THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF AGRARIAN CAPITALISM:
A case study of Large-Scale Capitalist Farmers in Kaduna And Katsina states

BY

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Datei June, 1991..

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis has been composed by myself and that it is a record of my own research work. It has not been accepted in any previous application for a higher degree. All quotations and sources of information are specifically acknowledged by means of reference.

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ABSTRACT

The penetration of capital ism into Nigerian agriculture and the emergence and consolidation of a capitalist class of farmers in the country have, of recent, recieved a lot of attention. It is believed that the emergence of this class of farmers producing on a large scale and using the most modern technology oould solve the country's food crisis. The extent to which capitalism can transform the productive forces and corresponding relations of production in Nigeria just like it did in Western Europe and America is itself quite controversial. This question has been an issue which, historically, has constituted the central pointof polemics on social ohange and progress.

This study has examined the nature and dynamics of agrarian capitalism in Nigeria and the composition of the class of farmers spearheading this process. It has also looked at the changes this agrarian process *i§* bringing about in the countryside. Empirical evidence gathered from a selected sample of capitalist farmers, peasants and agricultural workers has revealed certain dimensions which capitalist agriculture is taking in the country. It has been found that agrarian capitalism in Nigeria thrives on the exploitation of the labour of peasants and agricultural workers coupled with a wide range of incentives and support measures offered by the state. The agrarian capitalist class in Nigeria has been found to make fortunes in agriculture which are hardly re-invested in farming. The survival and profitability of capitalist agriculture in found to depend heavily on the exploitation of existing pre-capitalist production relations which serve to cheapen the 'cost[1] of capitalist production in many ways.

It is still doubtful whether capitalist agriculture can meet the food needs of the Nigerian nation and solve its agraxian crisis. The contribution of capitalist farmers to the country's agricultural output is still insignificant despite generous state support measures. Even if this class could produce abundant food, its quest for profit would net allow some people, especially the poor, access to this food. Besides, the prospects of democracy, we have argued, stands to be jeopardised if the nation relies on the capitalist class for food. Thus, agricultural resources it has been recommended, should be concentrated in the hands of the peasant majority.

CERTIFICATION

This thesis entitled "The Political Economy of Agrarian Capitalism: A case study of large-scale capitalist farmers in Kaduna and Katsina States" by Abdullahi Labo, meets the regulations governing the award of the degree of M.Sc. (Sociology) of Ahmadu Bello University and is approved for its contribution to knowledge and literary presentation.

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Date

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ABBREVIATIONS

A.D.P.	-	Agricultural Development Project
B.C.G.A.	-	British Cotton Growers Association
F.A.D.P	-	Funtua Agricultural Development Project
F.L.D.	-	Federal Livestock Department
F.O.S.	-	Federal Office of Statistics
H.Y.V.	-	High Yielding Variety
J.A.C.C.	-	Joint Agriculture Consultative Committee
L.B.A.	-	Licenced Buying Agent
N.A.	-	Native Authority
N.A.C.B.	-	Nigerian Agricultural and Cooperative Bank
N.A.K.	-	National Archives Kaduna
N.A.F.P.P.	-	National Accelerated Food Production Programme
N.G.P.C.	-	National Grains Production Company
N.L.P.C.	-	National Livestock Production Company
N.R.C.P.C.	-	National Rootcrop Production Company
P.Z.	-	Paterson Zochonis
R.B.D.A.	-	River Basin Development Authority
S.A.P.	-	Structural Adjustment Programme
U.A.C.	-	United Africa Company
U.B.A.	-	United Bank for Africa
U.S.A.I.D.	-	United States Agency for International Development

GLOSSARIES OF HAUSA TERMS

Alkali	-	Judge
Aro	-	Loan
Gado	-	Inheritance
Galmar Shanu	-	Ox - Plough
Galla	-	Token Payment
Gandu	-	Collective land Ownership
Gandun Sarki	-	Emir's Farms
Gayya	-	Communal Work
Iyasa	-	Ruler's Discresion
Jingina	-	Pledge
Kyauta	-	Gift
Kwace	-	Confiscation
Musaya	-	Exchange
'Rabin Duniya'	-	Half of the World
Saye	-	Purchase
'SAI-KA-GANI'	-	Until-You-See
Unguwa	-	Quarter(residential)
'Yan-Kwadago'	-	Hired Labourers

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Preamble

> As far as anyone could look ahead, Africa's major problem in the future will not be one of race relations, nor even of political ideologies but of what the people would eat. Sir Godfrey Huggins (1950).

The Nigerian nation since the beginning of the 1970s has been immersed in a food crisis. This crisis has generated serious concern both from within and outside the country largely due to the recognition that a large number of people would be affected if famine struck. Besides, rising food deficits, skyrocketting food prices, rural-urban migration, raw material shortages etc. have combined to strengthen the belief that unless the situation is squarely addressed, the problem is most likely to escalate. Thus, the thrust of government policies, public commentaries and scholarly attention has over the years focussed on possible strategies for solving the problem so as to avoid a replay of the Ethiopian or Sudanese famine experiences.

The socio-political and economic implications of the crisis have combined to further re-inforce government concern and efforts towards resolving the problem. It has became very clear in the eyes of policy makers and many scholars that the deteriorating food situation in the country and the inability of the nation to be self-sufficient in food is capable of generating tensions which could topple

existing political regimes. Infact, the termination of the Second Republic in 1983 by the Military was partly due to massive food shortage and rising food prices and the ineptitude of the civilian government to find a solution to the problem[1].

1.2. THE MANIFESTATIONS AND MAGNITUDE OF THE CRISIS

The agrarian and food crisis in Nigeria has assumed a wide variety of dimensions and the situation has been manifested in a number of forms. On the quantitative side, the picture is that of general decline. Even-though the agricultural sector employs the vast majority of the population, its share of the Gross Domestic product (G.D.P.) declined from about 31 percent in 1973 to about 23 percent in 1979 and 22 percent in 1980. Between 1981 and 1985, its percentage share fluctuated between 21 and 23 percent[2]. This is an alarming situation especially when compared with the country's annual population growth of between 3.0 and 3.5 percent.

Set against this trend of decline was the growing demand for food, a situation which has resulted in food deficits which, from Apeldoorn's computation, could reach about 10 million tonnes by 1990[3]. Arising from this situation was the escalation of food prices. The consumer price index for food went above that of all other commodities (see table 1.1.).

The nascent industrial sector became another victim of the situation as domestic production became unable to meet its raw material needs. As a result, the capacity utilization of most industries declined.

Very importantly also, the teeming rural population that depends on agriculture for its self-sustenance became increasingly poor and vulnerable to hunger. Rural-urban migration became quite pronounced as the rural poor intensified their exodus to the cities in search of non-existent "white collar" jobs. The rural environment, once luxuriant with water and vegetation cover became increasingly degraded due to over cultivation and wide spread disruption.

The immediate response of the Nigerian government to the dwindling food situation was to resort to massive food importation notably from America and Thailand thus creating a dangerous dependance on foreign food sources. The country's increased earnings from petroleum resulting from the OPEC - spearheaded price increases greatly expanded Nigeria's ability to massively import agricultural products. The table below shows the magnitude of the problem using indices of production, imports and consumer prices from the middle of 1970s to the late 1980s.

TABLE 1.1

INDICES OF FOOD PRODUCTION, IMPORTS AND CONSUMER PRICES 1975-1989 (1975=100)

Year	prod. of major food crops	Value of food imports (₦m)	Consumer price index (food only)	Consumer price index (all items)
1975	100	277.86	100	100
1976	99	438.93	128.1	124.3
1977	98	702.01	155.2	145.5
1978	96	1108.66	196.3	176.0
1979	98	1105.90	210.2	195.6
1980	100	1437.50	233.5	217.9
1981	99	2115.10	303.0	263.1
1982	100	950.60	327.7	283.2
1983	98	121.00	481.0	339.8
1984	95	820.01	585.3	479.7
1985	89	940.6	575.7	493.8
1986	98	801.9	619.2	543.6
1987	93	1646.6	652.5	581.6
1988	184	821.6	902.5	739.5
1989	98	168.1	1265.1	1089.2

Source: O. Awoyemi, "Character of Nigerian Agriculture" BULLION Vol VI No. 4, 1984

Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN)

As was the case with the food problem, the growing raw material shortage for Nigeria's industries was filled through massive importation. In 1982 for example Nigeria imported 58,000 metric tonnes of cotton lint worth 85 million U.S. dollars and 153,000 tonnes of palm oil valued at 92 million dollars[4]. By 1984, the poultry Association of Nigeria (PAN) alone had put in a request to the government for the importation of 600,000 metric tonnes of maize to offset the shortfall in the quantity needed[5].

A number of explanations have been put forward by scholars in the attempt to explain this problem. These includes among others, the overemphasis on export crop production, the 1967-1970 civil war, and the Sudano-Sahelian drought that affected the northern states between 1971 and 1973. A non-cogent reason given in explaining the development was that government had neglected agriculture in terms of resource allocation with the coming of oil[6]. The fact on the ground however is that agriculture was never neglected. For example during the 1970-74 development plan, it attracted a total expenditure allocation of ₦215.4 ie. 13.8 percent of total public sector allocation. Also during the 1975-1980 plan, it gulped ₦2,207 million ie. 18.5 percent of total public sector capital expenditure allocation[7]. Thus, the sector's problems could therefore be partly attributed to graft and persistent corruption[8].

However, the position of the Nigerian government since the eruption of the food crisis is that the problem has been the result of underproduction and other constraining factors within the agricultural sector. As far back as 1982, for example, the the permanent

Secretary in the Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Alhaji M. Liman put the official position as follows: "there is ample evidence that food gap or food deficit exists in Nigeria". The country he concluded therefore, "would require revolutionary agricultural programmes if complete self-sufficiency is to be attained by 1985 or soon after"[9]. (Emphasis original). This position is in tandem with that of scholars who claim that the crisis has been the result of the inability of peasant production to meet national demand. This is seen to have resulted in the existence of "deficits" between aggregate food demand and domestic food output[10]. In prescribing strategies for overcoming the crisis, proponents of this position have consistently put forward technically oriented proposals which aim at increasing productivity with the hope of resolving the crisis.

The direction of governmental thinking and policy formulation since the eruption of the crisis has therefore centred around the promotion of capitalist agriculture with the aim of solving the problem. In this regard, large-scale farmers, by virtue of their ability to afford and make use of sophisticated farm machinery, fertilizer, high yielding variety seeds etc. are considered as capable of transforming the rural sector to produce abundant food and solve the crisis. Besides, these newbreed farmers are believed to be in possession of a high degree of entrepreneurial skills which could make them capable of attracting foreign investors to give a helping hand in the desired transformation[11]. On the other hand, peasant farmers, by virtue of their small-scale production and backward technology were held responsible for the crisis. For this reason, the transcending of peasant

farming with capitalist agriculture is considered necessary if the problem is to be resolved. To drive the point further, government has also directed industries to engage in large-scale farming with a view to ensuring adequate local supply of raw materials so as to conserve foreign exchange. Thus, textile firms, breweries, flour mills etc. have moved into capitalist farming to comply with the government directive[12].

1.3. THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

In contesting the position of the state and that of technocratic scholars, it is our view that the most appropriate starting point in understanding the dynamics of the crisis is not to solely attribute it to underproduction, but also importantly to link it with other political, economic and social forces that have their roots in the capitalist mode of production. This is because underproduction itself has been shaped by these same forces, such as increasing commoditisation which has destroyed the very foundation of peasant landuse patterns and impeded the natural regenerative cycles of the soil[13]. The technocratic analysis therefore has failed to realise the fact that the crisis can best be understood by identifying the social groups and classes most vulnerable to it[14]. The holders of this view, therefore, cannot espouse solid strategies that could tackle the problem from its foundations.

Thus, a proper comprehension of the food situation would necessarily involve a conception of the problem in terms of the most affected classes. This is so because in Nigeria as well as in other societies, hunger and starvation are experienced mainly by the lower

classes while the upper classes are fond of luxurious consumption. It is therefore fundamental that any attempt to tackle the problem should address the inequality question or the "entitlement" question[15] rather than concentrate on addressing food gaps only[16]. It is our contention that to concentrate on addressing the problem within the productionist perspective would not allow for a grasp of its important social and political characteristics. A wide variety of important dimensions of the situation such as the social cost of capitalist farming, the drastic dislocations it imposes in the countryside, its oppression of labour etc. are bound to be ignored. Little wonder that inspite of governmental enthusiasm in initiating capitalist farming, the food problem has persisted. Infact, this persistence has been central in the toppling of the erstwhile civilian regime in 1983.

Thus, keeping aside the persistent governmental enthusiasm on the desirability of promoting capitalist agriculture, serious questions can be raised regarding the form it takes in Nigeria. For example, even at the level of state policy and scholarly advocacy, one is bound to rise a number of questions concerning the specific nature of agrarian capitalist transformation actually taking place in the country. What, for instance, are the kinds of changes being brought about by this process particularly in the countryside? What is the specific nature of the class of farmers spearheading the process? Are they capable of feeding the nation? If they can, would the hungry classes in society be in a position to afford the food? If that is possible, then under what socio-structural and political conditions?

Besides, it is a common knowledge that large-scale capitalist agriculture involves the expansion and consolidation of land holdings. What then is the fate of the peasantry who are most likely to be affected? What is the extent of labour commercialisation and subordination in the rural areas? What are the impacts of this process in the sharpening of rural differentiations and contradictions in Nigeria? These are questions which this study is raising and which it seeks to address. It is our view that an understanding of these issues is pertinent in comprehending the nature, prospects and implications of the current capitalist offensive on Nigerian agriculture.

Although many social scientists have paid significant attention to the emerging agrarian capitalist development in its various dimensions, most, however, have not paid particular attention to undertaking a concrete study of this dimension of the process. They did not pay much attention to the composition and basic characteristics of the emerging agrarian capitalist class in the country. For example, many of the works have tended to be specific case studies of government agricultural projects such as the irrigation and the integrated agricultural development projects[17], agricbusiness and peasant proletarianisation[18] etc. This, however, is not to say that all these studies are silent on the emerging agrarian capitalist class in Nigeria. Many of them had infact pointed out clearly how these government projects have systematically supported the emergence and consolidation of the class.

On our part, we consider isolating this class for study necessary because understanding it, we believe, is the crucial starting point in coming to grips with the emerging process of

capitalist agricultural development in the country. It is by comprehending the genesis and nature of this class that the entire process could be brought into better focus and the particular form it is taking in the country better understood. It was the absence of such concrete studies that has led to a number of guesses and misleading assumptions about the process. For example, it has led to the popular notion that capitalist farmers in Nigeria are not "serious" or are merely out to use agriculture to cover up their dubious business elsewhere. In as much as this could be true, it is our opinion that this sort of conclusion would remain misleading unless it becomes informed by concrete empirical evidence. Thus, this study intends to address the questions raised above by focussing specifically on Kaduna and Katsina states of Nigeria.

1.4. DATA COLLECTION

The search for data for this research began in the last quarter of 1987 when a pilot study was conducted. The aim was to comb the field so as to get its general picture. The rest of the data collection was conducted in 1988 and reconducted in 1990.

1.4.1. THE PILOT STUDY

The pilot study was conducted with the aim of developing initial impressions before the actual field work was done. Two capitalist farms were visited in four local government areas during which we spoke informally with farm owners or their managers. It was at this stage we recognised some of the problems we were bound to encounter on the field.

1.4.2. THE FIELD WORK

In the process of conducting this research, we got our primary information through the use of structured interviews and questionaires. The respondents comprised of large-scale farmers; peasants around the capitalist farms; and agricultural workers working on identified capitalist farms. peasants around the capitalist farms were covered to obtain information on rural differentiation in the area. Agrarian workers were covered being a crucial factor in the overall production process on the capitalist farms. Thus measuring the degree of labour exploitation in capitalist holdings is crucial in understanding the operation of these farms.

In sampling out the large-scale farmers for this study, we initially made a long list of these farmers from the two states covered. It was from this list we made a stratified random selection of thirty-two (32) farmers; that is, we randomly selected 32 farmers taking into consideration the individual strength of those selected. Interviews were conducted which took the form of free and structured discussions with these farmers. During the interviews, the questions asked centred around their sources and methods of land acquisition, their relationship with the surrounding peasantry, their own backgrounds and other issues relating to the day-to-day operation of their farms.

Availability sampling was used in choosing our peasant respondents. Fifty (50) peasants were covered in each of the four selected villages bringing the total to 200. The questionaires were administered in Mairuwa, Yammama, Yakasuda and Zonkwa. The concentration of capitalist farms around these villages informed

the selection of our peasant sample from these villages. Questions asked centred around methods of land acquisition, degree of land transaction in the areas, sources of labour and other farm inputs, relation with large-scale farmers, etc.

Out of a total population of 1506 agricultural workers employed in the 32 capitalist farms covered in this study, a sample of 100 workers was selected for interviews. This number constitutes 8% of the workers population which is adequate enough to represent the labour segment of the study.

Beside the conventional methods of questionnaire and interview administration, we also used our own observations on the field. Aspects that could easily be seen such as the extent of mechanization, crop preferences, labour utilisation etc. were observed and where necessary, clarification were sought from the farm owners or their managers. Generally, it was through observations that we were able to establish a few impressions which were later clarified from those we interviewed.

Besides, in the course of conducting this research, we benefitted from a wide variety of secondary data ranging from published to unpublished works as well as official documents. In this connection, we have made use of a number of materials at various libraries, the National Archives Kaduna, the Federal Office of Statistics (FOS) etc. We made use of the evidences we got from these sources to support some of our research findings. We sometimes even based our interpretations and arguments on these sources especially where we felt they were reliable.

1.5. PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS AND SOCIO-HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE RESEARCH AREA

1.5.1. Location:

The Kaduna and Katsina states of Nigeria cover an area of 70,210 square kilometres and stretch between latitudes 9° 00' and 13° 50' north of the equator and longitudes 6° 00' and 9° 00' east of the prime Meridian.

The two states which until recently (1987) constituted the old Kaduna State are bounded on the north by Niger Republic, on the north-west by Sokoto State, south and South-west by Niger State, South by the Federal Capital Territory, South-east by plateau State, East by the Bauchi State and North-east by Kano State. The 1976 local government reforms broke the two states into fourteen local government areas as follows: Kaduna, Zaria, Ikara, Jama'a, Kachia, Saminaka, Birnin-Gwari (all now in Kaduna State), Katsina, Daura, Kankia, Dutsinma, Malumfashi, Mani and Funtua (all now in Katsina State) (see appendix). This study is based on field data collected in Malumfashi, Zaria, Funtua and Kachia Local Government Areas.

1.5.2. Relief

The nature of the underlying geological formation in Kaduna and Katsina States consists of a peneplain developed on precambrian rocks of variable composition. In the southern parts of Kaduna State up to the area adjoining the Jos plateau are to be

found the highest parts with some areas well over 915 metres above sea level[19]. Also to be found beginning from that area is the general slope of the land in a north-westerly direction from the South-east of Kaduna State covering substantial parts of Jama'a, Zaria, Birnin-Gwari and Kintua local government areas. That slope has constituded an erosion surface of between 610-915 metres above sea level. The lowest points in the two states are to be found in the shallow valleys of rivers at 305-610 metres above sea level in the northern extreme around Daura and Katsina area[20].

1.5.3. Climate:

The importance of climate to a study of this nature is obvious particulary because of the crucial link between this factor and agricultural production. Thus, just like their physical features the climatic characteristics of the different parts of the two states varies in the north-south direction with rainfall becoming heavier as one moves southwards. For example, using running averages for over 10 years from 1975-1985, the Kaduna State Statistical Year Book has presented the state's average annual rainfall to have varied from 582 millimetres fro Katsina, through 960 millimetres fro Zzari, 1,264 for Kaduna, and a heavy 1,382 millimetres for Zonkwa in Kachia local government area.

Equally important are the months of the year when such rain-days occur. Katsina's wettest months are July and August; while those for Zaria extend to between May and September. Zonkwa's wet months extend to between April and October while the wettest

season for the Funtua/Gusau belt extends to between June and early September. It is pertinent to indicate that the duration and spread of the rainy season is very crucial to the kinds of crop varieties grown. Besides, the planning of farm operations, choice of crops and other varieties, and the assessment of the possibility of drought and other hazards in the different parts of the states can be considered within the context of rainfall distribution. It also indicates the ecological reasons that have made large-scale capitalist farmers to gravitate into specific areas to establish their farms. In short, it shows why most large-scale farmers preferred the middle and southern parts of the two states.

1.5.4. Historical Background:

Historically, most of Kaduna and Katsina states were part of the Sokoto caliphate renown for its feudal characteristics. The caliphate, according to Hill's demographic speculation, contained about 10 million people at the turn of the century and was overwhelmingly agrarian in character[21]. It was a complete rural economy "... based on a complex admixture of long term swidden (shifting), short term follow and permanent systems of agriculture, diversified by their raising of cattle and small livestock and dry season irrigation"[22]. It was marked by high agricultural output mostly in cotton and groundnut that permitted the flourishing of trade[23].

Thus, from the onset, the social relations of production in the caliphate were structured in such a way that effective power

Over persons and their productive resources was used to perpetrate exploitation and extortion. In this sense, therefore the State it self was directly responsible for the extraction of peasant surplus through the network of administrative and social structures. With the advent of colonialism in the early twentieth century, this indigenous feudal base prouded a fertile social climate for the initiation of commercial agricultural activities mostly in cotton and groundnuts.

In consideration of the above, coupled with the climatic suitability of the area for sustainable production, the British Cotton Growers Association (BCGA) established itself in Funtua and spread its tentacles to the neighbouring areas particularly Zaria and Gusau. Othe European trading companies such as Paterson Zochonis (PZ), G.B. Ollivant, the United Africa Company(UAC) etc. followed suit by establishing themselves in this area in conjunction with their Licened Buying Agents (LBAs) thus stimulating the development of commercial agriculture in the area. Each of these companies has important warehouses in Funtua and Zaria that served as centres where such commercial activities took place. Thus, these early colonial developments coupled with the historical roots established during the Sokoto Caliphate were re-enforced and consolidated with the establishment of capitalist projects such as the Funtua Agricultural Development Project (FADP). There factors have combined to attract many rich entrepremers who have found the area suitable for capitalist agricultural production. The selection of this area for our study, therefore, is directly connected with the proliferation of capitalist farming in the area.

1.5.5. Social Characteristics:

The total population of the two states according to the 1963 census was 4.0 million. A projection based on the annual growth rate of 3.0 percent per annum suggests that the population had increased to 5.9 million in 1978, 7.04 million in 1984 and 8.41 million in 1990. However, if the two states are considered individually on the basis of the 1963 census, Kaduna state had 1,555,301 people while Katsina state had 2,545,005 people. projections based on 3.0 percent per annum growth rate would give Kaduna 289 million in 1987 and 3.45 in 1990. Katsina state's projected population would then be 4.73 million in 1984, 5.17 million in 1987 and 5.65 million in 1990.

This study is centred on the people of Funtua, Malumfashi, Kachia and Zaria Local Government areas. The population figures of the four areas according to the 1963 census are as follows; Malumfashi, 278.090; Funtua, 420.606; Kachia, 296.570; and Zaria, 370.290. The 1990 population projections of the local government areas based on 3.0 percent annual growth rate gave the figures as follows; Malumfashi, 617,718; Funtua, 934,287; Kachia, 658,768 and Zaria, 822,521. On the villages where we took our peasant samples, the 1990 projection of their population on the same criterion as above are; Yarmama,11,036; Mairuwa, 29163; Yakawada, 15,649 and Zonkwam 20,910.

The two states also have a peculiar blend of nationality composition that adds more light to the manner capitalism penetrates specific societies. For example, the ethnic background of the

people of our study area reflects the dominant nationality trend in these specific areas. Thus, in Funtua and Malumfashi in Katsina state and also Zaria Local Government Area in Kaduna State, the predominant ethnic groups are the Hausa and the Fulani. However, in Kachia Local Government Area, varying ethnic groups could be found, the chief ones being the Kaje, Kataf and Kadara. Others include the Jaba, Kamanten, Ikulu and Chawai[24]. This stuey was undertaken amidst these varying ethnic groups whose economic and overall ways of life are being affected by capitalist advance.

