

Colonialism, Migration and the Emergence of Urban Spaces in Colonial Nigeria

Sri Lanka Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities
Volume 3 Issue 1, February 2023: 72-79
ISSN: 2773 692X (Online), 2773 6911 (Print)
Copyright: © 2023 The Author(s)
Published by the Faculty of Social Sciences and
Languages, Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka
Website: <https://www.sab.ac.lk/sljssh>
DOI: <http://doi.org/10.4038/sljssh.v3i1.87>



Adesote Samson Adesola^{1*} and Osiyale Babatunde Olabiyi²

¹Department of History & International Studies, Osun State University (Ikire Campus), Nigeria.

²Department of History & Diplomatic Studies, Tai Solarin University of Education, Ijagun, Ogun State, Nigeria.

Received: 22 June 2022, Revised: 11 November 2022, Accepted: 06 December 2022.

How to Cite this Article: Adesote Samson Adesola & Osiyale Babatunde Olabiyi. (2023). Colonialism, migration and the emergence of urban spaces in colonial Nigeria. *Sri Lanka Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities*, 3(1), 72-79.

Abstract

Arguably, urbanisation, which entails spatial, social, and temporal phenomena, is a social process describing how cities grow and societies become more complex. From this point of view, urbanisation is not a new phenomenon in Nigeria in particular and Africa in general. The process of urbanisation in Nigeria began in the pre-colonial period and continued during the colonial and post-colonial periods. However, the factors or conditions that facilitated urbanisation in each historical epoch of urbanisation in Nigeria have changed over time. This paper interrogates the effect of colonialism on the emergence of urban spaces in Nigeria between 1900 and 1960. It argues that migration, which constituted one of the main drivers of the emergence of urban spaces in Nigeria during this period, was promoted by the introduction of the British colonial policy of the administration. The main trend of internal migration during colonial Nigeria examined in the paper involves a drift from the rural areas and the lesser towns to the new urban centres of commerce and administration which developed in response to the establishment of formal colonial rule. This trend of internal migration was witnessed in different parts of Nigeria such as Lagos, Ibadan, Ogbomoso, Osogbo, Benin City (all in Western Nigeria); Onitsha, Enugu, Calabar, Port Harcourt (all in Eastern Nigeria); Kano, Jos, Makurdi, Zaria, Sokoto and Kaduna (all in Northern Nigeria) between 1900 and 1960. It concludes that the physical spaces in these cities have had a fundamental significance for the host communities, migrants and for host/migrant relations.

Keywords: British, Colonialism, Migration, Nigeria, Urbanisation


INTRODUCTION

Existing studies have revealed that the socioeconomic relations in different parts of Nigeria and Africa are shaped by trans-local patterns of migration, exchange and identity (Otite, 1979; Ogen, 2003 & Olaniyi, 2008). The dynamic nature of migration constitutes a major factor responsible for the geographical distribution of population in every human settlement. Fundamentally, the history of the human race is rooted in migration. In other words, the emergence of every society is a product of migration. This is why migration is generally referred to as a global phenomenon. By nature, man is designed to be mobile. He moves, as the need arises, from one location to another in search of a variety of things (Akai, 2010), which could be socio-economic opportunities available in the place of destination. Nigeria, like other countries of the world, has a long history of population mobility. From a historical perspective, the study of migration patterns in Nigeria falls into three distinct periods: pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial. Meanwhile, each of these periods reflects the people's response to widely divergent social, political and economic conditions (Adesote, 2016:19). The movement of people in these historical epochs of migration took forms of regional, occupational and seasonal rural-rural, rural-urban, urban-urban and urban-rural patterns of internal migration.

Importantly, the decision to migrate, migration stream/wave and paths which are major processes involved in internal migration based on place utility in terms of the environment and the information received from previous migrants.

Arguably, migration constitutes one of the main drivers of city building in any society. Although the process towards this development has begun in Nigeria during the pre-colonial period, it became unprecedented and took different dimensions during colonial and post-colonial periods. In fact, it was during the last two periods that rural-urban and urban-urban patterns of migration were more pronounced. The dynamic nature of urbanization during these periods was hinged on the socioeconomic development that attended colonialism. In other words, economic opportunities and the availability of social infrastructure prevalent in many cities and towns in Nigeria during the colonial period stimulated rural-urban and urban-urban migration. As argued in the literature, one of the consequences of colonialism in Nigeria was the growth and transformation of some cities and towns between 1900 and 1960 (Muritala, 2011; Sean, 2012:283 and Uji, 2015). Notable among them were Ibadan, Ogbomoso, Osogbo, and

* Corresponding author: Tel.: +2348062293355; Email: solaade2007@gmail.com

 <https://orcid.org/0003-1497-9304>



This article is published under the Creative Commons CC-BY-ND License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nd/4.0/>). This license permits use, distribution, and reproduction, commercial and non-commercial, provided that the original work is properly cited and is not changed in anyway.

Benin City (all in Western Nigeria); Onitsha, Enugu, Calabar, Port Harcourt (all in Eastern Nigeria); Kano, Jos, Makurdi, Zaria, Sokoto and Kaduna (all in Northern Nigeria). However, it is imperative to point out here that, the physical spaces in these cities and towns had a fundamental significance for the host communities, migrants and host/migrant relations. It is against this background that this paper interrogates the relationship between colonialism, migration and urbanization in Nigeria between 1900 and 1960. This paper is divided into six sections. The first section is an introduction; the second section deals with a literature review; the third discusses materials and methods used for the study; the fourth is results and discussions of colonialism, migration and the emergence of urban spaces in colonial Nigeria; and the fifth section is the conclusion.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Colonialism: Colonialism can be viewed from different perspectives. Generally, it refers to the domination of one country by another, which is mainly achieved through aggressive and military actions or means. From the African experience, it deals with the practice of invading African lands & territories by the Europeans for the purpose of settlement and/or resource exploitation (Kaniki, 1985:382).

