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STATE, PEASANTS AND LAND ACQUISITION IN NIGERIA: LOWER ANAMBRA IRRIGATION PROJECT AND THE TRANSFORMATION OF AYAMELUM CLAN

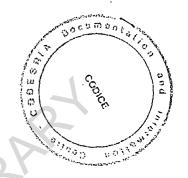
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A Thesis Presented to the Department of Political Science University of Nigeria, Nsukka for the Award of

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SUPERVISOR: PROFESSOR M.S.O.OLISA
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APPROVAL

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OGBUAGU

EXTERNAL EXAMINER

28/10/93

DEDICATION

To my daughter,
Uchechukwu,
You are, my bundle of joy,
Welcome;

AND

My loving wife,
Uzoamaka,
To you, my dear,
In appreciation.

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		ABBREVIATIONS
AAPA	-	African Association of Political Science
AIRBRDA	-	Anambra - Imo River Basin and Rural Development Authority
FAO	-	Food and Agricultural Organisation
FRN	-	Federal Republic of Nigeria
IYA	-	Ifite - Ogwari Youth Association
LAACS	-	Lower Anambra Agricultural Co-operative Society
TCPC	-	Technical Committee on Privatization and Commecialistion
UZLG	-	Uzo - Uwani Local Government
WLIA	_	Water Users Association

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the Lower Anambra Irrigation Project (LAIP) and the subsequent invasion of private capital in the transformation of Ayamelum Clan in Oyi Local Government Area of Anambra State. The study endeavoured to establish the conceptual link that the intervention of the state and capital in the rural areas may have some advantages but, in the main, they leave in their wake some deleterious consequences that make the peasantry the worse for it.

The study was predicated on three guiding assumptions, viz:

- (i) That the opposition of the Ayamelum peasantry militated against the development and functioning of the Lower Anambra Irrigation Project (LAIP)
- (ii) That agrarianism and the rural economy of Ayamelum clan were adversely affected by the intervention of the state and capital.
- (iii) That population displacement arose and social conflicts aggravated as a result of the establishment of the Irrigation Project and the penetration of capital in the area.

The data for this study were gathered through two main sources -

primary and secondary. The primary sources were of two kinds, namely questionnaire administration and, interview. The questionnaire was for a cross-section of Ayamelum people while the interview was conducted with Ayamelum indigenes selected through the application of the reputational approach. In addition, interviews were equally conducted with the General Manager, Project Manager and Public Relations Manager of the Anambra -Imo River Basin and rural Development Authority. On the other hand, the secondary sources included the published and unpublished materials already existing and relevant to the carrying out of this study. These were books, journals, correspondences, minutes of meetings, etc. The information generated from these sources were analyzed not on the supposition of what block (1977:353) refers to as "inverted functionalism" whereby all social institutions automatically fulfil the needs of capital accumulation but rather, on the principle that action taken by the neocolonial state to "remedy" a particular political economic problem (like agricultural crisis) will lead to further structural crisis in the accumulation process. Thus, this work demonstrates how the LAIP provided some temporary relief for the problems of the farm economy, but is also the basis for the current structural problems in agriculture and agrarianism in Ayamelum clan.

Consequently, the results desirable from this study are of three main types. Firstly, the LAIP is not achieving its objectives due to the opposition of the peasantry of Ayamelum clan. Secondly, the Project and capital generated the current structural problems in agriculture, agrarianism and rural economy of the clan. And finally, the establishment of the project and the intervention of capital have resulted in population displacements and social conflicts in the area.

Chapter One

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1.0 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY:

At present, there is a crisis¹ in Nigeria agriculture. This has led to deplorable and deficient food production statistics (Sano, 1983: 4; Mellor, 1980:1) that appears no longer in doubt (Opio-Odongo, 1987:157; Workman and Cummings, 1978 passim). Since the early 1970s, the country has experienced dramatic decline in agricultural exports, fall in food output per capita, and meteorical rise in food imports (Watts and Shenton, 1984; Andrae and Beckman, 1982).

From the 1960s, however, the state (Forrest, 1981; Vengroff and Farah, 1985; Watts, 1987) and international capital (World Bank, 1985; Williams, 1981) had on a massive scale, intervened in the agricultural sector. Palmer-Jones (1987:166) observes that irrigation projects are "peculiarly attractive to" Nigerian leaders as a panacea to declining agricultural productivity. In any case, Beckman (1987a: 116-7) argues that "the massive investment in capital- intensive, closely controlled (irrigation) schemes was justified by the 'failure' of domestic producers to respond to the 'food crisis'". Nevertheless, there is more to this than sheer love for the opportunities of irrigation. According to Palmer-Jones (1987:167), this

admiration has "to do more with the distribution of state rents" which "takes precedence over the development of the forces of production" rather than with quarrels with domestic producers.

The criticism in the literature of domestic rural producers for their backwardness in agricultural production is really persistent. It forms part of an orthodoxy of modern development thinking (World Bank, 1975; Berg Report, 1981) and is the basis for much of the development policy and practice in Nigeria, if not Africa generally (Williams, 1976; Bates, 1981). As Mba (1988) points out, the Nigerian Second National Development Plan makes this clear. According to the Plan,

No realistic change can be expected from the present nature of Nigerian agriculture or from the drudgery attached to it until the farmer finds an alternative to the existing hoe and cutlass technique of cultivation. The clearing of bush, the preparation of land, the sowing of seeds, the various post - planting operations and harvesting are all processes in which the farmer's present tools can do little for high productivity... (cited in Mba, 1988:50-51).

In addition, Hart (1982:5) contends that investment in small-holders only delayed industrialization. As a result, he saw "traditional" agriculture as organized to reproduce the basic household unit of production, mainly through a continued use of family labour and land. This is reminiscent of

stalin's argument about the propensity of small holders to consume their produce (Littlejohn, 1984:74-75), but it also mirrored Mellor's (1966) view that smallholders did not innovate. Nevertheless, Goldschmidt (1978) posits that there is a strong negative relationship between the scale of farm operation and the quality of life of rural communities. He argues that the growth of large non-family farms would have deleterious consequences for rural areas. This thesis has been tested several times in the literature (see for example, Harris and Gilbert, 1982: Heffernan and Lasley, 1978) and they have generally corroborated Goldschmidt's findings (Heffernan, 1982). However, Green (1985: 265) asserts that Goldschmidt and others have demonstrated how the structure of agriculture influences the local conditions of rural communities, but have failed to recognize the dialectical nature of this relationship.

Furthermore, Robert Bates (1981) and Goran Hyden (1980) have commented on the controversy over the place of states and peasantries in "rural development." Even though Bates notes the lack of investment in peasantries on the part of African governments, he, however, takes a fatalistic view of the outcome of peasantries in the development process. Like Bates (1981:7), Hyden (1980:31) argues that peasants must be made to surrender their resources to the state. To these scholars, African

smallhoders are not only economically backward, but they "live" in a "Cultural" world" of their own, stubbornly resisting modernization. In a later writing, Hyden (1983) postulates that African political economies have failed because "African state classes" have been unable to "capture" their respective peasantries. This ostensible immunity of rural producers is a result of the unflinching dominance of an "economy of affection" that perpetuates pre-capitalist economic, social and political relations; and one which, by its nature and logic, harmstrings the modernizing efforts of African ruling elites. Hyden's basic prescriptions cluster around a call for the necessity to eliminate pre-capitalist relations by "freeing the invisible hand" of the market, and a closer alliance with international capital.

However, contrary to Hyden's propositions, Samatar (1988) opines that while pre-capitalist production and political and cultural life are not necessarily advantageous to development,

On the whole, Africa's current agony is primarily attributable to cumulative colonial and post-colonial state policies which have directly contributed to the emergence of hybrid, moribund socio-economic structures incapable of lessening the vulnerabilities of the peasantry. The resulting deterioration of rural life continues to undermine the hegemony, that is, the intellectual and moral leadership of state classes and bodes ill for any current and future collective struggle against underdevelopment (Samatar, 1988:26-27).

The works of Mellor, Hart and Hyden seem to highlight the

aspirations and frustrations of African governments and agencies alike in promoting rural development in many parts of the continent. Their argument is that rural development must eliminate the "inherent limitation" of small-scale production by eliminating smallhoders and encouraging large-scale agricultural units which are supposedly more productive and more efficient than small units. This contention is not completely confirmed by the literature. Thus, there is evidence to refute this claim. For example, Hunt (1984) and livingstone (1986) examined the relative efficiency of large and small farms and found an inverse relationship between size of landholding and (a) output per acre, (b) the proportion of land under cultivation, and (c) the number of workers per one thousand acres. Consequently, Galli (1987: 95) correctly asserts that "To characterize the current agrarian crisis affecting Africa in terms of traditional, subsistence peasants was, in effect, taking sides in the ideological aspects of this struggle" (cf Saith, 1985).

Finally, Lambrecht (1982) has highlighted an important relationship between "agricultural production" and "physical fitness". There appears to exist in the literature a tendency not to project this relationship. This is unfortunate as the issues raised therein are important. According to Lambrecht (1982: 352).

Agricultural productivity depends not only upon available arable land, but also upon the physical fitness of those who till it. Full productiveness of agriculture and general labour can only be expected from a happy population unencumbered by debilitating illness. Hence, freedom from disease is paramount to adequate food production......

In addition, despite concerted efforts to convince African farmers about the benefits of technologies, continued low rates of adoption of these innovations have led to the contention that the farmer may not be readily or successfully adopting these technologies for reasons other than psychological ones. Abalu (1982:249- 250) identified some of the major reasons which are often proffered:

- (i) The small farmers, who form the majority of the population of Africa, have restricted access to credit, technical knowledge and material means of production and, as such, cannot be expected to innovate as quickly as bigger farmers who are "landed, liquid and literate."
- (ii) Because African society is characterized by a hierarchical and dependent social structure, the self-interest of rural elites manifested in direct as well as indirect domination of the small farmers, are bound to work against the adoption of recommended practices.
- (iii) Misdirected research efforts have in many cases led to incorrect and

inappropriate recommended practices. Since the farmer usually knows better, it is unlikely that he will willingly move against his knowledge, instinct, and interest.

- (iv) Since bigger farmers usually operate under different conditions, the profit maximizing incentives being offered to all farmers may be entirely inappropriate for the small ones. Profit maximizing is almost never the only objective of small farmers. Other goals that constrain profit maximization include meeting subsistence requirements, minimizing risk and accumulating wealth.
- (v) Quite often, existing input and output prices are such that profit maximizing behavior would be expected to lead to rejection of recommended practices.
- (vi) The usual emphasis of new technologies on yield per unit of land has been based on the assumption that land is the limiting factor, which in many cases, it is not.

There is, therefore, a need to move away from the traditional view that stresses that the low productivity in African agriculture is simply a technological problem solvable through the infusion of "modern technology" from outside.

It is pertinent to note that the presence of petroleum in Nigeria and

the "oil boom" of the 1970s may have provided the Nigerian state the much needed resources for investment in such economic activities as irrigation (Anikpo, 1985). This was done through the instrumentality of River Basin and Rural Development Authorities established in many areas of the country (Ona, 1988). The Authorities were given the wide-ranging power to acquire land for irrigation and rain-fed agriculture. The thinking was that such developed land would be made available to smallholders (whose land would have been taken over in the first place) for cultivation. However, this did not happen as intended. Such irrigation schemes have caused havoc to peasant communities (Munslow, 1984; Koehn, 1979) while creating fresh openings for capitalist penetration into the hinterland (Wallace, 1980), As a matter of fact, the shortcomings in the performance of public bureaucracies in promoting development in the rural sector have been well documented (Bryant and White, 1982; Esman, 1974; Vengroff, 1983) including the administrative difficulties experienced by agricultural extension services (Lele, 1975; Leonard, 1977).

Thus, irrigation schemes have not improved the production of food crops in Nigeria. Okowa (1986) reports that the cereals made available for sale by these River Basin and Rural Development Authorities indicated an average production cost much higher than that obtainable from peasant

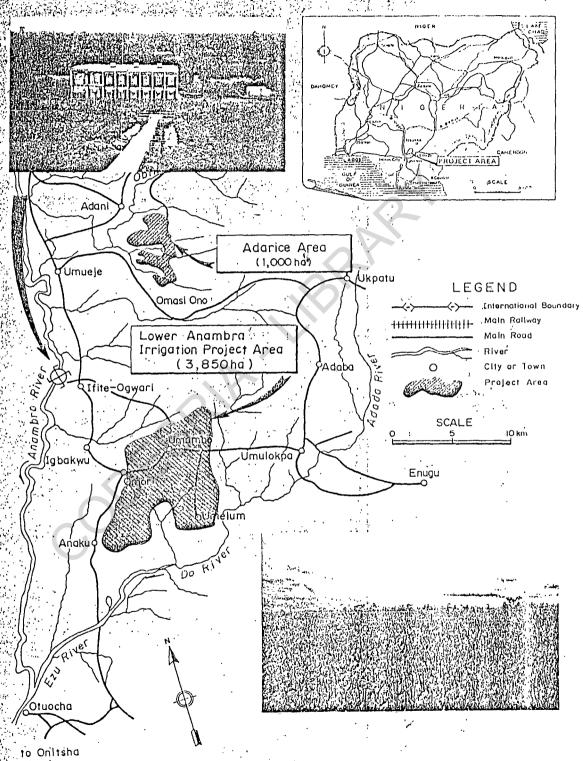
producers (cf Olatunbosun, 1975). Okowa (1986: 22) maintains that "that obviously was a clear case of monumental waste of government funds". For instance, the world Bank's "Agricultural sector Review 1987" estimates construction costs for the initial projects for the Lower Anambra (Irrigation) Rice Project at forty thousand Naria per hectare (Williams, 1987;52). There is the informed opinion that there is no prospects that this cost can be recovered from or justified by increased production from the project (Forrest, 1981:241; World Bank, 1985:62; Andrae and Beckman, 1985: 119).

The Lower Anambra Irrigation Project (Figure 1) is owned and controlled by the Anambra - Imo River Basin and Rural Development Authority. Though the Authority's major project, it is wholly situated within Ayamelum Clan of Oyi Local Government Area of Anambra State, Nigeria. The clan is made up of eight autonomous rural communities - Anaku, Ifite Ogwari, Igbakwu, Omasi, Omor, Umeje, Umerum and Umumbo - who in such delectable primordialism believe that they are the progeny of a certain woman called Ayamelum.

The Anambra - Imo River Basin and Rural Development Authority was established by Decree No. 25 of 1976 along with ten others. It was

THE RECEIVED THE PROPERTY

LOCATION MAP



launched on 13 May,1977 and charged with the following responsibilities as enumerated in the Decree. These are:

- (i) To undertake comprehensive development of both surface and underground water resources for multi-purpose use with particular emphasis on the provision of irrigation infrastructure and the control of floods and erosions and for water-shed management.
- (ii) To construct, operate and maintain dams, dykes, polders, wells, boreholes, irrigation and drainage system, and other works necessary for the achievement of the Authority's functions and hand over all land to be cultivated under the irrigation scheme to the farmers.
- (iii) To supply water from the authority's complete storage scheme to all users for a fee to be determined by the authority concerned, with the approval of the Minister.
- (iv) To construct, operate and maintain infrastructural services such as roads and bridges linking project sites; provided that such infrastructural services are included and form an integral part of the list of approved projects.
- (v) To develop and keep up to date comprehensive water resources requirements in the Authority's area of operation, through adequate

collection and collation of water resources, water use, socioeconomic and environmental data of the River Basin.

1.2 STATEMENT OF PROBLEM:

Michael Watts has identified "two broad thrusts" through which the state often intervened in the rural sector. The first he argues is Agricultural Development projects which are supported by the World Bank and the second is the irrigation schemes of the eleven River Basin and Rural Development Authorities (RBRDA) (1987: 19). Of these two, the RBRDAs appears to have been more disruptive of the peasant economy, especially as they are quite involved in agricultural production (Beckman, 1987a: 126) and land acquisitions that are statutorily sanctioned and therefore possess legal, state-enforced security of tenure (Gooneskeres, 1980:33,36). State intervention in land is reported to be a class-oriented activity (Ollawa, 1983; Koehn, 1987; Okpala, 1979). As Okpala notes, land law in Nigeria gave a duty to the state "to assemble land for the elites...." (1979:9). The result is that business men, contractors, bureaucrats, army officers, etc. are going into commercial agriculture on a large scale with the support of the state. This is in terms of access to land, farm inputs, credit facilities, etc. The consequence is the gradual contribution to the process of capitalist

transformation of Nigeria.

Okwudiba Nnoli (1989: 38) believes that irrigation schemes "paved the way for the penetration of capital to the adjoining countryside". Watts (1987: 32) seems to agree with this observation but adds that the schemes "constitute an attempt to directly subordinate peasants to the routinization of a technological labour process and also subject them to dispossession". It is this disturbing phenomenon that has helped to attract academic attention with regard to the threat posed to the threat posed to the peasantry, especially on peasant land rights, by the advance of capitalist agriculture and state development projects (Mkandawire, 1989: 20; see generally Abba, 1985; Amale, 1986; Koehn, 1986; Wallace, 1980). The projected argument is that peasants are being increasingly subordinated, proletarianised and marginlised. Nevertheless, Molnar and Wu (1989:230) believe that state intervention in agriculture is often controversial in terms of the type of intervention undertaken and the institutional mechanisms for distributing the costs and benefits of intervention (cf Skocpol, 1985). The major criticisms mostly identified focus on a sustained bias in programmes toward large - than - family and corporate farms (Berardi, 1981) and patterns of public infrastructure investment that generally tend to concentrate benefits among a small set of large landholders (Perelman,

Beckman (1987b: 16) posits that ruling class "assault on peasant land rights has opened up a new frontier of popular struggles in Nigeria" as irrigation projects displaced many peasants "from all or a share of their land to make way for dams and for project construction" (Williams, 1988; Land alienation has sometimes met with peasant resistance in 53). Nigeria. One of the most dramatic of such resistance occurred in Bakolori where there was massive and militant opposition to a state irrigation project (Gwandu, 1986; Beckmen, 1985; Wallace, 1980). The assault on peasant land rights as manifested in large - scale mechanized agricultural schemes has brought at least three types of conflicts: (i) Conflicts between the traditional producers and the owners of the large - scale mechanized schemes (cf Ahmed, 1987). (ii) Conflicts among the local population at the vicinity of the mechanized scheme since cultivable lands are getting scarce over the years. (iii) The conflict between state policies and the interest of the peasant cultivators (Salih, 1989: 108).

However, Nzimiro (1985) contends that land alienation did not obtain in pre-colonial Nigeria, especially in the non-centralized societies such as Igbo, Ibibio, etc. We would add that even if land alienation obtained, it was not of the noted scale in post-colonial Nigeria. This may be explained on the grounds that land rights were reserved in the community and allocation of same was through rights to usufruct. Thus, everybody, it would seem, appeared to have had right to the land. In addition, argues Nzimiro (1985;3) land "was clad with sacrality for land belonged to both the living and the dead". This "land sacracity" seems to have be tampered with especially since the state and capital started acquiring large expanses of land areas in the countryside. The interference by the state and capital in rural land is of immense disadvantages to the peasantry. Thus, Samatar (1986:26) argues that

... On the whole Africa's current agony is primarily attributable to cummulative colonial and post-colonial state policies which have directly contributed to the emergency of hybrid, moribund socio-economic structures incapable of lessening the vulnerabilities of the peasantry.

This may account for why Bradshaw (1990:4) aptly contends that perhaps "the most important question in any discussion of agriculture is: who controls the land". The <u>Land Use Decree</u> in Nigeria was meant to bring the existing system of land tenure under one common law. The customary systems of tenure were thought to inhibit agricultural growth as they encouraged the fragmentation of land between many members of a family. They prevented, moreover, the alienation of land and often made it difficult

for the authorities to consolidate big holdings for large - scale farming projects (Cliffe, 1987: 626). As the Nigerian government notes in the guidelines for the fourth national development plan,

the land tenure system has long been a bottleneck in the establishment of large-scale farms by private operators. With the implementation of the recent <u>Land Use Decree</u> ... private sector involvement in large-scale agricultural activities should receive a boost... The reform should promote better security of tenure and also encourage consolidation of holdings and large-scale operation (Quoted in Kirk-Greene and Rimmer, 1981:78).

dichotomy This opitomizes the and controversy between "conventional" and "alternative" agriculture (Beus and Dunlap, 1991). Conventional agriculture refers to large-scale, industrialized agriculture that is capital-intensive, highly mechanized, uses extensive amounts of synthetic fertilizers and pesticides, and involves highly concentrated and intense livestock production (Knor and Watking, 1984). Conventional agriculture also includes the agri-business complex with which today's farmers are highly integrated (Martinson and Campbell, 1980). On the other hand, alternative agriculture encompasses many different approaches, ranging from organic farming to permaculture, which nevertheless have much in goals favoured alternative common (Lockeretz, 1986). Some

agriculturalists are reduced use of agricultural chemicals, reduced energy use, greater farm and regional self-sufficiency, smaller farm units and technology, and improved conservation and regeneration of agricultural resources such as soil and water (Buttel et al., 1986; Lockeretz, 1986).

It is on this perspective that we want to investigate how the acquisition of a massive land-area in Ayamelum Clan for the irrigation of the rice fields of the Anambra-Imo River Basin and Rural Development Authority has affected the peasantry of the clan. Perhaps, the following two questions may provide some direction: did the peasants of Ayamelum Clan acquiesce to this arrangement? And second, what has become of agrarianism in the clan, a phenomenon that defined the corporate nature of Ayamelum and created "the enabling conditions for the discreet pursuit of peasant autonomy" (Rahmato, 1991:4).

Even though Ayamelum peasants have not done things of the scale discussed by Ranger (1985) and Beckman (1985), Scott (1986:6) argues that

The emphasis on peasant rebellion is misplaced. Instead, it is far more germane to understand everyday forms of peasant resistance - the prosaic but constant struggle between the peasantry and those who seek to extract labour, food, taxes, rents and interest from them.

Everyday forms of peasant resistance refers to what peasants "do short of organized confrontation that reveals disgust, anger, indignation, or opposition to what they regard as unjust or unfair actions by others more wealthy or powerful than they" (Kerkvliet, 1986:108). This includes what Adas (1981) calls "avoidance protest", meant to harm the target, with the target and the one resisting being aware of this harm. Scott (1986:6) identifies three features characteristic of these "Brechtian forms of class struggle." They:

- (i) Require little or no co-ordination of planning.
- (ii) Often represent a form of individual self-help.
- (iii) Typically avoid any direct symbolic confrontation with authority or with elite norms.

Finally, Scott (1986:8) pointedly avers that:

It is in this fashion... that the peasantry has classically made its political presence felt. Thus any history or theory of peasant politics which attempts to do justice to the peasantry as an historical actor must necessarily come to grips with what I have chosen to call "everyday forms of peasant resistance" (cf Wolf, 1989 and Mousnier, 1970).

Furthermore, agrarianism has been seen as highlighting social, economic and political beliefs about a society centered on the family farm

(Buttel and Flinn, 1977), as values about people's special relation to the land (Gilbert and Brown, 1981), and as beliefs in the virtue of rural living, the basic nature of the occupation of farming, and the superiority of the farm and town over the city (Craig and Philips, 1983).

From the foregoing discussion, this work basically seeks to address the following guiding questions: How has the peasantry of Ayamelum Clan shown "everyday forms of resistance" to the Lower Anambra Irrigation scheme and with what effect? How have the irrigation scheme and capital affected agrarianism and the rural economy of the clan? How has the land-grabbing tendency brought about by capital (in conjunction with the irrigation scheme) engendered conflict in the area? And finally, in what ways and to what effect have the activities of state and capital resulted in population displacement in the clan?

1.3 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Four major issues inform the necessity for and significance of this study. First is the need to contribute in helping to correct the "northern bias" in peasant studies in Nigeria as they relate to irrigation schemes. Generally, a number of scholars had equated what happens in the Northern

parts of Nigeria as epitomizing the situation in the whole country. Consequently, almost all serious studies in this direction are geographically specific (cf Watts, 1987).

Second, many studies of the peasantry in Nigeria are usually brought about as a result of one revolt or the other. Therefore, it would appear that there exists some paucity of works about the Nigerian peasantry that has not been occasioned by the incidence of violence. Thus, this study is our modest contribution to the development of peasant studies in Nigeria. This we will do, by investigating, within the context of our case study, the ramifications of everyday forms of peasant resistance in the country.

Thirdly, we share the view that African scholars should focus their attentions on peasant studies as these "have not been the subject of stimulating investigation" (Rahmato, 1991:26). What Rahmato calls "peasant oppositional politics" goes on sometimes within the rural areas even though they may be "hidden" or "invisible". We believe that these need to be investigated and issues arising therefrom articulated and projected for discussion in the contemplation of the "national question" in Africa in general and Nigeria in particular. We contend that this will help to enrich peasant studies in the country.

Finally, Nigeria has a large percentage of her population being agrarian. Many issues underlining such societies are unknown. As Watts (1987:33) has even pointed out:

The political aspect of the agrarian question in Nigeria demonstrates once again how little we actually know. This terra incognite also embraces questions of gender, the environment, and mechanization which severely impoverish our understanding of agrarian change.

This study is our contribution towards helping to improve, in our little way, the debilitating aspects of this impoverishment in the understanding of the agraria and peasant question in Nigeria.

1.4 NOTE

1. Biswas and Biswas (1986:190) share a contrary view:

Much has been written and spoken about the food and environmental crisis in Africa ... What we are facing in Africa cannot realistically be termed a crisis since the word implies a temporary disaster. What we are witnessing is a persistent problem which is the agglomeration of a series of complex and diverse issues and phenomena that cannot be resolved overnight.

Chapter Two

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 ON PEASANTS: A CONCEPTUALIZATION

There is some excitement in the discussion of the peasant. Lipton (1977:86) clearly puts this in a most graphic form, thus:

What never ceases to amaze is the resilience and regenerative capacity of the countryfolk: their ability, constantly drained of talent as they are, to farm so well under severe restraints; to innovate selectively and efficiently; to cope with bureaucrats and businessmen ... One understands the dangerously mystical populism of the poet Dehmel, eulogising the resistance to Napoleon by the Russian peasant (Lipton, 1977:86).

Nonetheless, Martin Klein (1980) argues that there are two schools of thought in the discussion of peasants. The first was pioneered by Redfield (1956) and Fallers (1961). This school stresses the relationship between a folk tradition and a dominant tradition and, therefore, emphasizes culture. Adherents of this school of thought have come to cherish the following definition of Alfred Kroeber's (1984:284):

Peasants are definitely rural - yet live in relation to market towns; they usually form a class segment of a larger population which usually contains urban centers, sometimes metropolitan capitals. They constitute part societies with part cultures (cf Gramst, 1970).

The second school seems to accept the "part society" notion but have stressed economic and political relationship. For example, Saul and Wood (1971:105) explain:

Peasants are those whose ultimate security and subsistence lies in their having certain rights in land and in the labour of family members on the land, but who are involved, through rights and obligations, in a wider economic system which includes the participation of non-peasants.

In addition, some of those who belong to this school of thought place some importance on formal colonial rule in the understanding of the peasantry in Africa (see Palmer and Parsons, 1977, and Ranger, 1978). Some others do not and thus go ahead to state their position without any direct linkage to colonialism. An example is Eric Wolf (1966:3-4) who argues that:

(P) easants ... are rural cultivators whose surpluses are transferred to a dominant group of rulers that uses the surpluses both to underwrite its own standards of living and to distribute the remainder to groups in society that do not farm but must be fed for their specific goods and services in turn.

However, Bernstein (1979:421-2) believes that definitions of peasants as rural producers securing their livelihood through the use of family labour on family land, describes the <u>form</u> of peasant production but gives that category no <u>theoretical</u> (ie, historically or socially specific) content. Such a general definition cannot help distinguish the social differences between, say, peasants in medieval Europe, and peasants in Africa today who are exploited through relations of commodity production and exchange which lock them into the international capital conomy.

In any case, Klein (1980:11) opines that some discussions of peasants seem to agree on the following variables:

- (i) Peasants are agriculturists who control the land they work either as tenants or smallholders. Landless labourers they are not peasants.
- (ii) They are organized largely in household units which meet most of their subsistence needs.
- (iii) They are ruled by other classes, who extract a surplus either directly (rent) or through control of state power (taxes)¹.
- (iv) Peasant culture is distinct from, but related to, the larger culture of the dominated group.

It is partially for the above - named variables that Karl Marx regarded the peasantry as doomed. Moreso, largely because its social structure was

amorphous and atomistic and therefore incapable of protecting itself against erosion by capitalism. Peasantries have not only proved more resilient than Marx expected, but have been, in the twentieth century, a more important base for revolutionary action than the proletariat Marx accorded immense revolutionary potentialities. Scott (1977) has attempted an explanation for this. He argues that the peasant social structure is not as amorphous and atomistic as Marx assumed and that what Marx saw as its disadvantages have turned out to be its strengths. In particular, the relative isolation of peasants has made them more immune than other classes to the social and moral hegemony of the dominant classes.

Bernstein (1979:430) maintains that the differentiation of pleasantries in the materialist sense is tied to the conditions in which wealth becomes capital, when it is not consumed individually but productively through investment in means of production. It is this, he argues, which gives content to his classification of "poor", "middle" and "rich" peasants in terms of the relations of production. Bernstein explains this classification as follows:

(i) <u>Poor Peasant</u> cannot produce themselves through household production and so exchange their labour-power on a regular basis

- and come to form a category reproduced through the sale of labour;
- (ii) Middle Peasants are able to reproduce themselves mainly through family labour and land but in specific relations with other forms of production; and
- (iii) Rich Peasants (or Kulaks) accumulate sufficiently to invest in production through the purchase of superior means of production and/or labour-power; they form a category of capitalist farmers.

Bernstein's classification derives from his quest to accord some relevance to the study of the peasantry in Africa after, according to Adibe (1992:6) he "had rejected the concept of 'peasantry' for having no theoretical value (in Africa) but uses it nonetheless albeit descriptively, to refer to the African small scale cultivators or agriculturalists or farmers". The main implication of this type of analysis is that there arises some element of obfuscation in the primary responsibility of differentiating a "farmer" from a peasant" and a "wage-labourer" from a "peasant". We find this unacceptable for our study as it will not enhance clarity of thought.

In the first place, sale of labour - power is seen in the literature as not central to the understanding of the peasantry. Rather, this feature is correctly perceived as an element of the proletarianization process engendered by the intervention of the state and capital in the peasants'

environment. Thus, Harris (cited in Bush-Hansen 1984:4) then argues that "the peasantry are subordinate to other classes within the state and may be required to yield some tribute to them". The lesson here is that peasants are a socially differentiated group, with specific consciousness appertaining thereto.

In addition, the idea, for instance of "rich" peasants, a phenomenon of an accumulation process, emanates from the absence of clarity in separating the "farmer" from the "peasant". A peasant <u>qua</u> peasant is by the accepted empirical indices of econometrics poor. He cultivates mostly to sustain himself and his household. On the other hand, farmers may not and need not be peasants *per se*.

