

Agricultural Policies And Rural Development, The Case Of South Western Nigeria, 1945-1960

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Abstract

Agriculture is fundamental to the growth and development of any Nation. In most developing economies, agriculture constitutes a major economic activity of the people either as producer, seller or marketer. Agriculture serves as the main foreign exchange earnings and major source of revenue for the government. It is against this background that this study investigates Agricultural policies and rural development in South Western Nigeria, 1945-1960. It examines the governmental Agricultural Policies adopted in the colonial period geared towards achieving increased agricultural production and the various strategies employed by the Regional government towards achieving the set goals. The paper went further to assess the extent to which the objectives were achieved, and what factors impeded the attainment of set goals. The paper adopts historical and descriptive method in analysing issues raised. The paper conclusively observed that the greater emphasis placed on the production of cash crops at the expense of food crops largely contributed to the food insecurity that is now prevalent in Nigeria. The paper made some recommendations on how Agricultural production could be improved upon and be made to contribute meaningfully to the growth and development of Nigerian economy.

Introduction

Colonial rule and the exploitation of the economic resources of the colonised territory are inextricably intertwinedⁱ. It is against this backdrop that this paper discusses the nature of colonial agriculture and the Nigerian economy from 1945 to 1960. With the outbreak of the Second World War, the imperial and the colonial government introduced new policies and intensified efforts at mobilising the Nigerian farmers for greater productivity of both food and export crops. New regulations and laws were introduced to ensure effective control of peasant farmers to meet up with the growing demand for export crops. The era therefore marked the beginning of a more direct intervention in the colonial economy. This paper argues that the drive to expand food and export production during the war marked a new phase in the process of agricultural change and the transformation of the rural economy.

However, this paper examines the trends in the development of agriculture in South western Nigeria most especially as it affects the production of such exportable crops as cocoa, coffee and rubber palm products, and cotton prior to 1945ⁱⁱ. This is because any analysis of agricultural development in Nigeria must essentially take into consideration the colonial system in order to understand how policies and practices during that period impacted upon subsequent agricultural policies in South western Nigeria in the post-independence period.

Land Policy

As an agrarian society, the primary occupation of the people of South Western Nigeria is farming in which land played a vital role, hence the need to examine the tenure system as it was being practised in the pre-colonial period. Land tenure system regulates the duration of ownership and utilisation of landⁱⁱⁱ. It is also the customary system by which people can own, use, and dispose of land in any given society. Perhaps, the most important feature of agriculture in the region during the pre-colonial period was the land tenure system. Land was however not scarce but the organisation of land for economic activities was regulated by by-laws and customs enforced by the communities or their leaders^{iv}. This law embodied those legal and contractual or customary arrangements whereby people engaged in farming gain access to productive opportunities on land.^v It constitutes the rules and procedures governing the rights, duties, liberties and exposure of individual and groups in the use and control over the basic resources of land and water^{vi}.

While the laws varied from one state to the other, they however had some common features. Firstly, land was jointly owned though it was being administered by the community leaders or rulers. At the head of each community was the Oba or chiefs-in-Council who held the community land in trust for every member.^{vii} Secondly, all descent groups in a community had right to land and such right remained inviolate except in cases of external conquest. Therefore, an individual possessed right to land for any legitimate economic activity only through membership of a descent group. Thirdly, a non-indigene of a particular community could also obtain land from a host community on certain conditions which included the payment of a token gift such as kola nut. The gift whether in cash or kind was never regarded as a payment for the land but rather as an acknowledgement of the fact that the stranger recognised the ownership of the host who gave him the land to use. Lastly, the descent group, the individual and the non-indigene were all forbidden from alienating the land.^{viii}

Land belongs to the community, the village or the family, but never to the individual. All the members of the community, village or family have an equal right to the land, but in most cases, the chief or the headman of the community or village or the head of the family acts as the trustee, and as such holds the land for the use of the community or the family and any member who requires any piece of land to cultivate or erect a structure goes to him for permission to use such land.^{ix} However, the land so given still remains the property of the community or the family. He cannot make any personal disposal of the land without consulting the elders of the community or the family; and their consent must, in all cases be granted before any portion of the land can be given to a stranger^x.

However, it should be noted, that the real unit of land holding is the family, and that the ascription of ownership of land to the community or village is only accurate if viewed as a social aggregate. For, even within the community or the village, actual occupation and control are decentralised, and the family rather than the community or village, in fact exercises acts of ownership. The main interest of the community or village is purely to maintain group solidarity both socially and politically.^{xi}

Native Authority Ordinance of 1945 provides that in addition to the subjects enumerated in the principal Ordinance, the various Native Authorities may make rules relating to the use and alienation of interests in land in their respective Districts.

