

The Challenge Faced Peasant Clove Producers in Pemba, Zanzibar, 1920s – 1950s

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Abstract:- This paper focused to investigate the challenge faced peasant clove producers of Pemba, Zanzibar from 1920s to 1950s. Peasants had been the main producer of various crops prior the advent of colonial domination in Zanzibar islands. Cloves arrived in Unguja and Pemba from Indian Ocean French dominated island of Ile de France (Mauritius) in the second and the third decades of the 19th century. Peasants of Pemba took part gradually in the cultivation of this crucial western demanded raw material; however their position as crucial producers was lagged behind by the slaves who provided prominent source of labours in the production. The abolition of slavery and slave trade in the second half of 19th century sparked up the domination of peasants in the cloves production. The data divulged that the development of peasant clove production was the deliberate measures taken by the British colonial government in Zanzibar especially from 1920s where peasants became the merely producers of cloves especially in Pemba where vast of cloves supporting land was available. Peasants were preferred so as to enable British colonialists to achieve their colonial interests crucial for expansion of capitalistic interests in Europe as a result of severe impacts caused by the World War One in Europe. Moreover, the findings disclosed that production of clove by peasants in Pemba was associated with several challenges that threatened expansion and development of peasant production in Pemba. There were serious clove tree diseases (Die back and Sudden death) that killed considerable numbers of clove trees in the island, changes in climatic condition and price fluctuation jeopardized the expansion of clove cultivation, few clove selling centre and variation in clove grade system minimized peasants benefit from the production. This paper benefited from the historical research design where the Theory of Mode of Production was used to inform the study. To construct pure historical knowledge both primary and secondary data were used where qualitatively data were collected, analysed and presented. The primary data were collected from Zanzibar National Archives (ZNA) and Pemba Institute of Archive

and Record (PIAR), Oral attestations were extracted from various clove stakeholders in Pemba where the study was conducted.

Keywords:- Clove, Colonial Government, Pemba, Peasant Clove Producer, Slave Trade, Wapemba, Zanzibar.

I. INTRODUCTION

Peasants in the East African coast participated in the production of various crops prior the advent of colonialism in the 19th century.¹ Abdurahman Juma² and Anselm Itandala³ argue that, before the advent of Europeans, Pemba and Unguja Islands grew from small fishing villages to prominent towns where fishermen came and settle in these archipelagoes for their fishing activities.⁴ As always environment determine the type of economic activities Wapemba conducted fishing as one among the dominant source of survival that nature provided for many centuries. The mangroves that found in the islands surrounding water body provide grounds for fish, turtles and crabs to enjoy their lives.⁵ Wapemba conducted fishing on the creeks and in the coast where other fishermen were going to open sea. In the open sea the fishermen use canoes fitted with a mast and sail, bait, hook and line supported by knife for direct stabbing whereas the coastal fishing take place in the shallow water.⁶ Wapemba conducted trade with foreigners who seasonally visited the coast and the Islands from the 1st Millennium Anno Domino. Traders from Asia and Middle East started to arrive and settle in the coast and the Islands where items such as beads, porcelain, cloths and glass were exchanged with tortoise shells, timber, slaves and mangrove poles. Apart from this international trade, the local trade developed among the Wapemba where the locally produced crops were exchanged among communities. In *The Development of Capitalism in Africa*, John Sender and Sheila Smith⁷ assert that, many pre-colonial African communities conducted trade. These activities were essential for social reproduction and surplus appropriation among the community members.

¹ John Iliffe, *A Modern History of Tanganyika*, (Great Britain: Cambridge University Press, 1979), p. 273

² Abdurahman Juma, *UngujaUkuu on Zanzibar: An Archaeological Study of Early Urbanism*, (Sweden: ElandersGotab, 2004), pp. 46-47

³ Anselm, B. Itandala, *History of Tanzania to 1890*, Dar es Salaam: Open University of Tanzania, 1997 p. 80

⁴ Basil Davidson, *The Growth of African Civilization Eastern and Central Africa to the late Nineteenth Century*, (Nairobi: Kenya Litho Ltd, 1967), p. 110

⁵ Abdulla Rashid Mkumbukwa, "The History of Use and Conservation of Marine Resources in Zanzibar: Ninetieth Century to the Present" PhD. Dissertation. University of Bayreuth, (2014) p. 55-58

⁶ Abduraman Juma, op. cit.

