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Indigenous Social And Economic Structure In Precolonial Idanreland

ABSTRACT

Pre-colonial Idanre was built on household farming, and reciprocal economic system among family members, age group and joint communal mode of production. Economic system in pre-colonial Idanre was therefore, conducted with an eye on widening social affinity, inclusive development and tightening cultural bond rather than accumulating wealth and economic surplus for individual aggrandizement. With this, social stratification, class conflict, expropriation and monopolization of the means of production, and uneven development were virtually non-existent, until the colonial epoch when agrarian capitalism adopted by the British government to maximize the extraction of raw materials - cocoa in the case of Idanre - based on the vent-for surplus theory gained formidable momentum. This paper thus examines the pre-colonial social and economic structure of Idanre social formation. This work shows that in order to gain a fuller understanding of the dynamics of pre-colonial social and economic system in Yoruba land, scholars must focus on neglected rural, but productive Idanre society. The study adopts the historical methodology; using on primary sources, especially oral tradition, the British intelligent reports and other official colonial document sourced at the National Archive Ibadan in addition to a handful of relevant secondary sources

Introduction

Idanre was one of the major cocoa producing towns in colonial Southwestern Nigeria. Since the 1920s, her cocoa farms had contributed tremendously to socio-economic change and provided immense revenue for the British colonial administration and the independent state of Nigeria.¹ Africanist scholars have neglected the place of Idanre in the understanding of the pre-

colonial, colonial and post colonial economy of the Yorubas. Put differently, until recently, very little or nothing is known about economic importance of the Idanre people to pre-colonial development of Yoruba landscape, colonial capitalism and post independence political economy.

This, among other factors is due to the effect of many mystical mythologies in Idanre. A.I Akinjogbin has enumerated a number of constraints in the writing of the history of certain Yoruba Kingdoms. These include sacrosanctity and religious taboos woven around the writing of history.² The Idanre people believed it was a taboo to reveal their history to any non native and also curiously inquisitive natives who did not belong to the appropriate 'cult' in Idanre. From the earliest times the history of Idanre had been enshrined in 'mystical sacrosanct mythology'; a method they use to preserve their past record from adulteration in order to save guard themselves from attack by their neighbors and rivals, whom they suspected desperate to ravage and seize the coveted Crown "Ade'" which Olofin (Aremitan) the progenitor of the Idanre people took from Ile-Ife. This over the years affected the conduct of oral interviews for the purpose of historical reconstruction in Idanre. Coupled with the fact that historian has paid limited attention to Idanre history, due to either the town was not located along the great commercial highways like Benin, Ibadan, Ondo and others, or to the fact that Idanre was not as big as other Yoruba towns and cities in terms of population and lack of basic social services. Also, unlike Lagos, Abeokuta, Ibadan, Ife, Oyo, and Ondo, among other Yoruba towns, Idanre did not play significant role in colonial and postcolonial politics. This paper however focuses mainly on the nature of indigenous social and economic structure as baseline to understanding her contribution to colonial and post independence Nigeria's economy.

Idanre occupies the remote mountainous land mass in the present day Ondo state in Nigeria.³ It is located, about twenty kilometres south of Akure, the Ondo State capital. It is one of the major towns which now constitute Idanre/Ifedore Local Government area, with its headquarters at Owena.⁴ The town prior to colonial rule was made up of Oke Idanre and the new Idanre.

While Oke Idanre is located on a very high land about 444 metres above sea level, though the same is contemporaneously deserted, the new Idanre is situated just at the base of those spectacular hills which surround it and make the town look like a walled city and creation of a brilliant artist.⁵

Idanre is naturally blessed with wide cultivable land mass, suitable for production of several food and cash crops. Until the late 1990s or early 2000s, Idanre was notable for its large forest reserve, which has disappeared due to uncontrolled deforestation.⁶ Before the introduction of cocoa cultivation in the early 1900s, food crop farming, hunting, trade, lumbering and local crafts industry at 'Ufe Oke' (Oke Idanre) 'hill top' were the major livelihood of the people.⁷ These predominantly rural agrarian people were endowed with large acres of land of about 1,584 square kilometers, out of which less than 20 percent is inhabited.⁸ The Idanre people in pre-colonial period practiced communal reciprocal economic system, with a non-capitalized land tenure system.⁹ The pre-colonial economic structure, in Idanre, was basically predicated on the cultivation of staple food crops such as yam and cassava, processed with local technologies and techniques.¹⁰

The pre-colonial mode of production and capital formation was characterized by household farming, and reciprocal accumulation of wealth, usually within the kinship, age group and other communal affiliations. Social conflict did exist among the various groups of people in Idanre; but the conflict did not degenerate into large scale violence that threatened public order. With this, expropriation, monopolization of relations production and socio-economic development disparity, were virtually, nonexistent in Idanre,¹¹ until when the British colonial subjugation radically transformed relations of production and the social structure.¹² This was also akin to other Yoruba communities in Nigeria. In southwestern generally,

The people had reached an advanced stage in the satisfaction of their basic amenities of life, prior to European intervention. They were conveniently

able to produce their food, clothing and shelter. In the process of producing their food with crude instruments of production, they were able to manufacture instruments necessary for arts and craft. The people grew their own cotton which they processed into hand -woven clothes. Furthermore, the people displayed affluence and stratification in terms of their mode of dressing.¹⁴

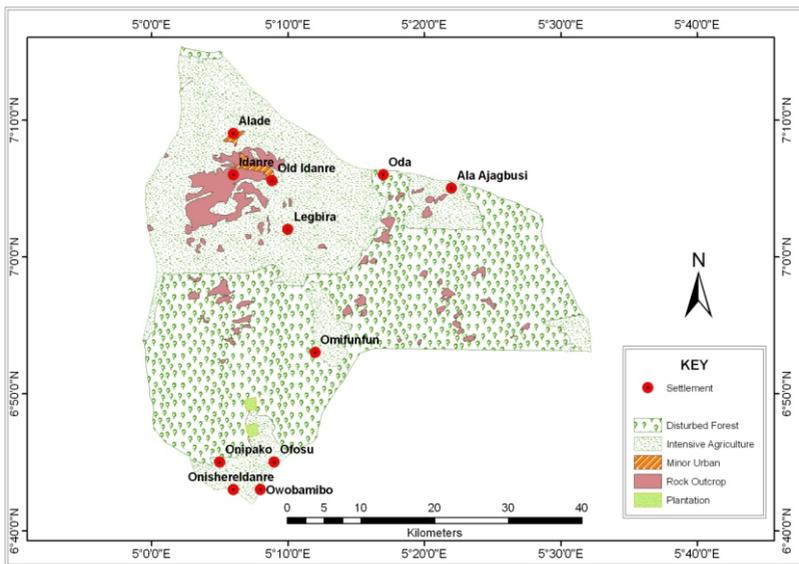
Indeed pre-colonial economic system in Idanreland was conducted with an eye on widening social affinity, inclusive development and tightening cultural bond rather than accumulating wealth and economic surplus for individual aggrandizement.¹⁵ This article surveys the land and geography of Idanreland. It also examines the pre-colonial social and economic structure and land tenure system to provide the context for the development prior to the coming of colonial capitalism

Idanreland consists of many towns and villages of which the most prominent are Odode Idanre, Alade Idanre, Atoshin Idanre, Owena Idanre, Onisere Idanre, Opasorun Idanre, Ala Elefonsan Idanre, Aponmu Lona Idanre Aiyetoro Idanre, Ajegunle Idanre among others. Odode, the mother town, apparently appears to be the largest settlement of the Idanre people.¹⁶ The intensification of deforestation under colonial rule (especially after 1928) reduced the size of the region compressing it to over four hundred farm villages/settlements, including Odode, Alade and Atoshin the major semi urban and Idanre metropolis.

