The Nigerian Cocoa Industry and the International Economy in the 1930s

The Nigerian Cocoa Industry and the International Economy in the 1930s:

A World-Systems Approach

By

Olisa Muojama

Cambridge Scholars Publishing

The Nigerian Cocoa Industry and the International Economy
in the 1930s: A World-Systems Approach

By Olisa Muojama

This book first published 2018

Cambridge Scholars Publishing

Lady Stephenson Library, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE6 2PA, UK

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data
A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

ISBN (10): 1-5275-1094-8
ISBN (13): 978-1-5275-1094-4

I dedicate this book to the peasant cocoa producers all over the world:
in Africa, South America, Asia and Oceania.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

LIST OF TABLES

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This book would not have been possible without the contributions of a glittering array of great people from across the world. First, the manuscript derives from my Master's degree dissertation, "The Dynamics of the International Economy: from Deglobalized to Globalized Capitalism", as well as my PhD thesis, "Nigerian Cocoa Exports and Global Capitalism, 1914-1960". I, therefore, celebrate my mentor, Benson Akutse Mojuetan, PhD (SOAS) London, for supervising both the Master's degree dissertation and the PhD thesis, and for his suggestions in the production of this book.

Similarly, I acknowledge the American Council of Learned Societies (ACLS) for awarding me the African Humanities Programme (AHP) Dissertation Completion Fellowship, which provided the funding that enabled me to complete the PhD thesis, whose Chapter Six constitutes the fulcrum of this book.

I am indebted to Professors Sandra Barnes of Pennsylvania University, Innocent Pikirayi of University of Pretoria, Sati Fwatshak of University of Jos, and Esi Sutherland-Addy of University of Ghana, for mentoring us (at the AHP Manuscript Development Workshop (MDW) held in Accra, Ghana in January 2016) on how to develop our PhD theses into book manuscripts. This book is a practical testimony. I thank Andrej Tymoski, Director, International Programs, ACLS, and Elisabeta Pop, Program Coordinator, International Programs, ACLS, for facilitating that important workshop.

Worthy of recognition is Prof. C. B. N. Ogbogbo, Head of History at Ibadan, and the President, the Historical Society of Nigeria (2014-2018). He granted me the leave of absence to participate in the workshops and conferences at which some of the hypotheses of this book were tested.

I also thank Dr. Saheed Aderinto of Western Carolina University for his friendship, guidance, encouragement and motivation. I am also grateful to him for his patience and dutifulness in reading my manuscripts, writing me tons of reference letters and giving me links to call for papers and applications. I also thank Dr. J.O. Arowosegbe of Political Science Department, University of Ibadan, for his guidance and suggestions.

Also acknowledged are Dr. Adesina B. Sunday of the Department of English, University of Ibadan and Dr. Tosin Adeniyi of the Department of

Economics, University of Ibadan and Dr (Mrs) Kikelomo Adeniyi (Department of English), Dean, School of Languages, Adeniran Ogunsanya College of Education, Oto-Ijanikin for proof-reading this manuscript.

I acknowledge the editor of *International Journal of Arts and Humanities* for giving me the permission to reproduce in Chapter Six some portions of the article which has appeared in the journal. Similarly, I acknowledge Chima Korie, the editor of *Nsukka Journal of History* for giving me the permission to reproduce in Chapter Seven of this book part of the article I have already published in the journal.

List of Abbreviations

CAN: Cocoa Association of Nigeria
CRIN: Cocoa Research Institute of Nigeria
CSO: Colonial Secretary's Office
FAQ: Fairly Average Quality
IITA: International Institute for Tropical Agriculture
ILO: International Labour Organisation
IMF: International Monetary Fund
NAC: National African Company
NCDE: National Cocoa Development Committee
NISER: National Institute for Social and Economic Research
PRAAD: Public Records and Archives Administrations Department
RNC: Royal Niger Company
UAC: United African Company
WACCB: West African Cocoa Control Board
WAPCB: West African Produce Control Board

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

This book is about the integration of colonial Nigeria into the orbit of global capitalism and the effects of the dynamics of the world economy on Nigeria during the economic crisis and catastrophe of the 1930s. It is concerned with the specific Nigerian case of integration: How was the process of integration carried out in the case of Nigeria? By what means was it effected? And what was the place of Nigeria within this international economic system during the economic depression and price fluctuations of the 1930s? It seemed to me that the best way to explore this thesis was to examine the character of the colonial Nigerian agricultural export economy, with the case study of the cocoa industry.

