

THE RUTH & TED BRAUN AWARDS FOR WRITING EXCELLENCE
AT SAGINAW VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY

Robert D. Kaplan's Anarchic Africa

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Robert D. Kaplan is one of the most widely read and criticized current affairs writers today. His view of the world is bleak: He believes that trends in population growth, environmental degradation, ethnic conflict, and political mismanagement are destroying third world countries, creating anarchic conditions that, if ignored by the first world, will come to threaten the economic and political foundation on which it has prospered. At the crux of Kaplan's argument is Africa, which he has observed, studied, and purports to understand. In *The End of the Earth: From Togo to Turkmenistan, from Iran to Cambodia, a Journey to the Frontiers of Anarchy* (1997), Kaplan chronicles his travels in West Africa, Egypt, and the Horn of Africa during the course of the 1980s and early 1990s.

This essay will focus specifically on Kaplan's observations in West Africa in *The Ends of the Earth*, comparing his observations and analysis with the available population, economic, health and geographic data in those countries, and arguing that Kaplan's observations, even if somewhat dated, align closely with what the current data suggest, with one exception: economic growth. Contrary to what he has observed and what he believes, there is some significant economic progress happening in Africa. That growth is not equal across the economic spectrum, and it tends to be geographically isolated, but it does exist. Kaplan's contention that Africa is falling apart socially, politically and economically is imperfect, if sometimes porous, and over-reliant on appeals to emotion. But dismissing his claims is unwise, since the data suggest that many serious social problems are affecting Africa today, just as they did during Kaplan's travels over ten years ago.

One can critique Kaplan's observations using the most recent United Nations Human Development Report, which measures general social, political and economic trends across the globe; the World Health Organization's World Health Statistics; general notes and reports from the U.S. Department of State and Central Intelligence Agency; and World Bank data profiles.¹ It should be noted that data for many of the countries – especially population data – is necessarily inexact, since weak government accounting practices in many African countries make census data unreliable.

There are three dominant themes in *The Ends of the Earth*, pillars of an overarching anarchy thesis, which he weaves through the majority of his work. The first theme concerns the negative forces of population growth in West Africa, which will be evaluated using the available data from the UN. The second theme, health and disease, will be studied both in Kaplan's observations and in the WHO's report. Finally, the paper will examine the economies of the West African countries that Kaplan visits in *The Ends of the Earth*, comparing his writing with reports from the CIA, the U.S. State Department, the World Bank, and the UN. The conclusion will tie together the data and Kaplan's observations to form a description of growth in the third world and argue that while perhaps pessimistic, emotional and even a bit amateurish, Kaplan's observations and pontification should be taken seriously.

In *The Ends of the Earth*, Kaplan begins his mid-1990s journey in Danane, a city in Ivory Coast, but before he recounts one observation, he rattles off statistics that deserve scrutiny. He says that in the 1994 United Nations

Human Development Report, 22 of the 24 countries at the bottom of the Human Development Index were countries in sub-Saharan Africa.² To compute the Human Development Index, the United Nations uses a formula measuring basic factors of life in countries, including life expectancy, total population, population growth, gross domestic product and purchasing power parity, literacy rates, fertility rates, mortality rates, and education.³

This area seems to have changed little since then. According to the recent 2007 report, 33 of the bottom 44 countries in the Human Development Index were sub-Saharan countries. The highest-ranked sub-Saharan country was Gabon, which placed 117 out of 177 countries listed. Sierra Leone was the lowest ranked country in the world, with an HDI (Human Development Index) of .336; average life expectancy in Sierra Leone is 41.8 years; the adult literacy rate measured 34.8 percent; and the gross domestic product per capita was \$806.⁴ In 2007, Ivory Coast ranked 166, with an HDI of .432, compared to 1994, when its HDI was .370, and it ranked 136 (out of 173 countries).⁵ So while the country's human development index has increased, which indicates some improvement on an absolute level, on a relative basis Ivorians' quality of life may have actually *decreased* in comparison with the rest of the world, reflected in its much lower HDI ranking. If what the Human Development Index suggests is accurate, Kaplan's overarching thesis seems to hold: rapid population growth, rampant disease, low literacy and other factors are in fact driving many third world countries backward, as his three dominant themes illustrate.

Population Growth: The End of the Earth?

