

**ECONOMIC POLICY AND INDUSTRIAL  
DEVELOPMENT OF WEST AFRICAN  
STATES DURING COLONIAL ERA**

BY

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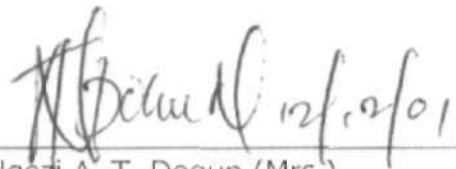
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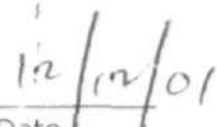
A PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL  
OF POSTGRADUATE STUDIES, AHMADU BELLO  
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AWARD OF MIAD DEGREE IN POLITICAL SCIENCE,  
FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES.

**DECEMBER, 2001**

## DECLARATION

I declare that no part of this thesis or the whole of it has been submitted to this University or any other Institution for any other qualification.

  
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Ngozi A. T. Dogun (Mrs.)

  
Date

## CERTIFICATION

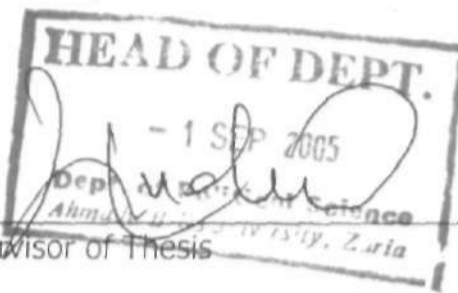
This thesis titled the "Economic Policy and Industrial Development of West African States during Colonial Era", by Mrs. Ngozi A. T. Dogun meets the regulations governing the award of the degree of Masters of International Affairs and Diplomacy and is approved forth as a contribution and literacy presentation.

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## DEDICATION

This project is dedicated to the Almighty God and to my husband T. M. E.

Dogun II esq.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

My special thanks go to all my lecturers during the MIAD Session. They were all very wonderful. My even more special thanks to Dr. Sadiq, Dr. Unobe, Dr. A. Dunmoye, Dr. Odojin, Dr. Tangowa and my very hard working project supervisor Dr. H. A. Abduullahi, who spent a great deal of his precious time, putting me through, step by step.

Finally, I must thank my wonderful children Jacqueline, Paul and Jessica for their patience throughout this course and to my dear daughter and friend Chinyere Igwegbe for her contribution to the production process.

## **ABSTRACT**

This project on the 'Economic Policy and Development of West Africa State during Colonial Era', tried to analyze the nature of the colonial economic policies. The various policies used by the three major European powers that colonized the West African region were highlighted.

The various differences in the economic policies that exposed the original intention of the colonial masters, no matter how good the policy looked as exploitative. To exploit the many resources of the West African people and export such to their European Nations. The paper also emphasized on the role of the 1930 economic slump with a world wide depression, which forced the European powers to change their policies to better the West African States. This change brought in the 'Rapid Industrialization Programme' which brought a lot of gain into the West African States.

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## CHAPTER ONE

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Trend in government policy planning and industrial development of West African states during colonial era was based on economic motives. As far back as the fifteenth century, after the partition of Africa, Britain, France, Portugal and Germany appropriated the entire West African territories as colonies. Economic considerations continued to guide European policies in their relations with the West African countries.

While the European powers pursued different administrative and native policies, they by and large pursued the same policies in the economic and social field. They were also anxious to increase the supply of foodstuff and raw materials for their own overseas trade and thereby increase the opportunities for employment in their countries. Coupled with this was also the desire to increase the supply of food and raw materials for their industries.

The economic philosophy of the European nations until the early part of this century was that "colonies were acquired for the benefit of the mother countries, colonial people must therefore produce what the mother country needs and at cheaper rates. By reserving the products of the colonies for themselves, the colonial master could obtain them at cheaper price than the market prices. Again, "colonies were also considered as dumping ground for products manufactured in foreign countries."

Another policy they adopted that had dangerous effect on the Anglophone and francophone West African countries were that the imperial countries believed and enforced the theory which stipulated that colonies must be self-supporting. That they must provide agricultural products in return. Thus, this colonial pact worked in favour of the imperialist and limited the market to which the colonies could trade. The colonies were forced to dance to the economic tune of their masters.

While the colonial master continued to exploit the resources of the colonies, they gave no thought to the industrialization or other profitable economic scheme for the colonies. All they did was to encourage the colonies to develop export crops like palm oil, groundnut, cocoa, coffee, rubber, cotton e.t.c. Southern Nigerian and Dahomey remained as at nineteenth century, the leading exporters of palm oil. Groundnut also became the major export crops of Senegal and of the Northern Nigeria when the railways reached there. Ivory Coast became the main coffee exporters in West Africa. Ghana, Ivory Coast and Nigeria were famous for exporting large quantities of cocoa to foreign countries. The European government made the Africans to sell the crops to them at their own established price like was earlier stated.

In order to facilitate the exploitation of resources, the colonial authorities provided uniform currencies, roads and railways for their easy transportation of cash crops and minerals. Since the colonies were expected to provide the monies for their up keep and development, the colonial authorities used the revenue from the colonies for their development. Again since revenue was not

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much after they had sent most of it to their mother countries, the colonies could not raise much for development. Thus there was no construction of railways and roads especially for those West African countries that did not have much cash crops produced from their area and tax customs duties to generate enough revenue. There was therefore just enough funds available for their economic exploitation, rather than economic development in West African states

### **1.1. STATEMENT OF THE RESEARCH PROBLEM**

This paper will establish the fact that the government policies in economic, social life and politics that were adopted during the colonial era were not in the interest of the West African states at all. Instead, the colonial masters used the opportunities to create markets for their home countries. They also used any little development that were socially observed strictly for the pleasures of their own people, expatriates were imported into the West African region from their home countries and were given the best of treatment. They actually came to trade and to enlarge their commercial routes, using any visible developmental comfort that was then seen for their relaxation. Politically they also made the colonies subject of her majesty their queen, using the authority of the leadership of their kingdom to dominate the indigenes of the colonies, collect taxes, dictate limits and above all subject the African indigenes with the colonial mentality to reason like the white man instead of reasoning like West Africans. The colonial Master condemned everything "black" and forced Africans to the mentality that only what is

"white is good", it will also establish the fact that "They enslaved the colonies mentally, socially, politically and also physically carried out the ugly trade of slave trade in the West African region having intimidated and clouded the minds of the leaders by imposing their self appointed warrant leaders over the people to make them willing to surrender their strong men to them, to be exported down to their industries, whose enlarged market were created through their exploitations of the African regions wealth back to their home countries abroad.<sup>2</sup> The political implication of this inhuman act of the colonial masters to the people of the West African regions would be established in this write up.