Consequently, it is pertinent that a clear distinction is made between "peasants" and "farmers". Peasants are predominantly agricultural producers, mainly employing family labour for the production of goods and commodities, primarily consumed by themselves. Peasants control or own their means of production (land and implements); despite the basic subsistence orientation of their production, they produce also for exchange and wider markets. Farmers are distinguished from peasants by their integration in an economy of accumulation. They produce mainly for the market, they own their land and implements, they seek to enhance the

scale of their production by investments in modern technology, and they may employ wage labour. A farmer mainly relying on wage labour for "his" production may be defined as a capitalist farmer (cf Sano, 1983).

2.2 ON POPULATION DISPLACEMENT AND SOCIAL CONFLICTS.

Okechukwu Ibeanu (1990:51) postulates the conceptualization of population displacement in marxian terms. According to him:

Displacement can be understood as a process involving a continuous reduction in the level of control which a social class, fraction, category or stratum exercises over the biophysical and inter-human environments in relation to others. It involves a continuous reduction of the capacity to attain objective interests within a given social formation. This condition manifests, in its extreme, in the physical movement of such a group of social agents either *en masse* or as persons situated in the first place within such groups.

He further argues that displacement is a <u>process</u> and that situations warranting the movement of people "in time and space (relocation/refugees) are specific moments in an overall/generic movement" (Ibeanu 1990:52). Thus, this process does not as such involve relocation since relocation tends to be an 'extreme' sign of displacement. Finally, he argues that displacement "involves contradictory relations among classes, class fractions, social categories and social strata within a social formation

at a given historical epoch, conjuncture or moment". This accounts for his insistence that displacement frequently co-exists with such conditions as exploitation, poverty, repression and other conditions of structural violence (Ibeanu 1990:52).

Nevertheless, population displacement can be pragmatically conceived as existing when a people or persons lose control of and are therefore put out of a place of pristine or societally-induced occupation or habitation. The implication is that there is a situational or positional difference between the location occupied by a people or persons at a given time and that originally occupied at first. Thus, population displacement suggests that there is a physical shift in the occupation, habitation, use, and or ownership of a piece of land occasioned by forces the people concerned are not able to control or contain. Implicit herein, therefore, is a sense of dispossession and this could be brought about by a multiplicity of factors. Among these are war, slavery, famine, poverty, coup d'etat, persecution, government policy, capital penetration and migration. It is quite unfortunate that Ibeanu (1989:48) believes that these "are mere effects of primary contradictions" and "symptoms of fundamental causes of population displacement" in the society. He contends:

By locating the problem (of population displacement) in the primary contradictions in society namely class contradictions and therefore the class struggle, it is able to show not only how other social contradictions are related to the primary ones but also how the entire conjuncture gives rise to the phenomenon ...

In spite of this, we believe that there are trends in society unrelated to "class" dynamics that engender displacement. Firstly, Zolberg (1983:18) has aptly identified that the "transformation of a world of empires and disparate communities into a world of states" resulting in the targeting of certain groups of person "as obstacles to be eliminated" in the pursuit of national unity and integration generates displacement. The tribulations of the Igbo person in some Northern Nigerian cities fit into this perspective.

Secondly, the various models of migration proffered by distinguished scholars are salient explanations of population displacement. Mabogunje (1970) developed the systems model of migration in which he noted that technological, economic, social and environmental factors are determinants of population movements. Richmond (1988:10) reports that Hoffman - Nowotny conceives of migration in power and prestige terms and that this notion is borne out by the inequalities and status inconsistencies in sending countries."

David Sly (1972) has developed and tested an ecological model of

migration. According to this model's two major propositions, migration is a response to organizational change, and technology and environment only influence migration to the extent that they elicit organizational change. Sly (1972:619) insists that:

environment and technology do not operate directly on migration, but effect migration through changes in organization ... variations in the migration rates of small and large aggregates alike can be explained by observing the effects of variations in external factors on population organization.

Despite the viability of this organizational model, Frisbie and Poston (1975) have argued against the temptation to assert causality within complex ecological systems on the grounds that the direction of causality in econological systems is surely a function of the point of analytical departure. Thus, although the findings of Frisbie and Poston are supportive of the organization model, they argue that even though population size may seek an equilibrium with organization, population must also seek an equilibrium with environmental and echnological factors, particularly when the latter are themselves responses to organizational change.

Sly and Tayman (1977:795), however, argue that population demographic responses, and migration in particular, are not always a direct result of organizational conditions as suggested by the organizational

model of migration. They, therefore, indicate the complex nature of ecological change and the important role which the ecological approach can play in helping to develop a better understanding of population change.

Furthermore, urbanization is another factor that generates population displacement. Rogers and Williamson (1982:468) argue that:

The urban explosion in today's Third World is nothing less than the evolution of a society during its structural transformation from an agrarian to an industrial-service economy.

This provocative statement could serve as a centerpiece for the on going debate over the meaning of Third World urbanization. While few would dispute that underdeveloped nations are undergoing rapid urbanization, debate over its causes and effects is intense and often bitter. Much of the debate, according to Bradshaw (1987:225), revolves around theories of modernization, urban bias and economic dependency.

These three perspectives advance different though sometimes complementary interpretation of urban growth and its impact on poor countries. Modernization scholars assert that urban expansion is part of the natural transition from a traditional (agrarian) society to a modern (industrial) nation (Berliner, 1977:448-449; Kelley and Williamson,

1982:179). Urban bias theorists, on their part, argue that government policies biased in favour of metropolitan areas (Utting, 1988:11) have prompted migration from country to city and thereby increased the size of urban areas (Lipton, 1977,1984; Ellis, 1984). Dependency or world-system arguments postulate that foreign investments reduces the amount of land available to farmers, forcing migration to urban areas (Amin, 1974; Ledogar, 1975). Moreover, economic dependence distorts urban labour markets and impedes comprehensive economic growth (Kentor, 1981; Timberlake and Kento, 1983; Walton, 1977).

Finally, the state and capital most poignantly brings about population displacement by intervening in the rural areas. It is in this form that population displacement manifests most in Nigeria. The interventions of private capital and the state in the rural areas are usually predicated on the necessity to "modernize" the agricultural practices and productivity of the nation (Beckman, 1985; Wallace, 1980). The result is the dispossession of the peasantry of their lands that leaves in its wake a multitude of displaced persons.

Meanwhile, what is social conflict? Lewis Coser (1956) is very fundamental in the revival of interest in social conflict (see also Coser, 1967). This revivalism was reinforced by C. Wright Mills (1951, 1956 and

1958) when he began to question the utility of the functional view of society at about the same time Coser was making conflict theory popular.

McGee (1975) counsels that conflict should not be understood as a destructive force in social life although obviously a certain amount of overt disharmony and hostility usually accompanies it. Simmel (1955) calls it a "sociative" process, one which binds men and women together in interaction, pointing out that while dissociating factors such as hate or envy have the tendency to drive people apart from one another, when they become the causes of conflict the result is to compel people to interact. It is impossible to conduct a conflict without interaction with one's enemy. It is, thus, a social rather than an asocial phenomenon.

Conflict is also a <u>social</u> process, not a static or one-time disturbance of some on-going equilibrium, but a phenomenon which can be seen to have a beginning, a history, and a termination, all of them the result of interactions among men and women pursuing their interests or values and all influenced or shaped by social forces.

However, there are five key concepts involved in the analysis of any conflict. These are:

- (i) Scarcity of some resource, social, physical, or emotional;
- (ii) Competition or rivalry over it (i.e (i) above);

- (iii) Social contact in pursuit of it;
- (iv) <u>identifiability</u> of rivals; and
- (v) The perceived threat of replacement in access to it.

In the absence of any one of the these factors conflict cannot occur. Competition or rivalry *per se*, for example does not occur at all over resources which are not scarce or does not lead to conflict unless it becomes so severe that at least one party feels his chance of securing his interests are threatened with replacement by another party. But even in this situation the aggrieved antagonist cannot actually come into conflict with the other unless they have some point of social contact (usually point of access to the resource) or unless he can identify the other party in question as the one threatening him.

However, since Simmel's observation about the necessary reciprocity between opponents in most social conflict situations is far more astute than many will realise, the annihilation of the enemy is rarely a goal. This means that most social conflicts are carried on according to some set of rules or norms and that opponents may withhold overwhelming force, or restrain themselves from access, from knowledge of the fact that they will have to live with each other afterwards.

Nevertheless, not all social conflicts are of the same kind. Some, for

example, follow definite rules and are not typically associated with angry feelings on the part of the parties, while others involve irrational behaviour and the use of violent or disruptive acts by the parties. Filley (1975:2) distinguished between social conflicts which are <u>competitive</u> and those which are disruptive.

In competitive situations there can be a victory for one party only at the cost of the opponent's total loss and the way in which the parties relate to each other is governed by a set of rules. The parties strive for goals which are mutually incompatible. The emphasis of each party is upon the event of winning, rather than upon the defeat or reduction of the opponent (see Rapoport, 1960).

On the other hand, in the disruptive social conflict, the parties do not follow a mutually acceptable set of rules and are not primarily concerned with winning. Instead, they are intent upon reducing, defeating, harming, or driving away the opponent. The means used are expedient and the atmosphere is one of stress, anger and fear. In extreme cases, the parties in disruptive social conflict will abandon rational behaviour and behave in any manner necessary to bring about the desired outcome.

Experience tells us that social conflicts are distributed along a continuum between those that are competitive and those that are

disruptive. Anger arises in a game and causes disruption. A competitior changes his behaviour from a rational pursuit of a strategy of winning to an irrational act of aggression. Thus, the motives of the parties and the degree of strategic control which each exhibits are important factors in determining the degree to which a social conflict is competitive or disruptive.

2.3 ON AGRICULTURAL CRISIS: THE ISSUES

Mkandawire (1989:2-3) argues that there has emerged two sets of polar interpretation that dominate current debates of the origins and nature of the agricultural crisis in Africa. These are the neoclassical interpretations on the one hand and the structuralists on the other. He believes that a subdivision of these into internalist and externalist interpretations is feasible. The internalists attribute the crisis to state policies or the peculiarities of civil society while the externalists associate the international system with the cause of the crisis. In a similar conceptualization, Mengistead (1985:40-3) asserts that explanations for the crisis could come from two perspectives - the liberal and the neo-marxian. The liberal perspective explains the crisis from the scarcity of certain products such as capital, technology and skill while the neo-marxian perspective, regards such scarcities as outcomes of the problem rather than the causes. The causes of the crisis, according to

the neo-marxian perspective, largely lie in the position that Africa occupies within the international division of labour, that is, in Africa's dependency and in the production relations that predominate in Africa.

Nevertheless, the problems of agriculture and its various ramifications have attracted a great deal of attention in academic circles. The result is a number of collaborative works aimed at a proper and enlightened understanding and handling of the problems. Some of these works are general in their treatment of issues (Hildebrand, 1986; Alschuler, 1981), others have Africa as their focal point of reference (Raikes, 1989; ROAPE, 1988; Mkandawire and Bourenane, 1987), and the rest have a specifically Nigerian focus (Watts, 1987; Okorie and Ijere, 1986).

However, Craig and Philips (1983) draw attention to the great deal of interest being "paid of late" to the political economy of agriculture in capitalist societies (cf Hadwiger and Talbot, 1982). They argue that these writers have directed attention to the seemingly contradictory position of family farms and petty commodity producers in an economy increasingly dominated by monopoly and oligopoly capital. They then posit that there are important relationships between the state in a capitalist society and development and/or transformation of non - capitalist agriculture. What are the reactions of those in non-capitalist agriculture to this? And what really

happens to them? We are not told. Similarly, Dinham and Hines (1984) have assembled and organized data on the major agribusiness firms operating in Africa and raised some important questions that have been asked for Africa, the most fundamental being: Does favouring of export agriculture, be it small farmer, government or agribusiness, crowd out food production to the detriment of the poorer population? In Africa, with its falling per capita food production, any shift from food to cash crop production would likely hurt the poor.

The reality in Africa is that agricultural policy finds its origins in the struggle between government and urban interest on the one hand, and rural producers on the other. In the struggle, it is usually the latter who are the losers. Many Africa governments are authoritarian regimes. They are often based on the rule of a narrow slice of military or ethnic elite. Anxious above all to stay in power, these elites tend to pander to the interest of those they fear most: namely, urban masses. Since they are geographically concentrated, urban masses can be quickly organized against the government (Bates, 1983). Rural masses, however, are more scattered and dispersed; they are slower to erupt into action than their urban counterparts.

Furthermore, most African leaders identify development with the

process of urban and industrial expansion, and generally neglect the role that food and agriculture can play in development. Consequently, these governments typically try to transfer surpluses-especially taxes - from agriculture to the urban, industrial sector (cf Byres, 1979:210-244). These usually high rates of taxation serves to effectively transfer resources from rural producers to the state and urban consumers. The state benefits through the expansion of its various government bureaucracies, which employ ever-increasing numbers of urban workers. Urban consumers benefit from the effects of lower food and agricultural prices. Yet, at the same time, such high rates of taxation have a deleterious effect on the agricultural sector. Heavily-taxed peasants possess neither the desire nor the resources needed to adopt new agricultural techniques. Consequently, Mellor and Adams (1986:296) conclude that in Africa, the combination of high taxation, low public investment and an "urban bias" against agriculture have all played a prominent role in creating serious food production problems.

In any case, Bernstein (1979:433) asserts that the state acts to promote the extension and intensification of commodity production in its own interests (deepening the material basis of appropriation and potential accumulation), and in conditions where it might not be immediately

profitable for private capitals to invest. The paucity of investment funds for this purpose on the part of the state, as well as the near absence of technical and managerial expertise, partly accounts for the prominent role of foreign aid agencies in the advancement of rural development schemes which provide infrastructure for the further development of commodity relations (energy, storage, communication, etc.), and the direct planning and financing of production schemes (fertilizers, irrigation equipment, agricultural machinery, "intermediate technology", etc).

Thus, Watts et al (1987:7) believe that state intervention in agriculture in Nigeria consolidates class hegemony that has "transformed the social relations of the countryside". How this affected the peasantry and their reaction to same was not pursued in the book.

2.4 PEASANTS AND AGRARIAN CAPITALIST EXPANSION

Klein (1980) argues that the coercive policies of the early colonial period were successful in breaking down the autonomy of village and household, in incorporating traditional authorities as agents of the colonial state, and in involving Africans in the modern economy as migrant labourers or as peasant producers. Participation in the market had been voluntary; now it is obligatory. Thus, the colonial state played a crucial role

in the destruction of African pre-colonial economy, a process which has two important and related dimensions. One concerns the withdrawal of labour from use-value production; and at the same time, the monetization of some of the material elements of reproduction, forces the rural producers into commodity production, either through the production of cash crops or through the exchange of their labour-power for wages.

However, peasant incomes generally remained low. A study of three Hausa villagse in a peanut - and cotton - growing area reported an average per capita income then of \$34.80 (Norman, 1977). Only some kind of modernization could have freed the Africa peasant from the harsh rule of an unyielding nature, but, generally, colonial regimes did little to modernize African agriculture (cf Palmer and Person, 1977). Consequently, Rodney's (1972:239) apt contention "that the vast majority of Africans went into colonial rule with a hoe and came out with a hoe" appears quite appropriate and illuminating.

Grindle (1986) has sought to assess the impact of agrarian capitalist expansion on the rural poor, and show the important role of the state both as a promoter of capitalism in the countryside and as an agent of social control. The salient conclusions he reached are that the efforts in the direction of modernizing agriculture have: (i) brought a greater

concentration of landholding, which has simultaneously fomented a proliferation of "minifundio" and landlessness, and given added impetus to rural-urban migration; (ii) Promoted change in the social relations of engendered agricultural mechanization and the production; and (iii) adoption of other capital-intensive technological changes that have contributed to higher rural unemployment and poverty. Grindle then posits that these economic trends have had the following political consequences: (i) social contradictions in the countryside have been heightened despite the promulgation of land reforms; (ii) the state has attained "increased capacity to fragment and control the political behaviour of the rural poor" (1986:158); and (iii) the state has been forced into a more interventionalist role both as an agent of social control and as an arbiter in rural class conflict.

However, there is a general treatment of peasant reactions to maltreatment or injustice in terms of "unrest" (Kleinpenning and Zoomers, 1991; Weller and Guggenheim, 1982; Adas, 1981) to the virtual exclusion of those of their activities that cannot pass for "unrest". The implication is that the intensity of activities that goes on in the countryside does not merit much attention unless violence is occasioned. The impact of government projects such as irrigation on the peasantry are not studied with a view to

understanding the relationship between such projects and peasant ways of life, their economy and their ability or otherwise to accommodate their displacements. In other words, there is a paucity of works on peasant "hidden" struggles.

It is noteworthy that rural people prefer to evade government controls rather than to confront the armed power of the state (Williams, 1987). As Bates (1981:8) argues, "they can use the market against the state, thereby evading some of the adverse consequences of government policies". For instance, Hyden (1986:688) points out that Senegalese farmers responded to poor groundnut prices by cultivating millet, by selling groundnut illegally to local oil crushers and by refusing to repay government loans. Political opposition may emerge at times of falling terms of trade, especially in perceived extortionate tendencies (see Afigbo, 1972; Ifeka-Moller, 1977) or incomprehensible agricultural regulations or schemes for rural "betterment" (Beinart, 1984; Beinart and Bundy, 1987; Iliffe, 1979).

2.5 ON PEASANTS AND THE PERFORMANCE OF IRRIGATION PROJECTS

Uphoff (1986), Easter (1986) and Bingin (1985) are concerned about the poor performance of irrigation projects. Uphoff suggests as panacea

the participation of farmers in irrigation management (of Ghai, 1988) while Easter and his associates see the development of management capacity as the solution. Bingin's major conclusion is that only those policies deliberately designed and carefully implemented such that power is shared with majority of the people can lay the political and economic foundation required to overcome rural poverty and resolve the food crisis in the Sahel. His work illustrates the gap between the rhetoric and reality of smallholder participation in development activities. He argues that irrigation promises technological solutions for the drought-stricken Sahelian countries, but irrigation projects without smallholder participation are rarely successful. This study, unfortunately, failed to analyze the major elements of state power in irrigation projects in particular and rural development in general. Underlining all these is the complete disregard of the attitude and feelings of the peasantry to such projects. In most cases, irrigation schemes are carried out when peasants are displaced from their land. What is their feeling and reactions to such projects What is their relationship with such projects on a daily basis? What has the resultant displacement done to their means of livelihood and ways of life? Is it impossible that the peasants may be responsible for the poor performance of irrigation projects (cf Beckman, 1987). These gaps are fundamental enough to merit serious

study in order to better account for the relationship between state and capital's intervention in agriculture and the peasantry on one hand, and the peasantry and such projects resulting from or occasioned by that intervention on the other. This study is a modest effort towards investigating these relationships.

2.6 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study is based on a theory of the state. The state in a neocolony is interventionist in the relationship between social groups and classes.

The state is at one and the same time the economic, political and ideological reproduction institution of the social formation and is being "the contradictory representation of social unity and is determined by the complex relationship among classes and requirement of classes, which are the social expression of the social reproduction process" (Ziemann and Lanzendorfer, 1977:151). Williams and Turner (1979) believe that the practice in Nigeria is that resources are neither socially allocated "nor distributed through an unfettered market mechanism". They then argue that the resources

are allocated both to private and to public ends. This process of allocation takes place through the state and its several agencies...(1979:133)

Consequently, the Nigerian state is to a large extent a "rentier state", though it can be said to be capitalist, interventionist and an initiator that has attained the propensity to "establish, maintain, protect and expand the conditions of capitalist accumulation" (Beckman, quoted in Watts, 1987:3). Nzimiro argues that this is not unexpected as the Nigerian state has history on its side, "the bourgeois history which colonialism assigned to it" (1985:7). The implication of this is quite grave and unedifying. According to Watts (1987:3),

Simultaneously the (Nigerian) state was and continues to be - a site of struggle, an avenue for astonishing malfeasance, venality, and rent-seeking and an entity fundamentally fractured into conjectural alliances and coalitions.

The Nigeria state receives and disburses the oil revenues. This transforms the techno-economic autonomy of the oil sector into the socio-economic autonomy of the state. Thus, while the state is the chief consumer, investor and employer, it does not depend (directly or indirectly) on the domestic means of production for the maintenance of a high level of expenditure. In fact, the historical position is reversed: it is the domestic

economic sectors, including the private sector, which are dependent upon the Nigerian state for direct and indirect welfare gains through the latter's disbursement of the revenue. However, Katouzian (1978:349) points out that,

The peasantry are almost completely left out of account in the state disbursement of oil revenues. Large numbers, poverty, geographical dispersal, etc leave little opportunity for demanding social justice, and the peasant becomes the Cinderella of the political economy.

This work will investigate what these tendencies imply for the peasantry, agrarian change, social harmony and politicization in Nigeria. Our study supports the view of the state as a mediator of class conflict (Gough, 1979; Piven and Cloward,1982; and Green, 1987). This approach does not explain state action in terms of the logic of capitalism, what Block (1977:353) refers to as "inverted functionalism" where all social institutions automatically fulfil the needs of capital accumulation. One important proposition of this approach is that action taken by the neo-colonial state (Nigeria) to "remedy" a particular political economic problem (Nigeria agricultural crisis) will led to further structural crises in the accumulation process (Castells, 1980 and Wright, 1978).

Therefore, this study demonstrates how the lower Anambra irrigation

project (LAIP) provided some temporary relief for problems of the farm economy, but is also the basis for the current structural problems in agriculture and agrarianism in Ayamelum Clan.

In addition, this work establishes that there is a conceptual link between the intervention of the state in rural areas on the one hand and the generation of "crisis" or distortions in the ways or mode of living of the peasantry on the other. The intervention of the state in the countryside is not neutral, in the sense of being done for the purpose of developing the rural areas for the benefit of the generality of the citizenry. Rather, such interventions are occasioned by, and primarily beneficial to the wealthy group in the country. More precisely, it is an intervention engendered in order to open up the countryside for the penetration of capital.

Consequently, when the state intervenes in the rural areas, capital usually trails it in its wake. The state facilitates this process by introducing the paraphernehia of modernization - roads, pipe-borne water, electricity, etc -in such a rural environment; not to make the peasants enjoy "better life" but rather to make it conducive for capital to thrive there. After all, there is a dialectical relationship between the advent of state and capital in the countryside and the forcing or compulsion of peasants to move further inwards away from "civilisation" and thus, away from the modern facilities

the state has provided. The implication of the word, "forcing" in the preceding sentence is that the peasants are generally apposed to the intervention of the state and capital in their environment; further suggesting that ultimately the intervention was not for their direct benefit.

Furthermore, the opposition of the peasantry to the advent of the state and capital is not unexpected and inexplicable. This is because the first result of such intervention is always negative to them as it leads to the acquisition of their massive land areas for the establishment of the state and capital. The effect is the genesis of population displacement which then directly results in the exacerbation of the people's pressure on, and quarrels over, the available land. Since land is central to the peasants' existence, it is therefore implicit that population displacement generates and aggravates social conflicts in the rural areas.

In addition, it is noteworthy from the discussion so far that the intervention of the state (and capital) in the countryside is the basis for the structural crisis in agrarianism, and the dislocation of the rural economy of the peasantry. This is easily made possible by the acquisition of the peasants' land; the land that is at the centre of their livelihood and informs their sensibilities and existence. The state, being an agent of the wealthy elements in society, does not appear concerned as its primary objective is

to "capture" (and therefore control) the peasantry. It is in line with this analysis that Hill (1978:25) argues that African states want

a productive peasantry, but one that remains under secure control. Governments do not want peasants using their productivity to wrest either political or economic concessions.

Finally, it is these basic features discussed above and derivable from the intervention of the state in the rural areas that makes it imperative that we employ such conceptual linkages and relationships in this study. This is because in the first place, the Ayamelum peasantry are opposed to the intervention of the state in their environment and therefore engages in activities inimical to the success of the symbol of state intervention in the area - the Lower Anambra Irrigation Project (LAIP). Furthermore, the advent of the state (and capital) in the clan is responsible (and accounts) for the structural crisis in the agrarian character and peasant economy of Ayamelum clan as the intervention deprived the people of, and displaced them from, their land; the primary essence of their being. The consequence of this deprivation and displacement is the escalation of scarcity of land; a phenomenon previously not in existence or obtainable. Thus, these issues best explain how the intervention of the state in the area through the Lower Anambra Irrigation Project (LAIP) has transformed Ayamelum

Clan in Oyi Local Government Area of Anambra state.

2.7 HYPOTHESES

On the bases of the theoretical exposition outlined above, we may hypothesize as follows:

- (i) The opposition of the Ayamelum peasantry militates against the development and functioning of the Lower Anambra Irrigation Project.
- (ii) The Lower Anambra Irrigation Project and the penetration of capital have adverse effects on agrarianism and the rural economy of the Clan.
- (iii) The Lower Anambra Irrigation Project and the penetration of capital into the Clan lead to population displacement and social conflicts.

2.8 NOTE

1. This is why Godelier (1977:31) argues that:

Peasant societies are class societies within which the peasantry constitutes an exploited class, dominated economically, politically and culturally by a class which no longer participates directly in production.

Chapter Three

METHOD OF RESEARCH

3.0 DATA COLLECTION.

The imperativeness for cost-effective method of gathering data in the rural areas has occupied the attention of researchers for quite sometime now. This is informed by the knowledge and reality that gathering data in the rural areas is often not cost-effective. Chambers (1985:403)attributes this to

...the hegemony of statisticians and the failure to treat statistical method as servant, not master. More generally, professional values and reward systems deter improvisation in learning about rural conditions because, even though the improvised methods are cost-effective, they do not seem pure. Better, it is thought, to be long and legitimate than short and suspect.

One of the approaches to improve on this, therefore, is the evolution and articulation of Rapid Rural Appraisal (RRP). Chambers (1985:404-410) proffers " a short repertoire for Rapid Rural Appraisal". Among these are:

- (i) The use of available written information from the state.
- (ii) Willingness to learn from rural people.

- (iii) The employment of exploratory method in the field.
- (iv) Use of investigations by ad hoc researchers.
- (v) Direct observation.
- (vi) Use of key informants in the field.
- (vii) Group interview to facilitate the cross-checking of information.
- (viii) The informal interview.
- (ix) Aerial inspections and surveys.

These judicious advice will guides us in this study.

However, two major sources were employed in our quest to gather information for this study. These were the <u>primary</u> and <u>secondary</u> sources.

3.1 PRIMARY SOURCES.

Questionnaire method and face-to-face interview were used here. Firstly, the questionnaire enabled us to gather information about the relationship between the Ayamelum people and the Lower Anambra Irrigation Project from a cross-section of the indigenes of the area. This is of utmost importance in order to forestall the pitfalls of some political scientists who only gather information from the elite.

According to Peil (1976:2-3),.

Most of the literature on African development, modernization, social change and planning is written from the point of view of the elites The result of this ... is a disdain for the general public which can be a serious hindrance to the accurate analysis of political events.

Secondly, the questionnaire is cost-effective. This has been pithily stated by Selltiz and his associates.

According to them (1968:153).

(The questionnaire) requires much less skill to administer ... and can often be Administered to a large number of individuals simultaneously ... with a given amount of funds, it is usually possible to cover a wider area and to obtain information from more people by means of questionnaires than by personally interviewing each respondent by telephone.

With regard to the face-to-face interview, it enabled us to garner information about the role of the irrigation project (LAIP) in the transformation of Ayamelum from the "leadership" of the clan. The basis for this decision was predicated on two grounds. First, being usually of high status in their communities, they have been confirmed to be generally more politically aware (Pateman, 1970:104). And secondly, they are the link between the state and capital, and the resources of the clan (Ofuebe, 1986).

3.1.1 THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Ayamelum Clan has a population of about 99,590 and this is distributed unequally amongst the eight communities (see Table 3.1).

Table 3.1.1: Population of Ayamelum Clan

	1963	Estimated	population	
Community	Population			
		1979	1980	1992
Omor	17,337	25,737	26,380	33,940
Ifite Ogwari	9,701	14,401	14,761	18,961
Anaku	6,881	10, 215	10,470	13,350
Umumbo	4,903	7,279	7, 461	9,501
Umerum	4,890	7,259	7,441	9,481
Igbakwu	3,923	5,824	5,969	7,649
Omasi	1,676	2,488	2,550	3,270
Umeje	1,455	2,160	2,214	2,838
Total	50,766	75,363	77,246	99,590

Source:

Ovi Local Government Council Records, 1992.

From this, we drew a representative sample of 800; 100 each for the respective communities. This was considered adequate as the other mechanisms through which we collected data acted as judicious complementarities to the questionnaire method. We stratified the sample equally amongst men and women. This idea is to ensure that our work is not biased against any sexual group. Consequently, we draw a sample of

400 men and 400 women.

Furthermore, the papulation disparities among the Ayamelum communities were played down on because:

- (i) The interview reflected this diversity in population;
- (ii) The sample represented the various strata of Ayamelum society whose opinion we are seeking;
- (iii) This enhanced convenience and clarity while not vitiating the validity of our data (see Garson, 1976: chap.8).

3.1.1.1. Questionnaire Administration:

We identified the market day of each of the villages as the most appropriate period to get a representative sample of the population of each of the communities. This is because it is only on market-days that the people of these communities stay in town (and go to market) as they are predominantly engaged in agricultural activities. The result is that most people of these communities go to their farms on the other days. And most importantly, it is the market that guarantees the highest concentration of diverse people in this clan. Apart from going there to buy and sell, the people of the clan are attracted to the markets as it provides them opportunities of interaction, renewal of friendships, exchange of ideas and

gossips, and so on. Market-days in Ayamelum clan almost tantamount to festival days — festivals that are "celebrated" in the market-place.

Furthermore, it is necessary that we explain the character of Ayamelum markets. First, Ayamelum communities are still pristine societies and the structure of their markets appear to segregate the sexes into two main "sections". These are generically called "Yam" section for the men and "Vegetable" section for the women. The "Yam" section could have some people selling other crops like cassava, potato, etc but these are usually not many. Cassava is mostly sold in the farms when not yet harvested. The trade is called akpu ani and this enables the buyer process the crops according to his/her needs. Garri is not a traditional foodstuff in the clan and uptill now it is not popular. In the same vain, "Vegetable" section connotes where the women stay and sell their products which may include sugar-cane, pepper, melon, etc. Generally, rice is not sold in this market but in the "Mills". Rice business is almost totally controlled by non-indigenes who have the money this business requires.

Therefore, for the market days in each of these communities, we went to the "Yam" section of the markets to obtain our sample for the men.

What we did was to select the first "stall" at the approach of the section if the occupant is an indigene of the village in question. If not, the next one

was chosen. The selection was done alternately.

With regard to female respondents, we chose the "Vegetable" section of the markets. When we got there, the first "stall" at the approach of the section was chosen. But if the occupant was not an indigene of the village in question, the next one was chosen. As with the men, this selection was carried out alternately.

