



Amalgamation, Land/Mineral Ordinances and Socio-economic Developments in Nigeria since c. 1914 A.D: A Reflection

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INTRODUCTION

A history of land use in Nigeria shows that since 1900, when the British manipulated the law to take over the land and other resources of the people, it has continued till date. The included the Land Proclamation Act of 1900, the Land and Native Ordinance of 1916, the Land Acquisition Ordinance of 1917, the Public Land Acquisition Act of 1956, and the Land Tenure Law of 1962, amongst others. This eventually paved the way for the emergence of the Land Use Act of 1978. However, before the introduction of the Land Use Act, state ownership of land in Nigeria was practiced in the parts of the west, following the 1861 Treaty of Cession, which ceded the colony of Lagos to the British Crown, subject to the customary rights of the local people — thus vesting land in the colony before 1963 in the Queen. When Nigeria became a Republic in 1963, land was vested in the Federal Government. Years after independence, the country is yet to resolve some of the issues surrounding land ownership and usage, as it still applies the colonial law, leading to socio-economic crises in the land.¹

PRECOLONIAL LAND OWNERSHIP AND USAGE

Land in the traditional Nigerian society (as in most parts of Africa), remains the major means of production. Sociological analysis opined that the whole social structure of the society has been developed primarily around land. This is because it is one aspect of the web of social relations and the central force for knitting the family together and the wider community as one.² It is in line with this that Land up till the emergence of capitalism in the Nigerian soil, was not owned by individuals, but by the lineage. The concept of ownership was at the level of control and usage. This means that it was possible in this conception of ownership to appropriate the use of land without necessarily owning the land itself. This practice, though seems

1 Centre on Housing Rights and Evictions (COHRE, 2009) September 2009, p. 10.

2 P. A. TALBOT, *The People of Southern Nigeria: History, Ethnology and Language*, London 1926, p. 18.



general have been described in different ways among the various peoples inhabiting the territory.

In line with the above, it has been argued that land and its management belongs to all the people which may be held by individuals and or jointly (in southern Nigeria) by families or *gandu* (in northern Nigeria).³ In this way, the family head, normally the oldest man was regarded as the administrator of land since it was he who allocated plots of family land. Such allocations were considered to belong to the individuals so granted for a life time since allottees had complete control over land. This was the situation in southern Nigeria. In northern Nigeria, such land might revert to the *gandu* for redistribution to others. It must be noted, however, that during the pre-colonial period, it was most likely that there was no alienation of plots either by sale or mortgage. Of course, it should be noted that customary tenure did not forbid alienation of land. It did so by not providing for it since it was not needed as there was plenty of land and low population density. However, even if land was not directly saleable, it could be passed to others through a variety of ways, often with a profit. This is one of the often-overlooked aspects of corporate holdings during this period.

This position has been echoed by scholars who argued that in most parts of pre-colonial Nigeria (with specific reference to the Edo system) the king is considered “the owner” of all the land in the kingdom.⁴ Although this prerogative has mainly symbolic significance, the king could actually revoke rights to land in cases of insurrection or treason. The King in consultation with the elders plays a role in the allocation of building sites and the use of land and resources by strangers. The actual landholding unit is the village; its elders act as the custodians. Approval must be sought from the elders and chief for the right to use certain plots.

Similarly, Smith Abdullahi,⁵ in his analysis, gave a clear picture of land ownership and management in the northern part of Nigeria before the colonial invasion thus; “*There is some reason to believe that the period between the desiccation and the rise of the birane saw the development throughout Hausa land of small agricultural communities known as kauyuka or unguwoyi (sing. kauye, unguwa). These were nucleated hamlets organized for crop production and consisting of family groups whose farmland (gona, gandu) was contiguous and separated from that of other kauyuka by waste (daji). In these hamlets authority appears to have been of two kinds. Overall leadership (sarauta), vested in a ruler (sarki), seems to have been recognized only for specific purposes where communal discipline transcending the family group was required: mainly in the economic field. Thus a very ancient office was*

3 A. B. MAMMAN (Ed.), *Land Management in Nigeria*, p. 2, <http://www.onlinenigeria.com>, [cit. 2014-05-19].

4 O. I. ERANGA (Ed.), *Understanding Edo People’s Economic Concept and Industrialization: An Extract from Edo People and Culture: Encyclopedia of World Cultures*, <http://ihuanedo.ning.com/profiles/blogs/what-do-you-know-about-benin>, [cit. 12-06-2016]; O. I. ERANGA (Ed.), *Industrializing Edo State*, <http://ihuanedo.ning.com/profiles/blogs/industrialising-edo-state>, p. 3, [cit. 12-06-2016].

5 A. SMITH, *The Early States of the Central Sudan*, in: J. F. A. AJAYI — M. CROWDER (Eds.), *History of West Africa*, Vol. 1, London 1971, p. 50; A. SMITH, *The Early States of the Central Sudan*, in: G. KWANASHIE et al. (Ed.), *A Little New Little: Selected Historical Writings of Abdullahi Smith*, Vol. 1, Zaria 1987, p. 50.



that of the sarkin noma, the king of farming, whose business was to organize the agriculture of the hamlet, including the religious ritual relating to the seasons. In matters not connected with agriculture authority appears to have resided in individual family heads, for the kauye was basically a collection of patrilinear family groups, gidaje (sing. gida) recognizing no superior to the family head (maigida)".⁶

LAND/MINERAL ORDINANCES: THE COLONIAL CHANGING FORMULA FROM 1900

The imperialist land policy in Nigeria was based on Lugard's theory of conquest. The British sought a moral justification for claiming control over Nigeria by claiming that the traditional rulers had sold the land to them, while in the case of Northern Nigeria, they argued that the Fulani rulers had used conquest to lay claim to ownership over the land; hence this automatically meant the subjugation of the whole territory. It was thus based on this that attempts were made to claim the entire territory, including her land and minerals for the government through the proclamation of various ordinances. It was therefore not surprising that the colonial land/mineral policy underwent a series of modifications throughout the colonial period. Thus, on the first day of January 1900, Imperial Britain made her first attempt at forcefully claiming the land of the territory, when through Her representative Lugard, the Crown declared that all the land bought previously by Royal Niger Company now becomes the property of the queen.⁷ By this proclamation, it was made open that the alleged lands were claimed to be administered by the Governor of the "protectorate" on behalf of the Queen. This proclamation claimed for the British exclusive control only over the lands that were allegedly bought by the Royal Niger Company.⁸ This was just a cover up for other proclamations that were to come later, as revealed by historical works which opined thus: "*The British did not conquer the pre-colonial polities of Nigeria only to leave alone their land and minerals. They took full control over these, as the sovereign power, starting with the Niger Lands Transfer Act no.2 of 1902 and with Native Rights Act of 1916, whose section 3, provided that: All native lands and all rights of the same are hereby declared to be under the control and subject to the disposition of the Governor. This was enacted together with the Minerals Act of 1916, whose section 3, unequivocally provided that. The entire property and control of all minerals and mineral oils, under, or, upon any land in Nigeria, and all rivers, streams and water courses throughout Nigeria is and shall be vested in the Crown*".⁹

All these were thus gradually revealed stating from 1901, when Lugard ordered the registration of the so-called Niger Company lands and 62 of such lands were registered in the same year.¹⁰ The majority of the lands were not more than three miles

⁶ Ibidem.

⁷ R. A. ADELEYE, *Power and Diplomacy in Northern Nigeria: 1804-1906*, London 1971, pp. 311-344.

⁸ National Archive Kaduna (further only NAK), Southern Nigeria Province 15, 19, 1920.

⁹ A. ABBA — Y. USMAN, *Misrepresentation of Nigeria: Facts and Figures*, Zaria 2000, p. 33.