The first pillar on which Kaplan's anarchy thesis rests is population growth, but Kaplan observes that growing populations are only one stressor on a nation-state, as he writes in *The Ends of the Earth*:

I had originally thought of population in neo-Malthusian terms, according to which state failure might be a direct result of overpopulation. By the end of my journey I understand that rapid population growth was just one of several agitating forces – a force that cultural ingenuity might sidestep.⁶

He argues that economic success stories like Singapore and Japan, both countries with low population growth, are secondary if not irrelevant in the global discussion of population growth, since most children are not being born in highly developed postindustrial societies, but into economic basket cases like Sierra Leone. He analogizes, writing that the second Cold War will not be fought against other developed societies, but between developed societies and the forces of disease, crime, population pressure, envi-

ronmental degradation, and conflict.⁷

So what do the current data suggest? What does population growth look like in West Africa? Are we looking at a new Cold War? Data from the 2007 UN Human Development Report makes it seem possible. Using the examples of population growth in Ivory Coast, Sierra Leone and Nigeria, one can compare the data with Kaplan's observations.

Ivory Coast, a medium-sized state in West Africa, is growing at a rate of 3.5 percent per year as of 2005, and has a population of 18.6 million. Thirty years ago, its population was only 6.6 million. The UN estimates its population will reach 22.3 million by 2015. Of this 18.6 million, 45 percent is urban, compared to 1975, when only 32 percent of Ivory Coast's population was urban. The UN predicts that in 2015, 50 percent of its population will be urban. Furthermore, as of 2005, 42 percent, or around 9.3 million people, is under 15.⁸ Kaplan's observations in Ivory Coast concentrate on a typical slum outside Abidjan, which the local inhabitants have dubbed Chicago.

Babies were everywhere, as intrepid as the palm trunks sprouting out of the sand or the orange lizards. You couldn't help noticing the number of pregnant women....Here, young unemployed men passed the time drinking beer, palm wine, and medicinally strengthened gin while gambling on pinball games....These are the same youths who rob houses at night in more prosperous Ivorian neighborhoods....Now 50 percent of the country's population is non-Ivorian, and 75 percent of Abidjan's population originates from neighboring countries.

Kaplan argues that the slums of the Ivory Coast are a microcosm for all of West Africa. His boldest assertion comes when he writes, "for many immigrants, the Ivory Coast had not turned out to be the land of plenty, or even of relative plenty, but a slum magnet for an emptying countryside."⁹ The statistics from the UN Human Development Report support his argument – with 45 percent of the country's population urban, Kaplan may have observed just a few of the 9.3 million youths who constitute the majority of Ivory Coast's population.

Sierra Leone, a small state in West Africa, is growing at a rate of 2.1 percent per year as of 2005, and has a population of 5.6 million, compared to 1975, when its population was 2.9 million. According to UN estimates, its population will reach 6.9 million by 2015. Of this 5.6 million, 40.7 percent of the population is urban, compared to 1975, when 21 percent of Sierra Leone's population was urban. By 2015, the UN predicts that 48 percent of its population will be urban. And as of 2005, 42 percent of its population, or around 2.8 million people, is *under 15*.¹⁰

Kaplan does not spare words when speaking of Sierra

Leone. “I was visiting a failed society,” he writes.¹¹ Sierra Leone’s high birthrate is tied to its disease problem to the point where the two cannot be separated. He encountered a young Leonean official who flared up when one of Kaplan’s friends told him that qualifications for Western aid might soon depend on the country’s ability to control its high birthrate.

I watched a Sierra Leonean official, a young and intense man with friends high up in the military regime, react angrily, his eyes flaring, as Michelle told him: “It may be that in future years Western aid will be given on the basis of a government’s ability to get its birthrate down and to stop destroying its rainforests rather than on the basis of a government’s friendliness.” ... The words *birthrate down* [Kaplan’s italics] were what made this official almost hiss in hatred. ... Michelle’s mention of the rainforest merely implied that African governments didn’t have their houses in order. ... But the birthrate was – to judge from the fellow’s reaction – a bit too personal.¹²

A third example, Nigeria, a large state in West Africa, is growing at a rate of 2.8 percent per year as of 2005, and has a population of 141.4 million. According to UN estimates, its population will reach 175.7 million by 2015. Of this 141.4 million, 48.2 percent is urban, compared with 1975, when 23.4 percent of Nigeria’s population was urban. In 2015, the UN predicts that 55.9 percent of its population will be urban. And as of 2005, 44.3 percent of Nigeria’s population, or around 57 million people, is *under 15*.¹³ Nigeria is the largest African state by population and one of the largest states in the world by that same measure. At 141 million people, Nigeria is more populous than Japan, a country of 126 million. The problems that accompany population growth in the much smaller states of Ivory Coast and Sierra Leone affect Nigeria in much the same way, and with a rate of population growth of 2.8 percent per year, those problems won’t be resolved without a tremendous national effort. Kaplan writes:

With little economic growth, sub-Saharan Africa’s exploding population is sustained by slash-and-burn agriculture and the creation of shantytowns that erode the continent’s environmental base. ... Africa shows how the urban environment may come to represent the locus of future conflict in the developing world. The perpetrators of future violence will likely be urban born, with no rural experience from which to draw.¹⁴

Population growth by itself does not imperil a nation. But population growth makes other stressors all the more relevant. A well-developed nation may better illustrate Kaplan’s point; take Finland, for example. Finland has a population of 5.2 million, or about as many people as Sierra

Leone. But Finland is growing at a rate of only 0.4 percent per year, and UN estimates place Finland’s population at 5.4 million in 2015, compared to Sierra Leone’s projected population of 6.9 million.¹⁵ So Sierra Leone is tasked with housing, clothing, employing, feeding, and keeping healthy 1.5 million more individuals than Finland in the same amount of time. Even if we were to assume that Sierra Leone and Finland could both start over, with a healthy natural resource base, equally demanding health concerns, and an equally educated populace, that’s still an enormously demanding task for Sierra Leone, or for any nation – no matter how ingenious its inhabitants – to accomplish. The situation looks especially grim when one takes into consideration the fact that Finland and Sierra Leone are not looking to 2015 with blank slates. Sierra Leone faces an incredible array of problems besides population growth, and population growth only complicates those problems further. Thus the first pillar of Kaplan’s anarchy thesis doesn’t merely survive an encounter with the data, but is bolstered by it.

Getting Sick(er): Disease in West Africa

The second pillar on which Kaplan’s anarchy thesis rests is disease, intimately tied to population growth and other factors. He argues that humanity’s grip on disease is temporary: the 21st century will be characterized not by a mastering of complex technologies necessary to contain disease, but by disease mastering the complex technologies we have devised to stall it:

Population growth, along with migration that is tied to soil degradation, means we won’t hereafter be able to control the spread of disease as we have been doing for the past 150 years. Viruses luxuriating in Africa may constitute a basic risk to humanity. In the 21st century, Africa, like Europe in the 20th, will have to be confronted.¹⁶

Kaplan’s gloomy outlook was heavily influenced by his time spent in West Africa, and especially from what he saw in Ivory Coast and Sierra Leone. In Ivory Coast, Kaplan explained how malaria might be at the root of the AIDS epidemic in West Africa and elsewhere:

Mefloquine is the most effective antimalaria drug ... however, with all its toxicity, it is losing the battle against the ingenious mutations of the malaria parasite ... a strain of cerebral malaria resistant to mefloquine is on the offensive. ... Because malaria can cause anemia, which necessitates blood transfusions, malaria is intensifying the spread of AIDS in Africa at the same time that AIDS and tuberculosis are intensifying each other’s spread. Of three thousand new cases of tuberculosis in Cote d’Ivoire, 45 percent are accompanied by HIV.¹⁷

According to the World Health Organization's World Health Statistics 2007, malaria and tuberculosis are experiencing a global downturn, though nearly 800,000 people died of malaria. The World Health Organization predicts that in 2030, fewer than 200,000 people will die of malaria yearly. But AIDS is still on the rise, even after more than a decade of capturing worldwide headlines, with a considerable spike in AIDS-related deaths predicted by 2030. By 2002, AIDS had killed 2.8 million people, and by 2030, the World Health Organization expects it to have taken the lives of 6.5 million. This is in spite of optimistically assuming that basic preventative medicines will be available to 80 percent of individuals by then.¹⁸

The AIDS problem is further complicated by the fact that sub-Saharan Africa is woefully under-equipped to fight the disease. Ivory Coast has 2,081 doctors with which to fight the spread of AIDS, a ratio of 0.12 doctors per 1,000 people. (This is to say nothing of the number of other kinds of healthcare providers. For instance, there are 339 dentists in Ivory Coast, a ratio of 0.02 dentists per 1,000 people.) These doctors have 3.8 percent of the GDP to work with to combat AIDS, of which 23 percent is government funds.¹⁹ It is overly optimistic to think that AIDS could be contained in such an environment where so few doctors are treating so many patients with so few resources.