However, the introduction of permanent crops changed some of the features of the land tenure system but the colonial administration made sure that farmers still held rights to land in much the same way as they did before the introduction of an exchange economy.^{xii} Changes brought about by the introduction of permanent crops were significant to agricultural production, as the re-allocation of land became modified. On the demise of the family heads, farms with permanent crops such as cocoa were passed on to the children of the deceased. Such land remained the property of that section of the family as long as it was effectively occupied by them.^{xiii} The

implication of this new development was that land which had hitherto been communally owned now changed as individuals do claim ownership of landed property. Therefore, the value of land now appreciated when compared to what was obtainable prior to the introduction of permanent crops.

This new system also had an impact on the traditional loan system in the region. In the 19th century, a man who intends to borrow money could “pawn” himself or one of his children to the creditor until the loan is repaid.^{xiv} As the cultivation of cocoa and other tree crops spread in Western Nigeria, farmers began to pawn their trees instead of themselves or their children^{xv}. The land so held by the holder however remained family land within the strict construction of native law and custom in so far as it could not be transferred to a “stranger” without the permission of the original family^{xvi}.

In an attempt to guard against any form of disruption in the traditional pattern of land tenure system which could have a negative effect on the agricultural economy, the colonial administration introduced a policy that favours the promotion of agricultural development through the agency of the indigenous people^{xvii}. The colonial Government was able to achieve this objective by making provision for laws and Ordinances through which the traditional cultivators in Southern Nigeria were protected against unlawful transfer of land holdings to foreign concession seekers. The Native Land Acquisition Proclamation of 1910 forbade any alien from acquiring “any interest or right over any land within the protectorate from a native except under an instrument which has received the approval in writing of the Governor.

In 1900, when the British colonial rule^{xviii} was formally established in western Nigeria, various steps were taken by the colonial government, to encourage export production. In addition to improving upon the production of palm oil which was already in place prior to colonialism, the peasant farmers in South - western Nigeria equally experimented with cocoa and coffee^{xix}. Agricultural expansion during this period was achieved by a combination of political and economic regulations and can be distinguished by different phases in policy and the responses of the peasant farmers in each period. Prior to 1900, the agricultural policy of the colonial government could be described as the “Botanical garden era”. This was because the colonial officials were more concerned with horticulture than with agriculture^{xx}. During the second phase, that is 1900-1921, there was the establishment of the department of agriculture in the Northern and Southern Provinces^{xxi}. During this period, the government began to encourage agricultural production. It was due to this encouragement that farmers were able to sell large quantities of agricultural products to the British trading companies. For instance, in 1903, Nigeria exported 54,257 tons of oil palm and 131,898 ton of palm kernels to Europe.^{xxii}

In 1914, when the protectorates of both Southern and Northern Nigeria were amalgamated, the ‘Modern’ agriculture was also entrenched. This period witnessed the introduction of those crops that were not indigenous to the entire West African region. These crops included cocoa, coffee, groundnut, rubber and other economic crops that were mainly meant to meet the raw material requirements of the industries in the Metropolis. In 1921, the department of agriculture in the Northern and Southern provinces were merged to form a single department of Agriculture. By 1929, the value and volume of export witnessed a tremendous increase over what was obtainable in 1921. The increase however represented an annual growth rate of 7% in value and 5% in volume, as well as 5% and 7% of the Gross Domestic Product^{xxiii}.

However, there were three main interests involved in the production and supply of cash crops. These were the Metropolitan interest which served as the main consumer of the export crops; the large trading companies which organised the collection and purchase and the export of the cash crops through their accredited agents; and the colonial State whose interest was to increase its revenue from taxation in order to meet the cost of administration and contribute to imperial investment fund. The colonial authority was motivated by the need to generate

revenue from within to meet British industrial raw material needs and expand the market for British manufacturers^{xxiv}. Throughout the colonial period therefore, the industrial interests, the trading companies, and the colonial State combined to regulate the quality and quantity of the agricultural cash crops through the establishment of pricing and marketing arrangements^{xxv}. Most of the encouragements given to farmers were however centred on the development of cash crops at the expense of food crops. O.T Faulkner, the Director of the department of Agriculture admitted this fact when he said “.....in reviewing the appearance of work on which the department has embarked, it may appear that it deals too largely with products which are or might be exported... but it must be remembered that it is much easier for us to help the farmer to take advantage of the changed conditions resulting from opening to him of the world’s market, than to teach him how to improve his method of growing his food”^{xxvi}

Faulkner’s view seems to suggest that an increase in the income of the farmer would guarantee general progress and facilitate economic development. However, these objectives could not be achieved without political and administrative mechanism to exercise effective control over local and foreign trade. In an address delivered by Hugh Clifford, the second colonial Governor of Nigeria, it was made emphatically clear that the task of administration would be to maintain the conditions upon which the success or failure of commercial enterprises depended^{xxvii}.

