The Constitutional Conferences in London and Lagos between 1953 and 1958 - The British Management of the Transfer of Government

Thesis Research Master Modern History & International Relations

Rijksuniversiteit Groningen

Student: Benedikt M. M. Bäther
Student number: S2376269
Address: Alter Gartenweg 7a
48249 Dülmen
Germany

Supervisor: Dr. Clemens Six
Second Examiner: Dr. Michel Doortmont
August 1, 2015
Second Version
Table of Contents

Abstract .................................................................................................................................................. IV

List of Abbreviations ............................................................................................................................ V

Introduction ............................................................................................................................................. 1

Chapter 1: Concepts, Methods and Sources ......................................................................................... 12
  1.1. Theoretical Framework ............................................................................................................. 12
  1.2. Methodology and Sources ....................................................................................................... 18

Chapter 2: The Realignment of the British Empire in the 1950s .................................................. 24
  2.1. Confronting International Challenges .................................................................................... 24
  2.2. An Imperial Metropole .......................................................................................................... 29
  2.3. Nigeria – Unity in Variety ....................................................................................................... 33

Chapter 3: Making the last Colonial Constitution – The Constitutional Conference in 1953/54 .......................................................... 41
  3.1. Prelude – The Constitutional Crisis in 1953 ......................................................................... 41
  3.2. British Preparations - The Danger of a Nigerian Boycott ................................................... 45
  3.3. Negotiations - Two Withdrawals ............................................................................................ 49
  3.4. Results – Regional Self-government in 1956 ....................................................................... 52

Chapter 4: Adjusting the Constitution – The Constitutional Conference in 1957 .................. 54
  4.2. British Preparations - Postponement ...................................................................................... 58
  4.3. Negotiations – British Delaying Tactics ............................................................................... 62
  4.4. Results – Steps towards Independence ............................................................................... 65

Chapter 5: Finding a date for independence - The Constitutional Conferences in 1958 .......... 66
  5.1. Prelude – No Crisis ................................................................................................................. 66
  5.2. British Preparations – Considering the Implications of Independence ............................ 69
  5.3. Negotiations – Clash over New States ............................................................................... 72
  5.4. Results – Independence in 1960 ........................................................................................... 76

Conclusion ............................................................................................................................................. 79
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bibliography</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary Sources</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>British National Archives</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newspaper Articles</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publications of Participants</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Source Editions</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary Sources</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literature</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online Sources</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maps</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Abstract

This master thesis examines the constitutional conferences in London and Lagos in 1953/54, 1957 and 1958 and sheds new light on the British management of decolonisation. It assesses the conferences as an imperial instrument to manage constitutional reforms and the accompanying political conflicts in Nigeria. The methodological approach makes use of the “Migrated Archives” collection and the proceedings of the conferences in the National Archives in Kew to examine three conferences through a comparative historical analysis. The thesis shows British policy-makers followed a reactive policy without clear plans. Furthermore, it elucidate that the conferences were a double-edged sword. On the one hand, they institutionalised the transfer of government to Nigerian elites and de-escalated conflicts. On the other hand, they accelerated the rapid process towards independence and the British policy-makers failed to delay constitutional reforms and Nigerian independence.

Keywords: Decolonisation; Constitutional Conferences; Colonial administration; Nigeria;
## List of Abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AG</td>
<td>Action Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CO</td>
<td>Colonial Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MZL</td>
<td>Middle Zone League</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NEPU</td>
<td>Northern Elements Progressive Union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NIP</td>
<td>Nigerian Independence Party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NCNC</td>
<td>National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NPC</td>
<td>Northern People's Congress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NNDP</td>
<td>The Nigerian National Democratic Party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NYM</td>
<td>Nigerian Youth Movement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SU</td>
<td>Soviet Union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNP</td>
<td>United Nigerian Party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US</td>
<td>United States of America</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USIS</td>
<td>United States Information Agency</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Introduction

In 2014 the Nigerian people celebrated the 100th anniversary of the amalgamation of Nigeria, which became independent on 1 October 1960. When the British Colonial Office unified the Northern Nigeria Protectorate and Southern Nigeria Protectorate in January 1914, it created not only a versatile colony but also laid the foundations for future challenges. Nigeria became the largest colonial territory and the most populous country in British Africa. To deal with a huge diversity of over 200 different cultural, religious and social groups became a major political issue for the British rulers. In the following decades, the colonial administration moulded the Nigerian colony, according to the ideas of the Colonial Office in London, and remodelled society, economy and politics from scratch. The British colonial masters exploited cultural differences between Nigerians to strengthen their political influence through indirect rule. This thesis deals with the last decade of British colonial rule. This period was significantly different because it was a transitional period, which was shaped by an uncertain colonial future. Furthermore, this thesis analysis the British management of the transfer of government to Nigerian elites in the 1950s and the accompanying conflicts on the example of constitutional conferences.

Before clarifying the research scope, a short introduction of the colonial history of Nigeria is necessary because the fundamental problems for British colonial rule in the 1950s have their origins in earlier decades. Two British policies had shaped the colonial period, dealing with the social, cultural and political diversity since the beginning of the 20th century. Both resulted in a deeply divided society. First, the historian Anthony H. M. Kirk-Greene highlights that Nigeria as “a laboratory sans pareil of indirect rule.” The High Commissioner Frederick introduced this system of local government between 1900 and 1906 to subdue resistance in the Northern protectorate by incorporating indigenous rulers into a so called Native Authority system. These rules, which became Native authorities, dealt with the

---

1 The formative years of the amalgamation in the perspective of the Colonial Office are well investigated in the following book: John M. Carland, The Colonial Office in Nigeria, 1898-1914 (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press 1985).
2 See map 2 and map 3 in the appendix. Toyin Falola, History of Nigeria (Westpoint, CT: Greenwood Press, 1999), 5-6.
3 This was typical for colonialism, which Jürgen Osterhammel defines as “a relationship between an indigenous (or forcibly imported) majority and a minority of foreign invaders. The fundamental decisions affecting the lives of the colonized people are made and implemented by the colonial rulers in pursuit of interests that are often defined in a distant metropolis. Rejecting cultural compromises with the colonized population, the colonizers are convinced of their own superiority and their ordained mandate to rule.” Jürgen Osterhammel, Colonialism. A Theoretical Overview (2nd ed. Princeton, N.J.: Markus Wiener Publishers, 2005), 16.
daily affairs of government, such as tax collection. They as the British administrators categorised the people into ethnic and religious groups, they adjusted indirect rule to the cultural differences. They selected major ethnic groups because they saw them as warrantors of stability. As a result, the Hausa-Fulani, the Yoruba and the Ibos gained key positions in the colonial system because they were a regional ethnic majority. Hausa-Fulani, which were Muslims and had Emirs as rulers, gained an important role in the Northern part of Nigeria. After the amalgamation more than the half of the Nigerian population lived in the North, which was around the double size of the South. The attempts of Christian missionaries, who successfully spread Christianity in the South, to convert the population of the North to Christianity were opposed by emirs and colonial officers. This protective policy caused an educational backwardness of the Northern region because Christian missionaries were in charge of the education. In the East the privileged group were the Ibo, which were Christian. They were a decentralised society, living in village communities until the British forced so called “Warrant Chief” upon them. The social hierarchies in the West were different. The dominant ethnic group of Yoruba had kings and chiefs with less power than the emirs in the North. The British extend their rights, for example tax collection.

Indirect rule was a typical divide and rule policy and it had its flaws. First, most of the 200 different ethnic groups, which were a small minority, were neglected, and social hierarchies were redesigned. Second, indirect rule was based on the illusion that African societies were slowly developing and structured in tribes. The rise of urban-based and educated elites showed the limits of this inflexible system. Their exclusion from political power fuelled resistance against colonial rule. Moreover, Nigeria’s population grew from

---

6 The problematic use of ethnicity will be further explored in chapter 2. It is illusory to accept the British colonial view on African traditions, tribes or ethnicity because they are often a product of colonialism. Terence Ranger, “The Invention of Tradition in Colonial Africa,” in The Invention of Tradition edited by Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (London: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 262.
8 For an overview on their pre-colonial role see: Falola, History of Nigeria, 17-38.
10 See map 1 and 4 in the appendix.
11 A good overview on the Missionaries’ struggle against the colonial administration and the emirs can be found here: Isidore Uchechukwu Chibuzo Nwanaju, Christian-Muslim Relations in Nigeria (Berlin: Logos, 2008), 130-158.
12 Ibid.
13 Falola, History of Nigeria, 71-72.
14 Roland Hyam, Britain’s Declining Empire. The Road to Decolonisation 1918-1968 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 15.
16.06 million in 1911 to 55.66 million in 1962.\textsuperscript{15} Third, this policy fostered regional diversity. With separate laws, authorities and taxations, the people became more aware of their ethnic consciousness. The different treatment of ethnic groups caused trouble due to rising competition between ethnic groups.\textsuperscript{16} Overall, the flaws of indirect rule contributed to the rise of Nigerian nationalism and colonial reforms since the 1920s.\textsuperscript{17}

The Second World War was the watershed for both developments and had a huge impact on the British Empire. The war also influenced two decisive levels for colonial rule in Nigeria. Besides the developments in Nigeria (local level), decisions at the metropolitan (or imperial) level in the United Kingdom (UK) and changes at the international level, interacted.\textsuperscript{18} The painful burden of war changed the relationship between the British and their subjects. The brutal warfare between Europeans in the global fight against a racist German Empire showed Africans the absurdity of the colonial value system, which was based on European superiority.\textsuperscript{19} In the post-war world the British Empire had to adjust to a new international order, with the two rising superpowers the US and the Soviet Union (SU). Moreover, the British Prime Minister Clement Attlee (1883-1967) had to deal with the economic consequences of a costly war. He granted India independence in 1947. This decision had a huge symbolic value for other colonies because it showed that independence was possible. The future of colonial empires became a highly debated issue. In this sense, the war accelerated the reforms of colonial rule and the rise of Nigerian nationalism.\textsuperscript{20}

The second British policy, which was constitutional reforms, became essentially after the war because British policy-makers hoped to contain Nigerian demands by integrating the educated elite in the colonial state. It was part of an ambitious approach to develop colonies

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{16} Falola, \textit{History of Nigeria}, 74.
\item \textsuperscript{18} Posser Gifford and WM. Roger Louis, eds., \textit{Decolonization and African Independence. The Transfer of Power 1960-1980} (New York: Yale University Press, 1988), xiii. These three levels will be further explored in chapter 1 and 2.
\end{itemize}
and thereby stabilise and legitimise colonial rule. The British constitutional reforms can be divided into two periods. In formative period from 1945 to 1953 the basic structure of a new political system developed. The Colonial Office imposed the “Richards Constitution” on the Nigerian people in 1946. The core element was the introduction of the federal principle. Besides a central legislative council, the Eastern Region, the Western Region and the Northern Region got an own assembly. In 1948 a new governor John Macpherson (1898-1971) announced constitutional concessions, a reform of the Native authorities system and the opening of the civil service for Nigerians. Furthermore, he consulted Nigerians before the “Macpherson Constitution” granted more regional autonomy and strengthened the federal character of the central government in 1951. Elections were the decisive British concession in this period.

In this first formative period of decolonisation Nigerian nationalist organised in parties and a three party system emerged. The electoral law favoured this development because the regional assemblies decided over the members of the central assembly. A regional victory granted influence in national politics. Moreover, the regional discrepancies resulted in ethnocentric election campaigns. The NCNC, dominated by the Igbo, under its leader Nnamdi Azikiwe (1904-1996) won in the East. In 1951 the Northern People’s Congress (NPC) became the political party, which would control the North. It had close ties with native authorities and used Islam as a unifying characteristic. In the East the Action Group (AG), lead by Obafemi Awolowo (1909-1987), prevailed and represented the Yuruba. However, there were a number of smaller parties, such as the Northern Elements Progressive Union (NEPU). Nigerians seized the opportunities of the constitutional change.

The British policy-makers were confronted with the demands of these three major political players in the decisive period from 1953 to 1960. A key characteristic was the rapid rate that surprised the British and the Nigerians. In 1953 the regional parties seriously clashed over political issues, such as ministerial responsibility and a date for independence in 1956. The latter was proposed by the AG to overtake their rival the NCNC on nationalism.

---


22 Lynn, Nigeria: Part I Managing Political Reform, xliv.

23 Falola, History of Nigeria, 91; Coleman Nigeria Background to Nationalism, 309.


25 The interaction between ethnocentrism and elections is explained in chapter 1.2.

This forthright proposal awoke fears, caused ethnic riots in the Northern City of Kano and the NPC threatened secession of the Northern region.\textsuperscript{27} In Contrast to other colonies, for example Kenya and Malaysia, the conflict in Nigeria did not escalate into a violent uprising.\textsuperscript{28} The reason was the special feature of the British management in this strained situation. The Secretary of State for the Colonies invited Nigerian representatives to a constitutional conference in London. This was the starting point for a series of conferences that aimed to solve political conflicts and reform the constitution. The colonial instrument of constitutional conferences is worth analysing because they determined the Nigerian takeover of the colonial state.

The series of conferences between 1953 and 1957 differ significantly from British colonial policy before 1953.\textsuperscript{29} First, the Colonial Office saw that the conflict could not be solved by the colonial administration and the Nigerian parties alone and the British Secretary of State for the Colonies personally intervened. He acknowledged the importance of the problems. Second, elected Nigerian representatives – Nigerian parties - were integrated in the decision-making process. A look at the speeches of Azikiwe shows that Nigerians saw the conferences as the essential steps to independence.\textsuperscript{30} Ahmad Bello (1910-1960), who was the leader of the NPC, also judges them as decisive.\textsuperscript{31} Third, conferences institutionalised the transfer of government because they determined Nigerian independence. The British aim was the same as in the pre-war decades, to contain nationalism and keep the initiative in the reform process.\textsuperscript{32} In this sense, it was another colonial instrument to manage Nigeria. Although these conferences were an innovation in late colonial rule, they have been neglected in the historiography on decolonisation.

This thesis contributes to two historiographical debates.\textsuperscript{33} First, it contributes to debates on the end of the British Empire.\textsuperscript{34} The historiographical debate about the question of


\textsuperscript{28} A violent military coup d’état in 1966 and the Biafra War (1967-1970), caused by insufficient constitutional consideration of diversity, resulted in the suspension of the constitution. In this sense, the constitutional reforms only delayed and did not solve the conflict. Michael Vickers, \textit{A Nation Betrayed. Nigeria and the Minorities Commission of 1957} (Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press), 14-16.

\textsuperscript{29} Falola, \textit{History of Nigeria}, 108-110.


\textsuperscript{32} Babou, "Decolonization or National Liberation: Debating the End of British Colonial Rule in Africa," 42.