Geographically, the town lies between Akure and Ondo towns to the south-south west and east-east north respectively. Alade which is the last town to Idanre is three kilometers from Odode; Idanre's metropolis. Two different roads lead to Idanre from Ondo and Akure through Alade.¹⁷ They are within a distance of 34 and 22 kilometers to the town.¹⁸ The latitude of Idanre is $9^{\circ}8'$, while its longitude is $5^{\circ}5'$ of the equator and Greenwich meridian. Its eastern neighbors are the Binis via Ofosu River which services a boundary between Ondo and Edo States. To its west is Ondo with land demarcated at Owena River. To its south are indigenes of

Siluko which lay within Delta and Edo States respectively, and Ikale, also of Ondo State. Akure is however Idanre's neighbor to the north.¹⁹

The land area of Idanre is approximately 619 square miles (1,584.6 square kilometers). From Onishere to Akure, Idanre's boundary is about 42 miles (67.2 kilometers): and the boundary with Owena measures 37 miles about 59.2 kilometers from Owena to Ala.²⁰ Idanre's boundary with the Ikales is about 46 miles (76.6 kilometers) close to Benin-Lagos Express Road after Ofosu River beyond Onishere. Idanre local Government in Ondo State became an autonomous Government on September 23rd, 1991, when it was carved out of the defunct Idanre/ Ifedore Local Government of Ondo State.²¹ Idanre lies within the Equatorial region of Nigeria in West Africa. Approximately, the area is situated between Latitude 9°8' North of the Equator and Longitude 5°8' east of the Meridian. Idanre covers a land area of 619 square miles, about 1,584.6 square kilometres. The map below shows Idanre land mass, cocoa plantation, Forest Reserve and farm villages and other settlements:



Source: GIS and Remote Sensing, Department of Geography, University of Lagos

The landscape of the study area as described by J.O. Adefila is characterized by lowlands, undulating grounds and rugged hills with granitic rock outcrops in many places. The land rises from the coastal area to the rugged hills in the north among the hills is the Idanre Hill upon which a tourist centre is now being built. It is not uncommon to find a chain of high standing but smoothed inselbergs thoroughly polished by agents of denudation in Odode, and Opasorun.²²

Idanre town and villages throughout the year experience high temperature; in fact, like in other tropical regions, Idanre experiences its double rainfall peak periods in July and August. The annual rainfall is estimated at about 70 inches, though with slight variation from year to year.²³ A thick cloud envelops the town during harmattan period or dry season. The humidity is more pronounced in the ancient town elevated by surrounding hills up to about 4,200 feet above the sea level. This phenomenon reaches climax at the peak of Orosun Hill. For most part of August and December, this spot becomes almost invisible as haze perpetually engulfs its topmost.²⁴

Nonetheless, between January and July, the temperature averages 78^oF and 83^oF respectively. Cool breeze reigns within this period. Thus, humidity which is always high in January could rise up to 80 per cent in July. This peculiar equatorial climate facilitates cocoa cultivation and explains the town's reputation as one of the main centers of cocoa production in Nigeria.²⁵ In addition, the nature of the soil equally places the town in this vantage position in agriculture. The soil, as showed in the above GIS map, is an end product of chemical weathering of the granite rocks adorning the town. The sand adjudged salty, mingles with clay soil to form dark brown color, which is very fertile for agricultural activities.²⁶

What is more, the town has a lot of tall trees. The trees of its dense forest can be categorized into three; the tallest trees are often distinguishable through their individuality and are about 150 feet in height.²⁷ forming a quasi-canopy. They are mostly visible between Benin and Ore Road,²⁸ while the other common species of trees in Idanre are of the families of mahogany, Iroko, Opeope, and

series of hard wood, fruits trees and epiphytes. The trees in this group are of the same variety as other dense forest in the area. Idanre is also endowed with rocks and granites. The ancient town Ufe Oke or Oke Idanre yielded about eighty per cent of its landmark to in layers while six per cent of a new town Odo-Ode Idanre, is at the mercy of gigantic phenomenal rocks.³⁰ Femi Odamo has described Idanre town as “creation of a brilliant artist wearing houses, shrines, and memorabilia while rocks scrambles for position”.³¹ On the mega space available, it is like the settlement was deliberately positioned on hills tops after its creation. However it is almost impossible to see the entire ancient Idanre at a glance for rocks cluster around and demarcate the town from itself many times over.³²

Houses in the ancient towns are of peculiar features, indicating that Oke Idanre and Ode-Ode Idanre are a neglected gold-mine for tourism. Her amazing topography attracts attention many kilometres away. Governor Gilbert from colonial office also captured this in a memo to the secretary for colonies about his visit to Idanre in 1894:

Personally I will prefer rather to spend a couple of months among these delightful mountains and hospitable vegetation than at the canary Island. One curiosity is not fully satisfied until a scene is witnessed of indescribable beauty and grandeur, while tropical vegetation runs riot in every crevice on one hand, on the other hand rocky eminences and fancies are such as at least from 2000-3000 feet and mostly of sugar loaf configuration, being a series of long curved masts of rock, which look like huge hippopotami burrowing through the forest³³

Pre-Colonial Political Structure in Idanreland

The pre-colonial political system of government in Idanre was characterized by bureaucratic decentralization. Although the "Owa" Oba was the sole authority, his sole authority was derived from the "Ugha" council of chiefs. The Owa of Idanre and his

Ewarefa formed the nucleus of the upper chamber known as "Ugha". This council of chiefs was the autochthonous political structure laid by the Agbogun the first "Owa" oba and son of Olofin the progenitor of the people.³⁴

The "Ugha" Council was vested with the authority to legislate for the entire kingdom of Idanre and also had profound executive power. It also retained the power to punish citizens for any offence committed under the laws of the people. In fact, the (Owa) Oba and his "Ugha" Council had the power of life and death over Idanre citizens.³⁵ The Owa was the head of Council. At the apex of the "Ugha" Council of chiefs was the "Owa" oba who presided as the sole authority. He was followed by the Lisa and other Ewarefa Chiefs, in a pyramidal order, the Ewarefa Chiefs were followed by the War Chiefs, Odunwo, Ojomu and so on.³⁶ Next to the Ugha chiefs were the Edibos "first class chiefs" and the War Chiefs were led by High Chief Sasere. Other chiefs in this category included; Logbosere, Lisagha and Osore.