Cocoa is one of the three nonalcoholic beverages of world importance.[1] As a beverage it comes behind tea and coffee in popularity, but only cocoa possesses nutritional value and has non-beverage or food uses of far-reaching scope.[2] Cocoa serves as an important crop around the world: a cash crop for growing countries and a key import for processing and consuming countries.[3] In terms of global scale of crop production, cocoa ranks among other key bean and nut commodities.[4] Cocoa travels along a global supply chain, crossing countries and continents. According to Ruf, "The center of world cocoa production shifted from Mexico to Central America in the 16th century. Then it went to the Caribbean in the 17th, Venezuela in the 18th, Ecuador and Sao Tome in the 19th, Brazil, Ghana and Nigeria in the early 20th century and Cote d'Ivoire shortly after."[5]

The spread of cocoa production in West Africa, starting from the 1870s, was one of the means by which Nigeria was incorporated into the vortex of the capitalist world economy. Some would wish to draw a distinction between the international economy (internationalization) and the global economy (globalization). "In this distinction, 'internationalization' involves increasing flows between national units and can be understood in terms of national balance of payments entries. It is the analysis of increasing interaction between national economies. 'Globalization,' on the other hand, involves the increasing integration of economic activities located in different countries into a unified process."[6] In this book, the terms “international economy”, “global economy” and “world economy” will be used interchangeably on the basis that, “with relatively free capital mobility, there cannot be internationalization without globalization.”[7]

The modern world economy is the product of the revolution in industrial capitalism. Capitalism is the only mode of production whose immanent laws of motion are capable of producing the world economy. According to Immanuel Wallerstein, the “world economy is a single division of labour but multiple policies and cultures. Capitalism and world-economy are the obverse sides of the same coin. Capitalism was from the beginning an affair of the world economy and not of nation-state.”[8] The global economy can, again, be used interchangeably with global capitalism.

This international economy was not a fixed and static entity but underwent continuous organic evolution, constantly responding to the changing conditions in its central core.[9] Various phases have been identified in the dynamics of the world economy. The formative stage began in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. In this era of mercantilism, Europe’s economic centre of gravity shifted from the Mediterranean to the North-west: the rise of the new commercial middle classes there, and their use of the state power to achieve national economic strength, went hand in hand with the systematic exploitation of the overseas regions susceptible to European technology. The chief commodity in this period was slaves. The trade in Negroes was the first great human migration across the Atlantic; as such, it provided a striking historical example of international factor mobility, albeit of an enforced kind. In this stage of the international economy, “Black Africa played a no less important role as the *periphery of the periphery*. Reduced to the function of supplying slave labour for the plantations of America, Africa lost its autonomy. It began to be shaped according to foreign requirements, those of mercantilism.”[10]

Around 1780, there opened the phase of early industrial capitalism, when the economies of Western Europe, led by Great Britain, began to undergo the basic transformation from rural agrarianism to urban industrialism. Industrialisation created new demands on overseas economies, for the scale and pace of change were too great to be satisfied by the internal resources of Western Europe’s own internal resources alone. Europe obtained in growing measure and beyond its confines the raw materials for its factories and construction industries and markets for its industrial goods. At the same time, Western Europe achieved a new level of technical capacity. The trade in expensive luxury or semi-luxury goods, which had still largely dominated the earlier phase of mercantile capitalism, gave way to the trade in cheaper machine–made goods and primary products in bulk. Thus, many new regions were pulled or pushed into the ambit of the international economy.[11] The same point has been made by Samir Amin, namely: "The period from 1800 to 1880-90 was characterised by attempts—at least in certain regions within the influence of Atlantic mercantilism—to establish a new form of dependence with that part of the world where capitalism was firmly entrenched by industrialization."[12]