## **1.2 AIMS AND OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY**

The objective of the study generally, is to examine the impact of the colonial rule, economic policy and development of the West African region during the Colonial era. Specifically, the thesis is aimed at:

- a. Examining the trends in colonial economic policies in West African states.
- b. Evaluating the position of the West African states where they colonized, tracing their achievement in the colonized areas and the different policies that were used.
- c. Discussing the industrial development of West African States and the reasons for the slow industrial development by the colonial government.

- d. Analyzing the measures taken by the colonial government of West African states. Later on, to stimulate industrial growth.
- e. Outlining the gains of West African states on the new policy of rapid industrialization, which the European later embarked upon.

### **1.3 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

The study is important because at the end of this:

- a. The reasons behind the coming of the colonial masters into the West African regions would be understood by all.
- b. The reasons behind the economic policies they embarked upon earlier would also be known.
- c. The reasons for their slow industrial development would be clearly seen.
- d. The reasons for the change they embarked upon to cause rapid industrialization would also be exposed.
- e. The gains of the colonies and the European due to the rapid industrialization process would be enumerated.

### **1.4 HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY**

The following sets of hypothesis are advanced as pilot for the study;

- a. Colonial economic policy was aimed at increasing the colonial masters market.
- b. During the colonial era, only the policies that favoured the Europeans were embarked upon.

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- c. The colonial masters in West African region, no matter their economic policies, all were aimed at intimidating, manipulating and dominating the Africans whom they colonized.
- d. The Europeans especially in the Anglophone west African regions made the Africans play second fiddles to them.
- e. The Europeans in the West African States changed their slow industrial development style to a rapid industrialization programme because of the economic depression slumps of 1930's.

### **1.5 METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY**

Secondary data were employed in this thesis. These were data gathered from secondary sources of written and printed materials from the archives, library, media reports and publications. Official Gazette on the problem under study, academic publications and MIAD lecture notes were also used.

All the raw information gathering from the secondary sources were brought together and analyzed. The method of analysis employed here is the content and qualitative method of social science research. Conclusions were empirically drawn through the general rules of deductions ... from general to specific.

### **1.6 SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

The thesis examined the economic policy and industrial development of the West African states during the colonial era. It is important to note that the colonial era lasted for over 50 years. But this study will concentrate on the

last 10 years of colonial rule in the West African regions dating from 1946 – 1956. Though much is expected from this, but time constraints had influenced the general out come.

### **1.7 ORGANISATION OF THE STUDY**

The first chapter discusses in an introductory manner the trends in government economic policies in West African states, analyzing the main economic and social policies they pursued and a brief mentioning of the colonial pact and its effect on economic development in West African states.

The second chapter makes reference to books, papers and publications on the subject matter and it is titled "literature review". The third chapter presents the data in such depth that the effects of the 1930's economic depression in the whole world had on their colonies were exposed with its gains. The fourth chapter analyzed the reason for slow industrial development in West African states and later on the measures that were taken on, to stimulate industrial growth. And the fifth chapter finally analyzes the gains of West African on a policy of rapid industrialization, summary, conclusions and suggestions that were made.

**NOTES:**

1. Economic History of West African States by Boluwaji Olaniyan page 201.
2. A newsletter on African History and Economic Policies during Colonial Era by Felix Odunze page 20 Volume II.

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## CHAPTER TWO

### 2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

In the book *West African under colonial rule* written by M. Crowder 1968 a complete review of the colonial economic policy and development during colonial era was simply revealed as "a period when the white man carried the African burdens".<sup>1</sup> The white man treated the Africans as children for whom European powers came for as guardians. Their approaches and their economic policies varied from one place to another.

West African regions were sixteen in number. These sixteen West African States were shared between the three European countries namely France, Britain and Portugal. France had ten the highest, followed by Britain with four and Portugal two. Each group used different policies in their approaches to their own colonies. They believed strongly that the imposition of European rule over the African was of unquestionable benefit to the Africans. They claimed that they were doing the Africans favour to colonize them. These attitudes informed their policy pattern greatly.

The British used a political policy approach called indirect rule system. This is a method of governing the people indirectly through having a strong control over the local rulers. Economically, they put all their colonies to work for them, disengaged them from their previous primary assignment, put them to areas of work that will favour British government. They ensured that the British men were placed as heads of districts on each of the colonies and the traditional heads or rulers who were the rural leaders of the people, report to

these district heads who were totally in charge. The rural leaders made their people to produce cash crops, these were purchased by the European at cheap prices and sent straight to the industries in their home land for their enrichment and manufacturing of finished products, majority of which were also sent back to be bought at high prices by the West African people. Whatever gains that were made after these transactions were then used for building and construction of roads, bridges or other facilities of development. Since such gains were little the effect of what could be achieved were usually little or nothing at all especially in those regions where cash crops could not be grown.

In a journal written by Stephenson in 1932 he condemned the British rule. He said the British intimidated their colonies the most. Unlike its European counterparts of the French and Portuguese who were more human in their economic policy and development, he stated that the method used by the French was called 'Assimilation policy', whereby, all the development done on the colonies were sponsored and supported straight from France. The people in their colonies were educated and trained as French men with lots of development for their roads, railways, Schools, hospitals and other facilities built and meant for everybody to enjoy irrespective of being white or black in the colonies.<sup>2</sup> In short, he said that the aims of the French colonial masters was to make the "African colonized peoples, Frenchmen". He said that the same was of the policy of the Portuguese, but he claimed that the Portuguese treated their colonies even much better than the French. The Portuguese used a political policy of association, where-by, the home country

developed the colonies much more better, and also allowed the indigenes of their colonies, to be in control of power but to report to the Portuguese government regularly.<sup>3</sup> Stephenson claimed that the different policies used by these groups of Europeans in West African regions made different results to be achieved in each area. Some, became more loyal to the European government, while some where not. Some started earlier than others to have nationalistic ideas and formed nationalistic movements especially the Anglophone regions of African colonized by Britain. Any development in terms of education witnessed in the West African Anglophone region, during this colonial period, was only from the missionaries who came in during the colonial era. They of course benefited also from the presence of colonial masters in terms of security. They were the group that brought in educational presence into our colonies then. The Anglophone colonial masters did not train anyone, only the missionaries brought in the initial education that was then needed.

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Webster's book on economic history of West African did explain that the different European groups treated Africans from the way they viewed them. He said that the European sincerely believed that African was "a dark continent and that they were bringing the first light of civilization to a benighted, lost and primitive barbarity".<sup>4</sup> Thus French textbooks on African history even till date still believed that, France occupation of West African was achieved at the cost of many French men's lives, and that such sacrifices they said, was an unqualified blessing for the Africans. While the British in a more characteristics reserve, were not so outspoken in praise of themselves. The

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attitude of the average British administrator was that the Africans were more than fortunate to be placed under his benight rule. These ideas still linger on till today.