These three groups mentioned above were also a major component of the Upper Chamber of the "Ugha" Council of Chiefs. They were fourteen in number and referred to as Eghare. The Lower Chamber comprised the Adaja of Idanre and his group of six chiefs. They were called Edibo Osi Chiefs. The next group was Egbediowu; a major class of chiefs that represented the Idanre community generally within "Ugha" Council. The last group in that order was the Osinle group of chiefs. Owing to space constraint, the role of these chiefs and their respective responsibilities cannot be mentioned here, what is however important, is that the office of the "Owa" oba and the "Ugha" council of chiefs constituted the central source of power and authority in pre-colonial Idanreland³⁷

In theory the "Owa" was an institution and all the chiefs formed a source of his power in practice. This explains the popular saying, "Owa-Okan, Ile-Kete-Okan", meaning the Owa is half of

the Ugha Council while all the Chiefs form the other half of "Ugha" Council.³⁸ Moreover, the "Ugha" were two separate segment. The "Owa" and his first Class and second Class Edibo Chiefs formed one component; the Odunwo, and the Egbediowu groups represented the entire Idanre Community. Every group within "Ugha" council was referred to as "Otu". Otu Lisa, Otu Odunwo and Otu Sasere, formed the next Upper Chamber or the Middle Chamber like the Senate, while Otu Adaja, Otu Egbediowu and Otu Osinle forms the Lower Chamber. A full house of Ugha Chiefs sitting either at the Owa's was called "ILE".³⁹ This included, the Lisa, Ojomu, Sama, Lobu, and Osolo. Above all, the Owa was the first member of Ewarefa group.⁴⁰ This however shows that the people before the advent of colonial capitalism in Idanre like many African societies operated a simple decentralized state.⁴¹

The Owa (Oba) was the highest ranked traditional ruler of the people; however he was assisted by representatives of the various quarters, village chiefs, and elder in running the town. He was the sole authority on every matter and his verdicts were sacrosanct. Villages under the Idanre also respected the supremacy of the Owa. The family and quarter heads played important roles in social and political structure of precolonial Idanre. Heads of households, apart from controlling members of his households and settling disputes constituted the main age classes (Egbe(s) or Otu(s) in the quarters (Idimi). In fact, as far as age classes were concerned, the heads of the quarters (Olori Idimi) were the important persons in the social structure. Each quarter has a quarter head and a body of elders (Agba), while some quarters had chiefs who were considered senior to those quarter heads the main affairs of the quarter were left to a great extent in the hand of the latter.⁴² The quarter heads were selected from any family living in the quarter in which he lived. They had judicial and executive powers. Not only did they settle conflict and ensured orderliness, they coordinated the collection of funds for public needs.⁴³ Above all, the symbiotic and communal economic system of pre-colonial Idanre enhanced the welfare of the entire community

Pre-colonial Social Structure in Idanreland

Pre-colonial social structure in Yorubaland, like in Idanre was considerably homogenous in terms of the umbilical kinship-bond and reciprocal social system that characterized the socio-economic activities, especially the appropriation of surplus.⁴⁴ In fact, it is similar to the “*familistic groupis*” in Japanese societies prior to the Tokugawa Shogunate regime.⁴⁵ In pre-colonial Idanre society, similarly to what Samuel Johnson recorded in other Yoruba societies, the house-hold played significant role in social relation, production and process of capital formation.⁴⁶ A household in Idanre consisted of a man, his wife (or wives) and his children, kinship, and other relationships such as the immediate and extended members of his lineage.⁴⁷ The word *family* was weightier in pre-colonial Idanreland than its connotation in western or contemporary Yorubaland. This was because the people lived together without any regard to individualism. Social stratification, class differentiation could have logically occurred at some point in Idanre, however, the gap between the rich and the poor was not very wide. The people focused more on integrated collective development of the family than personal individual accumulation of wealth. For example, in Idanre, it was obligatory for the rich to help the poor.⁴⁸

There was a deep sense of communal ties, mutual obligation and reciprocal socio-economic system.⁴⁹ The property of the wealthy member of the family was regarded as the common property of all. This communal system however permitted combine and inclusive development because it was very rare to accumulate wealth inordinately or raise standard of living at the expense of the larger community.⁵⁰ This perhaps was because the surplus income or estate of the rich people was usually spent on his benevolence, which included his immediate and extended family members. The ultimate aim of the communal and kinship system was to empower each member of the family and to ensure that the less privileged, such as the old, the sick and the unemployed were not neglected to suffer.⁵¹ This “unwritten social theory” arguably enhanced combine and integrated development and social orderliness in the town.⁵² The mode of production was based on the

doctrine of equality, mutual cooperation and combined development.⁵³ In fact, economic activities were conducted essentially with the aim of maximizing social cohesion rather than economic values.⁵⁴ Nevertheless, there were a considerable number of factor market, institutionalized but “non capitalist” means of selling land, hiring labor, and raising money.⁵⁵ This is evident in Claude Ake's observation that:

Societies in Africa were invariably patrimonial and communal; everything was everybody's business, engendering a strong emphasis on participation. Standard of accountability were even stricter than in western societies. Chiefs were answerable not only for their own actions, but for natural catastrophes such as famine, epidemics, floods, drought.⁵⁶

Cases of expropriation, extortion, stealing and undue exploitation of people in Idanre were prosecuted in the presence of the whole town, with the (Lisa) presiding as the judge.⁵⁷ The presence of robbers and extortionist indicated that the indigenous “social welfare” system of pre-colonial Idanre was not perfect. Or that economically marginalized people existed despite the fact that the people helped one another. The judicial officers, consisted of Alaworos (Orosun adherent), selected from a particular family, wherewith, the Owa (Oba) was represented among the Alaworos by the Odofin and among the Orosun officers invariably.⁵⁸ Minor cases of debt were usually settled by the head of the compound, especially in cases where debtors and creditor lived within the same compound.

Unsatisfactory verdicts of the family or compound head were subjected before the “Olori Idimi” (quarter head) who settled unresolved matters within the family. Cases of debtors and creditors who lived in different quarters were customarily resolved by the “Olori Idimi” (quarter head). Any unpleasant decision by the quarter head was often taken to the “Owa” (Oba) for final verdict. It was only major cases of indebtedness, particularly the ones involving strangers that were directly

brought before the Owa (Oba). A portion of a debt could be bequeathed on the debtor's family if he or she was unable to pay.⁵⁹

Customarily in pre-colonial Idanre, crimes were divided into three categories, namely; offences against the laws of Olofin (the progenitor of the Idanre people); offences against the laws of Orosun or Iyamode (a deified goddess and Olofin's wife) and offences against the state or the entire community. With regards to first, the judicial officers who presided over such cases included: the Laja, Olofin, Sama, Lorin, Ajana, Aremo and the Jogoro chiefs. This group were notably known as (Iwarefa) in Idanre. Example of offence against Olofin's included:

- i. It was a taboo for a woman to bear twin: in cases where such incident occurred in the town, the mother and father of the twins were prosecuted, while the twins were eliminated or killed;
- ii. Drumming was prohibited at certain times of the year for example during the Orosun and Olofin Festival: offenders were strictly prosecuted;
- iii. Making of yam heaps and the eating of yam prior to the apportioned period of certain ceremonies was abominable and had grave consequences.⁶⁰

However, in order to ensure that these laws were strictly obeyed and enforced, a one man representative was selected from each quarters of the town. They received titles tied to the name of their compounds: the Laiye of the Irowo quarter, the Rinja of the Isalu quarter, the Ewi of the Idale quarter, the Ajero of the Odoaba or Okedo quarter, the Ewi of the Odeja quarter, the Ajero of Isunrin and the Oro of the Ijomu quarter. These house-hold representatives were coordinated by the Agbakin who lived in the Irowo quarter.⁶¹

Offences against the laws of Orosun were adjudged by the osolo, (Iwarefa) Lobu, Aro, Asunrin, Gbenen and the Aranopon. These groups were also selected from a particular family. The Owa (Oba) was represented by the Olofin in this group. Some other laws which must not be violated included:

1. It was forbidden for a woman to conceive if she already had a child that was under one year old. In such cases, the child was sardonically murdered while the parent were heavily penalized;
2. The breaking of plates and pots; the fine was usually a dog

Offences against the community were tried in the presence of the whole town with the Lisa as the chief judge. These offences included but not limited to the following:

1. Murder: Murderer in the town were usually tied to a tree and clubbed to death
2. Possession of evil charms or used against the community: such offenders were severely flogged and such diabolical charms were confiscated
3. Committing adultery with the Owa (Oba)'s wives: violators of this law were usually tied to a tree and clubbed to death. This offense was last tried in 1894, when a chief named 'Lajuwa' was eliminated and the Owa's wife he carnally knew was also beheaded.
4. Insult against any member of the 'Ugha' chiefs were penalized and the fine was a goat
5. Woman refusing to become the Owa (Oba)'s wife: the culprits were usually banished

From the foregoing however, it is difficult to differentiate taboos from laws because much of what the people defined as laws, had their origins in established taboos. Also, It is may be out of place to argue that, that Idanre had no form of social stratification, except for the age classes, and the selected representation from certain quarters and families to assist the Owa (Oba) in the quotidian administration of the town. The gap between the rich and the poor was not very wide or that people focused more on integrated collective development of the family than personal individual accumulation of wealth. The fact that

robbers existed as revealed above indicated that the indigenous "social welfare" system of pre-colonial Idanre was not perfect. The fact that economically marginalized people existed despite that the people helped one another. Nevertheless, communality based on membership of quarters in pre-colonial Idanre enhanced social cohesion and sense of community development.⁶²

Pre-colonial Economic Structure

Ecology and human resources of ancient *Ufeke* hill-top, significantly shaped Idanre's economy in the pre-colonial era. The predominantly agrarian people were endowed with large areas of land of about 1,584 square kilometers, out of which less than 20 per-cent was inhabited. The most important economic unit in pre-colonial Idanreland was the household,⁶³ which reflected the character of each family. In addition, the household was profoundly capable of adapting its gross domestic output to meet communal "basic need" and enabled decent communal quality of life, existential satisfaction and to cope with undesirable circumstances, such as, famine, epidemics and others.⁶⁴ The household was the unit of Idanre's economy life. As highlighted above a household in pre-colonial Idanre consisted of a man, his wife (or wives) and his children with a considerably large collateral attachment to closely knitted and extended families, claiming blood or kinship affinity with him. Above all, each household divided itself into several smaller units, though, without necessarily breaking up the family bond.⁶⁵ Similarly to the dominant economic system that characterized the pre-colonial West African societies, Idanre people were predominantly agrarian people and their economic enterprise largely revolved around farming, hunting and a chain of inter societal trade.⁶⁶ The farmers used "locally manufactured implements" such as the hoe, cutlass and axes.⁶⁷

The main food crops grown, included yams, palm oil maize, pepper, calabash, cocoyam, fruit and cotton. Since crude implements were used, productivity was quite low because the people deployed their subsistent food production, to cater essentially for household consumption.⁶⁸ Male youth were

organized into various small groups for the purpose of communal labor, either in their parents' farms or in their own plantations to promote or to speed up manual labor. This practice is called *Nabo* or *Abo*.⁶⁹

However, the relatively non capitalistic pre-colonial economy and communal mode of production enabled moderate accumulation and to cater for immediate family, kinship and contribute to community development. The pre-colonial agrarian economy paved way for income reinvestment to *intra and inter* trade and nonagricultural activities such as mat making, sowing, weeding and craft workmanship, without jettisoning agriculture.⁷⁰ It must be mentioned that the pre-colonial agrarian economy of the Idanre people supplied the required capital and material incentives needed for livelihood sustainability, basic social and “combine development”. Although, it is difficult to quantitatively determine the scale of the pre-colonial production, nevertheless, the agrarian production out-weighted domestic consumption. Surpluses were exchanged for other goods and services from their neighbors.⁷¹

If labor was scarce due to low population, land was in abundance. It was unimaginable that a prospective farmer would have any difficulty obtaining land for use. While he did not have outright ownership of it, the farmer was entitled to whatever available land within his family or (quarters).⁷² In cases where a “stranger” or non-indigene migrated to Idanre, he could initially assume temporary tenancy over such land that he needed or could at least function as a share cropper.⁷³ Farmland was generally not a constraint on agrarian development in pre-colonial Idanreland.⁷⁴ Labor was the most important of all factors of production. Hopkins in fact also posited that many land are uncultivated because of inadequate labor.⁷⁵ Idanre people would have further maximized their large expanse of land at it been that they had enough labor to work on the on the abundant land areas that was underutilised as a result of low and commensurate human population.⁷⁶

It is important to mention at this juncture, that shifting cultivation and bush burning prevailed extensively in pre-colonial Idanre society.⁷⁷ Given that expansive land available for farming were located outside the main town in the pre-colonial epoch, the

Idanre people divided their weeks or months between staying in the farm or at home; usually located many kilometers away from the top of the hill "Oke Idanre" where the people lived.⁷⁸ Some people spent equal number of days, weeks, or month at home or on their farms. Others vary their habit slightly, depending on the season of the years. During harvesting or planting season, more time was spent on the farm.⁷⁹ Idanre people during this period practiced two types of farming, "igo" and "oko igbo". Igo is often within two to six kilometers radius from the metropolis, where food crops were grown. The other farm Oko-Igbo is often laid in a far distance away from the town. This is where the indigenes now plant cocoa and other crops in large quantity and for this they require enormous farmland.⁸⁰

The farmers involved members of their families in their endeavors. They probably could not do otherwise, because of the time consuming and energy-sapping nature of their system of farming. These agrarian producers therefore devised some systems of collective labour of helping one another on their farms. Three classes of such group farming are discernable. The first emanates from the willingness of male members of the same (Patrimony) family to work together. They work on a family land under the supervision of the eldest man. The proceeds of such labor belonged to all members of the family. This was either shared out or used, wholly or partly, to discharge obligation incurred by the family or a member, for example acquiring wives for eligible bachelor within the family.⁸¹

The next type was known as "Aro" in some Yoruba villages was (Abo) in Idanre dialect. It was a form of labor exchange among age-mates. These youngsters tacitly vowed to help one another on individual's farm in rotation. The host at any occasion however, was obligated to feed his colleagues after the day's work.⁸² Owe (working bee) was the last of the farming group. This was practiced among relatives and in-laws. The object is to come together to help a needy member. There was no rotational labour exchange. It was simply giving a helping hand. The beneficiary was not bound to reciprocate. He demonstrates his appreciation by feeding his benefactors after the day's work.⁸³

Nonetheless, there is also a lesser known method known as “Nabo.” In this system, Idanre youths helped one another to work rotationally on their father's farms. This practice was seasonal; even in some circles; it was famous among the youths because of the feasting which usually rounds up the day's work. “Nabo” is somehow similar to Aro. The difference is that youths work on their father's farm in Nabo, rather than on their personal farms in “Aro” participant in Nabo are younger than those in Aro. The youths are still dependent on their parents or guardian in Nabo, but independent in Aro.⁸⁴