1.6. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study has been undertaken with the belief that tounderstand the emerging class of capitalist farmers and the process they are spearheading would require a departure from the conventional generalisation of seeing them as an amorphous class into a study of their specific characteristics. This endeavour would help us to update or even revise our ideas and theories regarding the concrete social forces in control of agriculture and then be able to see whether they could solve the food crisis as claimed. Deriving from this kind of study also, it is our hope that government policies would have a sharper focus on the classes it intends to address. This is the more necessary because most policies tend to speak of "farmers" as if they all belong to the same class. This amorphous reference has resulted in capitalist farmers hijacking resources meant for peasant farmers including

disaster relief packages meant for the most vulnerable classes. Again, popular forces, it is hoped, would have a sharply focussed target on which class to aim at in the current on-going praxis for democratic reforms and transformation. For by understanding the nature of rural social forces, democrats may not dissipate much energy in pin-pointing targets in the countryside.

Besides, the proliferation of official reports and surveys has continued to pose a challenge to academic researchers. Such documents have tended to portray government biases or sometimes claim to be neutral. It has therefore become desirable and necessary for researchers to take up that challenge by initiating and conducting empirical researches that could effectively put our realities into sharper and more relevant focus. This could also give us the insight to re-interprete these official sources in a manner relevant to our purposes. The significance of this research resides in its ability to achieve the points raised above.

1.7. OUTLINE OF THE CHAPTERS

This work is divided into five (5) chapters including the 'introduction'. As already seen we started this introductory chapter with a brief review of the Nigeria's food crisis; its manifestations and dimensions coupled with the conception of some scholars and the state on the nature of the problem and

and the measures taken to confront the situation. We went ahead and posed the research problem by showing how the state's conception of thecrisis ignores significant socio-political dimensions of the situation. We raised questions on this development, declared our intension to research into it as well as indicating how to go about conducting the research and its significnace.

Chapter two is devoted to the understanding of the nature of capialist agriculture itself and the whole debate on the agrarian question. Its classical as well as contemporary origins were looked into with a conclusion pointing to the path that is most relevant in resolving the agrarian question in Nigeria.

Chapter three discussed the nature and emergence of capitalist farmers in Nigeria in terms of the socio-historical forces that generated their coming into being. We discussed the manner in which various state policies have supported them how they themselves influence government policies, their level of maturation, their relations with foreign capital and peasantry.

In chapter four, we presented both the primary and secondary data we collected and discussed them extensively. In chapter five, the last one we summerised and concluded the work.

FOOT NOTES

1. See General M. Buhari's maiden address to the nation, New Nigerian, 2/1/84.

2. Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN), Agricultural policy FOR Nigeria Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Lagos 1988 p. 3.

3. G.J.V. Apeldoorn. Perspectives on Drought and Famine in Nigeria. Allen and Unwin, London, p. 123.

4. S.A. Nkom, "The Deepening food crisis in Nigeria: Structural origins, policy, options and security implications" paper presented at the international workshop on Food and Security in Africa Senegal, Dakar, 1987, p. 16.

5. National Concord, 25/2/84 p. 15.

6. See for example S.T. Titlela, "The state and Food policies in Nigeria" in T. Mkandawire and N. Bournane, State and Agriculture in Africa CODESRIA, 1987.

7. E. Toyo, "Food and Hunger in a petroleum neo-colony: A study of food crisis in Nigeria" in P. Lawrence (ed) World Recession and Food Crisis in Africa. James Currey, London, 1986.

8. See an exposition of this trend in A. Abba et al., The Nigerian Economic Crisis; Causes and Solutions. Gaskiya, 1986.

9. Alhaji M. Liman, "Prospects, problems of Agricultural Development in Nigeria" in Sunday New Nigerian, 8th August, 1982 p. 7 and 14.

10. For a summary and critique of this position, see Nkom, op. cit, 1987.

11. S.A. Nkom, "Contradictions in Nigeria's attempt to solve its food crisis through capitalist agriculture" Sociology Departmental Seminar, 1985.

12. G. Andrea and B. Beckman, Industry Goes Farming, Research Report No. 80. Scandanavian Institute of African Studies, Uppsala, 1987.

13. B.G. Schoept, "Food crisis and class formation in Zaria" in P. Lawrence (ed)op. cit, 1986.

14. Nkom, op. cit, 1985.

15. See Amartya Sen, Poverty and Famines; An Essay on Entitlement and Deprivation Clarendon press, 1988.

16. As in Alhaji Liman's thesis, op. cit, 1982.

17. See for example, T. Wallace, Rural Development through Irrigation CSER, 1984.

18. See for example, "United States Agribusiness and the Marginalisation of the peasantry in Kaduna State" paper at Seminar on Nigerian Economy and Society since Berline Conference, 1985.

19. NISER, Kaduna State; A Survey of Resources for Development Ibadan, 1980 p. 7.

20. Ibid, p. 8.

21. Polly Hill, Rural Hausa; A Village and a Setting, Cambridge University press, 1977 p. 7.

22. Michael Watts, Silent Violence; Food, Famine and peasantry in Northern Nigeria, University of California press, 1983 p. 61.

23. See a discussion of this in M.G. Smith, Government in Zazzau. International African Institute.

24. The August Accession, A publication of the Ministry of Information, Kaduna State, 1986.

CHAPTER TWO

THE FOOD QUESTION AND AGRARIAN CAPITALIST TRANSFORMATION

2.1. INTRODUCTION

The poor performance of the agricultural sector in Nigeria and many Third World countries beginning from the third quarter of the twentieth century has generated an active debate on the whole question of food and the transformation of the entire rural sector as a way of solving the food problem. The crippling paralysis of the rural sector of countries which hitherto exported food and primary products has generated serious fear that this problem could further endanger their development prospects. Raza, for example, has shown that between 1970 and 1978, Nigeria registered a declining annual cereal grain yield of - 1.4 percent[1]. Similar trends have occured in subsequent years[2].

This alarming situation has prompted the emergence of a widely held view that agrarian capitalist transformation as it obtained in the west from the beginning of the nineteenth century is the best option in resolving the crisis[3]. In other words, the proponents of this position are calling for the adoption of the capitalist style agrarian transformation through the introduction of scientific techniques to enhance productivity[4]. It has therefore become an article of faith among many commentators to believe that the current capitalist offensive on peasant societies should be encouraged if the crisis is to be solved. The rationale behind this belief is that capitalist agriculture, by virtue of its sophistication is capable of ensuring rapid agricultural growth

to feed the nation[5]. Vast quantities of food could be produced, it has been argued, with the introduction of modern farming practices and technology. A change in the outmoded land tenure system dominated by fragmented peasant holdings would give way for a better and more production oriented tenure under capitalist dispensation.

In this regard, Nigerian agriculture is sought to be developed through the achievement of fast technological revolution to overcome the current agrarian crisis. In otherwords, the agrarian question is desired to be resolved via the capitalist path to agricultural development in conjunction with international capital in order to enable the transformation to take root[6].

However, the coming into prominence of the capitalist class of farmers coupled with the kinds of support they received and the contacts they have established with foreign capital has resulted in the emergence of a lope-sided agrarian relation which is highly detrimental to the survival of the small peasant production[7]. Thus, throughout the length and breadth of the country, capitalist agriculture is increasingly taking over huge tracts of land in a society dominated by the small producers who constitute about 80 percent of the population[8].

2.2. CAPITALISM IN AGRICULTURE

The relationship between capitalism and agriculture had historically been central in the transformation of many societies from their state of backwardness. The transformation of the conditions and relations agricultural production were of deter-

minant imprtance in the genesis of the capitalist mode of production. Marx and Engels[9] have repeatedly pointed out the fundamental laws of capitalist development that apply to the development of capitalist agrarian relations. The development of the productive forces leads, in the one hand as in the other, to the displacement of small production by big capitalist production. The dissolution of the pre-capitalist relations in the countryside thus, leads to the "... dispossession of small peasant farmers and the creation of a landless, propertyless class who, to live must hire themselves for wages"[10].

However, it is pertinent to indicate that in colonial and semi-colonial enclaves of the third world, the encroachment of capitalistic agrarian relations was unique. This is because this development came as a direct result of deliberate imperialist legislations geared towards the ruination of the small producer. In the case of Nigeria, for example, Oculi has shown how, right from the colonial period, "class interest interacted with political power" [11] to inaugurate an agricultural regime that enhanced the process of surplus appropriation by the dominant classes while at the same time undermining the ability of the small producers to sustain themselves. In the case of Latin America, Frank has demonstrated how capitalist social relations of production spread quickly and uniformly throughout these social formations with their integration in the capitalist world system[12]. In these cases, therefore, it was not uncommon that the invasion of their 'natural economy' by capital and the subsequent creation of a propertyless class on the land could hasten the development

of class differentiations within the peasantry leading to the emergence of well-to-do peasants[13]. Thus, in general terms, agrarian capitalist development in the Third World, being an imposed type as distinct from that which evolved out of the internal dynamic of society is bound to generate its own distinct implications and consequences at the economic and political levels.

Thus broadly speaking, we can distinguish several but related processes through which agrarian capitalism could become established. In the first place, production becomes increasingly specialised resulting in changes in the social division of labour and greater use of technology in production. production in this respect, becomes more differentiated than under the pre-capitalist situation[14]. Secondly, even though there tends to be significant specialisation in the production process, the usage of advanced technology and a closer articulation with the market leads to a concentration of production in fewer and larger enterprises. With this development also, the total size of land put to use increases but, paradoxically, in the manner industries develop in the early stages of capitalism, the number of workers employed by these farms declines. This process is aptly captured by Keith Griffin as follows;

> As agriculture becomes more commercialised, one can expect greater specialisation and division of labour. Occupations will become more specific, social relations will become distinct and the customary terms on which services are exchanged will tend to give way to formal contracts... Commercialisation will tend to concentrate the function of entrepremership into few hands. In the process, the peasantry will be destroyed. The quantity of goods produced may increase but the quality of life may decrease. 15

However, what is remarkably significant regarding the encroachment of capitalism in agriculture is the net effect of the entire process in transforming production and its corresponding relations. The penetration of capitalism into backward societies has resulted in the changing of the traditional farming methods of the societies affected. Such old methods which gave no room for the application of new knowledge to farming it has been argued, consumed much of peasant's energy without significant improvement in crop yield. On the other hand, the consolidated farms and the new production relations which capitalism came with have made possible the emergence of new production system that enhanced productivity despite the pain the process introduced by torning the pre-capitalist formation asunder[16].

Besides, capitalism has created significant changes in the relationships of men in agricultural production. The pre-capitalist small holding was merely self-supporting with insignificant investment. peasant relationship with the market was slight as production was primarily geared towards consumption by family members. However, the encroachment of capitalist forces in rural societies has led to a total re-direction and transformation of society. production become geared towards the market as agricultural products were new commodities subject to the laws of demand and supply. On this score, therefore, the notion of abundant productivity being brought about by the sophistication of capitalist agriculture as being solely capable of resolving the agrarian question is questionable. This is

because food, under the capitalist order is a commodity which, to have access to it, people must be able to afford it. For example, while the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) in 1978 assessed an increase in the number of malnurished people, the United States Department of Agriculture at the same time reported dramatic rises in per capita world food output as compared to the previous decade[17]. This is a demostration of the capability of scientific agriculture to raise productivity but not necessarily capable of feeding the society.

However, in the case of Third World Countries, other additional problems exist which have constituted a bottleneck to the emergence of a 'smooth' agrarian capitalist development that could effectively address the agrarian problem. As indicated earlier, the specific kind of capitalist incursion that occured in these countries has generated totally different impacts in these societies. Similarly, several problems and constraints in these social formations have impeded a re-occurence of the type of agrarian capitalist development that took place in Western Europe.

In the first instance, a very significant constraining factor in the smooth emergence of capitalist agriculture in these societies is the lack of an industrial base capable of absorbing the displaced rural labour. Since the emergence and consolidation of capitalist agriculture requires a fundamental transformation of property relations, the bulk of the affected peasantry are bound to be dispossessed by the emerging capitalist

holdings. However, unlike western Europe in the nineteenth century, Third World countries currently do not possess the industrial base to absorb the dispossed rural labour. Also, considering the size of the peasant population in contemporary Third World countries, its dislocation could only lead to the intensification of poverty among the poor, rather than the promotion of any significant capitalist enterprise that could enhance productivity[18].

Besides, several arguments have been propounded by scholars showing that the kind of bourgeois class that exist in Nigeria and the Third World is not capable of spearheading the transformation of production as their west-European counterparts did when capitalism was emerging there. This is because being appendages of foreign capital, their major interest does not lie in transforming production but simply in obtaining their profits at the commercial level[19]. Thus, the subservience of the national bourgeoisie to imperialism is another constraining factor towards the emergence of a 'real' agrarian capitalist class that could lead the capitalist revolution in the countryside.

Thus, it is significant to highlight at this juncture that considering the problems associated with capitalist agrarian development, an understanding of the manner in which capitalism penetrates agriculture has to identify the form it takes in specific social formations. The crave in some quarters for the replication of say the British enclosure system in Nigeria is insensitive to the objective situation on the ground. To be sure,

no progressive people can reject the fruits of scientific and technological achievements of the modern world especially with the deepening of the agrarian crisis. However, the deployment of modern scientific and technological innovations in a society such as Nigeria must not be outside the context of social, economic and political conditions of the society. For unlike in the West, for instance, where there was a distinct pattern in which capitalist enclosures tookover from the openfield owners, the case of Nigeria and most Third World countries is distinct. This is because in these cases, it is not uncommon to also find capitalism co-existing with pre-capitalism, the peasant co-existing with the capitalist farmer under the dominance of capitalist order[20]. Above all, the agrarian question in a number of social formations has remained on the high agenda in the political question of many countries. Questions on how to resolve the agrarian question have constituted the sources of intense political struggles and academic debates in the histories of agrarian and post-agrarian societies.

2.3. THE DEBATE ON THE AGRARIAN QUESTION

Originally, the agrarian question was a political question which confronted the parties of the Second Socialist International in Europe towards the end of the nineteenth century[21]. The predominance of peasant population in societies where those parties were active led to question such as whether or not peasants were disappearing; whether or not progressive forces should protect peasant properties etc. Hussain and Tribe summarised the situation as follows:

> The agrarian question was composed of a set of questions which the social democratic parties faced; how to win the electoral support of the peasantry, which section of the rural population should the parties try to appeal to and on what basis? 22

With the coming of Lenin and Kautsky into the scene, the agrarian question expanded to incorporate the development of capitalism in agriculture. The debate at this juncture, mainly based on Marxist classics, focussed on the direction and pace of agrarian capitalist development; why capitalist development in industry differs from that of agriculture; why capitalism tends to co-exist with elements of pre-capitalist order and so on[23].

However, when the Bolsheviks took over power, the question further expanded to encapsulate the role of the peasantry in socialist society, in accumulation and industrialisation and the part played by the Kulaks in the countryside. In the 1950s, the agrarian question shifted to raising questions on the role of the peasantry in national liberation struggles, in social revolutions and other agrarian struggles[24]. In the current African context, the agrarian question, needs further expansion to tackle issues dealing with food security and rural immiserisation.[25] From the foregoing, it could be seen that the agrarian question itself is heteregenous and unique at different times in different societies, depending on the nature, interest and dynamics of social forces at a time.

2.3.1. The Marxist Classics

The debate on the development of capitalism in agriculture as indicated earlier had its origins in the polemic on the agrarian question in Europe, including Russia. Although the conditions described in these social formations were historically more specific than was recognised at the time, this controversy has greatly influenced the development of Marxist theory on the agrarian question. This debate, though seemingly outdated, has continued to assume relevance in contemporary Marxist theory because the vexed question of the peasantry's identity, its place within a social formation dominated by capitalism, and its susceptibility to transformation has continued to re-curr.[26]

Writing in the Eighteenth Brumaire, Marx analysed the process that led to the demise of the European peasantry as capitalism tightened its grips around the necks of the small producers. With this encroachment by capital, Marx believed that the fate of the European peasant was sealed and that ultimately, he would be squeezed out of existence to join the ranks of the working class, the grave diggers of capitalism and the flag bearers of socialism. Thus, at the centre of Marx's contention on the peasantry is that there existed a contradiction between the dynamic growth of industrial capitalism and the persistence of pre-capitalist land ownership and production. For Marx therefore, the disappearance of the peasantry was the most interesting part of the peasant question. For their demise would presuppose the emergence of capitalist production that could engineer improved

productivity through its advanced technology. "Small property in land", he once wrote, "creates a class of barbarians standing half-way outside of society, a class suffering all the tortures and all miseries of civilised countries".[27] From the foregoing, it is quite obvious that at the centre of Marx's economic analysis was his belief in the superiority and necessity for large-scale production in both industry and agriculture.

The contribution of Karl Kautsky to the Marxist theory of capitalist agrarian development has been well recognised and commended.[28] His major contribution in his book The Agrarian Question came out with an explicit demonstration of the superiority of large-scale capitalist agriculture over all previous systems of agricultural production. The agrarian economy under the capitalist mode was radically transformed and revolutionised due to the technical superiority of modern agricultural production. Within a few decades he argued, capitalism had spearheaded a great revolution "by making agriculture a science instead of a routine craft"[29]. Kautsky retained the some position in his controversy with David (a Narodnik) regarding the superirority of large-scale farming over small-scale peasant production. He wrote:

> All great socialists, with the exception of the petty bourgeois ones, shared (this) view, at least in the sense, that they recognised the technical superiority of large-scale production" 30

Kautsky, thus, insisted that small-scale production even when stable does not demonstrate its technical rationality. Rather, it lies in the tendency of the small producers to work harder

then hired labourers and depress their consumption to a lower level. Besides, Kautsky also dealt with the general question of whether or not capital was actually bringing agriculture under its domination, whether it is changing forms of production and forms of ownership in agriculture and how this process is taking place. In this respect, Kautsky argued for the necessity of recognising the role played by pre-capitalist and non-capitalist forms of agriculture in modern society and their relationship to the purely capitalist forms of production.[31]

The contribution of Kautsky to the debate on the agrarian question was carried further by Lenin particularly in his debate with the Russian Narodmiks. Lenin in his polemic argued along with Marx and Kautsky that with the advancement of capitalism into the countryside, the future of the peasantry was sealed. As a superior mode of production, capitalism contains within it, the class of the future, the preletariat. In his view, therefore, the development of capitalism necessarily enhances the organisation, size and social power of the preletariat, while its impact on the peasantry was to promote disintegration and internal stratification.[32] For this reason, he insisted that no attempt should be made by revolutionaries to save peasant property from the progressive advance of capitalist forces. He wrote:

> The radical transformation of agriculture by capitalism is a process that is only just begining, but it is one that is advancing rapidly bringing about the transformation of the peasant into a hired labourer and increasing the flight of the population from the countryside. Attempts to check this process would be reactionary and harmful.33

Lenin's major contribution also came in his book The Development of Capitalism inRussia where he emphasised the part played by the forces of internal differentiation in the development of capitalist agrarian relations. For him, the penetration of market relations in the country-side does not impoverish agriculture as a whole. Rather, it distributes life chances more unevenly.[34] Lenin's contribution to the debate on the agrarian question, in the view of Goodman and Redclift, raises two important questions for both theoreticians and activists:

> First, ... it led him to consider the feasibility at a latter date, of a political alliance between some peasant groups and the preletariat. Secondly ... (his) view of the transformation process implies that same rural strata have the capacity to resist preletarianisation better than others".35

The impact of the theoretical debate on the agrarian question has been felt beyond the classical circles. In Europe particularly, the existence of a "farm problem" in the 1920s and the 1930s has occupied the minds of scholars and politicians alike. In most of the Third World, however, the existence of a food crisis and mass poverty has driven many scholars to begin to pay serious attention to the relevance of this debate for a proper understanding and resolution of the agrarian problem.

Thus, beginning from the 1930s, the British Communist Party was renown for its defence of the Marxist position on the agrarian question. In this regard, a variety of facts and figures were quoted by party intellectuals to demonstrate that progress in agriculture is the exclusive preserve of the big farmers who could afford the application of technology in production. The

development of capitalism in agriculture, therefore, was considered desirable to create the necessary pre-conditions for socialist revolution.[36]

In a similar manner, Berthound[37] sees proletarianisation as the inevitable outcome of the incursion of capital into agriculture and the collapse of the peasant economy as a result of the emigration from the rural areas of peasants and the consolidation of large holdings. The premise of his point of view lies in the assumption that small family farms cannot meet the food requirements of the nation. Large holdings are therefore needed to shoulder that responsibility.

Another contributor to the debate who retained the classical Marxist emphasis on the progressive character of capitalism was Bill Warren.[38] In this view, underdevelopment remains a myth in the Third World so long as capitalism is progressively and independently developing, the productive forces and creating an army of proletariat. The development of capitalism in agriculture in many Third World states, therefore, is not a fiction but a fact. Quoting from a wide variety of statistics, he demonstrated the relative contribution of most sectors of Third World economies to their Gross National products to support his position. proletarinisation in these societies, therefore, was only a prelude to socialist development.

Taking a position similar to that of Warren, Brenner[39] adopted the 'progressist prognosis' position by arguing that the penetration of capitalism will greatly raise the productive forces and the productivity of labour. Capitalist development in

agriculture, therefore, presupposes societal advance in terms of the development of rural productive forces which will in turn create the classes that would spearhead future socialist transformation. Also looking at the phenomenon from a purely environmental angle, Mortimore[40] suggests that capitalist agriculture could be able to protect the soil because of the viable financial resources of large-scale farmers. On the other hand, peasant farmers are said to possess little resources, not enough to ensure adequate application of fertilizer and manure. Their predicament is normally worsened he argued, when subsidies are withdrawn which make them incapable of conserving their own productive resources.

Thus, deriving from all these debates is the fundamental question, what is the relevance of the classical Marxist position to the Nigerian situation. In other words can that position adequately explain the Nigerian realities and provide insights into how its agrarian problem can be solved? On this score, some scholars have argued that the development of large-scale production in agriculture and the ousting of small-scale production should be supported by progressive forces.[41] The Leninist Kautskian position on Russia is presented as being relevant to the Nigerian situation.

However, as we said earlier, the application of science and technology in production deserves everybody's support especially since it demonstrates an acceptance of humanity's progress.

but, very importantly the realities of each social formation are specific and distinct. The British enclosures, for example, which Marx glorified in the nineteenth century were the direct result of a capitalist revolution that overthrew the than stagnant feudal mode of production. peasants in that situation were transformed into workers in both industry and agriculture. Similarly, Lenin and Kautsky picked on the Russian situation hoping that since capitalism was already developing in that society with the tsarist feudal ruling class already threatened by revolution, the appropriated peasants could swell the ranks of the working class, the vanguard for the revolution. None of the above situations exist in Nigeria. The reality on the ground here is that unlike the west and Russia, Nigeria is a neo-colonial state, subjected to a long period of imperialist domination and exploitation. The transnational monopolists have for long established themselves in the social formation, aiding the retention of medieval survivals and other obselete socio-economic relations thus giving rise to a brand of capitalism that retards progress, enhances absolute poverty, exploitation and misery. Besides, given the fact that the linkages between agriculture and industry are weak (i.e. no forward and backward linkages) the ruination of the peasantry would not necessarily lead to their absorption into modern industry as the classical marxists envisaged. Rather they might end up being thugs/ lumpenproletarians. The point being made in summary is that under the type of capitalism existing in Nigeria and most of the Third World, the 'original' Marxist position cannot properly address the

agrarian question unless it recognises their own specific realities and situations.