The phase commencing from the decades of the late nineteenth century was an era of maturing industrial capitalism in an enlarged but somewhat unstable international economy. The competitive forces which arose from the spread of industrialization underlay the late nineteenth century scramble for colonies in the regions of the world which had hitherto been only marginally involved in the activities of the international economy. The partitioning of the African continent, which was completed by the end of the nineteenth century, multiplied the means available to the colonialists to accumulate capital at the centre. Their target was the same everywhere: to obtain cheap exports and to solve the problem of realisation (that is to realise surplus value embodied in the commodity). But to achieve this, capital at the centre—which had now reached the monopoly stage—could organize production on the spot, and there exploit both the cheap labour and the natural resources.[13]

It was on this prompting by the laws of motion of capital that the production of cash crops and natural resources in colonial territories was undertaken. In the case of Nigeria, the production of the existing raw materials, such as palm produce, cotton, and tin, was expanded; while new ones, such as cocoa, rubber, and coffee, were introduced. Coal and, later, crude oil were discovered in 1915 and 1956, respectively. In summary, the viability and diversity of the colonial economy were based on the exports of agricultural and forest products as well as mineral resources to the world market.

This study deploys the cocoa industry as a window into a broader conversation on the economic, political, and social history of Nigeria and the international economy. It uses the Nigerian cocoa industry's encounter with the world economy in the 1930s to knit together a gamut of themes ranging from the social formations of production to the forces of demand and supply, price fluctuations and price stabilization, as well as the protest movements against monopoly capitalism. It examines the Nigerian cocoa industry within the international economy of the 1930s, with a view to demonstrating how the dynamics of the international economy of the 1930s, such as the Great Depression and the fluctuations in the commodity prices, affected the cocoa industry and the peasant cocoa producers in colonial Nigeria. It connects and speaks to the bigger issues of political stability and economic development in colonial Nigeria.

The arguments and observations that underpin this study are twofold. First, the Nigerian produce exports, in general, and the cocoa industry, in particular, have been understudied. There has been an avalanche of studies on the world cocoa economy as well as the West African cocoa industry, with the palpable omission of the state of the cocoa industry and trade in Nigeria during the depression and fluctuations of prices in the 1930s. At the general level, the botany and agronomy of cocoa have been treated by Jan Van Hull,[14] D. H. Urquhart,[15] and G. A. R. Wood.[16] The cultivation and processing of cocoa have also been dealt with by such scholars as W. Johnson[17] and Eileen Chatt.[18] Cocoa trade on the world market has received attention from V. Wickizer,[19] C. Krug,[20] H. Weymar,[21] and Robin Dand.[22] The nexus between cocoa and chocolate has been explored by Paul Redmayne and Thomas Insull.[23]

Being a major export commodity in colonial West Africa (just like crude oil in post-colonial Nigeria), the cocoa industry in the sub-region has attracted the attention of Africanist scholars. For instance, specialist studies on the West African cocoa industry have focused on various themes, such as the organization of the cocoa trade in West Africa[24] and the narratives on the cocoa marketing board.[25] Literature exists on the beginnings of the cocoa culture in Nigeria,[26] the cocoa production processes,[27] curing and preparation,[28] labour and migration.[29] The impact of World War II (1939-1945)[30] and the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) on the cocoa industry has also received attention.[31] Saheed Aderinto has examined the land conflict generated by cocoa in south-western Nigeria.[32] Similarly, studies on the Ghanaian cocoa industry have also been carried out in the area of production, revealing that the cocoa industry was a part of the development of rural capitalism and dependency. The works of Polly Hill,[33] Gareth Austin,[34] and Roger Southall[35] fall within this category. The influence of socio-economic factors and the impact of the banking system on the cocoa industry,[36] coupled with the sources of finance for the cocoa producers,[37] have received attention. Some aspects of the effects of the dynamics of the global political economy on the cocoa industry, such as the Gold Coast (now Ghana) cocoa hold-up of 1937-38 have also been examined by Josephine Milburn,[38] Rhoda Howard,[39] David Meredith and Gareth Austin.[40] These studies do not cover the economic depression and fluctuations in the commodity prices of the 1930s. The result of this neglect has been the existence of a huge gap in the body of knowledge on the place of the Nigerian cocoa industry within the global capitalist system during the crisis and catastrophe of the 1930s.

