

Noo Saro-Wiwa — Ideas Letter Podcast

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Ayisha Osori: Hello everyone, I'm Ayisha Osori, director in Open Society Foundation's Ideas Workshop. Welcome to Open Society Ideas on the New Books Network. Today we'll be talking to Noo Saro-Wiwa about her latest book, *The Burning Ground: Oil and Militancy in Nigeria*. Now Noo Saro-Wiwa is an author and journalist born in Port Harcourt, Nigeria and raised in London.

She's a graduate of Kings College London and Columbia University, New York. She's the author of three books. The first *Looking for Transwonderland: Travels in Nigeria*, which was selected as BBC Radio 4's Book of the Week in 2012. The second book, *Black Ghosts*, explores the African community in China and was named the Edward Stanford Travel Book of the Year in 2025.

And her latest book is the one that we're discussing today, *The Burning Ground: Oil and Militancy in Nigeria*, which is about the social and environmental effects of the insurgency that arose in Nigeria's oil-rich Niger Delta after the death of her father, the environmental activist, Ken Saro-Wiwa. For a more detailed bio, please head to the notes for this podcast.

So Noo, welcome to Open Society Ideas on the New Books Network. And thank you for joining me to talk about critical mineral wealth, mining, global warming, environmental degradation, politics, capitalism, and all the other themes in your book.

Noo Saro-Wiwa: Thank you. Thank you so much for having me.

Ayisha Osori: You're welcome. So I'm going to just jump right in.

And the first question is, what's the background to this book? Why did you write it? What was the trigger? And broadly, what is it about?

Noo Saro-Wiwa: I wanted to write a book because it's been 30 years since my father was killed, and I feel that the issues still haven't been resolved. And, you know, in an age when solar power is on the rise and we're seeing lots of instability around the oil industry, especially with the US attacking Iran. I think it's more important than ever that we switch to solar power. And I think that the

story in the Niger Delta really is a cautionary tale, to all oil producing countries. And you know, this story really shows how corruption and corporate neglect can create so many problems, and end up hurting everyone. It's not just the people of the Niger Delta that get hurt, but ultimately it's that all companies suffer and the government suffers as well. I felt it was important to retell this story.

Ayisha Osori: Thank you. It's really important. And thank you for also bringing in what's going on in Iran. Of course, everybody's talking about oil.

So back to the Niger Delta. What are the key ideas and theories behind the Niger Delta struggle for resource control? I mean, in talking about the book writ large, you mention the fact that people are moving, or we should as a world, be moving away from oil towards solar and other forms of renewable energy.

So what are the key ideas and theories behind the Niger Delta struggle for resource control?

Noo Saro-Wiwa: Well. Ever since oil was discovered in 1958, the revenues from that oil went to the federal government, which has done very little to diversify the economy and just help Nigeria grow as an economy. As a result, you've seen this impoverishment within the Niger Delta.

At the same time, all companies such as Shell and Agip were causing thousands of oil spills. Between 1976 and 1996, we saw over 4,600 oil spills, and without a government that's protecting its people and imposing regulations, it meant that these oil companies were under no obligation to clean up the mess.

The Niger Delta is a very sort of rich, fertile wetland system. We've relied on farming and fishing for thousands of years. The land, the soil is our wealth. And when you take that away from us and you're not replacing it with any other sort of economy, you end up with the kind of problems that we see today.

And my father, Ken Saro-Wiwa, wanted to address those problems. He felt that we weren't getting enough revenue as a people under the derivation principle. And he was also upset at the pollution that was being caused by these oil spills. Of course when he sort of fought against the government on this, he and eight of his colleagues were killed because they represented a threat to the government.

And their deaths basically sent a message to the people of the Niger Delta that peaceful protest doesn't pay, and it sparked off two decades of militant activity. You saw people arming themselves and trying to get their message out to the

government through violent means. At the same time, because there is so much poverty, you have people attacking the pipelines and accessing the crude oil in order to refine it for themselves.

Because at that time, Nigeria didn't really have any oil refineries. We were exporting crude oil and then importing it at a very high price, which is a bit like selling ice to Eskimos, really. And so as a result, people just couldn't afford basic kerosene, paraffin, or diesel. And it's basically sparked off this huge industry of illegal refining which still goes on to this day.