2.3.2 The populist position

Another major contribution to the debate on the agrarian question which seems to contrast with the classical Marxist position comes from a broad spectrum of these who believe in the viability of peasant production and the continuity of the peasantry. Subscribers to this school of thought, often referred to as "populists" first emerged in Russia towards the end of the nineteenth century - in the wake of the intensive capitalist advance in the countryside. At the forefront of this position were the Narodnike who argued that capitalism in Russia could not develop beyond a reasonable limit. This is because the situation that arose from capitalist incursion (i.e. peasant internal stratification, poverty etc) had created a contraction of the home market that hindered capitalist advance.[42]

The principal theoretician of this school was A.V. Chayanov[43] and members of the organisation and production school who, between 1912 and 1915 developed the theoretical basis for the analysis of the peasant household. Chayanov and members of his school have analysed the dynamics of peasant forms of production by attempting to understand what a peasant farm consists of from an organisational point of view. He argued that peasant organisation of production is basically different from that of the capitalist farmer. For example, the capitalist hires his labour while the peasant depends on his family labour. peasants use simple technologies that are literally fashioned out and commit very limited

amount of resources into farming while the capitalist farmer make use of modern machines and invest quite substantially into his farming venture. Thus the rate of profit determines his enthusiams to commit more of his resources into agriculture. Peasants, however, are motivated not by profit but by survival and would strive to produce even under the toughest of conditions just in order to meet his family requirements. For these reasons, Ghayanov questioned the rationality of evaluating peasant production on the basis of economic gains because the motive of this production was not purely economic profit. Thus, the peasant he argued, would be able to exist in jextaposition with the capitalist farmer because their logic of production fundamentally differ.

Other writers have taken positions similar to that of Ghayanov by demonstrating the contrasting characteristics between peasant farming and large-scale capitalist agriculture. For example, Vergepoulos[44], drawing heavily from Ghayanov distinguished capitalist and peasant farming from the fact that under the capitalist mode of production, increase in wages tends to stimulate entreprenuers to substitute technology for labours. In the case of peasant family production it is the opposite: "... the falling rate in the remuneration of labour leads both to the development of technical progress and to the intensification of peasant family's labour"[45].

In another contribution to the debate, Griffin[46] has argued that inspite of the tremendous capitalist innovations in many countries' agriculture, the impact on national economic indicators has been slight. Infact, capitalist agricultural innovations in

rural areas have only tended to alter the distribution of income and rural class structure rather than eliminate malnutrition and food shortages.

Many scholars of Africa have adopted positions similar to those of the early populists by insisting on the continuity of the peasantry and its small-scale production. Gavin Williams[47], for example, has reiterated the conventional Chayanovian argument of the peasantry's ability to survive where the capitalist farmer would easily quit. This is because the motif of peasant production is not profit oriented. Besides, Williams, has found evidence showing that peasants are efficient users of scarce resources and have a better knowledge of the environment. In a recent article, he was quoted as having argued that:

> In order to conserve the soil and protect land in a situation of rising population and demand for crops, land should be left in the hands of small-holders who use it more carefully, knowledgeably and effectively than most capitalist farmers. Governments should not encourage large-scale farming, either directly or indirectly by subsidizing the costs of machinery and chemicals. 48

In a similar manner, Goran Hyden's central thesis on this question is his contention that today, capitalism in Africa has failed to subordinate the pre-capitalist forces of peasant society to its specifications. [49] He discussed extensively on the small holder's "economy of affection" which he conceived on the basis that unlike the capitalists, peasants operate according to their own distinct logic and produce towards the satisfaction of their own requirements. He argued that due to the limited capacity of surplus production by the peasantry and its low level of produc-

tive forces, it has the tendency to safeguard itself against any disruptive force by retreating into its "economy of affection" defined as virtues, involving egalitarianism, reciprocity and solidarity.[50] Thus, due to their very nature, peasants have continued to pose a threat to state modernisation policies because they are yet to be "captured" just like those classes operating within the capitalist or socialist modes. They therefore need to be eliminated or at best be subordinated to capital.

The emergenceand flourishing of populist oriented thoughts on the agrarian question in Africa and Nigeria particulary has been aided by a number of factors. Considering the preponderance of peasant population in those countries, analysts have argued that only peasant farming could spearhead a peoples oriented agricultural development. The preservation and promotion of peasant farming is also seen as serving the social security functions of the rural population which otherwise would be a cost to the state. Thus, peasants must be freed from capitalist manipulations which are perpetrated under the cover of modernisation which has proved to be technically inappropriate, economically irrational and politically repressive.[51] populist political movements have therefore opposed the encroachment of the state and foreign capital into peasant societies because the two can be harsh in their dealings with the poor.

This debate was also re-echoed after the second world war particularly in the ex-colonies. This time, it was primarily due to the political significance of the peasantry in the process of national liberation struggles. Radical ideologists have recognised

that the masses in the Third World are peasants who constitute a revolutionary class rather than a dubious relic as argued by the classical marxists. In Nigeria, the peasant option against capitalist agriculture has been adopted by many scholars. Capitalist agriculture in this regard has been extensively analysed and proved to have led to the expropriation and marginalisation of the majority without necessarily developing agriculture. Nzimiro[52], for example, has argued in favour of the retention of the old methods of agrictural production. This is because he argued these old methods contain within them, a whole system that guarantees productivity, justice and equity. National resussitation of these old ways would then ensure that agricultural productivity translate into better standards of living for the majority and overall economic growth and development for the nations.

However, just like in the case of the classical Marxist position, the question still remains: what is the relevance of the populist position in understanding and resolving the agrarian question in Nigeria? The major relevance of this position, we would argue, lies in the fact that it advocates the retention of the peasantry who, infact, constitute the majority in Nigeria and produce the bulk of the food and agricultural raw materials needed in the country. The populist position could be relevant to the Nigerian situation in so long as it remains skeptical of capitalist incursion which has rendered the majority incapable of producing what to eat or even affording the food that has been

produced. Thus, at the general level, this position is capable of spearheading the emergence of grassroot democracy and the enhancement of community efforts against hunger and the encroachment of land grabbers and speculators into therural areas. However, this position on the other hand, because of its detest for capitalism could equally spearhead the retention of primitive techniques and organisation and prevent peasant society from benefitting from modern techniques and methods of production which they need in order to enhance productivity. This position can, therefore, only be relevant to Nigeria if it becomes fluid by attempting to safeguard the peasantry from capitalist exploitation while at the sametime opening the gates for them to benefit from the achievements of modern science and technology. This would then mean that peasant virtues of self-sufficiency and mass-welfare are complemented with the inculcation of higher techniques of production to enable them prosper and also feed the rest of the society.

However, the Nigerian government has over the years been promoting the development of capitalist agricultural enterprise. This time, the rationale has tended to emanate from the modernist perspective in which the development of modern private enterprise is considered a necessary path to agricultural development.

2.3.3 The Modernist perspective

The modernisation perspective on the agrarian question has emerged out of the theoretical conceptualisation that the "traditional" societies of Africa and the Third World can develop only through the adoption of 'modern' (i.e. western) technology and values. In this respect, development is measured in terms of the

success achieved by the emerging nations in enhancing productivity through the diffusion of western technology, market structures and other institutions. In this respect also the indigenous socio-economic, political and psychological structure which stands on the way to achieving this process are grudgingly termed development "obstacles". However, unlike the western countries which experienced development through an internally generated process of change, Third World countries are to relie on the external modernising influences through contact with the west.[53]

Applied to the rural scene, this approach has concluded that "traditional" farming systems in the Third World have been central in the perpetuation of rural poverty and backwardness. The existence of problems such as archaic agricultural technology, low output, outdated land tenure systems, small-scale production etc. have been blamed for being the bottlenecks that have retarded the development of agrarian sector. To solve this problem, the emerging nations are expected to adopt modern agro-technology, large-scale mechanised production and efficient management systems.[54]

Thus, beginning from the 1960s, many scholars have given their tacit support to the modernisation paradigm believing that 3rd world countries could develop through its prescriptions. For example, Johnson and Kilby have argued that:

> "The most fundamental factor conditioning the structural transformation in contemporary underdeveloped countries, is the existence of a large stock of proven technical innevations in the more developed countries. The existence of this technology backlog, much of which is of this transferable creates possibility for the late developing countries to by-pass the vast investment of time and resources that the accumulation of this knowledge involved". 55

Similar views have been expressed by T.W. Shultz who argued that "significant growth in productivity cannot be brought about by the re-allocation of resources in the traditional agricultural systems. Significant opportunities for growth will become available only through changes in technology". 56

In Nigeria, the crave to modernise agriculture along these lines started effectively in the Third National Development plan (1975-1980). Since then, various efforts were intensified to introduce several programmes and projects culminating into the Green Revolution in the later part of the plan period. This has involved the massive importation and application of bio-chemical inputs and labour saving devices, the establishment of agricultural schemes etc. all of which favour large-scale farmers.57

However, the relevance of all these strategies in terms of feeding the majority and resolving the agrarian question is highly doubtful. In the first place, the success of the modernisation drive is subject to the strict application of modern technology into agricultural production. However, given the widespread poverty among the vast majority of people, it means that only the big farmers could reap the fruits of the Green Revolution. This, then, would mean the enabling of the agro-industrial monopolies to exploit super profits through the sales of their products (fertilizers, herbicides, pesticides etc).58 It is therefore clear

that the modernisation drive in itself cannot be helpful in explaining or aiding in the effort to resolve the agrarian question in any fundamental way. This is because it has failed to adequately address the aspirations and yearnings of the majority because it is pervaded by the spirit of business and profit maximisation. Little wonder that these agro-industrial monopolies have integrated with local landlords, bureaucrats and top government officials. In the case of India, Sinha has shown that the advantages of the Green Revolution have "... accrued only to rich farmers or to regions which already had favourable factor endowments"[59]. politically, as the Latin American case demonstrates, land concentration and the development of Latifundia, brought about by the modernisation drive, is the mainstay of reactionaries and dictators. Thus, being a technical rather than a social revolution, the Green Revolution per se cannot resolve the agrarian question in Nigeria and much of the Third World.

2.4. Towards a Resolution of the Agrarian Question

The struggle to resolve the agrarian and peasant questions has been of primary importance to the vast majority of Nigeria's people. This is because obselete production techniques, crude relations of production and a high degree of poverty confronting the largest segment of the peasantry have combined and hindered the progress and development in Nigeria and Third World countries. The level of backwardness in these nations arose from their specific historical experiences having been brutally exploited by colonialism for many decades. While the rural areas were drawn into comodity -

money relations, the colonialists imposed limited possibilities for accumulation by the producers and helped to preserve traditional - subsistence methods of production. The development of capitalism under these objective conditions had been slow and quite difficult.[60] This situation has distinguished capitalist development in Nigeria and the Third World from that of Europe when capitalism emerged in agriculture there. Besides, it is a well known fact that in Europe, two major paths to capitalist agriculture were experienced. There was a situation in which the peasantry became differentiated into classes of bourgeois society i.e. the capitalists and the proletarians commonly known as the American path. The other, witnessed the transformation of the defunct feudal estates into capitalist agricultural holdings commonly called the Junker path.[61]

However, the situation in Nigeria and Africa generally as pointed out earlier is distinct. Here, for example, the development of commodity - money relations which caused the ruin of peasants did not actually convert them into dispossessed proletarians in the classical sense. In fact, their pauperisation proceeds more rapidly than their transformation into a proletariat. Thus, up to this moment, the principal direct producer in Nigerian agriculture is the peasant under the laws of capital rather than a hired worker. The size of agricultural proletarians exploited through capitalist methods has remained relatively small and concentrated in areas where modern capitalist agricultural holdings exist. Besides, due to the limited scope of the market in many areas, the development of capitalism in agriculture has tended to be confined to individual regions which tend to play a decisive role in commodity production. It was in this respect, Banaji contrasts the classical European model of

capitalist agricultural development with the capitalism that emanated from the foundations of small holder commodity production under the late nineteenth century colonialism.[62] Under this dispensation, capitalist social relations of production remain concealed by direct producer's retention of his means of production.

Thus, after considering all these, it is the more desirable to still come back to the basic question; How can Nigeria resolve its agrarian question. In other words which path/ position adequately captures the specific Nigerian situation and thus is capable of prepounding solutions to the raging agrarian predicement? We have earlier on pin-pointed what we consider the basic merits and weaknesses of the three positions we identified. For example, the classical Marxist position contains in it, a clear cut advocation for the progressive abandonment of primitivity which infact all societies required. However, this position is too specific to the European/ Russian situations to attract general acclaim. Its general call for the extermination of small production is unrealistic in Africa given the preponderance of a resilient peasantry. Similarly, the populist position, inspite of its orientation towards the defence of the rural majority run the risk of spearheading the retention of archaic forms which the peasants need to shed in order to spear-head increased productivity and prosperity. The modernist path, however, inspite of its orientation towards introducing into agriculture the achievements of humanity in science and technology has the problem of being motivated by the interests of the bourgeoisie in their effort to preseve and enforce capitalist social relations.

It is our central contention here, therefore, that in consideration of the fact that the predominant majority of the producers in Nigeria are peasants who, inspite of their backward technology provide the bulk of the food for the market[63] a resolution of the agrarian question has to consider their survival and prosperity a sine qua non. The preservation of peasant production in Nigeria is not an act of charity on the part of policy makers, it is in conformity with the reality on the ground. However, for peasant society itself to prosper, its gates would have to remain open to receive modern innovations of enhancing productivity in order to remove the drudgery brought about by its backward productive forces. The populist position would remain undesirable if it rules out this lofty idea.

It is therefore, clear from the foregoing that no single position on its own is capable of roviding solutions to the agrarian question. An attempt to resolve the problem has to consider a solution based on a combihation of their prescriptions given the peculiar situation in Africa. For example, the populist position is capable of providing a basis for safeguarding the peasantry from the menace of acquisitive forces and also promote grassroot democracy; the classical marxist position could provide aspects dealing with its vision of a society devoid of primitive and backward organisation of production; while the modernisation drive could allow the introduction of relevant technology. In this manner, the subordinate rural classes would be in better position to enhance their production through the introduction of modern production methods coupled with the existence of a conducive atmosphere in the rural scene which allows the producers to control

their products without being exploited by rural capitalists. In the final analysis, the agrarian question becomes resolved due to a popular control of the agrarian sector which has now became significantly improved and productive.

2.5. Conclusion

The active polemic on the agrarian question in backward social formation as we have seen, has taken quite a number of dimensions in the effort to resolve the problem. The emergence and flourishing in Africa, of similar positions adopted by the earlier scholars has been central in attempting to grapple with the food crisis and its socio-political implications. We contend that the Nigerian situation being specific has to be treated on its own merit. Thus, a resolution of the agrarian question must involve in the main, peasant survival and overall progress which, considering the contemporary African reality could only be properly addressed by a re-consideration of all these positions.

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CHAPTER THREE

CAPITALIST FARMERS, THE STATE AND AGRIBUSINESS IN NIGERIA.

The debate on the agrarian question in transitional societies and the specific paths a variety of social formations have treaded constituted the central theme of the last chapter. In this chapter, we set out to understand the nature of Nigeria's pre-colonial agriculture, its systematic destruction by colonial policies and its incorporation into the global capitalist economy. This phenomenon, as we shall see, laid a solid foundation for the development of capitalist social relations in the rural scene resulting from a variety of alliances that emerged between the state, capitalist farmers and agribusiness. The strong bond between these triple forces in the rural scene has largely given Nigerian agriculture its current character particularly as it concerns capital accumulation and the relationship between the various classes engaged in production.

In this respect, both large-scale capitalist farmers and agribusiness have depended largely on the state for conducive and favourable policies that could enhance their accumulation. On its own part, the state has continued to put a lot of hope in the capitalist farmers and agribusiness for the transformation of agriculture in order to solve the food crisis.

3.1. The Nature and Dynamics of pre-colonial Agriculture

Prior to the incorporation of the country into the world economy, the vast majority of communities were small, independent producers involved in pre-capitalist modes of agriculture. These societies were generally clustered in various socio-cultural groupings typically delineated by ethnic group and kinship.[1] The village community consisting of peasant cultivators was the dominant production system. Although these societies had developed different social and political structures, their overall set up exhibited a general struggle to maintain a certain level of stability,[2] For example, in most of these societies, the social security of individual members was governed by their mutual relationship as members of the community in whom was vested the ownership of land under its jurisdiction. This meant that membership of the community was the pre-condition for the appropriation of land and individuals were entitled to the allotment of land as their own as long as they continued to occupy it beneficially.

Thus, the basic features of traditional land tenure were in many cases characterised by: (a) the right of every individual to the productive use of the land by virtue of his membership of the community, (b) the rights over land and its products among individuals and groups (c) rigid prohibition against individual alienation of land.[3] Historically, collective ownership was practiced under the banner of the gandu system. The gandu here denotes a collection of many families farming under a common leadership. This system had provided a good measure of security

by eliminating land misappropriation and misuse, as well as providing protection in times of crisis[4].

Thus, the pre-condition for the continued existence of the community was the maintenance of a semblance of equality among its self-sustaining peasants as a condition for the continued existence of their property. Work was part of the social obligations of kin, friends etc. However, in situations where political and social relations had developed and resulted in the emergence of some form of surplus extraction from the peasantry, it has been argued that development should best be understood in relation to the dynamic of political intervention and the ideological basis of state power.[5]

On the whole, the material level of life in pre-colonial societies was very low as a result of social organisation failing to inspire innovation and technical changes that would have significantly raised society's production frontier. However, the pre-colonial agra society was not an undifferentiated communal society but a complex system characterised by several modes of production that were severely undermined with the coming of colonialism.

3.2. The Colonial State and Rural Class Formation

The specific kinds of policies which the colonial regime pursued in Nigeria were deliberately tailored to precipitate rapid agricultural increases and rural class formation. In other words, immediately after the conquest of the Nigerian territory, the colonial state went in and set in motion various trends that changed the structure of the pre-colonial society and its mode of production.

In this respect, the colonial state initiated a variety of policies meant for tapping the peasant productive base without any significant investment to transform it. The overall thrust of the colonial state in this direction meant the continued polarisation of rural society as well as hunger and malnutrition for the vast majority of rural producers.

Thus, the incorporation of Nigeria's agricultural sector into the world economy was achieved before 1940 through the penetration of merchant capital in the service of British industrial capital. By the very nature of merchant capital, it has not been able to radically transform the productive forces but only to tap the existing social and economic relations in the social formation.[6] The colonial state laid the foundation and largely succeeded in maintaining a conducive legal and economic atmospher for export crop production by the peasantry. It introduced a variety of mechanisms for the efficient extraction of agricultural surplus. production for the colonial export market blossomed while food production was disrupted. A number of colonial reports, for example, spoke of widespread problems and even calamities, emanating from this situation. The Annual Reports of 1930 and 1931 for Zaria province spoke of the persistence of famine resulting from locust invasion and overcultivation of export crops.[7] Much earlier than that, the Resident of Zaria in 1918 reported a serious shortage of food due primarily to two causes; "... the increased cultivation of cotton and groundnuts and the ever increasing non-farming communities".[8]

Thus, it is clear from the foregoing that the central motive for the expansion of colonial capitalism was the generation of

profit through expanded commoditisation of production and production and relations. A very crucial moment in this period of penetration by capital was the breaking up of the cycles of reproduction ofthe 'natural economy'accomplished through monetisation.[9]

Given the exploitative marketing system that developed around this agricultural export production, the poverty of the peasant producers got compounded the more they indulged in simple commodity production while the income of the colonial state, merchant companies and their network of middleman, and the emerging colonial elite continued to swell. In other words, the processes and mechanisms that engineered class formation in the country were the same processes and mechanisms that broughtabout the food crisis. The cumulative result of this entire process randered the peasant producers incapable of sustaining their levels of production coupled with the disruption of their socio-economic structures. This disruption, according to Apeldoorn,[10] took three major forms:

(1) The destruction of the traditional safety mechanisms against harvest failures in the pre-capitalist society;

(2) The destruction of the traditional methods of food distribution based on relations of solidarity and reciprocity rather than money.

(3) The gradual disintegration of the traditional collective units of production under the influence of monetisation and the commercialisation of land and labour.

In order to understand the damaging situations created by the colonial structure on the peasantry, let us look at the

problems it created. For example, after 1900, demands for staple food increased sharply particularly in the Northern protectorate due to the proliferation of non-producers, that is, colonial armies, permanent and seasonal workers, colonial and Native Authority (N.A.) bureaucrats etc. Many provinces became food deficit areas. By the late 1950s, Katsina was reportedly importing 20,000 tonnes of cereals.[11] Zaria province was also believed to be a net importer of grains when M.G. Smith conducted his study in 1949.[12] At the household level, storage of food-stuffs enough for security purposes in case of droughts became impossible.

Underlying the destruction of the pre-colonial agrarian basis of rural society and the imposition of colonial rule in Nigeria was the entrenchment of specific kinds of agricultural policies that guaranteed capitalist accumulation. A trend was set in motion in which the colonial state used its power to dictate the channelling of factors of agricultural production with the assistance of the emerging privileged classes.

At the initial stage of this intervention (1900-39) the degree of state involvement in agricultural activity was limited and mainly supportive. The entire rural economy remained under the direct influence of market forces, merchant capital and the network of middlemen whose activities have greatly undermined the bulk of the rural producer's efforts to obtain a fair return for their products. With the support of the colonial state, this syndicate largely succeeded in spreading its tentacles into the fabric of rural society, a situation that greatly served their accumulation requirements and enhaced class formation in the countryside. Thus, this period generally was that of boom

in export agriculture for the colonial state and the merchant companies.

However, because of the post First World War produce inflation, the peasantry were relatively better off inspite of colonial extortion. For example, data on Maska district in Katsina province shows that despite the heavy tax burden on peasants between 1914 and 1920, the favourable prices offered for their cotton by the British Cotton Growers Association (BCGA) greatly compensated for any harmful colonial assessment policy.[13] This situation has had its own differentiating dynamics as the ranks of the peasantry began to divide with a part beginning to get rich. The 1929-39 Great Depression, however, brought this honeymoon to an end. The contradictions generated by the crisis of global capitalist economy had brought tremendous changes in the dynamics of peasant economy and the corresponding class relations and alliances. Serious market slump at that time greatly intensified the crisis. The price of groundnut, for example, fell by 40 percent between 1928 and March 1931.[14] In the attempt to stabilize their income, peasants expanded their export production from 135,000 tonnes in 1928-29 to almost 200,000 tonnes between 1932-33.[15]

However, despite this situation, the colonial state maintained a stable direct tax revenue in relation to export price indices. The massive appropriation of producer income had serious effects even on commercial firms. This manifested in declining profit in their import trade. In southern Katsina and Zaria area, these firms in conjunction with their middlemen responded by devising advance crop mortgaging as a way of securing control and better

return from peasant production. It was during this period that the 'Yan baranda (middlemen) system flourished which undermined the sale of cotton to local weavers thus compounding the problems of the producers and local industry[16].

The acummulative result of this global market crisis coupled with the massive squeeze of peasant producers by the state and merchant companies was the proliferation of rural indebtedness. Giles' 1937 study of rural indebtedness in Zaria province estimated that between 30 and 40 percent of rural producers in the study area were highly indebted[17]. It had earlier been reported by Buell that by 1932, a majority of civil cases in the courts of Northern Nigeria were on debts of various kinds[18]. It is therefore evident that the early period of colonial agricultural policies was not a smooth one for both the colonial state, merchant companies and the peasantry.