Second, of all the export commodities in the colonial period, cocoa and rubber had no local use and no local demand. The cocoa producers in colonial Nigeria, therefore, depended on the world market for sale of their products and were subordinated to the vagaries of the external demand. Thus, the trade cycles and waves characteristic of the dynamics of global capitalism, such as the Great Depression of the 1930s, affected not only the world cocoa trade, but also the socio-political and economic life of the cocoa producers in Nigeria.

In attempting to focus on the interplay between the Nigerian economy and the international economic system in the 1930s, I have chosen the cocoa industry as the main subject of this book. This is because the history of the impact of "deglobalized capitalism"[41] of the inter-war years on the Nigerian cocoa industry provides an interesting case study of the impact of the international economy on the countries of the periphery as well as the consequences of economic dependence on the external market.

The 1930s was chosen as the temporal scope of this study because it was a period in which many spectacular events took place in the world economy, in general, and the world cocoa economy, in particular. Before and after the 1930s, there had been business cycles, but "the depression that started in 1929 'dwarfed preceding movements of a similar nature' both in magnitude and intensity."[42] It was a period of the Great Depression and fluctuations in commodity prices on the world market. It was also the period of the cocoa agreements by the European trading firms in West Africa, which was greeted with protest movements in the sub-region.

If we seek to understand the functioning of the contemporary world cocoa economy, in general, and the Nigerian cocoa industry, in particular, it is necessary to look at its origins and the forces that brought it into being. This study is a contribution to knowledge in the areas of the international economy, the Nigerian cocoa industry, and the inter-war depression of the 1930s. It will enable us to rethink the long-held notions about the nature and dynamics of the international economy as well as the nature and extent of the impact of the inter-war depression on the colonial economies.

The International Economy: a Historiographical Overview

Since the 1950s the historiography of the international economy has been on the increase. This is due to the resumption of the global interconnectedness shortly after the Second World War in 1945. The first phase of the world economy in which there was free movement of the factors of production was rudely shattered in 1914 following the outbreak of World War I, which brought about the disintegration of the world economy, described by Meghnad Desai as “deglobalized capitalism” or “capitalism in one country.”[43] Studies in the inter-war years focussed more on the national politics and economies as well as the beggar-thy-neighbour protectionism, characteristic of the disintegrated global system. The works of BSK fall within this category.[44]

With the end of the Second World War in 1945, the capitalist economies began the process of loosening the international barriers to private investments. This was aided by forms of economic integration, such as the common market, which provided for the “free movement of labour and capital among the members.”[45] The financial system was liberalized and concerted attempts were made to open up trade (and institute regional groupings).[46] This renewed spate of internationalization culminated, in the 1950s, in the renewed historiography of the international economy. The pioneering studies were in the areas of concept and theory as well as the laws of motion of the international economic system.

Regarding concept, some use the “international economy” synonymously with the “international trade.” This is the case with J.P. Young in his work *The International Economy*. The direct implication of this conception is that it becomes difficult for the authors to resist the temptation to trace the origin of the international economy to the ancient period, when inter-territorial trade also existed.[47] Similarly, in *An International Economy*, Gunner Myrdal takes “integration” to mean “nothing more than that parts are brought together into a whole.”[48] Economic integration is thus taken to mean “the realization of the old Western ideal of equality of opportunity. The essential element of this ideal...is the loosening of social rigidities which prevent individuals from choosing freely the conditions of their work and life. The economy is not integrated unless all avenues are open to everybody and the remunerations paid for productive services are equal, regardless of racial, social, and cultural differences.” Besides, in *The Growth of the International Economy 1820-1960*, Kenwood and Lougheed regard the world economy as the collection of national economies, differing from one another enormously in their sizes, occupational structures, modes of organization, and the average livings which they provide for the people in them, and the extent to which their economic lives are bound up with the rest of the world.