Migration: Generally, migration refers to the movement of people from one geographical location to another, either on a temporary or permanent basis. Migration could either be voluntary or involuntary or forced migration. While voluntary migration centres mainly on the movement of people based on willingness and desire, forced migration refers to as the mass movement of people caused principally by social and political problems such as armed conflicts, human rights violations, natural or environmental disasters, chemical or nuclear disasters, famine, or development projects (Adesote, 2016:20). There are two main categories of migration, namely, internal and external. While internal migration involves movement between one community and another, external migration refers to the movement between countries. For the purpose of this paper, our major focus is internal migration which according to Osoba is categorised into three main trends in Nigeria (Osoba, 1969:515). The first trend deals with the movement of people from rural areas of less economic activity to those of greater economic activity within the same region. A good example of this was the movement of people from their places in Abeokuta, Ijebu and Oyo Provinces to Ondo Province within the Western Region in search of suitable land and employment on farms. The second trend deals with the movement of people, whether on a seasonal, temporary or permanent basis across regional frontiers. A good example of this was the movement of people from the Northern and Eastern Regions to the Western Region and, vice versa. The third trend involved a drift from the rural areas and the lesser towns to the new urban centres of commerce and industrialisation caused by colonial policy of administration. A good example of this was the movement of people from different areas within Nigerian territory into places like Lagos, Ibadan, Kano, Jos, Port Harcourt, Onitsha and so on in search of employment, education, better conditions of living and so on. Of these trends of internal migration, our main focus is the third.

Urbanisation: The concept has been viewed from different perspectives by historians, social anthropologists, geographers, sociologists, demographers and other social scientists. According to Fadayomi, urbanization is a process

that brings with it rapid social change and new behavioural patterns that effects social institutions like marriage and the family (Fadayomi, 1998:5). Lious Worth observes that urbanization is simply "an urban centre. And that a town that has a population that is below the minimum of 4000 inhabitants cannot be classified as urbanized" (Lious, 1968:37) Also, Sackville sees urbanization from the perspective of population density and thus argues that a town with more than 5,000 people is an urban area (Ahokegh, 2011:6). In all, urbanisation means the physical growth of an area in terms of population and socio-economic infrastructure such as transportation, communication and so on.

The theoretical framework for the Study: It is imperative to point out here that a theoretical framework is a guide to perception. Besides, it is useful in ensuring that analyses of a more qualitative nature (like this paper) can be better organised within a framework in order to add conceptual richness to the work. The two main theories require in this paper centre on migration and urbanization. Basically, migration theories present two main perspectives, economic and non-economic as the determinants of migration. According to the economic perspective, individual migrants are viewed as rationally optimising the costs and benefits of their decision to migrate. Economists generally regard the decision to migrate as one which invariably leads migrants from rural, low-income areas with job prospects to urban areas where they can improve their economic standing by employment in the formal salary sector (Makinwa, 1981:6). The non-economic perspective consists of other social scientists like geographers, sociologists, anthropologists among others and thus pose that migration decision consists of two stages. The first decision to migrate precedes a second decision regarding the choice of destination. The former, though usually heavily predicated on economic factors, is seen as necessarily moderated by various non-economic considerations such as means of transport, presence of relatives, friends and/co-villagers at the destination, ethnic compatibility and residual environmental factors at both places of origin and destination (Makinwa, 1981:6). These two perspectives of migration are represented in various theories of migration. Notable among these migration theories are Ravenstein's Laws of Migration (1885); Everett Lee's push and pull" theory of migration (1966); Charles Tilly's three determinants of migration (1974); Mabogunje's (1970) systems approach to rural-urban migration among others. The paper adopts Everett Lee's push and pulls theory of migration, which mainly emphasises rural-urban migration. The theory is constructed around some fundamental factors (economic, social and political hardships in the sending regions) and factors of attraction (comparative economic and social advantages in the receiving regions).

Also, there are socio-economic and demographic theories of urbanisation. The traditional economic theory of urbanization, which has dominated in both academic and policy circles since the 1950s, revolves around the relationship between structural economic change and the spatial dynamics of the labour market. In other words, as the modern urban sector (i.e., manufacturing and services) expands, surplus labour from the "backward rural economy" (i.e., agriculture) is drawn to towns and cities, attracted by higher wages (Sean, 2012:287). This is illustrated in the Lewis theory of dualistic economic model of urbanization which explains that surplus labour from the traditional agricultural

sector is transferred to the modern industrial sector whose growth over time absorbs surplus labour, promotes industrialisation and stimulates sustained development (Lewis, 1954: 139). In other words, the economic model suggests that urbanisation is fundamentally driven by rural-urban labour migration (that is labour transition between two sectors, namely the capitalist sector and the subsistence sector) stimulated by a wage gap between rural and urban areas due to industrialisation. The demographers see urbanization from the perspective of population growth caused by either a natural increase in urban areas or rural-urban migration (Cohen, 2003: 23-24). They explain that the onset of mortality decline ahead of fertility decline in urban areas raises the rate of urban natural increase, and urban populations expand regardless of whether they are net recipients of rural migrants. The content is that population growth could occur in a place without rural-urban migration if urban natural increase exceeded rural natural increase over a sustained period (Sean, 2012:290). From these above perspectives, the paper argues that urbanization during colonial rule was mainly caused by rural-urban migration.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The methodological approach adopted in this paper is historical, thematic and analytical. The study historicises the evolution and development of urban spaces in the pre-colonial and colonial periods. The study relied heavily on materials from secondary sources. The main secondary sources used for the study included books (both single-authored and edited), journal articles, theses and dissertations. These secondary materials were obtained from University Libraries at Ibadan, Lagos, Ile-Ife and Ago-Iwoye as well as research websites online such as www.jstor.org. Data collected were subjected to historical analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Historicising Urbanisation in the Pre-colonial Nigeria

Generally, city building or urbanisation is viewed as a global historical process mostly driven by population dynamics associated with technological and institutional change (Sean, 2012:290). In other words, the emergence of urban spaces in Nigeria is a product of historical phases, which comprised pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial periods. Each historical phase was shaped by different factors. With respect to the pre-colonial period, evidence from the existing studies revealed that the origin of city building or urbanization in Nigeria in particular and Africa, in general, began during the pre-colonial period. While Sesan 2012 observes that urban settlements emerged in many regions in the nineteenth century, Southall 1974, submits that development predated the 19th century and started with the process of state formation.