While the WHO report suggests a global downturn in tuberculosis and malaria, its report does state that until then, malaria is most dangerous to children, whose underdeveloped immune systems are most susceptible to the virus. In sub-Saharan Africa, it will kill one percent of all children under five for the foreseeable future.

In Sierra Leone, Kaplan observes the brutal conditions in which villagers work and live. He prognosticates that in a slum village outside of Freetown, several hundred pregnant women who did the majority of the labor probably carried schistosomiasis or onchocerciasis parasites or both. Both diseases are found in water. "But where else were they supposed to bathe?" Kaplan asks.²⁰ A good question. Part of the problem that disease poses for West Africa is the fact that it is largely inescapable, and that most governments have proved ineffectual at dealing with it. Kaplan uses the example of the cholera "vaccination," which most physicians regard as useless. While in Sierra Leone, he asks a doctor why his country and other West African nations still insist upon proof of a cholera vaccination, despite evidence of its ineffectiveness. The doctor said that if the vaccine was ineffective, the government would have told him about it.²¹ That kind of semi-willful ignorance is something Kaplan encountered throughout his journey in West Africa, and the attitude wasn't limited to disease. While attending a function for a mid-level diplomat in Freetown, the capital of

Sierra Leone, Kaplan had run into one of the regime's chief civil servants who says, while fully sober, "Things are wonderful in this country. I can't believe how good things are."

The truth, according to the WHO World Health Statistics 2007, is that Sierra Leone spent about 3.3 percent of its GDP on health in 2005. Of that 3.3 percent, 59 percent was government expenditure, suggesting a very small level of private sector health-related activity. There are 162 physicians total in Sierra Leone, or about 0.03 doctors for every 1,000 individuals. The WHO does not specify if the 162 doctors are permanent residents or relief workers, or both. Again, if we were to use Finland as a country of comparison, given its small population, a sad story emerges. Finland has 16,446 physicians, or 3.16 physicians per 1,000 people. Africa has about 150,708 physicians total, or about 0.21 physicians per 1,000 people, the lowest ratio of all the continents. The global average is 1.23 doctors per 1,000 people. In Europe, there are 3.2 doctors per 1,000 people; in the Americas, there are 1.94 doctors per 1,000 people.²²

Those 150,780 physicians in Africa are battling viruses that Kaplan believes pose a fundamental threat to mankind. And if his observations are accurate, those diseases are winning the fight. Those 162 doctors in Sierra Leone are not only ill-equipped to fight those diseases; as the government official gleefully unaware of the ineffectiveness of the cholera vaccine illustrates, there's simply not enough of them to win the battle. So as gloomy as Kaplan's prognosis is, if the statistics from the WHO and UN tell us anything, it's that the situation is only getting more desperate. As the Human Development Report shows, populations in countries like Ivory Coast are rapidly growing, lowering the doctor-to-patient ratio still more. As the WHO's World Health Statistics show, the quality of health care in countries like Ivory Coast is and is likely to remain extremely low. The second pillar of Kaplan's anarchy thesis emerges intact after a comparison with the data from the UN and the WHO.

The Economies of West Africa: The Crumbling Pillar

The economies of the countries that Kaplan has visited are some of the most destitute on the planet. The U.S. Department of State's description of the economy of Ivory Coast reads like a laundry list of everything Murphy's Law would have predicted. The background note on Ivory Coast says high population growth has coincided with a sharp decline in living standards from 1999-2002, and that the economy has been slowly declining since 2002, actually contracting 2.3 percent in 2003.²³ The CIA's World Factbook doesn't offer a much more optimistic outlook for Ivoirians. According to the agency's page on the country,

political turmoil has continued to damage the Ivorian economy since 2004, “with a rising risk premium associated with doing business in the country, foreign investment shriveling, transportation costs increasing, French businesses fleeing, and criminal elements that traffic in weapons and diamonds gaining ground.”²⁴ Overall, the CIA and State Department’s observations are for the most part in line with Kaplan’s conclusions, even before he left for Africa.

Sub-Saharan Africa’s relative failure was apparent at New York’s Kennedy Airport even before I left on my Air Afrique flight to the Ivory Coast. Adjacent to the Air Afrique departure gate were flights leaving for Seoul and Tokyo. When those were announced, all of the businessmen...headed for their planes. I was left alone with a throng of Africans bearing cheap luggage held together by rope, and a few missionaries and charity workers wearing wooden crosses.²⁵

However, the CIA projects an annual economic growth rate of over 5 percent, dependent upon the stability of the new government.