Within the context of the above situation, the commodity marketing boards were established in 1947 on the grounds of price stabilisation and reduced middlemen extortion. However, because agriculture represented the principal economic activity in the country, these boards soon became the wealthiest and economically most significant agencies. Bauer in a critique of these export monopolies showed that the surpluses created through the boards were never used to promote general welfare. Rather, peasant surpluses have gone to finance a wide variety of unviable ventures resulting in colossal waste and corruption[19]. Infact, Kriesel has observed that only about 30 percent of the intended 70 percent of marketing board funds were actually used for price stabilisation. Most of the funds were used for "... development objectives, many of which had very limited benefits to the economy in terms

of solid economic development".[20] Thus, unlike the earlier colonial policy, the creation of commodity boards had changed the dynamics of the relation between the colonial state and the peasantry. As Tom Forrest pointed out;

> The appropriation of surplus value was now brought more directly under the control of the state machinery through its pricing, tax and credit policies, public finances were used to support and subsidize the establishment of capitalist relations". 21

For the Nigerian state, the creation ofthe boards had meant an avenue for massive accumulation of revenue. producer prices were kept well below the rising world market prices consequent upon the war induced inflation. For example, during the period 1947 to 1954, approximately £25 million was appropriated from this source".[22] The overall effect of these policies on the lives of the primary producers and the dynamics of class formation are quite obvious. It meant that the boards were directly appropriating the actual benefits which would have gone to the direct producers. In a study conducted by Olatunbosun and Olayide[23] on the marketing boards and their effect on the output and income of farmers, the economic life of the small producers has been presented as being generally miserable coupled with falling rate of productivity. Commodity production was supplemented with small food acreages of the Russian "Ivan produces, Ivan consumes" type. The study came up with two principal conclusions; firstly, that the kind of policies adopted by the boards, particularly on produce pricing had contributed to decreased production, inefficient divereification of farming, the growth of absentee landlords and the pledging of tree crops for loans. Secondly, that the small rural producers were denied access to formal sources of credit and instead, were driven to produce -

buyers, money lenders etc., on very harsh terms. The licenced Buying Agents (LBAs) however, were provided these privileges coupled with their additional roles of serving as creditors to small farmers and distributers of supplies such as sprayers and spraying chemicals.

Thus, at the centre of the whole marketing system was the network of LBAs the commercial capitalist class that occupied a very strategic place in the country's political economy. Their major activity was to purchase produce from farmers, assemble package, handle and transport under the directives of the boards. They did not shoulder any inyesment risks in their business. That was why appointments as and LBA becoame a very important avenue for sudden and quick wealth.[24] This phenomenon arose from the fact that with the isolation of this class by the state for special relationship, a situation became established in which the benefits which would have gone to the peasant producers actually wento to the LBAs. Thus with the concentration of productive resources in the hands of the priviledged classes, the peasants began to lose control over his food, his export crops and his life generally. Unlike the past, the peasantry lost control over their sources of inputs; they lost control over their land and labour because of increasing commoditization and the menace of powerful forces. Thus, unlike the LBAs, the peasants became increasingly incapacitated and vulnerable to poverty, hunger and political repression.[25]

The genesis and historical emergence of the LBAs as a privileged class has been gradual but remarkable. During the colonial period, the business was mainly dominated by foreign

firms. It has been reported that in the case of groundnuts in 1953, there were 22 LBAs, 2 of which were indigenes. In 1958, there were 27, 18 were foreign firms. However, in 1963, 91 existed out of which 19 were foreign firms; and by 1968, there were 268 LBAs out of which only 2 were foreigners.[26] Yahaya Abdullahi's study of Sokoto[27] has revealed that there were 55 cotton LBAs who operated in the whole state during the 1977/78 buying season. All of them were found to be prominent businessmen and some of them had connections with local or traditional rulers. Worth noting also is the fact that most members of this privileged class have not even been investing their wealth to re-invigorate agriculture. In the southern parts of the country, Essang[28] has found the pattern of LBA's investiment expenditure to be as follows: produce buying 46%; Real Estate, 21%; Transport, 14%; Trading, 7%; Contract work, 6%. Agriculture and industry carried only 6% of their investment indicating that most of the wealth generated from agricultural trade was not invested in agriculture.

From the discussion, the differentiating character of colonial agricultural policies could easily come to focus. It can be seen that these policies were actually geared towards promoting the interests of the state and merchant capital but in addition then contributed in grooming a domestic privileged class that later took over the control of agriculture. On the other hand, the small rural producers continued to become vulnerable to ruling class exploitation and oppression.

3.3. Agrarian Capitalism Under the post-Colonial Regime

The emergence and continued consolidation of capitalist agriculture in Nigeria is partly the direct result of the specific policies pursued by the state especially after independance in 1960. The post-colonial agricultural policies in the country have entailed deliberate state intervention with the intent of facilitating high productivity growth while at the same time altering the rural class structure. These policies have outwardly rejected the old agrarian relations and instituted a new order in line with the conception of the state on how to tackle the food crisis. Under the post-colonial regime, the privileged classes that emerged in the rural scene during the colonial period were given a boost. At the same time, a new set of people who have acquired fortunes within the economy went back into agriculture and gave the capitalist class within the sector an added impetus.

post-colonial agricultural policies in Nigeria have been articulated through the regular five year development plans. With independance in 1960, the control of the state by Nigerians did not alter the economic pattern pursued by the erstwhile colonial regime. The First National Development plan did not radically depart from the late colonial agricultural policies in that it was operated under the same structures. Export crop production remained the cornerstone of the economic activity in the country.[29] Earnings from these agricultural exports increased tremendously as shown in Table 3.1. below:

TABLE 3.1.

EARNINGS FROM AGRICULTURE 1960-1975

Year	AGRIC COMPONENT OF GDP		VALUE OF AGRIC EXPORTS		
	Value (₦m)	% of GDP	Value (₦m)	%of GDP	% of Total Agric.
1960	1,423.8	63.4	282.5	12.6	19.8
1961	1,465.2	61.7	283.0	11.9	19.3
1962	1,609.6	61.2	260.0	9.9	16.2
1963	1,675.0	59.7	285.9	10.2	17.1
1964	1,678.0	57.6	303.9	10.4	18.1
1965	1,691.8	54.9	327.3	10.6	19.3
1966	1,784.1	55.6	292.5	9.1	16.4
1967	1,713.0	56.1	264.5	8.7	15.4
1968	1,726.0	55.0	263.7	8.4	15.3
1969	1,743.8	53.2	278.7	8.5	16.0
1970	1,787.4	51.3	280.5	8.0	15.7
1971	3,344.7	36.0	265.2	2.8	7.8
1972	3,575.3	32.0	190.1	1.7	5.3
1973	3,351.8	27.9	278.4	2.3	8.3
1974	3,246.5	24.7	297.8	2.3	9.2
1975	3,372.7	23.4	n.a	n.a	n.a

Source: B. ONIMODE Imperialism and Underdevelopment in Nigeria

Zed press, London, 1982, p. 163.

It is obvious from the table that apart from agriculture being the backbone of Nigeria's economy right from independence, income from agricultural exports constituted the major component of the country's Gross Domestic Product over the years. Thus, the dynamic of accumulation and class formation in the country have remained the same. The prevailing situation continued to provide the nascent bourgeoisie increasing access to state resources due to their control of political power.

However, the political situation in the Nigerian state at that time was quite fragile coupled with the fact that the prices of the country's export crops were declining rapidly. To maintain its level of earning, the state, through the marketing boards, raised the effective rate of surplus appropriation from the peasant producers. At the same time, the network of LBAs and middle men continued to make fortunes out of the prevailing situation. The trend of peasant indebtedness, reminiscent of the intensive exploitation of the rural producers in the 1930s reared its head once more.[30] At the national level, the prevailing fiscal crisis has generated serious re-thinking within policy circles regarding the problem of state revenue. The emerging Petroleum sector became the focal point of revenue derivation especially in the 1970s while attempts to revitalise agriculture were undertaken right from the 1960s in the form of farm settlement schemes. During that period (i.e. 1960s) one would not say that Nigeria had a fully groomed agrarian bourgeoisie that had any significant strength to exert pressure on the state to formulate specific policies in

their own interest, However, there existed a conducive atmosphere in which this priviledged agrarian class could thrive and intensify its extortion of the peasantry who still constituted the backbone of the economy.

The introduction of the Farm Settlement Schemes in 1959 marked the initial attempt by the state to institutionalise agricultural production away from the traditional cultivators. This initiative was taken by Chief Akin Deko, the Western Regional Agriculture Minister who visited Isreal and thought that the Moshavi plantations there "could spearhead a possible agrarian revolution" and thus could be replicated in Nigeria.[31] The justifications that usually accompany state anti-peasant policies were also given in this respect. For example, it has been argued that the support being provided to the small holders by the state was inadequate to provide socially desirable changes in their productive techniques and levels of investment. It was also believed that efforts to modernise agricultural production require more fundamental changes in the basic production units. Other reasons propounded were that problems such as those affecting the land tenure, lack of access to formal sources of capital and lack of familiarity with new technologies have impeded the traditional farming unit from experimenting new production methods.[32] To achieve these, the state decided to undertake the basic role of organiser and manager of production on large-scale schemes. This responsibility had to fall on the state in the absence of a strong domestic capitalist class capable of shouldering that role. Thus, in the Western Region, by the end of 1966/67,

£6.4 million was spent on the programme at the cost of £4,000 per settler, The figure represented same 8 percent of the total budget of the region.[33]

Despite the massive support given to these schemes, they largely failed in meeting the goals they were set out to achieve. That apart, the impact of these schemes is polarising the farming population along class lines was tremend us. The schemes had benefitted only a few farmers who were considered as posessing entreprenurial skills. This was confirmed in a study conducted by Nzimiro and Eteng on the scheme in the Eastern Region. They found that the scheme had resulted in the increasing peasantization of the rural producers and the embourgeoisment of other sections of the peasantry. They also recorded massive rural decapitalization especially that the primary producers could not fix prices for their products. Generally, they reported the existence of "economic dependence of the region on monopoly capitalism and the process of underdevelopment".[34] There was a similar experience in the Western Region when Adegeya et al found that only about 6 percent of the peasants actually benefitted from the scheme. The rest regarded the settlements as "... forbidden territories which belonged only to the government".[35]

With the demise of the farm settlement schemes, it became quite clear that the ruling class in Nigeria as of then, lacked a solid foundation to institutionalise capitalist agriculture. The dominant agrarian social class then was not very much grounded in the country's political economy. They had yet to get consolidated and become a force to reckon with in the rural scene and thus be able to influence state policy in that direction.

The thrust of the then emerging bourgeois class in the economy was more towards middlemanship and industry.

However, some of the problems that came about due to the country's agricultural stagnation started to disappear with the emergence of petroleum as a major source of accumulation and class formation. Indicators of the new oil prosperity included a phenomenal rise of GDP from ₦9.4 billion in 1970-71 to ₦14.4 billion in 1974-75, and gross international reserves from barely US $222 million in 1970, to US $5203 million in 1976.[36] What this meant was that with the swelling of the government purse, state spending in various sectors also rose significantly. The basis for the consolidation of the domestic capitalist class became expanded and the possibility of their diversification into many other sectors particlarly agriculture became pronounced.

The ₦30,000 million Third National Development plan (1975-80), wholly funded with oil revenue had supported and strengthened the emerging capitalist class. Beside the multitude of infrastructural investments and projects that opened up easy avenue for members of this class to get richer, the deepening agrarian crisis and the official insistence on capitalist agrarian transformation had placed them in a better position to penetrate and takeover agriculture. The third plan also added in the rise of real income and provided the base and other necessary incentives for the consolidation of the Nigerian capitalist class.[37]

The initiation the huge capital intensive agricultural programmes such as the River Basin Development Authorities (RBDAs) and the World Bank Assisted Integrated Agricultural Development projects (IADPSs) in conjunction with a variety of foreign consultants and partners has provided the agrarian capitalist class the necessary legal, political and infrastructural backing to get consolidated. They in turn, have been influencing state policies in this direction especially due to the kinds of linkages they have developed with foreign capital and various levels of authority. Besides, the kind of perception the state has of them, in terms of their ability to spearhead productivity growth and agricultural development has made it to easily succumb to their demands in agricultural policy formulation. For instance, during the Fourth Development Plan (1981-85), the Federal Government pledged to;

> ... encourage entrepreneurs to establish large-scale farms. Fiscal incentives already provided by government for companies wishing to go into large-scale agricultural production, for instance, income tax relief for pioneer enterprises, duty free importation of farm machinery, additional investment allowance of 10 percent provision for carrying forward losses, etc. will be maintained and improved upon as may be appropriate as a means of inducing production. 38

The provision of these incentives has been accompanid with the re-shaping of the land tenuresystem in 1978 with the promulgation of the Land Use Decree. This decree was intended to promote better security of tenure and also encourage the foreign and domestic capitalist class to invest in agriculture. Besides, government has also directed commercial banks to make special allocations of loans to farmers. Capitalist farmers are likely to benefit more from those provisions considering

the thinking of the state concerning the food crisis and its view of the forces capable of overcoming it. Besides, they are also in a better position to provide the needed collateral security for obtaining loans than any other class of farmers. Already, Obiako has found that despite the Nigerian Agricultural and Cooperative Bank's (NACB) rhetoric of aiding the small farmer, the bank, because of its stringent conditions for granting loans "... seems to be out to aid those rich Nigerian businessmen who have decided to invest in capitalist farming".[39] Besides all these, capitalist farmers have been encouraged to form joint ventures with foreign capital and the latter has been encouraged with all sorts of incentives, participation agreements and generous new terms of foreign exchange including tax holidays. Agricultural production and processing have been transferred from schedules II to III of the Nigerian Enterprises promotion Act, which means that foreigners can now own up to 60 percent of equity in any agricultural enterprise.[40] Again, the variety of state agricultural and rural development projects intended to address the agrarian question have played a very significant part in widening the arena for rural differentiation and class formation in the countryside.

3.4. Rural Development policies and Class formation

The emergence and growth of the oild sector of the Nigerian economy, as we saw earlier, has immensely contributed to increased state revenue. The intensification of the food crisis, therefore, came hand-in-hand with increased income and purchasing power particularly of the middle class. The value of the Naira

was high and import restrictions on most consumer items were relaxed. The result of this was a considerable increase in the internal demand for food especially rice, wheat flour, milk and other imported foods. In the absence of a vaible source to meet the increased domestic demand for food, the Nigerian government resorted to food imports. On the other hand, steps were taken to expand domestic food production through direct state involvement in agricultural production. This initiative was undertaken under the third plan as a means to radically transorm Nigerian agriculture ostensibly to boost food supplies without increasing food prices. This strategy took two broadly structured forms. The first involved the initiation of state production schemes, often in concert with international capital and agribusiness concerns. The second strategy involves the expanded activities of parastatals and other agricultural companies in marketing and input provision.[41] These twin measures have promoted differentiation within the countryside by attracting elites and "progressive" farmers into production who have been quite keen in establishing large-scale farms.

In the first place, government had expanded efforts by establishing food companies that were initially allocated ₦114.2 million.[42] These are the National Livestock production Company (NLPC), the National Grains production Company (NGPC) and the National Root Crop production Compay (NRCPC). These companies were responsible for accelerating production through large-scale mechanised farm units.

On the other hand, state involvement in agrarian transformation also took the form of establishing capital intensive projects and programmes in conjunction with international capital. The irrigation schemes, for example, under the RBDAs were initiated in 1976. They are entirely financed by the federal government. The schemes have experienced spectacular expenditure growth from £1.37 million during the first plan period to about ₦2.26 billion during the fourth plan period. The projects cover some 20-25,000 hectares of irrigated land.[43] The stated objectives of these projects since their inception was to alleviate the plight of the small farmers to enable him increase production on his land and thus be able to sell more crops, and lastly, to increase his income and his welfare.[44] However, inspite of these stated objectives, these schemes by their very nature and activities have generated intense differentiation and contradictions in the rural scene. The schemes, for example, are concentrated around small areas involving the takin over of peoples' lands. Those directly benefitting from the situation have been the network of bureaucrats, capitalist farmers and agribusiness. In the case of Bakolori, for instance, rather than creating small farms of 12.5 acres as envisaged in the original plan, the consulting company (MASDAR) has encouraged the development of 350 hectare 'development farms' that have ended up in the hands of the wealthy class of farmers. Since their inception, these schemes have been involved in the disruption of existing production units and the enforcement of capitalist relations of production. At Tiga dam, for example, about 13,000 people were uprooted from their homes and re-settled on barren land, far from water, dependant on tankers to provide even daily drinking water.[45] Although the role of large-scale

farmers is less glaring in the case of irrigation schemes, in both Bakolori and Kano River projects, it has been claimed that businessmen with interest in agriculture have been trooping in to take opportunities in the schemes.[46] Infact in the case of Bakolori, many peasants were killed by a detatchment of mobile policemen for daring to protest the dubious non-payment of compensation for their lands taken over for the scheme.[47]

The integrated Agricultural Development projects started in 1975 do not involve the displacement of the small producers like the irrigation projects. However, they also emerged out of the prevailing disdain and loss of confidence in the autonomous peasant farmers. Its major emphasis is on increasing agricultural producitivity by introducing changes in the farming systems. A 1977 project progress report stated that;

> The traditional farming systems have satisfied the peasant farmer but cannot standup to the change of a growing population and a rapidly developing country. 48

Thus, the ADPs are oriented towards stimulating agricultural productivity through a package of incentives to farmers and the provision of inputs. The first ADPSs were launched at Gusau, Funtua and Gombe, costing about ₦98 million funded by the World Bank in conjunction with the Federal and State governments.

The Funtua Agricultural Development project (FADP) which is located in our study area was formally launched in 1975 following a feasibility study conducted by the bank in 1972. The estimated population covered by the project area was 905,000 as of the

year it was started. According to a FADP document, the "procurement, distribution and sell for cash or credit, of fertilizers, seeds, insecticides, sprayers, ox-draw equipment tractors and other necessary supplies" is the responsibility of the project".[49] It is within this context that the differentiating dynamics of the project have unfolded. For the project distinguishes between traditional, "progressive" and large-scale farmers with the last two having much access to project facilities and general attention. For instance, it has been reported that nearly 60% of the project extension staff visits were concentrated on progressive and large-scale farmers who constitutes only about 22.7% of all farmers in the area.[50] Besides, once a large-scale farmer has been identified, the project concentrates its efforts on him. For example, it aids the individual in securing loans. During the 1979/80 growing season, up to 2000 tonnes of fertilizer was specifically kept aside as an assured supply for large-scale farmers.[51] By 1979, therefore, the project had listed 186 large-scale farmers (100 and above), 19,562 progressive farmers and 66,438 peasant cultivators, around the area.[52] In a study conducted on this project, Kungwai[53] has shown the existence of a class of "gentlemen farmers" who emerged and got consolidated, composed mainly of people who have been central in enjoying the inputs and expertise provided by the project.

The conclusion that could be reached drawing from these trends in Nigeria's agriculture is that whichever way one looks at it, agricultural development in the country is no longer an undertaking reposed on the peasantry. For every dimension of state agricultural policy is oriented towards shedding the

structures and relations characterising traditional peasant production. Even under the current Structural Adjustment programme (SAP), despite the state's insistence on solving the country's agricultural problems through better pricing of peasant produce, the actual fact is that capitalist farmers are the undisputed beneficiaries. This is because agricultural policies based on the tenets of SAP have assumed from the outset that the entire crisis facing Nigeria's agriculture has to do with underproduction. This policy has clearly addressed the aspirations of capitalist farmers who are desperately in need of modern technology to expand production. Again, the emphasis on privatisation of virtually every single aspect of the agricultural sector has further made the agrarian and peasant question more complex. previous policies of government intervention in agriculture, despite their claim of protecting the peasantry, did not actually shield them from the encroachment of capitalist farmers and agribusiness corporations. The privatisation of agricultural parastatals and the deregulation of bank interest rates might also widen the scope of rural differentiations by denying small farmers access to credit while capitalist farmers continue to benefit from these provisions.[54]

To sum it all, Nigeria's rural development policies, formulated with the intention of addressing the agrarian question have engineered a wide variety of mechanisms within the social formation that enhanced differentiations and class formation in the countryside. The situation had also further widened the chances of emerging opportunities that have instigated the coming of alliances between the various segments of capital, the state and agribusiness.

3.5. The State, Capitalist Farmers and Agribusiness

The existence of close linkages between the state, capitalist farmers and agribusiness is motivated by a variety of business contacts existing for a long period of time. The aim was to enhance private capitalist accumulation in the agricultural sector of countries where agribusiness concerns have an interest.

Thus, right from the colonial period as we saw, multinational firms with interest in agriculture such as Unilever have increasingly expanded their interests in Nigeria. In 1920, for example, they bought the Royal Niger Company and also established the United Africa Company which, by 1936 had more than 56 percent of all Nigerian exports in palm-oil and kernels, cocoa and peanuts[55]. These conglomerates as we indicated, were, in conjunction with the state, very central in the exploitation of the peasantry during the colonial period. They were also highly instrumental in enhancing differentiations and the creation of privileged classes in the rural scene. Also with the coming into dominance of the existing assumptions and strategies which seek to replace traditional farming with modern capitalist farming, this process had get intensified. The establishment of state capital-intensive schemes and the encouragement of private large-scale farming, the agribusiness has found easy avenues to penetrate Nigerian agriculture. On their own parts, the transnational agribusiness firms have found in Nigeria, attractive opportunities they always look for:

"large and growing markets, ample raw materials, an appropriately skilled labour force and an extensive and reliable infrastructure. It looks for governments that are stable with effective and helpful administration. It wants favourable investment codes,

fiscal regime and custom regulations".[56]

Thus, the variety of capitalist agrarian undertakings pursued in Nigeria notably called the Green Revolution are consistant with the designs and aspirations of the agribusiness in their bid to facilitate agrarian capitalist accumulation in the Third World in line with their aspirations and goals. For the Nigerian state, however, its crave to pursue this course is geared towards attracting foreign investment so as to enhance capital, technical know-how and managerial capacity in order to hasten the capitalist path of economic development it had chosen. Thus, agribusiness corporations have targetted and got involved in a series of public agricultural undertakings. They have also found markets in the emerging large-scale farmers who already possess the resources and are willing to patronise and work closely with agribusiness.

The teaming up these triple forces has resulted in the emergence of an agricultural syndicate that has consciously re-directed the course of Nigerian agriculture towards profit and capital accumulation. Each of these forces as we indicated earlier has a specific role in the union. The state has continued to contribute resources and provide the necessary political and legal protection to the agribusiness and capitalist farmers. Agribusiness, by virtue of its control and monopoly over technology and capital resources, has continued to provide the capital, the technology and those skills that are crucial in enhancing capitalist production. For instance, in 1981, nineteen joint ventures were planned in Nigeria by companies from Brazil, Canada, and many European countries.[57] Even before then, the United States

Department of Agriculture in conjunction with the Nigerian government established the Joint Agriculture Consultative Committee (JACC) with the intention to encourage U.S. agribusiness corporations to invest substantially in Nigeria.[58] This, according to Goldberg, falls in line with the mission of these corporations whose intention was to "deliver a package of technological and managerial skills for growing, processing, and marketing of produce, and they are willing to apply their expertise and even train local nationals as their successors"[59] (Emphasis Added). Thus, the domestic agrarian capitalist class, being a force that is still coming up, depends on state and agribusiness patronage in order to survive and carryout its activities. However, their control of a significant amount of resources, their acceptance of modern farm practices, their indepth penetration into the rural areas, and their general prospect of developing fully into an agrarian bourgeois class have made them quite acceptable to the union. Individually and collectively, these forces have continued to direct the course of Nigerian agriculture to correspond with the requirements of capital. Agribusiness corporations, for instance, are the sources that recommend, specify and supply the type of machinary being used in the country. Thus, between 1975 and 1981, imports of agricultural machinery from this source rose from ₦50 million to ₦118 million.[60] In 1981 alone, the northern states imported 1,700 tractors from the U.S. based company Massery Ferguson.[61] Agricultural equipment from the United Kingdom, West Germany and Australia were supplied to Nigeria by American based corporations such as Ford, Massery Ferguson, John Deere and International Harvesters.[62]

The coming of international agribusiness into Katsina and Kaduna states is not a recent development. Right from 1962, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) had established large-scale agricultural demonstration projects at Mando, near Kaduna town. This was established with the active support of the then Northern Region Government and USAID has since then been providing support for large-scale agricultural undertakings in the state and beyond. The administrative and political centrality of Kaduna has continued to attract into it a number of agricultural and other concerns. The state has turned into a residential and operational headquarters for both serving and retired military officers, top bureaucrats, businessmen etc. By virtue of their political and business contacts, these elements have influenced the gravitation of oritical agricultural resour.es into the state and have further influenced the attraction of both state agricultural agencies and projects as well as branches of many agribusiness into Kaduna. These includes the Federal Fertilizer Company, National Grains Production Company, the National Livestock production Company and the Nigerian Agricultural and Cooperative Bank. Agribusiness branches in the state includes the Diezengoff West African Limited, SCOAGRI, the Green Fingers etc. It could be seen, therefore, that the kind of relation that exist between the state, capitalist farmers and agribusiness is the type that each of them needs in order to exist and prosper. This, however, does not preclude occasional disagreements and struggles over opportunities. Agribusiness corporations, for example, by virtue of their control of the needed resources and know-how could use this card in order to tune the business environment in its favour.[63] The state and the domestic

capitalist class on the other hand, use their control of home influence and their control of political power to mould existing situations in their favour. However, these possible areas of contradiction, important as they are in understanding the dynamics of rural accumulation, are not fundamental, since both sides are equally aware of their common collective interests and the necessity of remaining together in order to preserve their common interests.