Although the immediate production of export crops remained in the hands of the peasant farmers, it was highly influenced by state policy. There were series of by-laws and agricultural regulations and ordinances, credit and extension schemes which tied the producers more closely to particular kinds of production^{xxviii}. The colonial authority created conditions that made it inevitable for the peasant farmers to produce for the market, especially when prices were high. The colonial government also implemented structural reforms and gave material assistance such as improved seedlings, extension services and loan facilities to farmers. The structural reform was more noticeable in their promoting the cultivation of a number of exportable crops to meet the raw material needs of the British government. One of the cash crops that would attract greater attention in this study however is cocoa. The reason for this is because of the central place it occupies in the revenue generation of the south western region during this period, and its socio economic implication it has on the life of the rural farmers.

The Origin of Colonial Agriculture

The origin of colonialism^{xxix} could be traced to the Berlin West African Conference of 1884-1885 which stipulated the principle of effective occupation as the necessary condition for exercising European authority over African territories. This resulted in the treaty called ‘The Berlin Act’. Under this Act, it was stipulated that “any European country which could produce evidence of her interest in any part of Africa would be accepted by others as the administering power in that region”^{xxx} The establishment of colonial authority was borne out of the need for cheap source of raw materials and the search for lucrative markets for European manufactured goods^{xxxi}. A critical look at the nature of the relationship that existed between the European colonialists and the colonised territories bring to fore some fundamental assumptions which seem to have acted as guideline for both the framers and the implementers of colonial economic policies. The colonies were expected to provide raw materials to feed the machines of the imperial power. Secondly, the colonies had to import manufactured goods from the metropolis. These two assumptions divided the Empire into two distinct economic camps, - the colonies and the metropolis^{xxxii}. The foundation of this lopsided relationship had been laid during the long period of the Atlantic slave trade which span over a period of almost four Centuries.

The end of Atlantic slave trade did not immediately put an end to slavery. Rather, domestic slavery increased as legitimate trade in agricultural exports requires several hands for higher productivity. Apart from the labour

required for the production of those agricultural products meant for legitimate commerce, a clandestine trade in slave still persisted along the coast of West Africa until the 1870s.^{xxxiii} As the production of those articles of legitimate commerce such as palm oil and palm kernel increased, so also did the illegal export of slaves from West Africa until the trade was finally abolished at the end of 19th Century.^{xxxiv}

Consequent upon the abolition of the Atlantic slave trade, there was the introduction of what was called legitimate trade. This has to do primarily with the production of such agricultural crops such as palm oil, palm kernel, to replace the inhuman trade. This step grew out of the need for oil palm and other agricultural products which were needed in Europe for soap and lubricants following the Industrial Revolution^{xxxv}. The trade in palm oil and kernel remained dominant throughout the 19th century. This new European demand for bulky agricultural products soon imposed novel requirement on the economy of the region. The tonnage of such export commodities did impose extraordinary demands on production, trade, storage and harbour facility.^{xxxvi} For the rest of the 19th Century, the major crops that were exported from Lagos were palm oil^{xxxvii}, palm kernels, and cotton, but in the 1890s, other agricultural products such as rubber appeared in the trade figures as shown in (Table 1:1) below

Table 1.1 Some Major Exports from Lagos in the 19th Century

Year	Palm oil	Palm Kernels	Cotton	Rubber
	Tons £/ton	Tons £/ton	Ibs. d/Ib	Ibs d./Ib
1856	3,884	-----	34,941 (6.3)	-----
1860	2,752	-----	1,735 (6.2)	-----
1865	3,800 22.3	2,630 8.1	433,912 (19.0)	
1870	5,841 34.8	15,894 13.5	1,508,961 (10.0)	
1875	6,009 24.7	26,455 10.8	----- (7.4)	
1880	4,988 26.7	29,632 11.7	----- (7.0)	
1885	8,859 24.6	30,805 --	278,850 5.6	534 6.4
1890	10,669 11.3	38,829 8.2	358,830 6.0	119 17.6
1895	12,754 16.1	46,501 6.9	19,851 3.8	5,069,577 13.1
1900	9,926 19.1	48,514 8.3	24,080 --	596,332 19.9

Source: Berry, Sarra, S Cocoa, Custom and Socio Economic Change in Rural Western Nigeria, op. cit. p.23

It was during the first two decades of the 20th century that regional specialisation in crop production emerged with cocoa and rubber almost replacing palm products and cotton in western Nigeria, and the region soon became a major world producer of cocoa^{xxxviii}.