Kaplan’s economic observations are perhaps closer in style to Graham Greene and Joseph Conrad than to Alan Greenspan: literary, and not academic. And perhaps that is why Kaplan’s third pillar of his anarchy thesis – crumbling economies – is in fact itself crumbling. The data show, despite Kaplan’s pessimism (and the reality of conditions on the ground in much of the continent) that the economies of sub-Saharan Africa are growing faster than ever. According to the World Bank’s 2007 Global Economic Forecast, few sub-Saharan countries will reach millennium development goals set over a decade ago. In many countries, however, the shocks of the wars in the 1980s and 1990s are abating, and a kind of hard and bitter peace is setting in, allowing some economic growth to take place.

The World Bank’s summary of sub-Saharan Africa’s prospects is cautiously optimistic. GDP for all of sub-Saharan Africa increased 5.5 percent in 2005, 5.3 percent in 2006, and is expected to increase 5.4 percent in 2007 and 2008. GDP per capita increased 3.2 percent in 2005, 3.3 percent in 2006, and is expected to increase 3.3 percent in 2007 and 3.5 percent in 2008. These increases come after a long period of recession and stagnation during the often-violent 1990s, in which major economic contributors in West Africa like Nigeria, Liberia, and Ivory Coast experienced political turmoil that scared off investors.²⁶

The World Bank qualifies its estimates, however. According to a subset of data that accompanied the 2007 Global Economic Forecast, mismanagement in government could all but destroy sub-Saharan Africa’s recent gains. A recent exercise conducted by the Country Policy and Institutional Assessment Bureau of the World Bank reported that

on a scale of one to six, with six being the best, no sub-Saharan country scored higher than four in a measurement of bureaucratic competence. The highest-scoring country in sub-Saharan Africa was Cape Verde, scoring 3.9. Gabon was the only West African country that scored higher than three. Nigeria, the continent’s most populous nation, scored 2.8.²⁷ The World Bank explicitly realizes the fragility of economic progress in sub-Saharan Africa.

Thus when Kaplan writes “with little economic growth, sub-Saharan Africa’s exploding population is sustained by slash-and-burn agriculture and the creation of shantytowns,” he is off the mark. There is indeed economic growth in Africa, however unequal and fragile it may be. The real threat to Africa, then, is not lagging economic growth. Globalization has penetrated the very heart of darkness, if the World Bank’s statistics are accurate. It seems that, as Kaplan has exhaustively noted, Africa’s biggest problem is not whether or not it will grow, but whether or not it can control the social and political disorders that threaten its growth.

The third pillar of Kaplan’s anarchy thesis ultimately crumbles, but that has much to do with the time period in which he made the majority of his observations recounted here. His travels in sub-Saharan Africa took place in the mid 1990s, which, as the World Bank points out in its 2007 Global Economic Forecast, was a much more miserable period for many West Africans. From 1990-2001, GDP per capita averaged an increase of zero percent. Over those 11 years, the average African’s lot improved little. Only now are we beginning to witness globalization penetrate Africa in a serious way, after the most destructive political chaos of the 1990s abated. If Kaplan were traveling and writing about Africa today, he might see the economic prospects of sub-Saharan Africa as a slim beam of light shining through a foreboding storm cloud of disease and population growth.

Conclusion: A Sentimental Journey

Kaplan thought 10 years ago, and all indicators suggest he still thinks now, that disease, overpopulation, and economic distress are destroying third world countries and threatening the foundation on which the first world has built its prosperity. Comparing the relevant data concerning population increase to what Kaplan has implicitly and explicitly suggested in *The Ends of the Earth* demonstrates that his observations for his first pillar largely match up with what the UN Human Development Report has related 13 years later. Similarly, the data from the World Health Organization’s World Health Statistics 2007 report align with Kaplan’s 1994 observations on health in sub-Saharan Africa. However, the most recent economic statistics from the World Bank for sub-Saharan Africa suggest that, contrary to

Kaplan's observations fourteen years ago, there are good prospects for economic growth in parts of Africa, though these prospects are seriously threatened by disease and population growth.