3.6. Capitalist Farmers, Agribusiness and Food Security.

The question that has continued to recurr among analysts of the food situation in the Third World has been the intricate relationship that exists between the alliance of capitalist farmers nad agribusiness on the one hand and the whole question of food security and rural immesarisation on the other. The question becames the more prominent especailly when viewed from the fact that the actions and aspirations of these two warring sides run counter to one another with capitalist forces daily gaining ground at the expense of the subordinate rural classes. The question of food security thus, is a class question especially when viewed from the fact that it is the subordinate classes that suffer most from food insecurity.

To begin with, it is important to realise that the operations of both the agribusiness and capitalist farmers are geared towards profit and accumulation rather than feeding the society. Both are part and parcel of the capitalist transformation that disrupts

and distorts the peasant economy. Both are committed to the concentration of available farm resources into fewer hands and the increased proletarianisation of the peasantry. In Nigeria, the designs of these forces have led to massive displacement and marginalisation of the peasantry from their land.[64] Besides, the continued importation and imposition by these forces of "miracle seeds" - such as improved wheat, rice, maize - and exotic high breed chicken has continued to threaten Third World, and particularly Nigeria's food stability. For example, it has been reported that a number of exotic chicken diseases have been imported into Nigeria because of ineffective guarantee legislations.[65] In 1979, the Director of Federal Livestock Department (FLD) Dr. K.B. David-West confirmed that a number of livestock and poultry diseases such as Marek, Gumboro, Egg drop syndrome etc. have already been introduced into the country.[66] This genetic subversion and imperialism has meant the sabotaging of local varieties which have sustained the society for a very long time.

Furthermore, the National Accelerated Food production programme (NAFPP) initiated in 1972 by the government has been responsible for the supply and indoctrination of farmers to adopt the new seed varieties and engage in the use of fertilizers and tractors. However, what most governments have failed to address is the fact that all these provisions have, in the end, failed to tackle the food problem. This is because in the first place, the majority of the rural producers have not been used to the application of modern inputs. Besides, access to these new inputs has been the exclusive preserve

of the rich farmers who have the financial resources to afford them. Thus, under this situation, the predominant majority of the farmers become dislodged from their original farming practices without having the means to afford the newly introduced modern ones. This problem, therefore, necessarily leads to their inability to confidently produce what to eat talk less of feeding the society. Little wonder that Dr. Norman Borlaug the architect of the high yield varieties has warned that;

> the green revolution did not represent a solution to the food problem; rather, it was a means of buying time, perhaps an additional 15 or 20 years... 67

Another repercurssion of the alliance between the agribusiness and the domestic capitalist class centres around the dangerous redirection and distortion of the consumption patterns of many Third world states including Nigeria. Ruth Rama has documented this danger by showing how the agribusiness diverted domestic production away from the satisfaction of local needs in favour of export crop production to the advanced capitalist countries. The crops most favoured by the capitalist farmers and agribusiness and needed by the multinationals, replaced local staple crops on the best lands because of guranteed prices for the latter.[68] She showed in the case of Mexice that between the mid- 1960s and the late 1970s, the actual land area covered by the country's staple crops and cotton fell by 1.4 million hectares approximately while the area under oil-seeds and feed grains rose proportionately. In Ethiopia, the Italian firm MAESCO, in conjunction with big farmers has produced alfalfa for feeding animals in Japan in a region where thousands of people and

their livestock had to be evicted; some later got starved.[69]

In the case of Nigeria, a similar situation obtains in which destructive policies have been central in the coming of rural immesarisation and food insecurity in a society penetrated by acquisitive forces. For example, in 1971, Cadbury Nigeria Limited installed a tomatoes pure extraction plant in Zaria and stuck a "gentlemen's agreement" with the small farmers in the area to acquire their lands and/or produce for the company. By 1974 Cadbury not only doubled the acreage for tomato production, but also expanded its operation into other areas like yam processing into "poundo-yam".[70] Local farmers around the area drastically shifted their attention from their subsistence production to satisfy the needs of Cadbury. This situation has had a drastic impact on the peasants involved in the deal. For by abandoning their traditional farming to satisfy the needs of Cadbury, they have ended up tempering with the basis of their livelihood in order to meet the requirements of the company.

Thus, the major predicament caused by these developments on the food supply systems of many countries has led to the spread of a technology and production relations that are not geared towards the production of affordable necessary crops. Rather, it has only led to the consolidation of the alliance between the agribusiness and the emerging agrarian capitalist class-which is still not mature enough to exist on its own. For it still require the assistance and patronage of foreign capitalists to be able to hold on to their domination of the rural poor.

3.7. Conclusion

The development of capitalist relations in Nigerian agriculture, which we saw as having its roots in the colonial period has created a priviledged agrarian class while at the same time making others casualities. We have seen that beginning with the colonial period, a wide variety of differentiating mechanisms and processses have been initiated in the rual scene, with their consequences on the subordinate rural classes. State agricultural policies since the early 1970s have been pregnant with desperate but consistent attempts to condemn the peasantry and promote the capitalist agriculture.

The continued intensification of capitalist agricultural policies in Nigeria from evidence, has generated a miserable differentiating dynamic manifested atleast three levels: firstly, the growing private acquisition of land for capitalist agricultural purposes has been in the forefront in deepening the dislocation of the peasantry thereby ejecting them out and depriving them of their means of livelihood. A number of them have been forced to join the ranks of the expanding rural proletariat or graduate as lumpen elements. Secondly, this expanding army of the dispossessed and the deprived have become the inevitable victims of poverty. Thirdly, and deriving from the second, rural-urban migration has intensified due to this growing poverty. A large number of the pauperised peasantry that could not be accomodated as rural labourers have been forced to migrate to the cities. Lastly, the overall result of these trends and processes has assumed a political dimension whereby the society has become increasingly divided along class lines.

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CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

In the last three chapters of this thesis, we have looked at the genesis of the agrarian problem in Nigeria. We further examined the theoretical dimensions of the agrarian question by reviewing the entire debate on the agrarian problem and ended up by arguing in favour of looking at concrete situations on their own merit. In the third chapter, a closer look at state policies has convinced us that the concentration of the means of agricultural production in fewer hands has been of paramount importance in almost all agricultural policies promulgated by the Nigerian state regardless of their pretentions to the contrary.

This chapter begins with a presentation of the basic information on the population within the study area. This information is on the characteristics of the farming population in the study area and the agrarian workers whose lives are shaped by the new agrarian order.

We consider this necessary if a clear picture of the society within which capitalist agrarian relations occur and the preconditions that warranted the survival and thriving of capitalist large-scale farmers in the study area are to be understood.

4.1. Demographic characteristics of the Study Area

The demographic characteristics of the areas covered by this study are fundamentally similar except that certain minor differences do exist between them.

The basic meeting point of these characteristics and structures is that they serve the same purposes regardless of their location. Besides, they are being threatened by the same force, i.e. a new emergent system of production that is gradually, putting their essence asunder.

4.1.1. Age Distribution Among peasants and Agrarian Workers Covered in the Survey Area

A very important and conspicuous aspect in the social organisation of productive activities of the people in our survey area is age. Age has been found to constitute the criterion which determines the degree of work to be done by individuals. The large-scale capitalist farmers, even though they do not recruit labour based on age are actually conscious of the ages of their workers in assigning specific duties in their farming operations. Data obtained from both our peasant and agrarian worker respondents had indicated that a higher proportion of them are in the young to the middle age categories as the table below indicates.

TABLE 4.1.

AGE DISTRIBUTION OF THE SAMPLES OF PEASANT FARMERS AND AGRARIAN WORKERS IN THE SURVEYED HOLDINGS

Age Interval	Number of peasants	No. of workers
15 - 24	19 (9.5%)	13 (13%)
25 - 34	57 (28.5%)	32 (32%)
35 - 44	76 (38%)	29 (29%)
45 - 54	34 (17%)	21 (21%)
55 - 64	14 (7%)	3 (3%)
65 and above	None (Ø)	2 (2%)
TOTAL	200 (100%)	100 (100%)

Source: Questionnaire on the two classes of respondents.

It is pertinent to note that the two age categories with the highest number of respondents among the peasants (i.e 25-34 and 35-44) are age groups in their prime and quite in a position to undertake significant farm work. This runs contrary to the popular view that most of the yonger rural age groups have moved to the cities, leaving the older generations alone to farm. As for the capitalist farmers, their preference for stronger age groups is logical because it is within such groups that they find people with the energy and probably the skill to work.

4.1.2. Occupational Characterisitcs

The main economic activity of the inhabitants of the survey area is the cultivation of the land. This is because the overwhelming majority of the population depend on it directly or

indirectly for their livelihood. The farmers in this area can be fundamentally categorised into two. There are a few capitalist farmers who constitutes 13.8 percent of our total sample of farmers. Their aim in going into farming was to generate profit. This class of farmers also have tractors and other modern farm equipment. They also employ Yan Kwadago (farm labourers) in their farming operations.

The second class of farmers are the peasants who constitutes 86.2 percent of our total sample of farmers. This class of farmers produce basically to consume and dispose the rest in the market.

The survey also indicated that farmers in the area consciously allocate plots for the production of millet, maize, guinea-corn, rice, ginger, groundnuts, cotton, onions and other crops sparingly; but not haphazardly cultivated at the sametime. Intercropping is quite common. However, crops such as rice, onions and sugar-cane are normally cultivated in the fadamas (low land plots) while the other crops mentioned above are grown on upland plots (tudu) mainly during the rainy season.

Beside farming, both the large-scale and peasant farmers in the area also conduct other occupational activities. The table below indicates a broad categorisation of these occupations beside farming itself.

TABLE 4.2.

SECONDARY OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORISATION OF BOTH LARGE-SCALE AND PEASANT FARMERS IN THE SURVEY SAMPLE.

PEASANT FARMERS (n=200)			LARGE-SCALE - FARMERS (n=32)		
Type of Business	No.	%	Type of Business	No.	%
petty trade	77	38.5	Manufacturing	4	12.5
Farm Labourers	50	25	Merchandise	16	50
Craft	33	16.5	Contract	21	65.6
Services	40	20	Transport	7	22
			Others	6	18.7

Sources: Interviews (1988), Questionnaire (December 1990)

It is clear from this table that beside farming, both peasant and large-scale farmers in the survey area also engaged in other businesses. A majority of the peasants in the survey area (38.5%), for example, engage in petty trading such as the keeping of stalls to sell items, hawking, meat selling etc. Fifty percent have indicated selling their labour as Yan kwadago on other farms beside working on their own farms. Some (i.e. 16.5%) are in craft such as mat making, blacksmithing, pot making etc, while those in the category of "service" were mainly barbers, praise singers, local malams, cloth washers, nail cutters, etc.

The capitalist farmers on the other hand were found in businesses corresponding with their class positions. However, unlike the peasant farmers, the capitalist farmers in our sample were found to be in a wide range of businesses. For example, a single capitalist farmer could be a merchant and at the sametime be a contractor and a transporter. Those in the category of "others" are mainly those with interests in the banking and hotel businesses.

On their own part, the 100 agrarian workers covered in this survey indicated that they survive mainly by working on the capitalist holdings we have covered while 50% have indicated sharing plots of land 'at home'. Thirty percent of the workers mainly temporary and seasonal said they also engage in petty trade, backyard farming, apprenticeship training.

It is clear from the foregoing that even from 'other occupations' undertaken by our respondents, their class position could easily be understood. For example, no peasant farmer can be manufacturer while no capitalist farmer can be say a local meat seller.

4.1.3. Sources and Utilization of Labour

The traditional sources of labour in the survey area centre around the extended family, hired labour or a combination of these. Most of the peasants in the area depend heavily on their family hands for farming activities. This is normally the case especially for those whose production is primarily geared towards self-sustenance. A majority of the peasants, therefore, cannot afford

the services of yan kwadago (from labourers). The large-scale farmers on the other hand, could afford that because they have the financial resources coupled with the fact that their huge tracts of farmland are too large for family labour. The table below shows the proportion of the two different classes of farmers in the sample in relation to the type of labour they utilized.

TABLE 4.3.

TYPES OF LABOUR UTILIZED BY OUR RESPONDENTS ACCORDING TO THEIR CLASS POSITION.

Type of Labour	peasant Farmers	%	Capitalist Farmers	%
Family labour only	127	63.5	0	0
Hired labour only	22	11	32	100
Both family and Hired labour	51	25.5	0	0
TOTAL	200	100	32	100

Source: Questionnaire (December 1990), Interview (1988).

It is clear from the table above that the types of labour being utilized by our respondents vary with their class position. A majority of the peasants covered in the sample (63.5%) depend on family labour for their productive activities because that is what they can afford. Fifty-one percent (51%) of the peasants utilized both family and hired labour and only a small fraction (11%) mainly composed of rich peasants were found to have employed

the services of yan kwadago only in their farming activities.

All the 32 capitalist farmers covered mentioned labour (especailly skilled) as one of the major constraints in their farming activities in their farming activities. Many of them had to rely on labourers who migrated from neighbouring areas. For example, out of the 100 agricultural workers covered in the survey, 47 of them said by were migrants. When asked further, 28 said they came from neighbouring towns, 14 from neighbouring states such as Sokoto, Kano and Plateau, and five (5) said they were from Niger Republic.

The importance of labour and its constraining nature in agricultural production and the fact that many people in the area had to sell their labour to survive has made even the 'self-sufficient' small holders to sell their labour. For example, 50 out of the 200 peasants covered conceeded to having once worked as labourers on the farms of others. The increasing trend of labour commercialisation portrays the sort of changes that are occuring in which labour which used to be "donated" to others in the form of gayya (communal work) is now for sale. The major kinds of work undertaken on the farms, especially the capitalist farms includes planting, spraying, weeding, harvesting and threshing. Some of these works are undertaken with machines. On their own part, the large-scale farmers do not partake actively in any productive activities. In fact, 70 percent of those covered by this study are absentee land lords, residing in the urban areas especially Kaduna town.

4.2. Methods of Land Acquisition in the Survey Area

One of the principal factors governing the ownership and control of agricultural production in history had always been the manner in which land was acquired. The process through which this factor of production is cornered by various forces ultimately determines who controls which land and thus control agriculture generally. Consequently, the agrarian relations of production in our survey area significantly portray the forces in competition to acquire land, to put it under their control and subsequently direct the course of agriculture and most affairs associated with it. This is consistent with the general laws governing the development of agrarian relations under capitalism.

Thus, in order to have an insight into the land tenure practices in the area covered, we asked the farmers in the sample to give information on how they acquired the farmlands over which they held cultivation rights at the time of the study. From the responses gathered, we were able to notice a considerable overlapping of tenure in the area. That is, a single farmer may hold units of land under different types of tenure. Overall, the principal land acquisition methods we found in force were; inheritance (gado), purchase (saye), gift (kyauta), rent (haya), exchange (musaya), pledge (jingina) and confiscation (kwace). The table below shows the land tenure methods employed by the two classes of farmers covered.

TABLE 4.4.

MODES OF LAND ACQUISITION AMONG PEASANT AND LARGE-SCALE FARMERS IN OUR SAMPLE

TENURE METHOD	PEASANT FARMERS (n=200)	CAPITALIST FARMERS (n=32)
Inheritence	111	10
Purchase	55	32
Gift	47	-
Loan	60	-
Exchange	41	13
Pledge	9	-

Sources: Questionnaire (1990), Interviews (1988)

Deriving from the above table, we undertake a discussion of these tenure methods with the aim of understanding their nature and the degree to which the classes of farmers we covered acquired their farmlands through them.

4.2.1. (a) Inheritance: Inheritance of land arises with the death of a person's relation, notably his father. In muslim areas the division of the inherited land among the deceased's children is normally done by the Alkali (judge) or a selected scholar. Incase the deceased person had no children, his relations would inherit the land. Among the non-muslim communities however, the laws governing inheritance are normally derived from tradition. In this case too, inheritance comes up only after a person's death and an inherited land is passed to relations, notably children.

In the area covered by this study, inheritance is undoubtedly the dominant method of land acquisition especially among the peasant farmers. In the four (4) villages combined, it accounted for more than 50% of tenure patterns in each area. The highest number was in Zonkwa where it accounted for a little above 60%. Among the capitalist farmers, however, even though this method has not featured prominently as purchase, yet, in the case of Zaria Local Government Area, 50% of the large-scale farmers interviewed admitted that they acquired portions of their farmlands via this method.

On the whole, discussions with both the peasant and large-scale farmers have revealed that inheritance as a method of land acquisition has been central in the disintegration and sub-division of family holdings.

4.2.2. (b) <u>purchase</u>: purchase of land literally involves it being taken over from a person in return for cash. The nature of the transaction in this enterprise is the same as the market exchange of any commodity. The sale price of land, therefore, has a direct relationship with its size, quality and location.

Incidences of land purchase occurred in all the villages covered. This method, for example, accounted for an average of 28% of the total number of holdings in the entire sample of peasant farmers. This method is of greater importance in Yakawada, where about 50% of farmers admitted having acquired parts of their farmlands through this method.

Among the capitalist farmers, however, all the 32 indicated that they purchased substantial portions (over 50%) of their farmlands. Some large-scale farmers have claimed that they purchased parts of their farmlands as 'gush' mostly from government and later developed it.

What is quite obvious is that there is a general gravitation in the area for change towards the direction of land commercialisation. For example, 43% of the peasants covered have indicated that they have sold some 20 - 40% of their farmlands mainly to capitalist farmers. The general trend towards commercial land transaction could partly be attributed to increased population pressure on existing land and the fact that many peasants need the money to meet other pressing needs. Also, out of these who sold their lands, 40% have indicated that they sought the consent of their village heads before the transaction took place, but only as witnesses.

4.2.3 (b) Loan (ARO)/Rent (Haya): Loan refers to land acquired for temporary use usually with a token payment (galla). Galla is customarily a payment with a portion of the crop cultivated on the land. Thus, it is a rent in kind which is unfixed and quite unrelated to the quality and size of the land. Under the defunct calipha/social organisation, it was paid by peasants and slaves in order to legitimise the owner's title to the land and reinforce their allegience to him.

Rent, on the other hand, involves a situation whereby, land is acquired through negotiation regarding the amount of money to

be paid and the period of use. This method can easily be differentiated from loan due to its being formal, involving cash.

From the survey conducted, an average of 20% of the total sample of peasant farmers claimed that they acquired parts of the lands they cultivate through a combination of these two methods. On the other hand, none of the capitalist farmers interviewed has claimed to have acquired any of his land through this method.

4.2.4. (c) Gift (Kayauta): Gift means giving the land out free of charge to others. This is common mainly among family members especially to the younger members of the family. Among our sample of peasant farmers, 26 out of the 47 who claimed to have acquired parts of their lands in the form of gift said they were given by their uncles, 6 by their older brothers and 6 by their friends.

Discussion with the farmers has revealed that this is the method used to initiate the younger ones into independent farming. Small wonder that about 45% of those who said they got portions of their lands through this method belong to 15 - 24 years of age category. On their part, none of the capitalist farmers we covered said they acquired their farmlands through this method.

4.2.5. Exchange: Exchange in land transaction involves the taking of a person's land in return for another one elsewhere. This method of land acquisition is mainly engineered by capitalist farmers

who annex peasant farmlands especially those bordering their own farm in return for an "alternative" land elsewhere. Thirteen (13) capitalist farmers in all (2 in Malumfashi; 3 in Funtua, 4 in Zaria, 4 in Kachia) indicated having expanded their farmlands through this method. Among the peasant farmers, 41 of them (i.e. 9 in Yammama, 14 in Mairuwa, 8 in Yakawada and 10 in Zonkwa) said they acquired parts of their existing farmlands through exchange notably with large-scale farmers and Kulaks.

4.2.6. Confiscation: This method of land acquisition is common in our study area. It presupposes a situation whereby, peasant lands are being taken over by powerful forces notably the state or capitalist farmers. This is normally done for a variety of reasons ranging from arguing that the land belonged to their ancestors to claims of development undertakings. The influence of traditional authorities has been very crucial in forcing the peasants to give up valuable farmlands. Of the 32 large-scale farmers we covered, none of them confessed that they ever confiscated peasant lands. Such information had only been secured from the peasants themselves and also from past records. For example, a colonial document entitled A Memo on Rural Land policy in the North prepared in 1929 has described how peasant lands were persistently appropriated by the well-to-do in close collaboration with traditional authorities. Also, the 1981 Kaduna State Land Investigation Report is full of such reported cases where peasants were forced to surrender their lands amidst intimidation and harrassment by traditionsl authorities.

Also, confessions from the peasants covered have showed that seven (7) peasants in all (1 in Yammama, 3 in Mairuwa, 2 in Yakawada and 1 in Zonkwa) have parted with their lands not out of their own wish. Discussion with them has indicated that three (3) were "advised" by the village head to sell while the rest had their farmlands encircled by that of a large scale farmer, thus forcing them to sell their lands to them.

pledge: pledge arises when some farmers, out of necessity pledge their farmlands in most cases for cash to settle pressing matters. This mode of land acquisition is not common in our study area. For example, of the 32 capitalist farmers interviewed, none of them admitted acquiring any portion of his land through this method. However, among the peasants, 9 of them (i.e. 2 in Yammama, 1 in Mairuwa, 3 in Yakawada and 3 in Zonkwa) said they held title to a significant portion of their lands through this method.

From the foregoing discussion, it is obvious that even though the farmers in the study area have originally acquired their lands through a wide variety of methods (inheritance, gift etc), the increasing commercial transaction of land in the area has made this factor of production a commodity. The purchase and sale of land in the area has become prominent, a situation which, generally, encourages the activities of land speculators and potential confiscators. The increasing level of land commercialisation could also be ascertained from the incidences of land purchase by capitalist farmers. All the 32 covered indicated purchase as the principal method they acquired their

farmlands. Thus, the varying methods of land acquisition which exist smultaneously in the area has indicated that even though commercialisation of land has been growing, the traditional methods of acquiring land also have tended to survive indicating that the peasantry is yet to be totally removed from the land.

4.3. Large-Scale Farmers in the Survey Area and Their Production Implements

A very significant area of measuring the changes which capitalist farmers have been bringing into the countryside is the rate at which they have mechanised agriculture. This is because agricultural capitalism and the advancement of the productive forces have tended to be at par.

However, even though in some capitalist farming enclaves traditional implements are still being used, indicating that total mechanisation has not been achieved, the introduction of modern farm implements is still regarded as the best option in enhancing productivity and the elimination of the traditional methods of production. Thus, the large-scale farmers we have covered in the study area are in command of considerable farm resources such as tractors, planters, harvesters, boom sprayers etc. which were either purchased directly from the headquarters of the agribusinesses or at their local agencies. A few of the capitalist farmers (7) we interviewed said they have been turning for support to nearby Tractor Hiring Centres or to the ADPs in Funtua or Maigana. This is because the machines in their possession were not adequate to cater for their needs.