Conversations among economists and historians on the nature and dynamics of the international economy continued into the 1960s. For instance, in 1962, *A Short History of the International Economy* was released by William Ashworth. The study provides a more comprehensive and yet graphic description of the international economy: "The continuous and varied activity in international trade, the sophisticated markets in foreign exchange and the wide assortment of businesses done by international merchant bankers were all symptomatic of an economic life which transcended national boundaries as a matter of routine, and they had all proved capable of much expansion before 1850."[49] It is, thus, evident that the emergence of an international economy depends on a wide variety of related factors and that its course and nature can be mostly fully revealed by a closer look at the changes in these factors both separately and in relation to each other. Peter Kenen's *International Economics,* published in 1964, is also very significant in this area.

One important feature of the 1960s historiography of the international economy is the examination of the impact of the international economy on the periphery countries. In this way, references were made by scholars to the regional and specific cases of the international economic integration. Pierre Jalee's *Third World in the World Economy,*[50] published in 1968, is a study of the economic relations between the Third World and the advanced capitalist nations. It also sets out the data for the socialist countries. The work discusses the resources and economic activities of the Third World, namely agriculture and fisheries, minerals and energy, manufacturing, trade and shipping as well as the movements of capital and aid to the Third World.

The scholars of the international economy in the 1970s sustained the conversation on concept. For instance, Rostow provides the technological dimension to the conceptualization of the international economy, arguing that it is a product of the process of internationalization of technology. In his work *The World Economy: History and Prospect,* he maintains that "the generation and absorption of new technologies in industries are central to the process at work in the world economy."[51]

Beyond concept, the 1970s narratives added an emphasis on the difference between the "international economy" and the "international trade," which earlier scholars like J.P. Young failed to do because they used the two concepts interchangeably. On the contrary, the 1970s scholars of the world economy regarded the international trade as a part of the components of the international economy. In this argument, the dominant thesis was that the international economy was the product of the revolution in industrial capitalism. Prominent among these studies is Immanuel Wallerstain's *The Capitalist World-Economy* in which he emphasizes this capitalist root and characterization of the international economy. According to him, the "world economy is a single division of labour but multiple policies and cultures. Capitalism and world-economy are the obverse sides of the same coin. Capitalism was from the beginning an affair of the world economy and not of nation-state."[52]

Like the period of the 1960s, the impact of the international economy on the periphery countries featured in the narratives of the 1970s, with a special concentration on Africa. Thus, the place of Africa within the larger structure of the world economy was described and interrogated differently by various scholars. For instance, in 1976, Forbes Munro wrote *Africa and the International Economy 1800-1960.*[53] The book takes as its central theme the integration of Africa into, and the subsequent structural shaping of African economies by, the modern international economy. It is an overview of the major trends and processes in the modern economic history of Africa south of Sahara. The book presents a historical background to, rather than a direct commentary on, the contemporary African economic problems. Shenton and Bill's "the Incorporation of Northern Nigeria into the World Capitalist Economy"[54] also falls within this category.

Since the 1980s, cross-national mobility of commodities, the growth of international investment as well as international money and finance have been on the increase. By 1988, the world trade as a share of the world output had returned to the general level of 1913 (i.e. up from 7% of total GDP in 1945 to 15 % in 1988); foreign direct investment (5-10% of capital stock) in most major economies, and about a third of all trade between countries, had come to consist of the movement of goods between different national branches of one or another multinational company.[55] Fund raised in the international capital markets increased from just over $100 billion in 1979 to over $1500 billion in 1996. The mobility of the money and capital associated with the growth of these markets has broken down the notion of discrete national markets.[56] The IMF system of pegged exchange rates collapsed and the floating exchange rate system emerged.[57] Thus devaluation and revaluation moved lower or higher than the IMF parity band.[58] The abandonment of the post-war international trading regime was followed in 1979-80 by the abandonment of Keynesian economic policy.[59] These changes initiated the new process of internationalization of capital. Capitalism once again became global.