And so the problems have just proliferated, illegal refining is then further damaging the pollution as much as the sort of corporate neglect of pipelines has done, which has then exacerbated the problem, it's made life even tougher for farmers. And then at the same time, the government, in order to appease these militants, introduced an amnesty in 2008 and ever since then, it's been paying these reformed militants' monthly stipends in order to pacify them and give them an income. And this program is only supposed to last for a few years but if you take it away, then you are going to have a return of the violence that we saw in the runup to the amnesty in 2008, 2009.

And so the government is now being forced to constantly pay money in order to keep the peace. At the same time, you still have this illegal refining going on, which is damaging the environment. And then companies like Shell have divested from the mainland because they're being constantly held to account for their actions.

So no one is winning here. And I feel that a shift to solar power is what we need quite urgently.

Ayisha Osori: Thank you for that and that's such a very profound statement: peaceful protest does not pay. This model of peaceful protests not paying has obviously been adopted, not just by the people of the Niger Delta, but by Nigerians all across the country.

And when we think about the insecurity that's driven by kidnapping, bandits, terrorists, jihadists, and as you say, a proliferation of violence all across the country and it's all being traded in. And so you see the government in negotiations, whether it's paying kidnapping or ransom. So you're right, we unfortunately started this in the Niger Delta, this system of not allowing peaceful protests to make a difference. Now everybody's selling violence and that's why we are in this very deep insecurity, and it comes down to lack of state accountability. The loss of the monopoly of the use of violence by the state is

also state violence, where violence is not necessarily the answer or the way to engage things. It's lack of adherence to international standards. Destroying the economy, destroying Earth.

I read your book and there's some really beautiful passages in there where you talk about just the flora and fauna of the Niger Delta and just how beautiful, you know. I confessed that I've not really traveled very widely across the Niger Delta, but I've been to Port Harcourt a few times, I've been to Bonny. Your book made me want to visit. It made me want to go and visit the reserve that you mentioned. I can't remember the name and don't know if you remember the name, but yeah, I definitely want to visit that. So, again, just a really, really, really powerful overview of just what's wrong with Nigeria.

But what's your assessment though in terms of, aside from wanting us to transit away from oil, and obviously it's not just Nigeria that needs to transit from oil it's the entire world, but we're also seeing that we're in a world where there's a certain type of ideology that's very determined to hold onto capitalism, neoliberalism, in the way that we've been practicing it to the detriment of the environment. So you can see President Trump rolling back all the gains the world had tried to make in terms of climate change and trying to deal with the overheating earth.

So Nigeria alone is not going to be able to make this transition. We need some sort of global collaboration, global consensus, so I wanna bring that down to the struggle in the Niger Delta. I know you've said that violence has predominated and people are being paid to keep their tools down or keep their weapons down, but with the devastating environmental degradation and the link to what else is happening around the world. Do you think there are more Nigerians that are in support of this campaign in the Niger Delta for not just resource control, but also to clean up the damage? Have we seen over time more people in support, less people, neutral?

Noo Saro-Wiwa: It's a mix. I mean I don't know in terms of actual numbers, but you've got people in Ogoniland, where I'm from, who are actually calling for a return to oil extraction. My father, with his campaign, he was able to drive out Shell in 1993, so they haven't been operating or extracting oil in Ogoniland in all that time, but you now have people calling for a resumption of that extraction, which is really alarming and really an insult to my father's memory and everything he died for. But at the same time, you have other people who are very interested in solar power. I mean, I was the consultant on a project that recently installed solar power in a community called Umuolo in Delta State.

And I visited that community last year. And it's great. They've just completely pivoted and they're not using oil anymore. But obviously there are people who are making a lot of money from oil within the Niger Delta. Illegal refining in itself is a huge business. And you know, there's a hierarchy: you've got people at the top who are running these illegal refineries, which are located in forests, very sort of remote, hidden forests. Then you've got your sort of hierarchy of people right down to the bottom who are the actual refiners themselves, doing the very dirty and dangerous work of refining this oil. And they're at risk of being burnt, killed in explosions, but all of these people are earning money. I mean, I spoke to one such guy, his name was Barry Zandun. This was back in 2019, and he was an illegal refiner and he was making very decent money compared to other people, and he used that money to support his family, his siblings, and his grandmother, who ironically was a farmer struggling to maintain the kind of yields that she enjoyed in previous decades. So you could see how it's this kind of vicious circle. So yeah, oil is such an integral part of our economy and illegally refined oil is an integral part. I mean, there are even companies that rely on illegal oil. It's really quite shocking. And I'm talking about proper, legitimate companies that are using it.