Thus, if we take the degree of farmmechanisation to measure

the extent of the changes being brought about by the capitalist class, it would be seen that those with larger hectares and bigger financial resources are better placed. For example, whereas at "Sai-ka-Gani" farm owned by Alhaji Garba Amani the size of machinery was considerable (20 tractors, 8 planters, 16 boom sprayers, 3 harvesters and many other machines), at Alheri farm (251 hectares) owned by Alhaji Hassan Iro, the degree of farm mechanisation was slight. Infact, he indicated during interview that, the Funtua project had always been his major source of getting machinery for his farm work. We saw only one tractor and a few light machines such as hand sprayers on his farm. Thus, if the agricultural enterprises covered by the survey are ranged according to their degree of mechanisation, a wide range of variations would be noticed. For example, beside the "Sai-ka-Gani" farm, there exist others of its nature in the various places we covered. In Malumfashi area, there is; the Manema farm owned by Musa Musawa (10 tractors, 6 planters, 12 boom sprayers, 1 harvester and others); Hali farms owned by Haliru Kafur (12 tractors, 8 planters, 16 boom sprayers and 2 harvester). Maimuna farm owned by Alhaji A. Bello (8 tractors, 7 planters, 12 boom sprayers, 2 harvesters etc.).

In Funtua Local Government Area, the farms which could be rated as being close to "Sai-ka-Gani" are the Sambo Farm owned by General Shehu Yar'adua. It is highly mechanised with 15 tractors, 9 planters, 18 boom sprayers, 13 harvesters and a host of other machines. In Zaria Local Government Area, 2 farms (i.e. Nuba Farms and M.I.S. Farms) were found to be the most mechanised. Nuba had 7 tractors, 5 planters, 11 boom sprayers, and 1 harvester while M.I.S. had 8 tractors, 6 planters, 9 boom sprayers, 2 harvesters and other machines. Lastly, in Kachia, we have also recorded

farms with substantial mechanisation like the ones in other places. For example at Ladan Zuru's farm, there were 8 tractors, 4 planters, 6 boom sprayers, 1 harvester and others. Also at Karama farms, we saw 6 tractors, 4 planters, 12 boom sprayers etc. However, beside these farms with tremendous mechanisation, there are others where the presence of machines was quite limited indicating their unequal impact in changing the fabric of traditional society and its productive forces. In this respect, we could take for instance, A. Umaru Yaro's farm in Puntua; Alheri farm in Malumfashi or even Mahmud Kassim's farm in Kachia. The size of these three (3) farms put together was 821 hectares. Each had only one tractor and limited number of machines. Infact they confessed that they survive on the goodwill extended to them by the FADP. For Mahmud Kassim, he admitted that most of the help comes from friends and sometimes from the KADP. What is obvious from this development is that beside the differentials in terms of the impact of these farms in changing the form of rural society due to their differing levels of access to modern machines, state agricultural agencies (e.g. ADPs), estensibly established to cater for the small farmers, have actually ended up aiding and abetting the existence and prosperity of the large-scale capitalist farmers.

However, inspite of these variations, even the large-scale farmers with considerable quantity of farm machines have actually complained about the inadequacies of their machines compared with the sizes of their farms. Many of them explained the problem in terms of the skyroketting prices of farm equipments especially

with the coming of S.A.P. As such, Alhaji Zubairu Isa Raccah lamented that "you have to do about half of the work with labourers because the equipments are too expensive"[1]. Besides, many of those equipments available have been described as not suitable to local conditions. Despite the attempts by many agribusiness corporations to "tropicalise" the equipments to correspond with the realities of the local conditions, practical farm managers such as Mr. Sidiku of Malle farms insisted that such "tropicalisation" is a farce. He singled out Diezengoff, whose machines, notably planters, he says ... have got chains and sproket problems"[2] despite "tropicalisation". Such is a clear demonstration of the fact that capitalist development in Nigerian agriculture has its own unique characteristic and problems. The inadequacies in the supply of and access to machinery by the agrarian capitalists in our study area is a clear indication of their limited strength vis-a-vis their say American counterparts. The lack of durability of their productive implements when applied locally further indicates the above point coupled with the fact that the absence of a local sources of these machines further shows the dependant nature of the agrarian capitalist development process in the country.

In order to make these points clearer, we have attempted an evaluation of the monetary worth of the farm implements on the holdings we have covered, a task which proved difficult due to the unstable nature of the local currency (the Naira). For this reason, we based the evaluation on pre-SAP prices because they are more stable, more so that most of the machines were purchased before the initiation of SAP. Disclosure of information on the

actual monetary costs of the farm machines became a problem as many of our respondents were reluctant to disclose that information. However, the information was collected and the table below indicates the contents of the information.

TABLE 4.5.

Capitalist Farms Surveyed and The Worths of their farm implements (pre-SAP Value)

Area	No. of Farms Covered	Total Value of Farm Machines/ LGA (₦m)	Percentage of Total Value
Malumfashi	8	13.5	17.5
Funtua	8	23.2	29.5
Zaria	8	19.0	24
Kachia	8	23.0	29.
TOTAL	32	78.7	100.00

Source; Interview with the capitalist farmers (1988).

The table above demonstrates the intensity of capital investment in the surveyed holdings. All the four Local Government Areas covered contain farms with capitalist investment. Kachia and Funtua Areas. have farms with largest investments in machinery. Deriving from our field survey, we have attributed this to the fact that it was in these two areas we found the biggest and probably most influencial farmers. Not only that, these two areas have bigger land resources which attracted many capitalist entrepreneuers from many parts of the

country. However, a brief detail of what the individual capitalist farmers themselves indicated as the average value of their farm implements would shed more light on the situation. For instance, in Malumfashi, 3 farmers only owned up to about 60% of the total value of farm machinery among the sampled farmers there. These were A. Yammama, ₦1.3 million, A.H. Kafur, ₦5 million and Musa Musawa, ₦2 million. In Funtua area, 2 capitalist farmers, namely, Garba Ammani and Shehu Yar'adua, also control more than 50% of the total value of farm machines within the sample with ₦8 million and ₦5 million respectively. In Zaria Local Government, M.I.S. farm (owned by Alhaji Maikawari), Maidunya farm (owned by professor Abdullahi) and Anmur farms (owned by Alhaji Dan Sarki Arap) contain farm implements worth 40% of total sampled farms in the area. The least among all these are those farms mentioned earlier with some light implements that depend on the good will of tractor hiring schemes.

The obvious disparity in the quatity of farm machinery owned by the capitalist farmers further demonstrates their differences in terms of the degree of their capital investment in agriculture. This inturn presuppose the obvious fact that their productivity, labour use and general impact in the rural scene would also differ.

A crucial input in agricultural production worth mentioning is fertilizer which is widely used by capitalist farmers. The Funtua Agricultural Development project has been championing the campaign for its use by massively importing it beginning from 1974. It has been pointed out that even though the appraisal

target of project for fertilizer to be delivered by 1977 was 2,100 tonnes, in reality, a huge total of 8,500 tonnes of the input was imported by that time.[4] The major beneficiaries of this input are the capitalist large-scale farmers because they have the cash to purchase it, in addition to also being credit worthy. All the 32 capitalist farmers indicated using large quantities of fertilizer especially in maize production. For example, in Funtua Local Government Area, the 8 large-scale farmers covered indicated that they used 1506 tonnes of fertilizer during 1987 planting season. Out of these, 4 capitalist farms namely "Sai-ka-Gani", Sambo farm, Sanusi farm and Attah farm got the lion's share with a total of 1011 tonnes. In Malumfashi Area, the 8 capitalist farmers covered indicated having used a total of about 899 tonnes of fertilizers during the same season. The major consumers here were the Manema, Hali and A. Yammama farms with about 400 tonnes. In the case of Zaria, even though the information we received is not complete, 3 farmers (Prof. Abdullahi, M. Babajo and M. Bamalli) stated that they have applied a total of about 320 tonnes of fertilizer. In the case of Kachia Local Government Area, the application of fertilizer by our respondents was quite intensive compared with the rest. For example, a total of 1623 tonnes was used by the farmers during the same year. Out of these, 3 farms (Karama, Koba and Baba Bako) consumed 720 tonnes.

It is obvious from the foregoing that the condition of the large-scale capitalist farmers regarding access to modern implements and inputs has not been very difficult compared with the peasantry.

However, turning to the latter, the poor peasants in our survey area still use antiquated hoes they inherited. During the survey, we noticed that most peasants cannot even afford galmar shanu (i.e. ox ploughs) which is relatively cheaper to hire. The richer ones, on the other hand, apart from making use of traditional hoes, many of them owns ox-ploughs. Besides, quite a number of the rich ones also have access to the tractor hiring units of the FAIP and KAIP. However, during our survey, a majority of the peasant farmers have indicated their problems in terms of non-use of the modern inputs particularly tractors and fertilizers.

TABLE 4.6.

Rating of peasant Farmers According to Reasons for Non-Use of Modern Inputs

Rating	Score	percentage
Cannot afford	87	43.5
prefer local inputs	71	35.5
No problem with acces	33	16.5
Not available	9	4.5
TOTAL	200	100

Source; Field work.

It is clear from the above table that majority of the peasants do not have access to agricultural inputs because they could not afford them. Infact even among those who said they preferred local inputs, did not, in reality, have access to the modern ones and that was what informed their response. However, those in the category of "no problem with access" are mainly better off, the category of peasants who are rich.

4.4 The Structure and Major Characteristics of the Surveyed Holdings.

All the 32 agricultural holdings we sampled for survey have met the desired requirements of a typical capitalist farm. This is because beside their meeting the prescribed size (100 hectares and above) of a modern holding, they all share the following characteristics identified by the Federal Office of Statistics (FOS)[3].

- holdings with permanent locations
- holdings that employ paid workers
- holdings that keep proper records
- holdings that utilise modern implements in farm operations.

However, this section is mainly concerned with the structure and characteristics of the holdings we surveyed particularly regarding their crop production pattern, legal status, administrative set up, marketing channels etc.

4.4.1 Administation.

Administratively, the agricultural holdings are hierarchically organised from top to bottom in a typical bureaucratic set up. The chain of command flows from top to bottom with the

proprietor/chairman being the highest authority in the organisation. He issues periodic policy instructions to the farm manager with the necessary wherewithal for running the farm. In essence he is the "alpha and omega" of the business. His whims and caprices are final. As the owner of the business, he appropriates all the profits and pay workers wages through the farm manager.

The farm manager's position is very central in running farm affairs because he ensures that all the various levels are functioning and this requires his day-to-day supervision. Ernest Feder's description of the role of farm manager (administrator) in a typical Latin American Latifundia is very similar with what obtains here;

> He supervises the farm operations under orders of the landlord within a strictly limited sphere of action. He makes no major decisions with respect to the use of land, the number and kind of livestock to be raised or fed, or what to buy or sell. His powers over operational expenditures are normally limited to small cash transactions or charge accounts with merchants. From the point of view of the landlord, the administrator (i.e. manager) is merely another worker although he receives higher wages... and certain minor privileges not accorded other workers. But the administrator is the boss's "man of trust". 4

Feder went on to indicate that the worker's view of a farm manager is that he is the nearest authority because of his crucial position in running the daily affairs of the farm. Moreover, he assigns daily work, pay wages, punishes, fires a labourer and hires a replacement all within the specifications of the proprietor. The other staff under him (supervisors, accountants, administrative staff etc.) play supportive roles, with drivers, messengers down the line. Farm labourers are

the lowest in the hierarchy. They receive orders directly from the supervisors within the specifications of the farm manager. Overall, farm workers rarely enter into direct contact with the proprietor and any complaints or sentiments the workers may harbour regarding the system are first directed to the manager.

The administrative/management component of running a capitalist farm is an area which many capitalist farmers complained about. As was expected, being an area that handles decisions on production, payment, discipline and worker's walfare (if any) etc, it is central in virtually every aspect of the farms. Most of the capitalist farmers' reaction was on management being "lacking", "inefficient", etc. The future of capitalist farming might depend on the ability of farm management to bull doze its way in having production raised under the existing condition with the state's assistance in expropriating the peasantry and marginalising the working class.

4.4.2. Legal Status

In its survey of modern agricultural holdings in 1981/82, the Federal Office of Statistics identified 60 businesses in the old Kaduna State. Out of these, 56 were one man business while 3 were partnerships and only one was a limited liability. We found a similar trend in this survey as indicated in the following table.

TABLE 4.7

Distributions of the Surveyed Holdings by Form of Ownership

Area	No of Holdings Surveyed	No of Holdings owned by		
		Sole proprietor	partnership	Limited Liability
Malumfashi	8	6	1	1
Funtua	8	7	1	-
Zaria	8	5	2	1
Kachia	8	6	2	-
TOTAL	32	24(75%)	6(18.7%)	2(6.2%)

Source: Field work.

The predominance of 'one-man' businesses could be seen in that 75% of the holdings surveyed are owned by single individuals (sole proprietor). This is followed by the partnerships which constitutes 18.7% and limited liabilities, 6.2%. The fact that most large-scale farmers prefer not to operate as limited liability companies was confirmed from the 1987 Kaduna State Business Directory where among our sample, only the Manema and Nuba commercial farms featured as limited liability establishments. When asked why they preferred not to enter into joint partnerships with others, more than half of the capitalist farmers maintained that the vagaries of farming requires that they single handedly own the business and put in their best to ensure its success. All the 32 also said that their relation with the multinationals was only at the level of farm machinery supply, some of them even through

third parties. Four of them said that the few foreigners (mostly Israelis) on their farms were mainly providing expert services with no ownership claim. Alhaji Garba Ammani's statement summarised the position of the large-scale farmers in their preference for going it alone, without partners, especially foreigners;

> They (foreigners) dictates almost everything. They bring all the machines at inflated prices and ask for higher returns. They infact take away most of the profits" 5.

This phenomenon indicates the general trend and nature of the types of capitalist enterprises existing on the ground. These are enterprises that depend heavily on the products of foreign agribusiness corporations but not necessarily having direct contact with them thus giving the situation its pecular characteristics.

4.4.3. Crop production

A number of crops are being grown on the capitalist holdings covered in this survey. These includes maize, rice, sorghum, millet, beans, guinea corn, soya beans, groundnuts, ginger etc. The crop most widely cultivated is maize which was grown on all 32 holdings visited. Followed by guinea corn, 29 holdings; rice, 26 holdings; groundnuts, 24 holdings; cotton, 23 holdings; millet, 21 holdings; sorghum, 20 holdings; beans, 16 holdings; soya beans, 10 holdings and ginger, 7 holdings. Generally, production figures on these holdings have shown a specific pattern with some crops being more widely produced than others.

TABLE 4.8

PRODUCTION TREND FOR 1987 - 1990 OF CROPS PRODUCED ON THE SURVEY HOLDINGS PRODUCTION (000' METRIC TONS)

Crop	1987	1988	1989	1990	% change in '90 (base, 1978)
Maize	86	97	93	84	-2.33
G/corn	20	18	18	15	-25.0
Cotton	13	11	14	12	-7.7
Rice	19	22	21	16	-15.8
Sorghum	8	10	10.5	7	-37
Millet	17	19	17.5	16	-5.9
G/nuts	6	5	8	6	0
Soya beans	7	9	10	9	28.6
Beans	8	10	9	7	12.5
Ginger	5	5	7	6.3	26

Source: Figures provided during interview.

The table above indicates the trend in production and level of productivity of each crop during the four years between 1987 to 1990. It is clear from the table that maize is mostly preferred by the capitalist farmers. This could be attributed to the fact that this crop has wider marketing channels especially with the proliferation of poultry farms all over the country. Other important crops are the guinea corn and millet being given much prominence because of their importance in the local diet. The production of rice had also been intensified especially with the rising demand for it since its massive importation began in

the early 1980s. Of all the crops produced by the farmers covered, ginger was the least. Infact, we only recorded its production in Kachia area.

Generally speaking, the trend in crop production in the area from the sample covered was devoid of a constant pattern. production figures kept on rising and falling during the respective years reported. The year 1990, however, shows the worst negative growth trend. We attribute this partly to the fact that about 15 percent of our respondents did not cultivate a single crop that year, as a protest against what they called governmental "unfair" handling of fertilizer distribution during the farming season. Beside this, they also complained of the prices of their products in the market not even meeting the actual cost of production. For example, they claimed that the production cost of a bag of maize was ₦100 in 1990 while actual market price was only ₦95.00. Even before then, in the year 1989, the AERLS had reported "reduced involvenent of individual farmers in large-scale production in several states" such as Kaduna, Katsina, Borno, Niger and Sokoto. The reasons given by the farmers for this "reduced involvement" according to the report was shortage of inputs and production costs.

The implication of this situation is that large-scale farmers cannot be entrusted with the responsibility of feeding the nation. This is because as a class of farmers engaged in capitalist production, profit acquisition and maximization is their sole objective. Thus, even if they could shoulder that task, the nation stands to be disappointed and endangered once their profiteering crave becames threatened.

4.4.4 Marketing Channels

An aspect which many of our respondents got hysterical about was marketing. This is because the channels, conditions and terms under which agricultural products are sold determines the profit to be made and the financial gain of the farmer. All the 32 large-scale farmers interviewed said they sold their products both within the states they are situated and also in the neighbouring states. Fourteen of them said they sold parts of their produce in other parts of the country. None of our respondents claimed exporting his products to any foreign country. Twenty said they sold some of their products, particularly cereals, to the government and other firms dealing with agricultural products such as breweries, poultry feed mills etc and all said they also dispose in the open market. The table below indicates the capitalist holdings surveyed and the various channels and avenues they sold their products.

TABLE 4.9

DISTRIBUTION OF HOLDINGS SURVEYED BY MARKETING CHANNELS

Area	No. of Holdings Covered	Number of Holdings that Marketed their Produce				
		To Other States	To Govt.	To private firms	To the Open Market	Export
Malumfashi	8	3	2	2	8	-
Funtua	8	2	1	4	8	-
Zaria	8	3	1	3	8	-
Kachia	8	6	3	4	8	-
TOTAL	32	14	7	13	32	-

Source: Interviews (1988).

From the table above, it is clear that the capitalist agricultural holdings in the area covered have wide varieties of channels through which they dispose their produce. Thus, if we take specific cases into account, we could see that the Malle farm (part of Maidunya farm) in Zaria local government, for example, disposed its maize to Taraku Feedmill in Benue State; to the government and also in the open market. part of the crop also went to Arewa Agricultural Enterprises' poultry feedmill owned by its proprietor. Sambo farm diverted about 60% of its maize to its poultry farm while the rest and the other crops were sold in the open market. Nuba commercial farms proprietor said he sold his cotton to Arewa Textiles Ltd. Kaduna, his grains to the National Seed Service Company and also in the open market. The Manager of Karama farms said his organisation sold its cereal in 1988 to many feed mills; to Kaduna State Government and also in the open market. Alhaji Abdulkadir Yammama said he sold his crops mainly in the open market. The same responses applied to all 32 cases as they kept on mentioning the channels they disposed their products.

Thus, at the end of our discussions, none of our respondents complained of not getting a market to dispose of their products. All those wanting to adhere to the rules of the Islamic faith also said that they paid the Zakat (a koranic injunction on muslims to surrender a prescribed portion of their wealth to the poor annually) before selling their produce. This, they said, had never affected their profits. Their point of quarrel mostly was with government deciding on the prices of their products which many felt did not augur well for their business. For instance, Alhaji Attah of

Attah Farms in Funtua lamented on how he had to sell his maize at a loss (₦30 per bag) after the 1986/87 harvest. Another said furiously that "... we farmers should be allowed to fix the prices of our products because it is we who know their actual costs!".[6] With the intensification of SAP, these grievances have been largely curtailed. This is because with the abolishing of all kinds of all kinds of governmental intervention in agriculture (except in research and extension), farmers ~~he~~ should now be enjoying higher prices due to the "free operation of market forces". However, their complaint now centres around the skyroketting cost of farm input, especially machinery.

However, it was in the arena of profit generation that most of our respondents did not give satisfactory detail. This could partly be attributed to the opinion of many of them that researchers are virtually spies. However, about 60% of those contacted simply gave a yes/no answer when asked whether the whole business was profitable or not. On the other hand, 40% of the respondents have indicated that the degree of profitability of their business was not stable due to the problems inherent in agricultural production. When things were not difficult, the rate of profitability per annum they said range from 20-40% of their total cost of production.

4.5. The Genesis and Social Features of the Capitalist Farmers in Kaduna and Katsina States

The specific genesis and nature of the agrarian capitalist class in the area covered cannot be traced to the same root. The nature of their historical emergence has given them their

distinct features which in turn determines the specific changes they are bringing into the countryside. However, despite the variations in the manner they emerged, they are fundamentally part and parcel of the same process and are also pursuing the same cause. They are products as well as the prime movers of Nigeria's agrarian capitalist development.

Thus, the pattern through which capitalist farmers have emerged in the study area could be linked to the manner and pattern through which capitalism had penetrated agriculture. For example, we have seen previously that capitalist relations in Nigerian agriculture have partly emerged from below as a result of the intensification of commodity production by the peasantry. At another plane, capitalist relations could emerge through deliberate policies from above that aim to transform existing agragrian relations. In a similar manner also, large-scale farmers can be categorised into two depending on the manner they emerged. There are those who rose from the ranks of the peasantry and developed into capitalist farmers. There are also those who were groomed in other sectors of the economy and later found agriculture as an avenue for investing their wealth inorder to generate profit. This category is mainly composed of military officers, politicians, businessmen etc.

Thus, if we categories the large-scale farmers in the respective local government areas we covered, we would see that out of the 32, 17 (or 53.1%) belong to the category of those who rose from the ranks of the small producers while 15 (46.9%) belong to the new breed category. The following belong to the first

category i.e. those who rose from the peasantry; Alhaji Haliru Kafur (Hali farms), Alhaji A. Bello (Maimuna farms), Alhaji Hassan Iro (Alheri farms), Alhaji Abdulkadir Yammama (Yammama farms), Garba Malumfashi (no name), Alhaji Garba Ammani (Sai-ka-Gani), Alhaji A. Attah (Attah farms), Alhaji A.S. Isa (no name), Alhaji Zubairu Racca (Sabara farms), Alhaji Umaru Yaro (Umaru Yaro farms), Alhaji Mamman D. Arap (Annur farms), Alhaji Dahiru Maigana (Rabin Duniya), Alhaji Maikwari (M.I.S. farms), A.B. Danbazariye (no name), A.I. Usman (United farms), A. Baba Bako (Bako farms), and Alhaji Mahmud Kassim (Kassimu farms).

The new breed category on the other hand is composed of the following; A Musa Musawa (Manema farms), Dr. Tukur Abdullahi (noname name), M. Nasir (no name), General S.M. Yar'adua (Sambo farms), A.A. Sanusi (Sanusi farms), Sani Zangon Daura (no name), Cl. Abdulkadir (no name), Professor Ango Abdullahi (Maidunya farms), A.N. Babajo (Nuba farms), A.N. Bamalli (no name), Alhaji Kanti Bello (Karama farms), Alhaji Y.A. Yakubu (no name), A. Ahmadu Kurfi (no name), Alhaji Ladan Zuru (no name), and Mallam Sani Koba (Koba farms).

A sketchy anecdote of the histories some of these farmers would be helpful in the attempt to see the character and pattern of their emergence depending on the fraction of the agrarian capitalist class they belong. We begin with the first category. Alhaji Zubairu Isa Racca started farming in 1962 with a small patch of land as a peasant. He later inherited farmlands from his parents which he developed later. When the defunct Agricultural Commodity Boards were in their hey days in the 1960s and early 1970s, he rose and became one of their agents. He is now a big

time farmer with over 800 hectares of farmland. Alhaji Dahiru Maigana started going to farm with his peasant father. He inherited some few acres of land and continued on his own. He joined a farmer's cooperative society in 1959 and became its secretary in Zaria the same year and its vice chairman in 1968. He now owns a big farm of about 950 hectares which the surrounding peasant nicknamed "Rabin Duniya" (i.e. half of the world). During the second republic polities, he was a member of the Kaduna State House of Assembly and later, the Assembly's majority leader. He is currently the district head of Maigana. In a similar manner, Alhaji Garba Ammani started as a small farmer in 1956 by borrowing a piece of farmland. He rose over the years and is now a big-time farmer, Infact, he controls more hectares of land than any of our respondents. His farm was 5553 hectares, highly mechanised and has been an attraction point of tourists. Alhaji Haliru Kafur also started as a peasant farmer in Malumfashi. Having been successful in trade, he expanded his farmlands and is now a big-time farmer. Similar stories go for farmers like Baba Bako in Kachia, Abdulkadir Yammama and the rest of them in this category.