The pre-colonial urban or physical structure in Nigeria has been attributed to the factors of migration, politics and trade. Politically, the development actually began with the process of state formation, which is made up of the origin of a state and the emergence of dynasties in that state (occasioned by conquest, migration, assimilation and integration) (Southall, 1974:153). This was witnessed in different parts of Nigeria in the pre-colonial period. Here, we will only restrict ourselves to a few of these developments. For example, in Yorubaland, there was the existence of pre-Oduduwa societies in Ondo, Egba, Ijebu-Ode, Ilesa, Akure and so on (Akinjogbin, 1993). For instance, in Ondo, there

was the presence of three aborigines namely the Oka, Ifore and Idoko. These were autochthonous people that initially settled in the place that is now known as "Ondo". They were later conquered by the coming of Oduduwa's group led by *Pupupu* (the first and only female *Osemawe* of Ondo) who came from Ife/Oyo to Epe, Ile-Oluji and Ode-Ondo. The conquest led to the establishment of a new dynasty (known as *Osemawe* Dynasty) in Ondo (Ogunsakin, 1967:2-3) as well as successful integration between the aborigines and the newly migrated groups, which took forms of either absorption or assimilation. This was further followed by the emergence of different quarters (streets) such as Oke Lisa, Odo Jomu, Oke Odunwo, Odotu, Oke Dibo, Oreretu, Oke Otunba, Okerowo and so on (Adeyemi, M.C. 1993:46-47). Also, in the 19th century, generally described as "a century of revolution in Yorubaland", there were a series of political crises, which ended in the fall of the Old Oyo Empire. The fall of the empire resulted in the outbreak of other civil wars such as the Owu war, the Egba-Dahomey war and the Ekiti-Parapo war by other Yoruba states for political ascendancy. We are not interested in the factors responsible for the outbreak of these wars as they had been thoroughly examined in the literature (Ajayi, and Smith, 1964 Akintoye, S.A. 1971). Our main focus is the impact of the wars on city buildings in Yorubaland. Thus, the immediate consequences of the wars were forced migration or mass movement of people (which altered the demographic pattern of Yorubaland) leading to the establishment of new towns and cities like Ibadan, Aiyede, New Oyo and Ijaye; and the expansion of old ones (which became homes of large scale mixture of Yoruba peoples) (Falola, et al, 1991:69).

Also, in Northern Nigeria, there was the evidence of state formation process which initially began with the Bayajidda legend. Although there are versions with regards to Bayajidda legend, there is a general consensus among scholars that societies existed in Hausaland with a distinctive form of government [known as *Sarauta* (kinship) system] prior to the 1804 Uthman dan Fodio Jihad. Notable among societies that emerged in Hausaland in the pre-jihad period were Daura, Kano, Zauzau, Gobir, Rano, Biram, Kastina, Zamfara, Kwararafa, Gwari and so on (Adeleye, 1971:6). The expansion of Northern part of Nigeria during this period was later facilitated by the 1804 jihad. Aside from political changes leading to the emergence of a new dynasty, the jihad had a tremendous effect on the demography of the area in particular. It resulted in the emergence of new settlements, towns and cities and the expansion of the old ones. For example, the emergence of towns like Gombe, Yola, Bauchi, Kontagora and Sokoto was a result of the jihad (Falola, et al, 1991:15).

The second factor responsible for the pre-colonial urban structure in Nigeria was trade. Trade was a major factor that facilitated inter-group relations among Nigerian peoples during this period. Both internal and external trade developed in different parts of pre-colonial Nigeria. The first major form of external trade in the pre-colonial period in West Africa (Nigeria inclusive) was trans-Saharan trade. The trade flourished in Northern Nigeria during this period. A number of cities were said to have developed for the purpose of supporting Saharan and trans-Saharan trade routes. The main trans-Saharan trade route in Northern Nigeria had its centre in Bornu. It connected Tripoli, Cairo and the Kingdoms South of Egypt. The development of the trade attracted a large number of traders and migrants from outside (mostly Arabs) and surrounding areas, who later settled in different areas like Kano, and Katsina, which

eventually acted as central citadels and political capitals and Kukawa (Ogunsola, 1971:44). The areas were exposed to international trade as early as the 14th century and resulted in the growth of cities and towns in other parts of Northern Region. Inter-regional trade relations between traders from Northern Nigeria and those of the Southern part during this period equally facilitated urbanization.

Another major external trade that contributed to urban spaces prior to the establishment of colonial rule was contact with Europe, which began during the Atlantic Slave trade in the 15th century. It was after the abolition of the slave trade and the transition to legitimate trade and commerce in the 19th century that external trade relations between the peoples of Nigeria were well developed. A number of trade routes emerged in different parts of Nigeria. For instance, in Yorubaland, there was a trade route from Egbado (in Western Yorubaland) through Igan or Ilogun to Iseyin, Shaki, Igboho, Kishi and to Oyo (all in Northern Yorubaland). From Oyo, this same route continued through Raba on the Niger to Kano. This development enabled Egbado to trade with Hausaland and Bornu. There was also the trade route, which linked Central and Northern Egbado with Abeokuta to the east and Ketu to the West. In the Ketu market, there were usually found some 4,000 traders from Shaki, Kishi, Igboho, bariba, Dahomey and Porto Novo. This led to the rise of the Egba state (Folayan, 1980:83-87). The development of legitimate trade in the 19th century promoted effective trade relations between the Northern and Southern parts of Nigeria, which resulted in the emergence of new settlements and the growth of towns in both areas. In both areas, separate quarters emerged to host stranger migrant traders. While in the south, the new quarters were referred to as 'Sabo' (stranger settlement) and hosted the Hausa population, in the north, new quarters were referred to as 'Sabon Gari' (literally, new town) and hosted inhabitants who were not from the north such as the Yoruba (Olaniyi, 2008:5). The most commodities that promoted trade relations between Hausa traders and Yoruba traders were kolanuts, textiles and leather. Yoruba traders exchanged kolanuts for textiles and leather. During this period, some Northern cities had specific quarters for each group of specialised craft manufacturers. Also, in the Niger Delta area, a number of places like Bonny, Nembe, Brass, Warri, Duke town, Ebrohimi among others became not only major commercial centres but also emerged as cities during legitimate trade (Dike, 1956:10). Okpeh later argues that it was in these towns that besides trade, other forms of interaction took place all of which generated the sense of awareness in among these diverse groups (Okpeh, 2007/2008:129).

