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BIOGRAPHY

Zik of Africa: *How Nnamdi Azikiwe Shaped the Destiny of the Igbo People*

By Chukwunwike Ossai

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ZIK OF AFRICA

Zik of Africa: How Nnamdi Azikiwe Shaped the Destiny of the Igbo People

By Chukwunwike Ossai · Biography · Ozikoro.com

Nnamdi Azikiwe, well known as the “Zik of Africa,” is a popular and respected Igbo man in Nigeria and Africa’s history. He played a vital role in the lives of the Igbo in politics, culture, education and business.

Zik was a journalist, politician, and freedom fighter who helped push the Igbo and Nigeria forward. Let us take a look at some of the things he has done for the Igbo people:

01

1. Political leadership and nationalism

Zik is one of the major people who fought for Nigeria’s independence. His political journey started with the NCNC party, which helped the Igbo people gain visibility in colonial Nigeria. Many Igbos began to join politics because of Zik.

- Mobilize Igbo mind: Zik used his party to let the Igbo people think that they could lead and make decisions for Nigeria.
- One Nigeria: He always says Nigerians are meant to be united; therefore, the Igbo people started seeing themselves as part of natural projects.
- President Role: Zik became Nigeria’s first president. This uplifted

Igbo pride and gave many people hope that they could reach the top.

- **Challenge:** During the Biafra War, Zik did not fully join Biafra. Some people said he betrayed Igbo, while others said he was in search of peace.

02

2. Education and brain power

Zik believes in the power of education. He studied in America, and when he returned, he motivated many young Igbo to attend school.

- **University for Igbo land:** He built the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, in 1960. The school helped train many Igbo doctors, lawyers, and Engineers.
- **Scholarship:** Through his newspaper, he chased after scholarships so the children from Igbo could go learn overseas.
- **Igbo culture and book:** Zik wrote books like *Renascent Africa*, which encourages the young and shows the smartness of Igbo.

03

3. Journalism and cultural pride

Zik was a very good writer and published a newspaper. His newspaper, *West African Pilot*, helped fight colonial problems and promote Igbo culture.

- **Igbo voice:** The paper discusses the success and tradition of the Igbo. It brought ego to the people.
- **Pan-African mind:** Zik believes Africans are connected to the whole

world, which helps the Igbo's identity as the global black family.

- **Books and Stories:** Zik wrote his history in *My Odyssey*, and he promoted Igbo stories and culture in the context.

04

4. Business and Finance

Zik played a key role in uplifting the Igbo spirit in business.

- **Bank for Africans:** He started the African Continental Bank (ACB) to assist Igbo traders in obtaining loans and doing business.
- **Support Igbo Hustlers:** He talked about Igbo's achievements in his newspaper. That brought a push for anyone who works to become successful (*onye ruo, o zuo*).
- **After-war Recovery:** Although the Biafra war destroyed many things, the Igbo remained strong because of the business and money ideas Zik had available.

05

5. Problem and Criticism

Some people were unhappy with Zik, especially during the Biafra war. Zik was a big supporter of the Biafran troops but at some point withdrew his support to save the lives of the Igbo People

- **Ethnic Issues:** Zik tried uniting the Yorubas, Hausas, and Igbos, but his plan didn't go as expected because there was a lot of tribal tension among them.

6. Zik legacy in Igbo land

Zik still remains a hero at the site of many IGBOs. A prestigious university in Anambra state was named after him and a prestigious international airport too

- Inspiration to youth: His history from a little child in Zungeru to a president keeps motivating a lot of the igbo's.
- Culture and Unity: He used his book and speech to promote the igbo tradition.
- Political Influence: Till date, a lot of Igbo politicians apply Zik idea of unity and justice.

Nnamdi Azikiwe changed the life of igbo people forever. From politics to school, from culture to business, he made sure igbo people was lifted. Though he didn't support Biafra fully, many still saw it as igbo ego.

Zik showed that an igbo person can be anything – president, professor, business expertise – as long as they don't give up. His desire for “Renascent Africa” and igbo dignity still motivated a lot of people today. Truly, Zik is a real African and igbo legend.

- Azikiwe, Nnamdi. *My Odyssey: An Autobiography*. Praeger Publishers, 1970.
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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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An enthusiast in tech with deep passion for studying and showcasing the vibrant cultural heritage of southern Nigeria . Combining my skill with my obsession towards African history and traditions to create contributions that impacts the digital space.



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