In addition to farming, the ancestors of Idanre people were famous with the animal husbandry. The animals for husbandry are domestic; such includes dogs, goat, chicken and pigs. These animals supplemented the source of meat, or sacrificial offering, for their owners. Exclusive vocations for men in ancient Idanre included hunting, blacksmithing and carpentry.⁸⁵ Hunting is the oldest occupation among males in ancient Idanre. The men go to the forest to kill animal which serves the family as meat. Hunting was limited to a select household including, the (Egunre's household). This is because it was regarded as a special occupation, restricted to men who possessed requisite charms to overcome metaphysical hazards in the forest. They used traps, clubs bows and arrows and later guns. The animals killed were either sold or consumed by the family.⁸⁶

In fact, hunting and gathering was a keen small means of livelihood to the hunting households. Predominantly farming household exchanged their farms produce with hunted animals, wild fruit and assorted wild vegetables and mushrooms. In most farming season, the gathering of wild cereal grasses became crucial importance.⁸⁷ Weaving of cloth and calabash was also a major source of income to women in the pre-colonial societies in Idanre.⁸⁸ Some primary sources also revealed that the art of weaving became very much lucrative in Idanre during the reign of Owa Orile, the 17th (Oba) of Idanre in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.⁸⁹

It is however useful to note, that this primitive mode of accumulation in pre-colonial Idanre, before the nostalgic colonial

subjugation, were nevertheless, sufficiently adequate to solve quotidian livelihood and development needs of the people. All the sectors of the economy were capable of generating surplus and sufficient revenue, to the extent that the spiraling and palpable touch of extended family ensemble the whole community and often brought about 'combined development'.⁹⁰ Some surpluses in different quarters were involuntarily bestowed and disposed to the Owa's palace, to enable him effectively secure the territory and engage in distance trade.⁹¹ This partly explains why trade and market were the backbone of pre-colonial Idanre economy.

Trade by barter, known locally as "agbero pero" increased as the economic structure of the community responded to internal and external changes, however, pattern of exchange still replicated the communal system; in fact exchanged of items relied heavily on mutual trust, kindness and reciprocal gesture.⁹² Cowries, brass, iron and copper object were common means of transaction.⁹³ Three varieties of currencies were however notable. The first was cloth currency; the second was agricultural products, and the third, the Cowry shells.⁹⁴ The Cowry served as an effective measure of value and a unit of account which made it quite convenient to know the value of one goods, in relation to another and to fix prices to all kinds of products.⁹⁵ The use of cowry shell for exchange, gave more impetus for capitalization and market growth. The small-scale credit institutions like the "esusu" among the Yoruba people in the nineteenth century played an important role in creating financial resources to meet the needs of individuals and groups.⁹⁶ There were also indigenous bankers, money lenders and exchange banks that enabled traders to secure credit.⁹⁷

Markets in pre-colonial Idanre were designated sites where traders and consumers met to transact goods and service. People also displayed goods in front of their homes; many hawked essential items from one community to another. As population modulated and genealogies expanded, house-holds became increasingly distant; these changes thus necessitated the establishments of "former markets". Subsequently, every quarter had its own market, for example, Isalu market, Itogun market, each within its quarters.⁹⁸ These Idanre markets were mostly held

every five days. The quarters' markets were later merged together to form the main market, popularly known as "Alade market" in the 1920s.⁹⁹

There were also countless of trade enterprises within the people in addition inter community trade network the maintained with their neighbors. This trade involved the exchange of goods between the people of the town on one hand, and the people of immediate environs on the other. Local trade in Idanre operated daily but witnessed disruption during socio activities, such as the Olofin festivals, orosun week and other social events that restricted movement of people around the town.¹⁰⁰

Finally, prior to the formation of the "Alade market", the people according to legends, seems to have operated similar large market structure during their sojourn at *Ufeke* (Oke Idanre). A market according to oral tradition operated near the foot of the hill and attracted traders from Akure, Ondo, Benin and Owo.¹⁰¹ Another account retrieved from the Baale of Alade, also revealed that prior to the advent of modernization in colonial era which motivated the founding of Alade Idanre, there has been a functional market at the present Alade town. The present Oba Olusegun Ayodele Akinbola Agunloye, (the Aladeokun of Alade-Idanre) stresses that:

There was an age long market established by about sixteen Obas. We met the market there, adjacent to Okerisa, a hamlet, (Talupo) which was a small settlement in Idanre. This is now part of Alade-Idanre. We also met some people there e.g. Lisajero who played important roles in the Oba's installation at Alade. Alade market, for many centuries, was the only notable market in Idanre. It was formally popularly known as Aladepade meaning (a place to meet). We soon shortened it to Alade, and adopted the name for our settlement while we jettisoned the foundational appellation Ilutitun¹⁰²

The British Assistant District Officer, Bovel Jonnes in his report containing historical development of the Idanre people,

noted also that the principal market in pre-colonial Idanre was the Alade. He elucidated that residents of Akure, Ondo, Owo and the Benin attended the market, which was coordinated by chiefs responsible for different aspects of trade transactions.¹⁰³ For example, the Adeniken chiefs coordinated trade with the Benin, the Oshonu chiefs with the Owo, the Odundun, the Ondo traders and the Owayega monitored trade affairs with the Akures.¹⁰⁴ The chiefs stationed in the market at Benin, Akure, Ondo, and Owo appeared to have occupied a position similar to that of a vice consul in a small British colony: they looked after the interest of the Idanre traders and ensure they did not get into trouble.

In sum, the pre-colonial social and economic structure in Idanre was predicated on communal mode of production. The non-capitalization of the society permitted a high degree of social uniformity, reciprocal participation, sustainable growth and combined development. Everyone in the ancient town was his or her brethren's keeper. There was a strong sense of knitted affinity among all classes; whither which social stratification, private monopoly of production, inequality, injustice, exploitation, expropriation, pillage, and uneven development were virtually not existent. In pre-colonial Idanre, nobody perceived the problem of his neighbors as "none of his business: even strangers who stayed in the town were integrated into this egalitarian society."¹⁰⁵

Indigenous System of Land Ownership in Idanre

The pre-colonial land tenure system in the region that would later be known as Idanre district in the early twentieth century was different from what obtained in other parts of Yorubaland. It was however similar to the one practiced in Benin kingdom.¹⁰⁶ The pre-colonial system of land ownership in Idanre was divided into two: (a) Town land for building purposes and (b) Country land for farming purposes.¹⁰⁷ Town land in pre-colonial Idanre was customarily allotted to indigenous families by the Owa (Oba) or king of Idanre, who was considered to be the owner of all the lands.¹⁰⁸ Land bequeathed to certain households or family by the Oba (Owa) became legal property of the family and was inheritable¹⁰⁹

Town lands were also bestowed to other non-indigenous families or strangers who had been integrated into the socio-political life of the community.¹¹⁰ However, in cases when land (s) given to particular household or families was found uncultivated or unused for a specific time frame, such land (s) were usually retrieved from the family in order to ensure that all lands were judiciously used. Although such lands, were reclaimed by the family after paying fines or other penalties.¹¹¹ Transfer or commercialization of land was uncommon, however, sales of land from one person to another was conducted with the use of cowries or barter but was however subject to the approval of the (Owa) Oba of Idanre.¹¹²

The main principle that governed town land was that once a house had been built on the land, the land belonged to the owner of the house, but he could not sell it. The renting of town land for building purposes was strictly disallowed in pre-colonial Idanre society. It was only the Owa could freely or with little pecuniary reciprocation, gave land to families in need of such property.¹¹³ Also the renting of houses to natives of Idanre and strangers was not rampant, this was because the ownership of houses was vested in the family and not individual, as such, mortgaging town land and houses was not prevalent.¹¹⁴