\textsuperscript{33} The author is aware of the rich contributions of Nigerian. However, their often marginally deal with deal with the research focus and their availability was limited.

the extent of the British successful planning and management of decolonisation is relevant for my scope.35 As the historian John Flint outlines, British planning was overambitious in Africa because it over-estimated capacities of the British Empire, which was weakened in two world wars.36 The historian Robert Pearce adds that the British colonial policy was no cohesive policy, but an accumulation of attempts to save the Empire.37 This is in line with Martin Shipway’s argument that, although plans existed, they rapidly became obsolete because of new developments.38 The timing was crucial and often events in the colonies made a new plan obsolete within months.39 Moreover, the planners neglected the implementation and they were surprised by unintended consequences, such as nationalism.40 This thesis will test this argument in a case study on Nigeria.

The second debate is on decolonisation in Nigeria. Historians have given too little attention to Nigeria in the 1950s, in particular to the constitutional conferences.41 The historiography on Nigerian decolonisation can be divided into two phases.42 In the first phase after independence studies examined central elements of colonialism. Kalu Ezera Constitutional Developments in Nigeria from 1960 is an example. Ezera’s focus is on dealing with social and cultural diversity in constitutions to strengthen unity in Nigeria.43 Moreover, the former colonial officer I. A. Nicolson recapitulates the colonial administration from 1900 to 1960 and it flaws.44 In this first phase most historians and political scientists investigate the rise of Nigerian nationalism and the party system.45 Two publications became classic contributions to understanding colonial politics. Richard Sklar’s Nigerian Political Parties: Education. John Darwin's Empire,” The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History 43, no. 1 (2015): 125-144.

36 Flint, “Planned Decolonization and Its Failure in British Africa,” 411.
42 The focus is on publications on specific questions on Nigerian decolonisation. As one of the largest colonies, Nigeria can be found in almost every study on the British Empire.
Power in an Emergent African Nation, first published in 1963, is an excellent study. Sklar shows that the Nigerian parties were no monolithic entities and rivalries within parties had an impact on national politics.\textsuperscript{46} The second book is Nigeria Background to Nationalism by James Coleman. Coleman deals with the Nigerian perspective and the transformation from small nationalistic groups to parties with the support of the masses.\textsuperscript{47} He argues that this transformation ended in 1952, when the parties were established in the colonial system. Therefore, he only briefly comments on following developments.\textsuperscript{48} This decisive period of decolonisation is particular relevant for the thesis.

After 2000 there has been an increased interest of historians in the role of the Colonial Office after 1945 and the end of British rule. Between both phases there is a gap of two decades, in which almost none research on Nigerian decolonisation was published.\textsuperscript{49} Two historians are worth highlighting because they shaped the second phase. On the one hand, Nigerian historian Olakunle A. Lawal argues that constitutional reforms were a conscious decision of the British government, aiming at continued informal influence on a united Nigeria after independence.\textsuperscript{50} He highlights that the Colonial Office accomplished these aims in 1960. On the other hand, British-Irish historian Martin Lynn points out that the Colonial Office had limited room for manoeuvre because of Nigerian pressure.\textsuperscript{51} Lynn emphasises the Nigerian pressure on the Colonial Office during the process of decolonisation. He particularly highlights the Nigerian resistance in the Eastern Crisis in 1955 and 1957, when all British attempts to remove Azikiwe, who was found guilty of corruption, from the Office of the Premier of the Eastern Region failed. Furthermore, he agrees with Lawal that the Colonial Office successfully achieved their aims at independence.\textsuperscript{52} Taken all together, it appears that the general pattern of the decolonisation process in Nigeria has been studied, but there is still research to be done on the constitutional conferences from 1953 to 1958.

The crucial conferences appear to have remained a blind spot for most historians. for two reasons. On the one hand, Lawal and Lynn see the Colonial Office as the decision-making centre of decolonisation, at least implicitly. Thereby they overlook the importance of

\textsuperscript{47} James S. Coleman, Nigeria Background to Nationalism (London: Cambridge University Press 1963).
\textsuperscript{48} Ibid., 369-408.
\textsuperscript{49} It can be only speculated about the reasons this gap. It is possible that the military dictatorship hindered research.
\textsuperscript{52} Martin Lynn, “‘We Cannot let the North Down’: British Policy and Nigeria in the 1950s,” In The British Empire in the 1950s: Retreat or Revival?, edited by Martin Lynn (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006, 160.
the negotiation with Nigerians, whose resistance became the trigger for launching negotiations. Moreover, the crucial role of the colonial administration as a bureaucratic filter, which controlled the information from Nigeria and prepared the conferences, is neglected. On the other hand, the constitutions are the product of conference negotiations. In hindsight, the constitutional changes are clear steps to decolonisation. However, the negotiators did not foresee the open-ended outcome. It is important to look at the short-term goals and not only at the central aims. As a result, the thesis adjusts the perspective and tests the existing interpretations against newly published sources.

The recent publication of the “Migrated Archives” collection, which are secret files extracted from the colonies, when the British left, make it possible to shed new light on the constitutional conferences. These primary sources, which are arranged chronological order according to themes, are significant in a double sense. First, they particularly contain the documents on the constitutional conferences in the 1950s. Memoranda, drafts, telegrams and letters allow reconstructing decision-making and communication between the Colonial Office, the colonial administration and Nigerians. Second, the files also contain telegrams, which informed the remaining officials in Nigeria over the state of negotiations. In contrast to the official published proceedings of the conferences, these reports are written in an informal manner. The proceedings and the “Migrated Archives” offer an opportunity to study the conferences and clarify their role.

This thesis investigates the constitutional conferences as an imperial instrument to stabilise British colonial rule in the 1950s. It looks at three constitutional conferences, which determined independence, in 1953/54, 1957 and 1958. It focuses on the process of transferring the control over the colonial state to Nigerian politicians. The participants in this process and their agency are portrayed with a focus on the decision-making level. The historical developments are described in detail because the thesis examines the process on the basis of short-term events. However, this study is limited to the British perspective on the political transformation process. It primarily deals with the British management of constitutional reforms and the accompanying conflicts. Moreover, constitutional issues are exemplary examined because of a broad and vast constitutional change.

55 Although the content partly existed in the National Archives before, the collections show new perspectives. The relevance and reliability is demonstrated in chapter 1 in detail.
56 There was a fourth conference in 1960, which dealt with post-independence issues, such as foreign policy.
This thesis aims to unravel the constitutional conferences in London and Lagos from the British proposal to the final documents - the constitutions- in relation to the decolonisation of the British Empire in the 1950s. The first aim is to illustrate the British preparations and the proceeding of the conferences with respect to the developments in Nigeria. The assessment of the British management, in particular of the assertiveness, is the second aim. The third aim is to evaluate the conferences as an imperial tool to manage the transfer of government to Nigerian elites and accompanying conflicts.

Led by these aims, several research questions are answered. The main question is: To what extent were the constitutional conferences an adequate mechanism to manage constitutional reforms and the accompanying conflicts in Nigeria? To answer this main question several other questions are asked: How and why did the three constitutional conferences between 1953 and 1958 proceed in relation to short-term events? What are differences and similarities between the them? Who were the participants in the reform process, why did they participate and what was their agency? Too what extent did the British policy-makers accomplished their goals? What were boarder effects on decolonisation and the Nigerian society?

The thesis answers these questions in several steps. Chapter 1.1. explores the underling theoretical assumptions and frames the historical situation as a political conflict over the transfer of government. It will reveal that decolonisation was a complex process, which in its core was a transformation of values and a transfer of the control over the late colonial state. As the historians Martin Shipway and John Darwin have shown, the late colonial state was full of opportunities for change. Furthermore, it will show that a simple classification in the British and the Nigerians is misleading and a complex relationship between both sides existed. Ethnicity, which is understood as a politicised cultural identity, played a crucial rule.

The methodological approach is outlined in chapter 1.2. It evaluates the selected sources from the British National Archives and University Libraries. The chapter will emphasize the limitations of primary sources, which were produced by the British administration. Furthermore, it will illustrate the methodology, which consists of two stages. First, the assessment of the interactions between the international, the metropolitan and the local level will be executed in chapter 2. Second, the chronological analysis of three

conferring, which are structured in prelude, preparations, negotiations and results, will be explained.

Chapter 2 situates the constitutional conferences within broader deployments on three levels in the 1950s. Colonies did not exist in a vacuum and interactions and exchange within the international system must not be ignored. It will demonstrate that international actors, such as the United Nations (UN) or the rising superpowers, started to challenge colonial rule. The Second World War had a significant impact in Nigeria (Chapter 2.1.). Furthermore, the policy of three conservative governments and departments in the Colonial Office will be introduced. This look at development within the United Kingdom will show that imperialist dominated the metropole of the British Empire (Chapter 2.2.). Overall, I will argue that the changes in Nigeria overshadowed international and metropolitan developments, although the regional forerunner the Gold Coast was important. The British colonial policy entrenched the political and social differences in Nigeria and crisis management became everyday business (Chapter 2.3.). Nigerian political parties imitated crises in Nigeria and they became the agents of change. They brought the colonial administration to its limits.

The following three chapters feature the main analysis of three conferences, which are compared. Due to the wide range of negotiating topics, I put constitutional issues into three categories. First, the relationship between centre and regions in the colonial state was the crucial constitutional question. This includes regionalisation of the administration, the role of Lagos as capital, and the role of ethnic minorities within the three regions. Second, the Nigerianisation of the colonial state was the short-term goal of Nigerians, who intended to take over the civil service and the government as soon as possible. Third, a fixed date of independence was the key motivation for nationalists. Chapter 3 demonstrates that the conference in 1953 was a short-term measure. The British policy-makers capitalised their position as mediator in the negotiations to outmanoeuvre the AG and NCNC. The crucial result of the negotiations was that participants would review the constitution again not later than 1956. In the prelude of the next conference, the colonial administration and the Colonial Office became aware of their limited room for manoeuvre. The conference saw limited cooperation between the three major Nigerian parties and the British could only delay a date of independence (Chapter 4). The third conference was decision time and fixed a date for independence. Moreover, the rising demands of ethnic minorities were largely disregarded by British policy-makers and Nigerian parties (Chapter 5).

---

58 The metropole is the British centre of the British Empire, which is the United Kingdom.
59 Nigerianisation means to increase the Nigerian participation in the civil service. I understand it also as the takeover of crucial positions, such as ministers and members of parliaments, by Nigerians.
The conclusion will summarise the findings by highlighting the shortcoming of British management. On the one hand, it will sustain the claim of failed British planning and will conclude that the British policy-makers made situational reactions and improvised. Furthermore, it will explain the crucial role of the constitutional conferences, which became an institutionalised conflict solving mechanism. On the other hand, it will shed light on the important influence of the participants on formal independence and thereby assesses the imperial tool of constitutional conferences.
Chapter 1: Concepts, Methods and Sources

1.1. Theoretical Framework

This thesis deals with highly debated concepts, such as decolonisation, state and ethnicity. It is necessary for the analysis to clarify them because my understanding of them determines the approach. This chapter starts with the explanation of decolonisation based on the approach of historian Prasenjit Duara and the role of constitution-making. Furthermore, it conceptualises the relative cohesive British side and Nigerian groups, shaped by ethnic identity.

Decolonisation was not only the end of the colonial empires and the rise of new nation states but also a shift in social, cultural and political areas after the Second World War. The colonial societies started questioning colonial rule and emphasised their own identity in protests, literature and the media. Additionally, this historical process occurred on three levels, the local, the metropolitan and the international level. The first level describes the developments in a colony, such as national resistance. The focus of the metropolitan level is the United Kingdom and its political, economic and societal processes. Additionally, the international level includes international actors and actions, such as the Suez Crisis in 1956. Prasenjit Duara defines decolonisation as “the process whereby colonial powers transferred institutional and legal control over their territories and dependencies to indigenously based, formally sovereign, nation-states." Moreover, he interprets it as “a movement for moral justice and political solidarity against imperialism.” This definition is suitable for this investigation because the constitutional conferences negotiated the transfer of institutional and legal control, performed by the colonial state, in Nigeria. The political conflict over the autonomy of Nigeria is the core of this transfer process, which caused spill-over effects in the Nigerian society. Furthermore, the second part of Duara’s definition hints at the fact that decolonisation cannot be limited to a political transfer. It was also a change of the predominant perception of the equality of people. The benefit of Duara’s interpretation is that it highlights the importance of control of a state, which was the cause of conflict. However, the downside of this definition is that Duara uses the concept of the nation-state.

---

60 The First World War is an alternative starting point for decolonisation. However, the colonial expansion after it shows that the Second World War was the decisive point. Shipway, Decolonisation and its Impact, 61-62.
61 Gifford and Louis eds., Decolonization and African Independence, xiii.
62 The term nation-state is highly controversial, in particular in this context, because nationhood often did not exist in colonies, which were designed on the drawing board. It is not used because this chapter will show that no nationhood existed in Nigeria.
64 Ibid., 12.
This chapter will later show that the concept of the nation is controversial in the case of Nigeria. Nevertheless, this thesis utilises only the first part of the definition because the second part is not within the scope of the thesis.65 It is required to be more specific in describing what was transferred from whom to whom. This means that a look at the role of constitutions in this transfer is necessary.

The historian Dietmar Rothermund shows that constitution-making or more precisely constitutional reforms are an important element of decolonisation.66 “They [constitutions] were framed with a view to facilitating the transfer of power”.67 Moreover, “in functional terms a constitution is an agenda which regulates the transactions which are considered to be relevant in the political life of a nation [or society].”68 In this sense, constitution-making is not only about politics, but also about the society. Societies see constitutions as a political statement regarding the role of the state. Moreover, constitutions demonstrate the relationship between state and society. This is a complex issue of interaction. Fundamental rights, protecting the people from the state, show the relationship between state and society. In contrast to the unwritten British constitution, the Colonial Office introduced written constitutions in the colonies because they had the advantage to be more reliable. “The British produced tailormade [sic!] constitutions” with doubtful success.69 Reliability was vital for two reasons. First, statehood was transforming. Second, there was competition over the state. This made clear constitutional guidelines obligatory because a basic consensus reduces the risk of conflict escalation.

The colonial state was essential for the conflict because it was the condition to control Nigeria. A state is a political organisation that has the monopoly of legitimately using force within a definite territory.70 A crucial part is the administration, which had resources to control state and society in relation to Nigeria. The late colonial state is particularly interesting because the shortcomings of early post-colonial statehood resulted from

---


66 This paper treats “decolonisation”, “transfer of power”, “transfer of government” and “transfer of control” as synonyms. Nevertheless, the author is aware that particularly “transfer of power” has a tendency to imply success because the British policy-makers used it.


68 Ibid., 10.

69 Ibid., 11.

70 The definition of state is highly debated. See: Jens Bartelso, The Critique of the State (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 2.
colonialism. Its specific characteristics set the rules for the competition over the transfer. The historians John Darwin and Martin Shipway characterised this state. Shipway defines it as follows:

“What therefore chiefly characterized the late colonial state was an unperceived degree of uncertainty, where, the securities of colonial rule - administrative and military control, metropolitan confidence in imperial continuity, but also inaction, stagnation, repression - were superseded by flux, unpredictable change and fresh opportunities to seize the initiative.”