Cocoa Export From Nigeria, 1900-1960 (Selected Years)

Year	‘ooo tons	£, 000
1900	202	9
1905	470	17
1910	2,932	101
1915	9,105	314
1920	17,155	1,238
1925	44,705	1484
1930	52,331	1,756
1935	88,143	1,584

1940	89,737	1,583
1945	77,004	2,150
1950	99,949	18,984
1955	88,413	26,187
1960	154,176	36,772

Source: Nigeria Trade Reports in Carl, K. Eicher and Lied Holm (Eds.), Growth and Development of the Nigerian Economy, Adapted from Adesina, p.34

Origin of the introduction of cocoa to Yoruba communities of Western Nigeria

Agriculture in South western Nigeria just like any other West African country had passed through several phases of development. These among others include independent approaches to several indigenous seed crops in the forest area after many centuries of trial and error.^{xxxix} Each community specialises in the production of particular food crop which could be made available to others at a price. Those food crops were consisted of mainly tubers like yams, cassava etc. The output was mainly foodstuff which also dominated the intra-regional economy.^{xl} The pre-colonial economy was thus a collection of communities engaged in agriculture primarily as an economic activity necessary for their subsistence, producing and processing food for their family needs and for the localised markets.^{xli} At the onset, the primary purpose of agricultural activities was purely subsistence, but as time went on, the needs and tasks broadened, the Nigerian farmers began to produce to meet the domestic needs of their immediate families and to reserve the surplus for exchange.^{xlii} The exchange was initially hampered by lack of the means of exchange- money. In an attempt to proffer solution to the problem of exchange, the people made recourse to the barter system.^{xliii}

Cocoa was one of the major export crops that were introduced to Western Nigeria from Europe in the late 19th century. Sara Berry noted that the earliest cocoa farms in the Region were established by Lagos merchants and traders who took up farming when their trading and commercial activities were no more yielding the desired dividends. Most of these cocoa farms were established near Agege and Otta in the present Ogun State. However, a few Ijeshas and Ondos planted farms near their trading communities in Southern Ondo. They combined farming with their trading activities and some of these farms were established at various points along the routes from Lagos to the interior, such as Aiyesan, Atijere, Ajebandele.^{xliv}

Available sources such as J.B Webster corroborated by Sara, S. Berry suggested that it was from these early farms established at Agege and Southern Egba land that the knowledge and required information about cocoa farming were disseminated to other parts of Western Nigeria. The agencies involved in the dissemination of the information about the knowledge of the new crop among others include the Merchants and the missionaries. As they travelled inwards carrying out their commercial and missionary activities, the traders and the clergy men equally disseminated information about the opportunities that abound in the cultivation of the newly introduced cocoa seed.

The missionaries were however highly instrumental to the introduction and promotion of cash crop production in Nigeria, and most especially in the defunct Western Region. One of the most enthusiastic advocates of this vision was Rev. Charles Philips. Perhaps, the major source that wielded the greatest influence on the missionaries in their encouragement of agriculture was the Buxton theory of “The Bible and the Plough”. Buxton stated that “Let Missionaries and school masters, the plough and the spade go together, and agriculture will flourish: the avenue to legitimate commerce will be opened, confidence between man and man will advance as natural effect and Christianity operate as the proximate cause of that happy change^{xlv}.” When Henry Venn assumed the position of the General Secretary of the Christian Missionary Society, He held the view that the

adoption of this doctrine by the Anglican Mission would usher in a new social and economic order which would produce educated elites that would render tremendous benefits to Africa in Church, commerce and politics. The Missionary enterprise under the leadership of Bishop Charles Philips introduced cocoa seedlings to the people of the area. Bishop Philips vigorously pursued Henry Venn's policy of economic self sufficiency^{xlvi}. He knew that if the missionary enterprise was to succeed, he must help to promote the improvement of the material well being of the congregation. No wonder in Jan. 1895, the Bishop admonished converts in Ondo and its environs to take up cocoa production^{xlvii}. In 1896, the Bishop himself, in an attempt to show leadership by example planted coffee on his personal farm. This was followed two years later by an initiative by the leadership of the church who voted to secure coffee and cocoa plantation for the church future support. Towards the end of the 1890s, the Bishop played a crucial role in the establishment of Ajebandele, a farm settlement located South of Ondo town. The settlement was a demonstration farm designed to experiment with cash crops such as coffee, cocoa, kolanut and to also serve as centre of trade^{xlviii}.

The missionaries were not the only source of information about the new crops introduced to farmers in the interior. Merchants and traders were equally very instrumental at enlightening the rural populace in the interior about the opportunities that abound in the cultivation of export crops such as cocoa, coffee, and cotton^{xlix}. For instance, some Merchants and traders who resided in Lagos, and who were interested in the development of their home communities in the interior took positive steps at encouraging their people to take up the production of cocoa, and other cash crops. Many traders and migrant labourers from the interior also came in contact with cocoa, coffee, and cotton around Lagos¹. Some of these men went home with the knowledge and did plant the new crops for themselves as a way of boosting their income. The activities of the migrant labourers who now engaged in cocoa farming served as an impetus to the other farmers than the advice earlier given by some clergymen who merely encouraged them to plant cocoa but who never grow cocoa by themselves.

What was the attitude of the people to this new initiative?