3.1.1.2 Validity and Reliability of the Questionnaire:

To determine the content validity of the questionnaires, we employed judgmental validity. This, according to Garson, enables the researcher find out if he is "measuring what he or she intends to measure" (1976:191). A "Committee" of four people knowledgeable in social research was formed to comment on the questions. These were drawn exclusively from the Faculty of the Social Sciences, University of Nigeria. Those questions that the Committee generally agreed with constituted the questionnaire for this work. This and the pre-test we conducted ensured that the questionnaire was valid and reliable.

3.1.1.3. Pre-Test.

Hundred copies of the questionnaires were used for the test-run. For this purpose, we did a random sample of the eight communities and Umeje was selected. The community's Eke market day was the venue for our administration of our questionnaires.

Our administering procedure for the questionnaires was used. In other words, the "Yam" section provided the venue for the selection of the men who are indigenes of Umeje; the "Vegetable" ones provided that for the women. Fifty questionnaires each were distributed to the men and the women, respectively and these were recovered. The choice of the respondents was done alternately among the stalls. This helped to ensure that our respondents do not share the same social characteristics that could be associated with proximity.

It was discovered from the response we got from the pre-test that the respondents did not find the questions hard to understand.

3.1.1.4 Data Analysis.

We employed the services of the computers in the computer centre of the University of Nigeria, Nsukka. Frequency counts and cross-tabulations were taken. The frequency counts gave us percentages while the cross-tabulations helped us discover whether the demographic data of the respondents influenced their responses.

3.1.2 INTERVIEW.

To determine those we were to interview, we used the reputational approach. We have earlier successfully employed this method (see Ofuebe, 1986; 57-60). The approach views the community as a system of action and examines the structure of political roles involved in the setting of policies. Much of the literature on the problem of community power has been influenced by the lively and continuing dispute over the merits of Floyd Hunter's Community Power Structure, published in 1953. Hunter, a sociologist, described Regional city (a pseudonym for Atlanta, Georgia) as a pyramid of power, in which a small and homogenous group of men worked their will upon the rest of the population.

While Hunter's conclusions were essentially the same as conclusions reached by a number of researchers in other studies of American communities (Agger and Ostron, 1956; Barth and Abu-Laban, 1959; Robert and Lynd, 1929 and 1937), his work has attracted criticisms from scholars who conceive of local power as having many centers rather than a single centre (see Kaufman and Jones, 1954:205-212). Their views later came to be dubbed "the pluralist alternative" (Polsby, 1960).

However, of the several techniques that have so far been developed for the isolation of leaders in a community (see Form and Miller, 1960: 544

- 546), the one used in this study is that of Delbert C. Miller and Willian H. Form (see Hanson, 1959:663).the technique, as they used it in their work, merely involves

A panel of 14 people... carefully selected on the basis of their knowledge of the pattern of local influence in various institutional sectors of city life. Thus the panel was made of two representative each from mass communication, business, government, and religion. They were asked to submit names of local people whom they felt were most influential and powerful... (Form and Saur. 1962:2).

In the study in question, leaders were defined as "locally powerful people who could get things done in the city or who could kill local projects". From the resulting list of 120 names, 40 which received the most nominations were interviewed, and asked to "validate" themselves as leaders. They were also asked a wide array of questions dealing with their personal background and their present and past participation in the community. On the basis of these data, community decision-making in Lansing, Michigan, was described and analyzed.

However, for our purpose, our "Panel" consisted of the eight traditional rulers in the clan, the member of the present Anambra State House of Assembly from the area, the two indigenes who were former members of the then Anambra State House of Assembly, 1979-1983 and

the chairman of the respective Town Unions of the various communities in Ayamelum Clan. These people are knowledgeable in "the pattern of local influence in various institutional sectors" of the clan. To ensure that the information they will give are not egotistic, invalid and unreliable, our ponalists were implored not to nominate themselves.

The minor changes that we have effected on the "Miller-Form theory" were inevitable. Afterall, the Universality in the application of social science theories across cultures is questionable (O' Barr et al, 1973: passim). In addition, Oyovbaire (1984:129) has "drawn attention to the sufferance of Nigeria political science arising from the tyrannies of labels and paradigms intended originally to understand European and European-like social realities."

Nevertheless, the panelists were asked the following questions adapted from Shulze and Blumberg (1957: 292):

- (i) Suppose a major project were before the Ayamelum community, one that require decision by a group of leaders whom nearly everyone would accept; which people of Ayamelum origin would you choose to make up this group-regardless of whether or not you know them personally?
- (ii) In most communities certain persons are said to be influential

- "behind the scenes" and to have a lot to say about programmes that are planned, projects and issues that come up around town. Which persons in Ayamelum clan are influential in this way?
- (iii) If a decision were to be made at Awka, capital of Anambra State, that affected Ayamelum clan, who would be the best contact man to get in touch with state officials?
- (iv) Who would be the best people to get in touch with government officials in Nteje (headquarters of Oyi Local Government Area), Awka and Abuja?
- (v) Are there any other people whom these leaders work with and who have not been named so far, but who should be included in a list of community leaders?

When we collected the lists from the panelists, we discovered that of the 47 names listed, 25 of them had the highest nominations. This means that our panelists had ranked them highest in the possession of influence. These 25 people were subsequently intensively interviewed on how the establishment of the lower Anambra Irrigation project and the invasion of capital in the area has transformed Ayamelum clan. The discussions and interrogations revolved around the themes that embody the hypotheses for this work (see Hypotheses, chapter 2).

In addition to the indigenous people whose name will be got through the reputational approach, face - to - face interviews were conducted with the Project Manager and the two field engineers of the Lower Anambra Irrigation Project; the General Manager and Public Relation Officers of the Anambra-Imo River Basin and Rural Development Authority; and some of the Managers and workers of the private farms and agro-based industries in the clan. And, of course, my experiences and knowledge as an indigene of the area came in handy in the carrying out of this study.

3.2 SECONDARY SOURCES.

This encompassed the available written and/or published materials such as minutes od meetings, Government publications, mimeographs, correspondences, books, magazines, journals, newspapers, articles and so on that were of relevance to this work. Needless to say, these sources were of paramount importance in the execution of this study.

Furthermore, it is pertinent to mention that we had a massive compendium of material available to us as our secondary sources. Consequently, we had to employ painstaking and rigorous logic and informed content analyses to determine the validity and reliability of our secondary sources. The most important of which was that each theme in

our discussion has at least two opposing perspectives that greatly enhanced our perception of such social realities in our discourse. These perceptives were properly documented in written form.

Chapter Four

AYAMELUM PEASANTRY AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE LOWER ANAMBRA IRRIGATION PROJECT (LAIP)

4.1 INTRODUCTION: THE PROJECT.

In 1974, the Nigerian government commissioned NIPPON KOEI, a Japanese firm of consulting engineers, to investigate the agricultural potentials of the Do-Anambra River area. The company identified seven areas totalling 20, 000 hectares as suitable for irrigated rice production projects. Among these were the ADARICE Project and the Lower Anambra Irrigation Project (Mama, 1985:3).

In september 1980, the government of Nigeria requested the Japanese government for financial assistance for the establishment of the Lower Anambra Irrigation Project (LAIP). In November 1980, as requested by the Government of Nigeria, Overseas Economic Co-operation Fund (OECF) of Japan sent an evaluation team for a two-week study of Nigeria. The Evaluation Report observed that the LAIP has enormous potential for agricultural development and rice cultivation with irrigation. The Report concluded that the project was technically sound and financially feasible.

The OECF decided to support the LAIP and finance it with a special loan of 16.9 billion Yen under the following conditions:

- (i) Loan Amount Yen 16.9 billion
- (ii) Loan Period 7 years from 8th october, 1981 to 7th october, 1988.
- (iii) Repayment Interest rate: 3.5% per annum with 10 year moratorium and 35 year repayment
- (iv) Scope of Loan Construction of project facilities for LAIP, Engineering services and contingency. (FRN\AIRBRDA, 1991:2).

The LAIP area is located about 55km west of Enugu, in Oyi Local Government Area of Anambra state. The area extends on a gently undulating topography over an area of more than 5,000 hectares (ha); however, only 3,850 ha of land has been put to use. The climate is characterized by two distinct seasons, rainy and dry, and it is possible to operate double cropping of rice by application of Irrigation water. The soil in the project is favourable for irrigated rice cultivation. The water source for this irrigation project is the Anambra River at Ifite ogwari (drought discharge: 39 cumec) (Figure 2).

The potential of the project area has been recognized on account of its favourable physical conditions which enable most of the tropical crops to grow throughout the year. The objective in developing this area

GENERAL LAYOUT Head Race and Main Irrigation Canal Secondary Irrigation Canal Tertiary and Distribution irrigation Canal Trunk Road Village Area North West Zone Bifurcation North East Zone OMOR EAST MAIN CANAL South East Zone South West Zone 790 ha

have been three-fold:

- (i) To produce food for the growing population.
- (ii) To raise living standard and to increase the productive capacity of the people in and around the project area.
- (iii) To contribute to improved distribution of population in the project area by means of creating new farmland complete with infrastructure (FRN\AIRBRDA, 1991:3).

In any case, the project area consists of 31 turnout areas, 18 in the East and 13 in the West area, which are sub-divided into 290 blocks in total as the rotational irrigation blocks. The area of the rotational irrigation blocks vary from 4.0 ha to 24.4 ha. The rotational irrigation blocks are further sub-divided into a number of farm plots. A tropical plot is designed to have an area of 0.5 ha (50m x 100m) (FRN\AIRBRDA,1991:v-i).

The major objective of the agricultural development to be realised from the project area include:

- (i) Increase of food production in the country in order to achieve selfsufficiency of food as early as possible. Moreover, it is hoped to save foreign exchange reserve by decreasing food importation.
- (ii) Introduction of advanced farming techniques for high crop production together with intensive training to project staff and

farmers.

(iii) Formulation of optimum cropping pattern, establishment of farm management and farmers' organization (Federal Ministry of water Resources, nd:4).

According to a Nigerian government publication:

In recent years, farmers around the project area have been expanding their rice cropping areas under the influence of this irrigation project. Moreover, their standard of living, education and health conditions are much improved compared with those of 1981 at the commencement of the project (Federal Ministry of Water Resources, nd:4).

This assertion is to be verified by the issues raised and discussed in the subsequent pages that follow in this study. What is definitely not contentious is that the Ayamelum peasants and people have been displaying oppositional tendencies with regard to the project. These can be aptly encapsulated accordingly:

- (i) The compensation question and the Development of the LAIP.
- (ii) Racist innuendoes and the stature of LAIP.
- (iii) Use of rice-fields and LAIP facilities.

4.2. THE COMPENSATION QUESTION AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF LAIP

The Ayamelum peasants whose land was acquired for the establishment of the Lower Anambra Irrigation Project were never part of the labourious and prolonged negotiations for the setting up of the project.

This is confirmed by our respondents as Table 4.1. shows.

TABLE 4.1. PARTICIPATION IN NEGOTIATIONS FOR LAIP.

RESPONSE	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Yes No Don't know	.760 .40	0.0 95.0 5.0
TOTAL	800	100.00

Thus, it will be quite appropriate to argue that it is the bountiful potentialities of their land that attracted the project to the area. In the same vein, they were incapable of distinguishing the following important dimensions to the project:

- (i) Funding Government of Nigeria and OECF, Japan.
- (ii) Supervising Engineers NIPPON KOEI CO.LTD. Japan.
- (iii) Contractor TAISEI C. ITOH Consortium, Japan.

 According to the traditional rules of Umumbo community, which

incidentally is effectively surrounded by the rice-fields of LAIP, Igwe Augustine Nweke (1992), "no agreement was reached between us and the Japanese firms regarding land". This would not be necessary as the <u>Land Use Decree</u> has properly taken care of this by investing in the state power over land within its jurisdiction.

Igwe Nweke (1992), however, averred that the information he got was that the land for the rice-fields were to be prepared by the government and the peasant farmers will then go cultivating the fields. He said that compensation was promised them but this will be only for damages to economic trees and other personal things destroyed in the course of the construction of the Project. Nothing will be paid for land as government would not own the land "but hopes to hand it back to the people. The intention of government, we are told", argues Igwe Nweke, "is to make our land more profitable for agricultural activities."

The compensation to be paid can be categorized into two. First, those specifically for individuals whose property were destroyed. And two, those for communally owned property which means that implicit therein is a commonality of ownership among a collectivity of people held together by some primordial affiliation. In addition, the Assistant Project Manager, LAIP, Engr. Eme Uche (1992) proffers another form of compensation.

According to him, special consideration and allocations of land for rice cultivation are given to the communities whose land were massively appropriated for the development of the rice-fields. These according to him, "are Omor, Umumbo and Umerum who have right of cultivation over 50% of their land through the caring innovation and ingenuity of the LAIP management".

One outstanding issue here is that the resettlements of those dispossessed were not organized and essentially such peasants were left to their own devices. Our respondents are totally in agreement with this assertion as Table 4.2 clearly shows.

TABLE 4.2 RESETTLEMENT ARRANGEMENT FOR THE DISPLACED

RESPONSE	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Yes No Don't know	- 800 -	0.0 100.0 0.0
TOTAL	800	100.0.

What is more, a World Bank report has indicted this administrative lapse.

According to it,

Such procedures are quite contrary to World Bank requirements and in the future Federal Government of Nigeria, if it wishes to obtain Bank or other external official assistance for its irrigation development prgrammes, will have to provide comparable facilities to displacees as those they enjoyed ante-development (FAO/WORLD BANK, 1991:38).

It is instructive that this report did not make provisions for the rectification of the already prevailing anomaly. This appears not to be out tradition of that organization. Afterall, the world Bank has been unrelenting in its proselytism of Africa governments on the futility of social expenditure in the development process. Taking care of the already displaced who have not even disrupted state activities tantamounts to a monumental social expenditure!

4.2.1 MODALITIES FOR MAKING CLAIMS FOR COMPENSATION

The contractor of the Anambra-Imo River Basin and Rural Development Authority (AIRBRDA), TAISEI-C. ITOH, who were executing the irrigation project (LAIP) informed the "villagers" that payments would be made to them for damages inflicted on their economic trees and crops in the process of the construction of either the canal or the preparation of the rice-fields. Consequently, the Japanese company engaged "Assessment Clerks." Their duties were essentially three-folds:

(i) Receiving of reports of damages from the villagers.

- (ii) Investigating and ascertaining the authenticity of these alleged damages.
- (iii) Recording and forwarding to the company the verified damages.

These "clerks" used a proforma chart like this one given to Mr. John Nweke for Umuawa community in their assessment of all damages resulting from the construction of the project (Table 4.3).

TABLE 4.3: COMPENSATION WORK ON HEADRACE (PEG NO. 0+50 - 36 + 00)

ACTUAL COUNTING OF ECONOMIC TREES FOR UMUAWA COMMUNITY, IFITE OGWARI.

ACTUAL COUNTING LOCATION	P T	AK P T	N T	AGT	7 -	A K T	ЭВ	l B
LOCATION NO. 1 LOCATION NO. 2 LOCATION NO. 3 LOCATION NO. 4 LOCATION NO. 5 LOCATION NO. 6 LOCATION NO. 7	6 103 - 4 1 9 3	5	13 2 - - 1	- - 1 2	2	. 6 5		- - - 7 100
TOTAL	126	6	16	3	5	11	-	107

Source: AIRBRDA Records

PT = Palm Tree.

AKPT = Akpalata Tree.

NT = Ngwu Tree.

AGT = Agbono Tree.

UT = Ururu Tree.

AKT = Akwamili Tree.

UB = Ubili Tree.

IB = Indian Bamboo

\SGD\

ACHEBE ALPHONSUS

FOR: PROJECT COORDINATOR

Unfortunately, these assessment exercises did not work out as meticulously as intended. Instead, the exercise transformed into a scramble for state funds. This was done at three levels: (i) amongst the people of Ayamelum clan; (ii) within state apparatus represented by the Project Officials; and (iii) the extraneous scavengers mostly represented by the lawyers who swarmed the area in search of clients that would given them the "power of attorney," that will give the lawyer superintendent rights over associated compensation money.

According to Vincent Nweke (1992), the Speaker of Oyi Local Government Council, the damages assessment exercise in Ayamelum was an exercise in futility because most of the people whose economic trees were destroyed were never recognized for payment whereas those whose property were not even close to the project area had their names entered into the payment roster. In addition, he continued, some self-appointed leaders of some groups of peasants had their names written as the bona fide owners of those peasants' damaged crops and trees. The result was that on payment day, most of those peasants had to cry home in agony. Uptill today, recounts Agboso Udegbune (62) a peasant farmer of Amadie village in Ifite Ogwari, "I have been waiting in vain that they will come and pay me since then (August 1983). Right now (May 1992), nobody has paid

me anything for all my palm-trees destroyed in the process of the construction of the irrigation canal." Udegbune admitted that he reported the damages to his trees to "the people" but since he does not know how to write or read, he did not know what the officials wrote in their book. What perplexed him, he said, was that on the day of payment, his name was not called up for compensation. It is definitely this kind of incidents that made 95% of our respondents to believe that compensation for damaged crops and trees were not fairly handled as shown in Table 4.4.

TABLE 4.4 FAIRNESS IN HANDLING OF PAYMENT FOR DAMAGED ECONOMIC TREES

RESPONSES	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Yes No Don't know	40 760	5.0 95.0 0.0
TOTAL	800	100.0

Furthermore, those who were compensated had only paltry sums of money to show for their damaged crops and trees. For instance, some people were earmarked for payment of compensation as a result of damages emanating from the construction of the LAIP pumping station and an access road to the place. Table 4.5 shows the names of the people,

their full compensation, 50% of payment and the actual money paid. The difference between 50% of payment and the actual money paid is the 10% charge of the legal practitioner who acted as attorney. It is noteworthy that uptill now, the outstanding 50% has not been paid and there is a palpable disinterest among Project officials to discuses this issue. A massive pressure mounted on them for clarifications on this only succeeded in eliciting a reference to the Ministry who pleaded "lack of funds."

TABLE 4.5 CROP VALUATION, IFITE OGWARI COMMUNITY; PUMPING STATION AND ACCESS ROAD

S/No	CLAIMANT	FULL COMPENS ATION #	50% PAYMENT #	ACTUAL AMOUNT PAID #
1	Udekwe Udenze	1,004.00	502.00	451.80
2	Okafor Anakwe	1,010.00	505.00	454.50
3	Ogugua Ekwunife	492.00	246.00	221.00
4	Onwa Anekwe	216.00	108.00	97.20
5	Okoye Nwalieji	206.00	103.00	92.00
6	Emeka Nwalieji	186.00	93.00	83.70
7	Udenze Ogugua	421.00	210.00	188.95
8	Onuora Anyanwumelu	45.00	22.50	20.45
9	Joseph Machi	326.00	163.00	146.00
10	Nweke Okoye	315.00	107.00	96.00
11	Mgboye Okoye	34.00	17.00	15.00
12	Obanwusi Obanyelu	345.00	172.50	115.00
13	Chineke Mabia	221.00	110.00	99.00
14	Okoye Nzegwu	538.00	269.00	242.10

S\No	CLALMANT	FULL CONPENSAT- ION #	50% PAYMENT	ACTUAL AMOUNT PAID #
15	Ignatus Anagor	45.00	22.50	20.45
16	Cyprian Oguqua	613,00	306.50	275.85
17	Alexandra Udah	203.00	101.50	91.35
18	Onyeaka Nnagbogu	853.00	426.50	383.85
19	Ekwealor Umadi	610,00	305.00	274.50
20	Ezinwa Anikwe	655.00	327.50	294.75
21	Dominic Ejike	145,50	71.75	64.58
22	Roseline Ekwnife	150,00	75.00	67.50
23	Okoye Nwanna	230.00	145.00	103.50
24	Ignatius Chidile	92.00	46.00	41.40
25	Ifenu Ogugua	78.00	39.00	35.00
26	Onyemaenu Machi	100,00	55.00	49.50
27	Okonkwo Obali	45.00	22.50	20.25
28	Okonkwo lkegbuna	11.60	5.80	5,22
29	Augustine Okadigwe	185.00	92.50	83.25
30	Peter Ogugua	193.00	96.50	86.85
31	Sylvester Anizor	830.00	415.00	373.50
32	Ugo Nwofia	40.00	20.00	18.00
33	Okuata Madubuegwu	252.00	126.00	113.40
34	lkebudu Oke	420.00	210.00	189.00
35	Adamma Nwalieji	49.00	22.50	20.00
	TOTAL	11,169.10	5,531.55	4,996.20

SOURCE:

AIRBRDA Records.

Investigations reveal that what determined the amount of compensation paid to people was not strictly the quantity of <u>actual</u> and verifiable damaged crops and trees but the following: (i) level of elightenment of the individual concerned; (ii) the relationship between the persons whose property were damaged and the "clerks" who are Ayamelum indigenes; and (iii) the amount of gratification the individual in question was prepared to pay the "clerk". As a result of this, these assessment clerks struck it big then. For instance, one of then had to

acquire a peugeot 504 GR salon car and a one-story building.

However, the greatest cases of malfeasance are associated with communally paid compensation for damageds. This view is shared by 90% of our respondents as table 4.6.shows. for instance,

TABLE 4.6 MALFEASANCE AND COMPENSATION FOR DAMAGES.

RESPONSE	FIRST	SECOND	Don't know		
Individual compensation	10.0	90.0	0.0		
Compensation to communities	90.0	10.0	0.0		
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	0.0		

For instance, Ifite Ogwari community was paid #4,182.75 being 50% of compensation for damageds resulting from the HEADRACE of the project. In addition, N1,364.40 was paid for the construction of the pumping station and Access Road to the Station. These monies were collected on behalf

of the community by Peter Ekwunife, Daniel Mgbakor and John Nweke (AIRBRDA, nd). We were informed that the money has been shared. By whom? With what criteria? And who are the people who benefited from the sharing? These questions attracted looks of astonishment (and then, smile) that we should be asking such childish questions. The truth of the matter is that the money has been embezzled on behalf of Ifite Ogwari. This, however, is infinitesimal compared with what happened at Omor and Umumbo.

In Umumbo, two kinds of compensations were paid to them. The first was to the whole Umumbo community. The second, and which is the relevant subject matter for this section ,was specifically to Iboji Quarters of Umumbo community. The people of Iboji and those of Isiokwe, Anikwe and Umuanyara, Atu-uria, all of Omor community were engaged in a land dispute that was before the courts prior to the advent of LAIP. The project (LAIP) enveloped the contentious land and therefore made the court cases irrelevant and wasteful. Consequently, the leadership of the parties to the dispute decided to bury the hatchet and share the compensation money that would be paid to them for damages to their economic trees.

The problem arose as to the modalities of sharing of the money which is about N100,000.00 (one hundred thousand naria). Whereas Iboji

people of Umumbo asked for equal sharing between them and the Omor people, the Omor people maintained that since three parties - Isiokwu, Amaekwe; Umuanyara, Atu-uria; and Iboji, Umumbo, were engaged in the land dispute in court and paid for legal services accordingly, the sharing should reflect these parties. In other words the money should be shared into three equal parts. Iboji people refused and walked out of the discussions without collectively getting any money out of the lump sum paid. It is disheartening that that money has been shared without the Iboji people collectively getting anything. And nothing has happened about this. Why? Four things account for this:

- (i) One or two people of Iboji, Umumbo went and got some pittance for themselves from that compensation money and therefore legally served the interest of Iboji, Umumbo.
- (ii) At this point in time, the Umumbo community was embroiled in an intense and fatalistic communal disagreement over the management of the compensation money paid the community as a group. With this kind of problem that effectively polarized the Umumbo community into two antagonistic factions, the unity and zeal to pursue a cause was lacking among Iboji people.

- (iii) Paul Obidigwe, a lawyer, from Atu-uria was a Board member of the Anambra-Imo River Basin and Rural Development Authority (AIRBRDA), the owners of the project. His position was quite intimidating to the peasants of Iboji, Umumbo and so they felt it was already a lost battle.
- (iv) Onyekwuluje & Co., legal practitioners, holds the power of attorney for this particular compensation money. Barrister Obidigwe, the Board member, has a professional relationship and association with that legal firm. That, consequently, made the case of Iboji, Umumbo a frustrating and no-win one.

Nevertheless, the quest for compensation has been unrelenting. For instance, on 26th February, 1986, the Amikwe (Omor) land committee in a correspondence to the General Manager, Anambra River Basin and Rural Development Authority, Aguleri (the Imo variant was then made autonomous, but now lost) and signed by H.N. Okonkwo, Chairman and B.E. Iwegbunam, Secretary (1986a:1),

Wishes to remind you that up till now, nothing has been paid to our community as compensation for trees and crops destroyed on our land. These trees and crops on our land are the very foundation of our existence. We the members of Amikwe Land committee have tried our best to restrain our people even at our own risks. We are therefore requesting that, you take urgent steps to pay the compensation and save our people from further sufferings.

This got them no positive response; creating the impression that this is the Authority's latest strategy in her relations with Ayamelum people regarding the operations of the LAIP. For instance, George Okoye has a dam constructed during the administration of Dr. M. I. Okpara who pursued a revolutionary agricultural programme. Mr. Okoye's dam is one of the enduring legacies of that programme. Unfortunately, the construction of the canal for Lower Anambra Irrigation project has almost filled up the dam with sand excavated in the course of the contractors's civil works. Mr. Okoye has made representations to the Authority and even engaged the services of a lawyer but nothing has been heard from the Basin Authority, owner of LAIP.

John Ekwunife of Umuawa village, Ifite Ogwari, adds a new dimension to the activities of the management of LAIP. His lawyer, M. E. Eze Esq legal practitioner, explains:

- (1) My client (John Ekwunife) informed me that in or about 31st October, 1991, the staff of your Authority recklessly or negligently pumped or caused water to be pumped through the Authority's canal thereby causing water to over flow the canal.
- (2) That as a result of the over-flow of the canal, water escaped from the canal and over-ran my client's rice farm, covered

- same with mud and caused extensive damaged to his fully grown rice.
- (3) It is also my instruction that the farm so damaged by the reckless or negligent act of the staff of your Authority is worth N18,000.00.

TAKE NOTICE therefore that you have been given up to 21 days... to pay, to my client, through this Chamber, the said sum of N18,000.00, being the cost of my client's rice farm which was damaged by... your Authority (M. E. Eze, 1991: 1).

John Ekwunife has not been paid any compensation for his rice farm and the Authority's management has not even replied his lawyer's letter in any tangible way. The Ayamelum people are finding this apparent insensitivity and indifference most intolerable. Consequently, the Amikwe Land Committee wrote the General Manager of the Authority at Aguleri. The Committee observed that "it is unfortunately that uptill now, nothing has been done to pay compensation to our people". It continued:

We have stated our plight in very clear terms to you over these periods. We are using this medium to request that on no account should you <u>interfere with our land any longer</u> until the compensation for our damaged crops, trees and structures have been fully paid (H. N. Okonkwo and B. lwegbunam, 1986b:1)

As usual (see Table 4.7), the Authority was not impressed by the implied threat therein.

TABLE 4.7 THREATS AND ITS IMPACT ON LAIP MANAGEMENT.

	·	<u> </u>		·
RESPONSE	FIRST	SECOND	THIRD	FOURTH
Not at all	95.7	10.7	0.0	0.0
Always	0.0	1.3	10.6	90.0
Sometimes	2.3	80.0	5.4	0.0
Don't know	2.0	7.5	75.0	10.0
	J.			
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

However, the Amikwe people did not want the business-as-usual tendencies of the LAIP management to go on. According to Engr.Uche (1992), Assistant Project manager, LAIP, the Amikwe community is the problem the Project is having as they have driven away other farmers and have insisted that they alone were going to exclusively farm their area of the rice fields.

Amikwe community is not the only people that have been having a running battle with the Project Management. Ifite Ogwria is another. According to John Modokwe (1986:1), Security Guard, LAIP, in an obviously impetuous and unprocedural correspondence to the

Administrator, Uzo-Uwani L. G. A., "I hereby wish to bring to your notice that Ifite Ogwari town is still damaging the (irrigation) canal by fishing there with hoes and knives". He goes on:

You can get more facts about Ifite Ogwari attitude from pumping station to peg No.46 plus 22 along old Umeje road and from there to peg No.105 along Umumbo canal road.

Modokwe insists that he is not against Ifite Ogwari people fetching water from they canal but that they should construct concrete embankment that "would facilitate easy movement to and from the edge of the canal" and generally forestall erosion in the canal area.

Water problem in Ifite Ogwari and the necessity to utilize the canal water are all resulting from the construction of the irrigation canal. During the civil works for the canal, <u>all</u> the traditional sources of water supply in Ifite Ogwari - Ube, Atamele, and Ahala - were destroyed and no replacements provided. All representations to the Basin Authority to come to the help of the harried and deprived villagers have not attracted any provision of alternative source(s) of portable water to replace their naturally endowed spring water. Thus, the view of W.O. Okonkwo (1986:1), General Manager, Anambra River Basin and Rural Development Authority that "from the most recent indications, the position would seem to be that various

communities concerned are beginning to appreciate the necessity for them not to swim and wash their personal effects, etc., in the main irrigation canals in order not to damage the expensive infrastructural facilities involved" appears misplaced. This is because the Assistant Project Manager LAIP still complains of the same use of canal water by Ifite Ogwari people in particular and other Ayamelum communities in general (in 1992). His major grouse is that Ayamelum people are destroying their canals. Ayamelum people counter that they must use water, afterall the LAIP destroyed their water and never provided replacements. Thus, it is a war situation. Sylvester Metala (1986a:1), then Administrator, Uzo-Uwani Local Government, surmise the situation aptly:

It is however, equally sad to note that we people of Ifite-Ogwari. Omor and Umumbo suffer a double menace both in the hands of the Fulani cattle rearers and in the hands of your River Basin Development men at Omor who under the direct supervision of their Project Manager, carry out incessant, acrimonious and sadistic raids on our helpless and defenceless people who try to get some drinking water from your canal. With (their vehicles), they carry our men, wives and children together with their buckets, dripping clothes, headpans, bicycles, etc, to the Police Station at Omor, lock them up there for days without food, and finally make them pay heavy fines under a dubious arrangement with the police at Omor. The first time your people from Omor came for this inhuman raid at Ifite Ogwari, somebody raised an alarm that they were armed robbers, and but for the timely identification of one of our sons in their midst, Ifite Ogwari would have finished them. All appeals and representations to the Project

Manager i/c Omor location to get the Authority to construct cancrete steps at reasonable intervals through which my people will go to draw water from the canal have failed. Not only is the water in the canal drawn from our Anambra River but also our streams and springs, our traditional sources of water supply were destroyed in the process. So, while you cry against Fulani cattle menace, you and your people at Omor constitute a worse menace to my people. So, while you seek the solution to Fulani cattle menace to your project, my administration is busy seeking the solution to your menace.