In hindsight, this state became a self-destruct state because reforms aimed to eliminate the defining characteristic element, colonialism. In Nigeria the British monopoly was dissolved and Nigerianisation was the policy to integrate Nigerians into the civil service, the legislation and government. The constitutional conferences were possible because the British control over the state was weakening and thereby constitutions became negotiable. In this sense, the late colonial state was a key condition for the transfer of government.

Who were the competitors for the constitutions of late colonial state? A simple division of British and Nigerian participants of the conferences is misleading. On the one hand, there was a relative homogenous group of British representatives. A consistent representation at the conferences was the result of a well-organised administration, which carefully prepared the negotiations. The officials were experienced politicians from the colonial administration and the Colonial Office. The hierarchical structure of the colonial administration allowed a cohesive negotiation position. In this context, the term “official mind” is relevant.

“Official mind” is defined as the sum of the ideas, perceptions and intentions of those policy-makers who had a bearing on imperial politics. The term “policy-maker” designates politicians and civil servants who were responsible for or had a bearing on the development and execution of imperial policy.

Frank Heinlein shows that colonial policy was more than a simple cost-benefit evaluation because also feelings and perceptions shaped decision-making. This notion makes the concept of an official mind valuable because it offers a handy concept to analyse the British side. It is important to stress that the “official mind” is not self-contained because it is open to

---

71 The research of Crawford Young gives a good overview on this issue. An example is: Crawford Young, *The African Colonial State in Comparative Perspective* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994).
72 Shipway uses the term “the late imperial state” but the subject is the same.
74 Darwin, “What Was the Late Colonial State?,” 79-80.
75 Ibid., 80-81.
76 Ibid., 81.
78 Ibid., 5
change and discordance. The latter is of particular importance because the difference between Colonial Office in London and the colonial administration cannot be neglected. At the negotiations the hierarchical structure within the British administration was the key because it formed a unified position against Nigerians.

In contrast, a heterogeneous group of Nigerian elites represented the colonial territory Nigeria, but not the nation Nigeria. Benedikt Anderson notes that a nation “is an imagined political community – and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign”. 79 In the 1950s, there was no Nigerian nationhood because such a united community did not exist. Anderson characterises this community as “a deep, horizontal comradeship”, based on fraternity and the will to die for it. 80 Although a sense of nation existed, Nigeria was still in the process of becoming a nation. Nationalism did not nullify existing loyalties and identities. Regional, ethnical, religious and colonial solidarities, even imperial loyalty, divided Nigerian participants. 81 Fear of each other rather than trust between each other characterise the relationship between Nigerian parties. 82 Their party affiliation shaped the mindset of each Nigerian representative. In this sense, there was no common “colonial mind” of Nigerians, which could be compared to the “official mind”. This cleavage was primarily an issue of identity.

As shown in the introduction, the British policies promoted ethnic identities and a tri-party system. “Ethnicity is inherently political, hence conflictual.” 83 It has to be understandable, but there is a lack of clarity with regards to ethnicity. 84 In contrast to race, it is not based on physical characteristics only and is closely related to culture. Okwdiba Nnoli defines it in the Nigerian context.

“It is a social phenomenon associated with interactions among members of different ethnic groups. Ethnic groups are social formations distinguished by the communal character of their boundaries. The relevant communal factors may be language, culture, or both, in Africa, language has clearly been the most crucial variable.” 85

Ethnicity is dangerous, when it is combined with Ethnocentrism, the exclusiveness of one group. An exclusive identity leads to fears to be at the bottom in the hierarchy of ethnic

80 Ibid., 7.
81 Jansen and Osterhammel, Dekolonisation. Das Ende der Imperien, 38.
82 Falola, History of Nigeria, 93.
groups. Nnoli’s approach is used because it is tailored to Nigeria for two reasons. On the one hand, he shows that in the North religion was a more important factor than in the South because of the Islamic concept of the Ummah, which united all Muslims. On the other hand, he demonstrates how ethnicity worked in politics. The three main parties the AG (Yoruba), NCNC (Igbo) and the NPC (Hausa) used similar strategies to win elections, in his opinion. First, they mobilise the people in their homeland and try to win the support of ethnic minorities in the region. Second, they control the government and eliminate opposition by winning regional elections. Third, they encourage resistance of ethnic minorities against the biggest group in other regions to win federal elections. Fourth, they use the federal government to strengthen their position. This strategy polarized the country and weakened the unity. It has to be taken into account that ethnicity was a product of colonialism and not immutable. The division along ethnic lines was an opportunity for British policy-makers to act as mediator or agitator between ethnic groups.

Although there are differences between British policy-makers and the Nigerian politicians, it should not be forgotten that there were also similarities. Most of them were member of political and social elites. They had studied at British and American universities. They were skilled politicians, hardened by years of political conflict between each other. The masses were excluded, although they decided the crucial elections in Nigeria. The Second World had changed their perception of the imperial future. Although both sides experienced this late imperial shift, as Shipway notes, differently,

it might be broadly characterised as the shift from a view of colonial rule as “normal” and a stable fixture in the foreseeable future, to one predicated on rapid, possible violent or radical political change, even if that change was not always immediately conceived in terms of national independence. Shipway’s concept makes both sides to agents of change. They both agreed that political change was necessary, for instance the old Native Authority system had to be reformed because the new education elite had no place in the established political system. Furthermore, the constitution had to be adjusted to the rising fears that one Nigerian group could dominate the rest, for example traditional elite feared the takeover of the educated elite. This accordance between both sides led to the participation in the constitutional conferences.

86 Ibid., 6-8.
87 Ibid., 157.
88 Ibid., 159-60.
89 Ibid., 167.
90 Shipway, Decolonisation and its Impact, 13.
This uncertainty makes it necessary to look at the process and situational changes in detail because of the vicissitude.

Indirectly, the negotiations at the constitutional conferences were also about the relationship between the metropolis and the colony. The British Empire framed these relations and interactions.\(^\text{92}\) The hierarchical structure of this relationship is embodied in the term empire. With increasing Nigerianisation of the colonial state, the relationship was formally becoming a partnership of equals. The British-Nigerian relationship can be understood through the conflict over the future of the colonial state.

This chapter has demonstrated that the British policy-makers and Nigerians had to deal with a conflict over the uncertain future of the colonial state. The overlapping element of the introduced concepts is changeability. This makes it difficult to deal with the complex historical situation and primary sources are essential to handle it.

\(^{92}\) Andreas Eckert, *Kolonialismus* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 2006), 8-9.
1.2. Methodology and Sources

This chapter will introduce the methodological approach based on primary and secondary sources. The comparison between the constitutional conferences is the central methods to gain insight into the transfer of control. The historical method is applied to critically evaluate the sources, since the sources limit the possible approach. This chapter will demonstrate how this thesis analyses the constitutional conferences by highlighting differences and similarities between these conferences.

The large amount of existing British sources on Nigerian decolonisation is a double-edged sword. The British colonial administration was a productive state bureaucracy. Not only the Colonial Office in London and the colonial administration in Nigeria, but also the Foreign Office and other departments of the British government produced thousands of reports, letters and files. As a result, the available sources are numerous.\(^93\) Moreover, the productivity of the British bureaucracy increased in the 1950s, in particular when Eden, who wanted more policy reports, became prime minister. However, there are at least two limitations. First, there is uncertainty about the completeness of British governmental sources. The example of over 1 million unlawfully hoarded files of the Foreign Office indicates that crucial files could still be missing.\(^94\) Second, the very limited amount of Nigerian sources does not even come close to the amount of available British sources. Nigerian sources contain publications, such as speeches, books and documents of political groups or individuals. The quality of the sources is another point, which will be discussed later on in this chapter.

The available secondary sources are limited, as I outlined in introduction. Although Nigeria has a place in most publications on the end of the British Empire, in depth case studies are a rarity.\(^95\) As Lynn mentioned in his article on the “Eastern Crisis,” Nigerian decolonisation is a neglected issue of historiography.\(^96\) Although Coleman, Sklar and Nicholson have made valuable contributions to understanding Nigerian history, the constitutional conferences have never been studied in depth. Besides Lynn, there are only a few other specialists currently researching the decolonisation of Nigeria. An example is

---

\(^93\) Lynn, Nigeria: Part I Managing Political Reform, xxxv; xxxvii.


Lawal, who published several works on Nigeria. Moreover, to understand Nigerian History in general, the works of Toyin Falola are recommended because they are very helpful. His book *Nigeria, Nationalism, and Writing History* show that nationalism has a central place in Nigerian historiography.

To deal with the available source material it is necessary to answer two questions. First, why are sources selected? Second, how are they used? This chapter will answer these questions by introducing the selected sources and methodology.

For this study, not all available sources were indeed accessible. I consulted sources in Germany, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. In the first two countries, the university libraries of Groningen and Münster were visited to research their collections and use the inter-library loan function. The library in the Institute of Ethnology in Münster has a solid collection, which was used as well. Furthermore, the School of Oriental and African Studies library, the British Library and the National Archives in Kew provided most of the used sources. Sources in Nigeria were not accessible because a visit within the time of my master degree was impossible. Nevertheless, the consulted sources are substantial to deal with the task ahead because the analytical perspective is adjusted to reflect the source material. This was the reason that the political dimension of the transfer of power was selected and a British perspective. As outlined earlier, the social implications of the constitutional reforms are important. However, with the used sources the change in Nigerian society can be treated only briefly. Moreover, the reader needs to be aware that this thesis does not focus on the perspective of the colonized, but the British views.

Based on the analysed perspective this study mainly uses British governmental sources. In this context, the volumes the British Documents on the End of Empire on Nigeria and the three conservative governments between 1951 and 1964 are essential. Historians

---


carefully selected the content, which makes it possible to get a good overview of the existing sources. On the one hand, the content of “Migrated Archives” can be compared to determine the historiographical value. On the other hand, the introductions of these editions outline the decision-making process, which is vital to understand the ideas and decisions of the Colonial Office and the role of the Colonial. Additionally, I consulted sources from the National Archive and the digital archives of the British parliament.101 These archival records include the proceedings and reports of the conferences.102 The British government produced reports for the public and the parliament to demonstrate and support its position. The proceedings were “printed as confidential documents primarily for the use and convenience of Ministers and Officers of H.M.G.”103 The Colonial Office kept the number of copies low. Both document types have a rather formal language and give limited insight in the negotiations, although the positions are clear in general. However, the talks outside the official negotiations at meals or meeting between delegations are missing. Here the “Migrated Archives” are revealing because at the British delegations regularly reported to the Civil Service in Nigeria the developments in the negotiations.

The “Migrated Archives” differ in several ways from previously mentioned sources. They are the surviving files of a systematic purge of documents in African and Asian colonies at the eve of independence. They represent only a small part of the different documents of the colonial administration in Nigeria. Before British administration left Nigeria, all documents were either destroyed or kept in British hands. Only a few were handed over to the Nigerian independence administration.104 A civil servant in Northern Nigeria reported to London that documents were burnt in small quantities on a daily basis for a month in the eve of


102 Examples are the proceedings for the Nigeria Constitutional Conference May–June 1957 in three volumes. CO 554/2600; CO 554/2601; CO 554/2602.
103 Letter from M G Smith to A F F P Newns, 14 May 1959, FCO 141/13491.
inddependence. Archivist and historian Mandy Banton found a list “of 747 classified files, of which about 480 were to be destroyed and 79 sent to the Colonial Office. Only five were to be passed to the successor government.” This list is an indicator that an unknown number of British files are probably lost. Moreover, it took over half a century until British government released these documents. This delay raises the question whether independence brought Nigeria also the autonomy over its history? The British Empire ended, but the British government still holds most of its documents.

The British dealing with theses sources illustrates their value. The colonial administration in Nigeria decided that they could not be given to Nigeria and instead had to be archived in the United Kingdom. The reason lies in the content of these files. The content was classified as “personal and secret.” Only about 20 persons had access to these documents, which were kept in red leather despatch box. In contrast to the other sources, the Civil Service in Nigeria produced them. As a result, they demonstrate the managing of a colony. The majority of files are on constitutional and administrative issues, including intelligence reports and monitoring of political activities. In addition, the process of decision-making can be reconstructed from these files. They are chronologically organised, which allows tracing a decision from the draft stage to the final decision. The content includes official telegrams, letters and documents. Furthermore, there are handwritten comments and notes. Therefore, the analysis of the Migrated Archives is an important step in reconstructing decision-making under British colonial rule because it adds a new perspective of the colonial administration. However, it has to be noted that this collection has not the potential to rewrite the history of British colonialism.

Historians have to be aware of the perspective in sources. The biggest weakness of the selected sources is that they are one-sided because they stand for the British governmental perspective. Most of the selected archival documents are an elite interpretation of events. The producer, such as civil servants of the state bureaucracy and politicians, shaped these primary sources. Furthermore, the decision-making process has to be taken into account. This one-sidedness becomes clear in the picture of Nigeria, which is shaped by perceived stereotypes, such as ethnicity, or personal enemies, for instance the colonial administration made a

105 Ibid., 328.
106 Ibid., 328.
108 Office Instructions: Secret G Files, undated, FCO 141/13385.
bogeyman out of Azikiwe. This circumstance makes it necessary to compensate for this bias. Therefore, British newspaper articles and publications of Nigerians are included. These last sources have their own shortcomings. They are part of a political agenda, which has to be taken into account. These sources include books of parties’ leaders, such as Azikiwe. Nevertheless, they help to balance the analysis by showing opinions outside the “official mind.”

Secondary sources are also essential to overcome the outlined limitations of the primary sources. The consulted literature can be divided into two parts. First, general works on the British Empire and decolonisation. They help to contextualise the case study. Second, specific publications on the British and Nigeria allow situating this thesis within relevant historiographical debates, which I have done in the introduction.

Based on primary and secondary sources, the methodology is to reconstruct the constitutional process in the perspective of the Civil Service. The constitutional conferences are the cornerstone. The selected methodological approach is based on Jürgen Osterhammel’s methods. The German researcher of global history notes that in order to deal with the multi-layered process of decolonisation only specific questions are useful. A broad question after the reasons of the British retreat from Nigeria lacks clarity and cannot guide a research. His notes on analytical considerations are quite valuable. To understand a colony, researchers have to ask questions on four points, he argues. First, the characteristic of the late imperial time have to be identified. The social and political structure of the colony has to be clear, in particular the relationship between colonised and coloniser. Second, external circumstances, such as the Second World War and changes in the metropole, have to be taken into consideration. Third, the process and its characteristics, such as its pace, the degree of violence and constitutional reforms, have to be clear. Fourth, the results have to be determined. The postcolonial economic, social and cultural relationships and the stability of the political system are essential to understand decolonisation.