The above analysis shows that the process towards city building in Nigeria actually began in the pre-colonial or pre-industrial era. The development was mostly facilitated by migration, politics and trade. This was later popularised by the establishment of colonial rule in 1900. This will be the focus of the next section.

Colonialism, migration and the emergence of Urban Spaces in Nigeria

The British occupation of Nigeria was a product of two major phases, namely the first (1851-1900) and the second (1900-1914). While the first phase was characterised by the aggressive acquisition of territories through the adoption of military conquest, signing of treaties and gunboat diplomacy (which could be grouped into two measures-violent and non-violent), which lasted till 1900 (Barkindo, Omolewa, and

Babalola, 1994:28), the efforts of the British during the second phase were geared towards bringing different parts of Nigeria together under a single political entity for easy administration. According to Tamuno, the desire to achieve total and effective control over the Nigeria area constituted the prime objective of British colonial administrators between 1900 and 1914 (Tamuno, 1980:393). Meanwhile, by 1900, Nigeria had been recognised as "a British colony" by other European colonialists (Falola, Mahadi, Uhomioh, and Anyanwu, 1991:1). However, in spite of this, it was not until 1914 that a formal establishment of colonial rule was imposed on the whole of Nigeria. Thus, having successfully conquered Nigeria during this phase, the desire of the British was to open markets for the products of British industries and as well to control the important raw materials available in the country (Ajayi, 2005:5). There were two main conflicting arguments with respect to the British interests in Nigeria. They were Eurocentric and Afrocentric scholars. While Eurocentric scholars such as D.K. Fieldhouse and Arthur Norton Cook argue that the British colonial interests in Nigeria were motivated mainly by social and political intentions, Afrocentric scholars such as Toyin Falola, Walter Rodney, Kwame Nkrumah and Aime Cesaire posit that British enterprise was motivated to a large degree by the economic factors (Adesote, 2016). For example, Fieldhouse while criticizing Marxist explanations of colonial expansion and exploration argues that it was colonialism, not an economic enterprise that precipitated Europe's political impulses and military rivalries. Fieldhouse further explains that the missionaries, explorers and adventurers who had exerted pressure on European countries to search for colonies had no economic interests as such at heart. The economic interests of the merchants were merely accidental (Fieldhouse, 1983:3) His argument was later challenged by African scholars. For example, Ihonvbere and Falola, 1987, argue that British enterprise in Nigeria was majorly motivated by economic forces. He posits that the British managed the Nigerian economy to the advantage of the metropolis through a variety of direct and indirect means among which were the creation of modern transport, the incorporation of Nigeria into the British monetary system (Ihonvbere, and Falola, 1987:8). The various colonial policies of administration introduced by the British justified the various arguments of the African scholars that Nigerian society was governed for the benefit of the metropolis. Here, we will restrict ourselves to just a few of the policies that facilitated migration and urbanization.

The colonial agricultural policy was one of the main colonial economic policies introduced by the British which facilitated migration and the emergence of urban spaces in Nigeria. The colonial agricultural policy emphasised the cultivation of "cash crops" at the expense of food crops (the traditional economy of the Nigerian people). Emphasis on the new colonial economy led to the search for suitable fertile land and the emergence of wage labour, which invariably resulted in forced migration. As pointed out elsewhere in this paper, the movement of people from rural areas of less economic activity to those of greater economic activity within the same region, which occurred in different parts of Nigeria during this period, was mostly caused by emphasis on the production of cash crops. Both migrant farmers and labourers were affected by this development. While migrant farmers were searching for suitable fertile land for the cultivation of newly introduced export crops such as cocoa, migrant labours sought for work on the plantations. Between the 1920s and 1950s, there was the aggressive

colonial campaign for expansion in cash crop production (Faluyi, 1994:40-55). The demand for cocoa, rubber and palm oil increased during this period. This led to the search for land by Nigerian farmers. In Ondo Division, for instance, there was an influx of Yoruba Cocoa migrant farmers from Oyo, Ilorin and Abeokuta Provinces into the division. They penetrated the interior parts of the Ondo Division and acquired a large tract of land from the indigenes through their traditional rulers such *Osemawe* of Ondo and *Jegun* of Ile-Oluji (Adesote, 2017) for the establishment of cocoa farmers. Berry observes that the genesis of the influx of cocoa migrant farmers in the division was traced to the 1930s (Berry, 1974:86). The availability of suitable fertile land and its easy accessibility in the division coupled with colonial land policy, which encouraged commercialisation of rural land facilitated the influx of migrant farmers to the area (Adesote and Olaniyi, 2016:107). The same experience was witnessed in West Niger Igboland. Onyekpe 2012, argues that migrant capitalist farmers, who were mostly Urhobo and Ukwuani planters penetrated West Niger Igboland and acquired expansive virgin lands from both individual peasants and communities for the purpose of setting up rubber plantations (Onyekpe, 2012:188). This further led to the influx of migrant labourers into the two areas. While cocoa migrant farmers in Ondo Division drew their migrant labourers from the places of origin of the farmers and middle belt such as *Agatu*, *Igede*, *Ebira* (Adesote and Olaniyi, 2016:108-110). and so on, the Urhobo rubber planters in West Niger Igboland depended on the wage labour of migrants from Urhoboland and the East Niger Igbo districts (a good number of them were Efik (Onyekpe, 2012:190). The effect of the establishment of rubber plantations on labour migration was put by I. An Asiwaju in this way:

The establishment of rubber plantations led to the popularisation of wage labour. It was a gigantic concern employing hundreds of labourers in its various services. Apart from the clearing, planting, watering and later the tapping of the rubber plants, such labourers were employed in erecting the various buildings of both the factory and residential quarters adjoined to the plantation (Asiwaju, 1976:168).

In Ondo Division, for example, paid labourers in the cocoa, rubber and timber industry included the Ebira, Agatu, Ibo, Urhobo, Edo and Osun people. This could be corroborated by the Annual Report on the Ondo Division of 1946 which states that:

Ibo labourers still continue to provide most of the manual labour for timber, cocoa and public works. Indeed, it is difficult to know how trade and industry could possibly carry on without them (NAI Ondo Prof. 1/120C, 1946:12).