The nature of colonial development according to Boluwaji Olaniyani in his book *Economic History of West African states*, "that the first British colonial development and welfare act in 1929 was merely for the development of some specific areas for agricultural purposes, unfortunately most of the agricultural projects failed because too much capital was invested and the cost outran the income from such projects, so they stopped. The French development plans for her West Africa colonies were more ambitious. Though her colonies were poorer than those of the British West African, yet they ensured that elaborated development plans were designed for them. The French developmental plans were designed to co-ordinate the private and public efforts for further development, and France was the base for the operation of the plans. Their major emphasis was on communication and agriculture. They even planned a trans-Saharan railway line to link Algeria with West Africa. They put 5 million francs in one area of Niger under cultivation in 1947-1957 within which that area became the largest producer of coffee in West Africa".<sup>5</sup>

Even one of the eminent History professor Hugh-Trevor Roper in his much quoted verse, from his August chair at Oxford has still insisted that "Perhaps in the future, there will be some African history to teach, but at present there is none, there is only the history of the Europeans in Africa. The rest is

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darkness .... And darkness is not the subject of history".<sup>6</sup> The view of Africa as continent without history almost gained universal currency in the colonial period. They used this view as a justifiable reason for the European occupation of African as they figured clearly that Africa was in need of European tutelage.

Politically speaking, the Oxford professor Hugh-Trevor Roper did not convince the early nationalist that wanted to reclaim the West African region of his facts that the region as part of Africa was darkness. How can anyone call a place a dark place and yet could not relinquish his hold on darkness. Even if African was darkness it held a lot of attractions that made the Europeans want to kill themselves. Quoting from one of my lecturers class lectures in MIAD THREE session Dr. Odojin, he clearly stated that the Europeans, on arrival to African met a group of people already in existence with culture, traditions, religious belief and established social and family lives which history already "knew of", for them to claim that Africa had no history before their arrival was not factual.<sup>7</sup> Maybe, the professor from Oxford could have done more research. He also went further to say that such established socio-cultural boundaries were among the facts that made them govern and administer each of their regions properly and easily. They did not need to create boundaries but they used established ones to govern and group the regions.

Mary Kinsley in her book, West African studies 3<sup>rd</sup> edition with an introduction by John E. Flint, as a young woman living in the late Victorian England she

lived in a world of men, and her contribution and achievement in academic scholarship in the realms of public policy and political thoughts was also emphasized upon. Most importantly, she came up at a time when women were not allowed to vote, had only recently been admitted to one university, and besides motherhood, the only honourable profession opened then to them was Nursing, it was in such a society that Mary Kinsley created for herself in her chosen field of 'British West African policies and politics', a position of unique respect from which she was able to advise and influence British traders, government officials, educated Africans, traditional rulers and even Joseph Chamberlain, the most powerful British colonial secretary of modern times. She had a victory of attitudes to revolutionize the attitudes towards Africans, of British government, British officials, and even of that informed section of British public opinion which deigned to consider Africa problems.<sup>8</sup>

She saw the African society as a delicate and complex balance of forces. Which if set up, might result in a complete social, moral and psychological disintegration and as such the character of the true Africa which she loved and admired, could be destroyed if their economic colonial policies were not changed in the Twenty years after her death, these ideas come to occupy the central place in British West African policies. She stressed on the fact that the "British government has ill-judged West African in their economic policy making, trying to use the system of colonialism of South Africa in West African State, forgetting that the two regions, are different, though they are all in Africa."<sup>9</sup> To take only two out of the many differences and state them

bluntly, first, in the West Africa, the most valuable asset you have is the native: the more heavily the district is populated with the Africans, the more prosperous those native are, the better for you, for it means more trade. All the gold, ivory, oil, rubber and timber in West Africa are useless to you without the Africans to work on them: you can get no other race that can replace him and work them: the thing has now been tried, and it has failed, whereas in South Africa the converse is true: you can do without the African there, you can replace him with pretty nearly any other kind of man you like, or do the work yourself.

The second difference, is that, the land in South Africa is worth your having, you can go and domesticate on it; whereas in West Africa you cannot. Failures to recognize these differences, is at the root of our present ill-judged West African policy, so trade was devastated. From her point, West Africa's worth to us consist in it being the richest portion of our tropical African empire, and the economic policies to such regions should be made more favourable to enhance our trade, and as such more money will be realized. Her suggestions were proved right later.<sup>10</sup>

Yet others supported the European West African policies. In a book 'West African colonial civil servants, in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, edited by Kwame Arhin on African participation in British colonial expansion in West African research: Reports N25/1985 stated these in support of colonial administration contrary to Mary's views clearly, that the colonial government in West Africa did not

be appropriate for Europeans to serve under Africans in senior positions because;

Firstly, the cost of Havoc effects of malaria, in European lives made it necessary to place them mostly, on strategic positions and use the Africans, who were already used to malaria, for other intermediate positions. So they feel that policies of establishing trade routes from the coast to the hinterland and the active pursuit of imperial expansion of Africans should be used in order not to risk the lives of Europeans.

Secondly, while the colonial authorities were establishing preliminary contacts with the peoples in the hinterland of the coastal settlements, they thought that, "African emissaries could understand and communicate with those people better than the whites. The emissaries could understand and speak some of the languages of the various peoples, and their knowledge of the local cultures enabled them to conduct effective negotiations with the local rulers. So it is, that several Africans including mulattos were employed as intermediate reaches of the civil service and its auxiliary branches such as the medical services."<sup>11</sup> These were the words of Charles Bannerman of Gold coast who acted as lieutenant governor in the 1980's

Ferguson of Gold coast, Lawson of Sierra Leone and Payne from Nigeria were among the most distinguished Africans that were used during the colonial era. They believed strongly that the British colonial administrative policies had a lot of virtues. All three had one voice in common, in believing that, the British colonial policy and their rule was an instrument for civilizing their compatriots.

They believed in progress exemplified in the British way of life, which they claimed offered a justification for their more than competent services to their colonial employers. These three men exceeded the normal demand of their jobs. They helped in moulding some of the colonial policies. They also helped in securing what they considered as economically viable territories for their emergent countries. They are all important sources for the reconstruction of economic political and social histories of their respective countries.

Kwame Arhin further quoted that "Ferguson Lawson and Payne are not to be seen as merely African agents of colonial rule, but they ought to be considered as men who thought of colonial rule, as the best technical and socio-economic progress of their respective peoples, without them, there would have been colonial rule but the countries that emerged from the colonial scramble are certainly, the richer for their work".<sup>12</sup> The stories of these three men are of a very significant part in the story of British imperialist expansion in West Africa. But they are also the stories of dedicated men with a sense of vocation which is worthy of emulation by later generations of Africans, particularly in the period of self rule.