However, not every community began to engage in the cultivation of cocoa immediately they heard about it. Cocoa was known in most part of the Western Region before 1900, but the degree of acceptability of the new crop differs from one community to the other. Farmers in some communities adopted it much earlier than in others. Sara Berry pointed out that "Farmers began to experiment with cocoa in Ibadan and Egba around 1890; in Ilesha by 1896. In Ibadan, many new farming hamlets were established in uncultivated forest areas well suited to cocoa before 1900. Similarly, a visitor to Egband in 1901 found numerous cocoa farms between Asha and Ilogbo (near Otta) and also around Okenla on the railway. Ilesha developed a little later, but by the early 1920s, she was regarded as one of the main cocoa producing areas in Western Nigeria."ⁱⁱ It however took a fairly long time before farmers in Ondo, Ife, and Ekiti began to experiment with cocoa cultivation. In 1917, in one of the correspondence written by the District Officer, it was acknowledged that "The Ife people are entirely an agricultural people and possess a very rich country. Everything has been done to encourage their enthusiasm for cocoa growing which is fast becoming their most important industry"ⁱⁱⁱ

Colonial Intervention In Agriculture.

With the intervention of the colonial government, the agricultural sector in Western Nigeria occurred in response to changing political, social and economic conditions. A common interpretation of the change was that state intervention became the strongest factor in inducing agricultural development.^{liii} Although the colonial state did not adopt a radical transformation of the prevailing conditions of production, it began to employ a series of political and economic instruments to induce producers to expand their output of agricultural commodities. Those strategies employed by the colonial state included forced cultivation, imposition of taxation and expanded operations by European Merchant firms. Also, Marketing Boards with their controlled

commodity marketing orientation later became the major tools for harmonising agrarian economic pattern^{liv}. The colonial government in the bid to improve upon the efficiency of the farmer’s production and its capacity to meet market demands adopted various interventionist programs that would enhance increased production. These among others include: Nursery and seedling distribution; Agricultural Education; Cooperative farming society; Establishment of Provincial farm centres; and the provision of credit facilities. The colonial government, having realised the potentialities of agriculture to generating income earning, made frantic effort at inducing agricultural production. This was not only due to the importance of agriculture towards economic development of the colonial state, but the fact that the industrial sustainability of the Metropolis depended largely on the cash crop exported from the colony made it imperative on their part to embark on massive production drive. It should equally not be forgotten as mentioned earlier on that the colonial state was to be self financing, that is, the resources to finance the colonial state must be gotten from the dependant country made it necessary for the colonial administration to introduce various regulations and ordinances to achieve this objective.

Nursery and Seedling Distribution

One of the major ways by which the colonial government intervened in the Nigerian agricultural practices was the establishment of nursery centres from where seedlings were distributed to the farmers at subsidised rates. The colonial government made frantic efforts at developing the growth of agricultural products most especially those that were meant to be exported such as cocoa, coffee, oil palm, through the establishment of various nursery centres. The purpose of this was to raise crop seedling for distribution to farmers. In an attempt to meet the demand of farmers in this regard, various nursery centres saddled with the development of seedlings meant for distribution to farmers were established.

Table 2:2 Ilesha Central and Oyo N.A Nursery

Type of Plant	Ilesha Nursery	Oyo N.A
Oil Palm	5,001	-
Orange stock	4,244	6,000
Coconuts	1,975	1,188
Coffee	1,061	-
White Kola	429	290

NAI: Nurseries and Seedling Distribution, In File No 1222/2: Oyo/1/885 (1951)

The Nursery centres were designed to meet the immediate needs of the farmers within a particular locality. Whenever there was a short fall in supply, it was a common practice that the government resorts to Moor plantation at Ibadan to meet up with the short fall^{lv}. However, in view of greater challenges that arose in which the Moor Plantation Nursery were to meet the larger needs of the Western Regional Production Development Board on its partnership schemes and the rehabilitation programme of the swollen shoot disease mass infection area of cocoa by cocoa Division of the Agricultural department. The local nurseries were therefore advised to be self-supporting as they may not be able to get further support from the Moor Plantation as usual.

In an attempt to increase the productivity of the workers at the various nursery centres, various training programmes were organised in collaboration with the cocoa Division Nursery Centre at Ibadan^{lvi}. In 1922, the agricultural Department organised some training programmes to assist the native farmers.^{lvii} The Director of Agriculture, O.T, Faulkner, proposed to start two courses (a higher and a lower cadre) of agricultural education

at Ibadan in Western Nigeria. The course outline was to cover the following topics: new modes of production; mechanisation; soil management techniques; and general agricultural processing mechanism.