⁷ John Sender and Sheila Smith, *The Development of Capitalism in Africa*, (London: Methuen and Co. Ltd, 1986), p. 6

Agriculture was the dominant economic activity practiced by Wapemba where crops such as such as maize, millet, cassava, coconut, sweet potatoes, rice, bananas and pumpkins had been cultivated by peasants through mixed and shifting cultivation where rice and cassava were highly cultivated among these crops.⁸ Hyden,⁹ Sheriff¹⁰ and Raikes¹¹ comment that, the development of European capitalism in the 19th century and establishment of colonies resulted in the expansion of peasant's production. The development of clove production in Pemba in particular and Zanzibar in general was thanks to measures introduced by the British colonial government from 1920s so as to achieve their colonial interests crucial for expansion of capitalist economy in Europe. The introduction of cloves which went hand in hand with the development of capitalism, incorporated peasants into the capitalist relation of production through the production of clove. The available sources indicated that by 1920s, there were 32,000 acres of land under clove cultivation in Pemba where peasants dominated more than 60% of all clove trees.¹² Thus, this paper aimed to investigate challenges faced peasants clove producers in Pemba from 1920s to 1950s.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The colonization of Zanzibar came around the end of 19th like any other parts of the Continent as a result of development of capitalism in Europe. The European scramble for and the partition of Africa affected East Africa and the Zanzibar Islands in particular which were dominated by the Imperial British East Africa Company (IBEACO) and the Germany East Africa Company (GEACO). By the Helgoland – Zanzibar Agreement, Zanzibar was declared the British Protectorate on 1st November, 1890 during the reign of Seyyid Ali bin Said (1890 – 1893) and Sir Lloyd Mathews as first Minister.¹³ This period witnessed the shift of power and authority from the Sultan to the British officials who became in charge of Zanzibar affairs. The Protectorate embarked on various economic changes where colonial economy based on clove production under slave labours was expanded. The abolition of slavery and slave trade in the 19th century affected clove production since slaves were the basic source of labours in the clove industry. From the end of the century the Protectorate witnessed changes from slave

based to peasants based in the production of cloves especially from 1920s.

Writing on *Colonial Agricultural Development Scheme*¹⁴, and *Tanganyika and the Great Depression* Monica van Beusekom and Bonaventure Swai¹⁵ assert that, from the interwar period to independence witnessed the state intervention in the production and development of agriculture schemes that aimed to control and expand cash crops demanded by colonialists in Europe. This was the period in which both European nations and African colonies were highly affected by the First World War of 1914 – 1918 and the Great Economic Slump of 1920s and 1930s. The consequences of this crisis were dramatic due to the massive decline of revenue from the sale of primary products.¹⁶ N. N. Luanda in "*Rural Development*" in *Colonial Tanganyika: An Overview*, affirms that:

*The Great Depression of 1930s and the general crisis of imperialism during the period in question was largely responsible for the British policy on rural development scheme in Tanganyika and elsewhere in the colonies... The period 1930 – 1950 saw frenetic measures to re-organize in order to control and supervise peasant production.*¹⁷

Thus, African colonies were seen by the European as the merely source to recover from the effects of two sad events. This period experienced development of second phase of colonial domination that based on the institutionalization of colonial control and the expansion of colonial economy aimed to enable capitalist powers to exploit the African resources to compensate the loss caused by the phenomenon in Europe. From 1920s different policies were taken by the British colonial government in Zanzibar through department of agriculture. On 26th June, 1922 Memorandum was issued by the British Colonial government indicating measures to help production of cloves in the Protectorate.¹⁸ On 5th December, 1922 the Commission of agriculture under the R.H. Crofton as chairman and S. S. Abrahams as vice-chairman was appointed by the British Resident in the Protectorate so as to enquire, report and formulate workable policy for the revival and expansion of cloves production.¹⁹