To further stress on the political, economical and socio-cultural contributions of these three men, George Shepperson in his book, *The West African Civil Servants in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, re-emphasized African participation in British rule* and had these to say for each of the three men, "that George Ekem Ferguson father of modern Ghana, who saw that the coastal forest and Savannah areas of the gold coast and its hinterland were complementary in their resources

and by his exertions and demands to the colonial government at Accra, was largely responsible for securing the northern territorial basis of Ghana as it is today."<sup>13</sup> He was also called an acute observer of the people, and an extraordinary civil servant in Ghana during colonial era.

The same man analyzed Thomas George as perhaps the most influential British African during the colonial politics in Sierra Leone of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. He was born in fantekome of Adjigo quarter of Anecho on the coast of modern Togo in 1814. His father and grandfather both had been influenced by British culture and commercial operations.

The connections, wealth and social positions of his family in Anecho, led Thomas to consider himself as a representative of the African European commercial and political establishment in West Africa. He is one of the thousand of Africans who became vital to the development and operation of European colonial administration in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Lastly is John Augustus Otunba Payne who was born on August 9, 1839 at Kissy Sierra Leone. His father was a recaptive from one of the royal houses of Ijebu-Ode and that name Payne, was an anglicanized version of the original Yoruba name Adepeyin Otunba and properly written as an added title to members of the Ijebu-ruling houses. His parents did not make great achievement, until they returned from Freetown to Nigeria ... He made outstanding contributions in the colonial administration during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Colonial masters also involved him in making some of the policies for governing of those days.<sup>14</sup>

## 2.1 NOTES:

1. M. Crowder 1968 A complete Review of the Colonial Economic Policy and Development page 201.
2. Stephenson 1932 Journal on British Colonial Rule page 5
3. Stephenson 1932 Journal on British Colonial Rule page 10
4. Webster Journals 1928 on Economic History on West Africa during Colonial Days page 18.
5. Boluwaji Olaniyan 1973 Economic History of West State.
6. Professor Hugh Trevor Roper 1928 Journal on Europe and its Economic Policy on Africa.
7. Dr. Odofin MIAD III Lecture Notes February 2001
8. Mary Kinsley book 'West African Studies 3<sup>rd</sup> edition with an Introduction by John E. Flint pages 336 – 337.
9. John E. Flint, West African Studies, page 400.
10. Mary Kinsley Book 'West African and Europe by John E. Flint page 406.
11. Kwame Arhin on African Participation in British Colonial Expansion in West African Research. Reports N 25/1985 pages 12 – 14.
12. Arhin on African/British Colonial Civil/Servants, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, page 38.
13. George Shepperson 'The West African Civil Servants in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century page 40.
14. George Shepperson The West African Civil Servants in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century page 42.

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## CHAPTER THREE

### 3.0 THEORETICAL FRAME WORK OF THE ANALYSIS.

In 1930 Britain and France were forced by the world depression to Re-examine their colonial economic policies. The world depression of the 1930s had sharp and serious impact, which ruined all nations economically. There was a slump both in commodity, capital prices and increase in unemployment that reached a level unheard of before. West African countries were severely hit by the slump. Exports declined considerably, exports earnings fell by two-thirds, and falling wages and unemployment caused widespread discontent. Britain, France and their allies re-examined their colonial development policies. Britain and France required raw materials and foodstuffs, which at that material time could only be gotten from their colonies. They, therefore, relied heavily on what the colonies could produce and what they might be made to produce by active development programmes, which suddenly became an urgent priority. The colonial policy of making colonies pay for their own development was considered harmful to the interest of the colonies as well as the interests of the colonial powers. Thus, for the first time in colonial history, Britain lent or gave money from her own purse (resources) for the economic development of her colonies and passed the colonial development act of 1929. By 1938, all British colonies in Africa benefited up to the tune of four million British pounds from the colonial development fund. The reasons for the British initiative in setting aside this huge amount of money for the development of the colonies were these:

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## CHAPTER THREE

### 3.0 THEORETICAL FRAME WORK OF THE ANALYSIS.

In 1930 Britain and France were forced by the world depression to Re-examine their colonial economic policies. The world depression of the 1930s had sharp and serious impact, which ruined all nations economically. There was a slump both in commodity, capital prices and increase in unemployment that reached a level unheard of before. West African countries were severely hit by the slump. Exports declined considerably, exports earnings fell by two-thirds, and falling wages and unemployment caused widespread discontent. Britain, France and their allies re-examined their colonial development policies. Britain and France required raw materials and foodstuffs, which at that material time could only be gotten from their colonies. They, therefore, relied heavily on what the colonies could produce and what they might be made to produce by active development programmes, which suddenly became an urgent priority. The colonial policy of making colonies pay for their own development was considered harmful to the interest of the colonies as well as the interests of the colonial powers. Thus, for the first time in colonial history, Britain lent or gave money from her own purse (resources) for the economic development of her colonies and passed the colonial development act of 1929. By 1938, all British colonies in Africa benefited up to the tune of four million British pounds from the colonial development fund. The reasons for the British initiative in setting aside this huge amount of money for the development of the colonies were these:

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- Firstly, Britain wanted to show that colonization was not merely exploitation as the Africans thought.
- Secondly, she was anxious to encourage native administration (now local government) to develop and improve agriculturally.
- Thirdly, Britain needed to be provided with basic materials backing in the event of any war. This was because Britain suffered during the Second World War when Germany almost defeated the British army in all the colonies.
- Lastly, Britain believed that she would be boosting her economy by developing the local economies of the colonies. What an after thought.<sup>1</sup>

The Second World War helped in no small way to improve the economic conditions of West African. Important changes in the political and social life of West African also took place. During the second World War, public opinion was against the possession of colonies. It was argued that one of the causes of friction in the world was the possession of colonies, and that the menace to world peace might be removed if all colonies became independent. The United States of America was strongly moved by a wave of anti imperialist feeling. Which found its most pointed expression in an attack on the possession of colonies. Mr. Wilson, the president of America advocated for the principle of self-determination<sup>2</sup>. There was emphasis on the Atlantic charter of august 1941. All colonial powers were severely attached to their policies relating to economic, political and educational conditions in the territories for which the powers were *respectively responsible*. They were advised that the

aim of a good colonial administration should be defined positively as the promotion of economic and social advance in order to provide the essential basis for political self-rule.

Furthermore, there were new pressures and demands arising from the colonies themselves. Nationalists began to agitate for moves towards eventual colonial self-determination. These new developments during and after the Second World War were bound to affect the thinking of Britain and France who were the major colonial powers in West Africa regard to their colonies. As a result of the desire of the British and French governments to secure the support of colonial peoples, and also because they began to feel a more positive obligation to do good to their colonial subjects. New colonial developmental plans devoted to projects of social welfare, educational and health services and economic development were drawn up. Britain and France started to equip their colonies with the canopy of modern states, that is, the provision of infrastructure, internal and international airlines, road networks, broadcasting services, research institutes and the like. There was a new emphasis on public investment and economic planning. The French authorities worked on the basis of a succession of four – year plan for their overseas territories, and British on ten – year development programme.<sup>3</sup>

The first British Colonial Development and welfare act in 1929 was merely meant, like was said before, for the development of some specific areas for agricultural purposes unfortunately. Most of the agricultural projects failed because too much capital was invested and the cost outran the income or

revenue from such projects, but the second colonial development and welfare act which was passed later after the economic slump of 1930, where it was decided that up to five million British pound a year could be given to British West Africa colonies, out of the fifty six million pounds made available for the development of the colonies except India. Thus the profit from the West African colonies between 1946 and 1955 may be estimated as roughly over one hundred and sixty million pounds.