Ayisha Osori: You mentioned that we don't have any refineries. Once upon a time we're supposed to have like three, four refineries, all of them are not working. Now we are all relying on Dangote Refinery, but we also have these huge import bills. Are you saying that between the importation and the defunct refineries that don't work, we just don't have enough and so these illegal refineries are actually meeting a market need? That's what it sounds like.

Noo Saro-Wiwa: Yeah, I mean the oil that's coming in that we import is expensive and, also, I just think the economy in itself, this illegal refined oil, there were so many actors involved in it. You've got politicians and military officials who were involved. And then you've got oil bunkering, where this illegally refined oil is then exported to other countries.

Ayisha Osori: Oil bunkering is not just taking crude oil and trying to sell it, it's also selling refined products?

Noo Saro-Wiwa: Selling refined products. It's then taken in boats out into the sea, the Bight of Benin, where it then meets ships and it's loaded onto ships that are owned by different countries. We're talking, you know, Japan, Brazil. I was told by a journalist, unfortunately who has now passed away, Patrick Naba, he was very involved in Niger Delta issues, environmental issues. He said that if he'd go to the prisons in Port Harcourt, it's filled with sailors from all these different countries who were operating ships that were loading oil that's been

illegally refined. This is a problem that has so many tentacles and there are so many people who profit from it, it's not just poor residents of the Niger Delta. We're talking about foreign countries and high ranking government officials.

Ayisha Osori: Yeah, what you've described is like an international trade really pretty much in illegally refined goods. And then there's the bunkering aspect of stealing the crude oil from pipelines. So it's the whole ecosystem and I remember jotting down this point that you had made that the people who are running these illegal refineries are earning up to \$900 a month. And when you think about that, the minimum wage in Nigeria per month is barely \$50, of course, how are you going to stop people involved in industry or, you know, a sector that's earning them \$900 a month.

Noo Saro-Wiwa: When you have these individuals who earn so much money, you have this sort of pyramid system where you've got these people at the top and then everyone else at the bottom is relying on them. And so much of the Nigerian economy is based on that. It's the big man, you know, sometimes the big woman, who has the resources and everyone has to sort of, kowtow around them and relies on them desperately.

And again, this is another way in which solar power could really change that. With solar power, people have access to an energy resource that's clean, that one day will be relatively cheap, and they can all run their own businesses. You know, and that's what we need, we need an economy where you've got millions of individual stakeholders who are not relying on that one big man for their livelihood.

Ayisha Osori: Thank you for that. And I'm going to go back to the solar power, but I just wanted to finish up on this economy of illegal bunkering and illegal refining. What does this type of money in the hands of people who have, who can be violent, who have been violent, what does that do to our democracy or to what we are trying to build as a democracy?

Noo Saro-Wiwa: Yeah well that's another issue in itself. When you have these former militants who were then paid off, they were given millions of pounds or they were given surveillance contracts.

Ayisha Osori: Trillions of naira you are saying, right?

Noo Saro-Wiwa: Yeah. And they're armed and they have a lot of control. So when it then comes to elections, you have politicians relying on these former militants to provide security and to control voters. Politics and militancy then

become intertwined, and that's going to undermine democracy even more. In the past, our elections became extremely violent because you had one government and political party collaborating with one set of militants, and then you had the opposing political party giving money to a different set of militants.

And then those militants were clashing with one another. And so, that's the thing with Nigeria, whenever you have some sort of corruption on the ground that's started by people at the bottom of the food chain, what you see are people at the top of the food chain then just getting involved in that, rather than trying to eliminate it. It really has an effect on our democracy as well.

Ayisha Osori: Correct me if I'm wrong, so back to solar power, because you mentioned this a few times. What do you make of Nigeria's, as a state, response to global warming? I don't think you touch upon it in your book, but please correct me if I'm wrong. How would you assess where Nigeria is as a state in terms of responding to not just global warming and environmental degradation that has been caused by mining and oil and gas, but also just in terms of what else is happening in the world, what we know about the state of the earth and trying to reduce carbon emissions. What would you say Nigeria's state policy is?

Noo Saro-Wiwa: I've never got the sense that there is much of a conversation around that. The Nigerian government is having to constantly fight fires in terms of security issues. You've got this huge problem in the north with Islamic terrorism through Boko Haram. They're containing people in the south, just by providing monthly stipends. We have a major cost of living crisis.

The government is really just as far as I can see, is having to focus on those very, sort of immediate issues. And global warming then becomes a luxury topic that we can't afford. I mean, even when I have conversations with people down in the Niger Delta and I express concerns about the environment, the response is that the ordinary guy on the ground can't afford to think about these things. For them it's about survival.