⁸ Interview with Khamis Salim Juma conducted at Mizingani in 11 /8/2022

⁹ Goran Hyden, *Beyond Ujamaa in Tanzania: Under development and an Uncaptured Peasantry*, (London: Hainemann Educational Books Ltd, 1980), pp. 10-12

¹⁰ Abdul Sheriff, op.cit. p. 12

¹¹ Philip Raikes, op. cit. p. 294

¹² ZNA/BA4/10 Binder, B. H., Zanzibar Protectorate: Report on the Zanzibar Clove Industry, p. 2

¹³ The Residency, *A Guide to Zanzibar*, (Nairobi: East African Printers (Boyds) Ltd, 1961), p. 3

¹⁴ Monica van Beusekom, *Colonial Agriculture Development Scheme*, Retrieved from:

<https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190277734.013.751>, (2021). Visited on 26/4/2013

¹⁵ Bonaventure Swai, *Tanganyika and the Great Depression 1929 – 1936*, Trans - African Journal of History, Vol. 9, No. 1/2, (1980). Retrieved from:

<https://www.jstor.org/stable/24328557>. Visited on 8. 10. 2022

¹⁶ Roland Oliver, *The African Experience*, (New York: Herper Collins Publishers, 1991), p. 220

¹⁷ N. N. Luanda, "Rural Development" in *Colonial Tanganyika: An Overview*, (University of Dar es Salaam)

¹⁸ Ibid. p.1

¹⁹ ZNA/BA3/11 Zanzibar Government Report of the Commission on Agriculture, 1923, p. 1

Consequently, the Clove Bonus Scheme was introduced in 1922 to improve clove industry in Zanzibar. Under this policy free seeds were provided, government clove nurseries were constructed to supply young clove trees and distributed free of charge, and credits through bonuses were provided to cloves farm owners.²⁰ These changes expanded peasants clove production particularly in Pemba, Zanzibar where most of clove supportive land was obtained easily. This condition attracted many more peasants to engage on clove production.²¹ By 1920s there were about three million clove trees with equal possession between the Arabs and Swahili peasants.²² Participation of peasants in the production activities was not a new phenomenon among the Sub - Sahara African societies. Their history started to exist with beginning of human development across the millennium.²³ In *A Modern History of Tanganyika*, and *Peasant Resistance to Proletarianization in Colonial Tanganyika* John Iliffe²⁴ and F. J. Kaijage²⁵ indicate that peasant production went hand in hand with development of capitalism in Africa where subsistence producers were converted into peasants producing for cash income within the traditional work-life system.²⁶ Several studies on peasants have been conducted in Southern Zambia and Mainland Tanzania by Jelle van de Berg²⁷, Henry Bernstein²⁸, Herbert Ndomba²⁹, John Vicent,³⁰ and Balijali Mwamuzi³¹, yet these studies have not thoroughly discussed on the peasants in the small coastal Island of Pemba, Zanzibar. Peasants started to produce cloves prior the British effective occupation of the Islands in 1890. From 1920s global capitalist's phenomenon forced colonialists to turn into peasant production particularly after the abolition of slavery and slave trade at the end of 19th century. It is where peasants of Pemba, Zanzibar directly incorporated into colonial relation of production through production of cloves.

Despite plenty of literatures on clove production in Zanzibar, very little has been documented on the challenges faced by peasant clove producers in Pemba, 1920s – 1950s. Existing literatures focused more on contribution of clove industry and the roles of Zanzibar State Trading Corporation in

the clove production in Zanzibar, neglecting peasants who were the main producers of clove particularly in Pemba where more than 80% of Zanzibar clove produced. Thus, it is from this missing knowledge gap that this paper focused to investigate the challenge faced peasant clove producers in Pemba, Zanzibar from 1920s – 1950s.

III. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

To understand how the peasants of Pemba were incorporated in the cloves production process, the study opted for the Theory of Mode of Production. Under this theory Karl Marx (1818 – 1893) argued that, in order for any societies to continue their lives and survive, it is compulsory for them to work and produce material things which support their population and replenish their physical stocks for daily survivals³² The mode of production and relation of production determines the “proto – class” or class structure in the societies. The Theory of Mode of Production got support from Michael³³ and Kisambu³⁴ who assert that mode of production investigate the nature of production in the society and it is this nature that dictate the economic condition of the society which eventual determine the aspects of a particular society.

The study applied historical research design so as to capture, changes, dynamics and transformation through which peasants cloves production was organized and implemented across the various historical epochs in Pemba, Zanzibar. The collection and interpretation of data based on qualitative approach, where both primary and secondary data were collected. The archival data were collected from Zanzibar National Archive (ZNA) located at Kilimani Unguja and Pemba Institute of Archives and Records (PIAR) at Chake Chake Pemba. Documentary sources were gathered from Mwanza Regional Library, the State University of Zanzibar libraries from both Tunguu and Beit- Al- Ras campuses, SUMAIT library, University of Dar es Salaam libraries especially East Africana Collection, and Zanzibar Central library. From these

²⁰ ZNA/SA1/173 G. E. Tidbury, *The Clove Tree*, (London: Grosby Lockwood and Son, Ltd, 1949)

²¹ A. J. Hughes, *East Africa: The Search for Unity Kenya, Tanganyika, Uganda and Zanzibar*, (USA: Penguin Books Ltd, 1963), p. 109

²² ZNA/BA3/26 Wilsn, F. B., *Agricultural Officer: Notes on Peasants Agriculture and Industry in Zanzibar Island*, p. 1

²³ Jelle van de Berg, *A Peasant Form of Production: Wage – Dependent Agriculture in Southern Mozambique*, *Canadian Journal of African Studies*, Vol. 21, No. 3, (Taylor and Francis, Ltd, 1987)

²⁴ John Iliffe, *A Modern History of Tanganyika*, (London: Cambridge University Press, 1979), p. 273

²⁵ F. J. Kaijage, “Peasant Resistance to Proletarianization in Colonial Tanzania” ASC Working Papers No. 81, Boston University, 1981

²⁶ John Iliffe, *A Modern History of Tanganyika*, (London: Cambridge University Press, 1979), p. 273

²⁷ Jelle van de Berg, op.cit.

²⁸ Henry Bernstein, op. cit.

²⁹ Herbert Herald Ndomba, “A History of Peasant Tobacco Production in Ruvuma Region, Southern Tanzania, c. 1930 – 2016,” PhD. Diss. Stellenbosch University, (2018)

³⁰ John Vincent Teso in *Transformation, The Political Economy of Peasant and Class in Eastern Africa*, (California: University of California Press, 1982), p. 192

³¹ Balijali Mwamuzi, “The Role of Peasants in the Struggle for Independence in Shinyanga: 1920s – 1961”, (MA. Diss. St. Augustine University of Tanzania, 2019)

³² Maurice Cornforth, *Historical Materialism, Sec. Edn, Vol. II*, (New York: International Publishers, 1962), pp.14-20

³³ Philip Michael, *Marxist and the Labour Rights*, (Golden Publishers, 1989), p. 187

³⁴ Saruni Memiriki Kisambu, “Tea Production and its Impacts on the Societies of Mufindi, 1920s -1926”, (MA. Diss. St. Auhustine University of Tanzania, 2018)

centres various published and unpublished dissertations, thesis, books, and chapters were accessed. Oral testimony was extracted from village elders, peasants, government officials from the Zanzibar State Trading Corporation and Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation, Natural Resource and Livestock, and other stakeholders from Zanzibar Clove Producers Organization as private organization that dealt with clove matters in Pemba Island. To construct pure historical accounts the primary and secondary sources were collected in order to generate answers on the challenges faced peasant clove producers in Pemba from 1920s – 1950s.