The French development plan, which has always been more ambitious than those of the British, attracted about two hundred and seventy five million pounds by 1955. during the Second World war France gave to each of her colonies five million francs to help them. This planned economy was necessary because France was defeated so easily during the first and second world war. The plan for the assignment of fund for economic and social development of the colonies which was proposed in France National Assembly by Jacques Souslette proved to be successful,<sup>4</sup> according to Boluwaji Olaniya's book on Economic History of West Africa, he said that the plan was very successful in developing means of communication, urban centers and scientific research centers, all were visibly developed all over the French colonies<sup>5</sup>.

After 1945 World War, both France and Britain were anxious to accelerate social and economic progress in the colonies. There was a considerable increase in public investment, new agencies were set up for pumping loans and grants into colonial territories. The French government operated through

the Funds of the d' investment pour le developement economique at social known as FIDES. Between 1946 – 1956, FIDES, invested about ninety six million C.F.A FRANCS IN French West Africa. The British colonial development was charged with spending public fund in the British colonies and the growth of public investment in the colonies yielded fruitful results. It increased the scale and tempo of economic development with its social consequences, urbanization and growth of new classes (Administrative, technical, professional, commercial, wages and salary earnings) conscious of new needs and asserting economic and political self – determination. A proportion of investments feature prominently on road – building ports and railways, hospitals and schools.

The establishment and functioning of the marketing boards of the Second World War helped a lot. Previously the Marketing Board of West Africa produce was largely in the hands of expatriate firms. Many Africans were acting as middlemen between the commodity producers and the firms, which took active parts in buying and selling of commodities. The depression in the economy, which was a worldwide event then, had continued, in fact by 1937, there was a sharp decline in prices. Many people suffered especially the middlemen. The exporting firms complained that they had been trading at a loss and so they got together to better their condition to be able to keep the prices for the producers low and get good profit for their exports<sup>6</sup>. They tried to get rid of the middle men who they claimed had so much profit but the middlemen instigated the producers who refused to sell to the exporting firms any more. As a result of this, according to Boluwaji Olaniyan the Nowell

commission of enquiry was appointed to report on the "Cocoa hold up" between producers, exporters and middlemen. The commission frowned against the monopoly of the exporting firms, as well as the activities of the middlemen and eventually recommended the establishment of marketing Board for West African Export crops.

Politically, the Cocoa 'hold up' made it clear to the governmental authorities that the fluctuating marketing price were becoming increasingly difficult, and unbearable and might lead to further unrest in the colonies if a review to change the economic policy was not in place as quick as it came. Though the Cocoa hold up was organized in Ghana, similar ill feelings of primary producers towards the exporting firms, were already warming up all over the colonies. The British government stepped in quickly to guarantee a market at fixed price for all produce. Thus the West African produce Board which purchased and disposed of West-African principal export products during the World War was established. Four commodity Marketing Boards were established. In 1947 Cocoa Marketing Boards were set up in Nigeria and the then Gold coast i.e. Ghana, two years later in 1949, the same was done in respect of cotton, groundnut, and palm produce. Before long, this system was in operation throughout the British colonies of West Africa, Sierra Leone and Gambia having followed suit.<sup>7</sup>

The implication of the unrest if it has been embarked upon by all the colonies would have caused serious rebellion but since drastic actions were taken by the British government it yielded various good and positive results. There was

the establishment of price stabilization policy which implied that, during the boom when prices were high, the price of commodities paid to the producers were to be cut to prevent the goods which might reflect adversely in West African countries balance of payments and limit the rate of national economic growth . The surplus gathered as a result of this was to be used during the period of depression when prices were low to subsidize the prices to be paid to producers thus ensuring them a stable, rather than fluctuating income. Apart from price stabilization, there were other achievement, before 1937 firms operating in West Africa "were too competitive in their economic relations to possess any adequate power of bargaining with foreigners". The monopolistic tendencies of the firms were disliked by the people and government officials. As a result of this, government designed the establishment of marketing boards as a tool for strengthening West Africa's bargaining power in the world prices in respect of commodities and also to reducing the cost of marketing by purchasing, grading and exporting them. Thirdly, the idea of setting up the marketing boards was also motivated to extract from the producers some revenues for the promotion of economic development of the producing industries and areas of production and financing of research e.g. research programmes, pest, and disease control projects, the construction of feeder roads in growing areas, e.t.c. similarly accumulated incomes, from the boards could be used for community facilities such as local schools, health centers, e.t.c. on the ground that social utility was high and individual or joint purchase impracticable.

The prices paid to the producers as well as the commission of buying agents were fixed by the Boards. The boards then sold the produce to the buyers in the world markets so as to obtain high prices. The purchaser in West Africa and the sales abroad of the principal export crops like oil palm produce, cocoa, groundnut and cotton were in the hands of the statutory marketing boards, autonomous bodies established between 1947 and 1949 to take the place of control schemes instituted during the war. So between the period of 1947 and 1954 the marketing boards acquired enormous reserves and thus became important factors in the economic life and financial structure of West Africa. By 1951 the total reserves for West Africa was about two hundred million pounds and this continued to rise steadily till 1956. In other words, the scheme, in monetary terms had been an immense success.

To say the least, the board also succeeded in successfully bringing many West Africans into export trade apart from the stabilization and mobilization of funds. In addition to all the above, the board also contributed in developmental schemes, to the general economic development of West African countries. Revenue from export duties and grants from the boards have provided funds for many government projects. Construction of universities, road building, supply of pipe borne water and electrification of some rural areas and modern manufacturing facilities were all benefited from the boards support.