4.3 RACIST INNUENDOES AND THE STATURE OF THE LOWER ANAMBRA IRRIGATION PROJECT

It will not be incorrect and inappropriate to categorize the LAIP as the "baby" of Japanese capital mediated by their home government and midwived by the Government of Nigeria. From the very genesis of the conceptualization of the project, the Nigeria government has been reposing complete confidence in the Japanese to handle satisfactorily the blossoming of the agricultural venture. It is pertinent to point out, however, that the Overseas Economic Co-operation Fund (OECF) of Japan participated in the funding of LAIP; but so had the Nigerian government.

TABLE 4.8 PROJECT WORKS AND PROJECT COST.

WORKS	COST	
	Yen (Million)	Naira (Thousand)
(1) Construction of main Engineering Works (2) Construction of Rice Mill	12,290	16,100
complex and Workshop (3) Construction of Basin Facilities,	2,390	3,220
spare Parts, etc.	740	310
	0	
TOTAL	15,420	18,680

SOURCE: Federal Ministry of Water Resources (nd) <u>The Rice Production Program: The Lower Anambra Project,</u> Federal government of Nigeria, P.3

Table 4.8 shows that the Nigerian government contributed well over 18 (eighteen) million naira to the Project. The Yen component is the contribution of the OECF of Japan. Even though the Assistant Project Manager, LAIP insist that the figures are not correct especially the Nigerian part of the funding, the point really is to show conclusively that two parties - Japan and Nigeria - financed the Project. Inspite of that, Japanese companies alone did all the works salient to the completion of the project. They did the feasibility studies through NIPPON KOEI CO., who were further retained as

"Supervising Engineer". The contractor was TAISEI - C. ITOH Consortium of Japan. This provided ample opportunity for the "Japanese factor" to completely envelop the Project. Everything there is from Japan - vehicles, collapsible buildings, office equipment and "know all" about rice "experts". These "experts" are to train Nigerians. There is something disturbing about the Japanese attitude towards black people. It would appear that their compact but miniature frame and stature are incapable of containing the burning conundrum of racist prejudice and denigration within them. They manifest this at the international level and at the local level.

At the international level, Okelo Oculi (1992:2) argues that,

Japanese leaders at the very highest level have in recent years repeatedly made very racist remarks of denigration about African people, including African Americans in the United State... In the light of this, we African people have a right to insist that the IPRA (International Peace Research Association) Executive will vigorously protect African participants of racism against them at the (Japan) conference. At the 1983 IPRA conference in GYOR, HUNGARY, I was personally insulted by a Japanese youngman, without provocation, in the presence of Mrs. Sakamoto.

At the local level, Japanese racism in LAIP is perceptible and pervasive, inspite of the briefings given to them by their embassy on the racial sensibilities of Nigerians. We shall look at Japanese racism in LAIP

from two perspectives. First, in relation with enlightened Nigerians and second, as it relates to the Ayamelum peasantry.

As Oculi implies above, Japanese racism knows no creed or enlightenment. So it has been in the LAIP location at Ayamelum. The Japanese maintains an exclusive quarters in the area where blacks are not welcome, expcept perhaps as domestic servants. Any Nigerian's social status is irrelevant here. For instance, Slyvester Metala, the then Chairman/Administrator of Uzo-Uwani Local Government Area was a victim. He was snobbed when he went there and in exasperation thundered to the Project Manager, TAISEI - C. ITOH:

Please take note that because of your discriminatory and racist attitude in receiving me in a hut by your gate when I visited your location on 24th November, 1986, and your uncooperative attitude in not responding positively to appeals both from your client, the Manager incharge of Omor location of Anambra-Imo River Basin Development Authority, you are with effect from 28th November, 1986 not, repeat not, to fetch water anymore from the water bore-hole, Umuokpa, nor from any river/stream in Uzo-Uwani Local Government Area (1986b:1).

This order was to subsist untill appropriate fees to be charged had been determined by the Council. It was an unimagined crisis for the Japanese. The Ayamelum peasants were quite elated and, without payments or any compensation from the Council, helped the Council staff

to chase away TAISEI - C. ITOH officials from water sources and quarries.

The Project Manager was subsequently withdrawn from the area. But that did not annihilate the apparently innate racist sensibilities to the Japanese.

The workplace of LAIP is racially organized. The Japanese have their tastefully prepared offices distinct from that of blacks. The relationship between the two is superficial. For instance, in the course of this research, we needed to photocopy some documents. Unfortunately, the Japanese machine supplied the blacks for doing this has packed up and was taken out for repairs. The machines, however, in the Japanese area were performing. We were highly perplexed when a management staff of LAIP declined to go to them to do the photocopying for us. According to him, the Japanese people find such intrusions most objectionable.

The relationship between the Japanese and the Ayamelum peasantry fluctuates. It could be paternalistic as reflected in the Japanese giving them gifts such as toys, clothing, etc. or, when advising them on rice cultivation mannerisms. On the other hand, it could be condescending as most noticeable in their idiosyncracies towards Ayamelum people; and /or bossy especially in the workplace regarding their relationship with their Ayamelum workers.

When the Japanese were constructing the LAIP every Ayamelum

person who worked for them was seen and treated as a labourer. Augustine Onuorah, a Civil Engineer, from Umuawa village, Ifite Ogwari was an example. He worked for them after his National Service. Thus, academic attainment of Ayamelum people never impressed them for regular employment to important positions.

In addition, the recruitment procedure which the Japanese adopted was most arbitrary. People were hired without due process and proper documentation inspite of their level of academic attainment as Mr. Onuoah's case above shows. They were simply "casual workers". Consequently, dismissal of their workers were also most arbitrary. After all, they had abundant cheap labour to play with. The work schedule the Japanese adopted was quite excruciating. Work normally started by 7.00am and ended by 5.00pm. They equally devised a crafty over-time payment arrangement that appealed to the rapacious instincts of the Ayamelum people. The result was that the peasants abandoned their farms and rushed to work for the Japanese. This was the genesis of the generalized monetized economy of Ayamelum clan that would be consummated with the "rice agriculture" that the LAIP engendered.

Meanwhile, the Ayamelum people eventually saw the futility of abandoning their farms in order to work for the TAISET - C. ITOH. Table 4.9

shows that 85% of our respondents did not believe that participating in the construction of the LAIP was beneficial to Ayamelum people.

TABLE 4.9: AYAMELUM PEOPLE AND WORKING IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF LAIP: BENEFICIAL?.

RESPONSE	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Yes No Don't know	40 680 80	5.0 85.0 10.0
TOTAL	800.00	100.00

Consequently, oppositional tendencies towards the construction of the LAIP started. Pilfering of construction material became rampant and this, according to those who participated in the works, was the easiest route to meriting a dismissal. Secondly, some of those manning equipment started mishandling them. Anagor Odolo, a heavy equipment operator from Ama village, Ifite Ogwari, was notorious for this. He got hired and fired so many times that observers concluded that the Japanese must be finding it hard to replace him. The point really was that Mr.Odolo was wallowing in frustration and disillusionment. Finally, vehicles and tanker drivers were another serious source of worry for the Japanese. Many of them (the drivers), engineered mechanisms for putting their vehicles to use for private gains. For instance, water tanker drivers sold their waters to private users,

tractor drivers went to people's farms to work for them for a fee and those whose vehicles could carry people became transporters.

It is important to point out that these misdemeanor are not peculiar to TAISEI - C. ITOH workers. However, their magnitude and pervasiveness constituted an irritating distraction for the Japanese.

4.4 USE OF RICE FIELDS AND LAIP FACILITIES

This will be discussed under problems of:

- (i) land allocation; (ii) water; (iii) farming machinery;
- (iv) fertilizers; and (v) work schedule.

4.4.1. LAND ALLOCATION:

Koehn (1987:163-4) contends:

Control over the distribution of land use rights provides a particularly potent means by which the state bureaucratic bourgeoisie can promote its own class interest and/or act in a comprador role.

...land allocation policies and decisions constitute a critical indicator of class action.

At the commencement of operations of LAIP, land allocations was a herculean exercise, the impact of which the lion-hearted alone can withstand. The Ayamelum peasants were the most affected in this matter

as Table 4.10 shows.

Table 4.10 IS GETTING LAND FROM LAIP MANAGEMENT EASY FOR AYAMELUM PEOPLE ?

RESPONSE	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Yes No Don't know	0.0 800.0 0.0	0.0 100.0 0.0
TOTAL	800.0	100.0

Even though the Assistant Project Manager, LAIP, insists that special considerations and allocations are given to the communities whose lands have been acquired for the preparation of the rice fields, extraneous pressures and manipulations from the urban people - civil servants, business men, military officers, etc - made it difficult for the peasants of Ayamelum to get land. At that time, LAIP had a mellifluous connotation that was irresistible to the acquisitive instincts and appetite of the urban elements.

In addition, as the pressure for land allocation was much, this necessarily engendered corrupt practices in terms of location of land and quantity for allocation. The urban people are wealthier and better connected and therefore could have their ways; all to the disadvantages of

rural people. Incidences such as this informed Lipton (1977:13) to argue that:

The most important class conflict in poor countries of the world today is not between labour and capital. Nor is it between foreign and national interests. It is between the rural and the urban classes.

Furthermore, bureaucratization of the land allocation process gave rise to two additional problems. First, it was time wasting and second, it led to lateness in farming. The result is generalized protests. This was in form of representations to the Management of LAIP or the farmers refusing to give up their previously allocated plot to new entrants. To forestall the continuation of this type of problem, the management of LAIP has now started allocating land on a "semi-permanent basis" of four-yearly retentions.

This is seen as belated as pressure on the LAIP officials for the allocation of land in their rice fields has diminished drastically. According to one observer, the farmers "have voted with their feet" as a number of them have incurred monumental losses. The major cause of this is erratic water supply arrangement of the Project Management especially during dry season cropping.

Be that as it may, the farmers are still quite edgy. They do not

comply with land use instructions of the LAIP management. Thus, Peter Udemezue (Minutes, 1992:8-7), a community leader at Omor, complained about

The constant resistance of those who have been allocated nursery plots to allow other farmers to use such plots for nursery purposes as this disrupted the cropping programme of the allottees.

He is further reported as advising that as from the next planting season (1993), nursery plot should not be allocated for normal cropping to avoid the inconveniences of confused farming arrangements.

4.4.2. WATER

Water is very important to LAIP dream of cultivating rice in abundant quantities. This is moreso for the dry season cropping. However, water supply to the rice fields is, to say the least, erratic. The management of LAIP has not given water to the farmers in required quantities in recent times even after they have paid for this. Last year (1991) was particularly pathetic. Water was not supplied to some dress areas at all and those farmers lost all their investments. Onuorah, a business merchant-turned-rice-farmer and a native of Enugu Ukwu in Anambra State is one of them. He invested over N50,000.00 (Fifty Thousand Naira) in the LAIP rice fields

and could not get water. Nnalue, an employee of the Oyi Local Government Council and an indigene of Umumbo is another. He lost all his investment there and has sworn never to go near the fields again. To the Ayamelum peasant farmer, the problem of water drives them into bouts of hysteria especially during the dry season cropping. This is because many of them have lost their investments a number of times.

However, according to Engr. Uche, the Assistant Project Manager, LAIP, the problem is the improper and poor water management strategies of the farmers. To him the farmers are the cause of the problem as they are always struggling for water, and not allowing the LAIP's rotational irrigation system to operate. The farmers really do struggle for water. This is necessarily brought about by paucity of water supply. So, what do they do? Farmers now sleep in their rice fields awaiting water. Once it arrives, they open up their tunnels against LAIP instructions. Some even forcibly break up the locks to allow water come into their field. Others use hoes to pull down ridges of the tunnels to enable water go into their fields. The wealthy ones buy water pumping machines and with that get water from the main canals straight to their farms. These practices have made a mess of all LAIP management's water supply projections.

Ordinarily, LAIP operates rotational irrigation. This is the desire of the

founding fathers. This arises from the fact that in the on-farm system, the rotational use of irrigation water should be practiced for the following general advantages:

- (i) It ensures easier water control and effective distribution.
- (ii) This gurantees more equitable water distribution from the downstream area.
- (iii) Water supply to such farm plots with short time period is better for land preparation.

Inspite of these, the problem of water supply cannot be wished away so easily. A publication of NIPPON KOEI admits this. According to it,

It is historically evident, as often happened in this project, that those farmers in upstream area have more advantages in irrigation than those in down stream area, resulting in fierce conflict between the two (FRN/ALRBDA: V - 1).

There may be "fierce conflict between the two" but the peasants are still giving the LAIP surprises in water management. For instance, Emmanuel Nnalue, a retired Chief Education officer from Umumbo, reports that some LAIP Officials take bribes from farmers and then disorganize water distribution arrangements (Minutes, 1992:6). The result is that some areas have more than enough water while other areas have none. The Area/Project Manager, LAIP corroborates this. He observed

"that some areas even got excess water which waste into River Ezu" (Minutes, 1991:7). That is a problem for LAIP management.

4.4.3 FARMING MACHINERY

The LAIP aims to develop irrigated rice cultivation, where double cropping of rice, rainy and dry seasons, is practised. For effective farm operation, tractors and other agricultural tools are introduced for smooth rice cultivation.

This is now on paper. Most of the tractors are grounded and vandalized. The farmers are bitter that payments for use of tractors and other agricultural tools are made but the services are never rendered. They are therefore abandoning the LAIP officials in this regard and making private arrangements. According to some of them, what concerns them with LAIP officials now is land allocation; in other words, a new culture of minimal contact between the farmers and LAIP officials is evolving.

4.4.4 FERTILIZER

The LAIP is conceptualized in such a way that farm inputs are provided by LAIP officials. Thus, LAIP management collect money from farmers for the provision of fertilizer. The farmers complained that these

funds are collected but the bags of fertilizer never come. The Area/Project Manager, LAIP said that "efforts were being made both in Port Harcourt and Abuja to get fertilizer through the state ADPs and these will be facilitated now" that a co-operative society (in LAIP) is being formed (Minutes, 9192:8).

As at June 30, 1992 this fertilizer has not arrived and the Dry season cropping is almost coming to an end. Consequently, farmers now feel some scapticism about paying the LAIP management for fertilizer. This is made more grievous as the refund of payment for fertilizer may tantamount to the proverbial eye-of-the-needle complexity. The net effect is that the dreams of LAIP are crumbling one after the other as the farmers are losing confidence in the ability of LAIP official to provide farm inputs.

4.4.5 WORK SCHEDULE

Beckman (1987:126) maintains that projects such as LAIP require the effective subordination and disciplining of growers, who must produce according to specification and submit to the time and work schedules which follow the system for distributing water.

For the 1992 rainy season cropping, the LAIP management has brought out a programme as shown in Table 4.11

TABLE 4.11: 1992 RAINY SEASON CROPPING PROGRAMME (2,500HA.)

S/N	ACTIVITY	START	END
1	Payment	16-6-92	20-7-92
2	Main land	·	
	preparation	1-7-92	15-8-92
3	Transplanting	6-7-92	20-8-92
4	Irrigation water	287	
	supply	15-10-92	15-12-92

SOURCE: AIRBRDA/LAIP Records 1992.

This table shows that work for this period would commence from 1st July,1992 and end on 15th December 1992 when harvesting should begin. Unfortunately, this programme lacks relevance. As at this point in time, July 1992, the dry season cropping programme has not run its course. Why is this so?.

In the first place, the farmers are not complying with deadlines in cultivation leading to unco-ordinated planting/cropping arrangements. The major causes of this are:

- (i) Farmers' refusal to be regimented into an alien stereotypical cropping arrangement and practices especially as the LAIP officials, through their own disorganized programmes, have not cultivated their confidence.
- (ii) Late allocation of plots to farmers by the LAIP management.
- (iii) Delay in getting tractors and agricultural tools from LAIP management.
- (iv) Water supply problem.
- (v) Disorganization of farmers' plans by LAIP officials due to their inability to supply inputs especially fertilizer on schedule.
- (vi) Farmers' inability to commence work because of lack of funds or any other personal contingencies even through land has been allocated them.

4.5 ASSESSMENT

The potential of the project area has long been recognized on account of its favourable physical conditions which enable most of the tropical crops to grow throughout the year. The FAO (1991:52) reports that,

agricultural performance has been relatively good and in some (example,LAIP) extremely good, and financial returns to farmers high despite problems with input supplies, difficulties with obtaining cultivation services on time, and generally weak extension and research support.

Inspite of this rosy picture, the LAIP has not been performing optimally. The project is capable of yielding "up to 8-10 tones" of rice per hectare but does not; instead it is only capable of a miserly "3 tonnes rice production per hectare" (Minutes, 1992:3). A NIPPON KOEI publication argues that the main problem responsible for this abysmal performane (i.e. 30%) are:

- (i) Delayed farm plot allocation
- (ii) Shortage of farm inputs; and
- (iii) Delayed establishment of the farmers' organization (FRN/AIRBRDA, 1991:6-7).

The third issue above is a tacit but important acceptance that the farmers are not as co-operative as they should be. Therefore, this is a recognition that the opposition of Ayamelum peasants - the bulk of the farmers - have been militating against the development and functioning of the Project.

4.6 LAIP MANAGEMENT MEASURES TO IMPROVE THE PERFORMANCE OF THE PROJECT:

The first is the constitution of an Ayamelum Leaders of Thought. This "is an advisory and consultative body for the implementation of programmes in LAIP" (Minutes, 1992:2). This body has no constitution and

its membership is randomly selected at the whims and caprices of LAIP management. It might appropriately be called an *ad hoc* fire brigade mechanism evolved by LAIP officials for dousing and containing the frustrations of the Ayamelum people and in addition deftly getting the Ayamelum peasants to accept their (LAIP officials) thought-out programmes. Implicit therein is a false sense of importance and participation. In other words, the LAIP Ayamelum Leaders of Thought is a mere public relations outfit of the LAIP management whose relevance to the generality of the Ayamelum people is most questionable and doubtful. At least, 85% of our respondents feigned ignorance of the body.

The second is the formation of the Water Users Association comprising the participating farmers. The fundamental objectives of the association are:

- (i) To communicate with both the farmers and the project office in various aspects of their activities.
- (ii) To organize and supervise the operation and maintenance work on the on-farm facilities such as tertiary, distribution irrigation canals and field drains in collaboration with the project office.
- (iii) To settle the matters arising among the farms in operation and

- maintenance of the facilities.
- (iv) Besides, to promote the extension services such as procurement of the fertilizer and agro-chemical.
- (v) To carry out the cropping practice such as nursery preparation.
- (vi) To supervise the field practices of the farmers (FRN/AIRBDA, 1990:v/ii-i).

However, by the establishment of the Water Users Association, the LAIP management expects the following advantages:

- (i) Good and acceptable communication between the farmers and the project office in the various aspects of their activities.
- (ii) Settlement of the matters arising among the farmers in water supply and operations and maintenance works.
- (iii) Extension services such as the procurement of fertilizer and agrochemical, if necessary (FRN/AIRBRDA, 1990:v-8).

The fact of the matter is that the Water Users Association (WUA) was formed because the "River Basin alone cannot oversee the entire (LAIP) farmland" and needs the WUA "to help check the excesses of the farmers under then" (Minutes, 1992:6). Even though, the WUA had been working, the Area/Project Manager regrets that "the WUA were not doing enough to effect water control" and said that "something should be done urgently,

especially as the tractor situation is bad, so that farmers who have paid for water can start something on their plots" (Minutes, 1992:6). As far as Nnalue Okonkwo was concerned the WUA is a failure (Minutes, 1992:6). From the evidence available, we agree with him.

Finally, the establishment of the Lower Anambra Agricultural Cooperative Society (LAACS) is another measure to improve the performance of LAIP. It is the responsibility of LAACS to create a strong credit base for farmers and to assist them in the procurement of fertilizer and other inputs at a reduced rate.

In addition, the LAACS is being positioned to take over the LAIP Rice Mill. According to a TCPC - Technical Committee on Privatization and Commercialization - report (nd:6), the Treasurer of LAACS "said it is their goal to take the mill in the future". That would be problematic for two main reasons. The first is the fear of an inability to meet the minimum amount of rice required by the mill as most of the farmers have small holdings harvested at different times without good storage facilities. The TCPC report (nd:6) highlights the second:

Since the rice mill is not designed to handle already parboiled rice well some are scared because they prefer to parboil the paddy before milling. The output of already parboiled rice when milled by the project result in many breakages. What is even more, the Area/Project Manager points out that the LAACS "had seemed handicapped since its formation owing to low membership". He equally expresses "dissatisfaction that of the over 5,000 farmers working on the Authority's lands, only a little over 1,000 were registered with LAACS" (Minutes, 1992:2). The point is that the farmers are not interested in LAACS. This is why Peter Udemezue insists "That enough should be done to LAACS to make it attractive so that farmers would not hesitate to register" (Minutes, 1992:3).

4.7. CONCLUSION

This chapter has discussed the development of LAIP and the problems militating against its accomplishment of its set goals. We have seen that the project ia an exclusive rice cultivation venture. It has the potentiality of achieving 10 tonnes per hectare rice production in its operations. However, it has not been attaining optimal performance. The discussion has shown that a mere three tonnes per hectare is currently achievable. This is unfortunate and unacceptable, thereby attracting the attention of the TCPC.

Furthermore, we have highlighted the sources of the problems hindering the attainment of the set objective of the Project. These include

the complex issues associated with the payment of compensation for damages, the racist undertones pervading the Project that has made the Ayamelum peasantry see it as a foreign investment, the "misuse" of LAIP facilities and the corresponding refusal of the Ayamelum peasant farmers to comply with the operational directives of the LAIP officials. Thus, the opposition of the Ayamelum peasantry has been militating against the development and performance of the Lower Anambra Irrigation Project.

CHapter Five

LAIP, CAPITAL AND AGRARIANISM AND RURAL ECONOMY OF AYAMELUM CLAN

5.1 INTRODUCTION: ON AGRARIANISM AND RURAL ECONOMY OF THE CLAN: A PROFILE

This chapter examines the impact of the Lower Anambra Irrigation Project (LAIP) and the penetration of capital on agrarianism in, and the rural economy of, Ayamelum clan. The argument is that LAIP and capital, in terms of their underlying ramifications, have adverse efforts on agrarianism and rural economy of the area. However, to ensure clarity and brevity in our discussion, this section of the study has been organized as follows:

- (i) On Agrarianism and Rural Economy of the Clan A Profile.
- (ii) Land and the Penetration of capital into the Clan; and
- (iii) LAIP, capital and the rural Economy of the Clan.

Meanwhile, the fundamental tenets of agrarianism have been defined as beliefs in the virtue of rural living, the basic nature of the occupation of farming, and the superiority of the farm and town over the city (Craig and Philips, 1983). However, Flinn and Johnson (1974: 89-195) suggest five key

tenets of agrarianism:

- (i) Farming is the basic occupation on which all other economic pursuits depend for raw materials and food.
- (ii) Agricultural life is the natural life for man; therefore, being natural, it is good, while city is both artificial and evil.
- (iii) The complete economic independence of the farmer is desirable.
- (iv) The farmer should work hard to demonstrate his virtue, which is made possible through an orderly society.
- (v) Family farms have become indissolubly connected with democracy.

 Graham (1966:39), on his part, provides a graphic conceptualization and articulation of the obsession and celebration of rural life in the discussion of agrarianism. According to him:

... countrymen tended to regard farming as the most ennobling of vocations and rural communities the most natural form of association. It was through life in the country that a man developed most fully as a human being, both in labour and in daily contact with nature.

Nevertheless, Singer and de Sousa (1983) posit that at least three views on the role of agrarian values among family farmers can be gleaned from the literature. These are: (i) "end of agrarianism"; (ii) "agrarianism as a refuge"; and (iii) "agrarianism as false consciousness". Behind each view

are certain assumptions about, first, agrarianism's persistence, and second, its significance for socio-political developments.

- (i) END OF AGRARIANISM: This assumes that, among other modernizing influences, technological innovation and increased education are producing a farmer business ethic that is on its way to replacing all traces of traditional farmer values (cf Knapp,1963). Another perspective to the end of agrarianism thesis is that from history, farm level and other immediate socio-economic interests may have been the real motivation behind agrarian discontent (see David and Henry, 1977:51-62).
- (ii) AGRARIANISM AS A REFUGE: This notion contends that agrarianism is likely to be strongest among small, poor, and elderly farmers on the fringe of a changing world, and these farmers cling tenaciously to agrarian values for psycho-emotional reasons. Buttel and Flinn (1974:136) suggest that marginal farmers may be more agrarian because they "employ rural life and its moral virtues as a refuge, a defence, an adaptation to their inferior social rank."
- (iii) AGRARIANISM AS FALSE CONSCIOUSNESS: This view maintains that it is not surprising if family farmers of many kinds beside the marginal hold to agrarian values. This is not because all family

farmers need a psycho-emotional shield from modernism, but because the dominant capitalist class manipulates cultural symbols to promote their own interests (Rohrer and Douglas, 1969). While this interpretation admits widespread agrarianism, its arguments are unsatisfying to many critics of "false consciousness" (cf Hirst, 1979 and Burawoy, 1978).

Singer and de Sousa (1983:294) suggest a possible fourth view on agrarianism. This view, like false consciousness, admits the likely persistence of agrarianism but attributes persistence to social and cultural mechanisms. These social and cultural mechanisms do not arise among marginal farmers while becoming (or staying) subordinate to economic forces among modern farmers, as the refuge thesis would claim. Rather, these values are seen as a result of the experience of farmers with family and tradition. Although the particular organization of independent commodity production may make possible an unusually close connection between traditional social values and family farm labour, mechanisms such as fairly, church, and small neighborhoods, which are irreducible to economic relations, are also creating and sustaining farm values. This, in a nutshell, accounts for the persistence and longevity of agrarianism among the peasantry of Ayamelum clan.

It is noteworthy that our conceptualization of peasantry here does not refer to some mythical peasants engaged in per-capitalist "peasants mode of production", characterized by subsistence - orientation and disinterest in profits, innovations and commercial enterprise (Ladipo, 1985:36,44). We are also not referring to an "amorphous" peasantry made up of "typical" peasant farmers on their "average" holding (Hill, 1972 and 1977). Our idea relates to a peasantry with a long history of commercial incorporation into local, regional and global markets for produce and labour (Shenton and Lennihan, 1981), a peasantry which has been exposed to a range of shifting political regimes and pervasive state intervention in markets and in relations of land and labour, Even though the Ayamelum communities could be said to have been effected to perceptibly varying degrees, all them have had their internal relations shaped by the mode of commercial and political incorporation.

In spite of the tribulations of the peasantry as a whole, however, it continues to be centrally placed in social relationships and interactions in Nigeria. The peasantry, for instance, provides the bulk of the daily food of a massive non-agricultural population and its commercial surplus has not only provided the historical basis of "original accumulation" for Africa's largest bourgeoisie but also continues to finance a wide range of private

investments in commerce, transport, housing, cottage industries and education (Beckman, 1987). These were made possible by a "relatively even distribution of land and the access of the peasantry to land and, at least, their own family labour" (Mkandawire, 1989:18).

According to the traditional ruler of Umumbo, Igwe Augustine Nweke (1992) "land was not a problem in my community as this was communally owned. This view is corroborated by the generality of our respondents (see Table 5.1). The result is that people farmed wherever they found suitable

TABLE 5.1: LAND AS PROBLEM TO CULTIVATORS IN AYAMELUM CLAN:

RESPONSE	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Yes	<u>-</u>	- `
No	800.0	100.0
Don't know	-	-
TOTAL	800.0	100.0

and wanted. The common understanding that epitomized the guiding principle was that once a portion of land was not cultivated for two years any other person in the community can move in and farm the place. This

the pretice up-till 1980. Then, the Ayamelum area had no motorable roads that could survive all the seasons.

The nature of the soil obtainable in the clan made it impossible for vehicular transportation to go on in the hinterland during the rainy season. Those periods afforded the clayey nature of the soil the opportunity to go swampy. Hence no motor vehicles could pass through the clan's rural roads. Transportation therefore has to be on foot, bicycles or occasionally, motorcycles. Those living at the banks of Anambra River - Igbakwu, Ifite Ogwari and Umeje - and Ezu River - Umerum and Anaku - made use of boats, motorized and non-motorized alike. There boats, especially the motorized ones, operated on the barest of rudimentary technology. They usually were rickety, leaky and fragile structures that had "engines" attached at the tail-ends of them as propellants. Consequently, external interference in the affairs of the clan was very minimal indeed.

Traditionally, the Ayamelum society was based on the land. Farming was the basic occupation of almost everybody. Even those who could claim to be hunters, minstrels or fishermen had such activities supplemented with the real occupation of farming. There was some nobility attached to farming as this enabled the clan's men to attain some level of

independence in the accomplishment of their basic existential needs. This was irrespective of the status of the individual in question.

The Ayamelum man's farm had the capacity of providing for all his family's food needs. Everything basically could be got there - yams, cocoa yams, cassava, vegetables, plantain, beans, corns, etc and even some hunting from the numerous traps put in place as mechanisms of forestalling the anihilative tendencies and activities of farm animals and pests. It is pertinent to say that this apparent self-sufficiency, coupled with the minimal contact with the external environment, necessitated the very elementary nature of the monetization of the rural economy of the clan.

The people of the clan owned domestic animals and birds. Among these were goats, sheep, rams, ducks, cocks, and hens, and pussy-cats. These were allowed to room about in the village and basically took care of themselves. Problems never arose as around-the-home-farming was considered opprobrious; it symbolized a manifestation of laziness that was communally viewed as repugnant and reprehensible.

Generally, people had homes that were distinct from their farms. They left home in the morning and went to farms. In the evening, they come back. Sometimes, however, some people built huts in the farms where they spent some days before coming home to the village. The

and to come back on the day that preceded the market day. Implicit herein is the desire to participate in the commercial activities of the market day and equally enjoy the conviviality and companionship such days provided.

TABLE 5.2 MOST DIGNIFYING CROP TO CULTIVATE TRADITIONALLY IN THE CLAN

RESPONSE	FIRST	SECOND	THIRD	FOURTH	FIFTH
Cassava	-	9.5	75.7	5.0	1.6
Rice	-	4.0,	8.0	20.6	90.0
Potato	-	6.5	12.5	69.8	8.4
Yam	100.0	-	1.5	1.2	-
Corn	-	80.0	2.3	3.4	-
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Farming in Ayamelum clan was labour intensive and mixed cropping was pervasive. Yam cultivation was the most celebrated form of farming in the clan. This is appropriately indicated in Table 5.2. Yams symbolize manhood and the women are never owners of yam farms. In addition, yams were very central to the processes and ceremonies associated with title-taking. During festivals, in short, pounded yams were expected to dominate the menu of the indigenes of the clan. There was some communal understanding and expectation to this.

Furthermore, gender played a major role in the agricultural activities of the Ayamelum person. Even though the man, as the head of the household, was the titular owner of the farm, gender was relevant in the control of the crops from the farm. The women generally looked after complementary crops - vegetables, pepper, plantain, fruits, etc - whose particular social relevance was associated with the "soup-pot". Table 5.3 indicates the crops associated with the respective communities of Ayamelum Clan. It shows that rice cultivation was not traditional to the clan and that there was some specialization in agricultural activities. The major issue informing this is the soil and farming prowess of the communities.