The methodology of this thesis consists of two steps because of Osterhammel’s considerations. The first step is to characterize Nigeria and the British Empire in the 1950s in the second chapter. Although a limited number of colonies became independent, the 1950s lay

---

111 The book Awo – Autobiography of Chief Obafemi Awolowo could not be obtained due to different reasons.
113 Jansen; Osterhammel, Dekolonisation. Das Ende der Imperien, 25.
114 Ibid., 22-24.
the foundations to the 1960s, when most colonies became independent. It looks at broader developments, such as a new British government and the rise of the United Nations, at the international, metropolitan and local level, situating the transfer of government in Nigeria within these developments. I use secondary sources and introduce primary sources from the source editions to show that the British Empire had to adjust to a more hostile international system.

The second step is a comparison between the conferences. Three conferences in 1953, 1956 and 1958 are selected because they shaped the decisive period of Nigerian decolonisation. They are investigated in chronological order. A conference is divided into four stages because this allows showing the different influences at each stage. The prelude stage deals with the causes of the conferences. The preparatory stage looks at the crucial British preparations, which pre-determined the outcome, for instance the exclusion of Nigerian groups from the conference. The negotiation stage was the central element of the conferences. The results are the final stage and the impact on the process towards independence is assessed. Moreover the thesis focuses on core themes of the conferences. There was a wide range of political issues on the negotiation table. The reform of the Native Authority System, revenue allocation, ethnic minorities, the process of implementing reforms, the position of the capital Lagos in relation to the regions and many other issues were debated, but cannot be all analysed within this thesis. Three categories are selected. First, a fixed date of independence is used because it was the common frame for all participants. Second, the Nigerianisation of the civil service and the government was vital for both sides. Nigerian parties wanted to extend their power basis and the British administrators wanted to prevent political influence on the civil service, for instance the use of police against the opposition. Third, the relationship between centre and regions is the last categories because this has been a key issue of administration since the amalgamation.

In the face of a huge amount of primary sources, this thesis applies a systematic investigation of the British perspective on Nigerian decolonisation. This methodological approach takes into account that mainly British primary sources were available. The following chapter will deal with the British Empire, which was in a phase of reorientation in the 1950s.
Chapter 2: The Realignment of the British Empire in the 1950s

2.1. Confronting International Challenges

The 1950s were a decisive decade of British decolonisation. At first sight, these years did not witness much political change, compared to the 1940s, when India became independence, or the 1960s, when most British colonies became formally independent.\textsuperscript{115} British decolonisation had its own characteristics in this phase, although historical phases are always overlapping. The years from 1951 to 1959 were a time of “revival and retreat”, as Lynn points out.\textsuperscript{116} When Winston Churchill (1874-1965) took over the government again in 1951, the new conservative government took countermeasures against the colonial policy of the previous Labour government, which had promoted the political process towards self-governance for the British colonies. The three conservative governments under Churchill, Anthony Eden (1897-1977) and Harold Macmillan (1894-1986) attempted to work out a future for the British Empire in a changing world. Two superpowers rose. Moreover, the British metropole had to deal with unfavourable local circumstances at home and in colonies. Ian Macleod (1913-1970) became Secretary of the State for Colonies in 1959. His appointment symbolises that the Macmillan government had decided for colonial self-government. Britain would not revive the Empire but would retreat gradually and transfer the Empire into a Commonwealth of Nations. Nevertheless, this decision has not been predetermined in 1951. The conservative governments in the 1950s strived to realign the British Empire due to the fact that times were changing not only in Britain but also in colonies and in international relations.

This chapter will unravel the complexity of British colonial policy in this decade. In three parts, it will outline the broader picture of British colonial actions. The constitutional conferences for Nigeria did not proceed in a political vacuum. They were interconnected with developments inside and outside the British Empire. First, this chapter deals with British repositioning on an international level (2.1.). Second, it will introduce the internal circumstances of the metropole (2.2.). Third, it will show the broader context of British West

\textsuperscript{116} Ibid., 11.
Africa and the Nigerian colony (2.3.). This tripartite chapter will show that the British Empire had to reorganise because of internal and external pressure to overcome colonialism.\textsuperscript{117}

On an international level the United Kingdom was a power factor in the Cold War and the governments took the threat of Communism very seriously. Britain had to deal first and foremost with strategic and military implications of the global confrontation between the United States of America and the Soviet Union. This circumstance made it necessary to use the limited resources to produce substantial defence capacity against the communist threat. In June 1952 the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs Eden outlined potential reallocations in British overseas obligations. He highlighted that Britain could not maintain its colonial empire without the support of the United States and that Europe was essential to defend Britain.\textsuperscript{118} The British governments had to deal with the dilemma that there were insufficient economic capacities to defend Britain and continue the colonial empire, which strategic and economic value was double-edged. On the one hand, colonies provided raw materials, including crucial parts for the nuclear program, and colonies were of geopolitical importance, for instance the Suez Canal in Egypt. On the other side, their defence was expensive and colonies had less value in the face of nuclear war. The Cold War made it necessary to reconsider the strategic position.\textsuperscript{119}

In West Africa, the question arose how to deal with attempts of the superpower to influence the independence movements in these countries. The threat of Soviet activities influenced the British policy and the intelligence service watched soviet activities, which could influence the transfer of power in Ghana and Nigeria.\textsuperscript{120} Moreover, the British government cooperated with other colonial powers, such as France and Belgium, to contain Soviet influence. In Nigeria, this policy was successful and the communist Labour Party under Nduka Eze never gained mass support, in particular because of a coalition of other Nigerian political parties and the British administration against Eze.\textsuperscript{121} British officials used the threat of communism primarily to gain American support.\textsuperscript{122} Beyond the fear of communism, the Soviet Union did not influence Nigeria.


\textsuperscript{118} Cabinet Memorandum by Mr Eden, 18 June 1952, CAB 129/53.

\textsuperscript{119} Memorandum by Officials of the Treasury, Foreign Office and Minister of Defence for Cabinet Policy Review Committee, 1 June 1956, CAB 134/1315.

\textsuperscript{120} Letter from R L D Jasper to J H A Watson, 30 January 1956, FO 371/118676, no 1.


\textsuperscript{122} Ibid., 15.
The British had mixed feelings about the American activities. There was resentment between Americans and British in Nigeria. American USIS officers made anti-British comments.\textsuperscript{123} Furthermore, the British saw a clear lack of knowledge on the American side, which often treated all of Africa as backward.\textsuperscript{124} This can be partly explained by the information that America only became interested in Africa in the late 1950s.\textsuperscript{125} The small local British population had anti-American tendencies because of this American attitude.\textsuperscript{126} However, the local British administration preferred that America shoulder responsibility for Nigeria, in particular after self-governance.\textsuperscript{127} They welcomed the rising technical and educational aid from the United States to Nigeria, such as scholarships to study abroad.\textsuperscript{128} In addition, there was an exchange of information on an intelligence level. Although America disagreed with the pace of the political development and the handling of minorities, the United States remained passive. This course of actions can be attributed to the special relationship between the United Kingdom and the United States.\textsuperscript{129} Although the United States did not get actively involved in the constitutional process in Nigeria, they were a crucial partner for the United Kingdom at the United Nations. There was a close cooperation on colonial matters.

The United Nations became another international force, which challenged British colonial rule. Over the course of the 1950s, the international organisation successfully expanded their influence on colonial territories, for instance through extended information responsibilities on colonial territories. Formally the United Nations had only influence into trusteeship territories, such as the British Cameroons.\textsuperscript{130} Although Britain could contain the ambitions in the beginning, the Suez Crisis in 1956 made Britain the “public enemy number one” of the general assembly at the United Nations.\textsuperscript{131} The General Assembly condemned the Anglo-French attempt to capture the nationalised Suez Canal by military force and called for a ceasefire and an embargo. Moreover, both superpowers clearly position against the invasion.

\textsuperscript{123} Letter from L W C Pearce-Gervis to C F MacLaren, 30 June 1959, FCO 141/13715.
\textsuperscript{124} Letter from the British Embassy in Washington to S Lloyd, 10 July 1958, FCO 141/13702.
\textsuperscript{125} Lawal, \textit{The United States and the Decolonisation Process in Nigeria (1945-60)}, 46.
\textsuperscript{126} Letter from C F MacLaren to K J Maonochie, 26 June 1959, FCO 141/13715.
\textsuperscript{127} Ibid.; Lawal, \textit{The United States and the Decolonisation Process in Nigeria (1945-60)}, 64.
\textsuperscript{129} Lawal, \textit{The United States and the Decolonisation Process in Nigeria (1945-60)}, 74.
\textsuperscript{131} Ibid., 192
The United States rallied the general Assembly of the United Nations against it and the Soviet Union threatened nuclear countermeasures. It is worth highlighting that in Nigeria the Suez Crisis had little influence and the Islamic North distanced itself from Nasser. Nevertheless, the crisis impacted the United Kingdom in three ways. First, the government realised the strength to independently act without the support if the United States. Second, Prime Minister Eden resignation from office made a readjustment of colonial relationships possible. Third, they lost their moral credibility and became a renegade at the United Nations. Although it would take until 1960, when resolution 1514 called for colonial independence, the rhetoric at the United Nations undermined British colonial rule.

The British government also watched the attempts to form new anti-colonial transnational networks. The Afro-Asian Conference in Bandung was seen as a possible move against colonialism in 1956 and the invited colonial governments were asked to decline their participation unsuccessfully. In the end, the outcome of the first conference was acceptable for Britain because also communism was condemned. Another case is the All African Peoples’ Conference in 1958. This idea of Ghanaian President Kwame Nkrumah was seen critical because of the Soviet participation. Overall, British officials saw Third World movements as a threat to pending reforms and a pro-British foreign policy in colonies.

In the face of these challenges, the Commonwealth of Nations became an important element of colonial policy. A report in 1956 outlined its future in the next 10 or 15 years. It was seen as the next evolutionary stage of the British Empire. It was the sequel of economic, cultural and political domination. The British expected that Nigeria and other colonies would voluntarily become member states. The futures authority and influence of the United Kingdom would “continue ... to derive from its headship of, or association with, the world-wide group of States [sic!] that compose the Commonwealth.” The Commonwealth was the British policy instrument to secure further influence on colonies after independence.

132 Despatch no 19 from Sir B Sharwood-Smith to Mr Lennox-Boyd, 14 March 1957, Co 554/1841.
139 Ibid.
140 CRO Paper on the Probable Development of the Commonwealth over the Next Ten or Fifteen years, June 1956, CO 1032/51, no 112.
Chapter 2.1. has shown that the British Empire had to reposition it in the 1950s to adjust to new international challenges to colonialism. Although international actors had no significant impact on Nigeria, they were turning against colonialism. Colonialism became not only a political burden but also a moral stigma. The British considerations over the Commonwealth of Nations highlights that colonial rule was no longer perceived as static and long-lasting.
2.2. An Imperial Metropole

Three Prime Ministers ruled the British Empire from 1951 to 1959. Churchill called for a revival of the British Empire, after the previous Labour government under Clement Attlee (1883-1967) promoted independence of colonies. Eden attempted to enforce a revival in Egypt and failed. Macmillan decided to retreat in the hope of transferring the empire into a Commonwealth of Nations. However, it was common ground for the three conservative governments that colonialism would end. The first statement of Oliver Lyttelton, when he became the Secretary of State for the Colonies in 1951, made clear that self-government would come, accompanied by social and economic development.\textsuperscript{141} Therefore, the decisive questions of British colonial policy were on the procedure of the transfer to indigenous governments and its pace? This part deals with metropolitan politics the broader politics of the policy makers in Britain. It will show that a few general guiding principles shaped British decision-making.

The British society was still in support of the empire in the 1950s. Although the intervention in Egypt in 1956 was controversially discussed, public opinion backed the conservative governments.\textsuperscript{142} The public awareness of inhuman elements of colonialism, for instance the violent counterinsurgency against the Mau Mau in Kenya, grew towards the end of the decade, but this development peaked in the 1960s.\textsuperscript{143} This is also the case for anti-colonial literature. The Nigerian author Chinua Achebe published in 1958 the novel \textit{Things Fall Apart}. It tells the story of Okonkwo, who struggles with the changing society, after the British arrived in Nigeria in the 1890s. Written in English, this book brought the African perspective to a broader public. However, it took years until the broader public was aware of it. Culturally Britain remained an imperial country throughout the 1950s.\textsuperscript{144} Nevertheless, tendencies grew, as the example of the Church of England shows, which started a process of decentralisation.\textsuperscript{145} The Nigerian general secretary of West African Students' Union Lapido

\textsuperscript{141} Minute by Mr Lyttelton to Mr Churchill, 7 November 1951, CO 538/6696, no 12.
\textsuperscript{142} Darwin, \textit{Unfinished Empire}, 342.
\textsuperscript{143} Darwin, \textit{Britain and Decolonisation}, 51.
Solanke was active in London, but he was one of few voices to speak out against British colonialism.\textsuperscript{146} The British society would turn the tide against colonial rule in 1960s.

British business saw promising new sale markets abroad in the 1950s, but witnessed a disintegration of the economic structure of the empire. After the Second World War, Africa and the colonies in general were seen as opportunities in the eyes of businessmen and companies. British mining companies started to plan projects in the 1950s across Africa.\textsuperscript{147} However, it became clear that the empire could not provide business opportunities like in the pre-war period, when little regulations in the colonies permitted new business projects. A disintegration of the economic ties between metropole and colonies started, for instance in Nigeria.\textsuperscript{148} Extended regional autonomy resulted in a gradual expansion of Nigerian influence on business, markets and production. When, the East and West gained regional self-governance in August 1957, new economic policies were introduced, which hindered foreign investments and activities.\textsuperscript{149} Overall, British business became more concerned about the economic future of the Empire.

A look at the structure of the decision-making process in Britain allows identifying crucial policy-makers, who determined the Nigeria policy. As the British administration was huge, this paragraph focuses on the parts, which were relevant to Nigeria. The Colonial Office was in charge of the Nigerian policy. Other offices were only consulted, when necessary, for instance the Defence Department and the Commonwealth Relation Office became more important in the last years of British rule. A key position in the decision-making process was the assistance under-secretary responsible for the region. Until 1954 G. L. Gorell Barnes held this position. He was replaced by C. G. Eastwood. Serving under him was the assistant secretary T. B. Williamson, who was the head of the West Africa department. These civil servants coordinated the Nigeria policy in Britain and shaped it by selecting the relevant information to other parts of the administration. The permanent under-secretary, who was above both positions, sometimes intervened on important issues. The former Nigerian Governor Sir Macpherson took over this office from Sir Thomas Lloyd in 1956.\textsuperscript{150} For the constitutional conferences, the Secretary of State of the Colonial Office became essential because he represented the United Kingdom at each conference and informed the cabinet.