¹⁰ NAK, *Southern Nigeria Province 15, 19, 1920*; ADELEYE, pp. 311-344.



in width which shows that British control over the region was very limited. This infuriated the people and their chiefs, who argued that such lands were leased, and not sold to the Royal Niger Company. This was based on the customary laws of the people which acknowledge the fact that land belong to the people, recognizing only rights to use such land for both agricultural and building purpose; while the chiefs exercised ultimate control overland. It was at this point that further threat and intimidation was applied at all levels to ensure that the people and their rulers gave up their land and mineral resources, which was achieved due the brutal nature of the British conquest and punitive expeditions. Scholars acknowledging the use of threat, argued that the application of such means dates back to the 1900, when the first official British land policy state was made, during which Lugard warned the people that they must fulfil all treaties and their stipulations with the Royal Niger Company to the Queen. Lugard then threatened that any one that goes against such treaties and stipulations, the Queen will take it up with such group or persons.¹¹

Confirming the role of Lugard in forced acquisition, threat and recklessness involved in this acquisition, as well as the consequence of such Umejesi wrote: *“The established system of land acquisition and territorial expansion used by the Royal Niger Company provided the platform for colonial era land acquisition practices. In other words, colonial officials inherited from the RNC an already established system of land appropriation (treaties) and conquest of local communities. However, the major difference between pre-colonial and colonial systems of land expropriation from local communities hinged on the use of “state legitimacy” in the colonial era. While the RNC had used force or treaties, the colonial state used legislation — Acts and Proclamations of colonial officials (or force where necessary) to acquire communal lands and territories. This era marked the introduction of land use legislation and mining laws in Nigeria. It meant, for instance, that the Governor of Northern or Southern protectorates could proclaim state ownership over any territory or land without consulting local authorities. To demonstrate this, after taking over from RNC in 1900, the colonial government declared all the territories the company acquired in Northern Nigeria as Crown land.”*¹²

He continued thus: *“In the ensuing ‘Public Lands Acquisition of 1902’, the colonial state introduced formal titles for the local citizens. In other words, individuals had to obtain legal occupancy titles from the Governor of Northern Nigeria to validate their ownership. In the South, the colonial government did not acquire all the territories as it did in the North, except for Lagos and Benin which it declared ‘Crown territories’ in 1851 and 1896 respectively after their conquests. However, under the Native Lands Acquisition Proclamation of 1900, the state reserved the right to take over any territory or land the use of which it considered to be in the national interest. Other highlights of this period include the enactment of mineral ordinances such as the Mineral Oils Ordinance of 1914 which vested all minerals oils in the British Crown and gave British companies sole concession. The amendment in 1945 vested all oil minerals in the state to be held on behalf of the people of Nigeria. However, it was silent on the role of host communities where such minerals are found. This*

11 Ibidem.

12 I. UMEJESI, *Land Use, Compensational Justice and Energy Resource Extraction in Nigeria: A Socio-Historical Study of Petroleum and Coal Mining Communities*, PhD Thesis, University of Fort, Hare 2010, p. 14.



framework formed the basis for other laws related to land use and natural resource rights during the colonial era.”¹³

Subsequently series of other laws were made which extended British control to the whole region. In 1902, the crown lands proclamation No. 16 of 1902 was promulgated whereby the land was divided into three categories, Crown Lands, Public Lands and Native Land. Under the colonial arrangement, Crown lands were essentially the lands on which the British were able to exercise absolute control (especially owing to the fact that the right to dispose of such lands was vested in the Governor and his agents. Categorized under this included lands that were formally the “property” of the Royal Niger Company and lands that were allegedly granted to the British since 1st January, 1900 by “natives” as sites for residence; camps etc. Both “natives” and non-natives were required to pay rentage to the colonial government for the use of the “crown lands”.¹⁴

On the other hand, Public lands (also referred to as “waste lands”) were proclaimed by the Public Lands Proclamation No. 13 of 1902, to refer to lands usually reserved for agricultural use by the people (and as such not occupied by persons under customary or British laws). In this way, the colonial administration regarded fallow lands — which were essential for restoring soil fertility — as “abandoned or waste lands”.¹⁵ The Proclamation recognized the High Commissioner could lease or sell such lands, the proceeds of which were credited to colonial public revenue.¹⁶

Native lands were those that were administered by Native Chiefs according to their native laws. The native law ordinance gave certain power of control with prescribed limits over native lands. This is because the British had not yet established a colonial machinery which would take over complete control of native lands. These lands later came under the control of the British Native Authority. Native lands and the Governor had ultimate power to modify the laws to serve “public interest”.

The above were the series of promulgation and proclamation, which continued with the territory from 1900, preparing the ground for the long-term plan if the Amalgamation in 1914, such that by 1914, Nigeria was under the firm grip of the British imperialist represented by Lord Lugard. In his analysis, Gotan (2006), gave an analytical sequence of the events (especially as it relates to the capture of the area and the subsequent division into various categories of land) thus: “By 1914 Nigeria was fully in the control of British under Lord Lugard who was the head of the British Government in Nigeria. It is convenient to divide the experience of colonial rule [...] into two Phases. The first phase was the conquest and subjugation of traditional societies to the British rule. The area was divided into three parts namely the Government Reserve Area (GRA) occupied by the Europeans; the township occupied by Asians and other foreign nationals and the Native Town occupied by mostly the indigenous people (Hausa, Igbo

13 Ibidem.

14 A. MCPHEE, *The Economic Revolution in British West Africa*, London 1926, p. 30, C. K. MEEK, *Land Tenure and Land Administration in Nigeria and the Camerouns*, London 1957, p. 23; Y. B. USMAN, *The Formation of the Nigerian Economy and Polity*, in: A. MAHDI — K. GEORGE (Eds.), *Nigeria: The State of the Nation and the Way Forward*, Arewa 1994, p. 50.

15 National Archive Ibadan (further only NAI), Colonial Southern Office, 1901, p. 4.

16 MCPHEE, p. 30; MEEK, p. 23; USMAN, *The Formation...*, p. 50.



and Yoruba and other African who occupied the artisan and administrative positions). [...] This scenario created the settler/indigene perception of a people who could have been administrated as one entity. This was the beginning of the development of separate identities between the indigenes and nor indigene [...] who had a different and culture from the indigenous tribes.”¹⁷

On the direct impact of the Land Policy, the scholar continued thus: “Furthermore, the Mineral Ordinances of 1916 and 1945 whose provision de-emphasized the payment of any compensation for land taken for urban and mineral development further led to deprivation and further alienation of the indigenous population. Consequently, the best lands were developed as the property of either European and /or European miners or the new arrivals and gradually the indigenous population, was technically pushed into the hinterland. The new industries and their layout...destroyed not only farmlands of the indigenes, it forced them to mining camps to acquire money to enable them pay taxes, and introduced a new culture and social life on the people that almost destroyed their self-identify [...] many lost their farms and got absorbed into the city with its negative consequences. Sooner or later farmlands became scarce, and when Tin industry collapsed the people had to face the realities of life. This situation created intense competition for land, Jobs, business and appointments in the civil service to the extent that indigenes began to feel threatened by the stranger element. These were some of the sources of conflict that affected the area in the recent past.”¹⁸

The above position has also been shared by other scholars, who argued that although the colonial government had from the onset created the impression that the series of land and mineral proclamations and amalgamation were meant to ease the civilization mission, however, a critical analysis of the modus operandi portrays the contrary.¹⁹ Historian and Analyst opined that State-community conflict in Nigeria, but especially in the resource-producing communities, can be traced to the activities of the colonial land grabbers masquerading under the guise of spreading civilization and helping in the evolution of the Nigerian state.²⁰ Scholars have summarized the activities of the actors and factors thus: “The activities of British traders are central to the evolution, as they led to the gradual alienation of local communities from their indigenous land, a process that the colonial state inherited. In the colonial and postcolonial phases of the evolution, the local communities continued to lose their land to the state through a combination of formal legislation and force. This section expounds on the historical fact of the imposition of the rights of the modern state on local ecological resources. Of particular interest in this section is the land-related state-community conflict that has accompanied the juxtaposition of ‘state rights’ and ‘community rights’ on the same ecological space.”²¹

The import of the above in the economic life of the people was that a number of restrictions through proclamations were place to bar the indigenous people from

17 T. C. GOTAN, *Peace-Building Initiatives: A Case Study of Plateau State*, in: *Journal of Christian Religion and Education*, Vol. 4, No. 2, 2006, p. 23.

