Open Access Publishing of a UDC: Maynooth University’s Ken Saro-Wiwa Archive

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Leading Nigerian Writer Businessman Activist
A typical spill site within Ogoniland, many of which remain unaddressed for long periods of time
Destruction of Ogoni settlement, Port Harcourt
OGONI
SOLIDARITY
IRELAND
Dear Taher,

I got your letter and many thanks. I don't remember what I wrote to you, I think I wrote in a very great hurry and so was not able to explain myself clearly, maybe.

Of course, I know that you are all well with me in spirit.

And am very encouraged hereby. Nor did I imagine that you were doing nothing. But I have no access to newspapers or radio, and I write in chains — which was quite depressing. The chains do not in my table, a reminder that they can go on at any time.

My condition is not very bad. I have an air-conditioned room to myself, and the electricity has only failed once. I can write and only yesterday succeeded in smuggling my computer into this place. I can read (though I cannot write) for myself and have time to write. I can smuggle out letters. The only thing is that family members, including my doctor, are not allowed to see me. The military doctor came just once and wrote a recommendation that I be sent to the University Medical Hospital. The military administration has ignored the recommendation which makes me believe that he would not have been sent to me.

I look forward to hearing from you. I have no access to newspapers or radio. I do not know what to write. I have no idea of swimming my computer into this place. I can read and write for myself and have time to write. I can smuggle out letters. The only thing is that family members, including my doctor, are not allowed to see me. The military doctor came just once and wrote a recommendation that I be sent to the University Medical Hospital. The military administration has ignored the recommendation which makes me believe that he would not have been sent to me.

On my first night here, I had only the Bible for reading.

I decided to read it from cover to cover. I was very disturbed by the violence in the Book of Exodus. The soldier who owned the Bible has taken it away. I had given it to the soldier to use. Of course, the Bible is a great book. I've never had access to other books and my mind is still reproached. With the computer here, I think I'll be quite happy.

My worry is now in the Christian people. I wish all the people were of the same. The protection which is offered the people is gone. I'm
MOVEMENT FOR THE SURVIVAL OF OGONI PEOPLE (MOSOP)
24 Aggrey Road, P. O. Box 193, Port Harcourt, Nigeria
Tel: 004-331763/335658 Fax: 234-84-331763

20/10/93

Dear Abu Majella,

Thanks for your note. I'm really quite happy to have to help pass through the Catholic Church. Since all been so supportive and MOSOP will be right glad to have such friends or supervisors. Please do not have any doubts whatsoever on that score. We are too swamped with responsibilities that leaving some of it off our necks is sheer relief. I'll tell them about the church connection they will be able to jump in support from the temporal church.

4 th April is okay - one so as my last rally is at Bon at about that time.

I'm in Lagos this Friday morning. If there is anything to discuss with me, ring on 837455. The other tel. no is dead.

Regds,

Ken.
MOSOP
OGONI MUST SURVIVE
Publisher

• Daraja Press
• Daraja - KiSwahili word for bridge
• not-for-profit international publishing collective
• seeks to build bridges and highlight oppression, environmental issues and resources globally
• endeavour to make books available on open access, while also having print copies for sale
Trócaire felt it was important to support this project with a mini-grant because of its strong business and human rights approach, and also because it was part of Trócaire’s own history as the organisation was actively involved in the Ogoni Nine campaign in the 1990s.

Patricia Groves,
Telling the Ogoni Story
Silence Would Be Treason Last writings of Ken Saro-Wiwa (2nd Edition)


Abstract

THESE LETTERS AND POEMS are invaluable fragments of a living conversation that portrays the indomitable power in humans to stay alive in the face of certain death — to stay alive even in death. Reading through the treasure trove of the letters and poems compiled here as The Last Writings of Ken Saro-Wiwa evoked such intense memories of his resolute struggles against an oil behemoth and a deaf autocratic government. His crusade frames one of the most tumultuous periods of Nigeria’s history, his tragic story evokes anger and demands action to resolve the crises that first led the Ogoni people to demand that Shell clean up Ogoni or clear out of the territory. It was his leadership, in great part, that forced Shell out of Ogoni in January 1993. These letters are a testament of hope. Being on side of robust conversations between two persons that many would find unlikely as close friends, we learn the lessons that indeed friends love at all times and brothers (and sisters) are born for adversity’, as a proverb in the Bible states. This is where we must applaud Sister Majella McCarron for preserving and making public these letters that Ken Saro-Wiwa wrote to her between 20 October 1993 and 14 September 1995.
Silence Would Be Treason

Last Writings of Ken Saro-Wiwa

Edited by Íde Corley, Helen Fallon, Laurence Cox
with a foreword by Nnimmo Bassey

The Ogoni story will have to be told!

Last Writings of Ken Saro-Wiwa

2nd Revised Edition

Edited by Íde Corley, Helen Fallon, Laurence Cox
with a new foreword by Nn Onuagha Ehimetalor
and an afterword by Mark Dummett
Book Launch Abuja, Nigeria
2nd edition downloads
Launched 14 November 2018
The Ken Saro-Wiwa Audio Archive

Kairos Communications & MU Library

Series of recorded interviews of people connected with Ken Saro-Wiwa
Challenges, successes, learning

• Finding a reputable publisher
• The Legal Framework – book, movie
• Ethics
• Making the book available worldwide free of charge
• Building relationships – Sister Majella, Saro-Wiwa family, co-editors, publisher, Trocáire, new communities in Ireland
• Team Effort – different expertise
• Belief, enthusiasm & effort
• Be brave!
• Librarians can transform lives/Open Access can transform lives
Srini, Marjella,

I read your notes with great pleasure. I'm very sorry to hear about the illness of your mum. I hope she recovers. Please keep putting your thoughts on paper. She knows how we can use them in Jhure. The Afani story will have to be told!