The large-scale agricultural producers belonging to the category of the new breed in agriculture is a who's who list. For they belong to the class of people who have made tremendous fortune in the wider political economy, especially in public service and have accumulated wealth which they partly invested in agriculture. On top of this list is Major-General Shehu Yar'adua (rtd) who is a former chief of Staff Supreme headquaters during the Obasanjo regime (1976-1979). After retirement, he

became engaged in a variety of businesses: including agro-business and established the Sumbo farms. Among his chain of business are the Habib Bank Ltd., Hamada Carpets, Spring Water Nigeria Ltd. the Nation-house publishing Company etc. The General also holds a traditional title of the Tafida of Katsina. Justice Mamman Nasir is currently the president of the Federal Court of Appeal and a large-scale farmer, He controls over 700 hectares in Malumfashi Local Government Area. Dr. Tukur Abdullahi is a former Kaduna State Commissioner for Health and now a capitalist farmer in Malumfashi. He is a member of the Malumfashi traditional ruling house. Alhaji Nuhu Babajo is a former Deputy Governor of Kaduna State in 1983. Beside his Nuba commercial farm, he has other businesses notably Hamzent in Zaria and Hamzari Enterprises Ltd. Musa Musawa grew up in the civil service, joined the foreign service in the early 1970s and was a leading member of the peoples' Redemption party (PRP). He is also currently a large-scale farmer. Another person who grew up in the foreign service was Ladan Zuru. Until recently, he was Nigeria's Ambassador in France and also a big farmer in Kachia. Professor Ango Abdullahi grew up in academia. He was Vice-chancellor of A.B.U., Zaria from 1979-86. Beside his Maidunya farm in Yakawada village in Zaria Local Government, his other business is the Arewa Agricultural Enterprises in Zaria. Kanti Bello was a General Manager of Katsina Steel Rolling Mill and currently a big time farmer. His farm at Iburu village in Kachia Local Government Area is about 1,200 hectares and largely mechanised. Nuhu Bamalli was a former Federal Minister in the First Republic. He is currently the Magajin Gari of Zaria and a large-scale farmer. His farm is about 800 hectares and is mainly devoted to cereal production.

From these short anecdotes of selected capitalist farmers, it is obvious that large-scale farming has become a favourite of top level bureaucrats, government officials, politicians and businessmen. Crucial in their hustling to set up these farms is the fact that most of them are highly connected in the corridors of state power. Again, many of them, as we have seen, belong to the traditional ruling class which is still powerful in the countryside especially in terms of appropriating peasant lands. The Kaduna State land investigation report had spoken of such cases where traditional rulers confiscated peasant farmlands and gave them to large-scale farmers in return for cash or favours. The capitalist class in control of the agricultural enterprises in our study area are also a compradore bourgeoisie in the wider political economy many of whom are allied to traditional-feudal aristocracy.

Thus, the kinds of contacts and connections this class had established for itself has been central to it having easy access to modern agricultural inputs, unlike their peasant counterparts. Most of them have confessed that they "pressed buttons" to have access to facilities provided by the state especially credit, fertilizer, extension services etc. The Nigerian Agricultural and Cooperative Bank (NACB) and other commercial banks have over the years been issueing out loans to these farmers. The table below indicates the degree of the lending to this class of farmers.

TABLE 4.10

FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS AND THE AMOUNTS LENDED OUT TO CAPITALIST FARMERS IN THE SAMPLE COVERED.

Financial Institution	No of Beneficiaries	Total Amount Received (Naira)
N.A.C.B.	8	₦2,570,000.00
U.B.A.	6	1,545,000.00
First Bank	4	760,000.00
Union Bank	2	630,000.00
Non-Beneficiaries	12	-

Source; Interviews (1988)

The table above indicates the degree to which large-scale capitalist farmers have received financial backing from these institutions. Even though some of the respondents did not disclose the actual amount they have received (5 in all), the loans received per beneficiary range from ₦100,000.00 to ₦1million. Infact, it was the NACB that topped the list with a single ₦1 million beneficiary. However, it is our candid opinion that many of these elements did not actually need any loans to farm because of their already acquired fortunes. Beside farming, all the 32 capitalist farmers are also engaged in other diverse businesses (see table 4.2.). This, therefore, means that farming is only a fraction of the businesses of this class. As Nuhu Babajo pointed out, "the farm and my other businesses complement each other. They are part and parcel of the same business".[7]

However, we have observed that some of them are much more in the business of farming than others. That is they engage less in other businesses outside farming. Garba Ammani for instance, is a contractor beside being a farmer. But according to him "... the contract is secondary due to lack of adequate and timely payment".[8] He said that since he started as a small farmer in 1956, he had never relented his efforts. To confirm our earlier distinction of capitalist farmers on the basis of their origin he was quick to distinguish himself from absentee/newbreed farmers whom he sarcastically referred to as "masu gona" (i.e. farm owners) as distinct from people like himself who are "manoma" (farmers). Thus, unlike the absentee "farm owners", he has a big house on his farm where some members of his family reside. He also closely supervises all farm work and sometimes even participates in light work inorder to "encourage" his labourers.

However, even though we have earlier on said that profit is the sole motivating factor of capitalist farming, there still is an important social dimension of their farming which must not be taken for granted. This is that large-scale farmers, beside the profit objective also provides for the sustenance of their rather large families from their farm products. But because the proportion committed to this aspect is negligible, it is often ignored, and what goes to the market receives almost all the attention. For example, of the 32 farmers covered, 12 (or 37%) have admitted during discussion that they feed their extended family out of their farm products and deploy the rest to the market. This is an indication of the fact that the African extended family system is

not restricted to the peasantry but also applies to the capitalist class. However, because of the economies of scale embedded in large-scale production, the quantity committed by the capitalist farmer in meeting this social responsibility becomes insignificant in comparison with his proceeds.

From this discussion, we maintain that the Nigerian agrarian bourgeoisie is a product of the specific form which capitalism is assuming in the Nigerian social formation. Their features, as described in this section, portrays them as a class in ascendance, that is struggling to survive the lagging productive forces coupled with the constraints imposed on it by a capitalist system in crisis. However, the factors that have all along ensured their continued survival have a number of dimensions some of which are; the existence of the remnants of feudal and pre-capitalist methods that they benefit from in their capitalist production, the existence of cheap pauperised labour they have been exploiting and state support.

4.6. Capitalist Farming and the Expropriation of the peasantry in the Study Area

Like in any society confronted with the menace of capitalism in its rural society, capitalist penetration into Nigerian agriculture has continued to take its toll among the peasantry. peasant forms of production have continued to be undermined as capitalist agricultural projects and holdings take root in peasant societies. In the two states covered by this survey, the phenomenon of elites and the rich taking away plots and chunks of agricultural land belonging to small producers has been a matter of concern in

many quarters. A very frank statement on this alarming phenomenon was delivered by the then new governor of Kaduna State Alhaji Balarabe Musa thus:

> This government is not going to sit by and allow anybody no matter how powerful to turn any family of peasant farmers into landless labourers. We intend to establish special land investigation panels to examine the numerous cases of complaints over land transactions and the payment of compensations[9].

Thus, the report of the Lands Investigation Commission came up with alarming and startling revelations about all kinds of primitive land grabbing extant in the state that has rendered many peasant households landless. The Report clearly indicted wealthy individuals and traditional feudal authorities as being central in the rat-race to grab peasant lands.

The immediate effect of this phenomenon had been a drastic decline in the size of land holdings owned by the peasant house holds. This also presupposes a significant reduction in the productive capacity of the peasantry. For example, the Federal Office of Statistics 1983 Household Survey Report had indicated that the old Kaduna State had some 462,000 peasant households with a total of 582,910 hectares of farmlands. Further indicated is that a preponderant percentage of the landholding (about 89%) was acquired through family allocation or inheritance. Besides, each peasant household controlled an average of 1.26 hectares. The average small holder farm size in the state was about 0.66 hectares. These fragmented family farms constituted about 80% of the farming population in the state and it has been they who have met virtually all domestic food requirements and agricultural raw material needs over a long period of time. peasant producers have therefore

occupied a very strategic position in the Nigerian economy over the years. However, this strategic position being played by them is daily being subverted, resulting in the emergence of a new agrarian order in line with capitalist laws. Thus, over the years, several sources of information have indicated decreasing capabilities of the small producers to sustain increased output in their major staples. For example, the Federal Office of Statistics in its 1978 to 1984 Surveys of Households reported a trend of decline in the production of major staples by the peasant producers. By the end of 1984, all the major crops such as Guinea corn, Maize, Beans, Yam, Cocoyam and Rice have suffered a decline in production. For example, Guinea corn, declined from 4,081,000 metric tonnes in 1982/83 to 1,231,000 metric tonnes in 1983/84. Similar stories went for yam (5,909,000 to 4,987 metric tonnes), beans (741,000 to 475,000 metric tonnes) cocoyam (226 to 207 metric tonnes) and rice (203,000 to 99,000 metric tonnes) during the same period. Correspondingly, the average expenditure of the average rural household continued to shift towards the purchase of food. For example, during the period, an average of 40% of peasant expenditure was on food purchases, 21% as cash expenditure on other goods and services and 3% as monetary transactions. It is our contention that even if this trend does not indicate directly the phenomenon of peasant expropriation, an initial little light has been provided indicating a likelihood of immesarisation.

A very significant phenomenon that has been the direct result of rising capitalist penetration is the take over of peasant land by the rich and the powerful many of them large-scale farmers.

significant chunks of peasant lands have continued to switch over to these powerful elements leaving the small producers with less land to cultivate. In the survey of 200 peasants we conducted, we have recorded a trend of land transactions between the various rural classes. We have found incidences of small peasants increasingly selling their lands to the upper rural classes leaving them with less to depend on. The table below indicates this phenomenon.

TABLE 4.11

INCIDENCES OF PEASANTS WHO SOLD THEIR LANDS WITHIN THE SAMPLE COVERED.

Village	No. of peasants covered	No. of those who sold land	%of individual cases
Yammama	50	15	30
Mairuwa	50	19	38
Yakawada	50	24	48
Zankwa	50	18	36
Total/% of Total	200	86	43

Source: Questionnaire (December, 1990).

This table clearly shows the extent to which peasants are parting with their lands through commercially oriented transactions. It is also pertinent to indicate that these cases of land transactions actually occured between the poor peasants and other higher rural classes notably the capitalist farmers and Kulaks. For example, taking the overall cases, we have found that out of the 86 peasants who said they sold their lands, 59 (68%) said they

sold the lands to capitalist farmers. Twenty-one (21%) said they sold to fellow peasants but mainly Kulaks while the remaining 6 (7%) said they sold to the local government authorities. When asked whether they sought the consent of anybody, 34 (40%) said they informed their respective village heads.

The overall picture we have recorded was that a large percentage of peasants covered had less land than they used to.

TABLE 4.12

INCIDENCES OF PEASANTS WHOSE FARM LANDS HAVE DECREASED WITHIN THE SAMPLE COVERED.

Village	No. of peasants covered	Frequency of land decrease.	% of individual cases
Yaumama	50	15	30
Mairuwa	50	26	52
Yakawada	50	29	58
Zankwa	50	26	52
Total/% of total	200	96	48

Source: Questionnaire (December, 1990).

The above table demonstrates the degree to which a significant percentage (i.e. 48% of the small producers is having less land. The implication of this situation is that since the land owned by the peasantry is declining, their productivity would logically fall thus limiting their ability to be self-sufficient.

Thus, it is obvious that peasant expropriation from their lands could result directly from the expended role of capitalist agricultural producers. If we take the FOS survey of modern agricultural holdings, we could see that 60 holdings were identified in Kaduna State. The capitalist farmers owning these holdings had, during the 1980/81 planting season cornered some 2,635 hectares of available cultivable land. This gave each of them an average of 43 - 44 hectares. During the 1981/82 season, total land holding rose to 3932 hectares thus giving each of them an average of 44 - 65 hectares. Most of these lands were devoted to maize production, the grain most needed by poultry firms. Deriving from our survey, however, we believe that land concentration by this class was much deeper than reported by the FOS. For example, the 32 capitalist holdings we covered controlled some 18,652 hectares of land giving an average of 582 hectares for each holding. The reality of the situation however is that some holdings are much bigger than others. For example, while the "Sai-ka-Gani" holding in Funtua was 5,553 hectares, Alheri farm in Malumfashi was only 251 hectares. The degree to which peasant farmers are pushed out of their lands can be seen in that if we take the FOS figures of 1.26 hectares per peasant family, then the 18,652 hectares being cornered by the 32 capitalist farmers in our survey area could conveniently be shared by 14,803 households in the same area.

Beside these quantitative figures, there is further evidence to show the extent to which the peasantry are being displaced. For example, after collecting several complaints on land mis-appropriation from peasants, the Kaduna State Land Investigation

committee showed that the culprits were a combination of the government, traditional rulers and wealthy individuals most of whom are large-scale farmers. The table below gives a summary of the distribution.

TABLE 4.13

TOTAL COMPLAINTS BY RESPONDENTS

Respondents	Number	percentage
Local Authority	5,589	26.8
Traditional Authority	5,383	25.8
Local/Traditional Auth.(Combined)	368	1.8
Government	6,743	32.3
Govt. and Trad. Authority	508	2.4
Other Individuals	1,046	5.0
Other Combinations	1,238	5.2
TOTAL	20,875	100

Source: Adopted from N. Perchonock "Double oppression: Women and Land Matters in Kaduna State". A.W.I.N. Conference paper, A.B.U., 1982.

The table clearly shows that those most indicted were the various levels of authority including traditional rulers having constituted over 89% of the accused. However, deep inside the report, the commission indicted prominent people who are large-scale farmers as having grabbed peasant lands without compensation. Such people includes Ahmadu Kurfi, Abdulkadir Yammama, Garba Ja Abdulkadir, Justice Mamman Nasir, Hassan Usman Katsina, Nuhu Bamalli, Haliru Kafur etc. The commission, for example, reported Alhaji Garba Ja Abdulkadir as having confiscated

farmlands belonging to one Kasimu Galadiman Aska in Funtua Local Government Area. When Kasimu took up the case to Sarkin Maska (the traditional ruler of Funtua) he was given a ridiculous sum of ₦12.00 as compensation. Similarly, Alhaji Muhu Bamalli was reported to have siezed farmlands belonging to one Hashimu Muntari in Kachia when he was the Magajin Gari of Kaduna for a token sum of ₦300.00. This, Alhaji Muhu did by coming with the police who forced the parents of Hashimu to accept the money. Such cases have been variously reported by the commission in a number of Local Government Areas in the State.

The above and other processes through which the peasantry had been losing its land could have at least three serious implications. The first is that because of the subordination of peasant agriculture to capital, agricultural production has been moving away from the production of essential crops such as Guinea corn, Millet, Beans, Yams etc. The vast acreage of lands is being devoted to the production of maize precisely because capitalist farmers have found it marketable especially to poultry mills. This was evidenced from the survey we conducted in all the 32 agricultural holdings mentioned earlier. Maize was found to be the 'king crop' which dominated at least 50% of all planted hectares on the various farms. As for the survey conducted by the FOS, maize production predominated not only in Kaduna State (with some 1,157 hectares) but the entire country. For all the 636 holdings surveyed nationwide mostly grew maize. Shockingly however, a huge quantity of the product went to poultry firms rather than to human beings.

Secondly, the concentration of the most fertile lands in fewer hands is largely responsible for the deepening of the food

crisis. If the crisis is taken in terms of looking at those with/without access to available food and other agricultural resources, then it can be seen that the vast majority of the people who are mainly peasants are the most vulnerable. Since the primary motive of peasant production is for consumption first and foremost, a decline in area planted connotes a significant reduction in food for their consumption.

Thirdly, the continued concentration of agricultural resources (mainly land) in few hands is a notable avenue for enhancing rural differentiations and contradictions in the rural scene. As peasant producers become expropriated, most of them are forced out into all kinds of "professions". Many of them end up as agricultural workers on capitalist ventures. Those who "resist" this are often forced to emigrate to other parts of the state or the country. Seventeen of the 32 capitalist farmers in our sample agreed that a majority of their farm labourers were originally peasants from the surrounding areas. The rest use labourer both from the surrounding areas and also migrants from other areas.

4.7. Agrarian Capitalism and Labour Exploitation in the Survey Area.

The separation of the peasantry from their only means of production and the daily expansion and consolidation of capitalist agriculture had resulted in the sharp division of the farming population into two classes. On the one hand are the marginalised peasant producers who are daily joining the ranks of the growing number of agricultural workers. On the other hand is a rising agrarian capitalist class.

Earlier on we have identified capitalist farmers as a class that entirely depend on the services of agricultural workers in operating their farms. They themselves do not partake in any productive work on their respective farms. Besides, these farms contains huge capital investments which warranted them to require all kinds of farm machines and other technical inputs handled by trained workers. Not only that, evidence available shows that agricultural labour force employed on the capitalist holdings surveyed are subjected to terrible forms of exploitation.

All the 100 workers covered were wage workers without any blood relations (consanguinal) with their employers. Out of these, 59 of them were employed as permanent staff, 26 were temporary wage workers while 15 were seasonal labourers. These workers were distributed to specific operational areas on the farms according to their professions as indicated in the table below:

TABLE 4.14

DISTRIBUTION OF WORKERS ACCORDING TO THEIR PROFESSIONAL CATEGORIES IN THE SURVEYED HOLDINGS

		No. of Workers	Percentage
1.	Administrative		
	(a) Administrative	13	13%
	(b) Accountants	6	6%
	(c) Clerks	9	9%
2.	Field		
	(a) Supervisors	11	11%
	(b) Drivers	6	6%
	(c) Farm Labourers	41	41%
3.	Technical		
	(a) Agronomists	3	3%
	(b) Operators	4	4%
	(c) Mechanics	7	7%
	TOTAL	100	100%

Source: Questionnaire (January, 1991).

From the above table, it is clear that the large-scale farms in the survey area are considerably manned by workers from a variety of relevant professions. Workers from the three cadres were represented in the various organisations' payrolls according to the needs of the specific holdings. From the survey conducted, 28% of the workers were in the administrative cadre, 58% were field staff while 14% were mainly technicians.

The predominance of field staff in the sample should be understood from the point that that agricultural product itself is a field enterprise.

The development of capitalist agrarian relations, contrary to the widely held opinion of providing jobs for wage workers, also immesarise labour as the central logic for the growth and expansion of capital. In other words, the manner in which capital reproduces itself in agriculture by its very logic marginalises labour from the production process and also alienates the workers from the products of their labour.

In the first place, workers on these farms were found to be subjected to hardships and exploitative measures, the key ones being low wages, high number of working hours, non-payment of overtime hours, lack of working bonuses, lack of openings for further training, non-regular promotions etc. Added to all these miserable conditions was the reality of increased deployment of sophisticated machinery which assist the workers to raise productivity while at the same time alienating them from the production process and coverting them into mere tools and objects juxtaposed with the machines.

To provide the basis for understanding the degree of labour exploitation and oppression in the surveyed holdings, we have used the 8 hours per day, ie. 7.30am - 3.30pm and 40 hours per week excluding Saturdays and Sundays as approved by the Nigerian Government as the 'standard' in computing excess of working hours. The second point of reference we have adopted is the ₦120.00 minimum wage approved in 1980 in assessing the

wage earnings of the workers on the surveyed holdings. These 'standards' we believe are capable of portraying the degree and manner the agrarian capitalists oppress labour.

From the survey conducted, out of the 100 workers covered, 65 have indicated putting up tp 9 - 12 hours including weekends and public holidays. Only 18 workers mainly from the administrative cadre were found to be putting in the normal 8 hours daily. The remaining 17, mainly temporary and seasonal workers said that the hours they put in per day depend on the extent of work schedule on the respective farms they were working. This is a clear indication that at least 65% of the workers covered were over worked. This can also be seen from the fact that on the average they put in 10 hours daily which when added together would give a weekly average 60 - 70 hours: The maginitude of this oppression could further be seen from the fact that contrary to the officially approved daily work duration, on majority of these farms, work commences between 6.30 to 7.00am and closes between 5 - 6.00pm. In fact in the case of Sambo Farms, both the management and many of the workers reside on the farm and the workers could be called to duty at any time: In the cases of Hali, Sabara farms, however, they are strategically located very close to the villages where the workers reside. The proprietors or their managers could therefore drive in at any time into these villages and summon their workers to duty.

Despite these long working hours and tight schedules, however, the workers were found to be paid way below the minimum wage approved by the government. The implication of this is that even though all the 100 workers covered claimed that they received ₦120.00 and above during the month of December 1990, the payment was far below the standard since the hours they put in were much more than those officially approved. The most affected segment of the workers in this respect were the farm labourers, who infact constitutes the most vulnerable group. Being the lowest segment of the labour force in the holdings surveyed, they were found to be the most hit in terms of low wages and difficult working conditions. For example, out of the 41 ordinary labourers covered, 34 indicated that they earn roughly between ₦170 - ₦180 per month while 7, all of them (women) said they earn about ₦150.00. This means that the first category earned just about ₦6.00 per day while the latter category earn ₦5.00 per day. This of course does not reflect the fact that 15 of the 41 labourers were daily paid being seasonal workers. Members of the other cadres of the labour force mainly administrators, accountants, supervisors and agronomists were found to be better paid than the rest. All the 33 workers in these cadres said they were paid according to their qualifications and the nature of work they undertook. Even then, we found that only the 3 agronomists and 4 administrators who are university graduates earned between ₦500 - ₦600. Workers within the categories of clerks, mechanics, drivers and operators were in all cases earning between ₦200-₦400.

When the situation is examined on the whole, it would be seen that in the first place, the payment of wages was far below the number of hours put in by at least 65% of the workers. Secondly, in all the 100 cases, none indicated receiving the usual yearly salary increament. Beside that, extra hours worked were not paid for. Out of the 100 workers covered, 59 indicated having worked over time, including weekends and public holidays and were not paid overtime allowance. In addition to these miserable wages and non-payment of overtime, workers on the surveyed holding s were not given the bonuses which workers in other industries often receive from their employers. Out of the 100 workers coverd, only the 3 agronomists in Sambo, Hali and Karama farms and 6 administrators in Sambo, Sabara and Attah farms indicated receipt of some form of bonus. This was mainly in the form of petty cash advances and irregular light breakfast in the morning before the commencement of work.

The exploitation of labour in the study area could further be glimpsed from constant stagnation in processes of routine promotion as enjoyed by workers in other establishments. Out of the 59 permanent staff covered, 34 have indicated spending up to 4 years without promotion. The manager of Karama farms gave a representative official view of why this was so; "most of the workers have not acquired significant training to be considered promotable on regular basis". Even though we do not share this view, we found the educational factor difficult to ignore in terms of the manner in which the capitalist subjects labour in the holdings.

TABLE 4. 15

NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF WORKERS EMPLOYED IN THE SURVEYED HOLDINGS BY LEVEL OF EDUCATION

Educational Level	Number	percentage
No schooling	55	55
primary	21	21
Secondary	15	15
post-secondary	9	9
TOTAL	100	100

Source: questionnaire (January, 1991)

The table above indicates the poor educational state of the workers covered. Infact even among those educated, none of them was trained by his employers. Also, inspite of the poor educational state of the workers only the 3 agronomists had any hopes for further training by the employers. The rest said they were not sure while many of the farm labourers found the question funny.

The overall picture which this situation demostrates is that capitalist farmers have actually taken hold on labour in the survey area. With these sorts of treatment meted to their workers, the brand of capitalist development being spearheaded by the emerging class of capitalist farmers is also clearly demonstrated. Just like in other social formations that have experienced this development, the situation also indicates the inhuman character concealed in capitalism especially in its younger and more aggressive stage when for example it exploits

workers and also divide them along many lines. For example, as earlier shown, women were found to be paid less than men for the same work done. In fact many capitalist farmers preferred women to men in their farm work because according to one of them "they (women) are meticulous, cheap and they concentrate more than the men".[10] This phenomenon is similar to what obtained in Western Europe when capitalism was still in its formative stages. The then rising bourgeoisie, desperate in their bid at primitive accumulation of capital subjected workers to the most inhuman condition. Not only that, women and children, being the cheapest sources of labour were much more preferred to men who might organise to demand better wages.