\textsuperscript{146} Andreas Eckert, „Afrikanische Intellektuelle und Aktivisten in Europa und die Dekolonisation Afrikas,“ \textit{Geschichte und Gesellschaft} 37, no. 2 (2011): 262.
\textsuperscript{149} Ibid., 106.
two secretaries Oliver Lyttelton (1893-1872) and Alan Lennox-Boyd (1904-1983) were central. The former accepted regional self-governance in 1953. The latter negotiated the date of independence in 1958.\(^{151}\) The cabinet was only involved central decisions, such as the date of independence.\(^{152}\) The involvement of the parliament can be characterised as irregularly questions from members of parliament. In Nigeria, the main work was done in the office of the governor, who became the Governors-General in 1954. He had three regional Governors under him. Neither parliament nor cabinet played a leading role in the 1950s, with the exception of the issue of independence in 1959/1960. As a result, most work was left to the specialised staff in the colonial office and the administration in Nigeria.

New government did not mean a complete policy change because there was personal continuity. The crucial turning point was the retirement of Eden as prime minister in 1957 because it caused an open-minded reassessment of colonial future happened. Churchill and Eden were imperialists. Churchill saw Britain as the third global power when he became prime minister for the second time in 1951.\(^{153}\) The decades of service for the British Empire shaped his mindset and he believed in its glorious future.\(^{154}\) Eden came to similar conclusions. Their views were based on the opinion that Britain could control the long-term process that would end colonialism. There were only a few doubts about the feasibility of this policy in Her Majesty's Home Civil Service, for instance civil servants of the treasury raised question about finances.\(^{155}\) The British policy until 1957 was shaped by the perception that there was much time left and the Empire could be expanded before it would end in the distant future. While both Prime Ministers did not get involved in Nigerian politics, this was not the case for Macmillan.\(^{156}\) He visited Nigeria several times.

As a veteran of the previous governments, he was not the agent of change, as his wind of change speech might suggest. Two aspects changed under him because he realised that self-government could not be postponed for decades. First, he relied more on policy studies.\(^{157}\) One of his first actions was to order a review of colonial relationships based on a cost–benefit analysis by the Colonial Policy Committee.\(^{158}\) A few months later a report

---

\(^{151}\) Ibid., xl.  
\(^{152}\) Ibid., xlii.  
\(^{154}\) Ibid., xlvii.  
\(^{155}\) Ibid., lvi.  
\(^{156}\) Ibid., lii.  

“Future Constitutional Development in the Colonies”: Minute by Mr Macmillan to Lord Salisbury, 28 January 1957, CAB 134/1555.
outlined the future constitutional development in the colonies. For Nigeria, this report outlined that the loyal Nigerians wished the independence but it was probably too early.\textsuperscript{159} This highlights the fundamental dilemma of the Nigeria policy. The Nigerian civil service was not ready for independence in the eyes of British decision-makers, but they needed the cooperation of Nigerian politicians, which demanded independence soon. Second, Macmillan managed to pick up the African wishes in the “Wind of Change” speech in front of the South African parliament. It was a turning point. Well received in African countries, it made clear that the British Empire would end and that Britain was committed to self-governance.\textsuperscript{160} The speech symbolises what had become the colonial policy, the British government looked for trustworthy Africans to take over governance in the colonies.\textsuperscript{161} As this thesis will argue it was not the starting point of British decolonisation, but the British approval of a process that goes back to West Africa in the early 1950s.

Overall, British governments had to develop a concept for the future of the Empire. The British government had a free hand for the Nigeria policy within the United Kingdom because the public supported them Empire. All the conservative governments were guided by the principles of an appropriate pace of transfer of power to secure British interests post-independence. The transfer of government to loyal Africans was essential. Higher official became only involved in Nigerian affairs on important issues, such as the constitutional conferences. An experienced colonial service formed the basis for the colonial policy.

\textsuperscript{159} "Future Constitutional Development in the Colonies": Report of the Officials' Committee, May 1957, CAB 131/1331.
\textsuperscript{160} Address by Mr Macmillan to both Houses of the Parliament of the Union of South Africa, 3 February 1960, DO 35/10570, no 53.
\textsuperscript{161} Darwin, \textit{Unfinished Empire}, 371.
2.3. Nigeria – Unity in Variety

West Africa was a *sui generis* in British colonial policy. British decision-makers highlighted this region as an exceptional case, in particular the Gold Coast. This was propaganda because the Gold Coast should not become a role model for other colonies. The guiding principle was that each colony would be treated based on the local circumstances.\(^{162}\) Similarly, there was no cohesive anti-colonial policy of local people across the empire. “Nationalism was a political label of bewildering vagueness and ambiguity: nationalists of one time and place appeared to have little or nothing in common with those of another.”\(^{163}\) This quote of John Darwin sums up the diversity of local challenges. National movements could represent a cohesive challenge to colonialism or a mere culmination of vastly different ideas and aims, as it was the case in Nigeria. Moreover, British policy was to contain cooperation between colonial territories. In West Africa, the containment an accelerating process to self-governance in the Cold Coast was crucial.\(^{164}\)

This part will deal with the local circumstances in Nigeria, including the region West Africa. First, it will outline the British administration in Nigeria, its approach to keep the political initiative and their political priorities. Second, I introduce the British opinion on the three major political parties in Nigeria. Third, I evaluate the importance of the developments in the Gold Coast for Nigeria and introduce the situation in Nigeria.

The colonial administration in Nigeria played a crucial role in the constitutional change because they filtered the information that reached London.\(^{165}\) Compared to the Nigerian population of around 30 million\(^{166}\), the number of white colonial officers is a clear sign of indirect rule. In 1947, only 468 officers worked for the Colonial Administrative Service in Nigeria. This number rose to 521 ten years later.\(^{167}\) However, the approaching independence resulted in an understaffed service in the last years before 1960.\(^{168}\) The leaving staff represented a loss of human resources and the uncertain future lead to a dropping

---

\(^{162}\) Darwin, *Unfinished Empire*, 167.
\(^{163}\) Darwin, *Britain and Decolonisation*, 171.
\(^{164}\) "Africa in the next ten years": Report of Committee of officials, June 1959, FO 371/137972, no 24.
\(^{168}\) Ibid., 29-30.
Since the Second World War the morality had been already low.\textsuperscript{169} The asymmetrical relationship between the colonial administration and the local population highlights two central weaknesses. First, the British administration in Nigeria needed Nigerian cooperation to administer the huge country. Second, the Nigerianisation of the civil service reduced the strength of the administration in the short-term because experience and knowledge left with the British civil servants. Moreover, the size of the civil service needed to be expanded to create an efficient state bureaucracy for independence. The fate of colonial Nigeria rested in the hand of a few British civil servants in Nigeria and politicians in London.

The colonial administration was regionally structured. The Governor and the three Lieutenant-Governors in the regions were the heads of the colonial administration.\textsuperscript{171} Worth highlighting are the two Governors of the 1950s. On the one hand, Sir John Macpherson, who took over the office in 1948, stands for the policy of constitutional reforms.\textsuperscript{172} His decisive actions against radical nationalists made later talks with moderate nationalists possible. In 1953, he proscribed the “Zikist movement” and put the leaders in jail. This radical anti-colonial movement associated with Azikiwe, also called Zik, promoted a violent uprising against the British occupation. This British demonstration of power showed the Nigerian political that a dialogue would be a better option to end colonial rule. On the other hand, Sir J. Robertson managed the last years of the transfer of government. In his time in office, he warned about the risk of a hasty policy towards self-determination. Both Governors stand for “constitution-mongering” as major tool to contain nationalism.\textsuperscript{173}

Both governors followed a dual approach to prepare Nigeria for independence. First, political reforms in cooperation with Nigerians adjusted the political system. The structure of the federal government and regionalisation were the central issues of reforms. Second, social reforms and economic development should improve the living conditions for Nigerians. This was particularly important to integrate the growing educational elite into the colonial system.

The colonial policy had three aims in Nigeria. First, the Colonial Office wanted a united Nigeria. Unity was the key because the Colonial Office expected that it would stabilise the country after independence. The Colonial Office saw a fragmentation caused by


\textsuperscript{171} For a full list of British officials in Nigeria see: Lynn ed., \textit{Nigeria: Part I Managing Political Reform}, xvii.


secessions from Nigeria, as a vital threat to regional stability. Second, a friendly government hat to take over. This would give influence through Nigeria over the region, which was expected to be a powerhouse in West Africa.\textsuperscript{174} The third aim was to transform Nigeria in an adequate pace. An insufficient civil service, spreading corruption and economical imbalance between regions should be dealt with before Nigeria was ready for independence.\textsuperscript{175} The priority was on the first aim. These underlying aims guided not only the Colonial Office in London but also the British colonial administration in Nigeria.

The British colonial policy had a huge impact on the rise of Nigerian political system. Political groups of the urban-based educated elite gained more influence since the 1940s.\textsuperscript{176} As a result, the British had to arbitrate conflicts between the educated elite and traditional rulers, who mostly owe their positions to British indirect rule. Moreover, political parties competed for the electorate. Although Nigerian parties claimed to be national\textsuperscript{177}, they developed to regional groups because of the electoral law since the “Macpherson Constitution” in 1951. The constitutions favoured parties, which won regional elections. Parties started to rely more on the ethnic majorities in the region, which in most elections ensured most seats in the regional assemblies and thereby seats in the federal parliament. Competition between parties was strong and any cooperation was only temporal. In the press, often associated with a party, political propaganda fuelled the political confrontation.\textsuperscript{178} The year 1953 witness a new alliance between the Eastern National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons and the Western Action Group. A close look at the press demonstrates an abrupt change from open hostility to cooperation between both parties. In January to March following headlines could be found in the AG press: “N.C.N.C. the most dangerous energy”; “Dr. Zik’s [Azikiwe] devilish doctrine;” “Reincarnated Hitler (Zik).”\textsuperscript{179} In April, the language changed, after an alliance between both parties: “Zik express admiration” for Awolo’s speech; “future cooperation” between AG and NCNC.\textsuperscript{180} Simultaneously to this shift, Azikiwe’s political enemy, AG press attacked the Nigerian Independence Party: “Dangerous imperialists”; “traitor to the cause of Nigerian nationalism.”\textsuperscript{181} The press attacks were dangerous because they were “exacerbating the political and inter-tribal hatreds which bedevil

\textsuperscript{175} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{177} Letter from A E T Benson to T B Williamson, 20 July 1953, CO 554/262, no 292.
\textsuperscript{178} For an overview of media with their political affiliation see: Colonial Office, \textit{Colonial Reports Nigeria 1953}, 115.
\textsuperscript{179} Note from P S for H E, 10 April 1953, FCO 141/13368.
\textsuperscript{180} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{181} Ibid.
Nigerian politics.” The party newspapers propagated the party values as national values. The newspapers were their public organ, in particular in the South.

In this fluid and hostile conditions, three parties emerged as dominant actors. The strongest party was the Northern People's Congress. Founded in the early 1940s, it controlled the Northern House of Assembly. The Sardauna of Sokoto Ahmadu Bello (1910-1966) controlled this conservative party. The political strength came from three elements. First, it was a traditionalist party. Emirs of the North had worked together with the British for decades. The regional electoral law secured these conservatives to use the existing loyalties, based on the Muslim community and the ethnic groups of the Hausa and Fulani to win every election. Second, it controlled the largest part of the country with half of the population. Nothing could be accomplished with at least the tolerance of the North. Third, their aims were close to the British aims. Fearing an early independence would favour the higher developed South and would end the Northern influence, the NPC was open to British wishes to postpone independence. Moreover, their strong position resulted in a rejectionist stance on any political change, such as new regional states or a reformed electoral law. The threat of secession was the main tool against these changes. The NPC was a vehicle to secure the influence of the traditional elite of the North.

The most dangerous party for the British was the National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons because favoured open confrontation. The British watched the party since the 1940s because of its radical ideas. For the historian John Flint, the leader Nnamdi Azikiwe is the archetype of a West African nationalist. Educated in the United States, he was charismatic and ambitious. For his ambitions, he could rely on the mass party and his press, although he sometimes faced internal opposition. The British press contempted him for his radical opposition towards the colonial constitutions. Based in the East, but always attempting to expand to the West, the NCNC was dominated by the ethnic group of Igbo. In

---

182 Brief for the Secretary of State on Action Group and NCNC Press Campaign against the Governor and the Administration of Nigeria, 1953, FCO 141/13369.
189 “NIGERIA HEADING TOWARDS DANGER: Dr Azikiwe May Overcome Moderates” The Manchester Guardian. March 9, 1953.
1954, the NCNC won the majority in the House of Representatives. This victory led to a direct confrontation with the British administration because of allegations of corruption against several members, including Azikiwe. In a three year struggle Azikiwe lost his influence in the West, but could remain as leader in the east, although there were several British attempts to remove him from office and an official inquiry proved his corruption in 1956. Moreover, the NCNC aimed for a strong central government, the Nigerianisation as soon as possible and discredit the British “imperialists.”

The youngest party was the Action Group, founded in 1951 to counteract the NCNC influence in the Western Regions. Under Obafemi Awolowo, the AG dominated the Western region. For the British administration, he was someone they could work with. Although the AG was a mass party with own press just as the NCNC, it was less radical. Awolowo was in favour of federalism. His party proposed more regional states in Nigeria and a national participation in the constitutional conferences, for instance more ethnic minority representatives. Most of the members were from the Yoruba people. As Azikiwe, Awolowo had problems with the party discipline. This was partly due to practice of representatives to join the majority party after an election. The AG stood for an early independence of a federal Nigeria.

These political parties rose to power because they adapted best to the constitutional conditions and thereby gained political influence. Their aims were different. The date of independence is only one example that they political goals differed. This political division was the key to British colonial rule because it allowed exploiting it to keep Nigeria united. But more important, the Colonial Office accepted the three parties as important representatives of Nigeria. There were a few important developments that shaped the policy of the British administration and Nigerian political parties in the 1950s.

The progress in the Cold Coast was an accelerator for Nigeria. In 1957, the Macmillan government estimated that it lost fifteen to twenty years in Nigeria because of the Ghanaian independence. Although a negative impact of Ghana’s independence on Nigeria was foreseeable and Nigerian Governor Macpherson had warned London in the early 1950s,

Britain could not slow down in Ghana. Kwame Nkrumah was an ambitious political leader and during his political struggle for the independence of the Gold Coast, he attempted to influence Nigerian politicians. British colonial administration monitored Nkrumah’s correspondence. In a letter from 1953, Nkrumah wrote a Nigerian leading figure Nnamdi Azikiwe, he compared the ethnic problems in the Gold Coast and in Nigeria and praised national unity. He argued that Azikiwe should be prepared to make scarifies to keep Nigeria united because unity was the key to a strong West African cooperation after independence. The independence of Ghana 1957 had an impact on the second constitutional conference. The British administration argued that in the light of Ghanaian self-governance there was an emotional momentum for independence as fast as possible in Nigeria. However, this Ghanaian influence was more indirect. Nigerian politicians saw Nkrumah not necessary as friend. In 1959 Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, the Prime Minister of the Northern region, rejected Nkrumah’s plan for a West African Union in 1959. Neither the time was right for Balewa nor could Ghana act on this regional issue without Nigeria, which would play an important role after the independence in the following year. Furthermore, miscommunication led to mistrust between both countries. One time no Ghanaian ministers were present, when Balewa stopped in Accra. Another time a Nigerian football team did not turn up at a Ghanaian tournament. These events caused resentments, which would influence the post-independence bilateral relationships. Overall, the independence of Ghana in 1957 provided an incentive for faster constitutional change, but Nigerians and their actions were decisive. Ghana was a pacemaker and did not get involved directly. There were social, economic and political developments in Nigeria

This political reform process was accompanied by a feeling of uncertainty in Nigerian society.