The place of infrastructural development on migration and urbanisation during colonial rule cannot be overemphasized. Infrastructure can be classified into two groups of services, namely economic infrastructure and social infrastructure. While social infrastructure embraces health, education and water supply, economic infrastructure includes transportation (roads, railways and seaports) and communication. With respect to the economic infrastructure, the period between 1900 and 1960 witnessed a considerable investment of resources in the development of modern transport infrastructure. Before we interrogate the impact of infrastructure on migration and urbanisation, it is imperative to have a glimpse of the

evolution and development of each economic infrastructure. During this period, there was a rapid transformation of transport facilities especially railways, roads and seaports (Ogundana, 1980:159). Improvement of economic infrastructure in the colonial period was in line with the prevailing philosophy of the European imperialist power, which saw transport development as the key to colonial exploitation. Oluwasanmi, 1966, observes that the expansion in the production of agricultural materials for the export market was facilitated by the building of a modern transport system. All three means of transportation railway, road and seaport transport were developed during this period. Fundamentally, two main reasons facilitated the early development of the transportation system in Nigeria. First was the need to establish effective territorial administrative machinery. The colonial government held the view that in a vast territory like Nigeria without adequate transport facilities easy movement in the territory would be difficult. Second, the vast interior of the country could not be fully exploited without putting in place an efficient system of transportation (Oluwasanmi, 1966:13). Railway was the first to be developed. Following the establishment and consolidation of British administrative control in Nigeria, the British began to embark on the construction of the railway system. Although the official history of the Nigerian Railway was concentrated on the period after 1901 when the Iddo-Ibadan line was opened and when Railway policy was adopted, efforts to construct them began in the late 19th century (Omosini, 1980:10). The railway received the most important and urgent consideration. The demand for the railway to link Lagos with the hinterland antedated the imposition of colonial rule (Falola, 1984:167). As early as 1875, a European traveller, John Whitford had suggested the construction of a line from Lagos to Lokoja, romanticising the political economic and religious advantages derivable from it. Similar calls were also made by many other European and Africans. Despite all these calls, nothing was done before the 1890s (Olubomehin, 2011) The actual construction railway line did not commence until March 1896 (Oyemakinde, 1970). It was designed as an arrow standard colonial gauge of 3'6 (Omosini, 1980:157), which was to pass through the region where cash crops were available for quick transportation to Lagos (Falola, 1984:167). The approved line from Iddo to Ibadan was not completed until the end of 1900. This completed railway line was formally opened on March 4, 1901 (Olaniyan, 1980:86). It was later extended to the Northern and Eastern Regions (Agboola, 1980:142). For example, the Bauchi Light Railway reached Bukuru in 1915 (Freund, 1981:73-74).

The advent of motor transport created a greater economic revolution than that of the railroads because the motor vehicle as a means of conveyance has a range that far exceeds that commanded by the railways (Olaniyan, 1980:86). The colonial government designed the building of trunk roads to run horizontally across the country so as to link the regional capitals to facilitate the movement of commodities (Olubomehin, 2012:39). The first motorable road in Nigeria was built in 1906 from Ibadan to Oyo and it was linked to the railways by a railway-operated road transport service (Olaniyan, 1980:87). Before the outbreak of the First World War in 1914, over 2000 miles of roads had been built (Helleiner, 1966:14). In the 1920s, the colonial government took frantic effort towards road construction on the fact the railway was inadequate for the economic needs of Nigeria. The railway network tapped comparatively small areas in the vast territory. Roads were required to

carry the agricultural produce from areas not reached by railways to the coast and consuming areas (Oluwasanmi, 1966:15). Although the construction of roads was interrupted by the First World War, it resumed in 1922 (Olubomehin, 2012:39). In Southwestern Nigeria for example, roads were constructed between Ibadan and Lagos; Ibadan and Ijebu-Ode; Ilesa and Akure to Ondo among others (Olubomehin, 2011). While Olaniyan, 1980 argues that by 1926, the construction and maintenance of roads were the joint responsibility of the Native Administrations and the Public Works Department, Olubomehin, 2012, posits that with respect to Western Nigeria, road development in the region from 1920 involved the government, the people and the missionaries. With respect to seaport transport, the years 1914 to 1954 could be described as the colonial phase in seaport development in Nigeria. Port concentration was centred on Lagos (the leading port in Nigeria), Port Harcourt, Sapele, Warri, Calabar, Bonny, Opopo, Burutu and so on. Lagos and Port Harcourt ports were the main ports actually financed by the government. Others were managed by private European firms (Ogundana, 1980:1960). In the period between 1907 and 1938, while a total capital expenditure of £4.8 million was incurred by the government on port facilities in Lagos and Port Harcourt, the public expenditure in facilities during the same period in all other Nigerian ports combined was under £20,000 (Adesote, 2016:42)

The impact of infrastructural development on migration and urbanization in Nigeria was significant. Although the railway was mainly constructed to facilitate the effective transformation of goods from the hinterland to the coastal areas, it enhanced an influx of migrant labourers from the hinterland, particularly from the Northern, Eastern and Western parts of Nigeria. The genesis of labour migration occasioned by the development of the railway system started with its construction. Generally, railway construction in Nigeria involved the conscription of massive amounts of peasant labour (forced labour) minimally paid. The widespread use of forced labour was deployed for the construction of roads, rail and harbour as well as mining works in all British colonies in West Africa (Britwum, n.d: 22) The great impact of forced railway labour was much appreciated by mining firms: 'The system under which the Government has found labour for the building of railways has a strong influence towards developing the native. The construction of the railway from the Northern part to the Western and Eastern parts of Nigeria led to the influx of migrant labourers from the regions into Jos and Kano (Freund, 1981:73-77). The connection of the railway line from Lagos to Kano and other areas in Northern Nigeria led to the mass movement of labour migrants from the latter to the former. As observed by Edo and Muritala, 2014, the railway facilitated the movement of people to Lagos more than the goods it was meant to convey. They further explain that passengers carried on board railway rose from 7,015,000 in 1959 to 7,881,000 in 1960. Olaniyi, 2014 argues that with the emergence of the railway, the movement of Hausa migrants into Ibadan basically for trade in kolanut and cattle increased dramatically. He also explained that the presence of the railway in Ibadan accounted for the massive settlements of migrants in different parts of the city. For example, while the Ijebu largely settled around Oke-Ado, migrants from Lagos settled around Ekotedo and Mokola.