IV. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

A. Rise and Evolution of Peasant Clove Production in Pemba

The District of Pemba was formulated by the Provincial Administration and Authority Decree of 1931 and the Government Notice No. 29 of 1934. The District lies on the Western side of the Indian Ocean about 40 to 60 km off the East African coast.³⁵ It is about 50 km North-East of Unguja Island³⁶ and between 4.8⁰ and 6.2⁰ latitude south of the Equator and 39⁰ and 40⁰ longitudes east of Greenwich. It is about 75 km in length and 15 to 19 km wide with total areas of about 868 square kilometers.³⁷ Indian Ocean and other smaller islets border the Island of Pemba from all side.³⁸

Peasants were people who live in small community, cultivate land they own or control, rely chiefly on family labour, and produce their own subsistence while also supplying larger economic systems which include non-peasants.³⁹ Before the integration of Zanzibar islands in the capitalist economy in the early 19th century peasants were producing agricultural products for their use value leaving the cloves production under the Arabs landlord. The development of peasants in Zanzibar islands resulted by the abolition of slave trade in 1873 and slavery in 1897 created problems which led the decline of many Arabs land lords.⁴⁰ This change shifted production of cloves to peasants who were highly preferred by the British colonial states in Zanzibar islands so as one; to minimize the cost of production and generating super profits and two; to compensate

the loss caused by the World War One and the Economic slump that hit Europe in 1920s and 1930s. The native interest policy and Clove Bonus Scheme (CBS) policies were created by British colonial state in 1920s where peasants were recognized, encouraged and started to produce for capitalist's demands which were basic tenets of European capitalism.⁴¹ The development of peasants was the result of European colonialism which led expansion and incorporation of peasants in the capitalistic production circle from the 19th century.

Clove tree (*caryphillas aromaticus*) belong to the Myrtacere family. It is the tree which produces the cloves. Its history dates back hundreds of centuries before the Birth of Christ.⁴² G. E. Tidbury,⁴³ asserts that, cloves are the opened buds of the clove trees, a medium sized member of the Myrtle family which takes its origin from volcanic Island of Moluccas of South-East Asia archipelagoes of Ternate, Tidore, Mutis, Makyan and Bachian. Moluccas stay much further to the east, midway between the Celebs and New Guinea and it is about 1000 km to the north of Australia. W. D. Hussey⁴⁴ in his book "*Discovery Expansion and the Empire*" portrays that the Portuguese discovered Moluccas cloves producing archipelagos in the early 16th century during the age of discovery where two centuries later moved cloves into Mascarene by about 1770s. From the 18th century, French took clove seeds and seedlings from Ceram to Dominica, Martinique, Bourbon, Madagascar, and Seychelles where cloves attained huge success in these areas. Abdull Sheriff⁴⁵, Juhani Kopenen⁴⁶ and C. S. Nicholis⁴⁷ agree that from this area one Arab trader by the name Haramel bin Saleh took the first clove seeds and smuggled them to the islands of Zanzibar in the early decades of 19th century from Ile-de-Franca (Mauritius). By the time cloves reached in the Indian Ocean islands, it was very lucrative and every European nation struggled to maintain its trade and monopoly. In Unguja the first clove trees were planted at Mtoni. The trees were planted as a garden around the Palace areas at Mtoni Unguja 5.4 km northward from Unguja town.