Perhaps more noticeable was the impact of agricultural schools in the training of personnel. The department of agriculture needed both office and field staff and they had to be trained for the task before them. Rural science as the study of agriculture was called in schools and colleges had to be taught by specialists who would themselves have been prepared in the schools of agriculture.^{lviii} As part of efforts geared towards human capital development in the area of agriculture, the Oyo farm school^{lix} was established at Ilora in Oyo division in 1942 as an Educational Department Project. Shortly after the imposition of colonial rule in Nigeria, the colonial government took steps to re-organise the country for the purposes of easy administration into regions, with provinces, divisions and districts as centres of political, economic, administrative and social activities. Oyo farm School was established by the colonial administration of Oyo Division in collaboration with the Oyo Native Authority in 1942. This step was taken as an attempt to curb the rural – urban drift of young primary school leavers in search of white collar jobs^{lx}. Another factor that informed the establishment of the Farm School was the attempt to modernise agriculture in the bid to make it more attractive to the rural dwellers especially the young school leavers who after their educational training in the villages were drifting to the urban centres. In January, 1942, out of the first twenty applicants that applied for admission into the Farm School, only twelve of them were admitted.^{lxi} The trend was repeated throughout the country. In the western Region, farmers were selected in 1936 for training in soil fertility maintenance in Ogbomosho area of Oyo Province^{lxii}.

Twelve scholarships^{lxiii} valued at £60 each were granted by government annually to the Oyo Native Administration and are used to provide subsistence allowance for the first three years. The course at Oyo farm school was designed to be completed in two years. The first year was to be devoted to practical livestock management and to work on training farms with the use of the plough, and the application of green manure. In the second year, the student manages a small farm of his own in a manner similar to that which he intends to follow on completion of his course of study. The progress of the school from the point of recruitment, training and final settlement as a professional farmer however varied. The statistics shown below reveals how difficult it was many a time to filling the vacancies provided. That was why it became imperative to fall back on the recruitment of illiterate applicants even when it was not part of the design by the policy makers.

The Following Table Summarises the Position

Class	Literate Applicants	Entered course	Number passed out	Number farming, 1948
1942	20	12	12	10
1943	18	12	6	4
1944	17	9	9	8
1945	13	12	11	9
1946	(7 illiterates) 12	(7 illiterates) 10	(7 illiterates) 10	(7 illiterates) 10
1947	(5 illiterates) 120	(5 illiterates) 12	(5 illiterates) -----	(5 illiterates) -----
1948	30	12	-----	-----
		Total	48	41

Annual Report, Sessional Paper, No 12,1949. p.33

The progress of the students which is the true index of the success or failure of the programme varied as might be expected, with the ability, character, and energy of the individual. The scheme was however considered

sufficiently advanced and promising to justify the decision to open a subsidiary training school at Ogbomosho financed from Colonial Development and Welfare Funds.

Loan Scheme

The Western Regional Government also provided financial assistance to indigenous entrepreneur mainly farmers and low level industrialists through the agency of the Nigeria Local Development Board. The NLDB was created in 1945 with its headquarters at Lagos. It was given a grant of £1,250,000 by the legislative council which was to be repaid within a period of five years at £250,000 per annum^{lxiv}. The NLDB however became known as the Western Region Development Board in 1949 following the division of the country into regions. The country was regionalised in order to enhance quick economic development. Prior to the establishment of this board however, farmers have relied mainly on their personal savings and loans from local money lenders with very high interest rates. Between 1951 & 1955, this funding was given in form of loans administered initially by the Western Region Development Loan Board and latter by its successor, the Western region Finance Corporation^{lxv}. Between 1955- 1960, the programme was broadened to enable the private enterprise benefit from the government financial assistance. Money was given out as loans to companies to mobilise savings for development and popularise various progressive and modern institutions in the Region.^{lxvi}

The western Regional Development Plan Sessional Paper No 4 of 1955 also directed the Region's Finance Corporation to grant financial assistance to private enterprises to boost the production of goods and services such as oil and automobile services, laundry and dry cleaning establishments, hair dressing saloons and repair workshops among other businesses^{lxvii}.

However, the number of beneficiaries of the western regional loan scheme was insignificant when one considers the magnitude of small holder farmers who applied for financial assistance from the regional government. Apart from the insufficiency of the amount of money made available as a revolving loan, the conditions to be fulfilled before the loans could be granted were equally very stringent for the farmers to meet. Part of the requirement was the supply of clear evidence of title to land or buildings as security for the loan,^{lxviii} which many of them did not have. By 1951, the Loan Board banned further application for loan on the basis of what it regarded as "abuse and misuse of its loans by the borrowers"^{lxix}. This step could be regarded as a clear admission of the Board's failure to effectively monitor the loans it issued to the farmers with a view to ensuring that it was used for the purpose for which it was given.

Infrastructural Development

However, the marketing and the subsequent export of the agricultural produce would not have been possible without transportation facilities, hence; we shall examine the efforts made by the British colonialists at developing transportation in Nigeria. The development of transportation system was contingent on two main factors. Firstly, the establishment of an effective administration was considered inconceivable in a large territory like Nigeria without adequate arrangement that would facilitate easy mobility in the territory. The second reason was based on economic consideration and the belief that for the vast interior of the country to be fully exploited, it was necessary to open it up through a network of roads, railways and inland waterways.