18 Ibidem.

19 Ibidem, pp. 23–33.

20 UMEJESI, p. 14.

21 Ibidem, p. 14.



direct participation and decision on land use and resources exploitation. For example the High Commissioner or Governor was the sole grantor of licenses for timber exploitation, while the District Commissioner or District Officer was made the sole grantor of licenses for rubber, oil palm and other minor forest produce exploitation.²² This law also enabled the colonial state to alienate the forest land and constitute them into forest Reserves and timber licensed area, without payment of compensation to the indigenous people (these forest reserves of timber licensed area covered about ninety percent of the land of most divisions by 1920). These were put at the disposal of the colonial companies and their collaborative African middle men through license payment.²³

It is in line with the above that it has been argued that the colonial administration's policy with respect to the exploitation of Nigeria's mineral resources had two main objectives.²⁴ The first objective of the colonial state according to scholars was to eliminate oil indigenous mining activities that had existed before the advent of the Europeans; as well as exclude foreign and domestic investors from the exploitation of coal resources. In this way, the colonial administration ensured that Nigerian mining industry would be developed not by Nigerians but by the state with the assistance of foreign capital when it became necessary. In a more graphic manner, it has been presented thus: *"On agriculture, the colonial state pursued the policy of preventing the growth of white-settler community in Nigeria and any investment of capital in Nigeria agriculture was absolutely forbidden. In fact, in 1911 and again in 1920, the Governor General of Nigeria emphatically rejected efforts by foreign interest to establish plantations in any part of the country. On land, the colonial state preserved the traditional form of land tenure, thus, inhibiting free movement of people. People who moved out in search of jobs now discovered that they could not own land in their new residence. Thus, contradictions erupted between the preservation of traditional land tenure policy and political control of the economy. This, in part, accounted for inter-ethnic and intra-ethnic tensions and conflicts that have plagued the Nigerian political scene ever since"*.²⁵

FROM AMALGAMATED COLONY TO LIBERATED NATION: LAND ACT AND LAND GRABBING AMONG NIGERIAN ELITES

At independence, the need to continue, this colonial way of forced acquisition led to the inserting of such into the Constitution as well as the various Decrees under the military rule. In the Constitution as operated under civilian administration, it is clearly spelt out that the resources belong to the state under the control of the government. In the case of military rule, available records show that with the creation of

22 NAI, Colonial Southern Office, 1901, p. 4.

23 NAI, British Protectorate, 1918, p. 16; S. K. ADEYOJU, *The Benin Timber Industry before 1939*, in: *Nigeria Geographical Journal*, Vol. 12, No. 1/2, 1962, p. 34.

24 A. OTOGHILE, *The Evolution of the Nigerian State: An Overview*, in: *Journal of Knowledge Review*, Vol. 24, No. 1, 2012, p. 23.

25 *Ibidem*.



Decree No. 6 published in the Federal Republic Official Gazette No. 14 Vol. 65, Government No. 272 of 29th March, 1978, Land Use and Allocation Committee was born under the leadership of General Olusegun Obasanjo (The Military Head of State at the time). Under this situation, Decree No. 6 vested the power to administer, manage and control State Land in the Military Governor of the State. Under the provisions of this decree, the Land Use and Allocation Committee, established in each state, was charged with the sole responsibility of advising the Military Governor on land administration and management matters.²⁶ Although scholars argued that some administration through the Land Use and Allocation Committee have judiciously used the resources for the betterment of the people, however, a large chunk of the administrators (both civilian and military) have applied it in defrauding the people.²⁷

It is therefore not strange that since Independence, the government and their private collaborators have under different guise continued to acquire land. They have often given the people the impression that the acquisition is for food, agro-fuel production as well as provision of jobs. Legally, the laws of the land permit the government to be custodians of land on behalf of the communities, but the people are often never consulted or considered when these lands are converted and contracted to investors. In this way, governments at the state or federal level had always spearheaded acquisition of land for foreign capital.

The first of such act was the demolition of the Isale Eko part of Lagos, by the government in the name of pre-independence celebration. This act which rendered a lot of people homeless, destroying their economic base and power was done to give the visiting Queen of England, a pleasing view of the Lagos area.²⁸ This was to be followed by series of other Anti-people land laws, aimed at grabbing land and mineral resources for the few elite using the seal of the state. In the case of post-colonial Nigeria, the Operation Feed the Nation Project opened the curtain for the land grabbing and compulsory land acquisition scheme (scam). Although the land resource was acquired with the Seal of the state for economic advancement, it is presently a property of an individual.

The above was not too different from the land seizure in 1978, from peasants of Bakalori (which was then in Talata Mafara Local Government area of Sokoto state), rose up to ask the government for the promised compensation for their land taken by the government to build the Bakalori Irrigation Project through the Sokoto Rima Basin Development Authority (SRRBDA), which the government claimed gulped N200 million. Although the Federal Military Government compulsorily acquired the land, it was in the course of wanting to claim the compensation; they the people incurred the wrath of the government. The operation which started at the early hours of April 26th, 1980, when the villagers were still on their beds, witnessed the invasion of armed anti-riot policemen of villages, sealing off and ransacked the

26 B. OGHIFO, *Nigeria: FG Accuses States of Land Grabbing*, <http://www.guardian.ng/news/imota-residents-accuse-lagos-officials-of-land-grabbing>, [cit. 20-04-2013], p. 30.

27 Ibidem.

28 T. AGBOLA — A. M. JINADU, *Forced Eviction and Forced Relocation in Nigeria: The Experience of Those Evicted from Maroko in 1990*, in: *Environment and Urbanization*, Vol. 9, No. 2, 1997, p. 19.



whole area, while at the same time opening fire indiscriminately killing as many of the villagers, including children. At the end, hundreds of displaced peasant families were massacred by mobile police squads on Saturday, 26th April 1980, for daring to complain of inadequate and even lack of compensation for the land and properties they lost.²⁹ This military action continued throughout April 26th and lasted till April 27th leading to the death of a total of over 1,000 peasants lost their lives.³⁰ Although the land was acquired for national agricultural project, however at the end of the operation, the land allocated for the project went to the project officials and rich absentee farmers, with the bulk of the land worked by the project itself, in form of inefficient estate farming.³¹

This was to replay itself again in 1990, when the Lagos State government evicted the over 300,000 residents of Maroko, recorded as one of the largest forced evictions in Nigerian history.³² The excuse was that the location was unsafe for habitation and therefore needed to be taken over by the state; however at the land was shared among the rich and mighty in the society and estates developed in the area (while some parts of the land were sold, about 200 plots were given to Oniru family members).³³ Contrary to what it used to be, the estate is a fully residential area and well planned. The land and buildings presently are far beyond the reach of the common man. A plot of land of about 1,500 square meters costs about 180 million naira (approximately US\$1,139,240.5). Available evidence indicates that there are three categories of houses in the area. This includes the Terrace houses, fully detached houses and semi-detached houses. A three bedroom-flat goes for N8 – 9 million (US\$50,632.9 – US\$56,962.0) per annum excluding the service charges of N1.5million (US\$9,493.7). This is far beyond the reach of the original occupants. Within the estate, there is another mini estate where a room cost about N800,000 (US\$5,063.3) per annum compared to between N120 (US\$0.8) and N480 (US\$0.9) i.e. less than one dollar per annum.³⁴ The table below represents selected cases, under which the colonial land/mineral policies have continually been perpetuated in Nigeria even after independence.

29 USMAN, *Political Repression...*, p. 33; A. ABBA et al., *The Nigerian Economic Crisis: Causes and Solution*, Zaria 1985, pp. 55–70.