TABLE 5.3 CROP CULTIVATION IN AYAMELUM

COMMUNITY	MAIN CROP	AUXILIARY CROP
Omasi Umeje Ifite Ogwari Igbakwu Omor Umumbo	yam, cassava cassava, corn yam, cassava, corn potato, yam melon, potato yam, corn	corn, melon beans, yam plantain, beans melon, corn corn, cassava melon, potato
Umerum Anaku	melon, potato potato, beans	corn, cassava

The utilization of the output of the agricultural activities of Ayamelum people can be categorized as follows:

(i) The necessity for feeding the family.

- (ii) The preparation for and celebration of the village festivals.
- (iii) The satisfaction of the requirements of title-taking.
- (iv) The offsetting of the costs of initiation and marriage ceremonies.
- (v) The satisfaction of communal obligations.

Labour supply in the agricultural activities of Ayamelum people came from four ways. These are:

Firstly, the labour of family members.

Secondly, the free labour of in-laws and friends who out of obligation or assistance go to work in a man's farm. Generally, young sons-in-law were expected to gather their peers and occasionally go to work at their father-in-law's farms. These labour supplies are free but the father-in-law must take care of entertainment - food, drinks and cigarettes/snuff.

Thirdly, through a farming labour partnership, people gather themselves together and work, in turn, in each other's farms. For instance, four men could agree to this type of farming labour partnership. They will decide the order in which they will be visiting their respective farms. One day is usually allocated to each person. If each member's farm has been visited, the arrangement is repeated, if so desired. Entertainment may or

may not be required here. It all depends on the understanding reached at the commencement of the farming labour partnership.

And finally, paid labour. This is usually provided by those who want to supplement their family's income. Everybody had his family's farm and no wage labourers *per se* were in existence.

Table 5.4 confirms this assertion. However, it is important to emphasize that apart from the handicap which the low level of the monetization of the society then would have constituted to such an "occupation", no family would tolerate the existence of such a never-do-well in their midst. Thus, such families would help any of their members who is having problems to establish his own farm through the provision of communal labour, seedlings etc.

TABLE 5.4 WAGE LABOURERS AND TRADITIONAL AYAMELUM SOCIETY.

RESPONSE	NUMBER'	PERCENTAGE
Yes No Don't know	- 800.0 -	- 100.0 -
TOTAL	800.0	100.0

Savings and borrowings were not very developed in the area. Such cultures were quite rudimentary. People used their resources as they came

for title-taking, marriages, building houses, and the celebration of the multiplicity of festivals that abound in the clan - almost one every month. The people, however, practiced some from of "isusu", a kind of thrift society. Two types existed in the area. This first type resulted from the activities of a "meeting" group. It is a form of cooperative society. The members contributed some money at specific periods for a normal duration of one year. A treasurer who kept such money was appointed among the members. The person is usually a trustworthy and responsible personality. Members and even non-members could borrow from such mobilized funds. Interests were paid on borrowed funds with variation for members and nonmembers. At the end of the "meeting" period, members shared the monies according to there individual contributions. Incidenceses of default in repayment of loans were most unusual. The arrangement was never to put people into peonism.

The second type is quite straightforward and commonsensical. A group of people brought themselves together and decided to contribute at regularized and predetermined intervals a specific amount of money each which one of the members collected. This was done at prescribed intervals until everybody has collected. The arrangement could be repeated.

The Ayamelum person had a penchant for the good life, which, in

the opinion of their neighbours, was hedonistic. Festivals abound. People enjoyed feeding well and listening to minstrels. The appetite for acquisitiveness was just not there. A sense of contentment pervaded the psychology of the Ayamelum person. However, commensalism epitomized the cardinal principles of everyday existence. Thus, the people's sense of identity and oneness is solid and unwavering. As a result, Table 5.5 shows that our respondents see "sense of identity and oneness" as the most important thing to the Ayamelum person.

TABLE 5.5: MOST IMPORTANT THING TO AYAMELUM PERSON:

	RESPONSE	FIRST	SECOND	THIRD
(1)	Development-road school etc	4.2	85.7	4.1
(2)	Appointments to Civil service, Boards, etc	2.2	4.1	92.9
(3)	Sense of Identity and ononess	93.6	10.0	3.0
	TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0

This appreciation of the necessity for a sense of identity and oneness cuts across the generality of the Ayamelum people. Consequently, when we controlled for age there was no significant difference in perception. Therefore, Table 5.6 shows that 96.3% of those below 20 years,

95% of those between 20 -30 years, 93.7% of this between 31 - 40 and 89.4% of those above 40, years of age, had rated sense of identity and oneness first.

TABLE 5.6 SENSE OF IDENTITY AND ONENESS AND AGE OF RESPONDENT:

AGE OF RESPONDENT	FIRST	SECOND	THIRD
Below 20 years	96.3	3.7	0.0
20 - 30 years	95.0	5.0	0.0
31 - 40 years	93.7	6.3	0.0
Above 40 years	89.4	5.3	5.3

The intensity of the feeling of oneness and a sense of identity as motivating factors or spurs to action among a people cannot be over-emphasized. This is why Professor Obiechina (1980:270-271) has argued that because a people's sense of identity and feeling of oneness "form a solid basis for mobilizing and channeling human emotions, (they) also provide one of the strongest forces for consolidating a people's response when they are threatened or are oppressed as a collectivity." He believes that these feelings of oneness and sense of identity

become a dialectical instrument for dramatizing the sense of a people's injury no less than such a people's counterblast to the oppressor's strike ... Their culture and arts draw them together at favorable points of contact and by so doing integrate their emotional and psychological impulses and steel their will to freedom and positive assertiveness.

5.2 LAND AND THE PENETRATION OF CAPITAL INTO THE CLAN

Land, by tradition, was communally owned in Avamelum clan. The sale of land was never contemplated and thus, it was not part of the communal world view of the Ayamelum person. Land was seen as sacred and the most powerful deities in the area are usually those associated with the land. For instance, in Omor, this is called Aja-ana and Ani-Ifite in Ifite Ogwari. The belief was that these deities had superintendent jurisdiction over the affairs of Avamelum people. Equally, they are said to have the capacity to administer positive or negative sanctions depending on the activities of people. As the Clan's people lived on the land, it was believed that these deities determined the fertility or otherwise of the soil. Thus, bounteous harvests were rewards and blessings from the land goddesses, and famines, curse for human misdemeanor. Under such circumstances the idea of the sale of land would be sacrilegious and unthinkable. It is definitely for this that our respondents massively argue that the sale of land is not a traditional activity in the clan (see Table 5.7).

TABLE 5.7 SALE OD LAND IN AYAMELUM CLAN:

RESSPONSE	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Yes No Don't know	- 800.0 -	- 100.0 -
TOTAL	800.0	100.0

In addition, there were no boundaries as such between or among the Ayamelum communities. Where this existed, such boundaries were merely circumstantial rather than by the calculated design of human engineering. Thus, boundaries existed in situations where rivers, springs, and so on provided the natural delimitation of a tolerable and judicious expansion to one's farm land. In spite of this, there were no boundary pproblems and clashes as people could not even exhaust the expansive arable farm land available to them.

The Land Use Degree No.6 of 29th March, 1978 brought cracks to this harmonious coexistence of the communally and commensally minded Ayamelum person as it provided for and allowed the sale of land in Nigeria (Okpala, 1979; Goonesekere. 1980; Koehn, 1987). The Decree posits that:

- (i) It is in the public interest that the rights of all Nigerian to the land of Nigerias be asserted and preserved by law.
- (ii) It is judicious that the rights of all Nigerians to use and enjoy land

in Nigeria and the natural fruits thereof in sufficient quantity to enable them provide for the sustenance of themselves and their families should be assured, protected and preserved.

The Decree effectively nationalized all land in Nigeria. However, these are vested in the Governor of a state who holds same in trust for the people. He administers the use of land, presumably for the common benefit of all Nigerians. Section 5(1a-d) of the Decree gives the Governor of a component state in Nigeria the power to:

- (i) grant statutory rights of occupancy to any person for all purposes;
- (ii) grant easements appurtenant to statutory rights of occupancy; and
- (iii) demand rental for any such land granted to any person.

It is noteworthy that once a statutory right of occupancy has been granted, according to Section 5.2 of the Decree, "all existing rights to the use and occupation of the land which is the subject of the statutory right of occupancy shall be extinguished".

Furthermore, the Local Governments were equally given powers over land in their areas of jurisdiction (though not "in an urban area"). According to Section 6(1a-b) of the Decree, the Local Government could:

grant customary rights of occupancy to any person or organisation for the use of land in the Local Government area for agricultural, residential and other purposes; grant customary rights of occupancy to any person or organisation for the use of land for grazing purposes and such other purposes ancillary to agricultural purposes as may be customary in the Local Government area concerned. Nevertheless, the Local Government can only grant customary rights

of occupancy for agricultural land not in excess of 500 hectares. For grazing purposes, the maximum allowed is 5000 hectares. If these limits are to be exceeded, the consent of the Governor must be sort and obtained.

5.2.1 THE ADVENT OF LAND SALE IN THE CLAN:

There are certain extenuating circumstances that made the sale of land possible and pervasive in the area. These are highlighted as follows:

- (i) The Use Decree of 1978 created the atmosphere for this to be possible. In the first place, it militated against the socio-psychological aura in which land was held as it implicitly questioned and negated the sacrality in which land was clad. Secondly, sale of land become backed up by the intimidating and coercive machinery of the state. Every Ayamelum peasant acknowledges awareness of the immense powers of the State. To them really, "Oyibo" ("the State") is next to God in omnipresence.
- (ii) The Buhari-Idiagbon Regime (1983-1985) adopted some abrasively

nationalistic polices. One of these was the closure of Nigerian borders and the putting in place of some appropriate measures to ensure compliance with the border's closure. As a result, the incidence of smuggling drastically diminished. The regime equally mounted an aggressive agricultural and food self-sufficiency programme that was effectively supported with necessary incentives such as issuance of import licenses, allocation of foreign exchange, etc which the Nigerian commercial class found worthy of taking advantage of. These were first, the allocation of foreign exchange and second, the freedom to import agricultural inputs and machinery that were lacking into the country. The Nigerian commercial class pre-occupied with import are export Consequently, the urge to own a farm became popular as it was seen as lucrative. Ayamelum farm lands become a natural attraction to those who want to own farms because (a) the place is close to Onitsha, the haven of the commercial class; (b) the clan is the only place in Anambra State where somebody can acquire a large expanse of arable land without necessarily disturbing the living quarters of people; and (c) there was no pressure on the land prior to the intervention of the state and private capital.

- Government when the LAIP was being established made the area quite accessible. Prior to this, people found it immensely daunting to come into the place. The tarred road which runs from Nsukka in Enugu State through the clan to Onitsha changed all that. The commercial people therefore moved in and acquired land. One outstanding thing about this is that most of these were on the adjoining neighborhood to this road. The road was therefore necessary and instrumental for this land deal transactions.
- (iv) The establishment of the Lower Anambra Irrigation Project (LAIP) exposed the Ayamelum area, introduced it into people's consciousness and made it an attractive agricultural zone. Land speculators were enamoured of the massive resources the government has invested in LAIP and felt it would be worth their while to invest in land and agriculture in the area. In addition, it is pertinent to state that the construction of the highway through the clan was part of the infrastructural necessities for the establishment and functioning of LAIP. Therefore, were it not for LAIP, the possibility of the construction of that road is most remote. Thus, the advent of the forces of modernization into the clan is intractably

connected with the establishment of LAIP.

- (v) The tendency of Igbo traders to "join the bandwagon" in their business activities also accounted for the scramble to acquire land in Ayamelum clan. In other words, they have a proclivity for doing what others are doing. For instance, in 1986 when these quests for land was the in-thing, the argument in Onitsha was that anybody who had not bought land from that area was an upstart in the business world. As a result, most people moved in and bought land without a clear knowledge or idea of what to do with such land. This partly accounts for the lack of investment in and/or development of most of these tracts of land at present.
- (vi) Human beings are instinctively rapacious. The major difference amongst them is the ability to control and contain the display of such crude rapacity as opportunities arise. Thus, the excitement associated with making money among some Ayamelum people accounts for the massive sale of land in the area. The amounts of money involved were staggering. These ran into hundreds of thousands of naira; amounts associated with legends and fairy-tales among the generality of the Ayamelum peasantry. Land money then became the opium, the debilitating elixer of the average Ayamelum

person. Thus, there arose a scramble both among the dumb and confused sellers and the monied but enthusiastic buyers. Those who were, or succeeded, in manipulating themselves into positions of leadership in these land sales and deals in all the communities in Ayamelum became the *nouveau riches*. Prominent among these were the traditional rulers especially Igwe Obiako of Omasi and Igwe Nneli of Umeje. These two built themselves houses, bought vchicle, and their homes were abodes of festivities and minstrelsy. These, they believed, imply that they have attained high status in society. Other individuals benefited from this "naira rain". They too carried on as the *nouveau riches* by indulging in the acquisition and use of symbols of those of high social stratum in society.

(vii) The absence of clear-cut boundaries between and among Ayamelum communities provided an ample rationalization for those intent on selling land. The argument was that such contentious boundary areas should be sold off before the counterpart community or communities did. In the scramble to sell land, money became the god the participants in the land sales and deals worshipped. Long-standing consanguine and conjugal relationships became irrelevant in the process.

5.2.2 THE SALE OF LAND

This was usually done by a cabal of actual (for instance, traditional rulers) and self-appointed community leaders of abashed opportunistic propensities. They took advantage of existing communal ownership structure of land. They forgot or refused to take note of the fact that despite the prevailing communal ownership arrangement of land, some people have been farming certain areas from time immemorial and therefore could be said to "own" such areas.

Consequently, land areas where people were farming got surveyed and sold to private capital. People protested, naturally; these were visited with reprisals. The instrument used by the land sellers against protestations for their nefarious activities was intimidation. The police appears to have provided them some assistance in this direction. For instance, the protesters were occasionally locked up and had all kinds of unimaginable charges levelled against them. The outstanding example here is Mesers Augustine Emegini, Ben chidube and two others in 1986, They are indigenes of Umeje. Those men were arrested at Umueje and taken to the central police station "CID section", Enugu on grounds of an armed robbery they allegedly committed at Umeje. Ben Chidube argues that that incidente was the greatest humiliation and torture he has suffered since he was born.

In addition, Augustine Emegini, who headed the opposition camp against land sales in Umeje, was later accused of the murder of a mentally deranged man from Omasi. The corpse of the man was recovered long Umeje - Omasi road. The land sellers at Umeje ganged up and maintained that it was Mr Emegini that killed the man. They argued that they were going to give evidence to that effect in court. The only way, they insisted, to forestall that was for Augustine Emegini to concede to drink the water resulting from the bathing of the corpse of the Omasi man. The belief of the Umeje peasantry is that a man who is not associated with the death of a man will not die if the crops of the deceased is bathed and the accused man drank of the water resulting therefrom.

Faced with an alternative of a court case in which he has already got a vociferous and established opposition, Augustine Emegini chose to drink the corpse bath-water. He did. However, he has not died uptill now. At present he is a judge of the customary court at Omor. Other people, equally, prominently opposed the sale of land. The most outstanding are Simeon Anah of Omasi and Odinga Isiudala from Ifite Ogwari. Anah was a regular customer of the police at Adani, in Uzo-Uwani L. G. A., and Enugu. He was a persistent obstacle to the sale of land in Omasi. At present, he is the Chief Whip of the Oyi Local Government Council.

Odinga Isiudala in 1986, found out that his farm land has been surveyed and sold. He want to court, got an injunction from the court restraining the effectuating of the land transaction and notified the Local Government about his opposition to the granting of occupancy certificate in respect of the land deal. Mr. Odinga, a peasant farmer and without western education, is a man with a lion's heart. All intimidatory strategies to break his will failed. He still farms his farm land and has asked the so-called land purchaser to ask for a refund since he will never enter the land in question. If he dares, Odinga maintains, violent measures will be put in place to stop him.

Those participating in these land sales and deals had a lot of money which they were prepared to spend on the law enforcement agencies and state officials to have their way. In addition, they shared out some fraction of the money paid for their land sales on the peasants in order to legitimize the deal and masquerade same in communal authenticity. According to Okasia Umeleri (1992), a World Bank official at ADARICE, Omasi, the activities of the land sellers created the conducive atmosphere for police work to be lucrative and thriving in the area. In addition, he said, this created the feeling and impression that the Ayamelum people are litigants.

A lot of land was sold during this period and people had to fight to

protect their land. As a society basically based on land, the agitation to prevent the loss of that means of livelihood had to be intense. Table 5.8 shows the particulars of some land sales in Ayamelum Clan.

TABLE 5.8 PARTICULARS OF LAND SALES IN AYAMELUM CLAN

TABLE 5.8 PARTICULARS OF LAND SALES IN AYAMELOM CLAN					
S/NO	NAME OF COMMU- NITY	NAME OF LESSEE/BU YER	ADDRESS OF LESSEE/ BUYER	HECTA-RAGE	PUR-POSE
1.	Omasi _.	SICO Farm Complex Ltd	2E Eloseh Street Aduda, Surulere Lagos	480.782 ha	Agric-ultu- ral
2.	Umeje	Dr L.A. Ononye	31 Ugwunoba- mkpa Road Onitsha	259.394 ha	-do-
3.	Omasi	Chilinn Farms Ltd	12 Okwuenu Street Onitsha	202.317 ha	-do-
4.	Anaku	Chief Rommy Amadi Eze- onwuka	Amaife-Akpo, Aguata LGA	40.779	п
5.	Umeje	Offor-Offor	20 Park Lane Nkpor	41163.946 sqm	п
6.	Umerum	Prince Mark Farm Ltd	30 Ifejika Street Onitsha	3297.241 sqm	и
7.	Omor	Emma-nuel Enweh	C.M.S Church Itchi	4453.759 sqm	Comme- rcial
8.	Omasi	Rojel Farms Ltd	5A Aria Road Enugu	652.349 ha	Agri-culu- ral
9.	Omasi	Alpho-sus Akana	6 Ichida Street Onitsha	261.036 ha	-do-

Table 5.8 Continued

Table 5.6	Continued	,			
s/NO	NAME OF COMMU- NITY	NAME OF LESSEE/ BUYER	ADDRESS OF LESSEE/BUYER	HECTA- RAGE	PUR-POSE
10.	Omor	Samuel Anata-ogu	18A Calabar Rd Ikom	1224.412 sqm	Comme- rcial
11.	Omor	Leonard Ekeiyi	47 Calabar road Ikom	1690.033 sqm	Comme- rcial
12.	Omasi	Tempo Mills Ltd	PMB 1580, Onitsha	1142.549 ha	Agric- ultural
13.	Umeje	Tempo Mills Ltd	PMB 1580, Onitsha	1019.581 ha	-do-
14.	Anaku	Phili Ezoba Mofus	20 Nwangene Street Onitsha	501.987 ha	
15.	Omasi	Olympic Farms Ltd	Abagana, Njikoka LGA	260.788 ha	
16.	Anaku	Ekene Dili Chukwu motors Ltd	1, llodibe Road Awada Onitsha	43,649 ha	Agricultural
17.	Anaku	-do-	- do -	90.236 ha	-do-
18.	Omor	Justin Akukalia	Box 342, Abagana	26891.156 sqm	Agricultural
19.	Umeje	Ramac Farms & Agro Industries Ltd	43, Francis Street Onitsha	134.400 ha	Agric- ultural
20.	Ifite Ogwari	-do-	-do-	270.737 ha	-do-

S/No	NAME OF COMMUNITY	NAMES OF LASSEE/ BUYER	ADDRESS OF LESSEE/BUY ER	HECTAR- , AGE	PURPOSE
21.	Omor	C.U. Uzo- Amobi	19,Aria Road, Enugu	80 ha. "	Commer-cial/ Residential
22.	Ifite Ogwari	SESAIC Indust-ries Ltd	1, Ukwa Street Enugu	178.00 ha	Agricultural
23.	Umeje	Dalgo Ltd	48 Ibaíon Street Apapa Lagos	264.139 ha	-do-
24.	Omor	GMO & Co Ltd	1 Abim-bola Shodipe Street Lagos	473.088 ha	,
25.	Omor	Samuel E. Mbanefo	18 Chuk-wura Lane Onitsha	3.015 ha	Resid- ential/Agricultu ral
26.	Ifite Ogwari	A.C. Ekpechi	Umuru Village, Ogidi	509.051 ha	Agricu-Itural
27.	Ifite Ogwari Omor Umumbo	WINCO Foods & Agric Complex Ltd	P.O. Box 14, Isuofia Aguata LGA	337 ha	Agricu-Itural

SOURCE: Oyi Local Government office documents.

According to John Akor (1986: 1), "thousands of peasants have been dispossessed of their land in the (Ayamelum) area" by a number of companies and individuals. He says:

The land deals... have generated squabbles between privileged members of the communities and peasant farmers who are being chased away by the lessor from their (farmers') land.

These dispossessed people made written and verbal protects to the Governor over the indiscriminate sale of their land. For instance, in a petition dated 2nd July, 1986 and signed by Simeon Anah and Simeon

Okeii. Chairman and Secretary respectively, the Omasi Uno progressive Union cried out over the illegal sale of land in their community and expressed fear that they would "be turned into beggars and wanderers in their own land if the situation was not arrested". In its own petition dated 18th August 1986 and signed by 10 village heads and the traditional ruler of Umumbo, the community warned that the sale of their land would sentence the present and future generations to slavery as the land in question is the principal source of their survival and subsistence. They recalled that the LAIP took a massive expanse of their land, adding that they were not prepared to lose a meter any more. The village heads wondered where their farmers would cultivate yams, maize, cassava and other food crops if "big companies take over our land". These protests never merited any response from the government. The government seems to see the individuals and companies buying land as agricultural and rural development organs and a timely and inevitable counterpoise to peasant agrarian practises (cf Nzimiro, 1985:43) of Ayamelum people. The views of M. E. Nnamah, former sole Administrator, Uzo - Uwani Local Government Area, are most didactic and illuminating. He argues:

As soon as a public notice (for a Certificate of Occupancy) is issued, protests begin to flow (from Ayamelum Clan). Many a time some people may wish to cash in. We have used the

process of inviting both parties to settle quite a number of such protests, even in Anaku ... In the interest of peace, we found it much better to the parties than costly litigations. It seems that Umuaga family (of Anaku) do not want to accept negotiations for peaceful settlement. Although this may not be important, yet I would like to invite your attention to the site at Anaku where Messrs Ekene Dili Chukwu Motors Ltd has already sunk hundreds of thousands of naira on productive industry and would like to think that for such meaningful use of land, the villagers should be made to talk sense rather than obstruct development which is in the best interest of themselves and the general public (1986:1-2).

5.2.3 IMPLICATIONS OF THE SALE OF LAND IN THE CLAN

There are five major implications that are derivable from the sale of land in the clan. The first is that it led to the alienation of land from the peasantry (see Koehn, 1974 and 1986) as a lot of them were forced out of their traditional farm lands to make way for the incursion of private capital. The sales provided the first known evidence of the displacement of Ayamelum peasants from their land in order to allow capital to move in.

Secondly, the sales led to the introduction of land ownership in the clan. Prior to this period, people utilized land that was not being cultivated without anybody questioning or challenging them. This is no more. A new phenomenon of land ownership has set in. This is as a result of the pressure on land resulting from the sales that pushed farmers to a smaller

land space. Necessity, it is said, is the mother of invention. Consequently, the necessity to have a piece of land to farm for one's subsistence and livelihood brought about ownership processes and practices.

Thirdly, the sale of land in the clan brought about the introduction of tenant farmers. These are peasant farmers who have been dispossessed of their land by capital. To survive now, they go back to the person who bought their lands and hire some portions for a fee on seasonal bases. These "land grabbers" have set up offices where the villagers go to hire land for a fee. Implicit herein is that these people never developed their land for any mechanized agriculture; this is excluding the Ekene Dili Chukwu Farms Limited as Anaku which is a development farm complex. The other companies displaced peasants only to make such peasants pay for the land they were using free before. This will be discussed in greater details later.

Fourthly, the sale of land in the area is generating an ever rising incidence of land disputes and boundary conflicts among the people of the clan. An investigation into the records of the Police Posts in the area shows that 95% of the cases reported to Police relates to land disputes and boundary conflicts. At the Customary Court, Omor, which serves all the communities in the clan, the records show that 99% of the cases that are

adjudicated upon there relates to land disputes and boundary conflicts.

This is the outcome of the alienation of the land of the Ayamelum peasantry. We will return to this theme in the next chapter.

Finally, sale of land in the clan has been a principal contributor to the weakening of commensalism in the area. This is because social conflicts resulting from quarrels over land have escalated. These quarrels cut across the social fabric of Ayamelum clan. It could be between friends, family members and across gender lines. It reminds one of Chinua Achebe's axiom about things falling apart as the centre, the clan's commensal tendencies, can no longer hold.

5.3 LOWER ANAMBRA IRRIGATION PROJECT, CAPITAL AND THE RURAL ECONOMY OF THE CLAN

In recent years, farmers around the project area have been expanding their rice cropping areas under the influence of this irrigation project (LAIP). Moreover their standard of living, education and health conditions are much improved compared with those of 1981 at the commencement of the project (Federal Ministry of Water Resources, nd:4)

The LAIP and capital introduced the instinctive consciousness for the acquisition of money in the clan. The construction of LAIP brought a pervasive wage - earning culture and the pastime of contract jobbery. Some people made some money especially at Omor where Barrister Paul

Obidigwe, a then Board member of Anambra - Imo River Basin and Rural Development Authority (AIRBRDA), comes from. These people were able to build houses and buy cars for their private use. Frankly, LAIP and capital have changed the orientation of the Ayamelum person and the clan will never be the same again as this discussion will show.

The LIAP and capital immensely contributed to the development of a culture of rice cropping in Ayamelum area. The LAIP is exclusively engaged in rice cultivation and their "influence" has been attested to by their quoted statement above. Some private companies initially did not engage in rice production. For instance, Iva Valley Integrated Farms Limited owned by Mr. A.C. Ekpechi at Ifite Ogwari started with the cultivation of corns and sugar cane, while SICO Farms Complex Limited Omasi was formerly primarily engaged in corn production. These companies wanted to take advantage of the then ban on wheat importation in Nigeria and the recourse to and appeal of "corn beer" to the brewery industry. This dream did not materialize as the breweries - Premier, Life, Olympic, etc - established their own farms either in Ayamelum clan or Uzo - Uwani Local Government Area.

As a result, these private companies discontinued the production of corn and sugar canes. This was, however, facilitated by the existence of a

better alternative in rice cultivation. This alternative provided by the cultivation was carried out in two main ways:

- (i) The hiring out of plots of their land to interested and enthusiastic peasant Ayamelum farmers who needed land to cultivate rice. It should be recalled that this phenomenon arose from the alienation of peasant lands to these private companies. The practice is for these companies to open up offices in their lands where farmers go to register, pay and have plots of lands allocated to them for one season cultivation. A plot (50 m x 100 m) of land costs N250.00 per season in 1992. It is a very lucrative business for these private companies, indeed.
- (ii) These companies preferred rice cultivation because (a) the crop has faster maturation rate, (b) is capital intensive, which is not their problem, and (c) fetches quick cash as it has market and can be sold en bloc.

The culture of rice cultivation has, therefore, caught up with many people in the clan - the indigenes, non-indigenes and private companies. The implication of this are twofold:

- (i) the monetization of the rural economy of the clan; and
- (ii) the abandonment of the cultivation of traditional crops in the area.

5.3.1. MONETIZATION OF THE RURAL ECONOMY OF THE CLAN:

Rice cropping is capital - intensive and requires money for all the processes leading up to its sale. Thus, everybody now in Ayamelum is a money-chaser. The quest for money is associated with rice. People make money working in rice fields and people need money to cultivate rice. Table 5.9 shows the estimated cost of cultivating one hectare of rice field during the 1992 cropping season in a personal farm.

TABLE 5.9: FARM RECORD: COST OF CULTIVATING ONE HECTARE OF RICE FARM

S/NO	ACTIVITY	PRICE
1. 2. 3. 4.	Cost of seeds (50kg or 1.5 a bag Ploughing Harrowing Cost of and spraying of chemical to	N600.00 640.00 320.00 320.00
5. 6. 7. 8. 9.	"aba" weed Sowing of seeds, at N30.00 per chain Filling of gaps in field through replanting First weeding, at N60.00 per chain	240.00 320.00 480.00 400.00 800.00
10.	Second weeding (Grass now lighter) Harvesting Transportation	320.00 N4,470.00

SOURCE: Stephen Onuekwe, a retired teacher and a farmer, Amah Village, Ifite Ogwari.

^{1.} These are dangerous weeds said to have been transported to the clan by itinerant Fulani cattle from Abakaliki, Enugu State.

². A chain measures 66 ft x 66 ft.

If a concerned farmer does not have his/her own farm land, he/she will be forced to rent land for a fee. For such persons, therefore, the cost of cultivating one hectare (= 2 plots) will be more and not N4, 470.00. If the fellow had rented land from the multifarious private companies (one plot costs N250.00), it means that the cost will be N4.970.00 for one hectare. Stephen Onuekwe estimates a maximum yield of thirty-five bags (one bag = 100kg) per plot, i.e. seventy bags for a hectare of rice farm. The market price of rice as at June 1992 is N1020.00 per bag at Ifite Ogwari. Thus, a farmer who had seventy bags of rice would make N71,400.00 (seventy-one thousand and four hundred naira only). It is statistics such as this that make the urge to cultivate rice irresistible. Three things should be pointed out here. First, almost all the farmers sell their rice during the November - December period when the product is relatively cheap in order to meet up their financial and family commitments. Debts must be paid and Christmas celebrated. Secondly, only an infinitesimal number of farmers sell their rice during the June peak pricing period. These are the emerging kulaks of Ayamelum clan. And thirdly, there are a lot of hazards in rice cultivation that make the bandying about of statistic such as this deceptive and fallacious. These relate to pests and flooding problems, and poor yield. As a result, rice production projections should

be taken with a pitch of salt, as they say.

Rice cultivation at LAIP appears different from those of private individual farms. Table 5.10 shows the estimated cost of one plot of LAIP rice field.

TABLE 5.10 FARM RECORD: COST OF CULTIVATING ONE PLOT OF RICE FIELD AT LAIP

	1110001100000	
S/NO.	ACTIVITY	PRICE
1.	Land rate (water and land preparation)	600.00
2.	Nursery: (a) Labour (b) Seedling	200.00
0		200.00
3.	Transplanting (a) Nursery uprooting (b) Transporting of nursery to	50.00
	field	80.00 320.00
4.	(c) Actual transplanting Weeding:	320.00
	(a) First application of herbicide (b) Second " " herbicide	320 .00
	(picking) (c) Third application of herbicide	320.00
	(if necessary; picking)	270.00
5.	Bird Scaring	280.00
6.	Harvesting (cutting and Packing)	800.00
7. 8.	Threshing and winnowing Miscellaneous (including transportation)	300.00
	TOTAL	N4,720.00

SOURCE: George Okoye, a farmer, at Umuawa village, Ifite Ogwari.