³⁵ Sara N. Seme, Narriman Jiddawi and Oswald Masebo, Climate Change and Adaptation in Pemba Island, Zanzibar: Environmental History-Pre-colonial Period to 1840, *Journal of the Geographical Association of Tanzania*, Vol. 41, No. 2: 22-40, (2022), p. 24

³⁶Brooke Shorett and Lauren Crask, "Pesticide Use and Awareness on Pemba Island". Retrieved from: http://digitalcollections.sit.edu/isp_collection/891,(2010), p. 9

³⁷ Abdulla Rashid Mkumbukwa, op.cit. p. 7

³⁸ Pemba Island Map, Retrieved from: http://www.zanzibar-holiday.com/zanziba_pemba_Island.html. Visited on 2/10/2022

³⁹ John Iliffe, *A Modern History of Tanganyika*, (Great Britain: Cambridge University Press, 1979), p. 273

⁴⁰ Abdulla RasidMkumbukwa, "*The History of Use and Conservation of Marine Resources in Zanzibar*:"

Nineteenth Century to the Present",Ph.D Diss.,(University of Bayreuth, 2014), p. 97, 99

⁴¹ Abdull Sheriff, op. cit. p. 39

⁴² ZNA/BA3/11 Report of the Commission on Agriculture, 1923, p. 42

⁴³ ZNA/SA1/173 G. E. Tidbury, *The Clove Tree*, (London: Crosby Lockwood and Son, Ltd., 1949)

⁴⁴ W. D. Hussey, *Discovery Expansion and the Empire*, (New York: The Cambridge University Press, 1954)

⁴⁵ Abdull Sheriff, *Slaves, Spices and Ivory in Zanzibar*, (United State of America: Ohio University Press, 1987)

⁴⁶ Juhani Kopenen, *People and Production in late Pre-colonial Tanzania*, (Finland: Gumerus Kinjapaino Oy, 1988)

⁴⁷ Nicholis, C. S, *The Swahili Coast: Politics, Diplomacy and Trade on the East African Littoral 1798 – 1856*, (Edinburgh: T. & A. Constable Ltd, 1971)

The development of clove cultivation in Pemba takes its origin from 19th century.⁴⁸ A. J. Hughes and W. Grazebrook affirm that cloves came in Pemba in 1818. However, Abdulaziz Y. L., indicates that, the production of cloves in Pemba started after the removal of Mazrui Arabs in 1822 by Busaidi Arabs who dominated Pemba island since the mid of the 18th century. The first clove trees were planted at Kichunjuu in southern Pemba. The area was the potential settlement of the Mendhiri Oman Arabs who first established their settlement and cultivated cloves in the area. Peasants of Pemba took clove seeds and seedlings from this area to plant in their local farm from the earlier period of the century,⁴⁹ from this area cloves spread to south west, central west and North West of Island.⁵⁰

B. Challenges Faced Peasant Clove Producers in Pemba

The findings from the various primary and secondary sources indicated that, production of cloves under the peasants was given the central priority by the British colonial government. To ensure effective production of cloves under the peasants various decrees were established in Pemba which was essential part of British Protectorate of Zanzibar, however during the production process there were several challenges that faced producers in the island. Majority of peasants claimed that production of cloves associating with many activities that demand peasants to possess financial power in the production so to smoothly run the production activities. For instance the cultivation of tree starts by hand hoeing and plant trees in a well spaced line. To ensure well and smooth growing of tree, constant care is required for the young plants of about one and two years accompanied with regularly watering process.

Moreover, cloves grow in clusters at the end of the branches; these buds start to appear about six months before harvest time. When the buds become pink, they are ready to be harvested and must be picked before they open out and turn deep red in colour, as that leads to loss of value. This is the period for picking stage. The clove picking normally require pickers to climb the tree and pick cloves using hands. To reach higher branches on the tree, pickers need to draw the branches towards them by using hook tricks. However, this process often damages the tree since some branches get broken. The picking process is very dangerous especially when the branches have been made more slippery by rain or when the trees have been infested by Koyokoyo (red ants/ Maji-ya-moto). Cloves were picked through the hot hours of the day; the red ants swarm on the pickers inflicted extremely painful bites which may render a tree unpick able which led to the pickers to break the branch as a solution of this condition. After the picking stage is over, the buds are then spread on the mats or cement floor so as to be separated from the stems by brushing the clusters against the palm of the hand taking place often in the camp or at home.