This development in the world economy heightened scholarly discussion on the subject. Peter Kenen's *The International Economy* was first published in 1985. The second edition appeared in 1989, and differed greatly from the first. The third edition appeared in 1994, while the low-price edition came out in 1996. The book grew out of his *International Economics* published in 1964. It aims at showing students how the international transactions affect the domestic economy and the conduct of national economic policies. It also reviews the history of the international economy to show how it has shaped the views of economists and governments and how it has affected the development of the international economic institutions, such as the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade and the International Monetary Fund.[60]

The impact of the world economy on both regional and national economies also featured in the narratives of the 1980s and 90s. For instance, Cooper's "Africa and World Economy"[61] is a case in point. Similarly, "The Long Depression: West African Export Producers and the World Economy, 1914-45"[62] by S. M. Martin focuses on the responses of African producers to the "long depression." He argues that the responses varied mainly between different areas of West Africa; and that the two main theories (vent-for-surplus theory, as developed by Hla Myint; and dependency theory, as applied by Samir Amin) which have commonly been applied by economic historians to West Africa as a whole, actually have limited applicability to the circumstances of different sub-regions. Toyin Falola's and Julius Ihonvbere's work *Nigeria and the International Capitalist System*[63] as well as David Laitan's "Capitalism and Hegemony: Yorubaland and the International Economy"[64] all fall within this categorization of the specific case of the integration into the world capitalist economy.

The 2000s featured more studies aimed at fitting Africa into the larger scheme of world political economy. These studies included Cooper's "Africa Since 1940,"[65] J. F. Bayart's "Africa in the World,"[66] J. Ferguson's "Global Shadows,"[67] and *The South in World* Politics[68] by C. Alden *et al*. Revisionism of the concept of the international economy was carried out by scholars in the 2000s. Shahid Alam's *The Global Economy since 1800: a Short History* introduces an energy perspective to the concept of the international economy. According to him, the history of the global economy since 1800 is about the system of global capitalism that took shape once the British economy began to draw its energy and its raw materials from mineral resources. The progressive substitution of minerals for plants, as the economy's sources of energy and raw materials, transformed the dynamics of capitalism. It opened up a vast new source of energy and raw materials, freeing the economy from the narrow resource constraints of an organic, plant-based economy. The new, cheaper, more abundant energy produced dramatic reduction in the cost of transportation; a growing volume and range of goods could now enter into long-distance and international trade and this rapidly created the basis for the international division of labour.[69] According to Rostow, the "Industrial revolution foreshadowed the birth of the global economy. The first world economy was made possible by the staggering technological breakthrough of the industrial revolution. Most obviously, new forms of transportation toppled the age-old tyranny of distance."[70]

In spite of this rich body of literature on the subject of the international economy, there is an area that has been omitted, namely, the relationship between the Nigerian cocoa industry and the international economy. There has not been a comprehensive study of the place of the Nigerian cocoa industry in the international economy, most especially in the 1930s.

Africa in the Crisis and Catastrophe of the 1930s

Owing to the significance of the inter-war years in the history of the world economy, studies have been carried out in order to disclose its cumulative pattern and its ultimate characteristics. In these studies, the effects of the crises of the 1930s on the economies of the metropolitan countries are well documented. The consequences of the dynamics of the world economy, such as the Great Depression of the 1930s on the exports trade of the developing economies, have been interpreted differently by various families of scholars. A significant study is the work edited by Ian Brown, which deals with the impact of the inter-war depression on the economies of Asia and Africa.[71]

As noted by Elsenhans, "the depression marks a turning-point in the history of the relations between the capitalist industrialized countries and the Third World from two angles. The trend towards decrease in the growth rates of commodity exports from the Third World, which had shown itself before 1929, further intensified. Measured in terms of quantity, these exports stagnated during the recession. The terms of trade deteriorated in the case of the underdeveloped countries."[72] This submission was borne out of the theory of the responsiveness of producers to price. However, there are well-known and serious difficulties in measuring the degree of response of the agricultural producers in the underdeveloped countries to the changes in prices and price relationships.[73]

In the specific case of Nigeria, Moses Ochonu has examined the impact of the Great Depression on Nigeria, as a whole, and on northern Nigeria, in particular, arguing that, in African history, for instance, the crisis has been "largely treated as a period of stagnancy. It was a period in which nothing happened due to the bankruptcy that befell colonial powers and their subsequent preoccupation with economic recovery to the detriment of public works and social projects."[74]

Many scholars have argued that the depression's only remarkable feature is that it was a period of unprecedented exploitation of African resources and peasants, as colonial powers sought to transfer the burdens and sacrifices of recovery to Africans.[75] According to Ochonu, the economic crisis of the 1930s did two interrelated things: it exacerbated the violence, protectionism, and strategic elimination of Africans' choices often inherent in the British colonial order; and, more interestingly, it focused attention on the colonial routines that often went unchallenged and undebated in normal economic times.[76]

Thus, in this body of literature on the international economy, the impact of the Great Depression and fluctuations in the world commodity prices on the Nigeria cocoa industry has been a neglected theme.