This part of the project on the progress made by the British government after they changed their economic policy will not be complete without mentioning

the report that the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (1954) on the Nigerian marketing boards. The report went thus: -

*"In our opinion the marketing board system is well suited to Nigerian conditions. The combination of guaranteed price for an entire crop year to the small holder producers, adequate compensation for the buying agents, and price policies designed to encourage quality improvement, provides the inducement, necessary for increased and improved production, and for a regular and efficient flow of produce, and the joint selling arrangements, strengthening, Nigeria's position in the world market. We recommend however, that henceforth the 'Boards' functions be limited to settling quality standards fixing producer prices and purchasing, and marketing crops. The financing of economic development and agricultural research is a responsibility of government and the boards should not undertake it. Nor should the level of expenditure for these purposes be left to the discretion of the boards or be dependent on the results of their operations. While the present reserves of the Boards can be an important sources of development capital, we recommend that the boards contribution be made through long term loan to government, out of that portion of their funds which need not be kept liquid. We also recommend that in fixing producer prices, the boards should have no object other than mitigating price fluctuations and giving an incentive to improvement of quality. The deliberate use of the price fixing functions for other purposes such as the promotion of development or to counter act inflationary or deflationary trend, cuts across the responsibility of government".<sup>8</sup>*

This chapter of the project took time to elaborate the contributions of the West African Marketing Board which came up as a result of the change in the previous economic policies that the colonial administrations used on our regions. The contributions were indeed numerous. A politically analyst,<sup>9</sup> had argued that the cocoa 'hold-up' which originated in Ghana would have also led to the 'hold-up' on other cash crops for exports. They said that if that happened, all other producers of cash crops for exports into European countries from their West African colonies would have followed suit especially

those in Nigeria were ready. So the Europeans had to embark on a quick diplomatic move to form the Marketing Boards, which helped both parties involved a lot. The most dangerous resultant effect of this great rebellion of producers would have been shortage of raw materials and lost of security in all the colonies of Europe. No wonder they intervened quickly in providing a fast diplomatic solution to regain their security-grip on their West African colonies. The survival of any political organisation social or religious groups depends on how solid the Economic structure of such an organisation is. If there is a threat on the economic base of the structure, the entire structure is calling for a collapse because the continuous survival of the entire framework of any organisation is determined by the strength of such organisations economy. <sup>10</sup>

### 3.1 NOTES:

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2. Harly-Baron Williams, *The Future of Colonial Peoples*, page 4 of 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition.
3. Colonial Annual Reports Published by H. M. S. O. of Nigeria, 1978, page 2 Ghana, Sierra Leone and the Gambia, 1984 page 36.
4. Thompson, Virginia and Adloff-Richard: *French West Africa*, page 114.
5. Boluwaji Olaniyan's 1977, *Economic History of West Africa States*, page 207.
6. Annual Reports of the Marketing Boards in Nigeria, Ghana, Sierra Leone and Gambia page 24.
7. Annual Reports of the Marketing Board in Nigeria, Ghana, Sierra Leone and Gambia page 30
8. *The Economic Development of Nigeria: Report of a Mission Organized by the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development* page 4.
9. Pamphlet No. 29 on Federal Ministry of Economic Development '1962' page 5.
10. Dr. Dunmoye Lecture Notes on International Economics, MIAD III, 2001.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### 4.0 ANALYTICAL REASONS THAT AFFECTED EUROPEAN POLITICS AND POLICIES

The reason for the slow industrial development in West Africa have been traced back to the many years of various methods of colonization and what the Europeans themselves encountered on their arrival in West Africa. Long ago, from the 1970's thereof, many European nations started looking towards Africa for the fulfillment of their economic hopes. This was also the time that the British made their appearance in a greater number and with greater zeal. Previously, the British were passive in their attitudes towards founding colonies in Africa. Colonies to them were expensive and an economic nuisance.<sup>1</sup> British merchants only wished a free access to African market. When however, French and Germany ran the race for colonies, British public opinion changed in favour of colony annexation policy in Africa.<sup>2</sup> If Germany and France had colonies in Africa for the sake of prestige, British should do the same. From henceforth there was a change of attitude towards colonization. Britain like all other European nations started to exercise her claims to all her former trading territories in addition to this she acquired new areas.

The scramble for Africa by Europeans reached its peak in 1884, and to prevent the possibility of conflict among European nations an international conference was held at Berlin from November 1884 to January 1885 under the chairmanship of Bismarck, the greatest diplomat of his days. France,

and Germany took the initiative to call this conference and invited twelve other nations to discuss three important pressing matters; namely, the freedom of commerce in the basin and mouth of Congo, the liberty of navigation on international rivers and the question of effective acquisition of territories. Thus in 1885, an agreement was signed by the representatives of the Europeans and many resolutions were passed on the question of liberty of commerce, the conference agreed that in the best interest of Africa and the world as a whole, traders and missionaries of all nations should have free access to the interior of Africa " so that its slave trade would finally be crushed, and that material and moral benefits of European civilization be made freely available to its people.<sup>3</sup> The conference also stipulated that the navigation of the Congo and Niger rivers should be open to all nations alike. This was a very important resolution from the economic consideration as there were no inland roads or railways to the interiors of Africa. Then two rivers served as the gateway to tap the resources of the interior. Other nations would be placed at a disadvantage if the rivers were to be monopolized by any of the European powers. The conference defined effective administrative machinery over the areas. This further implied that the acquired territory would be developed politically, socially and economically by the power occupying it.

The immediate effect of the Berlin conference was that it became clear that a quick partition of Africa was inevitable as each nation was anxious to have her own share before it was too late. Africa was "shared" setting

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aside some parts for the British, others for France, Portuguese, Italians, Spanish, Germans and Belgians. These new European invasion met with strong resistance from Africans, causing an era of colonial wars between Africans and Europeans. During this period, many African kingdoms, empires and towns disappeared forever because of the powerful weapons at the disposal of the Europeans'. In addition to this, many powerful African chiefs who refused to compromise with the colonial rulers were deported, executed or imprisoned. Britain, France and Portuguese got their share for West African sub-regions. British government was slow in the development of her territories because of their attitudes, which had clearly been demonstrated from their initial behavior. So later on, since they participated, in order not to lose prestige and also to please their home's public opinion, they were cautious. They, for a long time, insisted on only the policies that will enrich their homeland, Britain, economically. Thus they made the West African people to forcefully shift from the production of their primary goods to the production of cash crops, which were shipped for the home industries to manufacture other finished products.

They forced our West Africans to abandon farming and agriculture, which was our main occupation to begin to build roads and railways. West African indigenes were dislodged from their homes of origin and forced to live in another homeland in seclusions. Living like a stranger in one's own country. They were forced to use British currency for buying and selling of goods and services, this you can only get by working for the Europeans.