Drying is the next stage, where cloves are spread on the mats to dry on the sun. This process needs much care and labouring since too rapid drying can lead cloves to become brittle and bad drying can cause cloves to become darker and turn musty.

The production of cloves in Pemba was highly affected by tree disease which destroyed and killed numbers of clove trees in the island from the 1940s and 1950s. The 1929 Agriculture Annual Report confirmed that, many clove trees of Pemba which ranges from 50 years of age had affected by Sudden Death and Die Back diseases. When the trees affected by this disease individual small and large branches die and became leafless, remaining white and dry on the tree. This condition becomes progressively worse until most of the tree branches are killed and develop a typical “stag – headed” appearance where finally the entire tree dries up.⁵¹ This condition caused by *Cryptosporella* fungus that grow through the health tissue of the tree, chiefly upwards and down wards and laterally, killing the tissue and staining them reddish – brown than then whole tree branches dies and the leaves turn brown and latter fall. By 1940 there were 500 case of diseases outbreak in the islands that increased to 2,170 and 2,604 in the 1950s the led the cut of more than 60,000 clove trees in Pemba island. This resulted big loss to peasants of Southern Pemba from Mkoani, Jambangome, Fufuni and Kengeja where the disease affected some clove trees.⁵² The problem of disease caused many peasants to losse their trees and remains with few trees hence little gain from the production.

The clove quality was determined by particular clove grading and inspection process that was insisted by the colonial government. This condition severely affected clove peasants in Pemba. In the market, that was supervised by CGA from 1927 and middleman dealers of cloves were sold after consideration of appearance and quality of cloves. On 6th July, 1934 the British colonial government enacted Agricultural Produce Export Decree (APED) parallel with the Clove Export Rules (CER) to deal with the clove quality and grades in the whole Protectorate. With this decree, special grades which were No.1 Grade, No.2 Grade and No.3 Grade were formulated. However, findings showed that there was severe exploitation associated with the implementation of this decree to the peasants’ cloves before they arrived in the market. In Pemba, there were special agents at the market called Government Produce Inspectors (GPI) in the market of Wete, Chake Chake, and Mkoani who were responsible in dealing with clove selling quality. These agents sometimes the quality provided did not conform to the legal standard of the peasants’ cloves, the condition that deprived peasants’ profits from their own products. By the Adulteration of Produce Decree dated 21st July, 1934

⁴⁸ Interview with Said Sultan Said held at Mtambile in 21/8/2022

⁴⁹ Haji Mohamed Ame, op.cit.

⁵⁰ Interview with Juma Shaaban Farjala conducted at Kenya village in 17/8/2022

⁵¹ PIAR/AA7/9 Agriculture Department Confidential Memoranda, see also PIAR/AA7/10

⁵² PIAR/AA2/2 Annual Agricultural Report for the Year 1943: Survey Clove Crop Scheme in 1950

adulteration of cloves beyond Grade 3 condition was prohibited.

The change in climatic condition that existed for long time affected clove production in the island. Historically the island experienced tropical climate with heavy rainfall ranging from 1500 mm to 2000 mm. This flourished the agricultural production that made the islands granary of East Africa for the production of both food and cash crops of various categories. But the changes in climate had affected the production of cloves which is the mainstay of the island and only source of cash income to the peasants. The island now receives long period of drought rather than rainfall which is the catalyst of the clove production in Pemba. The Bulletin of the Department of Agriculture for March 1938 indicated that, the island climatic condition had changed, the drought retarded the production of both food and cash crops in the Protectorate in 1935/1936 and 1936/1937.⁵³ The production declined from 16000 tons in 1800s to 13000 tons in 1950s. The data from the field indicated that many trees in the clove farms from Mkoani to Chake Chake, tree died and other dried as times went on due to drastic climatic change in the island. This harsh climate resulted in many clove trees to produce little yield, hence little gain to peasants from the production during the harvesting seasons in Pemba.