194 "Constitutional Developments in the Gold Coast and Nigeria": Cabinet Memorandum by Mr Lyttelton, 13 May 1953, CAB 129/61.
196 Letter from A E T to T B Williamson, 21 July 1953, CO 554/258, no 1.
197 Letter from Sir J Robertson to Lord Peth, 16 March 1957, CO 553/1583, no 7.
198 Letter from Alhaji Abubakar Tafawa Balewa to Dr Nkrumah, 1 March 1959, CO 554/2122, no 89.
199 Letter from A W Snelling to S J fingland, 1 February 1960, CO 35/9344, no 50.
202 Altman, Abschied vom Empire, 120
203 There are “complex, changing uncertain and unpredictable situations.” Letter from L H Goble to E O Mercer, 25 May 1953, CO 554/261.
published the novel *Things Fall Apart* in 1958. He wrote the story of an Igbo man who struggles with the emerging of the British rule and finally commits suicide because he surrenders to the social and political change, brought by the British. This novel implicitly linked the 1950s with the rise of British colonialism in Nigeria. This time the existing social order was falling apart again. The Native Authority System, which stands for the traditional rulers, was reformed.\(^{204}\) Reason was an “undeclared war” between tradition and modernity.\(^{205}\) The new educated elite demanded a voice and the differences between countryside and cities grew. Without a place in colonial Nigeria for the new elites, which were often educated at British and American Universities, opposition was predetermined. Decolonisation was also a time of shifting loyalties and identities and Nigeria was no exception because ethnicity became a connecting element of people.\(^{206}\)

Since the Second World War the Colonial Office aimed at improving colonial economics. It saw investments into the infrastructure in Nigeria as foundation for economic prosperity.\(^{207}\) Moreover, British and American development programs focused on education and agriculture. The growing regional autonomy made a cohesive economic policy impossible. Each region became their economic board and developed an economic policy. The board members were often politicians of the majority party in the region.\(^{208}\) This policy continued existing political or ethnic cleavages. In the 1950s, not only politics but also economics in a region became dominated by a single party. As a result, British companies asked the Colonial Office for the protection of British economical interests.\(^{209}\) The process of Nigerianisation of the economy was another disputed point.

The greatest impact of the constitutional reforms was on politics. The reforms were intended to legitimise colonialism and the Colonial Offices hoped that they would partly neutralise nationalistic demands and thereby would allow controlling the pace of reforms.\(^{210}\) The Nigerianisation, the takeover of positions by Nigerians, of the civil service and in government was key element of the reforms. However, the British saw Nigerians as

\(^{208}\) Ibid., 154.
inexperienced and corrupt.\textsuperscript{211} The British dilemma of political reforms was that the Nigerian demands did not match the Nigerians capacity to govern. This fuelled the already explosive political atmosphere because a corrupted civil service could paralyse the colonial state. This risk was the exact opposite of the British aim to stabilise it. The problem of Nigerian capacities is an example that Nigerian politics was minefield and one step in the wrong direction could escalate the conflict over the control of the colonial state. It was necessary for the British to be very adaptable to changes and set priorities. Time was the decisive factor for reforms, but each political crisis reduced it. The Crisis in 1953 demonstrates that not much time was left. The British policy-makers expected that the “Macpherson Constitution” from 1951 would last years and independence would come in a few decades.\textsuperscript{212} In 1954 the “Lytelton Constitution” offered regional self-governance. The timeframe of decades was reduced within a year to years.\textsuperscript{213} These unexpected flexibility caused uncertainty.

This part has shown what made Nigerian demands for independence were a very large challenge to British colonial rule. First, the colonial administration had limited capacities, but substantial changes were necessary. Second, the competition between Nigerian parties leads to proposal for radical changes. Third, Nigerian was in transition. The Cold Coast the accelerant and the British policy-makers had to prioritise their aims. The Unity of Nigeria, they saw as condition for stability, became the first priority.

Looking back at chapter 2, it becomes clear that the local level was decisive for Nigeria. Key actors in the international system supported anti-colonialism, but this shift had little impact in Nigeria. The United Kingdom attempted to adjust its colonial rule, but would defend the Empire, for instance the crackdown of the “Zik movement.” West Africa was still a British backyard, but reforms were opportunities for change. However, the outcome of the British adjustment was uncertain. As the Gold Coast showed Nigerian politicians, there were opportunities to change Nigeria. The constitutional conferences were steps to take over power form the British colonial administration. The following analysis of the central colonial tool to deal with Nigerian will give certainty to the extent of British control. It starts with the crisis in 1953, which initiated a rapid transfer.


\textsuperscript{213} Ibid., 256-257.
3.1. Prelude – The Constitutional Crisis in 1953

The following three chapters will show that the constitutional conferences were not only a colonial instrument to prepare Nigerian independence and to control the path to it, but also a mechanism to solve conflicts. The British policy-makers used them to institutionalise the conflict with Nigerians over the colonial state’s future and expected to regain the initiative, which was lost in the crisis of 1953. Although Governor Macpherson successfully established the “Macpherson Constitution” in 1951, Nigerian resistance dashed British hopes that it would be long-lasting. The “Macpherson Constitution” had given the Nigerian a voice in the political system. A House of Representatives was established together with extended legislative power to the three regional Houses of Assembly. The members were elected on the basis of regional electoral laws. Moreover, the future of Cameroons as part of Nigeria was constitutionally embedded.214 This chapter will show that the year 1953 was the turning point for a decisive period in decolonisation.

The roots of the crisis lie in the first elections in late 1951. The results of these elections were typical for the next years. The AG won most seats in the Houses of Assembly, in the East most votes went to the NCNC and the NPC dominated the Northern House of Assembly. The elected members of the House of Assembly selected their representatives for the House of Representatives. Lynn points out that two problems emerged after the AG, the NCNC and the NPC won their regions. First, the Council of Ministers became a political battleground. The three parties tried to implement their ideas but with four members of each party and no Prime Minister to set guidelines it was often impossible to find a consensus. Additionally, the aspiring ministers did neither have a department nor the power to influence the execution of decisions, but they were formally responsible for both.215 Second, the constitution enhanced ethnic solidarity and loyalty because of regionalism. The electoral campaigns against other parties also were aimed at the dominating ethnic group in the rival parties. This was the first time, the strategy to use the mobilising power of ethnicity to win elections worked. The parties continued ethnocentric agitations, which reduced the chances to

214 In the 1950s Northern Cameroons and Southern Cameroons remained under British trusteeship. They were represented at the constitutional conferences. After a plebiscite in 1961, the Northern Cameroons were integrated into Nigeria and the Southern Cameroons became part of the former French colony Cameroon. Lynn ed., Nigeria: Part I Managing Political Reform, i; lx.
215 Ibid., i:lx.
become a national party, to secure mass support in their regions. In addition, an alliance of two regions could control the Council of Ministers and decide against a region. This was particularly daunting for the Muslim North that did not trust the Christian Southern parties. As a result, the constitution neither allowed the parties to put into effect their programs nor to protect their regions. Normally, cooperation is the solution, but with their electoral agitation the parties destroyed the necessary trust into each other.

At least two interrelated events escalated the constitutional crisis in 1953. When the Colonial Office established the position of a Prime Minister of the Cold Coast in 1952, it fuelled demands for a reform of the Council of Ministers. First, the dysfunctionality of the constitution became clear, when Azikiwe, who struggled with internal position in the NCNC, caused the “Sit-Tight Crisis” in 1953. Azikiwe had failed to become member of House of Representatives with his seat for Lagos in the Western House of Assembly because of internal opposition in the NCNC. Therefore, Azikiwe was only the leader of the NCNC opposition. This was a political role that did not match his ambitions. In January 1953 he instructed the resignation of the nine NCNC ministers in the Eastern Region Executive Council. His intention was to confront the Eastern Lieutenant-Governor Sir C. Pless and securing the loyalty of his party. After all ministers handed in their resignation, six ministers decided to stay and formed a new party, the National Independence Party (NIP). When the House of Assembly dismissed the remaining ministers in a vote of no confidence, the East was de facto ruled by a minority government. A situation the constitution-makers did not predicted. Due to the shortcoming of efficient political instruments - the only way would have been to dissolve the regional houses and the federal parliament together, it took month to change the legislation to make regional elections possible. The NCNC under Azikiwe secured a victory in the Eastern elections in June 1953.

Second, the AG took advantage of the factionalism within the NCNC and Anthony Enahoro’s (1923-2010) moved a motion for self-governance in 1956 in the House of Representatives. The AG’s aim was to be faster than the NCNC because both parties contested Lagos. The Nigerian capital had been the nationalistic hotspot since the 1920s. When the motion was brought before the Council of Ministers, the ministers fiercely debated. The NPC ministers, who wanted more time for the North to catch up with the South, wanted

---

216 Ibid., lxi; lxii.
217 Letter from Sir J Macpherson to Sir T Lloyd, 8 January 1952, CO 967/173.
to substitute “in 1956” with “as early as practicable” and threatened with secession.\(^{220}\) On the 31 March, the heated debate continued in the House of Representatives. There was no vote casted because the NCNC and AG members left after an uproar, caused by Awolowo’s offending comment on a Northern leader.\(^{221}\) Moreover, the Lagos crowed insulted the NPC members, when they came on the streets after the debate had been postponed. The effect was that the Northerners became more suspicious, in particular about a NCNC and AG alliance.\(^{222}\) Awolowo told Macpherson later that the AG was “determined to bring in the same motion every time the House of Representatives meets.”\(^{223}\) Overall, the motion resulted in a deadlock between the three Nigerian parties, who became more suspicious about each other.\(^{224}\)

The Colonial Office was alarmed that the crisis could escalate. In April, Macpherson was invited to a meeting with the Secretary of State for the Colonies Oliver Lyttelton at the Colonial Office.\(^{225}\) It was agreed that the “Nigerian constitution will have to be radically revised.”\(^{226}\) The policy-makers concurred that more regional autonomy would solve the conflict between North and the South. However, their intended to wait until the NPC would clarify its position.\(^{227}\) When Macpherson was back, the conflict over independence in 1953 escalated. A determined Awolowo saw the risk of an “immanent breakdown” of Nigeria.\(^{228}\) Additionally, politicians of the NPC demanded an “immediate assessment” of relationship between the regions and the centre and they threatened secession.\(^{229}\) The NPC called some Southern members of the House of Representatives irresponsible politicians with “a mass of undigested book-learning, and no experience in Public Affairs.”\(^{230}\) The Action Group fired back and called the NPC a “reactionary minority (“Sadauna group”) working as tools of the British” and suppressing the mass opinion in the North to protect the “Native Authority system” and “to prevent” political process in the South.\(^{231}\) The Civil Service monitored these smear campaigns and concluded that both sides were driven by fear. On the one hand, “the

\(^{220}\) Telegram form the Governor to The Secretary of State for the Colonies, 24 March 1953, FCO 141/13363.


\(^{222}\) Note on a Meeting held in the Administrative Secretary's Office, 7 April 1953, FCO 141/13363.

\(^{223}\) Awolowo highlighted mainly the autocratic NPC and that the North would slow down Southern progress. Note of conversation with Mr Awolowo, 9 April 1953, FCO 141/13363.

\(^{224}\) Notes for H E, 1953, FCO 141/13363.

\(^{225}\) Some Conclusions of a Meeting at the Colonial Office under the Secretary of State's Chairmanship, 15 April 1953, FCO 141/13363.

\(^{226}\) Ibid.

\(^{227}\) Ibid.

\(^{228}\) Personal Telegram from the Governor Nigeria to Secretary of State, 20 April 1953, FCO 141/13363.

\(^{229}\) An Appreciation in Summarised Form of the Reactions of the Northern Region to the Present Political Crisis from Sir B Sharwood-Smith, 10 April 1953, FCO 141/13363.

\(^{230}\) Draft Memorandum by the Northern Ministers and a select Committee of the Regional Legislature for the Minister of State for the Colonies from R Hopkinson, 1953, FCO 141/13363.

\(^{231}\) An Assessment of the political Situation in Nigeria, 9 May 1953, FCO 141/13363.
intense, real, and **openly-expressed** [sic!] fear” of Southern dominance because of fast progress and Southerners in key Civil Service positions in the North.\(^{232}\) On the other hand, “the intense, real, but **concealed** [sic!] fear” of a dominating North, which already had a higher population than the West.\(^{233}\)

The conflict escalated in Northern city of Kano on the 16\(^{th}\) May.\(^{234}\) Caused by a planned, but cancelled AG rally for independence that day, the clash between Ibo and Hausa in the living areas of Southerners was the most serious interethnic violence since the start of British rule. In four violent days 46 Nigerians died and 205 Nigerians were wounded.\(^{235}\) This event was followed by the “Eight-Points Motion” in the Northern House of Assembly. The House voted for three completely autonomous regions with a “central agency” limited to Defence, External Affairs, Customs and the West African Research Institutions.\(^{236}\) The alternative would be a secession of the Northern region from Nigeria. In the South the AG and NCNC formed an alliance for independence in 1956.\(^{237}\) This development shows that the crisis in 1953 was especially between Nigerian parties and not so much on attack on colonial rule.

Nevertheless, it was a threat to the colonial rule. Lyttelton announced a conference to discuss the deadlock and the methods to modify the constitution a week after the Kano riots. As unity of Nigeria was the key aim in British policy, the rising risk of secession concerned British policy-makers. With the “Macpherson Constitution” under revision, long-term plans became outdated. It is an irony of history that its implementation was the start of its end.

Overall, the self-government crisis of 1953 was not about independence, as the name suggests, it was about the clash, which was between the AG, the NCNC and the NPC, that broke the constitution. The spirits of ethnicity the three parties summoned in the elections became independent in the Kano riots. Moreover, a divide between the South and the North became clear. Time was short for the British and a gradual transfer of government became outdated within months.\(^{238}\) As a result, uncertainty increased. This development is in line with Shipway’s emphasis on rapid change after 1945. Therefore, it was necessary that the conference was held soon.

\(^{232}\) Ibid.

\(^{233}\) Ibid.

\(^{234}\) Inward Telegram no SX 1176 from HQ West Africa Command to Mr Lyttelton, 17 May 1952, CO 554/428, no 3.

\(^{235}\) Inward Savingram 1192 from Sir J Macpherson to Mr Lyttelton, 21 May 1952, CO 554/428, no 24.

\(^{236}\) Motion Introduced in the Northern House of Assembly, 22 May 1953, FCO 141/13368.