They're going to refine oil illegally because they have to support their family. And I feel that the federal government in Nigeria is also in this sort of survival mode of its own making. I could be wrong, maybe someone has spoken about...

Ayisha Osori: That's my sense as well. I'm always struck by the fact that when it comes to what's happening in terms of global warming to the environment, we see the floods in Nigeria every season, and it's the same response and nothing changes. There does seem to be a lack of awareness, whether it's on the state

level or whether it's on the citizen, public level. But I just wanted to check with you because we do know that we have a Ministry of Environment. We know that we have this ecological fund that's funded I think directly from revenue, and has almost 400 million dollars allocated between 2020 and 2021, thereabout. But nobody's ever sure what happens to these funds or whether the money's ever deployed. And I remember when you were saying earlier about the Amnesty Fund, it's the same thing, these funds are created, they become slush funds for corruption, for stealing elections. There's no accountability.

Noo Saro-Wiwa: Broadly speaking, federal governments or politicians are just very shortsighted. They don't have a grand vision of what Nigeria should be, could be. They don't really think in those times.

Ayisha Osori: Well, what about the state governors? So yes, I can agree that maybe the federal government is in Abuja, it's always accused anyway of being remote, removed, and not connected to the lives of people. But the state governors. So what would be the governors of Bayelsa, of Delta, of Rivers. Why don't they care? If the federal government in Abuja can be shortsighted, what about the state governors who do have at least budgets, do have some control, do have some power. I'm curious, would you say that Rivers State, for example, has a policy on the environment that you know they are trying?

Because I'm quite sure the Commissioner of Environment, even though if you'd give me a million dollars to stay who that person is I can't tell you, but I'm sure that Rivers State has a commissioner of environment. What about the state? What would you say about the state responsibility to the environment?

Noo Saro-Wiwa: There's a lot of talk and there are a lot of policies in place. But then the actual action on the ground, there's a big gap between what's said and what the intentions are and then what actually happens. The UN, they conducted a study looking at the extent of the environmental disruption in the Niger Delta and they issued a report. The UN Environmental Programme issued a report in 2011 which concluded that oil companies were responsible for huge amounts of environmental damage and were obligated to remediate that pollution. And so a billion dollars was put towards the cleanup of the environment and an organization was set up, the acronym is HYPREP.

Ayisha Osori: Yes, I remember that, HYPREP.

Noo Saro-Wiwa: It has done some good things. You've seen a cleanup of certain areas of the Niger Delta, but at the same time, there's a lot of talk of corruption.

The money is not going where it's supposed to go. And that's just what always seems to happen in Nigeria, you have policies that are made, intentions are stated, but the action on the ground is patchy. There's still that corruption and there's still a lack of real will.

And I feel that as time goes on, people become more and more ignorant in terms of understanding the link between environment and farming, and even family structures as well. I was struck by how many former militants I spoke to who got involved – and these are very sweet, kind, gentle natured men – who got involved in this violent militancy back in the 2000s because they were trying to support a huge number of siblings. So many of them told me, “I'm the eldest of eight children” or “My father had three wives.” But no one seems to understand the connection between that and the pressures on the environment and the way people need money, which then leads them to engage in illegal refining or militancy.

No one seems to connect the dots at all, and I feel that even our politicians don't seem to understand. You can take money, you can steal money, from government coffers, but ultimately it's going to cost you further down the line. You can enrich yourself for now, but further down the line, you're going to have to pay stipends to people because they become frustrated through poverty and turn to violent cy.

You're going to have to pay money to help people when there are floods and then you're going to have to protect yourself for fear of being kidnapped. So there's just this shortsightedness. People are not connecting the dots. And you see that at all levels of society.

Ayisha Osori: Funny, it's almost like you read my questions that I had written down to ask you, because I was going to ask that same question. What do you think about people making the links between the environmental degradation, the capitalism, the corruption, the lack of resource control, and sort of tying that to a form of imperialism that we see in conversations about reparations and restitution. I was just wondering, are people making this link between all of this and you've just pointed out, and I have to say, it's very alarming, your diagnosis that people are becoming more ignorant because you'd like to think that with time people are becoming more knowledgeable, more aware. To hear that people are becoming more ignorant. What would you say is the reason? Is it the poverty?

Noo Saro-Wiwa: It's poverty, there's the lack of history as well.

I didn't know this, but apparently history as a subject in schools was removed from school curriculum. And you can see the effects of that. When I go to the Niger Delta, people above a certain age know who Ken Saro-Wiwa is. But people below a certain age, especially if they're not well-educated, they don't know.