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They also introduced taxations, which further forced the indigenes to accept to work for them to earn the European money.<sup>5</sup>

However, all their selfish motives stopped and changed as mentioned in chapter three when the 1930 economic slump caused the greatest economic depression in the world market. They regretted their attitude to their West African colonies, where they should have had more than enough from, to sustain them. So their eyes opened, though a little late, and they began the rapid industrialization approach which yielded many results. Thus as a result, many forms of developmental changes were made economically, socially and even politically. The most important of the social facility was in education; which was the weapon by which many African states freed themselves from colonial rule, as from the middle of the twentieth century. Though the British were forced to change their economic policies towards their colonies, they still had some areas that were left uncared for. After the second World War, British and France continued to be the major sources of investment in West Africa. All the funds poured into the French and British territories were used to develop the infrastructure and basic social amenities. There was for instance the quickening in the space of educational development. There was little left over to invest in programmes of economic betterment which would equip the colonies with modern facilities and amenities and increase the efficiency of their peoples. The economy was not diversified or "Industrialised". Secondly, industries for processing agricultural products were totally absent. Common consumer goods like matches, soap,

chocolates, candles, cloths, e.t.c. had to be imported primarily in West Africa, remained producers of Basic raw materials for industrial countries, Britain and France in particular. In return manufacturers products were dumped into West Africa countries. In brief, the West African economy remained under colonial domination and alien control for a very long time.<sup>6</sup>

It is not until towards the last 1950's when West African countries started becoming independent that a drastic change in the economic policies became very visible. Political leaders, believe that "The economy of a country can only obtain a favourable change only when such a country obtains political independence".<sup>7</sup> This is true because until the basic control of a nation resources, are transferred to the control of indigenes or the citizens of such a nation, no true change can be seen. It is only in the independence of the nations can any nation make economic objectives for their part of West African areas, to include diversification of the economy', so as to provide the much needed for employment, the encouragement of private investment in industries, the formation of producers co-operatives, the stabilization of prices and the currencies, the establishment of new enterprises in partnership with foreign business interests and the provision of services which private enterprises could provide. In addition then, there can be diversification of trade, investment and technical aid. Development plans would be drawn to transform the economy into something new fro its old merchantile character to a new modernized system. In the general theories of politics, the colonial

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masters never considered the issue of national interest which is the analysis of the good of the state and the good of the society e.g. these were never considered before any action was taken. It is true that state with limited capabilities is governed mainly by contingences, which is more closely tied to the operational level and less capable of developing its inspirational interests.

The colonial masters did not have the national interest of their colonies in mind. Even when they attempted some positive steps towards the new changes in their economic policies, underline their intentions especially in the British colonies was still to establish the superiority of the whitemen over the Africans. Top on the lists of their reasons had always been for commercial purposes, provisions of raw materials for their industries in Europe. The gains they make from the huge exports of cash crops to Europe and importations of finished manufactured goods that were continuously brought into the colonies. Truly the power that Europeans had over their colonies was enormous. No wonder there is a saying in political science that absolute powers corrupts absolutely," this was true especially during the colonial era.'

The relevant modern theories, and model, concerned with human behavior, and with social organisation, to pay due regard to their colonies purposes, were totally ignored or neglected. It is also important here for us to make this point clear that one of the major reasons for the change in their policies apart from the pressures that were placed on them from

the United Nations was from the African Nationalists. Those who were returned as slaves had become very educated. Some of those in administration, who were a little learned, as they had opportunities, got themselves more trained, and all became more nationalistic in their minds. They began to envisage what great nations West African countries would become, when they would gain their own independence. As pressures were mounted by these Nationalists, the press began their open condemnations of colonial government and played a major role in enlightening the masses on the importance of independence.

The various labour unions in various parts of West African regions contributed to their colonial government's change of policies. They boycotted work, threatened the colonial government and organized themselves to put pressure on the government – Especially the Aba women riot which also played a great role in causing a re-visit to better the policies of the British colonial Administration.<sup>10</sup> With all these pressures, the British government, to save their face, began the inaugurations of different groups into the formulation of constitutions.

The first constitution was inaugurated in Nigeria called the 'Richard's Constitution'. The aims and objectives of this constitution was to promote the unity of the members of the country; to ensure that the people of Nigeria and by extension all the others in the region would participate in the discussions of their own affairs, Richard's constitution failed. With its

collapse came the Macpherson's constitution, which also failed again. The third was the Lyttleton constitution, this constitution also failed<sup>11</sup>.

The failures of the different constitutions to provide enough suitable and lasting solutions to the problems of people of the regions was a big indication that the people were tired of being colonized. They wanted to be free. The press, continued on daily basis to poison the minds of the masses, by enumerating the ills of colonialism in their write-ups. The colonial masters had no choice but to change their policies and create more receptive and more welcoming approach to woo back the confidence of the West African masses to themselves. It was then, they realized, the full implication of Mary Kinsley's advice which was earlier mentioned in chapter two. Unfortunately this was 20 years after the death of Mary Kinsley. Though they tried in their new change of policies through the means of the various constitutions, rapid industrialization process yet the West Africans were bent on having their own independence. Majority of them were very well educated to ignore the many ills of colonialism. The 2<sup>nd</sup> world war participants were also more exposed and more wiser, that on their return back home, to the West Africa regions, refused to tolerate colonial rules any more, no matter how they tried to blanket them.

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3. A Journal on Political Scramble for Africa by Austin Hinks vol. 2 page 3
4. Boluwaji on European Rule in West Africa page 21
5. Boluwaji on European Rule in West Africa pages 22 – 23.
6. West African Countries and Peoples with an Introduction by George Shepperson 1969.
7. Economic History of West Africa by Boluwaji Olaniyan, page 49.
8. An Article by Fergruson Payeju Distributed on a Meeting of the Nigerian Labour Union against Colonial Rule 1932.
9. Lecture Notes of MIAD Dr. Unobe on West African Sub-regions 2001.
10. Boluwaji on European Rule on West African pages 26-28.
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## CHAPTER FIVE

### 5.0 POLICY OF RAPID INDUSTRIALIZATION

The policy of rapid industrialization of West African colonies began in Europe. The age of industrialization in Europe had its effect on West Africa greatly in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century. The spread of industrial revolution made the colonial masters to begin to seek outlets overseas for manufactured goods and increased demands for supply of raw materials from West Africa. The desire for West African raw materials and other potentialities by the Europeans helped in no small way to increase the incentive for agricultural production.<sup>1</sup>

The previous economic colonial policies, were that, their colonies should produce agricultural crops for the mother country and help to sustain her economy by buying her manufactured goods in return. In addition to this, colonial rulers advocated that colonies must be self – supporting. They also said that colonies must be developed by encouraging Africans to participate in export and import trade. Realizing the key role of improved industrialization, transport services and communications in tapping the resources of West Africa were focused on. Thus railways, roads and more sea ports were constructed to make import and export trade easy. The influence of railways, roads and other means of transportation opened large areas and made inaccessible routes easy for entrance of civilization. There was a great demand for oleaginous products during the war. Throughout the forest belt there were millions of palm oil trees producing valuable palm kernels and oil,

and there were also innumerable other trees which produced timbre of great economic value.

