-Nigeria" (2009).
 - 11 Another woman, Malama Halima, a divorced woman living in the Makere neighborhood of Kaduna, started an organization known as Ta'alimu for widows and their children as well as for disabled and impoverished people living in Makere. Widows who participate in this organization normally meet on Fridays and she sometimes brings cloth wrappers, as well as rice, corn, salt, and Maggi bouillon cubes for them to distribute. During Ramadan, she brings corn, millet, and sugar.
 - 12 In 2019, the Kaduna State Government signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Institute of New Structural Economics, Peking University, concerning the revival of the textile industry in Kaduna. However, the difficulties in carrying out plans for the earlier agreement with the Turkish textile manufacturer, SUR, has discouraged other investors.
 - 13 Only 10 days into January 2020, thirty people were reported to have died and 58 were injured in road accidents in Nigeria (Sule and Adeniyi 2020).
 - 14 This money, referred to as "Abacha loot," was amassed in overseas accounts in the US that were frozen by the US government. After negotiating a return of these funds, the US State Department "requires Nigeria to repay any funds lost as a result of any new corruption or fraud" (Olaniyi 2020).
 - 15 For example, Jibrin Ibrahim (2020) was told about a very wealthy man, whose mother was a recent kidnapping victim, who was ordered to bring clean naira bills for ransom money. He obtained clean bills but also alerted banks to look for specific serial numbers. Shortly after his mother was released, officers at one bank called to say that they had two men—a police inspector and a military officer—who had attempted to deposit the bills. The ransom money was returned.
 - 16 In 2018, fifty individuals with assets surpassing N50 million were prohibited by the Nigerian government from traveling abroad "pending the determination of their cases" (Mudashir 2018).
 - 17 Although there is a law which requires the Federal Government to document how the repatriated funds have been spent, no such documentation has been revealed. Hence the Socio-Economic Rights and Accountability Project (SERAP) leaders are demanding that the government provide detailed information on moneys already received and also provide documentation of the spending of the "Abacha loot" (Bangboye 2020).
 - 18 For example, there have been recurring thefts of textile mill equipment, wiring, and even roofing materials at the KTL mill and other mills in the Kakuri area. In January 2020, a request was made by the acting KTL manager to the military police group known as Operation Yaki (*yaki* means war in Hausa) to provide armed personnel to protect the KTL site. An agreement for security was subsequently reached.
 - 19 Since members of the Nigerian legislature are not made to pay taxes, requiring them to pay income tax might be one way of regulating graft—at least to some extent.

- 20 The older neighborhood known as Television consists of unpaved streets and impoverished housing.
- 21 Anne Case and Angus Deaton (2020) discuss the related problems of unemployment experienced by working-class whites in the US, who without college degrees, have been relegated to low-paying and insecure service work. The high death rate of among this particular group of Americans, referred to as “deaths of distress” by Case and Deaton, reflects drug use, alcoholism, and suicide.
- 22 Walley (2013: 168) notes that “what is at stake is not simply particular kinds of jobs— industrial work is not something to romanticize—but whether such jobs can foster a society that pays living wages and that supports families and communities.”

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