Thus, Kaplan's observations were accurate, but also influenced by ideology. The literary style of his travelogue reflects this. Kaplan doesn't claim to represent hard-boiled analysis in his work, but his impartiality is at risk with statements like this:

I observed the rotting market stalls of blackened bile-green: rusted metal poles festooned with black plastic sheeting held down by rocks and old tires. In front of a mosque whose walls seemed almost to be melting in the rain, I spotted several women with bare breasts feeding their infants, and another woman urinating, oblivious of the crowd. Inadequate housing and the tropical heat had, perhaps, helped defeat attempts at decorum.²⁸

That is not the observation of a detached traveler. Kaplan is infusing literary prose into his own descriptions of Africa, which are anything but objective. He has been criticized on this front before, and rightly so. His brand of arm-chair history and the emotionally wrenching travelogue is often at odds with itself; purportedly objective, Kaplan claims to search for the truth, but in reporting the truth, readers are repeatedly subjected to metaphors, allegories, and poetics.

Perhaps that's why Kaplan's writing is so infuriating. It is not quite journalism, and it is definitely not scholarship. Kaplan cites colonial-era fiction writers as much as dry-eyed ambassadors, scholars and diplomats who have written on Africa in the past. Unable to be pigeonholed, Kaplan finds himself in a simultaneously uncomfortable and unique position of being the most readable current affairs writer today. The problem may be that many readers don't know how to interpret him, and more specifically, how to separate his more clairvoyant observations from less prophetic and more uninformed quips (for example, "The extraordinary profusion of carved masks in West Africa, which a visitor cannot help but notice, suggests the role of the forest in the regional psychology.").

But as Kaplan's observation of disease and population growth show, he can be a keen observer of human civilization, and his anarchy thesis is nuanced. He takes into account a number of conflating factors that are contributing to anarchic conditions in sub-Saharan Africa. The numerous agitating forces that affected Africa in 1994 during Kaplan's journey are still affecting Africa today. If ignored, they might indeed signal a coming anarchy.

Notes

1. 2007 data is available for some countries.
2. United Nations Development Programme, "United Nations Human Development Report 1994," <http://hdr.undp.org/en/reports/global/hdr1994> (accessed December 1, 2007).
3. United Nations Development Programme, "United Nations Human Development Report 2007," <http://hdr.undp.org/en/reports/global/hdr2007> (accessed December 1, 2007).
4. United Nations Development Programme, "United Nations Human Development Report 2007."
5. United Nations Development Programme, "United Nations Human Development Report 1994."
6. Kaplan, Robert D. *The Ends of the Earth: From Togo to Turkmenistan, from Iran to Cambodia, a Journey to the Frontiers of Anarchy* (New York: Vintage Books, 1997), 9.
7. Kaplan, *The Ends of the Earth*, 10.
8. United Nations Development Programme, "United Nations Human Development Report 2007."
9. Kaplan, *The Ends of the Earth*, 21.
10. United Nations Development Programme, "United Nations Human Development Report 2007."
11. Kaplan, *The Ends of the Earth*, 46.
12. *Ibid.*, 55.
13. United Nations Development Programme, "United Nations Human Development Report 2007."
14. Kaplan, *The Ends of the Earth*, 12.
15. United Nations Development Programme, "United Nations Human Development Report 2007."
16. Kaplan, *The Ends of the Earth*, 4.
17. *Ibid.*, 17.
18. World Health Organization, "World Health Statistics 2007," <http://www.who.int/whostat2007/en/index.html> (accessed November 28, 2007).
19. *Ibid.*
20. Kaplan, *The Ends of the Earth*, 63.
21. *Ibid.*, 53.
22. World Health Organization, "World Health Statistics 2007."
23. United States Department of State, "Background Note: Cote d'Ivoire," <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2846.html> (accessed November 28, 2007).
24. Central Intelligence Agency, "The CIA World Factbook 2007," <http://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/iv.html> (accessed November 28, 2007).
25. Kaplan, *The Ends of the Earth*, 13.
26. The World Bank, "Regional Economic Prospects 2007," <http://go.worldbank.org/6PT7IQPSP2> (accessed December 1, 2007).

27. The World Bank, "Regional Fact Sheet from the World Development Indicators 2007," <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/DATASTATISTICS/Resources/ssa.wdi.pdf> (accessed December 1, 2007).
28. Kaplan, *The Ends of the Earth*, 15.

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- World Health Organization, "World Health Statistics 2007," <http://www.who.int/whostat2007/en/index.html> (accessed November 28, 2007).