The British colonial administration therefore embarked on the construction of the railway system which began at Lagos in 1896 and reached Kano in 1911^{lxx}. Through the railway system, the easy transportation of agricultural products from the interior to the coast was greatly facilitated. It was however considered inadequate

and may not be able to function optimally without roads, hence the construction of roads through which farm produce were required to be conveyed from the interior that could not be reached by railway.^{lxxi}

The first motor able road in Nigeria was the one that linked Ibadan to Oyo was constructed in 1906. The road was linked to the railways by a railway operated transport service. This was followed by similar services from Oshogbo (the centre) to Ife, Ilesha, Ogbomoso, and from Ede to Iwo^{lxxii}

Conclusion

The administrative and economic success of colonialism in the agricultural sector came at a high price to the local agrarian economy. The relentless pursuit of cash crop expansion also led to the practice of permanent farming. Farmers had neither control over the price of their produce nor the power to influence the price of imported food stuff. The official policy, though not aimed at taking the peasants off the land, forced them to produce for export with negative consequences for the local agrarian environment.

Colonial agriculture was successful to a very large extent in the production of cash crops but at a very great price on the part of the rural agricultural producers. They were many a time induced to produce through coercive policies. They produced more to earn more money to meet their tax obligation. The desire to avoid penalties for the inability to meet up with their tax obligation made the farmer exert more than the usual amount of energy in the traditional economy to provide for his needs and those of his family. Farmers living in areas where cash crops did not thrive were forced to migrate to cash crop producing areas where they worked as labourers partly because of the need to pay tax^{lxxiii}.

Furthermore, the colonial agricultural policies also encouraged the production of cash crops at the expense of food crops which accounted for the food insecurity as we have it today in Nigeria. The colonial policy, rather than alleviating the suffering of the farmers, did upset the indigenous economy, and made no attempt at improving the agricultural techniques. The system according to Ake “created among other things a shortage in the supply of traditional crops, unsatisfied demand for new farming skills, shifts in population and the dependence of the economy on a few export crops.”^{lxxiv} The farmers were put at disadvantage and short changed as they did not receive commensurate price for their crops through the agency of Marketing Boards. The surplus was repatriated to Europe to develop the western economy.

The introduction of currency into the Nigerian economy inducted her into the main stream of international trade and tied her into the sterling currency area. Through this, the freedom of the people were restricted as they could not trade with all prospective buyers on first come first served basis.^{lxxv} The monetisation of the economy was designed not only to complement the British trade in the colony, but also to enable her manipulate the monetary system to her economic advantage.^{lxxvi} This was however to the disadvantage of the producers who bore the brunt of the economy.

The relentless pursuit of cash crop expansion also led to the practice of permanent farming, the reduction of fallow periods and the change in traditional management practices that ensured the regeneration of the fertility of the soil. This situation did not only lead to having less land for food crop production, it also implied that farming households became exposed to greater food insecurity.^{lxxvii} The intensive development of export economy led to neglect of food production consequently leading to over dependence on imported food items to feed the people.

Notes and References

ⁱ C.O., Komolafe, British Attempt to Develop Trade in Cotton and Palm kernel in Akoko, 1902-1933, In The Olosunta, Ikere Journal of Social studies, vol.1, No 1, 1987, p.1, Michael Crowder agrees that Britain's overriding interest at the beginning of 1900 in Nigeria were primarily economic, The story of Nigeria. Faber & Faber, London, 1962, p.206. Also in his West Africa Under Colonial Rule, (Hutchinson & co) London, 1968, Crowder dwells at length on the commercial exploitation of West Africa by Britain and France, See part V, chapter 1. Frederick Lugard, Nigeria's first Governor General in his Dual Mandate restated, in a more forceful term the goal of the colonial economy. See Izuakor, L.I., "Quest for Further Exploitation: British Colonial Occupation of Nigeria" in Abolade Adeniji "Tokensim" as Imperial Policy: An Assessment of British Aid to Nigeria, 1929-1939" in the Nigerian journal of Economic History, No 5&6, June, 2003. See also Falola, Toyin, (ed), Britain and Nigeria; British Colonial Occupation of Nigeria: Exploitation or Development, (London & New Jersey, Zed Books, Ltd. 1987.

ⁱⁱ The period between 1900 and 1945 could be described as a period of colonial Laissez Faire oriented development policy while the second phase, 1946-1956 was a period of active participation in agricultural production

ⁱⁱⁱ For the models of communal tenure, see for example John M. Cohen, "Land Tenure and Rural Development" in *Agricultural Development in Africa* ed. R.H. Bates, M.F. Lofchie (Prager: New York, 1980), 349-399; Cited in Chima J. Korih "The State and The Peasantry: Agricultural Policy, Agricultural Crisis and Sustainability in The Igbo Region of southeastern Nigeria, 1900-1995." PhD Thesis, University of Toronto, 2003.