3.2. British Preparations - The Danger of a Nigerian Boycott

The Colonial Office always attached importance to the planning and organising of conferences, which were an opportunity. In contrast to Nigeria, the conferences were a highly structured environment. They were a space, the British policy-maker thought to prevail. They could make the rules, predict Nigerian positions and even make the seating plans. Two elements were important. First, the Colonial Office and the colonial administration had to deal with organisational matters, such as participants. Second, they had to coordinate their negotiation strategy. This part will analyse both elements and show that Nigerian influenced them. Although the first Nigerian reactions to the announcement of a conference in London were positive, soon a conflict over participants and negotiations arose. Macpherson reported to Lytton on the 29th May that Nigerian press welcomed the conference, but there was a misperception that the constitution would be discussed.239 When the Colonial Office clarified this misunderstanding, Awolowo and Azikiwe declined the invitation with an identical letter. The new AG-NCNC alliance wanted that only the regional government or the three majority parties would send. This wish was against the NIP, still being in a minority government at that time. Moreover, discussing only the method to reform the constitution would be, according to both, “a sheer waste of our time” and the selection of representatives without Nigerian consent was a “great insult”.240 Furthermore, the AG press and the NCNC newspapers assisted the claims of their political leaders with vicious remarks on the British administration. “These newspapers have not hesitated to preach, virtually, civil disobedience and in some cases to threaten the introduction of a Nigerian Mau Mau.”241 The strong language gave them a great publicity.

In contrast to AG-NCNC demands, Macpherson and the Colonial Office wanted a limited number of participants. Macpherson had the idea of a maximum of fifteen elected Nigerians, who represent the regional governments and the opposition.242 The discussed number of representatives was: “4 NPC; 4 NCNC; 4 AG; 2 NIP; 1 Northern Elements Progressive Union (NEPU) [Northern Opposition]; 1 United Nigerian Party (UNP) [Eastern Opposition]; 1 Middle Zone League (MZL) [Northern Opposition]; 1 from the Southern

239 Inward Telegram no 776 from Sir J Macpherson to Mr Lyttelton, 29 May 1953, CO 553/261, no 139.
240 Letter from N Azikiwe to Sir J Macpherson, 1 June 1953, FCO 141/13371; Letter from O Awolowo to Sir J Macpherson, 1 June 1953, FCO 141/13371.
241 The Mau Mau was a violent uprising against colonial rule in Kenya between 1952 and 1960. Brief for the Secretary of State on Action Group and NCNC Press Campaign against the Governor and the administration of Nigeria, 1953, FCO 141/13369.
242 Telegram no 777 from the Governor Nigeria to the Secretary of State, 28 May 1953, FCO 141/13371.
Cameroons.”  If Azikiwe and Awolowo would boycott the conference on the basis of this representation, "what-if" scenarios were considered, such as administrating of the South by emergency powers and a separate administration in the North. Both actions were unrealistic because it would have been the division of Nigeria, the British policy-makers indented to prevent. Therefore, the AG-NCNC alliance was taken seriously.

Macpherson invited Awolowo, Azikiwe and the Sardauna of Sokoto Ahmadu Bello, who was the NPC leader, to find a solution on participants and negotiations. “They agreed objects of the talks in London should be consider [sic!] (a) defects in present Constitution; (b) what changes are necessary; (c) what steps are necessary to put those changes into effect.” In addition, a possible independence in 1956 should be discussed. The three Nigerian politicians agreed on three delegates from the majority party, one from the opposition and one public figure (nominated from the majority party) for each region and some advisors. This was accepted by the Secretary of the State for the Colonies, with the exception that he instated on two representatives from the NIP, the acting government in the Eastern region. After several rounds of negotiations with Azikiwe, they agreed on four delegates from the majority party and two from the NIP. The Conference was scheduled for August.

The determining factor of preparation was who was included and who was not. On the one hand, the three major parties had a say. They pushed through that the conference was about the constitutions. This was a contrast to the formative period from 1945-1952, when the British decided alone. On the other hand, minority groups were excluded from the conference. The Muslim Welfare Association of Nigeria asked to represent the Western Muslims. Another example is the Ijaw Union, which represented an ethnic minority in the Eastern region. Moreover, the Middle Belt People’s Party (MBBP) indented to represent minorities in the Northern region. The Colonial Office decided against their requests because they played no role in the political stalemate. The selected participants would shape the topics of the negotiations.

---

243 Note by O P Gunning, 5 June 1953, FCO 141/13371.
244 Ibid.
245 Telegram no 905 from the Governor Nigeria to Secretary of State, 20 June 1953, FCO 141/13371.
246 Ibid.
247 Personal Telegram no 73 from Secretary of State to the Governor Nigeria, 20 June 1953, FCO 141/13371.
248 Telegram no 1057 from the Governor Nigeria, to Secretary of State, 24 June 1953, FCO 141/13372.
249 Cablegram from the Muslim Welfare Association of Nigeria to the Secretary of State, 1 June 1953, FCO 141/13371.
250 Letter from the Ijaw Union to the Governor, 11 July 1953, FCO 141/13372.
251 Letter from the Secretary of State for the Colonies to the Officer Administering the Government of Nigeria, 21 July 1953, FCO 141/13372.
At the eve of the conference, the assistant under-secretary of state Gorell Barnes was informed about the British negotiation tactics. The Colonial Office expected that Nigerians would propose their demands and soon the AG and the NCNC would demand self-governance in 1956 and thereby the NPC would threaten succession. As a result, the negotiations would see the same stalemate again. A shock-tactic was considered to overcome it. Lyttelton could assure the Northern delegation independence, when they want it, but offer immediate independence to the Southern delegations. Macpherson and others hoped to “get rid of the phase “self-governance in 1956” for all time” with this shock. However, Lyttelton expected this proposal to be a “boomerang” and decided against it. The tactic would be to confront Nigerians with the necessary preparations for independence, such as the Nigerianisation of the civil service. Furthermore, the British would make the proposals for possible changes.

The aims of the negotiations were debated in several meetings between Macpherson and the Colonial Office. Besides the fundamental aims of solving the crisis and reforming the constitutions, the British policy-makers had three central aims. First, independence in 1956 had to be denied because chaos was expected, even when only the Southern regions gained it. Second, the three Lieutenant Governors and the Governor needed reserve powers in the case of Nigerianisation and Nigerian cabinets. Moreover, the control over the police had to remain in the hands of British officials. Third, a strong central government was necessary to keep the country together. These were red lines that had not to be crossed. The British policy-makers were ready to make several concessions on other issues, such as ministers in the centre, to Nigerians to avoid independence. The complete constitution was open to debate. This was an opportunity for Nigerian participants to change colonial rule, which Nigerians never had in their history before.

The preparations demonstrate that Nigerians gained more influence. The conference, announced as consultations with Nigerians over mechanism to reform the constitution, became constitutional negotiations in three month. This decision of the Colonial Office was ad hoc. The British policy-makers had lost their monopoly and had to accept Nigerian participation. Nevertheless, the Colonial Office confided to outmanoeuvre Nigerians at the negotiation table and prevent independence in 1956. They expectations to find a long-term solution were optimistic. Before leaving Nigeria, Azikiwe quoted Benjamin Disraeli: “Change

252 Letter from Unknown to Gorell Barnes, 15 July 1953, FCO 141/13368.
253 Ibid.
254 Note of a Meeting with the Governor of Nigeria, 21 July 1953, FCO 141/13368.
255 Note of a Meeting with the Governor of Nigeria, 22 July 1953, FCO 141/13368.
is inevitable in a progressive country. Change is constant.” His quote indicated that he was ready to play by the British rules, but change towards independence could not be stopped. The negotiations would take an unexpected turn.

3.3. Negotiations - Two Withdrawals

The constitutional conferences lasted from the 30th July to the 22nd August 1953 and took place at No. 10 Carlton House Terrace in London. At this place, the 19 Nigerian delegates with their 40 advisors meet with Secretary of State, the Governor and a few British delegates and advisors. After the British drafted a new constitution, the conference was resumed in Lagos from the 19th January 1954 to the 1st February 1954 to finalise the “Lyttelton Constitution.” I will analyse the negotiations out of the British perspective on two points. First, the British and the Nigerian negotiation tactics are outlined. Second, the controversial debates on, regionalisation, self-governance 1956 and the right to secession are illustrated.

Before dealing with the negotiations, it is obligatory to look at the formal proceeding of the conference and the structure of the negotiations. The delegations met once a day between 10 am and 1 pm and a steering committee of all delegation leaders set the agenda for the secret meetings and regulated the press releases. The British delegations convinced the other delegations that the problems of the constitutions should be discussed first and that self-governance should be the last item on the agenda. This allowed Lyttelton to emphasise that self-governance was only possible, if a solution was found on all other issues. Independence without a functional constitution was out of question for the colony.

The four main delegations had different approaches towards negotiating in the heated debates. Lyttelton was the chairmen. A role he did not fulfil well because he was “terribly patchy” and “gave no guidance at all” to the delegates. One time he clashed with Awolowo. Awolowo threatened to “use every means in their power”, if there were new elections for the House of Representatives. Lyttelton countered that “he was allergic to threats.” However, Lyttelton normally mediated between the delegations. In contrast, Awolowo pursued an aggressive strategy. At a meeting before the negotiations,

“Awolowo said that while it would be presumptuous for him to utter threats at the very heart of the Empire he must make it clear that unless he could go back to Nigeria with some solid decisions they would have to take the action with had been planned, and which had been stopped only by the decision to hold this Conference.”

---

258 K. P. Maddocks kept the colonial administration over the progress of the negotiations informed. His full name and position is unclear. He was probably one of the “other advisors” in the list of participants. This allows to look insight into the negotiations.


261 Letter from K P Maddocks to A E T Benson, 5 August 1953, FCO 141/13369.

262 Letter from K P Maddocks to A E T Benson, 10 August 1953, FCO 141/13369.

263 Ibid.
At the negotiations, he behaved like a dictator and tried to run the AG and the whole conference.\textsuperscript{264} His alliance partners, the NCNC delegates, negotiated without hierarchy and had to contain him by threatening to break the alliance.\textsuperscript{265} The Sardauna of Sokoto left arguing mainly to others members of the NPC delegations, who focused on protecting Northern autonomy. There was an “atmosphere of suspicion and distrust between the delegations.”\textsuperscript{266} All delegations tested their room for manoeuvre.

Regionalisation became the sticking point of the negotiations because two parties left. On the one hand, the NIP rejected further regionalisation and withdrawal, when it was faced with the majority of the AG, the NCNC and the NPC, in favour of decentralising.\textsuperscript{267} On the other hand, the AG temporarily left. A long debate on the future role of Lagos showed that the AG was in the minority against the NPC and NCNC, who favoured a capital with autonomy from the regions. The delegations agreed that Lyttelton should find a solution. He decided to create a federal territory. A decision the AG did not accept and left.\textsuperscript{268} As a result, the AG-NCNC alliance broke because the NCNC stayed at the meeting. In contrast to the NIP withdrawal, the British delegates tried to get the AG back to the negotiation table. After three days the AG returned and accepted the results under reserve.\textsuperscript{269} The British delegation treated the two parties differently because of their size. If the AG would reject the result, trouble in the Western Region would be likely, in particular because of the threats Awolowo had made during the conference.

Self-governance in 1956 was the crucial point on the agenda. Lyttelton stated that the United Kingdom would “help the British Colonial territories to achieve self-government as soon as circumstances permitted in each case.”\textsuperscript{270} He argued that the negotiations had shown that Nigeria was not ready because first the “Macpherson Constitution” needed to be reformed and proposed a new conference could discuss the issue again in 1956.\textsuperscript{271} Azikiwe and Awolowo pushed for the definite date because they saw his proposal as unreliable and open to interpretation.\textsuperscript{272} On the contrary, the NPC opposed a specific date. Lyttelton proposed internal self-governance for the regions, if it did not hinder the central government or other

\textsuperscript{264} Letter from K P Maddocks to A E T Benson, 6 August 1953, FCO 141/13369.
\textsuperscript{265} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{266} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{267} Minutes of the twelfth Plenary Meeting, 13 August 1953, CAB 133/129.
\textsuperscript{268} Letter from K P Maddocks to A E T Benson, 6 August 1953, FCO 141/13369.
\textsuperscript{269} Minutes of the twenty-second Plenary Meeting, 22 August 1953, CAB 133 129.
\textsuperscript{270} Minutes of the seventeenth Plenary Meeting, 19 August 1953, CAB 133/129.
\textsuperscript{271} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{272} Ibid.
regions in any way.\footnote{Minutes of the eighteenth Plenary Meeting, 19 August 1953, CAB 133/129.} A compromise all could live with. Azikiwe and Awolowo would get control over a Nigerian government and the civil service and the Sardauna of Sokoto saw the interests of the North protected.

At the resumed conference in 1954 secession became a central question. The AG argued that “unity must evolve from inside not outside” and each region should have the right to secede in 1956.\footnote{Minutes of the eight Plenary Meeting, 28 January 1954, CAB 133/130.} It wanted an alternative, if the conflict escalated again. The NCNC dismissed the idea because they wanted a united Nigeria. The North agreed in principle but rejected the proposal. If the both Southern regions would secede in 1956, the Northern region would be forced into self-governance.\footnote{Ibid.} Lyttelton settled the dispute and all delegations agreed that secession could be discussed at the next conference in 1956.

These three controversial issues demonstrate that clear hierarchy between the delegations. The AG, the British delegation, the NCNC and the NPC had the majority. Smaller parties, such as the NIP, had \textit{de facto} little chance to oppose. Even the AG could not resist, when the NCNC and the NPC cooperated. Lyttelton played his role as neutral mediator. He proposed solutions, when there was another stalemate. It was a great opportunity to label the British position as the best compromise and no British red lines were crossed, except for one. Instead of getting rid of self-governance completely, regional self-governance became possible in two years. The power relations were similar to Nigerian politics in general, with three major parties mistrusting each other.
3.4. Results – Regional Self-government in 1956

The “Lyttelton Constitution” was the main result of the negotiations. The changes to the colonial state had been so drastic that a new constitution was inevitable. As a product of the negotiation process, it is a benchmark for British negotiation skills. This part assesses not only the constitutional change but also assesses the broader implications of the constitutional conferences in 1953 and 1954. The conference set the pace and stands for the end of British dominance over constitutional changes.276

The “Lyttelton Constitution” was a huge step towards Nigerian autonomy in the regions. The regions got a new separate electoral law and the Southern regions abolished ex-officio ministers, which were often British civil servants. Nigerian cabinets under a Premier were established. Moreover, the civil service’s Nigerianisation was speeded up. The Governors, which were called Lieutenant-Governors before, and the Governors-General, which was previously called Governor, still had a veto and emergency powers.277 Although the police remained under the control of the federal government, but the local police in the Native Authority System became part of the regional civil service.278 The decisive point was that “the Conference eventually accepted a declaration of policy that in 1956 Her Majesty's Government would grant to those Regions which desire it full self-government in respect of all matters within the competence of the Regional Government.”279 The total control over the colonial state in the regions for Nigerians was within reach.

