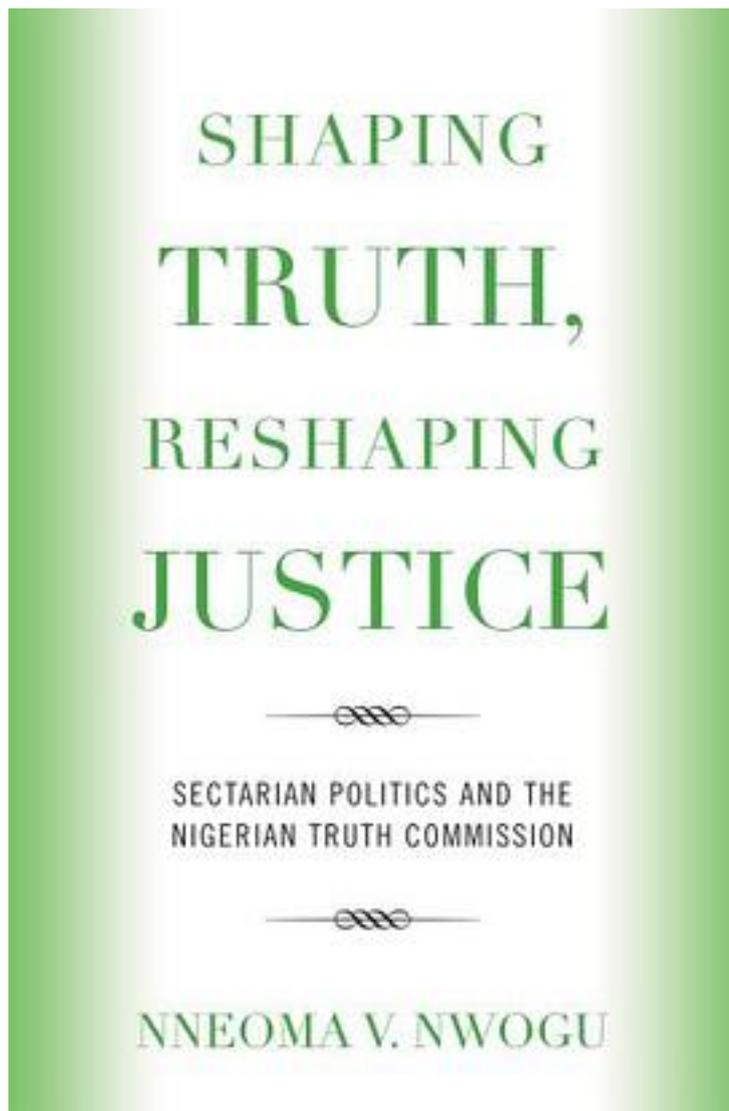


Shaping Truth, Reshaping Justice



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Shaping Truth, Reshaping Justice explores the realities of the Nigerian truth commission, the Human Rights Violations Investigation Commission. In doing so, the book examines the events of the Nigerian truth telling forum, comparing some of its aspects to the South African and Latin American counterparts from which it derived a number of its elements. Using the most public of ethnic conflicts in Nigeria's history as a case study, Shaping Truth, Reshaping Justice scrutinizes the ways in which the HRVIC interacted with the Nigerian socio-political melee and the way in which the pertinent ethnic groups presented a narrative of their 'enduring conflict.' Nwogu argues that this interaction does not indicate the participation of ethnicity in politics; rather, it is the politicization of ethnicity by elite members of these ethnic groups who utilize the official and moral forum that truth commissions provide to revitalize ethnic identities for the purpose of elite political aspirations. Ethno-political groups appropriated the commission as a formal space for the (mis)remembering of histories and the re-arrangement of politicized memory so as to mobilize constituencies, claim and reclaim political territories and gain access to social and economic resources at the national level. The government undermined its own ability to deliver the spectrum of justice that was particularly available through the HRVIC. This severely limits the potential for reconciliation. Looking at the HRVIC from this point of view shows the truth commission, designed to symbolize discontinuity, in reality reflects continuity with the past.

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