30 B. BECKMAN, *Bakalori: Peasants vs State and Capital*, in: Nigerian Journal of Political Science, Vol. 4, No. 1 & 2, 1985, p. 40; A. F. ESETANG, *The Politics of the Poor in Nigeria and Ghana, 1900–1986*, Mimeo 1986, p. 43.

31 OKELLE OCULI, *The Political Economy of the Planning of the Bakalori Irrigation Project: 1974–1980*, in: USMAN, *Political Repression...*, p. 49.

32 SERAC files *Maroko Communication before the African Commission* (Press Statement) December 19, 2008, p. 4.

33 OPUTA PANEL, *Report on Nigeria and Biafra Atrocities*, Abuja 2005, pp. 4–10.

34 C. R. NWANNA, *Gentrification in Lagos State: Challenges and Prospects*, in: British Journal of Arts and Social Sciences, Vol. 5, No. 2, 2012, p. 14.

TABLE I: Selected Cases of Land Confiscation and Forced Eviction in Nigeria (1973–1995)³⁵

| s/no | Location | Date | No of persons evicted | Motive | Agent for the eviction exercise | Administration | Compensation or offer of an alternative site |
|------|---------------------------------|------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------|--|
| 1 | Idioro, Agege Motor road, Lagos | Aug. 1973 | 500 | Road Construction | Federal govt. | Military | N.A |
| 2 | Metropolitan Kano | May 1979 | N.A | Urban development | State govt. | Military | N.A |
| 3 | Laramo Village | Dec. 1979 | N.A | Road Construction | Federal govt. | | No compensation |
| 4 | Adeniji Adele, Lagos | Oct. 1975 | 5,000 | Urban renovation | State govt | Military | No compensation |
| 5 | Iponri, Lagos | Dec. 1975 | 5,000 | Urban development | LSDPC, Lagos state | Military | No alternative site |
| 6 | Oba Akran, Ikeja, Lagos | April 1976 | N.A | Road construction; illegal occupation | State govt | Military | No compensation |
| 7 | Calabar | 1976 | 500 | Urban renovation | State govt | Military | N.A |
| 8 | Elekuro, Ibadan | Aug. 1976 | 10,000 | Encroachment on school land | State govt | Military | N.A |
| 9 | Central Lagos | Sept. 1976 | 10,000 | Urban renovation | Federal govt | Military | Resettled |
| 10 | Ketu, Lagos | 1976 | 10,000 | City clean up | State govt | Military | Not resettled |
| 11 | Apongbon, Lagos | Nov. 1976 | N.A | Road construction | State govt | Military | Not resettled |
| 12 | Alaba Market, Lagos | Aug. 1977 | 20,000 | Illegal occupation | State govt | Military | No compensation |
| 13 | Bakalori | 1978 | 1,000 | Agricultural Project | State/ Federal | Military | No Compensation |
| 14 | Isiala Ngwa, LGA, Imo | Nov. 1978 | 7,000 | Illegal occupation | State govt | Military | N.A |
| 15 | Aba road, Port Harcourt | Nov. 1978 | 60,000 | Road construction | State govt | Military | N.A |
| 16 | Shasha Village, Lagos | June 1979 | 5,000 | Illegal occupation | N.A | Military | N.A |
| 17 | Onilekere, Lagos | June 1979 | N.A | Land dispute | Owners/ authorities | Military | No resettlement |
| 18 | Port Harcourt | Aug. 1979 | N.A | Illegal occupation | State govt | Military | No compensation |
| 19 | Oworonshoki, Lagos | April 1980 | 10,000 | Urban development | State govt | Civilian | N.A |

³⁵ AGBOLA — JINADU, p. 19; K. O. DIMUNA — M. E. O. OMATSOME, *Regeneration in the Nigerian Urban Built Environment*, in: *Journal of Human and Ecology*, Vol. 29, No. 2, 2010, p. 14; L. FARHA — K. THOMPSON, *Violence: The Impact of Forced Evictions on Women*, India 2000, p. 13.



| s/no | Location | Date | No of persons evicted | Motive | Agent for the eviction exercise | Administration | Compensation or offer of an alternative site |
|------|---------------------------------|------------|-----------------------------------|---|--------------------------------------|----------------|--|
| 20 | Shomolu | Jan. 1981 | N.A | Channelization programme | State govt | Civilian | N.A |
| 21 | Maroko, Lagos | 1982 | N.A | Road construction | State govt | Civilian | N.A |
| 22 | Suleja, Niger State | Aug. 1982 | 5,000 | N.A | Local govt council | Civilian | N.A |
| 23 | Maroko, Lagos | Oct. 1983 | 60,000 | Set back for lagoon | State govt | Civilian | No compensation |
| 24 | Agboju/ Amuwo Osofin, Lagos | Dec. 1984 | N.A | Illegal occupation | State govt | Military | N.A |
| 25 | Ebute Meta/ Lagos Island, Lagos | July 1985 | 10,000 | Illegal occupation | State govt | Military | No compensation |
| 26 | Along Badagary Express, Lagos | Aug. 1985 | N.A | Illegal occupation; structure under NEPA high tension cable | State govt | Military | No resettlement |
| 27 | Iponri, Lagos | Sept. 1985 | 5,000 | Urban renewal | State govt | Military | Only 1000 resettled |
| 28 | Shomolu, Lagos | March 1986 | 10,000 | Urban beautification | State govt | Military | N.A |
| 29 | Igbo Erin, Lagos | Aug. 1986 | N.A | Illegal occupation | State govt | Military | N.A |
| 30 | Oworonshoki, Lagos | Feb. 1988 | 3,000 | Bridge construction | Federal govt | Military | No compensation |
| 31 | Maroko, Lagos | July 1990 | 300,000 | Illegal occupation | State/ Federal govt | Military | No compensation |
| 32 | Maitama village FCT | Aug. 1990 | 3,000 | FCT Development | FCDA | Military | Resettled, 1,000 naira only |
| 33 | Central, Lagos | Nov. 1990 | N.A | Urban sanitation | State govt | Military | No compensation |
| 34 | Mushin, Lagos | March 1991 | N.A | Illegal occupation | State govt | Military | No compensation |
| 35 | Lugbe (Garki), Abuja | May 1993 | 30,000 | FCT Development | FCDA | Military | Resettled |
| 36 | Aboru village, Lagos | May 1994 | N.A | N.A | Federal govt | Military | N.A |
| 37 | Bamisoro, Lagos | Feb. 1995 | NA | Illegal occupation | State govt | Military | No compensation |
| 38 | Ndoki, Rivers State | 1988 | 77 landlords and 1,500 households | urbanization | Rivers state Land and Housing Bureau | Military | No compensation |

| s/no | Location | Date | No of persons evicted | Motive | Agent for the eviction exercise | Administration | Compensation or offer of an alternative site |
|------|----------------------------------|------|-----------------------------------|--------------------|---------------------------------|----------------|--|
| 39 | Aggrey water front, Rivers state | 1991 | 80 landlords and 1,213 households | urbanization | State govt | Military | No compensation |
| 40 | Aja, Lagos | 1995 | N.A | urbanization | Lagos state govt | Military | N.A |
| 41 | Rainbow town R/S | 2000 | N.A | Illegal occupation | Rivers state govt | Civillian | No Compensation |

N.A = Figure not available

Although the government and her agents often claim that most of these areas are illegally occupied, however it has been established that it only become so, once they are bent on taking over the land. For instance, prior to the forced eviction, Rainbow Town (Rainbow Town was so named because it was one of the most beautiful areas in the nation. Rainbow Town was acquired in 1964 by the then Eastern Government of Nigeria through the region's Housing Corporation. The land was officially set aside for the construction of low-cost houses), residents were recognized by the State government as legal occupants and paid several categories of taxes, including: Development Tax levied monthly at 100 naira (US \$1) per person, monthly sanitation fees of 20 naira (US\$0.20) per room, health fees, and utilities. Rainbow Town contained numerous privately operated nursery and primary schools, several health clinics, religious and cultural centres and thousands of residential and commercial buildings constructed from zinc, wood, brick and/or concrete building materials.³⁶

From the table, it is clear that most of these exercises were accomplished by a vast array of bulldozers, and trucks ably supported by fully armed security personnel ostensibly mobilized to suppress any resistance to the demolition, leading to deaths of innocent persons. Scholars argued that these evictions induced by sovereign governments against their citizens rather than those induced by natural factors or disasters (for instance fires, floods and earthquakes) or wars or colonization or voluntary movement or population transfers, could be best described as an “officially sanctioned act which has many harmful consequences for the affected persons or group” and it is usually violent and socially, economically or racially discriminatory in nature.³⁷

NIGERIA UNDER DEMOCRATIC DISPENSATION

Even with the return of democratic rule, forced evictions by government agents are rife throughout Nigeria, often carried out with brutality. Thousands fear for their homes on a daily basis in Nigeria. Hundreds of thousands of families are affected

³⁶ FARHA — THOMPSON, p. 13.