However, the process of labour marginalisation in the area covered has been execerbated by the additional factor of lack of worker's organisation that could resolutely struggle to enhance the condition of the workers. All the capitalist holdings visited had no labour unions designed to protect the rights and interests of the workers against exploitation. Their struggles had only been restricted to individual complains which were sometimes branded as "rudeness" capable of causing outright dismissals. When asked why such unions were non existent, 51% of the workers expressed the fear that the proprietors would be hostile to such moves. While about 19% did not give a definite answer, 30% expressed the view that their proprietors were generally "nice", "good" and they would not want to engage in acts that could offend them.

In conclusion, it is contended that the development of agrarian capitalism in Nigeria had its foundation in a predominantly peasant setting. Capitalist social relations of production which have been promoted by the state to resolve the food crisis have been surviving on thespecific kind of situation which exist in the country; feudal survivals, relatively backward productive forces, etc. However, with the kind of support which it has been receiving from the state coupled with its oppression of labour, this class might continue to produce but may not necessarily be capable of feeding the nation.

FOOT NOTES

1. Interview, 20th April, 1988.

2. Interview, 23rd August, 1988

3. FOS, Survey of Modern Agricultural Holdings, 1984

4. Quoted from Ernest Feder, "Latifundia and Agricultural Labour in Latin America" in T. Shanin (ed) peasants and peasant Societies, Penguin Books, 1979.

5. Interview, 14 January, 1988.

6. A. Z. Baccah, Interview, 29th April, 1988.

7. Interview 6th April, 1988.

8. Interview 14th January, 1988

9. A. B. Musa, cited in Oculi, Food and African Revolution, Op. cit, 1986.

10. Interview, 6th April, 1988.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The penetration of capitalism into Nigerian agriculture and the emergence and increasing prominence of capitalist agricultural holdings in the country has attracted the attention of scholars and policy makers. Correspondingly, the class of capitalist farmers that has emerged from the process has been heralded as 'new breed' and enterprising; a class capable of resolving the raging food crisis. Thus, the enthusiasm and prominence which has been given to the emerging capitalist agriculture in Nigeria could be traced to the belief that it could resolve the food crisis and spearhead future prosperity for the country. Within this same perspective, peasant producers, a class that has catered for the country's food needs and overall economy over the years has been castigated as "archaic" and incapable of providing a serious alternative in the effort to resolve the food problem. At the same time, a wide range of arguments have also emerged, indicating the unsuitability and danger of this whole process particularly in terms of its implications for the majority of rural producers and other subordinate classes. Other questions have centred on whether the process and the class spearheading it could actually feed the nation. The foundations of this research were rooted in this mounting controversy with the intention of understanding in some detail, the process itself, the class spearheading it and whether the nation could pin its hope on it in the effort to find a solution to the crisis.

In the effort to tackle the problems outlined above, the Nigerian state has over the years initiated a wide range of policies geared towards providing the basis for the emergence and consolidation of the agrarian capitalist class. This effort was rooted not only in the assumption of the superiority of capitalist agriculture over peasant production but also in the desire and commitment of the state to re-direct the course of the country's agriculture towards the requirements and specifications of the capitalist class and its foreign patrons. It is a process that has involved the placing of the most needed agricultural resources into the hands of ruling class farmers.

Thus, the polemic that took place on this process in various social formations and particularly in Russia between the early Marxists and populist scholars has been central in broadening the scope of the arguments preferred. Various issues dealing with the contemporary dimensions of the agrarian question arose out of the hitherto existing positions. For example, current issues dealing with food security and rural immesarization and the question of which option best suits the contemporary Nigerian situation in enhancing productivity and prosperity arose out of the need to develop theoretical positions which could explain and aid in resolving the crisis.[1] In this respect, we argued on the basis of the fact that a resolution of the agrarian question in specific social formation need no universal laws. This is because specific social formations are unique with their

own historical trends. In the same manner, the historical emergence of the agrarian question will determine the manner of its resolution. As a society with large and resilient peasant population, a resolution of the agrarian question would have to tally with the liberation of the rural majority and other classes from the scourge of hunger.

A broader understanding of the dynamics of the current agrarian problem in Nigeria would also have to take cognizance of the kinds of policies which various governments have been pursuing right from the colonial period. This is because government agricultural policies right from that period have been geared towards capitalist class formation which had resulted in the increasing incapacitation of the majority of rural producers to sustain their production and feed the rest of society. The establishment of various colonial structures of exploitation in the rural scene such as the commodity Marketing Boards which were later on inherited by the post-colonial state have been central in the cruel misappropriation of peasant surplus. The prominence given to merchant companies, the marketing boards and their agents in agricultural produce trade has been primarily responsible for the misdirection of those benefits which would have gone to the peasant producers. The resultant effect of these developments was the rendering of the small producers incapable of sustaining their production due to their lack of control of basic farm resources and the overall commercial environment. It was under this condition that segments of the peasantry and those people having contacts with traditional authorities

became groomed as an indigenous privileged class that later joined the ranks of the emerging agrarian capitalist class.

The intensification of capitalist class formation in Nigerian agriculture in the second decade of the country's independance marked a turning point in the attempt to resolve the agrarian question in the capitalist way. It was a period of significant governmental re-thinking regarding the options best desirable in achieving agricultural prosperity. In this respect, the petroleum sector of the national economy had been of tremendous help in providing the resources needed to establish capitalist programmes intended to transform the agricultural sector. Through their joint efforts in this enterprise, the invited multi-national firms, the World Bank and the Nigerian State had sought "to make capitalist style enterpreneuers out of the peasant producers".[2] The differentiating character of these policies became increasingly unfolded with the subjection of the subordinate agrarian classes to the specifications of capital coupled with the restriction of available farm resources into the hands of privileged farmers. It was a period when the state, agribusiness corporations and the indigenous capitalist class of farmers teemed up into an agrarian force that has been central in reconstituting and re-shaping the class character of the rural scene. The dynamics of the relationship binding together these triple forces are rooted in the contemporary nature of capitalist agrarian accumulation in which an alliance between capital and local state became necessary for a condusive and 'smooth' transition to agrarian

capitalism proper.

Thus, the field survey conducted has laid bare, the specific kind of agrarian capitalism taking place in Nigeria. We have also seen the specific nature and the categories of the agrarian capitalist class that has emerged in the areas studied. We have seen that this class even though homogenous has a twin background in that the social origins of members of the class are different. The nature of the state from the colonial period till independance and the various mechanisms of accumulation in existence have been central in dichotomising the social origins of the class. With the deepening of the food crisis in the country and the confidence reposed on them as capable of tackling it, members of this class have deeply penetrated the rural scene, expanding their existing chunks of land through purchase of peasant lands and other methods. This phenomenon had been a contributing factor in the decrease in existing peasant plots due to the growing commercialisation of land in the rural areas. Also, the growing influence of the agrarian capitalist class has placed it in a position of easy access to state provided inputs and services; a concession which complements the existing lagging state of the productive forces in the area. However, inspite of all these, the large-scale holdings covered have been found to be experiencing down ward tread in production figures, an artificial situation in most cases in order to register a 'protest' against 'reduced' state provision of inputs and declining prices of their produce.

Besides, the agrarian labour force in the surveyed holdings has been found suffering from profound exploitation in the hands of the capitalist class. A wide variety of exploitative denials of worker's rights have made these holdings to be havens for labour oppression with no organisational avenues and channels capable of enabling them to register their grievances. This, however, does not exclude probable occasional hostilities which may not have any significant impact in bettering their condition of work.

In conclusion, it is contended here that the prominent position given to the agrarian capitalist class for its alleged capability to produce enough to feed the nation is not necessarily correct and justifiable. This is because this class of farmers does not stand on its own. State discrimination in its favour when it comes to resource allocation is central to its survival. Confessions from them during our survey confirms this fact. Such discrimination we believe, is capable of hindering agrarian capitalism developing according to its own independant pattern and pace. For this reason, reliance on the class for the provision of the needed supply of food would be risky because sustainable food supply is bound to be jeopardised whenever such support was not forthcoming. Besides, analysts[3] have questioned the rationality of pinning our hopes for 'genuine development' on capitalist farmers. The reason is that the profits generated from agriculture by this class hardly goes back as re-investment into the ventures. Rather, such profits have been going into the purchase of luxuries congruent with

the conspicuous consumption of elites. Others have invested those profits into all sorts of businesses such as transport, hotel business, real estate, contracts etc. to the gross detriment of the sector's need for further investment.

The development of rural land alienation resulting from the increasing commercialisation of aland and labour has continued to pose a threat to small producers. The activities of capitalist farmers has been a major factor in bringing about this situation. An entire frontier of political struggle exist which seeks to protect the genuine rights of the peasantry from the menace of these forces. These are clear indications that capitalist farmers are a class to be taken quite seriously contrary to the popular opinion that they are not serious and should therefore not be taken seriously.

Besides, it is the contention of this study that considering the importance of state discrimination in the sustenance of large-scale farmers that they would not be in a position to feed the nation because their productivity would wane without that support.

5.1. Recommendations

This research has two basic recommendations to make especially regarding future policies on agriculture. In the first place, it is contended that the question of pinning societal hope on capitalist agriculture to resolve the current food crisis should be reconsidered. The fact that capitalist farmers are prompted by the spirit of business rather than feeding the society is a clear indication that even if they do

not decide to use food as a weapon of blackmail to block the prospects of democracy, their quest for profit might make more people unable to afford what to eat. This danger, for instance, was recorded during our survey when some capitalist farmers in 1990 refused to produce on their farms to 'protest' against lower prices of their produces notably maize.

The second recommendation derives from the first. This is, that government policy consideration would be more meaningful if it were peasant centred. This is because in the first place, the issue of limited access to food by the majority arises primarily in situations where most producers have become unable to produce what to eat and to dispose by themselves. If the factors of agricultural production are concentrated in the hands of the small producers, sustainable and enhanced productivity logically pre-supposes prosperity for the majority since they are already in control of their products. This further calls for the establishment of a number of grassroot democratic structures capable of mobilising the small producers to enhance productivity through the use of modern inputs and organisation and the provision of other incentives. Thus, even in environmental terms, peasant producers have been found to be efficient and prudent users of the soil.[4] Their indigenous mechanisms of preserving the natural ecological balance has kept their production at par with nature. Thus, despite the claim in some quarters that peasant farmers are not eco-conscious[5], there is no ample evidence that large-scale farmers are guardians of the environment either. Infact, by

virtue of the huge tracts of land they have amassed with no regards or concrete efforts to preserve and maintain soil durability, large-scale farmers cannot be exonerated from the current destruction of the environment. Thus, even the ability of the peasantry to preserve soil durability and enhance production could serve as a pointer to their potentials in feeding the nation while protecting the soil itself. Finally, it is our contention that the promotion of peasant agriculture deriving from the foregoing could ensure prosperity and a resolution of the agrarian question since the liberation of the majority of producers is the necessary starting point in tackling the problem.

FOOT NOTES

1. See R. Mustapha "Structural Adjustment and Agrarian Change" cited op. cit.

2. Cited in Oculi, op. cit.

3. See for instance F. M. Lappe and J. Collins, Food First, Abacus, 1982.

4. See G. Williams, op. cit, 1980.

5. See summary of these views in L. Timberlake, Africa in Crisis, Earthscan publishers, London, 1989.

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APPENDIX I

Department of Sociology
Ahmadu Bello University
Zaria.

QUESTIONS TO LARGE-SCALE FARMERS

1. Farm size
2. What is normally produced and what tonnages annually? Why do you prefer producing those crops.
3. Which farming methods used and types of machinery employed.
4. Cost incurred annually.
5. History of farming career.
6. Assistance/partnership with any quarter (local, foreign).
7. Methods (i.e. bought, exchanged, confiscated, hired etc) and problems in land acquisition.
8. Assistance from any quarter in land acquisition.
9. Is his farmland increasing or decreasing in size. Why in whichever way.
10. What are his future prospects in land acquisition.
11. His major sources of labour supply.
12. The composition of the work labourers (i.e. adults, young, women, children, aged migrant labourers etc) and what each component plays and its significance.
13. The average size employed and on what basis (i.e whether temporary or permanent).
14. Criteria used in labour recruitment (i.e. are the labourers from the surrounding villages?).
15. What is the net amount paid to labourers annually.
16. Do you get support from any quarter in labour hiring?
17. Which other business/s do you engage into beside farming.
18. How do this business(s) reinforce your farming.
19. Any competition with other farmers? in what way if any?/ why not?
20. How do you dispose of the products of your farming?

.../2..

21. What is the attitude of the surrounding small farmers towards you.

22. Have you benefitted from any loan or grant? From where?

23. How do you assess the overall cooperation of authorities (Federal, State, Local or Traditional) towards you and large-scale farmers generally?

24. How do you react the notion that government gives you preference over peasant farmers?

25. Is large-scale farming generally profitable? Why?/Why not?

26. Any other information to offer?

APPENDIX II

M.Sc. Research questionnaire For Agricultural Workers

1. Name: _____

2. Name of Farm: _____

3. Local Government Area: _____

4. Date: _____

BASIC INFORMATION

5. Age: _____

6. Educational Attainment: _____

7. Sex/Marital Status: _____

8. What is your main occupation: _____

9. Are you a migrant worker? _____

b. If yes, from where? _____

10. For how long have you been working on this farm? _____

_____

11. What is your employment status: _____

a. permanent: _____

b. Temporary: _____

c. Seasonal: _____

12. What type of work do you undertake on the farms? _____

_____

13. What time do you normally report to work? _____

a. When do you close? _____

14. How much do you earn per month? _____

15. Have you been receiving overtime payment from your employer? _____

a. If yes, how much? _____

16. Have you been receiving any bonus? _____

b. If yes, in what form? _____

17. Have you been promoted since you started working on this farm? _____

b. If yes, when last where you promoted? _____

18. Do you receive the official yearly increament in your pay? _____

b. How much? _____

19. Have you ever been trained by your employer? _____

b. What are your prospects of receiving further training?

_____

20. Do you have any worker's union on this farm? _____

_____

b. Give reasons for either answer: _____

_____

21. Do you undertake other occupations? _____

b. If yes what are they? _____

22. Do you have any blood relation with your employer: _____

_____

23. Do you have other information to give? _____

_____

_____

APPENDIX III

M.Sc. Research Questionnaire
For peasant Farmers

1. Farmer's Name: _____

2. Farmer's Code No: _____

3. Survey Area: _____

4. Date of Interview: _____

BASIC INFORMATION

5. Age: _____

6. Marital Status: _____

7. Number of Wives: _____

8. Number of Children: _____

9. Ethnic Group: _____

10. Are you an indigene of this village or a migrant: _____

_____

11. Name the major crops you produce on your farm: _____

_____

12. Through which of the following methods have you acquired your farmland?

a) Inheritence: _____

b) purchase: _____

c) Gift: _____

d) Rent: _____

e) Exchange: _____

f) Pledge: _____

g) Confiscation: _____

h) Do you have any other informations on above?

_____

13. Have you ever sold any land to anybody before; _____

a. If yes, to whom? _____

b. What average percentage? _____

14. What prompted you to sell the land; _____

_____

15. Did you get the consent of anybody beof selling the land? Give details; _____

_____

16. Has your farmland been increasing or decreasing in size?

_____

17. Which of the following constitutes the major source of your farm labour?

a) Family members; _____

b) Hired labourers; _____

c) A COMBINATION OF THE ABOVE: _____

18. Do you work on the farms of other farmers in this area

_____

b. Which type of work do you normally do; _____

19. Do you undertake other occupation beside farming? _____

If yes what are they? _____

_____

_____

20. Have you been receiving farm in puts from any quarter?

_____

b. What are your problems in getting these inputs? _____

_____

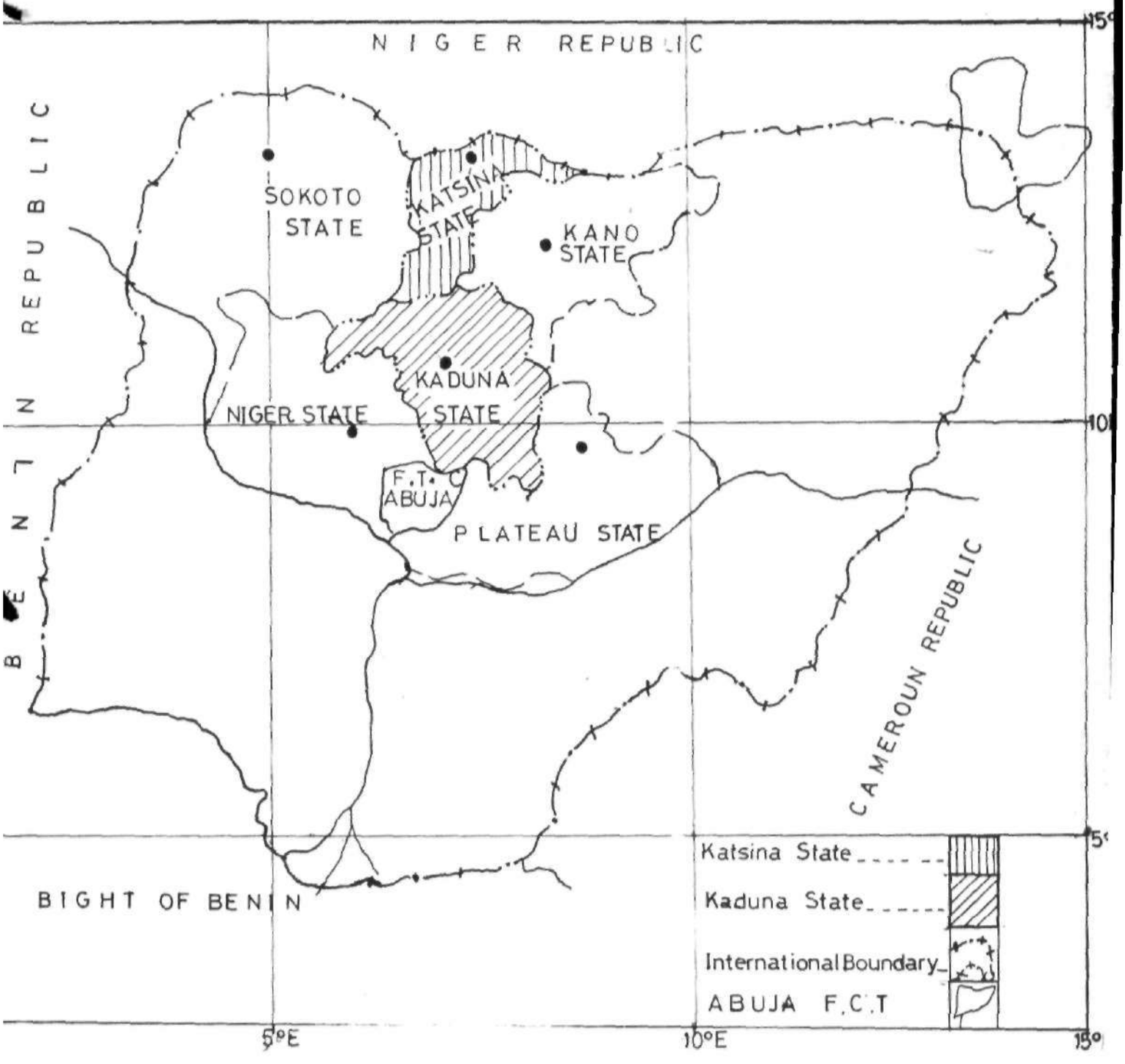
21. Do you have any information to add? _____

_____

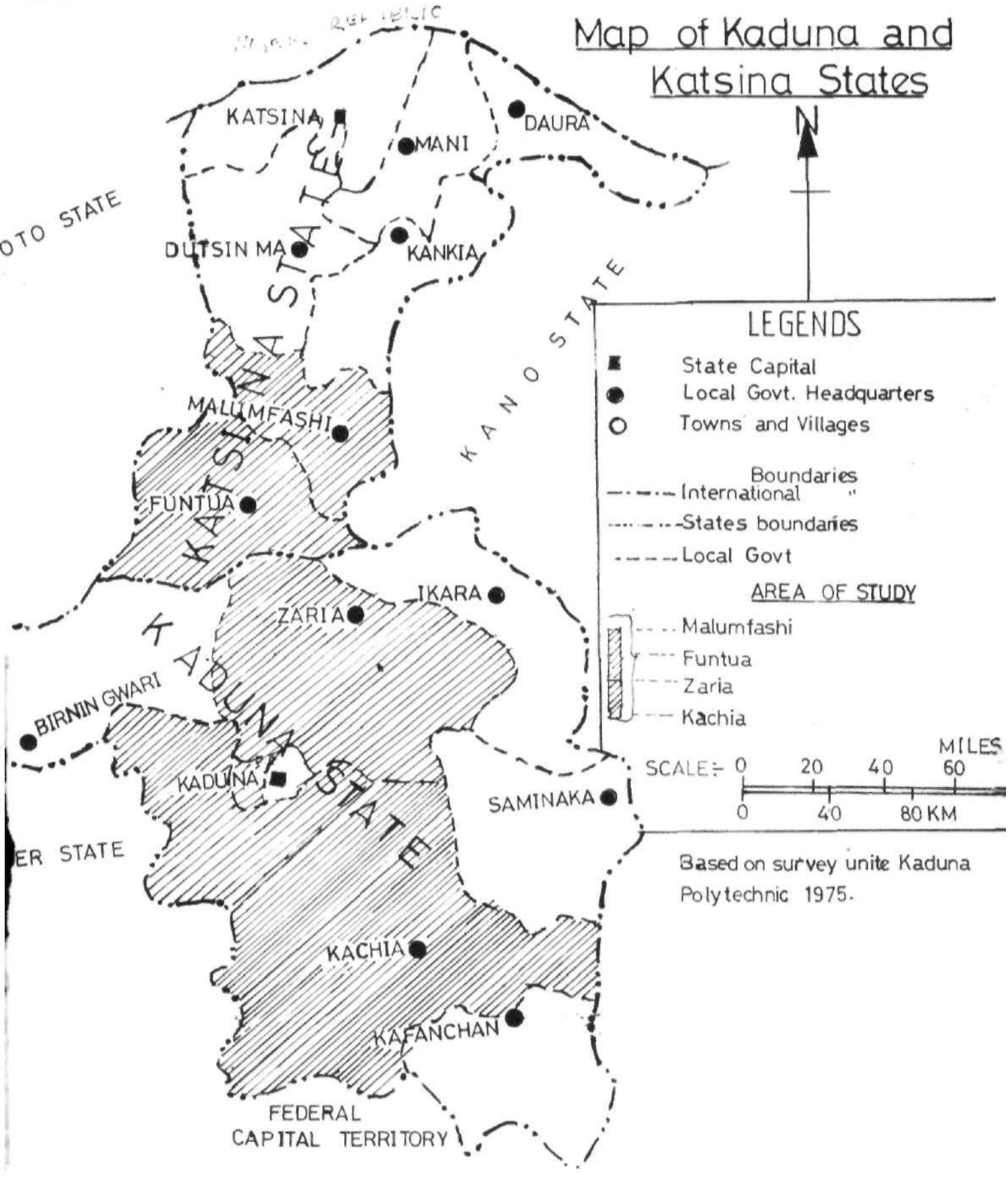
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APPENDIX IV

NIGERIA MAP
Showing Kaduna & Katsina States



APPENDIX V


Map of Kaduna and Katsina States
N
KATSINA
DAURA
MANI
DUTSIN MA
KANKIA
KATSINA STATE
MALUMFASHI
FUNTUA
KANO STATE
IKARA
ZARIA
KADUNA STATE
BIRNIN GWARI
KADUNA
SAMINAKA
KACHIA
KAFANCHAN
FEDERAL CAPITAL TERRITORY
LEGENDS
State Capital
Local Govt. Headquarters
Towns and Villages
Boundaries
International "
States boundaries
Local Govt
AREA OF STUDY
Malumfashi
Funtua
Zaria
Kachia
SCALE:- 0 20 40 60 MILES
0 40 80 KM
Based on survey unite Kaduna Polytechnic 1975.