Agricultural land was cultivated through rotation or shifting cultivation.²⁹ Due to the difficulty of farming with simple implements, group-farming evolved as a method of maximizing agricultural output. In spite of enough land available for cultivation, therefore, individual ownership of land did not emerge through the ownership of the means of labour which, itself, was possessed by individuals. Consequently, the mode of surplus appropriation was through extra-economic means. In other words, the appropriation of nature (through the ownership of land privately) and the appropriation of surplus (through the private ownership of the means of labor) were disjointed. These made it impossible for a few individuals to dominate the economic prosperity of the larger community.¹¹⁵

It is important to note, that country land for farming purposes was considered to be communal. For example, land

acquisition under the native custom was controlled by the head of a community for the common benefit of such community. In effect, the Owa was the head of a large family and the disposal of all lands was in his hands.¹¹⁶ Moreover, towards the beginning of the colonial epoch “country” town land was exigently divided into two: (a) land for food crop, for example; yam and corn among others. (b) land under permanent crops such as kola and later cocoa.¹¹⁷ As regards land for major food crop, if a man abandoned a piece of land which he had cultivated, without expressing any intention of returning to it after it had been allowed to lie fallow for a long period of time, such land was seized by the (Owa) Oba. Thus any other individual was permitted to use the land.¹¹⁸ Interestingly, that all land was communal can be illustrated by the fact a native living in another quarter or village in Idanre was allowed to use land outside his jurisdiction. For example, a farmer of Irowo quarter or Idale quarter was eligible to obtain farmland in other quarters such as Isalu or in aweba, Abababubu or Onisere villages, provided he sought the permission of the Owa (Oba) of Idanreland¹¹⁹

The land for cash and food crop cultivation are acquired through similar process. However, such land for food crops was retained till the time the permanent crop ceased to bear fruits, because there were cases where a farmer used a piece of land for food crops, which was already planted with kola tree that is (permanent crops) by another man and provided that permission was granted by the person who first arrived on the land. Bovel Jonnes during the early colonial period reported cases where some farmers cultivated food crops on piece of land belonging to another cocoa farmer¹²⁰

In pre-colonial and even during the colonial era in Idanre, sales and mortgage of crops in the land are permitted even between strangers, provided that the strangers obtained the Owa's permission. Sales and mortgages between natives of Idanre are not usually reported to the Owa.¹²¹ In the case of town land, once a stranger had built a house, he was regarded as the owner of the land; meaning that such house(s) was inheritable by his family on his death. Although, migrants or rather non-indigenes to whom

land was granted had to recognize the Owa (Oba) as their overlord.¹²² The Owa and chiefs had the prerogative to evict an occupier of land from site required for communal purposes. The occupiers of such lands were properly compensated with other plots for his crops or house.¹²³

Inheritance law allowed relatives and children of a deceased person to inherit his land and other estates or property. Both the Owa and relatives of the deceased were entitled to the crops on the deceased farm.¹²⁴ However, the deceased relations took the greater share, because they were mandated to pay the debt or other deficit left by the deceased. This practice continued under colonial rule. In the case of cocoa trees, the Owa was entitled to one cocoa tree; not by compulsion but out of individual- collective rationality of the indigenous people to contribute to the wellbeing of the Oba and as the quotidian administration of the polity.¹²⁵

Before the establishment of colonial rule in the first half of the twentieth century, no economic value was attached to trees. The commercialization of trees increased under colonial rule due to the monetization of the economy. No one was permitted to cut down an Iroko tree, because the timber from the trees was sacredly reserved for the Owa's coffin.¹²⁶ This however explains why the Owa and his chiefs, since the colonial era have received all the royalties from timber without any complain from the people except during the 1920s when the British colonial government began intensive monopolization of timber by granting concession of timber extraction to Miller brother.¹²⁷ This decision denied the Owa and his chiefs their regular remuneration from timber business.¹²⁸ It was customarily, however not obligatory for the sawyer to give a few plank to the man on whose farm the trees were felled. Trees felled on uncultivated land would be considered to have been on communal land, which belonged to the Owa or held in trust for the people. The Owa and chiefs in the late 1930s after the intense colonial deforestation of the Idanre Reserves, agreed, that in future no royalties should be paid to them on timber extraction.¹²⁹ Generally, land in pre-colonial up to the early twentieth century Idanre was allowed to lie fallow between the time span of ten to fifteen years.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the pre-colonial Idanre social formation was homogenous but also varied in other patterns in number of ways to other Yoruba speaking societies. The farmer made use of simple agricultural implement such as machete to till the land for the production of food crops to meet the daily demand of the expanding population. Idanre people from inception had developed a suitable mode of capital formation; production, distribution, exchange and consumption which formed the bedrock of rural livelihood. The pre-colonial socio-economics of the people was laced on communal social relations, similar to what was prevalent in other African societies. Primitive appropriation of surplus, expropriation of land, labor, capital and individualistic accumulation were virtually nonexistent under the pre-colonial communal system, because law of reciprocity profoundly moderated relations of production. Groups, kinship and sex interchanged labor and capital for the creation of further wealth and combine development. The people had reached an advanced stage in the satisfaction of their basic amenities of life prior to European intervention.¹³⁰ They conveniently produced their food, clothing, and shelter. Their economy was also diverse to incorporate craft and arts making.

From the foregoing, it has been established that Idanre society like many pre-colonial social formations in Yorubaland, enjoyed a high degree of social, economic and political coordination. Indeed pre-colonial African political system of administration, organized economic structures that made for social harmony, as well as its religions and sophisticated belief systems demonstrate not only the intensity of responsibility, accountability and coherence, but also revalidates the authenticity of African civilization and combine development. If pre-literate societies in Nigeria among other African states could record such phenomenal achievement through communal living, western capitalism and neoliberal democracy going by the historical experiences of many African states is a misleading pathway towards the task of achieving development Africa in the twenty first century. It is therefore imperative evolve a distinct African

political ideology based on decentralization of power, collectivity and combine development as revealed in the story of Idanre.

ENDNOTES

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2. National Archive Ibadan (NAI), Akinjogbin I.A, "Oral Tradition collected on Idanre by for the Yoruba History scheme" File 0522/OD10983/ 1957 (August, 1957). The report is also accessible at the Owa, (Oba)'s Palace at Odode-Idanre. See also Akinyeye O.A, 1998, Iden Festival: Historical Reconstruction from Ceremonial Reenactment, in, Toyin Falola and Ann Genova, (eds) *Orisa; Yoruba gods and Spiritual Identity*, New Jersey: African World Press p 87
3. S.F. Odamo, *Idanre Beauty and Culture on the hills*, 1991, Ibadan: Samnice Press p 6
4. S.A. Akintan, *History of Idanre 'Ufeke': From Beginning Up till Earliest Times*, 2014, Ibadan: John Archers pp 3-4
5. Akin Obalisi " Idanre Features" *Daily Times News Paper* 26 August, 1991, p 5
6. National Archive Ibadan (NAI), Mr H.L Wood-Price, "Intelligence Report on Idanre Land Tenure in the Yoruba province" File 236/08/1917/377, (November, 1934)
7. Interviews with High Chief S.A Akintan, 90 Years, Ojomu of Idanre, at Odode Idanre, 25/ 12/2014
8. National Archive Ibadan (NAI), File No 171/ OD160/124, "Intelligence Report on Idanre Forest Reserve in the Ondo Province, Extracts from Memorandum of the Resident to the District Officer, Ondo Province, 1916, p3
9. National Archive Ibadan (NAI), Bovel Jonnes, "Appendix No 8/135/137, Certified Copy of Report on Idanre for D.A Rowse (Acting: Col & Surveyor to H. Alfred Willoughby, the Assistant Superintendent of L.C", (April, 1937).
10. F.O. Ajiola, *The Economy of Idanre, 1900-1960*, M.A