A Note on Sources and Methodology

In an attempt to fill this gap in the extant literature, the study relied essentially on the primary sources for its analysis. The primary archival documents included those generated by the Agricultural Departments during the colonial period. Documents deposited in the National Archives, Ibadan and Enugu, in Nigeria were utilized. Added to these were documents gathered from the Public Records and Archives Administrations Department (PRADD), Accra, Ghana. Such relevant sources as the Blue Books, Nigerian Handbooks, Official Gazettes, and files of the Colonial Secretary's Office (CSO) on cocoa matters and colonial economic policies provided data for the historical reconstruction. These were augmented by unstructured interviews with randomly selected surviving cocoa producers and their descendants in Nigeria. Conference papers and proceedings gathered from the Cocoa Research Institute of Nigeria (CRIN), Ibadan; Institute of Agricultural Research and Training (Moore Plantations), Ibadan; and the National Institute for Social and Economic Research (NISER), Ibadan, as well as the International Institute for Tropical Agriculture (IITA), Ibadan, were utilized.

The primary sources were examined not only from a historical perspective in order to identify the dynamics at play, but also from the perspective of political economy for a holistic picture. This is the whole idea of structuralism, represented by Wallerstein's "World-systems Analysis", which has to do with fitting phenomena in the larger scheme of things. The proponents of world-systems analysis argue "that the separate boxes of analysis—what in the universities are called the disciplines—are an obstacle, not an aid, to understanding the world. We have been arguing that the social reality within which we live and which determines what our options has not been the multiple national states of which we are citizens but something larger, which we call a world-system."[77] Thus, the West African cocoa industry was examined within the larger and wider structure of the international economy. This was because the introduction of the cocoa culture into West Africa was a part of the dynamics of industrial capitalism and cannot be understood in isolation from a wide historical process. This is the essence of the intersectional and complexity approaches: systems of many dynamically interacting parts or particles, characteristic of much modern study in humanities, culture and society.[78] Multi-disciplinary method was employed in the analysis, because disciplinary approaches have proven utterly inadequate for elaborating the complexities of colonial and post-colonial conditions, hence the myriad of interventions across a range of multidisciplinary perspectives.

Chapters in Brief

Chapter One deals with the *problematique* of the study: its *raison d'être*, aim and objectives, significance, and central arguments. Besides, it situates the whole study within the context of the existing literature on cocoanomics, the international economy, and the period of the 1930s, with a view to demonstrating the originality of the study. It also states the sources and methodology of the study as well as chapters in brief.

The second chapter deals with the integration of Nigeria into the world cocoa economy. By so doing, it conceptualises and historicises the world cocoa economy and then demonstrates how Nigeria was incorporated into the world cocoa trading system. It examines the role of global capitalism in the revolution of the commodity trade and how the penetration of European merchant capital stimulated commodity production, including the cocoa industry, in pre-colonial Nigeria.

The third chapter explores the Nigerian cocoa industry and the world economy up to 1929. It provides the historical background to the study and shows the continuity and change in the interaction between the international economy and the Nigerian cocoa industry from the beginnings of the cocoa culture in pre-colonial Nigeria to the 1930s in the colonial period. It presents the processes involved in the cocoa production as well as the impact of the international economy on the Nigerian cocoa industry until the eve of the 1930s.

The fourth chapter explores the crisis and catastrophe of the international economy in the 1930s. It examines the factors responsible for the Great Depression, and how the depression gave rise to the fluctuations in the world commodity prices, in general, and the world cocoa prices, in particular. It emphasises the necessity for price stabilisation mechanisms, such as commodity restriction.