The creation of administrative headquarters in some areas also facilitated migration and urbanisation. These administrative headquarters attracted the establishment of

social infrastructures such as telegraph and telephone services, health, education and water supply. Most of the headquarters of the European private firms such as United African Company (UAC), and John Holts among others were equally set up in the administrative headquarters of the colonial administration. This development facilitated the growth of rural-urban migration. While some came in search of jobs, others came purposely for the acquisition of western education. Osoba observes that the phenomenon of labour migration from rural areas and lesser towns to new urban centres of commerce and administration such as Lagos, Port Harcourt, Ibadan, Onitsha, Kano, Kastina, Jos, Enugu, Benin City among others between 1911 and 1963 became unprecedented (Osoba, 1969:515-516). This could be corroborated by the submission of Ahokegh that rural-urban migration in the 1940s and 1950s was exacerbated as there was a strong desire by migrants for the acquisition of western education in the new areas designated as commercial and administrative centres. He identified areas like Makurdi, Gboko, Katsina-Ala and Adikpo in Tivland of Central Nigeria which grew into urban centres due to the influx of migrants occasioned by the above-mentioned factor (Ahokegh, 2011:232-233). Other areas that were designated as administrative headquarters by the colonial authorities were Warri, Ondo town, Ijebu-Ode, Ogbomosho and so on.

The Impact of physical spaces in new urban centres on host communities, migrants and host/migrant relations

The emergence of physical spaces in the new urban centres caused by colonialism was not without its socio-economic impact (which was both positive and negative) on the host communities, migrants and host/migrant relations. It is practically impossible to exhaust all the socio-economic effects of this phenomenon in a discourse of this nature. Therefore, efforts would be made to interrogate just a few of them.

The population explosion was a major impact on physical spaces in new urban centres caused by colonialism. The colonial economic policy and the development of social and economic infrastructure stimulated migration. It is true that a high rate of fertility and a decline in mortality can contribute to population increase as argued by demographers. During this period, the high density of population in new urban centres in Nigeria like Lagos, Makurdi, Gboko, Ibadan, Jos, Warri, Enugu, Calabar, Port Harcourt and Kano was mainly caused by the influx of migrants occasioned by colonialism. For example, Ahokegh observes that while the population of Makurdi rose from 7,500 in 1939 to 10,000 in 1948 and to 16,270 in 1952 (Ahokegh, 2011:232-233). As pointed out elsewhere in the paper, Edo and Muritala, 2014, reveal those passengers carried by railway to Lagos from the Northern part rose from 7,015,000 in 1959 to 7,881,000 in 1960. As opined by Ake, 1981, the phenomenon of urbanization during colonial rule was born out of the contradictions created by capital accumulation, which encouraged the socialisation of production and the spatial and social concentration of producers caused colonialism (Ake, C. 1981:78).

The attendant problems associated with the population explosion in these colonial urban centres such as overcrowding or congestion, the outbreak of diseases, enormous pressure on land, poor sanitation and housing arrangement were other negative consequences of urbanization caused by colonialism. With respect to Lagos, Olukoju, 2004, observes that the high density of the

population that resided in the indigenous part of Lagos Island and the congestion associated with it had negative effects on the living conditions of the people. Edo and Muritala, 2014, corroborate the effect of population explosion on the livelihood of the people living in Lagos during this period in this way:

“the enormous pressure on land occasioned by the rapid growth of population forced many people to resort to erecting buildings in swampy areas such as Elegbata, Alakoro, Anikantanmo, Oko Awo and Sangrouse, which were ordinarily inhabitable” (Edo and Muritala, 2014:181)

The above new settlements experienced outbreaks of epidemics such as tuberculosis from 1919. Olukoju, 2004, explains that the high incidence of the epidemic in the city of Lagos caused a steady rise in death and infant mortality rate between 1912 and 1922 (Olukoju, 2004:37). Edo and Muritala, 2014, reveal that while total death in 1912 was 29, it increased to 42 in 1913 and to 78 in 1922. They further explain that the incident attracted negative reactions and protests of the elite in the city (Edo and Muritala, 2014:181). Ahokegh, 2011 argues that congestion in colonial urban areas caused the spread of European diseases such as gonorrhoea, syphilis, and influenza; and the emergence of social vices such as stealing and theft, prostitution and other crimes in Tivland of Central Nigeria (Ahokegh, 2011:238).

There was the emergence of inter-communal disputes over land between the host and migrants. Although the inter-communal dispute was not a new phenomenon in the history of inter-group relations in Nigeria, it took a new dimension during the colonial period. In pre-colonial, inter-communal disputes mainly occurred as a result of the process of state formation. Colonial agricultural policy (which emphasised cash crop production) and the commercialization of rural land [occasioned by the Public Lands Acquisition Ordinance of 1917 (formerly known as the Public Lands Ordinance of 1876 and which was initially restricted to the Colony of Lagos)], (Elias, 1971:51) accelerated intra and inter-communal disputes over land. With respect to the West Niger Igboland, Onyekpe, 2012 argues that fierce struggles for farmlands in the area occurred at two levels. First, within the communities (that is intra-community struggles and disputes); and second between communities (that is inter-community struggles and disputes). He further explains that the phenomenon which began during the colonial period was accelerated in the post-colonial period. He observes that the disputes involved the cases between the historically stranger communities, which began to reject their status as strangers or tenant communities and their host communities, which naturally insisted on their status as owners and landlord communities. He identifies notable examples of inter-communal disputes over land in this area. For example, the loss of large areas of land to rubber and later to the production of cassava on a commercial scale in the Agbor Alidimma and Igumpe communities led to disputes between them in the 1940s-1960s. Also, the logical results of extreme scarcity of land in the aftermath of large-scale land expropriations led to disputes between Ejeme Aniogor and Ekuku Agbor in 1939-the 1960s; and Umutu and Urhonigbe in the 1950s and 1960 (Onyekpe, 2012:188-189).