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11. Interview held with Ologunlana Akinade 82 Years, Cocoa Farmer, at Atoshin Idanre 10/7/14 with Chief Bamisaiye Famiye, Cocoa Merchant 65 Years. at Tejugbola farm-Idanre, 10/7/14
 12. The term agrarian capitalism has although been used to delineate an epochal transformation in mode of production and social structure in Europe, prior to the era of colonial capitalism in Africa. However it became flooded in most literatures of Neo-Marxist orientations for instance Immanuel Wallerstein, Federick Cooper, Karl Polanyi etc. With regards to Nigeria, and Africa in general, it became rampant in neo-Marxists, works such as Gavin Williams, Gavin Kitchen, Claude Ake, Fredrick Cooper, et al.
 13. J. Samuel, *The History of the Yorubas: From the Earliest Times to the Beginning of the British Protectorate*, 1921, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, pp 122-122
 14. A.O. Olutayo, *The Development of Underdevelopment: Rural Economy of Colonial South Western Nigeria*, Ph.D thesis submitted to the Department of Sociology, Faculty of the Social Sciences, University of Ibadan, 1991 p 56
 15. A.G. Hopkin, *An Economic History of West Africa*, London: Longman, 1973 p. 9.
 16. Y. Akinyeye, "Iden Festival: Historical Reconstruction from Ceremonial Reenactment" in Toyin Falola and Ann Genova (eds) *Orisa; Yoruba gods and Spiritual Identity*, Trenton: New Jersey: Africa Press, 1999, p 88.
 17. National Archive Ibadan (NAI) D.N Adeniyi and A.I Akinjogbin File 975/230/ 57 "Oral Tradition Collected for Yoruba Scheme Project" (September, 1957)
 18. M.C Adeyemi, *Ondo Kingdom: Its History and Culture*, Ibadan: Bounty Press, 1993, p 10.
 19. S.F. Odamo, *Idanre Beauty and Culture on the hill*, p 3
 20. O. Olofin, *Idanre from then till now*, Ondo: Vox Africana press, 2001 p. 1.

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25. *Ibid*
26. S.F. Odamo, *Idanre Beauty and Culture on the hill* p.7
27. Interview with Chief Orosundafosi, Cocoa Merchant, 71 Years, 22/ 10/13
28. S.A. Akintan, *A History of Idanre Ufeke from Earliest Times*, pp. 1-2.
29. Cocoa Cultivation in Western Nigeria,) *Quarterly Bulletin of Cocoa Research Institute of Nigeria (CRIN)*, 1991 p 6
30. O.C. Akinde O.C, *Idanre Heritage*, Akure: Vox Africana Press, 2010, p 12.
31. National Archive Ibadan (NAI), Williams Bright, "Appendix of Governor Gilbert Carter's Report on Idanre to the Secretary of State for the Colonies" File 001/OND1ST912/2876 (February, 1902).
32. W.O. Ogunboye. *Cocoa Production and Marketing in Idanre Local Government Area of Ondo State, in the era of Structural Adjustment programme*, Unpublished M.A Dissertation Department of History University of Ibadan, 1999, p. 7.
32. National Archive Ibadan (NAI), Bovel Jones "Intelligence Report on Idanre Topography of Idanre District" File 374/ONDPROV27893, (September, 1935)
33. Ugha " the traditional council" could be likened to the house of chiefs and the first six members are called Egharefa with the Owa as President. These Chiefs

- includes: The others are the Lisa, Ojomu who is the treasurer, Sama, Lobu and Osolo. See also Charles O Akinde, *Idanre Heritage*,
34. The second rank are the war chiefs-Odunwo, Sawo, and Ojumu; the third rank if chiefs are called Edibo Otun (Right hand) and made up of Sashere, Logbosere, Lisagha, Osore, while the Edibo Osi (left wingers) consists Adaja- the leader, Manare, Lejuwa, Ayadi, Beepie, and Egbedi
- 35 Interview with HRM Oba Fedrick Adegunle and some Prominent Members of the Ugha Council 14/02/13.
- 36 *Ibid*
- 37 *Ibid*
- 38 National Archive Ibadan (NAI) D.N Adeniyi and A.I Akinjogbin File 975/230/ 57 "Oral Tradition Collected for Yoruba Scheme
- 39 S. F. Odamo, *Idanre Beauty and Culture on the Hill* p 34
40. C. Ake, *Rethinking African Democracy* p 34
- 41 Interview with HRH Oba Atoworoloye A. (The Oba of Atoshin Idanre) 26/12/2012 at Atoshin Idanre
- 42 National Archive Ibadan (NAI), H.L Wood-Price "Intelligence Report -Paragraph 17/377/ 236/19" on Idanre Land tenure in the Yoruba provinces.
- 43 A.G. Hopkin, *An Economic; History of West Africa*, p 173
44. J. Rosser and M.V. Rosser, *Comparative Economics In a Transforming World Economy*, 1996, New York: Irwin & Mc Graw-Hill, pp 23-24
- 45 J. Samuel, *The history of the Yorubas: from the earliest times to the beginning of the British protectorate* p.98.
46. *Ibid*
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48. B. Davidson, *The Blackman's Burden: African and the Curse of the Nation State*, New York: Time Brook, 1992 p 14
49. Interview with HRM (Owa) Oba Fredrick Adegbule Aroloye (Arubiefin the III) 93 Years 24/12/12.
50. Y. Akinyeye, *Iden Festival; Historical Reconstruction from Ceremonial Reenactment*, p. 91.

51. *Ibid*
52. F.O. Ajiola, *The Economy of Idanre, 1900-1960*, pp 27-28
53. A.G. Hopkins, *An Economic History of West Africa*, p.26
54. R.O. Ekundare, *An Economic History of Nigeria*, 1971, Longman, London p.10.
55. Ake C, 1991, *Rethinking African Democracy*, *Journal of Democracy*,
56. Oral Interview with HRM Owa (Oba) Fredrick Aroloye Adegbule, 24/12/12
57. *Ibid*
58. *Ibid*
59. *Ibid*
60. *Ibid* 21/07/2014
61. *Ibid*,
62. Ake C, 1991, *Rethinking African Democracy* p 34
63. Interview held with Oba Atoworoloye A. (The Oba of Atoshin Idanre) at Atoshin Idanre 26/12/12
64. Odamo, S.F. 1991, *Idanre Beauty and culture on the hills...* pp.9-11.
65. National Archive Ibadan (NAI) D.N Adeniyi and A.I Akinjogbin File 975/230/ 57 "Oral Tradition Collected for Yoruba Scheme
66. S.F. Odamo, *Idanre Beauty and culture on the hills* pp.9-11.
67. G.O. Ogunremi. And E.K. Faluyi, (eds) *Economic History of West Africa*, Lagos: Rex Charles, 1996, p 1
68. Interview with Mr Fajuyi Akinlure, Farmer age, 76, Alade Idanre 112/11/14
69. The people enjoyed a deep sense of mutually acceptable reciprocity in the deployment of the means of production as well as appropriation of economic surplus to fasten cultural ties. See also K. Olufemi, "The Role of Politics in Human Underdevelopment in Nigeria", in Dipo Kolawole, (ed) *Issues in Nigerian Government and Politics*, Ibadan: Dekkal Publishers, 1998 pp 93-94.
70. Similar to Julius Nyerere's polemic that it was difficult to locate poverty on the main street of Tanzania, prior to the advent of European capitalism and colonialism, in pre-

colonial Idanre, also the economic growth derived from communal agrarian system was unconventionally sustainable for rural livelihood and combined social development and moderate accumulation. Although the people generally, subsistence farming was the basis of the economy prior to colonial epoch, the Idanre people were not in much times bothered by basic survivalist means of livelihood, in fact surpluses in food crops, were usually, to be subsidized at the local or inter-town market or exchanged through trade by barter.