³⁷ AGBOLA — JINADU, p. 19.



by such evictions every year. Families forcibly evicted from their homes are rarely, if ever, provided compensation or alternative housing. Research traced the fundamental roots of this as inheritance of colonialism, hence, Ake Claude opined thus: *The most important is the character of the post-colonial state in Africa [...] the post-colonial state in Africa like its predecessor; its power over economy and society are enormous, arbitrary and it is largely privatized. For all but a few of its citizens, it is alien and remote, uncaring and oppressive. They encounter it as ruthless tax collectors, boorish policemen and bullying soldiers, corrupt judges cynically operating a system of injustice, a maze of regulations through which they have to beg, bribe or cheat their way everyday. Accordingly, many of them have turned away from the state and given their loyalty to sub-national social formations, the community, sub-national or ethnic group. The appeal of such social formations is not, as is sometimes imagined, owing to regressive consciousness, but vigorous rationality bent on maximizing utilities.*³⁸

This was the case between 2003 and 2007 in which more than 800,000 residents were forcibly evicted from informal settlements in Nigeria's capital, Abuja, between 2003 and 2007 as government authorities implemented the "Abuja Master Plan" of urban development. Most of these lands are at the end of the day converted to private estates. For example, in 2012, a former Minister of the FCT, was accused of illegally allocating land belonging to PHCN (Plot 1,201, Asokoro) and that belonging to NIPOST (Plot 3,352 located in Maitama) as well as 10 other plots of land in Asokoro District in various sizes to family members. This was between 2003 and 2007.

Similar evictions are taking place in Nigeria's (and Africa's) largest city, Lagos, as the government implements a "beautification project". Millions are at risk of forced eviction, with nowhere to go. Thousands of residents of Port Harcourt also face mass forced eviction, as authorities attempt to clear the city's waterfront property for leisure and other developments.³⁹ This was to repeat itself in 2004, through the signing of Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for the establishment of commercial farms. In this deal, the Kwara state government acquired land for the White Zimbabwean farmers under the umbrella of White Commercial Farmers Unions of South Africa and Zimbabwe. The result was that the government initially allocated about 200,000 hectares of choice agricultural land of the local farmers close to the River Niger to the white Zimbabwean commercial farmers, (which was more than double of the land the Zimbabwean farmers had asked for.⁴⁰ The impact was the displacement of some 400 families and 1289 local farmers in 28 communities, evicted from their ancestral lands and farms.⁴¹ In this way, the appropriation of such large expanse of land restricted the area available for rotational bush fallowing; thus limiting the local farming system that depended less on chemical fertilizers. It also reduced land available to settled pastoralists as well as nomads to graze their livestock.

38 C. AKE, *The State in Contemporary Africa*, in: O. NNOLI (Ed.), *Government and Politics in Africa: A Reader*, Harare 2000, p. 40.

39 FARHA — THOMPSON, p. 13.

40 S. HOFSTTER, *Zimbabwean Farmers get 200,000 Land Hectares in Kwara State*, Lagos 2004, p. 30.

41 S. HOFSTTER — A. R. MUSTAPHA, *Zimbabwean Farmers and Nigerian Agriculture*, 2010, <http://www.independentngonline.com>, p. 15, [cit. 2012-07-12].



According to Ariyo and Mortimore,⁴² the government bore a lot of the burden of the white farmers in order to achieve this, such as providing the Zimbabwean farmers interest free loan, estimated to be in the region of \$3 million USD in 2005 to take off. As a way of trying to cover up the scam involved and creating the impression of a serious venture, the Zimbabwean farmers formed a consortium now known as “New Nigerian Farms” in partnership with the State Government and took a US\$5 million loan from the Federal Government owned Agricultural, Cooperative and Rural Development Bank in 2006.⁴³ The loan was backed by an Irrevocable Standing Payment Order (ISPO) of the Federal Ministry of Finance authorizing deduction from the Kwara state government’s statutory allocation in the event of default. As a way of ensuring that the “New Nigerian Farms” commercial farmers had steady access to credit, the Kwara state government through a consortium of five commercial banks guaranteed to invest US\$6.6 million as equity in the farming enterprises and another credit advance of US\$6.6 million to the farmers.⁴⁴ The above situation has also replayed itself in the Nigerian government and the Ollam International, an Asian agribusiness deal. In this case, under the guise of ensuring maximum food production, the government and her allies acquired 6,000 hectares’ farmland in Nasarawa, with the expectation of producing 36,000 tons of milled rice annually, which will be sold across Nigeria.⁴⁵ To this end a sum total of US\$49.2 million was invested in its first rice farming and milling facility.

In 2010, under the guise of ensuring food security for the Gulf countries reliant on food import, the federal government entered into agreement with the Gulf countries to invest in farmland. Under this arrangement, they (Gulf investors) were to utilize the supposed remnant of the over 71.2 million hectares of farmland (50% estimated to be under use by Nigerian farmers) for agriculture. The surprising aspect of this agreement was that at the end of the day they would export 100% of production to the home countries.⁴⁶ Similarly, 31,000 hectares of land was acquired in Odogwu, Ibaji of Kogi State of Nigeria for the construction of an ultra-modern sugar factory. The Government acquired the land from the Ibaji area without payment for the land or compensation. The people were assured that the mill will generate over 400 job opportunities for their children and will open up the area to further development. The sugar factory worth US\$510 million is a partnership deal between the NNPC, Kogi State Government and International Trans Oil Corporation of USA, expected to produce about 87 million litres of ethanol for agro-fuels annually.⁴⁷

42 J. A. ARIYO — M. MORTIMORE, *Land Deals and Commercial Agriculture in Nigeria: The New Nigerian Farms in Shonga District, Kwara State*, in: Paper presented at the International Conference on Global Land Grabbing organized by the Land Deals Politics Initiative in collaboration with the Journal of Peasant Studies and hosted by the Future Agricultures Consortium at the Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex, 2011, p. 59.

43 A. ODOEMENE, *White Zimbabwe Farmers in Nigeria: Issues in “New Nigerian” Land Deals and the Implication for Food and Human Security*, in: *African Identities*, Vol. 10, No.1, 2012, pp. 63–76.

44 ARIYO — MORTIMORE, p. 59.

45 <http://www.businesstimes.com.sg/>, [cit. 2011-07-15].

46 http://www.reuters.com, [cit. 2010-12-12].