The transformation of new colonial urban centres constituted one of the positive effects of colonialism. Undoubtedly, major areas that served as colonial administrative headquarters experienced a major

transformation. For instance, seaports as focal points in international and national transport services became advantageous locations for secondary and tertiary economic activities like manufacturing, the assemblage of goods, wholesaling and distribution. For example, port concentration enabled Lagos, Port Harcourt, Calabar and Warri to grow as large centres of commerce and industry. In fact, in the immediate post-colonial period, Lagos and Port Harcourt in particular became the fastest-growing industrial centres in Nigeria (Ogundana, 1980). There was also the emergence of new settlements and the transformation of some hamlets into villages as well as some villages into towns. Although the influx of migrants into some areas contributed to population explosion as argued earlier, in the others, it resulted in their transformation from towns into cities. As observed by Ifediora, the history of many of Nigeria’s urban centres situated along the coast is coterminous with the period of colonial rule, 1900-1960. He further explains that though these coastal states had had their origin as centres of Afro-European commerce in the period before the imposition of colonial rule, they were later popularised and grew rapidly as a result of their emergence as centres of colonial administration. He concludes that the effort of the colonial government to develop the urban centres of Nigeria through the setting up of social and economic infrastructure was the foundation of modern urban growth and spatial development in the country (Ifediora, 2011:83). The presence of these migrants resulted in the emergence of new settlements as well as the transformation of some rural settlements to urban centres. Aside from the proto settlements and their offshoots, which are the secondary settlements (described as the indigenous settlements with rightful claims of autochthony), new settlements emerged and were classified as migrant communities in Ondo Division and West Niger Igboland (Onyekpe, 2012:189).

CONCLUSION

The foregoing examined colonialism, migration and the emergence of urban spaces in colonial Nigeria. It argued that the process of city building or urbanisation began during the pre-colonial period. However, the phenomenon assumed a new dimension during the colonial period. It analysed the effect of the colonial policy of administration on rural-urban migration, which has now become a permanent feature since the post-colonial period. The discourse is also situated within the existing socio-economic and demographic theories of urbanisation and migration. The paper submitted that while the push and pull theory of migration was the main theory of migration that facilitated rural-urban migration during this period of study; socio-economic theories of urbanization were the major urbanisation theories. It observed that the socio-economic expansion in some Nigerian communities caused by the colonial authorities stimulated rural-urban migration, which invariably resulted in their emergence as urban centres. The socio-economic effects (which were both positive and negative) of physical spaces in the new urban centres on the host communities, migrants and host/migrant relations were equally analysed. The paper concludes that every policy no matter how well thought tends to produce unintended results. Therefore, the British colonial policy in Nigeria was no exception to this general tendency. Hence, the British Administration of Nigeria was a mixed blessing to the people. This study is a major complement to existing works on the effect of colonialism on urbanisation in colonial

Nigeria. It has filled a major gap in the historiography of colonialism and urbanisation in Nigeria.