71. E.K. Faluyi, , The Role of Government in the Promotion of Agriculture, in Ogunremi G.O and Faluyi E.K (eds) *Economic History of West Africa* Ibadan: Rex Charles Publication, 1996, pp 176-182
72. S.F. Odamo, *Idanre Beauty and Culture on the Hills* p 8
73. NAI Forest Reserves-Ondo Province telegram/No, 2734 of 5/9/1923 from the resident Ondo province to the secretary, southern provinces, Lagos) out of which less than 20 percent is inhabited. It may be useful to note also that despite the enormous inflow of migrant cocoa farmer to the town between 1930s and 1960s, coupled with the rapacious colonial deforestation of Idanre forest reserve, especially in the areas stretching beyond 'Irele reserve. Owena reserve, Oluwa Reserve and Otu Reserve' Idanre land was still large uncultivated
74. A.G. Hopkins, *An Economic History of West Africa*, p15
75. *Ibid.*
76. Interview with Rufus Orosundasi-Folafosi, Cocoa Merchant, 73Years, 23/5/14
77. G.J.O. Afolabi, Journey to Agricultural Work in Yorubaland, *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 63, No 1 pp 85-86
78. F.O. Ajiola, The economy of Idanre, 1900-1960 p.48
79. S.F. Odamo, *Idanre Beauty and Culture on the hills* pp.11-13.
80. *Ibid.*
81. *Ibid.*

82. *Ibid.*
83. Interview with Bodede A, The Iyaloja of Idanre, 60 Years, 7/11/14
84. Interview held with Mr Sarokun Andrew, 68 Years, Hunter, at Abule Lisa Idanre 17/ 11/14
85. *Ibid.*
86. S.F. Odamo, *Idanre Beauty and Culture on the hills* p12
87. A figurine displayed near the old palace at Ufeke (Oke Idanre) depicts that the Idanre women were skilled cloth weavers during their historic sojourn at the old Idanre.
88. Certain relics wooden craft kept in a spot at *Ufeke* (Oke Idanre) viz., the mode of dress for indigenous women during their periodic 'Orosun festival speaks volume of the nature of economic activities of the past women.
89. Interview with Chief S.A Akintan, Ojomu of Idanreland at Odode Idanre, 13/9/13
90. T. Falola, The Yoruba Toll System, *Journal of African History*, Vol 30, No1, 1989, pp 70-72.
91. N. Azikwe, *Ideology for Nigeria: Capitalism Socialism and Welfarism?* Nigeria: Macmillan Publishers, 1980 p 52
92. O. Olofin, 2010. *Idanre from then till now*, p.14
93. P. Lovejoy, Interregional monetary flows in the pre-colonial trade of Nigeria, *Journal of African History*, 1974, p 282
94. S.F. Odamo, *Idanre Beauty and Culture on the hills* p.24.
95. J. Samuel, 1921, The history of the Yorubas p.93
96. Interview with Rufus Orosundafosi-Folafosi, Cocoa Merchant, 62 Years, during Moore festival Odode Idanre, 2/12/11
97. Interview with the HRM (Owa) Oba Federick Aroloye at his Palace 6/9/12
98. Interview with HRH Oba Olusegun Ayodele Akinbola (Agunloye 1, the Aladeokun of Alade –Idanre) at his residence, Alade Idanre, Over 60 Years, 26/12/11
99. *Ibid.*
100. *Ibid.*
101. *Ibid.*

102. National Archive Ibadan (NAI), "Appendix No 8/135/117 Certified copy of Bovel Jonnes's report on Idanre, signed in the presence of D.A Rowse (Acting: Col & Surveyor to H. Alfred Willoughby, the Assistant superintendent of L.C.(September, 1934)
103. *Ibid.*
104. *Ibid.*
105. The above argument corroborates assertions and polemic of dependency and underdevelopment theorists that societies in pre-colonial African societies were organised along non capitalist mode of production and expropriation. The same point justifies the point that pre-colonial societies in Africa were able to generate sustainable progress, growth and development to a high degree that everyone in the society was relatively comfortable.
106. C. Ake, *Rethinking African Democracy*, 1991, p 34
107. Interview with Oba Awosoye, Ogunlowo of Atoshin Idanre, at Atoshin Idanre 26/12/12.
108. *Ibid.*
109. This was although very much common in the early twentieth century when cocoa cultivation started in the colonial period
110. Interview with Pa M Akinduro, Retired Farmer, 102 Years at Isalu Idanre, 3/8/2014
111. National Archive Ibadan (NAI) File 236/08/119, Paragraph 17 of Mr H.L Wood-Price's report on Idanre pp 17-21
112. Interview with High Chief S.A Akintan, Ojomu of Idanreland 90 Years at Odode Idanre 11/7/2014.
113. W.B. Morgan, Some Comments on Shifting Cultivation in Africa, *Research Notes*, Vol 2, No. 9, 1957, p 1, see also Morgan W.B, *Agriculture in Southern Nigeria (excluding the Cameroon)*” *Economic Geography*, Vol, xxxv, 1959, pp. 138–150
114. A.O. Olutayo *Development of Underdevelopment: Rural Economy of Colonial South-western Nigeria*, p 61

115. National Archive Ibadan (NAI), "appendix No 8/135/1917 Certified copy of Bovel Jonnes's report on Idanre, signed in the presence of D.A Rowse (Acting: Col & Surveyor to H. Alfred Willoughby, the Assistant superintendent of L.C p 11.
116. National Archive Ibadan (NAI) William Bright, "Intelligence Report on , Idanre Forest Reserve- from resident officer Ondo to the secretary of Southern Provinces" File ONDIV 2734/ 59/097, (June, 1923)
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119. J. Samuel, The history of the Yorubas, 1921 p.99
120. Interview with the Oba Federick Aroloye, Owa of Idanre 93 Years at Odode 23/7/14
121. *Ibid.*
122. *Ibid.*
123. *Ibid.*
124. *Ibid.*
125. Interview with Mr Akinrolayo Ajiola, Son of Akinoujomu: Previous Ojomu of Idanre and 26/02/11
126. National Archive Ibadan (NAI), File 236/08/19/Paragraph (VII) of Mr H.L Wood-Price's report on Idanre Land tenure in the Yoruba provinces..., p.13.
127. Interview with HRM Oba Federick Aroloye Arubiefin III, Owa of Idanre, 93 Years, At his Royal Palace Odode Idanre, 11/24/14
128. National Archive Ibadan (NAI), File 236/08/19/Paragraph (VII) of Mr H.L Wood-Price's report on Idanre Land tenure in the Yoruba provinces..., p.15.