^{iv} Toyin Falola, African Pre-colonial Domestic Economy in *An Introduction to The Economic History of Pre-colonial Africa*, p.7-10.

^v Olutayo Charles Adesina, p.3

^{vi} Dorner, p.p., Land Reform and Economic Development (Tennessee Kinsport Press, Inc.) 1972. p.17 cited in Fabiyi, Y.L., "Land Tenure Reform in Nigeria: Implications of The Land Use Decree For Agricultural Development," *Ife Journal of Agriculture*, vol. 1, (no.2) p.237, 1979

^{vii} Alao, J.A., "A review of Traditional Authority and its impact on the Acceptance of Agricultural Innovation in Western Nigeria" *Ife Journal of Agriculture*, Vol. 1, (no. 2), p.286, sept. 1979.

^{viii} *This is an out and out transfer by the grantor, having enough land to spare, to the grantee or grantees that usually enjoy perpetuity of tenure subject to good behaviour. The chief or the family head, as the case may be, will either go in person or delegate someone else on his behalf to go, with the intended grantee in sight of the parcel of land. The extent of the land will then be demarcated sometimes by placing a mound of earth at each of the four corners and sometimes by planting some trees in the same position as evidence of the boundary. Then kolas are split, and wine drunk in celebration of the occasion to which those present are expected to be witnesses in any future dispute, since the customary law is unwritten. The condition attached to gifts of land must depend on what has been agreed upon between the two parties and the relevant customary rules. See Akinola A. Agboola., p.24&25*

^{ix} Akinola A, Agboola, Land Tenure system in Western Nigeria, Unpublished, p.12.

^x Sara, S. Berry, p.91.

^{xi} Agboola, op.cit. p.14.

^{xii} Olutayo Charles Adesina, op.cit. p.23.

^{xiii} *Ibid* p.23

^{xiv} 27 Johnson Samuel, History of the Yorubas (Lagos, C.M.S. Bookshops Nigeria Ltd., 1921) pp.126-30. In Adesina, p.23.

- ^{xv} Lloyd, P.C., Yoruba Land Law (London, Oxford University Press, 1962) pp. 125-135). In Adesina, p.23.
- ^{xvi} Ibid, p.24
- ^{xvii} Buchanan, K.M. and J.C, Pugh., op.cit. p.100, In Adesina, p.24 .
- ^{xviii} “Colonialism was not merely a system of exploitation, but one whose essential purpose was to repatriate the profit to the so called ‘mother country’ as a way of exploiting the Africans to develop Europe” See Walter Rodney, “How Europe Underdeveloped Africa” Abuja, Panaf publishing Inc. p.177.
- ^{xix} *Nigeria First annual bulletin of Agricultural Department, (Lagos Government Printer, 1922).
- ^{xx} Chima, J, Korieh “The state and the Peasantry, p.120, see also Key, ed. *The political Economy of Colonialism in Ghana*, p.199 for the analysis of the different phases of colonial agricultural Policy.
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- ^{xxii} *Helleineer, Peasant Agriculture*, p.500 cited in the state and the Peasantry, p.120
- ^{xxiii} Chima, J. Korieh, “The State and The Peasantry...
- ^{xxiv} *Usoro, the Nigerian Oil Palm Industry*, p.122, cited in the State and the Peasantry, Chima J, Korieh p.121
- ^{xxv} *Chima J, Korieh ibid*, p.121.
- ^{xxvi} *Nigeria First Annual Bulletin of the agricultural department, July 1922, (Lagos: Government Printer) 11, In The State and The Peasantry, p.122*
- ^{xxvii} H, Clifford, Address to the Nigerian Council (Lagos, 1920), p.187 cited in the state and the Peasantry, p.122.
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- ^{xxxii} M.H.Y Kaniki, “The colonial Economy: The former British Zones. UNESCO. Vol.7 p. 282 .
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- ^{xxxiv} Ibid.p.176
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- ^{xxxviii} Eicher, K. Carl, “The Dynamics of Long Term Agricultural Development in Nigeria,” In Eicher, K.C., and Liedholm Carl (eds.) *Growth and Development of the Nigerian Economy* (Michigan, University Press,

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^{xxxix} Olutayo Charles Adesina, op.cit. p.1.

^{xl} G.K., *Heleiner Peasant Agriculture, Government and Economic Growth in Nigeria. (Homewood, Illionis) cited in G.S. Agaldo "A survey of The Impact of Colonial Agricultural Policies On Nigeria Agriculture" in Journal of Economic And Financial Issues, vol.2., No.1, Dec.2000.p.81*

^{xli} Ibid. p.82

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^{xlvi} Olutayo Charles Adesina, Agric 1,

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^{li} Sara Berry, P.44

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