In the former Northern Nigeria and Gambia, for instance, the cultivation of cotton and groundnut increased. The groundnuts which formed such an important export from West Africa were mostly decorticated before shipment from the same groundnut benniseed and shear-butter were made. Oil, margarine, candles and cattle feeds were also made from it. Amongst the minor exports of West Africa were ivory, ebony, copra, coffee, beewax, silk, gums, piassave, fibre, guinea – grains, capsicums, ginger and ostrich feathers. All these products were manufactured in a vast and massive production because of the new rapid industrialization policy. Great was the outcome of these as Britain poured in big money from her British purse without were being selfish and miserly towards her colonies. J. I. Roper in his words stated;

*"West Africa is in the turmoil of an economic revolution; The ancient foundations of social life are being shaken by new forces and pressure of new needs; the commercialisation of agriculture has brought into existence wide variety of subsidiary activities such as buying, grading, transporting and storing of crops."*

As the exports of West African goods grew, the demands for European goods also increased as many West Africans now had increased purchasing power. The principal importing countries were, United Kingdom, Germany, France and United States of America. They supplied cotton goods, haberdashery, woollen goods, wearing apparels, wine and other commodities. The establishment of European rule thus transformed West Africa in many directions. They saw the development on a very large scale of agricultural

exports, the development of modern commerce and the widespread use of money revolutionized economic position of many people.<sup>3</sup>

Wage earning employment began to gain some important position in the economy. Many development projects were undertaken in the colonies, the motive being to make them reasonably habitable by European standard. Railways, roads, bridges, hospitals, schools, electricity and public buildings were provided to raise the standard of living and to facilitate the growth of economic development. Health facilities and dispensaries were created making employment for nurses and sanitary inspectors to introduce hygiene on the environment. In British West Africa, the influence of the then Secretary of State for the colonies, Joseph Chamberlain, came to play an important role. He introduced new policy of constructive imperialism because he believed in giving direct financial aid to the colonies so as to raise the standard of living of the peoples. Colonial government realized that a higher speed of economic and social development would be achieved if colonial revenues could be supplemented by external borrowing for the execution of some projects. Hence overseas capital was invested in the construction of railways and roads and in the development of infrastructure in general. Although it is true that African's suffered and are still suffering because of colonial effects. In a recent publication of an article called the Anchor, it was stated;

*"Recently, the burgeoning number of refugees in West African Regions has been particularly attributed to the artificial boundaries and unfamiliar systems of government foisted on the continent by European colonialists, whose foray into Africa, dislocated the existing social order, consequently, it produced a systems of disorder".<sup>4</sup>*

We cannot also deny the facts that there were lots of gains and a lot more that the regions got from the process of colonialism. It should not be seen as a one-sided gain only, for the Europeans advantage, Africans, also gained. The *current political structures in most of the democratic systems in West African regions* came from the Europeans. It has its disadvantages but then such cannot be compared with the brutal military rules that invaded the politics of Africa nations for a very long time.

Easy communication systems came from them. You can easily communicate through Radiogramme, Telegram, letter writing from one end of the world to the other, that within and outside the West Africa region to the entire world. Sometime the act of communication can be so easily done through telephone or the computer. These were all the ideas of colonial masters. Areas where roads were previously un-used and abandoned or even left out for the *worshipping of idols, where gainfully used as decent road constructions* and in most cases charged to Government Reserved Area, or schools built on such grounds to enhance developmental facilities. The missionaries who came along with them helped to stop some obnoxious acts like that of killing of twins and expulsion of their mothers for bringing bad luck to their societies as were practiced in the countries of West African regions.

One cannot over-emphasize the educational benefits that the colonial masters brought into our regions. They built schools, gave us the basic education, and most of us excelled, and became better than even some of them. You can now talk of *experts in various fields of life from West African regions*. Our

professors from the various universities at home and abroad are living-proof. Our very intelligent lectures in various universities are also a proof. Our doctors can perform different kinds of operations which are done, previously in the European countries, now in our regions. Our men and women with various degrees were recently sort for to be taken abroad as citizens with their families through visa lottery popularly called Brain Drain. Our nurses and doctors are on daily basis being offered jobs with attractive salaries in European countries today. All these started from colonialism and its gains.

Another communication system that thrilled the people of the region was the radio and television area. The television steadily progressed from black and white, to coloured television. Then came the area of radio cassettes of various types and progressed to satellite and beautiful modifications. Today we can proudly say that infact mortality rate had greatly reduced the number of death rate reduced due to the cures that have been discovered of various diseases which were considered incurable those old days e.g. Malaria, Yellow fever, Jaundice, Cholera, Meningitis, Appendice e.t.c. their coming into Africa was a blessing in disguise. In as much as I refuse to see their arrival with light ..... in as much as I agree that African had a kind of light before their coming ..... it is obviously clear that their arrival brought into West African region lots of gains and brightness. It was only in their economic policy, which was the bedrock of any development that they failed and the failure was very obvious.

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2. West Africa Under Colonial Rule 1968 by M. Crowder, page 52
3. West African Countries and peoples magazine with an introduction written by George Shepperson Edinburge page 6
4. The Aunchor Vol. 1 No. 37 page 11.

## SUMMARY

The economic policy during the colonial era had its good and its. This study was able to trace out the trends in government economic policy on West African region. It went further to analyze the nature of the colonial economy how it concentrated this paper also tries to feature the three colonial powers that colonized the West African states and the policies they used. The paper carefully traced the different policies that were used by each, how, no matter which policy was used, their motives were the same – to exploit the so many resources of the West Africa and send the accumulated wealth back to enrich their home countries. The reasons that Britain had on why they did not make any serious efforts initially to industrialize their colonies in West Africa. It further continued to discuss and to consider the world depression of the 1930 which forced the Britain and France to re-examine their economic policies in their various colonies. The roles of new pressures and demands arising from the colonies themselves played in changing the thinking of Britain and France were enumerated and discussed. The new economic policies and development how they affected the scale and tempo of economic development and all the gains of West Africans on the new policy of rapid industrialization were also established.

**CONCLUSION:**

In conclusion though the Europeans early intention for coming into Africa was to colonize and dominate Africa so that, they can use the resources and use the people to tap the resources and send over to their homeland, their motives were purely for TRADE, generally economic reasons. Though they did not have any intension of doing their best to these people with no history as they claimed ----- that what was in Africa was darkness and that darkness had no history at all. Though any little development they started with was totally and entirely to help them penetrate into the interiors of Africa like roads, rails and sea routes. No matter what negative intensions they had earlier for coming into Africa, their arrival into Africa had a tremendous positive effect on West African regions. Trade was expanded. Africans began to deal with international trade. Exports from Africa increased. Hospitals were built to handle rear diseases that easily killed people of our region. Slave trade stopped. The killings of twins, which helped to finally liberate our people from colonial rule. As our West African people began to be literate, they were now exposed to the ills of colonial rules and they gained enough strength to fight Nationalisitically for their freedom, which eventually came.

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**SUGGESTIONS:**

The entire research on this work had truly and clearly shown that no matter how terrible the colonial era's policies were they eventually turned out to be, for the interest of the people of our region. So I suggest that:

- Every West African should reflect back on the European colonial era in West Africa with the warmth and honesty it deserves.
- That every teacher on this subject should without bias make each student to be objective in his or her views of this topic.

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