I feel the government is on a mission to make people forget their past, but it's also a problem that you see in the West as well. People in the West can't connect the dots either. There's this whole anxiety about immigration, for example. But that is entirely connected to neoliberal capitalism. It's like if you don't want immigrants, then you have to, especially in countries like England where I grew up, you have to do something about this laissez-faire capitalism that has allowed people to accumulate so much property, it's boosted property prices which then affects people's ability to take lower paid jobs. It's the immigrants that have to do those jobs. It's all tied up in the system and people don't seem to realize that. So if a country like England with 99% literacy, if people here can't even connect the dots, then. . .

Ayisha Osori: You're absolutely right. So I thank you for even broadening this lack of history because yes, we do bemoan the fact that in Nigeria we don't take history seriously. And I definitely think it's deliberate. It's a relic of Imperialist Britain and wanting to train a bunch of people who would really not know their history and just follow and of course the people who took over Nigeria in 1960 just continued that and are still doing it.

But I'm glad you made that broader link. History is dangerous for every government and every state, especially now as things are getting worse for people, as we see the unsustainability of neoliberalism in the way that it's been practiced and beyond, that's why America can literally burn books and, you know, close down libraries. And it's the same thing that's happening in the UK. So you're right, this is a general attack on history and knowledge. It makes sense, as you said, it's not just Nigerians who are becoming more ignorant, but people even abroad, the so-called Enlightened West, are becoming even more ignorant of how the world works and their role in it.

I just wanna try and leave a little time for a few lighter things, but one more question. And of course I didn't say that I'm Nigerian, but hopefully, it's come out in the conversation that I am. You mentioned Egbesu the Ijaw god of justice and truth who has very strict ethics for war. And I was really taken by that because I was like, oh, this sounds really fascinating. Would you say a bit more about that? Do you think that Egbesu and those who believe in Egbesu, does it guide them in any way? Is this something that if revived in some way, more

people knew about, speaking about knowledge and awareness and ignorance, would this help the Niger Delta in any way? Would it help Nigeria if more people understood this Egbesu, god of justice and truth?

Noo Saro-Wiwa: Yeah, I don't know. I mean, Egbesu, is an Ijaw god. It's a belief system and a lot of the militants who were from the Ijaw ethnic group subscribed to this belief system. And, you've got people like Tompolo who's a chief, former militant, and very influential man, who is a priest of that religion. You know, he takes it very seriously and he's revered for that reason. And so, Egbesu has a code of conduct when it comes to war, but like with any religion it's great on paper, but people don't necessarily practice it as it should be practiced.

But yeah, I was struck by how many former militants I spoke to who really believe in this system. But there's a lot of supernatural stuff. There's a belief that if you follow certain rituals you will be impervious to bullets. People can shoot you and do anything and you still won't die.

Ayisha Osori: It reminds me of a story, I'm sorry, it's an anecdote. Apparently, one time, Fela [Aníkúlápó Kútì] had this charmer who claimed that he'd given him invincibility towards bullets. You know, he was now free of being able to be killed and he wanted to test it out. And his brother, I think Beko, was like let's try it on this goat first before we try it on you. And of course, the goat died. When you said that, I remembered that anecdote, but please continue.

Noo Saro-Wiwa: Exactly. I mean, that is what people believe. The thing is the West, when you look at England, they were very good at taking religion and fusing it into their sort of capitalist belief. If they had an agenda that they needed in order to take the country in a certain direction or take society in a certain direction, they used religion in order to make that happen. Which is, you know, it's sneaky, but it's effective.

Ayisha Osori: To give an example, I'm curious. Do any examples come to mind of how religion was used in aid of capitalism?

Noo Saro-Wiwa: The Protestant work ethic, for example. It's really just a way of getting low paid people at the bottom end to work in those mills.

Use the textiles, produce the coal. You know, you're sort of made to feel that you are lazy and somehow sort of going against God . .

Ayisha Osori: Yeah. And not serving God. Yeah.

Noo Saro-Wiwa: Yeah. So it's that work ethic. But I kind of wish that in Nigeria, we would find a way to take our Indigenous belief systems. . .

Ayisha Osori: Which is why I asked. I was very taken by the idea of an Egbesu and I was like, oh yeah, why can't we build on that?

Noo Saro-Wiwa: Exactly. But you know, you need to sort of blend it with solar power and things like that. But you know how you do that, I don't know.