47 A. ARUWA, *Kogi State Governor Launches Bio-fuels Refinery in Itoke*, in: *Graphic Newspaper*, 2011, p. 14.



Similarly, a United States firm, Dominion Farms, through the government acquired 30,000 hectares of swampy land in Gassol Local Government of Taraba State for commercial rice farming. The land, which belongs to the Federal Government, was a property of the Upper Benue River Basins Development Authority (UBRBDA), an agricultural scheme established by former President Olusegun Obasanjo when he was a military Head of State. The firm has invested an initial US\$40 million for the production of rice, but did not pay for the land. The farm site covers 30,000 hectares of Gassol swamps in Gassol Local Government Area of Taraba state, adjacent to Taraba River for full irrigation and is capable of producing 2.4 crop cycles per year. According to the government, the farm when completed will require up to 15,000 well trained men and women working daily with 90% of the land available for contract farmers, and the remainder utilized as a corporate farm and for educational training purposes by the lead investor. Although the number of years under consideration was not revealed, the briefing stated that 300,000 tonnes of rice will be produced annually for the Nigerian marketplace, which currently imports approximately 2,000,000 tonnes of rice annually, thereby offsetting 15 per cent of imports. However, a year later, the State government's assurance for immediate construction of training centre, grain storage silos, rice parboiling plant, rice milling plant, rice storage warehouse, offices, maintenance workshops, aircraft hangar and runway, weigh bridge, housing compound, and a power plant is yet to fully commence and 3,000 titled farmers yet to receive any form of compensation for improvements on land.⁴⁸

In all these the indigenous cultivators with customary land tenure were coerced into surrendering their customary holdings for agro-fuels production without compensation. This was with the understanding that agro project will bring development to them; hence there were no serious oppositions to the land deals. However, with the seizure of their lands by trick and lack of the promised jobs and developments, the peasant farmers no longer have hectares of suitable land, which they can use for mixed-farming as some of their lands have been converted to agro project. The dispossession of vulnerable farmers' hectares of cultivable land with the explanation that its conversion to agro represents development for them is a remarkable construction to justify the process of expropriation.⁴⁹

Generally, as with the nature of the above exercises, excessive violence characterized the evictions and a significant number of the evictees suffered various degrees of injuries including temporary and permanent disabilities, while some persons die when they are crushed to death by falling walls. On the other hand, the overzealous security operatives characteristically exhibited elemental bestiality, capitalizing on the haplessness of the people to dehumanize them; harassing, maiming, beating, raping and looting in the process, while victims helplessly

⁴⁸ <http://blog.policynig.com>, [cit. 2015-06-12].

⁴⁹ N. E. ATTAH, *Land Grabbing in Nigeria and Responses: Protest or Acquiescence?*, Paper for Panel 130: "Possession by Dispossession: Interrogating Land Grabbing and Protest in Africa" presented at the 5th European Conference on African Studies on African Dynamics in a Multipolar World organized by the Centro de Estudos Africanos — Instituto Universitário de Lisboa (Center of African Studies of the University Institute of Lisbon) on behalf of, the Africa-Europe Group for Interdisciplinary Studies (AEGIS), 27th — 29th June, 2013, pp. 14–18.

watched properties they acquired with totality of their life savings and earnings perish in one fell swoop.

As it is today, the land/Mineral Policy of the colonial government have been fine tune to suit the present reality, in which the name of the government so much so that a lot have been rendered homeless and economically impotent. It is this situation that an Analyst wrote: *The Federal Government has large parches of land scattered across the country and, they are so many even their land officials can hardly track them. The Federal Government acquired vast parcels of land in the states for use in its National Housing Programme. Unfortunately, the government could not execute the programme and, for years, the land remained fallow. People (those in government) are making so much money from land transactions that they have difficulty letting go of any opportunity to acquire any piece of land that appears unattended to [...] some states government have made serious moves to grab the land earlier given to the federal government.*⁵⁰

On the use of state power to state land and threat to deal ruthlessly with those who dare to question their authority just like the colonial power, Governor Fashola accused the political class and their military allies of forcefully acquiring lands that are not allocated to them, after which they station officers there as well as military flags.⁵¹ This is presently evident in the acquisition of part of a land that was meant for (Air force, Navy and Army) barracks in the Abuja by top military brass to build private houses and businesses.⁵²

In the case of oil and other mineral resources, it has been argued that just like the issue of land, it traceable to the Colonial Ordinances immediately after the Second World War on “land”; and on “minerals”, which made all minerals the Crown property.⁵³ Section 1 of the Minerals Ordinance of 1945 provides as that the entire property and control of all minerals and mineral oil, in, under, or upon any land in Nigeria, and of all rivers, streams, and water courses throughout Nigeria, is and shall be vested in the Crown. The scholar argued that it was with this in mind that while oil was yet to be found in Nigeria, the British Colonial Government in 1938 gave the Shell D’Arcy, the forerunner of the modern Shell of Nigeria the concession covering the total territory of Nigeria to explore. It should be noted that this was before the beginning of the Second World War. This means that Shell had always been part of the British colonial order in Nigeria. However, Shell D’Arcy was later joined by other international companies, namely, Mobil (1955), Texaco (1961), Gulf oil (1961) later Chevron, Elf (1962), Nigerian Agip Oil Company (1962) and Philip Oil (1965).⁵⁴

50 B. OGHIFO, *Nigeria: FG Accuses States of Land Grabbing*, in: THISDAY, April 20, 2013, p. 14.

51 M. OLOWOOPEJO, *Fashola Accuse Military Personnel of Land Grabbing*, <http://www.vanguardngr.com/2014/03/fashola-accuses-military-personnel-land-grabbing/#sthash.S3Cw2rGq.dpuf>, 2014, p. 17, [cit. 2014-03-13].

52 B. ATONKO — R. MUTUM, *Army Shares out Barracks Land to Generals, Others*, <http://www.dailytrust.com.ng>, 2015, pp. 1-2, [cit. 2015-12-12].

53 O. OMORUYI, *The Politics of Oil: Who owns Oil, Nigeria, States or Communities?*, in: *The Guardian*, January 17, 2001, pp. 1-14.

54 A. E. PAKI — G. EDOUMIEKUMO, *Colonialism and Political Conflict in Contemporary Nigeria: The Case of the Niger Delta*, in: *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, Vol. 1, No. 6, 2011, pp. 22-30.



According to UNPD (2006), since 1958, when the first oil well was drilled at Oloibiri, over 1,481 oil wells have sprung up, producing from about 159 oilfields.⁵⁵ There are more than 7,000 kilometres of pipelines and flow lines, and 275 flow stations operated by 13 oil companies. It also argued that although less than five per cent of the land of the region is occupied by the oil industry, the problems associated with its operation are immense and region wide. This includes impact such as the pollution of soil, surface and groundwater, and air, oil and gas exploitation which has negatively affected socioeconomic conditions. It has been established that that a total of 6,817 oil spills occurred between 1976 and 2001, with a loss of approximately three million barrels of oil. More than 70% was not recovered. Approximately 6% spilled on land, 25% in swamps and 69% in offshore environments. As at 2006, it was recorded that the Niger Delta had experienced two major oil spills — the Funiwa oil well blowout in 1980 and the Jones Creek oil spillage in 1998. These resulted in the greatest mangrove forest devastation ever recorded worldwide. It has been argued that the immediate result of this, is the ingestion of hydrocarbon directly or indirectly through contaminated food leads to poisoning.⁵⁶

Similarly, the 1983 Oshika oil spill (Rivers State) impact assessment confirmed the death of floating and submerged aquatic vegetation, especially water lettuce. Dead crabs, fish and birds were also reported. In the case of the 2004 oil spill at Chevron's Ewan oilfield near Ubale Kerere, Ondo State, Igo, Awoye, Odun-Oyinbo, Ubale Kerere, Ogungbeje and Yoren communities were affected. Fishing grounds were devastated, thus affecting the economic life of the people as they depended solely on fishing for income. In a related development, the construction of a canal by oil operator in Awoye, Ondo state to improve its activities, led to salt water intrusion as well as the destruction of more than twenty hectares of land. Another oil operator constructed a pipeline from its facility in Delta State to the coast, but the ecological disturbance and ensuing saltwater intrusion caused serious coastal erosion.⁵⁷

From that period till date, the governments like their colonial ancestors have continued to help the in brutalizing the people. It has also been established that instead of building infrastructures for the people, the multinational companies build and maintain military equipment to help them deal with the people. In this way, when the land and crops of the people are damaged and they try to register their displeasure and disappointment through peaceful protest, oil magnets, government and multinationals suppress the people using military might and superior fire arms. This was the case in October 1989, following misunderstanding between youths of Umuechem and Shell, two lorries load of anti-riot police invaded the area, killing 30 people and destroying several houses.⁵⁸ This was to be repeated in April 1993, in which the troops that were requisitioned by Shell to accompany its pipe laying contractor, Willbros, opened fire on unarmed villagers (farmers) in the village of Biara, who were protesting the bull-dozing of their crops by Willbros. A number of protesters were injured,

55 United Nations Development Programme: Niger Delta Human Development Report, 2006, pp. 1-50.

56 Ibidem.

57 Ibidem.

58 <http://www.hrw.org>, [cit. 2015-12-12].

while some died. At the end of the day a one-million-naira compensation was offered for the victims — the dead and the injured.⁵⁹ This has been the case over the years.