The table (Table 5.10) shows that it is more expensive to farm at LAIP. This is not unexpected for a number of reasons. In the place, the rice field of LAIP are some distances away from the communities in Ayamelum clan. Consequently, the intrusion of family labour is amply unattractive as this would need to be transported to the place. Secondly, farming in LAIP is more capital-intensive as all the processes in rice cropping had to be paid for in cash. Example: scaring of birds and transportation of nursery which would have been by the younger members of the family. Thirdly, undoubtedly the costing by Mr Okoye is more comprehensive. And finally, the LAIP fields are more modernized - for instance, the use of irrigation water and herbicides.

The popularity of rice cultivation and its capital-intensive nature provides a perfect environment for money-lending practices to thrive. Money-lending, argues Beckman (1987:13), is pervasive in the peasant economy. It is an activity that follow patron-client networks. Ayamelum peasants at all levels borrow money to pay for urgent outlays, for production, social obligations, and emergencies on the understanding that this will be paid back at the harvest of rice. We share the view of Beckman (1987:14) that

Money-lending is exploitative but in the foreseeable future there are no political forces capable of providing an alternative to those exploitative relations and the crude "social security" provided by patron-client relations.

In Ayamelum clan, the interest demanded from the peasantry by money-lenders is 100%. And the duration of the loan period may not be up to one year. Generally, it is less as rice cultivation starts in June and ends mostly in December. Therefore, a loan of N1000.00 given to a peasant for the cultivation of rice in June will be paid back as N2000.00 in December. Unfortunately, this is the period when rice does not attract "good"prices. People still go to the lenders as they desperately need the money. Nobody cultivates rice without money. This is why the Assistant Project Manager, LAIP, Engr. Eme Uche argued that Ayamelum peasants farm for other people, the money-lenders. This is indubitable. As a result of this, poverty is enduring and endemic in the area.

Even though Weinberg (1987) argues that understanding rural poverty is not easy (cf Coppedge and Carlton, 1977), he admits that particular rural locations undeniably have a higher concentration of poor people than others. Ayamelum Clan is one of such "rural locations." And rice cultivation is the salient contributor to this agrarian crisis. The traditional ruler of Umumbo, Igwe A. C. Nweke argues that Ayamelum

people now come across more money in their lives but that they lack the financial discipline, prudence and management wizardry of the Japanese who popularized rice cultivation in the area. The Igwe is correct. The general practice in Ayamelum clan is that at harvest time, people paid back the loans they used for rice cropping. This is when the price of rice is relatively low. The outstanding proceeds from the sales are squandered during christmas festivities (purchase of bicycles, radio sets, clothing, etc) and/or the commencement of block-cement building projects that will annually eat up all their money and mostly never get completed they become bankrupt once more. At the start of the next cropping season, they go back to the money-lenders. It is a vicious cycle. Consequently, money-lending and crop cultivation are closely linked through the system of pre-harvest cash advances (of Clough, 1985).

Furthermore, rice cultivation and the monetization of the rural economy of the clan has given rise to the existence of "labour camps" in Ayamelum areas. The most prominent ones are those beside the Iva Valley Farm Limited and the "junction" of Omor, Umumbo and Igbakwu communities. People go to such labour markets to sell their labour power in order to make some money. The labourers will tell you that they make over N200.00 daily. Consequently, the Clan's elderly people, young men

and women, and children are carried away by the fantasy of making a lot of money on a daily basis and therefore consider it lucrative selling their labour power to the highest rice cropping bidder.

The greatest casualty of this perversion of Ayamelum agrarian spirit is school enrolment. The children have abandoned schooling. The craze now is money, either selling their labour or tending their own rice fields. Formal education has become quite unattractive to them. Consequently, there is 50% drop in primary school enrolment, a high-level of truancy in the secondary schools, an embarrassing failure rate in school certificate examinations and an appalling disinterest in tertiary education. For those who still attend school, the days preceding the market days for he respective communities are accepted by implication by the school authorities as days their pupils and students go to sell their labour power and make some money from rice cultivation.

The extension of wage labour in the clan has made the peasants the poorer for it and more wretched. This is because they now depend on the money from the sale of their labour power for food, medication, school fees, etc. The puzzle is that as their problem exacerbate, they tend to believe that they need to sell more of their labour power to make up - leading to a depending crisis of impovershment. Pamans has identified the

problems associated with the intrusion of private capital in peasant agriculture along these lines. He observes that

it will give more room for the extension of wage labour in the rural areas and an enlarged process of proletarianisation. This is stimulated by the disruption of the traditional structures of land ownership which have been severely eroded since independence. It thus gives room to the rise of a land market and of a labour market. Even if the two have very specific features, they are the result of a "primitive accumulation process" which is now producing fully its effect and has prepared the ground for a full extension of agrarian capitalism (Quoted in Mkandawire, 1989:9; see also Pamans and Ntalaja, 1986).

5.3.2. ABANDONMENT OF THE CULTIVATION OF TRADITIONAL CROPS IN THE CLAN.

Traditionally, Ayamelum people had their family farms where they got almost everything for subsistence. The ones they cannot was taken care of by their selling some products they had to purchase what they needed. It is true that people did not have a lot of cash at that point in time (as obtains when rice is sold), but they were not impoverished. This was the era when people ran away to their farms to evade the payment of taxation, and school fees were paid communally. Cash had to be mobilized by the whole community otherwise those of school age would not go to school. There were specific age grades whose level of maturity qualified

them to collect these monies for the payment of the school fees. For instance, in Umumbo, the age grade that matures into <u>Irunato Umuakwo</u> was incharge of collecting contributions for the payment of the school fees of their wards.

This practice is no more, according to Damian Anierobi, a community leader at Umumbo, anybody can now train his son or daughter up to University level by cultivating rice. He, however, appears to forget the seasonal nature of "rice money' in the clan which is between November and January.

In any case, the idea of quick money, the illusion of striking it rich quickly through rice production persists. As a result, Ayamelum people have now converted parcels of land previously meant for the cultivation of traditional crops - yam, corn, cassava, melon, potato, vegetables, etc. - to exclusive rice fields. All the <u>itulu</u> land where the bulk of yams were cultivated by Ayamelum people have been converted to rice fields. (<u>Itulu</u> land are those adjoining rivers that are annually flooded. They are very rich soil. People cultivate yams in them as the floods are receding. In that way, the yams are due for harvesting before the next floods come).

<u>Itulu</u> land is the most perfunctory of all rice fields in Ayamelum clan and has put many families into perdition. Rice thrives on constant wet soil,

unlike yam. Thus, the accurate timing that made <u>Itulu</u> yams a beauty to behold would not be feasible with rice as dryness kills the crop. The result is that yearly, numerous <u>itulu</u> rice fields are ruined by floods. Still people are adamant about farming rice there and debts are mounting. The dream crop is rice and not yam or any other. Chief Madumelu Nnamah, a prominent community leader at Omor, laments that there are no more land for the cultivation of yams. This has made people go begging for land across the Niger for the production of yams, he concluded.

Stephen Ekweozor (1992), a community leader in Ifite Ogwari, argues that the problem constraining people from yam cultivation is the market. He maintains that nobody wants the drudgery and insipidity of selling yams in bits any more as that does not bring in money in required quantities. On the other hand, he contends, rice can be sold in any quantity desirable and available and, in addition, somebody can borrow any amount of money from people with his rice as surety. Rice is the inthing, he concluded. Ekweozor's analysis is supported by our respondents. As Table 5.11 shows, 98. 7% of them ranked "rice" as the crop they will want to cultivate.

TABLE 5.11 THE CROP TO CULTIVATE.

RESPONSE	FIRST	SECOND	THIRD
 Yam Rice Cassava Corn 	1.3 98.7 0.0 0.0	72.0 4.2 3.0 20.8	24.0 2.0 40.0 34.0
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0

Rice cultivation is now the opium of Ayamelum Clan. It has carried people away and nobody bothers about a cost-benefit analysis of its production. "Such an exercise will not be necessary as I know that it is rice that is keeping me alife as I have a lot of commitments and many mouths to feed", Okafor Nweke, a community leader in Ifite Ogwari maintains. Asked whether he built his house through rice cultivation, he said no. When intimated that the "many months he feeds" could be better done with traditional crops, he looked bewildered. He needed to be because the traditional farm of an Ayamelum person provides a lot. He gets pepper, vegetables, plantain, beans, sugar cane, etc. as ancillary complements to the main ones such as yam, cassava and corn. These have now been lost in the Ayamelum man's quest to cultivate rice.

The result is the scarcity of food crops in the clan. People now offer friends drinks rather than food as before. Money may be there but food stuff is not, as people now buy <u>all</u> their food requirements. These food

items - vegetables, okra, pepper, corn, yam, garri, etc are brought in from Orba (Nsukka) and Onitsha at exorbitant prices; a previously unthinkable phenomenon. Malnutrition has crept into the clan as the traditional family farms that provided food items that helped balanced their diets are fast vanishing.

5.4 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, we have endeavoured to show that the establishment of LAIP and the penetration of capital into Ayamelum clan have adverse effects on agrarianism and the rural economy of the area. We started by analyzing the agrarian character of Ayamelum society. This we established to be commensal and non-exploitative. There was some form of moneylending - "isusu" - but this was a collaborative attempt at ameliorating the hardships encountered by members of the society. Monetization was equally rudimentary, while the family farm provided most of the subsistent requirements of the family members. Land then was communally owned and everybody had access to same. There was the centrality of partnership, consanguine and conjugal relationships in the supply of labour. Generally, people were not abrasively acquisitive; they had the penchant for ceremonies and conviviality.

These features become changed or altered with the penetration of

private capital and the establishment of LAIP in the area. Land grabbing became initiated and entrenched as a result of private capital. The ownership of land now came into existence leading to disagreements over land. Boundary conflicts, on its part, have become commonplace. The Ayamelum man's innate greed was aroused and this manifests in acquisitive tendencies that were unusual. What is more, the rural economy of the clan has become monetized.

The family farm which was the bedrock of the Ayamelum peasant's subsistence is no longer fashionable as a result of the impact of private capital and the irrigation project. Especially important here is that the family farm is seen as not yielding enough cash and in dramatic quantities as rice farms do. Rice cultivation therefore is the in-thing. However, this requires money for the various processes involved in its production. As Ayamelum people generally lack capital, money-lending business is thriving in the area. The money borrowed from the lenders are at exploitative terms. The result is a deepening crisis of impoverishment and malnutrition (as the family farms that provided food items before are neglected). Consequently, the penetration of capital and the establishment of the irrigation project in the area, definitely, have adverse effects on agrarianism and the rural economy of Ayamelum clan.

Chapter Six

THE IRRIGATION PROJECT, CAPITAL AND POPULATION DISPLACEMENT AND SOCIAL CONFLICTS IN AYAMELUM CLAN

6.1 INTRODUCTION:

This chapter examines the role of the Lower Anambra Irrigation Project (LAIP) and private capital in the generation and persistence of population displacement and social conflicts in Ayamelum clan. To properly attain this objective, we have organized the chapter as follows:

- (i) Population Displacement in the clan;
- (ii) Social Conflicts in the clan;
- (iii) Umumbo Community: A monument of disunity and polarization; and
- (iv) Conclusion.

6.2 POPULATION DISPLACEMENT IN THE CLAN

The incidence of population displacement, already implicitly highlighted in dispersion in the preceding chapters, occurred in Ayamelum clan from two major angles. These are from the operational necessities of

the LAIP and the activities of private capital in the agricultural sector.

The LAIP was conceived to have five thousand (5000) hectares of cultivatable rice fields. In addition, the project developers equally got over four hundred hectares for the establishment of their offices and living quarters. This does not include the land area required for the construction of the main canals, head race and the pumping station. The land on which all these aspects of the irrigation project took place were previously being cultivated by the peasants of Ayamelum clan. Thus, it would be appropriate to say that all those peasants were displaced to make way for the LAIP.

This was easy. After all, the state now has access to all land courtesy of the Land Use Decree of 1978. The land for the rice fields were expropriated from Umumbo, Omor, Umerum and Anaku communities. The land of Anaku and Omor communities jointly constitute the South West Zone. This has 790 hectares. The Omor people involved in this case are from the Amikwe quarters. They are embittered and have been having a running battle with the LAIP management as they allege that no compensation has been paid to them for their damaged crops, trees and structures. The latest development is that they are effecting the forcible ejection of non-Amikwe people from farming in that portion of the LAIP rice fields.

The Amikwe people lost not only their traditional rice planting land areas but also those areas that they cultivated yams, potato, and cassava. The result is that a good number of the people have migrated to Ubulu in Delta State where they are wage labourers or yam cultivators. Those still at home are engaged in LAIP rice cropping or selling their labour power to the farmers there.

Umerum's land is in the South East Zone. This measures 670 hectares. Unfortunately, no compensation has been paid for the damaged economic trees there (in 1992) as the ownership of the land is being contested between Chief Christian C. Onoh of Ngwo (a former Governor of old Anambra State) and the Umerum community. According to Damian Anierobi (1992), a community leader of the area, this is a perfect situation that "government" wants and cherishes as that will enable her to pocket her money - the compensation money. The Umerum people have spent a lot of money,gathered through contributions and levies, in making representations to the AIRBRDA's officials at their headquarters at Owerri and the bureaucrats of the Federal Ministry of Water Resources to no avail.

Akanator quarters of Omor community and Umumbo community owned the land that makes up the LAIP's North West Zone which comprises one thousand, three hundred and seventy-five (1375) hectares.

In addition, the land on which the office blocks and residential quarters of the LAIP officials were constructed belonged to Akanator quarters Omor. What the Akanator people regret most is that the piaces where they were displaced constituted the prime land on which they cultivated traditional crops such as yams, potatoes and melon. It is for this that Chief Medumeluu Nnamah (1992), an Akanator indigene and arguably the most powerful community leader in Omor, laments that his people now go begging for land on which to cultivate traditional crops. As a result of the problems associated with this, most Akanator farmers now engage only in rice cultivation, deepening their dependence on the market for the purchase of their required food items.

The bulk of the rice-fields of the LAIP was got from Umumbo community. Apart from their legitimate interests in the lands of the South East Zone and North West Zone, the people exclusively provided the land for the North East Zone, which measures one thousand and fifteen (1,015) hectares. In addition, the land area on which the LAIP Rice Mill Complex is situated belonged to Umumbo community. Thus, the people lost a lot of land. As a matter of fact, the rice fields of the Irrigation Project effectively encircles Umumbo town, leading to a devastating incursion of sand-flies and mosquitoes that have made living in Umumbo nightmarish.

The traditional ruler of Umumbo, Igwe A. C. Nweke (1992) maintains that his community still has some land areas towards Umulokpa, headquarters of Uzo-Uwani Local Government Area, where traditional crops would be cultivated. However, that too is not safe as the TAISEI Corporation of Japan has established her offices and living quarters in those areas.

Umumbo people live and talk rice. That has become the informing essence of their idiosyncracy. This is really not surprising as people stay in their huts and admire the expansive cops and fields of the LAIP. Everybody in Umumbo is a rice farmer or rice-farm wage labourer. However, the farmers own no land as the land belongs to the AIRBRDA, owners of the LAIP. Therefore, they are all tenant farmers as the LAIP has displaced them from their land.

Private capital, however, has not spared the Umumbo community from further dispossession of their land. The community's only land towards lifte Ogwari called <u>Utulukpam</u> has been allegedly bought by WINCO Foods and Agricultural Complex Limited. The area measures 337 hectares. This time, the community is opposing this further displacement. In a petition dated 18th August, 1986 to the former Military Governor of old Anambra State, Emeka Omeruah, the community vehemently opposed the

sale of the land as this "will sentence the present and future generations to slavery" as most of their land has already been taken over by the LAIP. In addition, Igwe A. C. Nweke and others in a suit No. OT\150\89 at the High Court, Otu-Ocha, headquarters of Anambra Local Government Area, are challenging Emmanuel Nnalue for the sale of this <u>Utulukpam</u> communal land.

On her own part, Ifite Ogwari community houses the LAIP pumping station and the head race from Anambra River to the LAIP rice fields. The head race measures a distance of 16.5km. The adjoining areas of that are not allowed for cultivation, neither are those of the pumping station. Two hundred and one person were reportedly displaced. The amount of money for damages to economic trees is N141,655.32. The actual payments made is N70,827.66, being 50% of the actual amount. These figures were obtained from the records of the AIRBRDA. It should be noted that these amounts are for the value of the Naria as at 1983.

Apart from the displacement on the land, the activities of the LAIP contractors destroyed the traditional drinking water source of Ifite Ogwari. It was the compassion resulting from this that made the then Administrator of Uzo-Uwani L.G.A., Mr S. O. Metala to appeal to the Director of DFRRI, Anambra State, Mr Ejoh to consider the inclusion of Ifite Ogwari in the

Phase one of the Directorate's Rural Water Supply Scheme:

May I hereby most humbly and passionately appeal to you, to include Ifite-Ogwari town... in the above scheme. The traditional drinking water sources and springs... of this unfortunate town have been destroyed in the process of constructing the ... Irrigation Canal which passes through Ifite-Ogwari where the (AIRBRDA) has it's rice irrigation pumping station. Since the irrigation canal destroyed all their sources of drinking water, the people of Ifite-Ogwari have been subjected to drinking dirty, stagnant water from potholes and gutters, and this has introduced guinea worm and other water-borne diseases into Ifite-Ogwari... Please... help them by including Ifite-Ogwari in the above scheme (Metala, 1986:1).

Private capital has made noticeable incursions into the acquisition of land in Ifite-Ogwari community. For instance, all the boundary lands adjoining Umeje to the North has been sold off by the Umana quarters of Ifite-Ogwari. Equally, the expanse of land between Ifite-Ogwari and Omasi to the East has been equally sold. By present counts, this measures over 500 hectares and it is now known as Iva Valley Integrated Fram Ltd. Ifite Ogwari people are also part-owners of the 337 hectares Utulukpam land said to have been sold to WINCO Foods and Agricultural Complex Ltd.

In Ifite-Ogwari, there is now private ownership of land.

Consequently, individuals have sold their lands. Among these are the Meli and Okoye families of Umawa village. These sales have resulted in land available to the peasants for cultivation being mercilessly reduced, leading

to land disputes and boundary conflicts. Those who have been displaced have now resorted to being wage labourers, tenant farmers in the fields owned by the land grabbers, migrated to other communities to farm especially Ubulu in Delta State and Aguleri in Anambra L.G.A. or drifted to the urban areas in search of greener pastures.

Furthermore, people have now resorted to farming in pieces of land around homes, a thing previously viewed with opprobrium. The result is disagreements between domestic animal owners and these behind - the - house farmers. It is to resolve this that Clement Ikegbunam, Christopher Ekwunife, Obi Okoye, Cyprain Ogugua, Patrick Okoye and fifteen others sent a petition to the Chairman, Uzo-Uwani L.G.A. intimating him that -

The roaming about of domestic animals in Ifite Ogwari despite series of warning is becoming too alarming with great concern (sic). You can agree with us that the pieces of land around home are more fertile than the ones in the distant farms. Consequently, people prefer farming there to going to distant farm lands...

We are therefore calling on you to use your good offices so that all these straying animals be impounded by your council and fined... and the proceeds will not only boost your economy but will also enable people to farm where ever they find suitable... (Clement Ikegbunam et al, 1986:1).

In Omasi community, the traditional ruler, Igwe Obiakor pursued the quest to sell Omasi land with such zealousness and impetuosity that the impression was created that the people's land was inexhaustible.

Compared with other Ayamelum communities, Omasi would be said to have been endowed with a lot of land mass. With a population estimate of about 3,270, Omasi community could be said to be sparsely inhabited; this is the case as it is the second to the last (Umeje) in population density in Ayamelum clan. As a result, land was never previously considered as likely source of disharmony among the indigenes of the community.

Unfortunately, that is no longer the case as Omasi ranked first in the disposal of her land to the commercial class land grabbers. Table 6.1 for instance, shows that a total of 3079.821 hectares of Omasi land has been taken over. Tempo Mill Ltd alone acquired 1142.549 hectares.

What those who oppose the sale of land at Omasi find most annoying and embarrassing is that most of those land were disposed off at miserly payments. This was because land sales in Omasi started much earlier than in other Ayamelum communities. They were the pioneers in these matters, so to say. Thus, a lot of ignorance in land matters and the intoxicatory tendencies of small amounts of money to the peasantry, made land sales in Omasi exceedingly cheap. For instance, Sico Farm is reported to have bought her 480.78ha of farmland for a mere N20,000.00. Such land area was eventually fetching other communities hundreds of thousands of Naira.

TABLE 6.1: LAND SOLD IN OMASI COMMUNITY:

SINO	NAMES OF BUYER	ADDRESS HACTAR-ES.		PURPOSE
1.	SICO Farm Complex Ltd	2E, Eloseh str. Surulere, lagos 480.782		Agric
2.	Chilinn Farm Ltd	12, Okwuenu Str Onitsha	202.317	Agric
3.	Rojel Farms Ltd	5A Aria Road Enugu	652.349	Agric
4.	Mr. Alphonsus Akana	6, Ichida Str,Onitsha	261.036	Agric
5.	Tempo Mill Ltd	P.M.B.1580 Onitsha	1142.549	Agric
6.	Olympic Farms	Abagana, Njikoka L.G.A.	260.788	Agric Residential
7.	Chief C. U. Uzo- Amobi	19, Aria Road, Enugu	80.00	Commer- cial
	TOTAL HECTERAGE		3079.821	

SOURCE: Oyi Local Government Records.

It was easy to manipulate land sales in Omasi by the traditional ruler and his cohorts because land was communally owned, and abundant. That is no more; individualistic ownership is now the vogue and practice. The result is land disputes and boundary conflicts. A lot of people are now landless and displaced, heightening deprivation and the tenacity to get land. For instance, as at June 1992, some elements in Omasi and Iga in Uzo-Uwani Local Government Area were engaged in a ferocious and bloody struggle, occasioning the use of firearms, over lands adjoining the ADARICE Producing Company. Some lives have been allegedly I

intervened to no avail, and the internecine misunderstanding goes on.

The Omasi Uno Progressive Union foresaw these developments. For instance in a petition dated 2nd July, 1986 and signed by the Chairman, Simeon Anah and the Secretary, Simon Okeji, the Union cried out to the old Anambra State Governor, Samson Emeka Omeruah over the "illegal sale of land" in the community. The Union members expressed fear that they would be turned into beggars and wanderers in their own land if the situation was not arrested. It was not arrested and history has vindicated them.

Finally, another great land selling community is Umeje. With a population estimate of only 2,838 as at 1992, Umeje is undoubtedly the least populated of all Ayamelum communities. However, comparatively it has a land mass that is only second to Omasi. Like that of Omasi, the traditional ruler of Umeje, Igwe Nneli, was a great lover and ardent participant in the sales of land in his community. Then again he was carried away by the monetary returns from such deals and consequently projected the image of a *nouveau riche*. Truly, he appeared then to be contented with himself, so also were his supporters in the land sales.

Table 6.2 indicates that Umeje land sold measures 1,677.514 hectares and 41,163.946 sqm. Tempo Mills Ltd has the highest individual

Table 6.2: LAND SALES IN UMEJE COMMUNITY

s/NO	NAME OF BUYER	ADDRESS	HECTER- AGE	PURPOSE
1.	Dr L.A. Ononye	31 Ugwuobankpa street, Onitsha	259.394	Agric
2.	Tempo Mills Ltd	P.M.B. 1580, Onitsha.	1019.581) 11 0
3.	Ramac Farms Ltd	48 Francis St, Onitsha	134.400	4. "
4.	Dalgo Limited	48 Ibafon St. Apapa - Lagos	264.139	11
5.	Offar-Offor	20 Park Lane Nkpo	41163.946sq	11 27

SOURCE:

Oyi Local Government Records.

One thing can be said of Umeje people. This is that they are the least enlightened and sophisticated of all Ayamelum people. Their interest in western education is poor and as such the community lacks high calibre civil servants. There are, in addition, no monied men of note in the town. Generally, Umeje is an agrarian society in a world of its own. The people are simple-minded, trusting and kind. These qualities were their greatest undoing when Umeje lands were being sold. All attempts by Augstine Emegini and a few others to mobilize them against the sale of their lands were neither comprehended nor appreciated. The result is that the choice

land areas where Umeje people engaged in the cultivation of crops have been sold off. The people farming such areas are now displaced and landless.

As a result of this, many individuals in Umeje have now become wage labourers at ADARICE Producing Company and the private agrobased companies in the clan. In addition, some of them now constitute sources of cheap labour to their neighbours, especially Umawa people of little Ogwari. Others, mostly of the younger generation, have migrated to the urban areas to learn one trade or the other, or join the burgeoning class of hoodlums and labourers in Nigerian cities. Consequently, Umeje town projects the image of heightened dereliction, and her people amply exemplifies the deepening crisis of agrarianism in Ayamelum clan. Unfortunately, the traditional ruler, Igwe Nneli, has also left the town in search of greener pastures elsewhere.

6.3 SOCIAL CONFLICTS IN AYAMELUM CLAN:

Traditionally, Ayamelum people are an easy-going lot who are prone to festivities. These celebrations are arranged all through the year, though the intensity of these are determined by the farming cycle they fall into. In other words, those that come up at the heat of farming are not elaborately

and seriously celebrated. One thing that these festivals have done to Ayamelum people is that they enabled them to establish friendship links among themselves in the various communities of the clan. These relationships are reinforced by the extension of invitations of participation to these friends when one's community has a festival to celebrate.

Of course, people had their family farms which they tended religiously. They owned the land they cultivated. Land was in abundance and people never quarrelled over land. In addition, the pressure for the acquisition of money was not all-consuming. The need of people which required money for their satisfaction were not many and all-embracing. The rural economy was self-sustaining and resilient. Now, all these are part of the lost heritage of Africa which the adherents of the negritude philosophy are enamoured about.

The establishment of the Lower Anambra Irrigation Project (LAIP) and the penetration of private capital into the clan are responsible for changing all that. The LAIP brought and popularized the cultivation of rice with its attendant problems. The most critical being supplanting of traditional crops farmed in the area. In addition, rice cropping usually requires large land spaces resulting in the brazen desire and appetite for more land areas among its cultivators. Equally, rice cultivation is capital-

intensive. The result is that people engaged in it require money in order to do it well, thereby directly generating money acquisition consciousness among Ayamelum people. Our respondents confirm these views. According to Table 6.3, 91.5% and 93.7% of our respondents view "land" and "money" respectively as the first and second in the order of the necessities for the cultivation of rice.

TABLE 6.3: ORDER OF NEEDS OF RICE CULTIVATORS IN THE CLAN:

RESPONSE	FIRST	SECOND	THIRD	FOURTH
Land Farming	91.5	3.2	_	-
implements		1.0	17.5	94.6
Fertilizer	0.5	2.1 93.7	80.3 2.2	5.4
Money	9.5	93.7	2.2	-
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Private capital moved into the clan in the mad rush to engage in commercial agriculture. The result is a massive land grabbing tendency and activities that is very unusual in the eastern parts of Nigeria. It is unusual because no other area has disposed of such gargantuan land areas to private capital in the name of agriculture. It is usual for people to farm in other people's land as in the Abakaliki area but such does not warrant outright purchase of land as in Ayamelum clan. When land is so purchased problems are created for the indigenes. The outstanding ones

are population displacement and intensive pressures and struggles for the remaining land spaces.

It is noteworthy that everybody of Ayamelum origin did not support the alienation of the people's land. Some people, inside and outside, of Ayamelum never wanted these land deals. Mostly, those not living in Ayamelum and by implication supposedly more enlightened, were against the sales. For instance, the Ayamelum Progressive Union, Maiduguri branch, sent a petition dated 4th August, 1986 to the then Military Governor of old Anambra State, Samson Emeka Omeruah, in which the Union members "viewed with grave concern, the spate of illegal land deals in Ayamelum clan". The petition signed by the Chairman, Dr. Peter Obuasi, the Secretary, Benjamin Obiora, and the Vice-Chairman, Cyprian Okadigwe further urged the governor to help their people who have been deprived of their land. The government did not come to the aid of the deprived people and the result has been generalized and incessant quarrels all over the communities in Ayamelum clan.

It is equally noteworthy that most of the traditional rulers in the clan supported the sale of lands. This is evident from Table 6.4 where 100% of our respondents are emphatic about that.

TABLE 6.4 TRADITIONAL RULERS AND SALE OF AYAMELUM LAND:

RESPONSE	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
All of them	-	-
A few of them	-	-
None of them	-	-1-
Most of them	800	100.0
TOTAL	800	100.0

Among these are Igwe Mabia of Igbakwu, Igwe Nneli of Umeje, Igwe Obiakor of Omasi, Igwe Ogugua of Anaku and Igwe Mgbakor of Ifite Ogwari. Igwe Nweke of Umumbo and Igwe Nnoyelu of Omor did not superintend land sales in their communities. That of Umerum is deceased. The traditional ruler of Umumbo is the leader of the movement in his community to forestall further alienation of their land. He believes that the one they suffered in the course of the establishment of LAIP is quite enough. The traditional ruler of Omor is not cantankerous by nature. He is quite unassuming and does not give his subjects any problems. Evidently, his material comfort in contradistinction to those of his Ayamelum colleagues accounts for his apparent contentment.

The traditional rulers who supported land sales are all contending with legitimacy problems. A cross-section of their people, and a vociferous and organized one at that, are up in arms working for their dethronement. Igbakwu, Omasi and Ifite Ogwari are the outstanding cases. Igbakwu community as at now is a community with two "traditional rulers". One, Igwe Mbia, is recognized by the government as the traditional ruler of Igbakwu community but disowned as such by a generality of his people. The other, Chief Udebunu, has been installed as the Igwe Ododo of Igbakwu by an important cross-section of members of that community but he is not recognized by the government. The parties to this dispute are unwavering in their position and Igbakwu as a community is the worse for it as no development initiatives are going on there.

Omasi community is a different problem. Nobody else has been installed but the leadership of that community rests squarely on the shoulders of Chief Simeon Anah. He determines what goes on in that community and the youths, who are the principal agencies for the initiation and execution of revolutionary ideas in Ayamelum communities, are solidly behind him. They have determined that Chief Anah will always be their Councillor no matter the political party he contests under. Since 1987 when the Babangida Administration initiated the Local Government reforms and

elections, Chief Anah has always represented Omasi in the Council.

Igwe Obiakor (the traditional ruler of Omasi) is no longer reckoned with in the power politics of his community. For two times he has fronted candidates against Chief Anah and for those two times he has been worsted. The issue is that Chief leads the movement against the sale of Omasi land. He resigned his primary school teaching job to take up this position. He has been a resolute and consistent leader who rebuffed all financial baits from the land grabbers to make him abandon his opposition. For his stand, Igwe Obiako and his cohorts in Omasi land sales, have always engineered police problems for him and his supporters both at the Adani, Uzo-Uwani Local Government Area police station and the Central police station, Enugu. Unfortunately for Igwe Obiako and his supporters, such harassments had always made the Anah group reinforce their commitment to the fact that Omasi land should not be sold.