REFERENCES

- Adeleye, R.A. (1971). *Power and Diplomacy in Northern Nigeria, 1804-1906*. Longman
- Adepoju, A. Ed. (1976). *Internal Migration in Nigeria*. Ile-Ife: Institute of Population and Manpower Studies
- Adesote, S.A & Olaniyi, R.O. (2016). Land acquisition, cocoa farming and internal migration in Ondo Division, 1947-1972. *Lagos Historical Review*, 16 (1), 107-126
- Adesote, S.A. (2016). *Plantation agriculture and the growth of migrant settlements in Ondo Division, Southwestern Nigeria, 1947-1986*. Unpublished PhD Thesis. Department of History, University of Ibadan.
- Adesote, S.A. (2017). Cocoa migrant farmers and Rural Development in Ondo Division, 1940s and 1980s. *Keffi Journal of Historical Studies*, 4, 24-44
- Adeyemi, M.C. (1993). *Ondo Kingdom: Its History and Culture (Enlarged by Aluko – Olokun, N)*. Ibadan: Bounty Press Limited
- Agboola, S. A. (1980). Agricultural changes in western Nigeria, 1850-1910. In I. A. Akinjogbin and S. O. Osoba. (Eds). *Topics on Nigerian Economic and Social History*. (pp.142-156). Ile-Ife University Press
- Ahokegh, A.F. (2011). Colonialism, development of infrastructure and urbanization in Tivland of Central Nigeria. *Ilorin Journal of History & International Studies*, 2 (1), 232-250
- Ajayi, A. T. (2005). *Colonial policies and the textile industry in eastern Yorubaland, 1900-1980*. Unpublished PhD. Thesis. Department of History, University of Ibadan
- Ajayi, J.F.A and Smith, R. (1964). *Yoruba warfare in the 19th century*, Cambridge
- Akai, N.F. (2010) National integration and the Niger Delta Question. Mangnut, J and Egbefo, D.O (eds). *The Fourth Republic and National Integration in Nigeria, 1999-2009*. Markurdi: Aboki Publishers
- Ake, C. (1981). *A political economy of Africa*. London: Longman & Co.
- Akinjogbin, I.A. (1993). Yorubaland before Oduduwa. *Ife Journal of History*, 1 (1), Jan-June
- Asiwaju, A.I. (1976). *Western Yorubaland Under European Rule, 1889-1945. A Comparative Analysis of French and British Colonialism*. London: Longman Group Limited
- Barkindo, A, Omolewa, M and Babalola, G. (1994). *Africa and the wider World 3: Africa since the scramble*. Lagos: Longman
- Berry, S.S. (1974). The concept of innovation and the history of cocoa farming in western Nigeria. *The Journal of African History*, 15 (1).86-90
- Britwum, A.O. n.d. *Labour in African history: Trends and organisational forms*. A Paper Presented at the Second ITUC-Africa New Year School, Kisumu, Kenya, January 22-27.
- Cohen, C. (2003). "Urban growth in developing countries: A review of current trends a caution regarding existing forecasts," *World Development* 32 (1): 23-51
- Dike, K.O. (1956). *Trade and politics in the Niger Delta, 1830-1885*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Edo, V.O & Muritala, M. (2014). Overcrowding and disease epidemics in Colonial Lagos: Rethinking road and railway infrastructure. *The Nigerian Journal of Economic History*.11 & 12, 181-196
- Fadayomi T.O. (1998). *Migrations, development and urbanization policies in sub-saharan African*, Codesria Books
- Falola, T. (1984). *The Political Economy of Pre-Colonial African State: Ibadan, 1830-1900*. Ile-Ife: University of Ife Press
- Falola, T., Mahadi, A., Uhomoibhi, M., and Anyanwu, U. (1991). *History of Nigeria 2. Nigeria in the 19th century*. Ibadan: Longman Publishers Limited
- Faluyi, E. K. (1994). *A history of agriculture in Western Nigeria, 1900-1960*.PhD. Thesis. Department of History. University of Lagos
- Fieldhouse, D. K. (1983). *Colonialism, 1870-1945*. London: Macmillan
- Folayan, K. (1980). Trade routes in Egbado in the 19th century. In I.A Akinjogbin and S.O Osoba. (Eds). *Topics on economic and social history*. (pp.83-87). Ile-Ife: University of Ife Press,
- Freund, W.M. (1981). *Labour Migration to the Northern Nigerian Tin Mines, 1903-1945*. *The Journal of African History*, 22 (1), 73-84
- Ifediora, A.O. (2011). Impact of the physical environment on the growth and development of Warri, 1891-1999. *Ilorin Journal of History & International Studies*, 2 (1), 83-90
- Ihonvbere, J and Falola, T. (1987). *Introduction: Colonialism and Exploitation. Britain and Nigeria: Exploitation or Development?* T. Falola (ed). New Jersey: Zed Books Limited, 8
- Kaniki, M. H. Y. (1985). *The colonial economy: The former British zones*. In A. A. Boahen. (Ed). *General history of Africa. VII. Africa under colonial domination, 1880-1935*. (pp. 382-419). Paris: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.
- Lewis, W.A. (1954). Economic development with unlimited supplies of labour. *Manchester School*, 22, pp.139-91 and See Gollin, Douglas. 2014. *The Lewis Model: A 60-Year Retrospective*. *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 28 (3), 71-88
- Makinwa, P. (1981). *Internal migration and rural development in Nigeria: Lessons from Bendel State*. Ibadan: Heinemann Educational Books (Nig) Limited
- Muritala M. O. (2011). *Urban Livelihood in Lagos 1861-1960*. *Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria*, 20, 193-200
- Ogen, O. (2003). *Urhobo Migrants and the Ikale Palm Oil Industry, 1850-1968*. *The Nigerian Journal of Economic History*. 5&6, June, 1-17
- Ogundana, B. (1980). *The Development of seaport in colonial Nigeria*. In I. A. Akinjogbin and S. O. Osoba. (Eds). *Topics on Nigerian Economic and Social History*. (pp.159-1963). Ile-Ife University Press
- Ogunsakin, P. (1967). *Ondo, the People, their Custom and Traditions*. Lagos
- Ogunsola, J.B. (1971). *West African history (A.D 1000 to Present day)*. Ibadan: Aromolaran Publishing Company
- Okpoh, O.O. Jr. (2007/2008). *Patterns and dynamics of inter-group relations in Nigeria, 1800 – 1900*. *Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria*, 17, 129-140
- Olaniyi, R.O. (2006). *Approaching the Study of the Yoruba Diaspora in Northern Nigeria*. In T. Falola and A. Genova (Eds). *Yoruba Identity and Power Politics*, (pp.231-250). Rochester: University of Rochester Press
- Olaniyi, R.O. (2008). *Diaspora Is Not Like Home: A Social and Economic History of Yoruba in Kano, 1912-1999*. Muenchen: Lincom Europa
- Olaniyi, R.O. (2014). *Landmarks in economic history of Ibadan, 1830-1930*. *Sokoto Journal of History*, 3, 195-212
- Olubomehin, O.O. (2011). *Road transportation in Western Nigeria, 1900 –1960: Its role, Nature and Impact*. Saarbrücken: LAP Lambert Academic Publishing
- Olukoju, A. (2004). *Population pressure, housing and sanitation in Metropolitan Lagos, 1900-1939*. Lawal Olakunle. Ed. *Urban Transition in Africa. Aspects of urbanization and Change in Lagos*. Lagos: Longman, 37
- Oluwasanmi, H.A. (1966). *Agriculture and Nigerian Economic Development*. Ibadan: Oxford University Press
- Omosini, O. (1980). *The background to railway policy in Nigeria*. *Topics on Nigerian Economic and Social History*. In I. A. Akinjogbin and S. O. Osoba. (Eds), (pp.10-15). Ile-Ife University Press, 10.
- Onyekpe, J.G.N. (2012). *Land disputes and inter-group relations in western Niger Igboland*. In C.B.N. Ogbogbo, R.O. Olaniyi and O.G. Muojama. (Eds). *The dynamics of inter-group relations in Nigeria since 1960: Essays in honour of Obaro Ikime @ 70*, (pp.188-191). Ibadan: Department of History, University of Ibadan,
- Osoba, S.O. (1969). *The phenomenon of labour migration in the era of british colonial rule: A neglected aspect of Nigeria's social history*. *Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria*, 4, (4), 515-516
- Otite, O. (1979). *Rural migrants as catalysts in rural development: The Urhobo in Ondo State*. *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute*, 49 (3), 226-234
- Oyemakinde, J.O. (1970) *A History of indigenou labour on the Nigerian railway, 1885-1945*. Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Ibadan.
- Sean Fox. (2012). *Urbanization as a global historical process: Theory and evidence from sub-saharan Africa*. *Population and Development Review*, 38 (2), 285-310
- Southall, A. (1974). *State formation in Africa*. *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 3, 153-165
- Tamuno, T.N. (1980). *British colonial administration in Nigeria in the twentieth century*. In Ikime, O. (Ed). *Groundwork of Nigerian History*, (pp.393-409). Ibadan: Heinemann Educational Books (Nigeria) Plc

Uji, W.T. (2015). Migrant groups and the development of urbanization in
tiv society of central Nigeria: Colonial Period to Post Colonial Era.
International Research Journal of Arts and social Science, 4(2), 37-42