The production of clove was affected by price fluctuation that was changing regularly. Production of cloves was the main source of their livelihood that generated income for families. Agricultural report on Pemba in 1928 indicated that, clove production faced serious challenges due to price fluctuation. For instance, in 1923/1924 the price ranged from Rs 19.06 to 29.94 where 1931/1932 the price declined to Rs 7.65 to 11.30, the price went further down in 1933/1934 where the one frasila ranged from Rs. 4.92 to 7.34. The fluctuation was further increased by the 1929 and 1933 Great Economic Depression. This period witnessed the decline of export and the clove price drastically collapsed in Zanzibar, which by the time, dominated clove market in the world. For instance, as a result of depression clove, price fell from 6/- to 5/- per frasila⁵⁴ and from Rs 30/- 20/- to a frasila in 1930s, the condition that posed a great challenge to peasants of Pemba. The report indicated that, this condition posed a threat not only to the British government but also to the peasants that were highly depended on the cloves as the source of their income.

During the production of cloves money was demanded for clearing their farm for growing more trees, to buy more clove seedlings during the cultivation, paying pickers who were paid on the piece-work basis during harvesting seasons, buying materials as bags and drying-mats and the payment of cost during the transportation of their cloves to market.⁵⁵ The Annual Reports of agriculture department indicated that many peasants of Pemba got into the debt crisis from Indians money

lenders as the result of this problem in the islands at the end of 1920s and early 1930s. The condition that resulted many cloves producers lost their farms to the Indian as payment after failure to pay back their debts. The findings indicated that from 1926 to 1933 more than 237, 000 clove trees in the islands of Pemba came under the Indians possession from the peasants of the Islands and the holdings increased from 152,000 to 502,000 and further 309,000 clove trees were mortgaged to Indians as a result of debt problem. In Pemba the peasant's debt was Rs 497 due to the short-term loan with annual interest rate that range between 25 to 100%.

V. CONCLUSION

The period from 1920s to 1945 witnessed second phase of colonialism in Africa. This due to changes in colonial policies, emphasis being kept on the production agricultural materials using peasant producers. During colonial period several cash crops were introduced while in some African colonies locally produced crops were expanded to meet the colonial interests. In Zanzibar cloves production was expanded through encouraging local peasants. The Clove Bonus Scheme policy of 1922 came to improve and encourage production of cloves which was the major sources of government revenue. To control production under the peasant the colonial government formulated various decree that strictly benefited colonialists and exploit peasants of the island. The 1927 formation of Clove Growers Association intensified further control and exploitation of peasants in the Islands of Zanzibar. It was The Clove (Purchase and Export) Decree No. 15 of 1937 that gave CGA the sole right to proposed and fixed clove price that maintained the colonial interest and lay behind the peasant's profit. To disguise exploitation the colonial government tried to design various policies to help producers nominally but practical the policies tended to expand production which was the mainstay of Zanzibar colony. The launch of Clove Regeneration Policy from 1920s to 1950s and the establishment of Agriculture Indebtedness Commission in 1934 aimed to provide clove seedlings to peasants and investigate financial condition of many producers so as to proceed with production activities. These majors aimed to smoothen production of cloves in the island, however despite these majors peasants experienced severe challenges in their production process; clove diseases (Die back and Sudden Death) that killed considerable numbers of trees in the island, few clove selling centers, change in climatic condition that prolonged dry season and price fluctuation threatened the expansion and development of clove production under the peasants. Despite facing these challenges and high exploitation from the government peasant continued to proceed with profitless production of cloves as their means of earning dissatisfied income to independence.

⁵³ ZNA/BA29/3 op. cit. pp. 1-5

⁵⁴ The weight of cloves is computed locally in frasilas. A frasila is a local unit of weight representing 35 lbs

⁵⁵ZNA/BA3/16 Memorandum on the Function of a Department of Agriculture with Special Reference to Zanzibar Summary

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- [55.] Khamis Salim Juma, aged 90 a peasant, interviewed on 11/8/2022, at Mizingani Village
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