Consequently, Chief Anah and his supporters have taken the private companies that bought land in Omasi to court challenging the propriety and legality of such transactions. The cases are going on. Meanwhile, the youths of Omasi have been making life difficult for Igwe Obiako. For instance, in 14th October 1989, a mob consisting mainly of Omasi youths invaded the home of Igwe obiako, manhandled him and vandalized his

house. He brought in the police from Adani police station who made some arrests. They were eventually released. Subsequently, the then Akonobi Government of old Anambra State set up a 12-man peace panel headed by Paul Odenigbo to look into the quarrels between the traditional ruler and members of his community, and then make recommendations. Uptill now, nobody has heard anything about the work of the peace panel.

In Ifite Ogwari, Chief Daniel Mgbakor was installed the traditional ruler of Ifite Ogwari on the waves of a massive popular support. Unfortunately ever since he attained his position, Chief Mgbakor has been pursuing anti-people policies that has made him irrelevant in the administration of Ifite Ogwari. His presence is only felt whenever the government wants to make contact with the people through the traditional rulers.

The majority of Ifite Ogwari people do not recognize him as the traditional ruler because of his activities. Consequently, in 2nd May, 1990, the Akonobi Administration of the then Anambra state constituted an "Administrative Board of Inquiry into the Alleged Misconduct of the Traditional Ruler of Ifite Ogwari". The Board's terms of reference were:-

To determine whether Igwe Mgbakor has any relevant support in Ifite
 Ogwari.

- ii. To find out whether Igwe Mgbakor has been encouraging disputes among the people of Ifite Ogwari for his selfish ends.
- iii. To determine whether there is likelihood of threatened peace in lfite Ogwari.
- iv. To determine the causes of this threatened peace, if any.
- v. To ascertain Igwe Mgbakor's role in the Village Adoption Scheme (VAS) in Ifite Ogwari.
- vi. To verify the claim that Igwe Mgbakor has been obstructing development efforts in the town.
- vii. To find out whether Igwe Mgbakor has been participating in partisan politics in the community.
- viii. To recommend any appropriate action.

In their submission to the Board of Inquiry, the Ifite Ogwari Development Union (1990) insisted that Daniel Mgbakor was no longer fit to continue in office as the traditional ruler of Ifite Ogwari since the terms of reference given the Board of Inquiry could be easily comfirmed against Chief Mgbakor. The Union (1990:1) wrote:-

We see this Board of inquiry as a God-sent opportunity that will enable our people to properly articulate and aggregate their grievances against Daniel Mgbakor, who parades himself as the Traditional Ruler of Ifite-Ogwari to the chagrin and annoyance of the people of our community. We equally

believe that the Report of this Board of Inquiry will be an amplification of the unanimity of the decision of our people that we no longer want Daniel Mgbakor as our Traditional Ruler.

The Board of Inquiry has since submitted its report to the government. Nothing has been heard regarding its findings and the chieftaincy dispute and crisis are still ranging on in Ifite Ogwari.

Meanwhile, at present in Ayamelum clan, land disputes and boundary conflicts are pervasive. This is confirmed by our respondents in Table 6.5 where 100% of them agree with this notion.

TABLE 6.5 LAND QUARRELS IN THE CLAN

RESPONSE	NUMBER	RERCENTAGE	
Yes	800	100.00	
No	-	-	
Don't know	<u>-</u>	· · · · · ·	
TOTAL	800	100.00	

According to Stephen Onuekwe (1992) "the struggle over land is stiff and so people compete aggressively for this. Land conflict is everywhere

in the clan especially during rice farming. This subsides after the harvest of rice". The problem of land is the major pre-occupation of the Customary Court at Omor. Most of the cases handled or being handled by them, as their records indicate, relate to land disputes and boundary conflicts. The same land problems feature prominently in the cases brought before the Police Posts in the clan. According to a police officer, "our post is a beehive of activities at the start of every farming season as people come complaining of trespassers to their land. Land matters are really keeping us busy here".

Unfortunately, the police in Ayamelum Clan never settle or solve land problems. In short, they exacerbate them as their arrest-and-bail approach intensifies animosities amongst people as that merely involves the expenditure of scarce funds by both parties. It is the courts, especially the customary court at Omor, that settle or solve land problems in the clan. For instance, Ozekwe Metala and Godson Okafor, both of Ama quarters, Ifite Ogwari contested the ownership of a piece of land called "okwu-ala farm land" situated at Eziama, Ifite Ogwari. Interchangeably, they were bringing in the police from the Police Post at Ifite Ogwari against each other. The Police employed their usual strategy of arresting the person who the report was made against. The person bailed himself with money and the case is

rested.

In exasperation, Ozekwe metala took the matter to the customary Court at Omor. In the suit, No. CCO/11/91, the plaintiff was asking the court "for customary right of occupancy and title over" the piece of land, Okwuala farm land. In the judgement delivered on 9th October, 1991, the court (1991:17) said:-

From the evidence before the court, the plaintiff sued for about fifteen chains of the piece of land but the defendant claims that the plaintiff has no piece of land there at all ... Court now declares that all that piece of land measuring about fifteen (15) chains from the banana by the North-West, through the narrow Gully up to Udoyibo Onyenwife's farm land, opposite "Ijisi" tree by the North-East, down to Peter Onyekwe by the South-West to Ngene Okwuala by the West and ends at Banana again, belongs to the plaintiff.

One salient fact is that the sale of land in Ayamelum clan has been a major contributor to the generation of social conflicts in the area. Each land deal has attracted a lot of protestations. M. E. Nnamah, (1986:1) a former sole Administrator of Uzo Uwani Local Government confirms this:

I would like to say that this land dispute is not an isolated case even in Anaku. When a piece of land is sold, people usually keep quiet and say nothing ... As soon as a public notice is issued (for the issuance of Certificate of Occupancy), protests begin to flow in.

What Nnamah misses here is that the sale of land in Ayamelum clan is not a particularly publicized activity. What is even more, most of such

deals are nocturnally organized and the conclusion of the transactions is effected outside the clan. The people concerned get to know usually when the notices for the issuance of certificates of occupancy are out. The former sole Administrator even confirms this in his write-up:

Ekene Dili Chukwu Motors Ltd applied for a Certificate of Occupancy in respect of... Okpoga, Umurienu Village, Anaku ... The public notice No. 39/85 to the effect was issued on 25th October, 1985 inviting those who may have any objection to do so. In compliance with the public notice, Umuagu family of Anaku put in a protest against the grant of Certificate of Occupancy to the applicant. This fact was brought to the notice of messrs Ekene Dili Chukwu Motors Ltd and the Traditional Ruler of Anaku, Igwe P. N. Ogugua. Igwe Ogugua told me that the claim has no merit as the land in question belong to Umulienu Village ... I had to depend on the Traditional Rulers as witnesses to vouch for the customary right within the areas of their authority (Nnamah, 1986:1)

Land is a central issue in Ayamelum clan. People make their living from it. People make/made money from it. And people are having problems from it. It is for this that 97.40% of our respondents are convinced that land is the most important matter to the Ayamelum person (see Table 6.6).

TABLE 6.6 MOST IMPORTANT MATTER TO AYAMELUM PERSON

RESPONSE	FIRST	SECOND	THIRD	FOURTH
i. Civil ServiceAppoints.ii. Political	0.00	20.3	80.00	9.7
Appointment iii. Schools for the	0.0	3.5	15.7	90.3
Children iv. Land.	2.6 97.4	70.5 5.7	4.3 0.0	0.0 . 0.0
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Furthermore, land was a critical factor in the introduction of the consciousness for the acquisition of money. People sold land and had a lot of money to spend and throw about. They lived like the *nouveau riche*. This was noted amongst the peer groups. Peer group influence is pervasive in the clan. It is the reference point for the determination and measurement of one's status in the community. Thus, when an individual accomplishes a feat or attains some position or generally makes an achievement in the society, the first set of people to be made aware of this is the peer group. Therefore, peerages in Ayamelum clan are societal mechanism for the inculcation some of sense of competition among people.

Unfortunately, the stupendous speed with which land money came to individuals was too sudden and unusual that people started being inclined to the mentality of "getting rich quick'. The result is increasing incidences of stealing and armed robbery. They quest for quick money is responsible. The problem is made worse by the rising cases of displacement and migration to other areas by the youths of the clan. Onitsha is the favourite place they drift to. Consequently, people began stealing rice, yams, corns, etc. from others' farms. Economic trees - pears, mangoes, ogbono, oranges, etc - were not left out. They were vandalized.

The most startling in these developments was the waylaying of people on the roads by thieves. The prime targets were early morning travellers to Onitsha and traders coming to the clan for one business or the other. By 1991, the thieves have become quiet daring as they openly threatened people with nocturnal visitation unless they were provided with commensurate requirements. Our teachers of old talked about actions and reactions being equal and opposite. The bravado of the thieves brought about what we call "IYA phenomenon" in Ifite Ogwari.

6.3.1 IYA PHENOMENON IN IFITE OGWARI

IYA is an acronym for Ifite-Ogwari Youths Association. It was a child of circumstance as nobody planned its genesis. In other words, people never made consultations, organized constitutions, called for members and held elections before IYA originated.

IYA was a spontaneous reaction of the youths of Ifite Ogwari against three known and dangerous thieves in the community. These thieves have been making life unbearable for the people of the town in particular, and the clan in general. Of course, those not indigenous to the clan were not left out by these thieves. They were the principal characters in the theft of food crops and breaks-in into people's houses in the area.

It should be noted here that the targets of these thieves were usually the property of the youths. The youths are much into rice cultivation; an attractive target of these rogues. The youths equally had electronic gargets the thieves stole. And, the youths were the major victims of the nefarious activities of these thieves on the highways against travellers as they are the most mobile category in the society. What is even more, the youths have most of the money these rogues want to steal. Therefore, the youths were the most embittered category in the society, moreso, as these hoodlums belonged to their peer groups.

It all began on 17th July, 1991, the day preceding the night the thieves struck at a medicine store in Umawa quarters, Ifite Ogwari. The store-keeper, Amuluche Abonu, had earlier taken a loan from one of the banks. He used same to purchase drugs from Onitsha on the 16th of July, 1991. That same night, the thieves came and carried away everything. The

Umawa store-keeper became hysterical. People gathered. The atmosphere was tense and charged. People expressed sorrow and anguish. Curses and unprintable epithets were thrown at the perpetrators of the despicable act. The youths were dumbfounded and startled. The consensus was that nobody or thing was safe again in the community. Consequently, the conundrum of silence that pervaded thievery in the town then exploded into a convulsive outpouring of indignation and vengeance.

People made suggestions about the possible characters behind the theft. Immediate search parties were mobilized and dispatched. Some persons were manhandled in the process. Eventually, the goods were found in Mr. Udebunu's house at Isiudala Village, Ifite Ogwari. Reasonable pressures were employed on him and he named two of his colleagues. Those (D.S.POnuora and James Nwekekwaa) were arrested equally by the youthful mob.

To this day, the three persons have "disappeared". Nobody can or even wants to border about their whereabouts. The message became crystal clear: the youths are fed up with hoodlums messing up their lives. It was the necessity to maintain the momentum of opposition to thieving activities of people that the youths on that day formed what is now known and called Ifite-Ogwari Youth Association (IYA).

The Association is now formalized and the members through OLG/SC/R.59/91 have regularized the existence of IYA with the Oyi Local Government Council of Anambra state. They now have a constitution and elected officers. The Chairman is E.A. Obiora from Umawa Village while the Secretary is T.N. Uchenu of Isiuduala Village, Ifite Ogwari. According to the constitution (1991) of the association, the members have "resolved to effect a more cordial relationship among Ifite youths, to bring around a better Ifite Ogwari". This commitment is amply demonstrated by section 2 of the constitution which provides that the "motto of this Association shall be 'For Better Ifite-Ogwari".

The aims and objectives of IYA as reflected in section 3 (i - iv) are as follows:

- i. to engage in development projects;
- ii. to promote peace and unity;
- iii. to render meaningful assistance to any other association "having ideals like ours"; and
- iv. to act as a vigilant group through which "it shall attempt to stop all social and moral evils in Ifite Ogwari".

The membership of IYA is open to all male indigenes of Ifite-Ogwari between the ages of 15 and 40 years on the payment of a registration fee

of N1.00 and submission of "a passport photograph for an identity card and N20.00 for it'. Section 6 of the constitution of IYA indicates that elective posts "shall be filled ... every two years". The elections shall be conducted by the open-balloting system and a simple majority determines victory. However, "students are not qualified for any post at all, so likewise men of apprenticeship (sic)".

Finally, section 9 (i - v) of the constitution of IYA provides for what the members call "sanctions/orders". These are:

- i. Stealing of goods any type shall not be condoned by the Association.
- ii. No refund of money to any member who withdraws his membership from this Association.
- iii. Any village that fails to send us their representatives during meetings shall pay a fine of N10.00 to our Secretariat.
- iv. If a member dies, the Association shall perform a funeral ceremony from 8.30 a.m. to 4.000 p.m.
- v. Any Chemist whom we received an information (sic) that he/she deals in abortion malpractices will be expelled from Ifite-Ogwari.
- vi. False information shall be fined the amount of N500.00 or the person handed over to the police for criminal offence.

The IYA is the *de facto* administrator of lifte Ogwari. The members make the rules and everybody obeys. They go to any length to enforce their injunctions. They have banned stealing of any kind in the community or the culprit will pay dearly for it. "Jabra" from Amadie Village and "DSP" of Amah Village thought otherwise and their relations have only tales of woe and ignominy to tell. The IYA has put in place sanitary regulations which people comply with. Thus, reckless dumping of refuse and uncontrolled defecation by both children and adults are offences that attract automatic N100.00 fines.

The most important function being performed now by IYA is the resolution of conflicts in the community, especially those associated with land. These days, people refer their quarrels over land or boundary conflicts to IYA. Nobody takes delight any more in sending such matters to the police. They prefer IYA as that is less expensive, less time-consuming and resolves the conflicts in a less contentious manner.

According to Animude Obiora (1992), the Chairman of IYA, "land problems now take up most of our time. For instance, last night we were handling some cases till 4 o'clock in the morning". Most of these cases they handle relate to rice fields. For instance, that between Udezue Nwofia and Simon Okafor was a boundary dispute at lyi-ltu rice farm; Ikechukwu

Udanya and Okedu Chinelo's was over the ownership of Ani-Oligbogbo rice farm; Ekwezor Edeogo and Igwehi Okoye's was over the ownership of Okpu Umawa rice field; and that between Peter Emeka and Nalue Ikegbune was on the ownership of Aja-awu rice field. Those are samples of cases handled within one week by IYA. They have no choice but to handle them. Afterall, the chieftaincy dispute and acrimonies relating to land sales in the town have made other traditional organs for the resolution of conflicts in the community irrelevant and even theatres of acrimony and disputation. Nature is said to abhor vacuum. As a result, IYA may be said to be nature's device for filling the leadership vacuum in Ifite Ogwari. Umumbo community is not that lucky.

6.3.2 UMUMBO COMMUNITY: A MONUMENT OF DISUNITY AND POLARIZATION

Umumbo community, by 1992 population estimate, is made up of 9,501 people. It was a very communal society. The indigenes's sense of commensalism is worthy of note. According to an address of welcome the community presented to the Administrator of Uzo - Uwani Local Government (1986:1):

we love progress and development and this love for progress compelled Umumbo people to introduce free primary education as far back as 1937 and this continued till after the Nigerian Civil War. Through our joint efforts the road between Umumbo and Umulokpa (headquarters of Uzo-Uwani L.G.A.) was made motorable in 1956. All men and women in Umumbo today owe their foundation for (sic) education to Umumbo free primary position no matter his or her (sic) present position.

This education function was performed for the Umumbo community by the age grade called <u>Irunato Unoakwo</u>. They were concerned with the development of education in the town and principally ensured that the levies imposed on adult indigenes for the payment of communal school fees were collected.

There are two other <u>Irunato</u> age grades. These are <u>Irunato</u> <u>Ojiani</u> and <u>Irunato Umuata</u>. <u>Irunato Ojiani</u> who are older than <u>Irunato Unoakwo</u> are incharge of Umumbo village administration. The <u>Irunato Umuata</u> are the oldest of the three and can be appropriately called the highest stratum of the Umumbo Council of Elders. It should be noted that age grades mature into these three categories.

These three administrative strata worked harmoniously and gave their community a unity of purpose and sense of direction. Their efforts were smoothly complemented by the traditional ruler of Umumbo who ably acted as a link between the government and his people. Umumbo was a symbol of unity and commensalism. However, according to the community in a welcome address (1986:1):

The unity of purpose continued till 1983 when a large sum of N440,624.00 (four hundred and forty thousand, six hundred and twenty-four naira) was paid to Umumbo people by the Anambra/Imo River Basin Development Authority as compensation for the economic trees damaged in Umumbo land. On the receipt of the large sum of money, our people planned quickly and embarked on three projects: building of community secondary school, community hospital and reactivation of Umumbo water bore-hole.

To ensure that these programmes were properly executed, the Land Committee of Umumbo was mandated to superintend the processes relating to the projects. The traditional ruler, Igwe A.C. Nweke was to head the group. The members were:-

- (i) Cyril Obodoeze
- (ii) Simon Okoye
- (iii) Louis Anedo
- (iv) Jerome Nwankwo
- (v) Emmanuel Okonkwo
- (vi) Michael Oriya
- (vii) John Nnana
- (viii) Michael llegbune

Of all these people, only Emmanuel Okonkwo was living outside the

community. He was a chief Education Officer then at Onitsha. In any case, they worked together in peace for some months and then, problems arose.

First, Emmanuel Okonkwo urged the committee members to accept that the Doctor's Quarters should be built by direct labour instead of the contract system they agreed to be using. Quarrels arose over this in the sense that some members felt that accountability will be harder to effect under direct labour. Eventually, they accepted direct labour for the Doctor's Quarters in an attempt to forestall destabilization.

Second, Emmanuel Okonkwo became persistent in complaining that he was being put in the dark in the workings of the committee. This was seen as suggestive of the perpetration of shady deals.

Third, and as if lending credence to the above, Michael Ilegbune, a member of the Land Committee, was alleged to have boosted to his age mates that by 25th December, 1983, he was going to buy a peugeot 504 GR with which to open his new house. People were perplexed as his visible means of livelihood could not enable him afford all that.

Subsequently, Emmanuel Okonkwo reported the Land Committee to the Umumbo Council of Elders. The seeds of suspicion already sown made it easy for Okonkwo to get the elders approve the dissolution of the Land Committee and the authorization of the Irunato Ojiani to superintend

the on-going projects and represent Umumbo community in all transactions relating to the LAIP. They were asked to work with the traditional ruler as the representative of the whole community.

That decision tantamounted to another major seed of discord in Umumbo. In the first place, the traditional ruler did not want this arrangement at all and said so. Secondly, it was not everybody who was a member of the Land Committee that belonged to the <u>Irunato Ojiani</u>. Those now alienated felt very bitter. Thirdly, it was not all members of the <u>Irunato Ojiani</u> that took kindly to this decision. Evidently, some of them saw it as a slight on their traditional ruler. Fourthly, some people felt bad about the decision because it meant victory for Emmanuel Okonkwo, a member of the <u>Irunato Ojiani</u>, over the traditional ruler. And finally, consanguine relationships helped to weaken the solidarity of the <u>Irunato Ojiani</u>.

For instance, Cyril Obodoeze belonged to the dissolved Land Committee and Irunato Ojiani. However, Godwin Chidube is the leader of their age grade in their part of Umumbo. Both of then belong to the same Umunna, i.e. extended family. Equally, Louis Anedo belonged to the Land Committee. Okafor Ikeagwu was the leader of Irunato Ojiano in their part of the community. Anedo and Ikeagwu are of the same Umunna. In each case, Godwin Chidube and Okafor Ikeagwu were harassed by members of

their <u>Umunna</u> on the propriety of their presiding over the disgrace and supplanting of Cyril Obodoeze and Louis Anedo respectively. Consequently, they withdrew their support and commitment to the <u>Irunato Ojiani</u>.

From this period onwards, everybody started taking sides. As a comparatively small community, everybody had to take sides. Every issue that arose was seen from the prism of "for Emmanuel Okonkwo" or "for the traditional ruler". Where one party appeared to side, the other automatically became the opposition. A few instances will suffice.

Firstly, the Umumbo community is predominantly of the Catholic faith. As a result, when the community Hospital was completed, the Catholic church was approached by Emmanuel Okonkwo's group to come and manage the Hospital. The Catholic Bishop of Enugu Diocese where Umumbo belonged agreed but insisted that the traditional ruler must sign the "Take-Over Agreement". Emmanuel Okonkwo and his group refused and gave the hospital to the Anglican Church. The Anglican Bishop of the Diocese on the Niger accepted and on 24th October, 1985, Rev. J.A. Onyemelukwe commissioned the hospital. According to Joseph Ezue (1992), a community leader in Umumbo,

There is total disunity in Umumbo. No family is united. There

is total disarray. When the hospital was started only Emmanuel Okonkwo's group were going there (for treatment).

Secondly, the Fulani cattle rearers invaded Gabriel Anaekwe's rice farm in Umumbo. The protests he made to them only attracted him matchet cuts from them. Then, there arose a serious disagreement between the Fulanis and Umumbo people. Later, the traditional ruler's group sided with the Fulanis in the conflict and aided the police in their investigations against, and prosecution of, Umumbo people.

Finally, the attitude of the Umumbo people to government officials equally reflects this disunity. According to the community (1986:2) in a welcome address to a government official,

The welcome address presented to Mr. Nnamah (the former Sole Administrator of the Local Government) your predecessor in 1985 by a section of Umumbo people during his tour ... contained a contradiction of custom and tradition ... Finally, we are surprised that office circulars or letters which should go to Igwe as traditional ruler were being misdirected to another quarter in Umumbo for over a year now. We pray that this should stop.

The "misdirecting" of correspondences may have stopped but the quarrel in Umumbo has not. A quarrel brought about by land money, and which worries the Ayamelum person. Consequently, at the annual general

meeting of Ayamelum Improvement Union held at Omor on 28th December, 1985, the union set up a committee to look into and settle the dispute in Umumbo community. The committee was headed by Barrister P.A.C. Obidigwe, with Mr. G.O.C. Okoye serving as secretary. The committee held seven sittings, received documents and accordingly found as follows (Report, 1986:2-3):

- (i) That the trouble in Umumbo in the first instance arose from suspicions and lack of confidence among the members of the former Land committee which culminated in the writing by Emmanuel Okonkwo to the Manager, A.C.B. Ltd, Uwani, Enugu to stop honouring cheques signed by the former signatories and also the dissolution of the said committee by the entire Umumbo community.
- (ii) That the withdrawal of (1) twenty thousand Naira (20,000.00) and (2) one hundred and twenty thousand Naira (120,000.00) as imprest accounts to be kept by the treasurer were wrong and risky.
- (iii) That the entire community agreed on the dissolution of the former

 Land Committee and both parties accepted the placement of the

 administration of communal projects and land money in the hands

- of <u>Irunato Ojiani</u> together with the Traditional Ruler, Igwe A.C. Nweke.
- (iv) That from the time of the split in February 1984, the <u>Irunato Ojiani</u> took over and completed the projects initiated by the former Land Committee. This is commendabl
- (v) That the amount of six hundred Naira (600.00) allegedly given to appease Igwe A.C. Nweke when he allegedly demanded a car from the community was proved to be an amount paid to him as rent for the use of his house as a Postal Agency.
- (vi) That in the course of the dispute and in apparent frustration Igwe A.C. Nweke signed a petition alleging that some citizens of Umumbo were responsible for the dispute between the Fulanis and the Community.

The Committee then decided as follows:

- (i) That the dissolution of the former Land committee was accepted by both sides and therefore should be allowed.
- (ii) That <u>Irunato Ojiani</u> should be recognized as having taken over the functions of the former Land Committee. The <u>Irunato Ojiani</u> should work in conjunction with Igwe A.C. Nweke.
- (iii) That the committee condemned the resolution of the former Land

Committee authorising the withdrawal of N20,000.00 in the first instance and N120,000.00 in the second instance as imprest accounts to be kept by the treasurer. The treasurer paid part of the withdrawals into his account for safety. It is risky of anybody to keep such an amount in his house.

- (iv) That the committee condemned in unequivocal terms the action of Igwe A.C. Nweke in petitioning against his subjects in a matter involving the later and the Fulanis.
- (v) That Igwe A.C. Nweke and Mr Emmanuel Okonkwo, whose respective position and status in the community demand that in a situation as this they should direct the people towards peace, rather took sides in opposite directions, thus creating a situation of personality struggle. The two personalities should realise their respective roles in the community, and that if each plays his role well their interest cannot conflict.
- (vi) That Igwe A.c. Nweke, as the traditional ruler of the community should be the father of all and custodian of the entire community and cannot derogate from that position to the position of a leader of a faction of the community.
- (vii) That likewise, Mr Emmanuel Okonkwo should use his wealth of

education and experience to act as check and balances between the land committee or the <u>Irunato Ojiani</u> and the community, and between the <u>Igwe</u> and the community. The community should be prepared to make use of his advice as he is respected within and beyond Umumbo. He should not have accepted the post of a treasurer of the community's account. The committee recommends that in view of his status in the community, it is advisable for him to resign his post as the treasurer. This will enable him to be in a proper position to check and balance all actions and decisions affecting the community's account.

- (viii) That the people of Umumbo are requested to restore their loyalty to Igwe A.C. Nweke.
- (ix) That Elder Oguejiofor Agbata should summon a formal traditional ceremony of both the elders and the youths for the traditional cremony of the settlement, an occasion for interaction and exchange of kolanuts and drinks of both parties.
- in courts should be withdrawn and discontinued. Where necessary, the committee can help in meeting the lawyers of both sides of the cases for their withdrawal and discontinuance.

The committee had done her work but the parties to the dispute in Umumbo were not impressed. The cases in courts were not withdrawn. In short, new ones are being added. For instance, in suit No. OT/150/89 Igwe Nweke and others are accusing Emmanuel Okonkwo of selling <u>Utulukpa</u> communal land. Equally, in suit No. OT/26/91 Emmanuel Okonkwo is accusing Igwe Nweke of defamation of character and the damages he is asking for is N10 million.

Furthermore, a cross-section of Umumbo community still has not restored their loyalty to Igwe Nweke, the traditional ruler. For instance, the present (1992) Irunato Ojiani who are handling the Umumbo rural electrification project insists that the traditional ruler should not be consulted at all. Inspite of that, the members are equally fractionalized and that is derailing the smooth-running of the project. Payments for work done are not being made, contributions are not foruth coming and the contractor, who put up poles that are neither good nor properly fixed, has not been paid and has stopped work.

It is not only the rural electrification project that is in problems. The hospital is. The place is over-grown with weeds and looks derelict and dilapidated. In addition, the secondary school is being vandalized. In June 1992, thieves broke into the laboratory and carted away all the science

equipment installed or packed there. All these are harvests of a disunited and polarized community.

6.4 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, we had examined the concepts of population displacement and social conflict. We indicated that there are various reasons accounting for the occurrence of population displacement. With regards to social conflicts, we argued that they could be competitive or disruptive.

Furthermore, we established that there are incidences of population displacement in Ayamelum. These, we pointed out, resulted from the establishment of the LAIP which took over thousands of hectares of the peasants land. In the same vein, we showed that the penetration of capital into the clan had generated population displacement.

The cumulative result of all these are three fold:

- i. the bringing about of money consciousness and appetite for same among the people of the clan;
- ii. the increasing pressure and struggle over the land space availableto the peasants of the clan; and
- iii the general incidence of social conflicts as a result of (i) and (ii)

above.

In short, these social conflicts have produced phenomena such as IYA in Ifite Ogwari and made Umumbo community a case study in disunity and polarization.

Chapter Seven

STATE, PEASANTS AND LAND ACQUISITION IN NIGERIA: SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

7.1 SUMMARY

This study has attempted to investigate the role of the establishment of a gigantic government irrigation project (LAIP) and the subsequent invasion of private capital in the transformation of Ayamelum clan. The premise is that the intervention of the state and capital in the rural areas may have some advantages but in the main, they leave in their wake some deleterious consequences that make the peasantry the worse for it.

We started off with three guiding assumptions in this study. These were:

- i. That the opposition of the Ayamelum peasantry militates against the development and functioning of the Lower Anambra Irrigation Project.
- ii. That agrarianism and the rural economy of Ayamelum clan were adversely affected by the intervention of the state and capital; and
- iii. That population displacement arose and social conflicts aggravated as a result of the establishment of the irrigation project and the

penetration of capital in the area.

These features were analysed not on the supposition of what Block (1977:353) refers to as "inverted functionalism," whereby all social institutions automatically fulfil the needs of capital accumulation but rather on the principles that action taken by the neo-colonial state to "remedy" a particular political economic problem will lead to further structural crises in the accumulation process. The result is that our study demonstrates that the LAIP (and private capital) provided some temporal relief for some aspects of the rural economy, but generated the current structural problems in agriculture and agrarianism in Ayamelum clan.

It is noteworthy that even though the domestic economies of most African nations are based upon small-holder agriculture, which has demonstrated in the past that it can be a dynamic source of growth (Mcloughlin, 1970:6-8), many African states have tried to constrain this sector and replace it with larger farming units whenever possible (Miracle, 1970:321-2). Part of the reason for such policies is a lack of understanding of the nature of small-holding - surprisingly little appears to be known about what they actually are and do (Mosher, 1969; Bradshaw, 1990). It is frequently assumed that peasant farmers live in a state of blind ignorance, using inappropriate methods, and only waiting to be taught the excellent

technology which stand ready to be used (Clayton, 1974; Hyden, 1986). From time, the available evidence indicates that this is grossly wrong (Shultz, 1964; Mellor, 1966; Yotopolus, 1968).

Thus, the much more acceptable alternative hypothesis is that the peasant farmer knows his environment, his resources, and his own locality (Igbozurike, 1988) better than anyone else, and that he acts rationally to take advantage of his knowledge. Furthermore, that short of altering his surroundings or providing him with more assets we cannot hope to improve his productivity (Joy, 1970).

In anycase, Africa is generally rural and the peasant farmer still predominates. In the past, he has not been most of the time, studied systematically, and this accounts in part for ignorance in high places. Policy conclusions have been arrived at by hunch, by blind assumption, and by planning from-the-top-downwards, despite the acknowledgment that this is based, according to Miracle (1969:144) upon "unreliable guesses about national income, unrealistic growth rates, fictitious capital-output ratios". Consequently, Waters (1974:56) argues that,

It is necessary to go to the source of information about Africa's key productive factor: the small-holder farmer himself. He is generally not stupid, he is generally not ignorant, and he is generally not inarticulate, if we will only train ourselves to listen to him and understand his frame of reference.