Ayisha Osori: I hope you're setting up a solar power company, because you're really into solar power now. You've mentioned solar power, it's the one common thread. But right now Nigeria is going through a really major energy crisis and there's so many memes about having solar power. You know, now it's like, if you don't have solar power, like really, honestly, are you human? Do you have money? Are you sensible? Because there's no electricity, there's no power, and it's very hot right now before the rainy season. So everybody is talking about solar power, actually.

Noo Saro-Wiwa: Yeah. And a lot of people have it. When you go to the homes of people who are a little bit more well to do and you see that. When you're in Nigeria, people are constantly passing Chinese engineers and they're here to install solar power. So it is something that we are pivoting to, but it's not happening on a fast or broad enough scale.

Ayisha Osori: And the president probably told us that if he didn't fix power in two years, three years, we should hold him responsible. Apparently he has made Aso Rock, the home of power, fully off the grid. It's now powered by solar. But let me ask you, did you learn anything new and surprising?

Anything that sticks out from researching this book, writing this book, what one or two things that you found that you didn't know that really struck you as important?

Noo Saro-Wiwa: I mean, as I mentioned before, I was just shocked at the extent to which the economy within the Niger Delta depends on illegal oil refining.

You've got radio stations, radio programs, talking about this problem, but the radio station itself is powered by illegal oil. And I didn't realize that. The extent of it, you know, I thought it was just, the common man and woman needing paraffin, you know, and kerosene, those sorts of things. So the extent of it was just absolutely massive.

But I also spoke to a lot of women activists. There's this whole kind of gender aspect to this and the women are doing fantastic things. A lot of them are farmers. You know, there were a lot of male farmers too but women are the ones really holding things together. They are the farmers. But the problem is when you have an oil spill or you have flooding, the compensation is then often given to the men. And so I think women have a much closer relationship with nature. They can connect the dots whereas the men are a bit more concerned about income. They just want income. If that income comes at the expense of the environment, so be it. And it's the women who have to bear the brunt of that.

So there's a whole sort of female aspect to this. And I spoke to some women in this report and you know, that was something that really sort of emphasized the importance of valuing women as well. And I think a lot of people, they just want to fall asleep or roll their eyes when you talk about feminism and women's rights. But again, they're not connecting the dots. If you give women rights, then it's their children, their sons who benefit as well. So that's really important.

But I also visited different parts of the Delta, especially in the last two years. I visited a conservation project run by the Southwest Niger Delta Project and they protected a few hectares of forest. They still have colobus monkeys and all these incredible species. They convinced the local population to stop eating bush meat and to treat it as a resource that is a value when kept alive.

It's fabulous. You know, and there are still parts of the Delta that are absolutely beautiful and we can reclaim that beauty and make money from it. Oil is a very capital intensive industry. It doesn't help loads and loads of people. The per capita dividends from this are tiny. You can make a lot more money by maintaining a healthy agricultural system. And tourism ultimately. It doesn't have to be like this.

Ayisha Osori: Yeah, sadly. Are you working on anything next? And if yes, you don't have to divulge too much, but what themes are you looking at? Ideas that you're grappling with. It doesn't have to be about the Niger Delta, it could be anything in the world.

Noo Saro-Wiwa: Yeah. Well, obviously for me, and you know for a lot of people, we understand that at the moment the world, especially the Western world, is concerned about immigration.

All of these things, it's all about foreign cultures. But really, we all know, that it's a class problem. And you know, it's the ruling classes around the world that are sewing division between the people at the bottom and pretending that the

problems that we have can be solved by just removing foreigners. And so it's just that classic problem of class versus race. So that's on my mind and features in what will hopefully be my next project.

Ayisha Osori: Thank you for that. And last one, I know I've last one more than once, but are you reading anything interesting that you recommend or have you read anything lately that you recommend?

Noo Saro-Wiwa: Oh gosh, I haven't read much but you know the Open Foundations book?

Ayisha Osori: Oh, the Ideas Letter Anthology that we publish.

Noo Saro-Wiwa: I received that a couple of months ago, and it was my intention to read one story every day. I haven't quite followed through on that, life's too hectic. But that's a great book and I'm looking forward to finishing that one.

Ayisha Osori: Fantastic. Thank you so much Noo. Really appreciate your time. I hope this was as useful for you as it has been for me and hopefully for our listeners.

Noo Saro-Wiwa: Absolutely. Thank you so much for having me. I appreciate it.

Ayisha Osori: Alright, take care.

Noo Saro-Wiwa: Take care.