IMPLICATION FOR ECONOMIC SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

It has been established that colonialism, especially its land and mineral policies as inherited by the independent state remains the single most important factor in the crystallization of contemporary identities and identity conflicts in Nigeria. By cobbling the different Nigerian groups into a culturally artificial political entity for instance, the British stimulated inter-group competition and mobilization for power and resources in the new state, thereby fostering ethnic conflicts. The colonial urban settings were particularly key in the development of ethnic contact, competition, consciousness and organization. A phenomenal instance of such colonial economic migration was the early twentieth century influx of southern Nigerian immigrants, especially the Igbo and Yoruba, into northern cities like Kano, Kaduna, Zaria and Jos. Instead of encouraging unity through cohabitation, the British responded through avoiding potential inter-group tensions by discouraging movement of non-Muslim migrants into the core Muslim areas, and to ‘quarantine’, as it were, the migrants in sabon gari or strangers’ quarters. This territorial demarcation, which was to be extended to most Northern cities and southern cities like Ibadan and Lagos where sabon gari were also created (in the south to house Northern migrants who were mostly Muslim), became one of the strong bases for conflictual identity formation and discriminatory practices. The immediate impact was that these new colonial cities and mining, commercial and administrative centres became and served as “aggregations of tribal unions” because the urban centres encouraged the formation of kinship, lineage or ethnic associations as a means to cushion the insecurity, instability, alienation and competitiveness of colonial urban life. This emerged because the official promotion of segregated residential settlement patterns — the so-called sabon gari or strangers’ quarters to which reference has already been made — and, inflexible land tenure systems, both of which reinforced discrimination against migrant communities.⁶⁰ In addition, the British policy of ruling indirectly through indigenous political institutions or native authorities led to the reification of local tribal political institutions and loyalties.

The immediate impact of the above is seen in the dwindling agricultural production in the country. In most countries of the world, food production keep up with increase in population and expansion in needs or demand by both consumers and food processing industries. However, in the case of Nigeria’s, while population had been rising steadily since independence, food production had been decreasing with rising imports of food. The Table 1 below has shown the slow and almost negligible growth in acreage under food production over a fifteen-year period from 1960 to 1975. At the

59 B. NAANEN, *Bala Usman, History and the Niger Delta*, in: Urhobo Historical Society, 2001, pp. 1–10; E. O. AKUBOR, *Nigeria’s Valley of Death: Historicizing Environmental Degradation in the Niger Delta and Its Impact on Human Development*, in: S. A. AKPOTOR et al., *Five Decades of Petroleum Production in Nigeria: Impact on the Niger Delta*, Abraka 2012, pp. 40–51.

60 J. S. COLEMAN, *Nigeria: Background to Nationalism*, Berkeley 1958, pp. 72–78.



same time table 2 shows how the share of food import to total import value rose from 8.1% in 1971 to 16.98% in 1975.⁶¹

TABLE II: Estimated Areas under Cultivation for Major Food Crops in Nigeria 1960–1975 ('000 hectares)⁶²

| s/no | Year | Cassava | Cocoyam | Yam | Maize | Millet | Sorghum | Rice | Cowpea | Wheat | Ground-nut | Total |
|------|---------|---------|---------|-------|-------|--------|---------|------|--------|-------|------------|--------|
| 1 | 1956/60 | 730 | 166 | 876 | 1,345 | 4,329 | 4,589 | 119 | 1,196 | 9 | 1,102 | 14,457 |
| 2 | 1960/61 | 754 | 170 | 1,268 | 1,317 | 4,353 | 4,570 | 134 | 1,213 | 9 | 1,463 | 15,251 |
| 3 | 1961/62 | 720 | 181 | 1,412 | 1,374 | 4,359 | 4,657 | 149 | 1,212 | 9 | 1,483 | 15,556 |
| 4 | 1962/63 | 865 | 294 | 1,299 | 1,120 | 4,442 | 4,772 | 218 | 1,468 | 9 | 1,496 | 15,983 |
| 5 | 1963/64 | 801 | 256 | 1,561 | 1,140 | 4,122 | 5,233 | 161 | 2,630 | 9 | 1,986 | 17,899 |
| 6 | 1964/65 | 820 | 283 | 1,622 | 1,470 | 4,426 | 5,532 | 179 | 2,523 | 11 | 2,001 | 18,817 |
| 7 | 1965/66 | 829 | 281 | 1,530 | 1,399 | 4,612 | 916 | 188 | 2,735 | 11 | 2,238 | 19,739 |
| 8 | 1966/67 | 910 | 246 | 1,344 | 1,380 | 4,049 | 4,825 | 159 | 3,043 | 11 | 2,255 | 18,222 |
| 9 | 1967/68 | 950 | 288 | 1,372 | 1,466 | 4,362 | 4,718 | 262 | 3,934 | 11 | 2,267 | 19,644 |
| 10 | 1968/69 | 901 | 243 | 1,699 | 1,082 | 4,462 | 5,159 | 235 | 3,364 | 11 | 1,919 | 19,075 |
| 11 | 1969/70 | 906 | 283 | 1,292 | 1,315 | 4,251 | 5,853 | 258 | 4,018 | 11 | 1,919 | 19,075 |
| 12 | 1970/71 | 920 | 250 | 1,222 | 1,431 | 4,905 | 5,643 | 246 | 3,772 | 10 | 1,848 | 20,247 |
| 13 | 1971/72 | 899 | 200 | 1,197 | 1,197 | 4,788 | 5,387 | 200 | 3,791 | 10 | 1,796 | 19,465 |

TABLE III: Share of Food in Total Import Value: 1971–1987⁶³

| s/no | Year | Total Import (N million) | Food Import (N million) | Percentage Share of Food |
|------|------|--------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 | 1971 | 1069.1 | 88.3 | 8.2 |
| 2 | 1972 | 990.8 | 95.8 | 9.7 |
| 3 | 1973 | 1,241.1 | 128.0 | 10.3 |
| 4 | 1974 | 1,737.3 | 154.8 | 8.9 |
| 5 | 1975 | 3,721.5 | 297.9 | 8.0 |
| 6 | 1976 | 5,148.5 | 440.9 | 8.6 |
| 7 | 1977 | 7,093.7 | 786.4 | 11.1 |
| 8 | 1978 | 8,217.1 | 1,020.7 | 12.4 |
| 9 | 1979 | 6,169.2 | 952.4 | 15.4 |
| 10 | 1980 | 6,217.1 | 1,049.0 | 16.9 |
| 11 | 1981 | 12,602.5 | 1,820.2 | 14.4 |
| 12 | 1982 | 10,100.2 | 1,642.2 | 16.2 |
| 13 | 1983 | 6,107.5 | 1,176.7 | 19.3 |
| 14 | 1984 | 7,178.3 | 1,052.1 | 14.7 |
| 15 | 1985 | 7,662.6 | 1,199.8 | 15.7 |
| 16 | 1986 | 5,983.6 | 803.1 | 13.4 |
| 17 | 1987 | 17,861.7 | 1,573.7 | 8.8 |

⁶¹ A. ADAMU, *Food Security in Nigeria since Independence*, Gombe 2008, p. 13.