Have we listened to him in Nigeria? Have we understood "his frame of reference"? What is the attitude of the Nigerian state? Igbozurike (1988:164) explains:

At last it has dawned on Nigeria that she is confronted with a grievous crisis in agricultural production ... She is presently keenly aware of the need for, and urgency of, an aggressive assault on her lagging agricultural productivity. The <u>beginnings</u> of this assault are now evident. They are exemplified by a number of individually -owned, corporately - controlled, and government - established large - scale agricultural (irrigation) projects ...

Although irrigation can significantly improve crop yields, especially in more arid regions, its utilization is necessarily a simplistic solution to food shortages. A survey of the literature on irrigation projects in the developing world, and Africa in particular, shows that the economic success of such projects falls far short of the expectations of planners, politicians and development agencies. The African continent is littered with derelict irrigation schemes (Moris J. et al, 1984); for the most part, the record of such schemes has been dismal (Heyer J. et al 1981), and even the few relatively successful projects appear to be experiencing increasing social and ecological problems which will eventually have negative economic effects (Von Harder, 1983:17). This is inspite of the fact that during the '80s, and according to estimations, more than \$100 billion will be invested in irrigation projects in the developing world (Walker, 1983:19).

Thus, persistently low performance on irrigation projects poses one of the biggest problems for planners, policy makers, financing agencies, managers and participants alike. And unfortunately, since African nations face a continuing decline in per capita food production, irrigation development is accordingly being given increasing priority (See Barker, 1984).

In any case, a look at the literature on irrigation projects in subsaharan Africa reveals that not only is too little known about the performance of the schemes, but that there is relatively little dissemination of information about experience gained, which could be used in planning new schemes (Adams and Grove, 1984:144). Much of the planning, design and construction of irrigation projects has been carried out, in one form or another, by external agencies. To supply water effectively is of course the immediate purpose of irrigation; but its ultimate value is in improving the well-being of both the project participants and the nation as a whole. However, whilst the state and development agencies have given extensive consideration to the technological aspects of irrigation projects, they have virtually ignored the all-important "human" dimension (Overseas Development Institute, 1985). Due to its very nature, irrigation development is particularly prone to human problems (Bembridge, 1986). This is because the introduction of irrigation commonly necessitates a change in the way of life of those participating in these scheme; and it is difficult for planners to predict future human behaviour.

In Nigeria, large-scale irrigation projects which were initiated by development agencies in the 1950s and 1970s have functioned very disappointingly, and at very high cost (see for example, World Bank, 1979). In addition, Griffith (1984:12) has highlighted the economic failure of such irrigation projects when he stated that "for the time being government expenditure on irrigation is to be regarded for social purposes only" and that "there must be at least a moratorium on all expectations of economic return". Thus Adams (1984:126) reports that 75% of the farmers in the Bakolori Project said that, as at that time, they had not reaped any benefits from the scheme. Preliminary studies show that the main problems are social and economic: problems of land allocation have arisen and production targets have not been achieved.

This our present study shows that the main problem militating against the functioning and development of the Lower Anambra Irrigation Project is human; human in the sense that it emanates from the opposition of the Ayamelum peasantry on whose land the project is established. This manifests in four major ways. In the first place, the peasants are not

satisfied with the compensation for damages carried out by the government. Apart from the disenchment that only 50% of the money has been paid, a cross section of the people of the area are embittered that nothing has been paid to them at all. The result is the cultivation of a sense of estrangement that reinforces the alien and impositional character of the people's understanding of the project. Matters are not helped by the racist propensities of the Japanese contractors of the irrigation project. Thus, incidences of pilfering, misuse of equipment and vehicles, damage to the LAIP infrastructure, especially canals, by villagers drawing water, etc, have become sources of problems to the management of the project.

In addition, the negative attitude is equally carried over to the use of the LAIP rice-fields and facilities by the participating peasant farmers. This has led to problems in the use of irrigation, land allocation and usage, hiring of farm machinery, procurement of fertilizers and compliance with cropping schedules. Admittedly, irrigation projects such as the LAIP, demand extreme regimentation and time-consciousness on the part of the participating farmers. Through that the necessary synchronisation required in order to maximize the use of facilities such as irrigation water, farm machinery and in-puts will be attained.

Unfortunately, in the case of LAIP, the participating Ayamelum

peasant farmers are opposed to both this necessary synchronicity and regimentation. This opposition reflects a manifestation of everyday forms of peasant resistance. The result is that there are disorganization in the use of irrigated water, blatant disregard of farming schedules, misuse of farming machinery and so on. What is even more, the Amikwe-Omor's sacking of non-indigenous farmers from the areas they claim to be their Land represents the most direct confrontation against the LAIP management. That is a nightmarish problem for them. In addition, the peasant farmers refusal to patronize the LAIP Rice Mill on the questionable claim that it breaks rice makes the gigantic mill capable of receiving/drying 130 tons per day of rice and parboiling/milling 3.3 tons per hour a white elephant project.

The net effect is that the LAIP is not functioning as it should as even amply demonstrated by its meagre "present three ton rice production per hectare". It is disheartening that the measures evolved by the LAIP management to improve on the irrigation projects' performance such as the formation of Ayamelum Leaders of Thought, Water User Association and Lower Anambra Agricultural Cooperative Society (LAACS) are not yielding desired results. They have even become avenues for the perpetuation of oppositional activities against the functioning and development of the LAIP.

The second assumption on which this study took off indicated that agrarianism and the rural economy of Ayamelum clan were adversely affected by the establishment of the LAIP and the penetration of private capital into the area. We started by examining the communal and commensal character of traditional Ayamelum society. The people display a penchant for enjoyment that accounts for the multiplicity of festivals celebrated in the area. People had their family farms where they got most of their needs. The existence of wage labourers *per se* was not practiced. The sale of labour power was a mere device to complement one's family's requirements. Farm labour supply was derived mostly from the family members, partnership arrangements and assistance from conjugal relations.

Furthermore, monetization was quite rudimentary and there was no pervasive penchant for brazen acquisitiveness. The major essence of achievement is title-taking and that is attained more from the proceeds of one's farm. Land was accessible and generally communally owned.

However, the establishment of the LAIP and the invasion of private capital in the area have changed all that. Land alienation has crept in leading to the individualization of land ownership. The Ayamelum peasant economy has been monetized and the innate greed in the Ayamelum

person has been aroused. Sale of land and land-grabbing tendencies have become the order of the day. People now want to make quick money and the disposing of communal land constitutes a most lucrative avenue.

The cultivation of traditional crops has been superseded by the cultivation of rice. Rice gave money quickly and in desired quantity, it is believed. Consequently, land areas usually used for the production of crops such as yam, cassava, corn, etc. now become converted to rice fields. Rice cultivation is capital - and labour - intensive leading to a booming business for exploitative money lenders and those wanting to sell their labour power. Many are really selling that as "labour camps" have come into existence as well as wage labourers. These days, people look for money, may get it and then go to buy food stuffs that have become exceedingly expensive. Family farms where people got items from are disappearing fast, drawing along with it nutritious food varieties the family farm provided. At present it is garri, rice; garri, rice -a musical monotony of a people's menu. The result is hunger, malnutrition and haggard personalities.

The unfortunate thing is that the peasants of Ayamelum still believe that rice cultivation is better, as the idea of quick money, the illusion of striking it rich quickly through rice cultivation persists. Every body is into the rice bandwagon. Some own the rice farms and get deep into debtand into peonage. Some sell their labour and depend on that. The result is the desire to sell more and more. The people become more malnourished and haggard. School enrolment goes on dropping as people rush to the rice fields to sell their labour power. Only an infinitesimal number make it from rice cultivation. But their popularity soars beyond the frontiers of their communities, attracting and reinforcing the commitment and desire to cultivate rice. The agrarian character and the rural economy of Ayamelum clan will never be the same again.

The final assumption we investigated states that population displacement and increasing incidence of social conflicts are consequences of the establishment of the LAIP and the penetration of capital into the clan. For sure, these issues - LAIP and capital penetration - alienated the peasants from their land. People lived on the land. Thus, when lands were taken away, there arose an increasing pressure on the available land area. Land ownership started. Land alienation became pervasive. Some peasants had to become tenanted farmers. There arose a hypersensitive attitude to land. Tensions usually become high on land matters. However, people still needed land. And rice cultivation requires a lot of land. Necessarily, quarrels become rampant. Consequently, the

Police Posts in the area and the Omor Customary court become inundated with land disputes and boundary conflicts.

The sales of land in the clan were generally crisis-ridden. They were/are so many court cases. Friendships were broken. Conjugal and consanguine relationships lost their pull and sanctity. The urge was to make money very quickly by selling land. Then, of course, this gave rise to generalized appetite to acquire money. Some legitimate, some downright illegal. Thievery became more and insecurity of life and property acquired the status of authentic worries. This type of atmosphere gave rise to the development of extral-legal mechanisms such as IYA (Ifite Ogwari Youth Association) for the containment of social decadence in communities; communities that have been torn apart by land disputes, chieftaincy squabbles and court cases. The implication is that the communal and commensal character of the communities of the clan had been mortally affected - all because of the establishment of the LAIP and the invasion of private capital.

7.2 CONCLUSION

Three issues stand out from this study. These are as follow:

i. The peasantry are capable of engendering actions that would

militate against the development and functioning of a government irrigation project in which their land was taken. Consequently, it is imperative that they are properly compensated and/or rehabilitated and convinced to see the project as their own and not an alien imposition that does not concern them whether or not it is performing according to expectation or not.

- ii. State and capital's intervention in the rural areas have the potentiality of adversely affecting the agrarian character and rural economy of such areas. "Development" in Africa should not be seen as antithetical to the corporate character and livelihood of the peasantry. Rather, it is the uncontrolled destailisation of agrarianism in, and the rural economy of, African societies that is mostly responsible for the agricultural crisis that we all worry about at present in the continent.
 - When the state and private capital invade the rural areas the likely effect would be population displacement. This is, by its very nature, infinitely conflictual. After all, peasants live on the land and pursue a communal existence. The severing of this bond, this commensal spirit, will most probably generate agrarian crisis and chaos in the rural areas.

iii.

Finally, this study has shown that it is on these three bases (above) that the transformation of Ayamelum clan by a state irrigation project and private capital can be better understood and appreciated - a negative transformation that accounts for the structural problems in agriculture, agrarianism and rural economy of the area.

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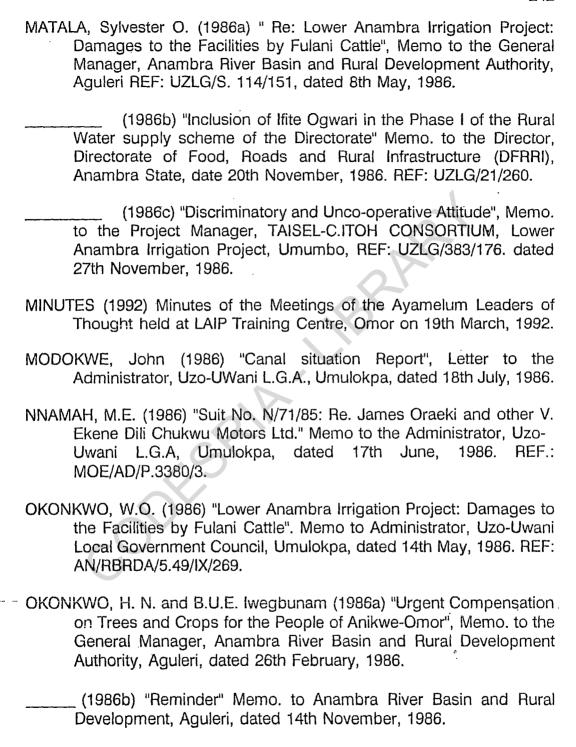
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UMUMBO COMMUNITY (1986) An Address of Welcome Presented By Umumbo Community to the Administrator of Uzo-Uwani Local Government Area on the Occasion of his "Meet the People Tour" on 8th July, 1986.

APPENDIX I

The Questionnaire Administered to Respondents in Ayamelum Clan. Dear Sir/ Madam,

This questionnaire is purely for academic purposes and we should appreciate your co-operation. Please complete the questionnaire to be best of your knowledge. We promise strictest confidentiality; so there is no question of others discovering how you feel on these issues. What is more, we won't require your giving us your names. Once again, thank you for your co-operation.

You are expected to provide answers to the statements we have made by ticking (x) one or to rank - order them, that is allot 1st, 2nd, 3rd or 4th (as the case may be) to the said statements on how you think they should be arranged in their order of importance. In some cases, however, you are expected to give us answers of your own to the issues me would want to clarify with you.

Thank you once more.

Yours sincerely,

Chikelue Ofuebe. RESEARCHER

- Name of Community:
 Age: (a) Below 20 years ()
 (b) 20 30 years ()
 (c) 31 40 years ()
 (d) Above 40 years ()
- 3. Sex: Male () Female ()
- 4. Please, are you aware that the Lower Anambra Irrigation Project (LAIP) exists in Ayamelum clan? Yes () No () Don't know ().
- 5. Do you think that Ayamelum people participated in the negotiations for the establishment of LAIP were to be resettled? Yes () No () Don't know ().
- 6. Did the government provide places or areas where those whose land was acquired for the establishment of LAIP were to be resettled?. Yes () No () I Dont' know ().
- 7. Is it correct to say that compensations for damaged crops and trees were fairly handled in the clan?. Yes () No () I Don't know ().

8.	If your answer in No.7 is "No", please tell us which of these two forms of compensation for damages that you think attracted the greatest cases of illegalities? () Those paid to individuals () Those paid to communities () Don't know.		
9.	Do you think that "Threats" from Ayamelum people affect the LA management in their decisions? (Rank as you feel). () Not at all () Always. () Sometimes () Don't know		
10.	If "Threats" do not affect them, please how will you explain the reason for this to us?		
11.	Would you agree that participation in the construction of LAIP benefitted Ayamelum people? Yes () No () Don't know ().		
12.	Did Ayamelum people get land easily from the LAIP management? Yes () No () don't know ().		
13.	If your answer to No. 12 is "No", could you please suggest reasons for this?		
14.	Before the advent of LAIP, was land a problem among the cultivators in Ayamelum clan?.		
15.	Yes () No () Don't know (). Which is the most dignifying crop to cultivate traditionally among the people of the clan? (Rank-order them) () Cassava () Rice		

16.	 () Potato () Yam () Corn. Could you please tell us the ways in which Ayamelum people were supplied or got labour for their farming activities.
17.	In traditional Ayamelum clan, will it be possible to find people who are purely wage - labourers? Yes () No () Don't know ().
18.	Please, could you tell us how people saved in Ayamelum clan?
19.	Having told us how people saved, could you please tell us how people borrowed.
20.	Please, how do Ayamelum people view land generally?
21.	Traditionally, do people sell land in the clan? Yes () No () Don't know ()
22.	Please, explain to us the reason for your answer in No. 21 above.

23.	the clan, from the mid-1980s, started selling their land.
24.	Who are the people who buy this land and why do they buy them?
25.	We can notice that people of the clan are now very interested in cultivating rice. What is responsible for this?.
26.	What are the most important needs of rice cultivators in Ayamelum clan? (Rank them accordingly) () Land () Farming implements () Fertilizer
27.	() Money Did the traditional rulers of the clan support the sale of land in the clan?
	 () All of them () None of them () A few of them () Most of them
28.	Is it true that there are a lot of land quarrels in the clan now? Yes () No () Don't know ()
29.	Please, if your answer to No. 28 above is "yes", could you help us understand this by telling us what you think is / are responsible for this?

APPENDIX II

THE OVERSEAS ECONOMIC COOPERATION FUND

4-1 OHTEMACHI 1- CHOME, CHIYODA-KU, TOKYO 100, JAPAN

Dec.12,1991

CHAIRMAN
TECHNICAL COMMITTEE ON PRIVATISATION
AND COMMERCIALIZATION
FEDERAL GOVERNMENT SECRETARIAT
IKOYI, LAGOS

ATTENTION:

Dr. Hamza R. Zayyad, Chairman, Technical Committee

on Privatisation and Commercialization.

GENTLEMEN:

RE: Rice Mill in Lower Anambra Irrigation Project.

We would like to submit for your kind consideration our further findings on the subject project as follows:

- According to a study and survey made by us it was apparent that all parties concerned, including farmers are strongly opposed to the idea that the Rice Mill be transferred to a private company which would be a third party to the Irrigation Project, because they fear that a private company could pursue their own interest and might then harm the benefits of the Project to the local community.
- 2. Taking into account these opinions and also the fact that a farm's co-operative has been organized in this project area and is expanding its membership very steadily. (sic) It seems a consensus has been attained among the parties concerned that the Rice Mill should be owned and operated by a body in which the *Farmer's Co-operative plays the major role.
- 3. In order to establish such a body, the details should be examined by the Farmer's Co-operative, the Anambra-Imo River Basin Development Authority and other interested parties concerned. There will be a possibility that the body would be composed of both the Co-operative and the Authority, which means both, would be

- sharedholders in any company formed.
- 4. OECF will continue to co-operate and the tentative findings presented by us will surely contribute to the activities.
- 5. We will try our best to arrange a meeting among the Lower Anambra River Basin Authority as soon as possible so that they are able to draw up a detailed plan for the operation of the mill with the above mentioned contents before the end of March 1992.

We look forward to your giving your endorsement of these findings to the Lower Anambra River Badin Authority, and other bodies so that the Rice Mill can be put into viable operation.

Very Truly yours.
SGD
NOBUO, HazeyamaDirector
2nd Division
Loan Department III

*LAACS Lower Anambra Agricultural Co-Operative Society.

APPENDIX III

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY THE 12TH DECEMBER 1991 BETWEEN THE OVERSEAS ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION FUND (OECF) AND TECHNICAL COMMITTEE ON PRIVATISATION AND COMMERCIALIZATION OF THE RICE MILL IN LOWER ANAMBRA IRRIGATION PROJECT.

OECF Mission headed by Mr. Hazeyama, Director 2nd Div., Loan Dept. III, stayed in Nigeria from the 7th to 13 December 1991 and had meetings with Dr. Hamza R. Zayyad, Chairman of TCPC on the 9th and 12th December 1991. OECF mission and TCPC agreed on the following points:

- 1. TCPC will take necessary action to incorporate the Mill, of which the major shareholders will be the Farmer's Co-operative and Anambra Imo River Basin Development Authority. It is the opinion of the community of the Irrigation Project area that the Mill should be considered public property, this is consistent with Decree No. 35.
- 2. TCPC will send a letter to OECF confirming the above mentioned point and also invite the Authority to discuss the details of the

procedures to be taken.

3. OECF will use its best endeavour to Co-operate with the Co-operative and the Authority to identify and select proper management.

DIRECTOR FINANCE
& INVESTMENT
Office of the president
Technical Committee on
Privatization and Commercialization

NOBUO Hazeyama Director 2nd Division Loan Department III

APPENDIX IV

ANAMBRA - IMO RIVER BASIN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
(BODY - CORPORATE OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT OF NIGERIA)

P.M.B. NO Telephone Telegrams;	DIVISION 19 Ref. No:					
ASSESSMENT FORM						
ADDRESS:OCCUPATION:	TREES AFFECTED AND QUANTITY:					
SIGNATURE OF CLAIMANT	SIGNATURE OF NEXT OF KIN					
SIGNATURE OF CONTRACTOR REPRESENTATIVE DATED THIS	REPRESENTATIVE					

APPENDIX V

The Accredited Representative of Amikwe Land Committee
Omor
Uzo - Uwani L.G.A
14th November, 1986.

The General Manager, Anambra River Basin and Rural Development Authority, Aguleri. Sir.

Reminder:

With reference to our letter of 26th February 1986 (copy attached), it is very unfortunate that uptill now, nothing has been done to pay compensation to our people.

We have stated our plight in very clear terms to you over these periods. We are using this medium to request that on no account should you interfere with our <u>land any longer</u> until the compensation for our damaged crops, trees and structures have been fully paid.

We strongly wish you take steps to prevent the situation from exploding beyond this point.

Thank you.

Yours sincerely

SGD N Okonkw SGD

H.N. Okonkwo CHAIRMAN Bernard Iwegbunam SECRETARY

Amikwe Land Committee

Amikwe Land Committee

SGD

SGD

SGD

Oldest Man

Oldest Man

Oldest Man

AKARA AMIKWE-

Umugbu Amikwe-

Amikwe-Etiti-Omor

Omor

Omor

For and on behalf of Amikwe Community.

CC: Messrs Michael Ikedianya & Associates, Enugu

The Project Manager, A.R.B. & R.D.A., Omor

The Project Manager, Nippon Koei, Omor

The Project Engineer, Taisei, C. Itoh Consortium, Umumbo.

The Administrator, Uzo - Uwani L.G.A.

APPENDIX VI

AN ADDRESS OF WELCOME PRESENTED BY UMUMBO COMMUNITY TO THE ADMINISTRATOR OF UZO - UWANI LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA ON THE OCCASION OF HIS "MEET THE PEOPLE TOUR" OF UZO - UWANI ON THE 8TH JULY 1986.

Sir.

The citizens of Umumbo Community in Uzo - Uwani local government area are happy to welcome you and your entourage to this town.

We are happy too that unlike the other years; the present Chairman and his entourage are almost from home - Uzo -Uwani. Thanks to God and Federal Military government.

We love progress and development and this love for progress compelled Umumbo people to introduce free primary education as far back as 1937 and this continued till after the Nigerian Civil War. Through our joint efforts the road between Umumbo and Umulokpa was made motorable in 1956.

All men and women in Umumbo today owe their foundation for education to Umumbo free primary education no matter his or her present position.

The unity of purpose continued till 1983 when a large sum of N440,624.00 (four hundred and forty thousand, six hundred and twenty-four naira) was paid to Umumbo people by the Anambra / Imo River Basin Development Authority as compensation for the economic trees damaged in Umumbo land. On the receipt of the large sum of money, our people planned quickly and embarked on three projects; building of community secondary school, community hospital and reactivation of Umumbo water bore-hole.

When Umumbo people were planning for the above projects, the self appointed financial controller or self appointed leader Mr. Emmanuel Nnaluo Okonkwo was faster in his plan to spend the money alone which he did.

The Igwe of Umumbo A.C. NWEKE, EZEORA I, seeing that discipline in Umumbo was threatened reported Mr. E.N. Okonkwo to the Sole Administrator Mr. E. Onwunyi in February 1984, to check Okonokwo's dishonest act. The Sole Administrator summoned several meeting but Mr. Emmanuel Nnaluo Okonkwo refused all suggestions for peace. Now that Umumbo is in pieces, you will not be surprised to get Umumbo I Umumbo

Il and Umumbo III.

We are humbly asking you here to reject any overtures by Mr. E.N.Okonkwo and his hand-picked Irunato Ojiana of development committee. If it is true that Mr. Okonkwo and his gang had paid a sum of 5000.00 (five thousand naira) which is Umumbo share in ASET fund, let him also pay the sum of N2000.00 (two thousand naira) which is Umumbo share in Police fund. A man who mismanaged a sum of N231,460.57k (two hundred and thirty one thousand four hundred and sixty naira, fifty-seven kobo) from Umumbo public fund and refused to give account, has now negotiated to sell two miles squares of land from Umumbo Communal land against the will of Umumbo community, can afford to do everything for Umumbo. In the interest of peace, Mr. E.N. Okonkwo should be advised to leave Umumbo money and land for Umumbo.

The welcome address presented to Mr. Nnamah your predecessor in 1985 by a section of Umumbo people during his tour of Uzo-Uwani, contained a contradiction of custom and tradition. The address said in part, that all age-grades in Umumbo had handed over all powers to the hand-picked Irunato Ojiana Age-grade, headed by Mr. E.N. Okonkwo.

This is misleading, false and of no effect in Umumbo community.

Finally, we are surprised that office circulars or letters which should go to the Igwe as traditional ruler were being misdirected to another quarters in Umumbo for over a year now. We pray that this should stop. Our problem now is that Umumbo water bore hole which was damaged during the Nigeria Crisis had not been repaired. We are humbly asking you to use your good offices to see to it that the water bore hole is reactivated.

May the Almighty God give you wisdom, strength and courage to continue the War Against Indiscipline.

Signed	
UDEBUNA MAKOLU	EGWUATU UYAMADU
ANUMUDU IBESI	OKAFOR IKEAGU
EDUNO ORUYA	IGWE A. C. NWEKE

For and on behalf of Umumbo Community.

APPENDIX VII

LAIP RICE MILL: TENTATIVE FINDINGS OF THE TECHNICAL COMMITTEE ON PRIVATIZATION AND COMMERCIALIZATION (TCPC).

In financing the Rice Project at Omor, OECF's objective was to achieve sustainable development of rice production in the area. In the early eighties the decision was taken to build the Rice Mill so that the increased production from the project could be processed.

The situation now is that this year the LAIP or irrigation project will produce in excess of 10,000 tons of rice paddy. However rice production in the area has yet to increase to the level where all rice mills are operating at full capacity.

The situation has led to little interest at present from the business community in investing in Rice Milling therefore other alternatives to outright privatisation have been considered.

Possible ways of Commercialization of the Mill.

In principle there are three methods of commercialization of the Mill, they are as follows:

- (1) The Authority charges a milling fee (so called toll basis).
- (2) The Authority buys unrolled rice and sells milled rice.
- (3) The Authority makes a lease contract with a trader, miller or the Farmers Association.

CHARACTERISTICS OF EACH METHOD

A) Method 3 the Authority is to make a lease-contract:-

In this scheme, the Authority should call a tender for a lease-contract of the mill. If someone succeeds in the tender, then all the Authority will have to do is just to receive a lease fee from him. This system is closest to privatisation, the only difference being that the ownership of the Mill lies in the hand of the Authority and the Authority can maintain the nature of the Mill to benefit the Irrigation Project in the future.

An important aspect in order to realise this scheme is how to provide an incentive to maintain the Mill with the contractor. One of the best ways to overcome this problem is to have the engineering staff of the Authority responsible for the maintenance, because the Authority has very competent staff for this matter.

The scheme seems to be as realistic as method (1) and also

completely consistent with the general policy of privatisation and commercialization. However, recent studies indicate that this solution may not attract the necessary business entrepreneur.

- B) Method 2 the Authority is to buy unhulled rice and sell milled rice:
 This scheme has substantial advantage in the sense that the Authority may be able to get revenue from the mill and utilise it for maintenance of the Irrigation Project. On the other hand, however, the Authority runs the danger of a deficit if it fails in managing the mill efficiently. In order for the method to be successful, the following problems should be tackled:-
- (i) Authority has to develop and keep its own market channel.

 The Authority will have to sell milled rice by itself at the best possible prices, therefore will have its own market channel.
- (ii) The Authority has to have its own transportation. For the same reason as in the above, the Authority may have to carry rice from farmlands to the Mill and from the Mill to wholesaler. The Authority is not equipped with enough trucks, therefore, it may have to consider spending a substantial amount of money.
- (iii) The Authority have to pay farmers in time.
 In order for the Authority to make farmers (or traders) sell their rice to the Authority, it must keep its credibility in terms of payment. From this point of view, it should be recommended that the Authority pays cash in exchange for rice from farmers (or traders).
- (iv) The Authority has to have sufficient working capital
 There appears from discussions with the Authority that they are
 confident they can make available and secure the funds needed.

C) Method I: The Authority charges a milling fee:-

This method will have the least effect on the current market situation, therefore, the Authority will not-have to commence any new activity but just mill rice i.e the same traders as in the recent situation will buy rice from farmers in the field and take it to the Mill, ask for milling, then sell milled rice to wholesaler or in some cases directly to consumers. This method will therefore not require the Authority to act as a merchandiser in the rice market. It is very important to realize this method because the Authority is believed to be very competent in operating the Mill but has no experience in marketing rice.

The success of this method depends on two factors as follows:-

(i) Level of milling charge.

In order for the Mill to be competitive, the milling charge should be around the level of the other mills. The quality of milled rice in this mill is expected to be much higher than that in the other mills because the mill can parboil rice.

It should be pointed out that rice brought into the Mill by an individual trader must not be merged with that of other traders, because the quality of rice of one trader may be different from that of another and if so, a trader with a higher quality rice would not want his/her rice merged with a low grade rice. From that point of view, the quantity of rice brought into the Mill should be set at a minimum such that the efficiency of the operation of the mill will not be harmed. We assume that a minimum quantity would be one days operation capacity of the Mill which is about 25 tons. If the milling charge and the milling quality of the Mill are attractive enough to traders then the traders will make every effort to gather the required amount of rice. Also, the farmers cooperative union (LAACS) which the Authority has established could be a good tool to make traders buy a certain amount of rice form farmers in a deal.

Another advantage of this system is that the Authority will not need a great deal of capital for the initial operation of the Mill, because they do not have to buy the rice first. Furthermore, the Authority will never have to bear the risk stemming from marketing rice, if it concentrates only on the general policy that the River Basin Authorities should refrain from participation in marketing.

D) <u>Local Opinion</u>.

Farmers and traders in the rice paddies were interviewed along with millers and staff of the project mill. Most of the respondents commented on their choice in each alternative system. These comments are summarised below:-

Method 1.

- (a) There is the fear of an inability to meet the minimum amount of rice required by the mill. Most of the Farmers have small holdings harvested at different times without good storage facilities, especially during the dry season harvests. Consequently most of the paddies get spoilt if not quickly disposed.
- (b) Since the rice mill is not designed to handle already parboiled rice well some are scared because they prefer to parboil the paddy before

milling. The output of already parboil rice when milled by the project results in many breakages.

Method 2.

- (a) If this system does not operate on immediate payment for paddies bought it will likely fail as most of the respondents gave the condition that sales can not be on credit.
- (b) Another fear is the setting of standard measures which must also take into account the quality of the paddy.
- (c) The pricing of the paddies should be competitive.
- (d) There is concern that the project might be operated in a bureaucratic manner resulting in inefficient operation of the mill.

On the other hand some believe that the project will be effectively utilized (greater caracity utilization).

Method 3.

(a) The main temark here is the fear of exploiting the farmers by buying cheap and /or charging exorbitant/fees for processing. The urge of the leasee to make profit will make his charges to high while he is expected to want to buy inputs at low prices.

E) Other Comment

The Treasurer of Lower Anambre Agricultural Co-operative Society (LAACS) gave the present membership as 1150 with the ultimate aim for 7000 members. He said it is their goal to take over the mill in the future. His fear is that if the mill is not properly managed it will result in the mill running at a loss.

The farmers complain of the very high cost of input which reaches them at double the government controlled prices. They would prefer the establishment of an outlet to service them at controlled prices or moderately above.

From the detailed financial analysis that has been recently made commercialization could be realised by either method 2 or 3 or some combination of the two. What the is most important is that the mill is put into regular operation as quickly as possible to minimise the risk of climatic damage to the equipment and machinery. We therefore trust that the Lower Anambra River Basin Authority and other interested bodies take a decision on this matter without delay.