⁶² Federal Office of Statistics and Federal Development of Agriculture, 1988, p. 15.

⁶³ Know Nigeria series No. 1, Federal Ministry of Information, *Towards Self Sufficiency in Food*, Lagos 1991, p. 30.



From the above tables, it is safe to argue that the culture of dispossessing farmers of land and limiting their access to it has therefore presented the opportunities for resistance against the state that has not demonstrated genuine commitment to food security in Nigeria. The entire process of acquiring land for food production that is ultimately exported does not guarantee the protection of citizens from foreign predators and food insecurity.⁶⁴

Closely related to the above is the issue of clashes between occupational groups especially farmers and herdsmen. The policy and land grab by the post-colonial administrators, have led to massive incursion into agricultural lands and grazing reserves, this in turn has led to rivalry over resources to cultivate crops and well as graze animals. Every part of modern Nigeria has been experiencing clashes and crises, however the most recent is the conflicts that are almost exclusively defined by the competition for scarce economic goods, with specific attention on conflict over grazing opportunities between Fulani herdsmen and sedentary farming populations. In June, 2003, about 50 persons died and 10,000 displaced in new night raids on Tiv settlements on the Benue and Nasarawa border by Fulani herdsmen.⁶⁵ This phenomenon has continued till date in which on a daily basis there are news of violent clash between farmers and herdsmen in every part of the country. On March 7, 2010, a vengeful attack by Fulani herdsmen on four villages near Jos, led to the merciless killing of over four hundred in Dodo-Nahawa and the neighbouring villages of Zot, Rasat and Kutgot. On 17 July, 2010, an attack by Fulani herdsmen on Mazah village in Jos claimed ten lives. In what seems like an attack for their stolen cattles, Fulani herdsmen attacked Nding Susuk, Nding Jok, Jong and Dorowa villages in Barkin Ladi Local government area in January 27, 2011, killing 14 people. In February and September 2011, they also attacked Tsohon Faron and Kunzen Gashish, in Barkin Ladi Local government area, killing 12 people. In November 2011, Herdsmen violence in Plateau State led to the death of 20 people and the destruction of property as Berom natives and Fulani herdsmen clashed at the Barkin Ladi Local Council of the state. Also in January 2013, at least nine people were killed in clashes between ethnic groups in the central Nigerian state of Plateau. This was as a result of clashes which broke out between ethnic Fulani herdsmen and local farmers in the city of Wadata. It should be noted that this has been extended to parts of Kaduna state and Tiv land. Of more recent, villages in Tiv land were attacked by the herdsmen, while the palace of the Tor Tiv was burnt down; in a similar manner, in March 2015, parts of Kaduna south (Kaura) was attacked with sophisticated weapons leaving hundreds dead.⁶⁶

There is also the rising case of land loss as a result of the activities of those that have taken over the land. As earlier stated in the case of the Niger Delta area, a total of 6,817 oil spills occurred between 1976 and 2001, with a loss of approximately three million barrels of oil. More than 70% was not recovered. Approximately 6% spilled on land, 25% in swamps and 69% in offshore environments. These resulted in the greatest

64 ATTAH, pp. 14–18.

65 H. MOHAMMED, *Federalism and the Native versus Settlers Question in Jos, Plateau State*, in: H. MOHAMMED, (Ed.), *Nigeria's Convulsive Federalism: Perspective on Flash-Points of Conflict in Northern Nigeria*, Ibadan 2012, pp. 125–131.

66 Ibidem.



mangrove forest devastation ever recorded worldwide. In 2004 Igo, Awoye, Odun-Oyinbo, Ubale Kerere, Ogungbeje and Yoren communities in Ondo state lost their land. In the case of Awoye, more than 20 hectares of land, while Delta state recorded salt-water intrusion causing serious coastal erosion.

There have a rising level of crime especially among the youths, who in one way or the other would have been comfortably employed in their various localities. The unavailability of land for agricultural program as well as the mass seizure of available land for private uses, have led to mass migration to the cities. The result is that rampant crime became a serious problem in Nigeria after the civil war of 1967-1970. Consequently, in the two-and-half decades that have followed, concern about public safety has become an overriding concern among Nigerian citizens, as perpetuated by those who would have moved the nation forward. From the works of Osaghae et al⁶⁷ (1994), it has been established that from the 1980, this took a frightening dimension. For example, the total crimes reported to the police in 1980 were 245,972; the figure rose to 325,073 in 1983. Since then, it has stabilized, falling to 297,060 in 1986; 279,058 in 1987; and 325,061 in 1989. The available figure for the first half of 1990 was 85,602. This figure reflects those crimes that have been reported to the police. Public concern derives from the knowledge that approximately 50% of the offences go unreported. Since 1999, the dimension changed as these youths (gangs), comprised primarily of unemployed young men are mobilized to attack political rivals, intimidate members of the public, rig elections and protect their patrons from similar attacks. Some of these often end up as criminal gangs, violent campus-based “cults” and other sources to recruit agents of political violence. Those recruited are paid, often very little, and sometimes armed for the sole purpose of carrying out violent abuses on behalf of their political sponsors.⁶⁸

CONCLUSION

From the discourse, it is clear that in the process of conducting the political surgery on the various ethnic groups, the British ended up complicating issues for the people, such that by 1960 (and till date), the nationals are continually confronted with myriads of questions in the search for a harmonious existence (hundred years after the amalgamation, and sixty years after independence). This is because (in relation to the discourse), land deals are often facilitated by the governments or their agencies at the expense of the people and food security because of venality, or that those in government have direct interests in the outcomes of the deals. Unfortunately, those saddled with the responsibility of leadership of this country since independence, are still behaving like their colonial ancestors. They have continued to steal from the people to

⁶⁷ E. OSAGHAE et al., *Urban Violence in Africa*, Ibadan 1994, pp. 1-20.

⁶⁸ B. A. OLASUPO, *Electoral Violence in Nigeria: Issues and Perspectives*, Abuja, Nigeria 2003, pp. 268-271; I. A. BADMUS, *Ethnic Militia Movements and the Crisis of Political Order in Post-Military Nigeria*, 2006, <http://www.Krepublishers.com/02-journals/jjSS/JSS-13-0-000-000-2006-web/JSS-13-3-000-000-2006-Abst-text/JSS-13-3-191-198-2006-379-Badmus-1-A-Text.pdf>, pp. 1-10, [cit. 2009-07-12].

enrich themselves and cronies in the name of developmental Schemes (or scams); they pass obnoxious laws, which render the working class economically impotent, while the youths have become thugs to eke a living, yet they cry for peace every day. Nigeria cannot (and may never) achieve peace, until the leaders begin to behave like leaders and not colonial masters.



AMALGAMATION, LAND/MINERAL ORDINANCES AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENTS IN NIGERIA SINCE C. 1914 A.D: A REFLECTION

ABSTRACT

Generally, the Amalgamation of 1914 brought together the protectorates of Northern and Southern Nigeria, thus forming one country — Nigeria. However, the ordinances of the colonial government did not reflect that as it denied the people access to the land and mineral resources, vesting both in the Crown. This has in turn impacted on the Socio-economic development of the Nigeria area even years after independence. This is because the ordinances under the new gab of Land and Mineral Acts, have offered the neo-colonial actors and their allies the opportunity to continue to corner for themselves large spans of land and oil blocs. This in the opinion of the paper is largely responsible for mass landlessness, low economic activities/productivity among the people (especially among professionals whose means of livelihood are tied to land), boundary disputes as well as occupational conflicts in parts of the country. The paper using qualitative analysis, seeks to interrogate the relationship between the Amalgamation, Land/Mineral Ordinances and the implications of these on socio-economic developments in the area.

KEYWORDS

Amalgamation; Land/Mineral Ordinances; Nigeria; Development

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