The federal structure of the Nigerian state was further developed. The Nigerian ministers gained a portfolio and control over the departments, but no Prime Minister was recommended. Federal elections, completely separated from regional elections, were introduced. These changes were intended to create a balance between the regions and the federal government. The Nigerians were also incorporated more into the federal government.

The results were a double-edged sword for British policy-makers. They saw these decisions as a success because the constitutional deadlock had been overcome. The decision over independence was postponed, the three major parties had made compromises and the conflict was de-escalated. However, the political landscape in Nigeria had changed. Three major parties became even more dominant in Nigerian politics.280 In 1956 a new conference

278 Ibid., 8.
would assess the constitutional progress. It was the institutionalisation of negotiations as pacemakers. It was the British attempt to steal the nationalists their thunder and create a certainty for the pace of devolution to Nigerian elites. The predictability of change, which was lost in crisis-ridden year of 1953, was re-established through the conference in British eyes, although the time scale was drastically reduced.\textsuperscript{281}

Change always results in uncertainty and the British policy-makers could not predict the developments in the following years. Indeed, the conference in 1953 and 1954 entrenched the regional differences and introduced the next steps of reforms. However, it did not determine the future. This chapter has shown that ethnocentrism played a crucial role for nationalists, as Nnoli argues.\textsuperscript{282} But the national ambitions of the parties made it necessary to aim at becoming a national movement. In this context, I refute the argument of the historians J.F. Ade Ajayi and A. E. Ekoko that “the nationalist movement became regionalized in 1954.”\textsuperscript{283} They view is too static because, as Shipway demonstrates, historians have to avoid neglecting the uncertainty of events. In 1954 the NCNC surprisingly won the federal elections in the Western Region, gaining not only in the South but also the federal government the upper hand.\textsuperscript{284} The AG-NCNC rivalry had been a destabilising factor for the balance of power, the “Lyttelton Constitution” had accomplish, again. The next crisis followed in colonial Nigeria.

\textsuperscript{282} Nnoli, \textit{Ethnic Politics in Nigeria}, 167.
\textsuperscript{284} Shipway, \textit{Decolonisation and its Impact}, 180.
Chapter 4: Adjusting the Constitution – The Constitutional Conference in 1957


Federal elections were the immediate result of the “Lyttelton Constitution” in November 1954. Neither the Colonial Office nor the Nigerian parties anticipated any surprises. All predicted that the AG, the NCNC and the NPC to win their regions again, strengthening their important role in federal politics. The unexpected win of the NCNC in both Southern regions lead to a conflict between Azikiwe and the colonial administration. Azikiwe’s capitalised his decisive victory and pushed forward with the Nigerianisation in the Eastern region. The Colonial Office counteracted his ambitions used corruption charges against Azikiwe to remove him from Office. It was the last attempt of the Colonial Office to stop the transfer of government. However, the British policy-makers had to make further constitutional concessions because Azikiwe came through the “Eastern Crisis”. This chapter highlights the difficult part to the second constitutional conference and emphasises that British reacted to events.

A close look at the federal elections indicates that the British had a wrong assumption on the impact of introducing elections to Nigeria. The Colonial Office assumed that they would create a broad spectrum of parties, which would be similar to the United Kingdom, ranging from parties on the right to parties on the left. However, the presumed class society did not exist.285 This is an example that British policy-makers misperceived local realities in Nigeria. False assumptions resulted in unintended consequences, such as the rise of ethnocentric parties. As shown earlier, the electoral law undesignedly promoted campaigns, focusing on ethnical loyalties and solidarities. The NCNC successful campaign in the Western regions had two characteristics. First, it attacked the AG’s policies, in particular taxation. Second, it branded the NCNC as a party, which defends ethnic minorities. The NCNC promised new states, such as a Mid-West state, to protect minorities against Yoruba dominance.286 The latter was the key to the NCNC victory.

The colonial administration became entangled in a web of fears, shaped by their experiences in 1953. On the one hand, Azikiwe could propagate for more constitutional concessions and could paralyse the federal government.287 On the other hand, the NPC and

---

the AG could join forces to secede.\textsuperscript{288} The consideration of these worst case scenarios highlight that the British policy-makers were nervous because of the uncertainty of Azikiwe’s next move. When it became clear that the AG and the NPC stayed calm, the NCNC leader became the main concern.

The “Eastern Crisis” in its essence was caused by two attempts to get someone out of the way. First, the NCNC wanted to get rid of the Eastern Governor Sir Pleass, who had supported the NIP minority government against the NCNC in 1953. In March 1955 the Eastern House of Assembly passed the Eastern budget bill, which unilateral cut the allowances for British senior official in the civil service. Pleass used his reserved power to adjust the bill and therefore faced a vote of no confidence, which was postponed \textit{sine die}.\textsuperscript{289} Pleass was seriously concerned because of planned the regional self-government, which would allow Azikiwe to enforce his budget bill.\textsuperscript{290} The result would be the collective departure of most British civil servants and the breakdown of the regional administration. Second, the Colonial Office attempted to remove Azikiwe from Office based on corruption charges. It identified the political leader as the greatest threat to colonial rule because of his aggressive attitude.\textsuperscript{291} Azikiwe’s dubious relations with the African Continental Bank (ACB), he owned from 1944 to 1954, were an opportunity the Colonial Office seized.\textsuperscript{292}

Corruption was wide-spread in colonial Nigeria, but the colonial administration attacked Azikiwe for political reasons.\textsuperscript{293} British commissions had investigated corruption and found corruption in each region before. The colonial administration published reports to convince the public. There is one important exception. The NPC, allies for a later independence, were not publicly confronted with corruption in the North, but behind closed doors.\textsuperscript{294} In contrast, the NCNC was investigated under the eyes of the public. Azikiwe had business and personal relations with the Bank afterwards, after he became Minister in 1954.\textsuperscript{295} The Eastern government indirectly gave £2m to the ACB and official reason as to strengthen the indigenous banking system. However, British intelligence monitored this transfer and found out that the money partly was used to finance the NCNC’s electoral campaign in the

\textsuperscript{289} Letter from T B Williamson to Sir C Pleass, 3 June 1955, CO 554/1181.
\textsuperscript{290} Letter from Sir C Pleass to T B Williamson, 22 June 1955, CO 554/1181.
\textsuperscript{292} Nigeria was the only colony, which developed an indigenous banking system. Chibuike Uche, "Indigenous Banks in Colonial Nigeria." \textit{The International Journal of African Historical Studies} 43, no. 3 (2010): 467.
\textsuperscript{293} It has to be taken into account that the “corrupt African” is a stereotype that shaped the “Official Mind” and corruption a product of colonialism. Steven Pierce, "Looking like a State: Colonialism and the Discourse of Corruption in Northern Nigeria." \textit{Comparative Studies in Society and History} 48, no. 4 (2006), 887.
\textsuperscript{294} Tignor, “Political Corruption in Nigeria before Independence.” 202.
The colonial administration condemned the use of state money for the struggle against another party. The ACB affair was a chance for the British to show the public Azikiwe’s misconduct and react to the NCNC offensive against the colonial administration.

The new Secretary of State for the Colonies Lenox-Boyd, who was minister since 1954, directly intervened. His involvement indicates that the development in Nigeria was so important that it could not be dealt with by the colonial administration alone. Until 1957 British policy-makers made their last attempt to neutralise a nationalistic leader and regain complete control over the Eastern Region. In November 1955 Lennox-Boyd called Azikiwe to London and had a serious talk about Azikiwe’s policy, which would lead to an economic and political disaster, and his shady dealings with the ACB.\(^\text{297}\) Previously, the Colonial office had played through its options. An extreme option had been the suspension of the constitution and the deployment of troops against the expected unrest.\(^\text{298}\) Seriously debated in the Colonial Office, the enforced return of British direct control of the Eastern Region was assessed as too dangerous because it would be a perfect opportunity for nationalistic uprisings.\(^\text{299}\) The use of force would allow Azikiwe to become a martyr.\(^\text{300}\)

As his talk with Azikiwe did not help, Lenox-Boyd announced the Foster-Sutton Commission, which investigated the ACB corruption scandal.\(^\text{301}\) On the one hand, the investigation of Azikiwe made it possible to delay the planned conference to 1957. The AG and the NPC agreed to wait for the results because they speculated that their rival Azikiwe would be taken out by the British. Indeed, the report found Azikiwe “guilty of misconduct as a Minister” in January 1957.\(^\text{302}\) The Eastern Governor Pleass rightfully “conceive[d] of no more certain way of giving the N.C.N.C. led by Zik a sweeping victory” than holding regional elections after the publication.\(^\text{303}\) Nevertheless, new elections in March were held and the NCNC defended their majority because of portraying Azikiwe as the martyr for freedom.\(^\text{304}\) The support of the masses saved Azikiwe, who had lost the Western regional elections in the meantime.


\[^\text{297}\] Note by Mr Lennox-Boyd on his Meeting with Dr Azikiwe, 10 November 1955, CO 554/1109.

\[^\text{298}\] Letter from Sir J Robertson to Sir T Lloyd, 27 September 1955. CO 554/1181, no 60a.

\[^\text{299}\] Minutes of a Meeting of Officials with Sir J Robertson and the Nigerian Governors, 4 October 1955, CO 554/1156.

\[^\text{300}\] Lynn, “The ‘Eastern Crisis’ of 1955–57, the Colonial Office, and Nigerian Decolonisation”; 103.

\[^\text{301}\] Circular Telegram no 292 from the CRO to UK High Commission, 24 July 1956, CO554/1127.

\[^\text{302}\] Outward Telegram from Mr Maclay to Sir Robertson, 3 January 1957, Co554/1140.

\[^\text{303}\] Personal Telegram no. 211 from the Governor-General to the Secretary of State, 16 September 1956, FCO 141/13398.

\[^\text{304}\] Inward Savingram [sic!] no 9 from Sir R Stapeldon to Mr Lennox-Boyd, 26 March 1957, Co 554/2128.
In contrast to the crisis of 1953, the “Eastern Crisis” was about the hostile relationship between Azikiwe and the Colonial Office, who failed to outmanoeuvre its dangerous opponent.\footnote{Lynn, “The ‘Eastern Crisis’ of 1955–57, the Colonial Office, and Nigerian Decolonisation”: 106.} Although the Colonial Office could neutralise Azikiwe’s win the Western Region, it lacked the capacity to remove him from office. It became clear that reversing the constitutional concessions was impossible. The long-term side effect was that the three parties became regionalised, when the NCNC did not secure the South. The AG had used the conflict to regain their regional dominance by purging the Native Authority System and the civil service the NCNC supporters.\footnote{Inward telegram no 133 from Sir J Macpherson to Mr Lennox-Boyd concerning the Oyo riots, 18 September 1954, Co 554/1236, no 7.} The NPC took good note of the division of the South. In context of the next constitutional conference, the crisis was a reason to postpone it rather than to hold it. Azikiwe, who did not manage to fast track Nigerianisation, and the colonial administration realised that the conferences were the place to solve conflicts. In this sense, the “Eastern Crisis” demonstrated that the constitutional conference was decisive because conflicts over the government could not be solved in Nigeria.
4.2. British Preparations - Postponement

The final documents of the constitutional conference in 1954 had announced that in 1956 the next conference would be held. The first aim was to review the constitutional progress. The second aim was to decide over regional self-governance. Therefore, the preparation time was significantly longer, contrary to the last conference. The British policymakers had time to elaborate the conference in detail. Two problems arose during the preparations. On the one hand, the unstable situation in the Eastern Region made the participation of Eastern politicians questionable. On the other hand, ethnic and religious minorities, excluded from the last conference, raised their voices and argued that all shades of opinion in the Nigerian society needed a chance to participate. This chapter will outline the crucial decisions on the proceedings of the conference and its content.

On 25th April 1955 the British preparations for the next conference, scheduled for 1956, focused on two problems. The three central points of planning were time, place and composition of the participants.\(^\text{307}\) As there was “prestige attached to a Conference in London” for Nigerians, the place was again the capital of the British Empire.\(^\text{308}\) The other two points were challenging. The stalemate in 1953 had caused that the conference with involved parties had been hold at short notice. For this conference the target, the delegations had specifically stated, was that “all shades of political opinion” in Nigeria had to be “adequately represented.”\(^\text{309}\) The British position was that elected politicians should participate because the fragmentation of Nigerian delegations hat to be limited.\(^\text{310}\) However, smaller Nigerian parties and representatives of minority groups demanded an extension of delegations.\(^\text{311}\) The right balance of Nigerian opinions was shaped by the minority question.

For religious and ethnic minorities, neglected since 1914 by the colonial administration, participation at the conference was a hope to raise their voices, which often got lost in the rivalry between the AG, the NCNC and the NPC. The constitutional reforms had been marginalised them and minorities looked with fears at the rising influence of regional majorities, such as the Yoruba in the Western Region. The ethnocentric electoral campaigns and the use of the regional state structures in interethnic conflicts frightened them.

\(^{307}\) Minute by A F F P News, 24 April 1955, FCO 141/13384.
\(^{308}\) J W Robertson to A Lennox-Lloyd, 13 January 1956, FCO 141/13385.
\(^{309}\) Sir T Lloyd to Sir H Marshall, 12 May 1955, FCO 141/13384.
\(^{310}\) Letter from Sir T Lloyd to Sir H Marshall, 12 May 1955, FCO 141/13384.
Independence was associated with losing the last protection, the British administrators. Minorities’ fears resulted in the calls for more regional states.\(^{312}\)

The River Chiefs are a good example for demands of an ethnic minority because it shows a fundamental dilemma for British politics. They belong to the Jjaw people, which were an ethnic minority in the Eastern Region, and live in the Nigeria Delta. Treaties with the crown from the 1890s protected the River Chiefs, living in the Niger Delta.\(^{313}\) The chiefs argued that the crown had to protect them against the Eastern and Western governments and called for a “Protected Rivers State of Nigeria.”\(^{314}\) The Colonial Office got the legal judgment that the treaties were not “scraps of papers” and still valid.\(^{315}\) As a result, they were invited to the conference, but the British position was that “treaties made in very different circumstances [should not be allowed] to impede the march of Nigeria to full self-government.”\(^{316}\) A creation of new states would reassure minorities, but would delay independence, which would anger the majorities. In contrast to other minorities groups, the River Chiefs were represented at the conference.\(^{317}\)

The big three had decisive influence over the list of participants. In January 1956, the Governor-General met representatives from the Nigerian governments. The new Governor-General Sir James Wilson Robertson (1899-1983), who took over in June 1955, mostly left the talking to the Nigerians, which agreed on 10 delegates per Region and delegates from Lagos, the federal government and the Southern Cameroons. The regional governments would select the delegates under the principles, accepted at the last conference.\(^{318}\) The Secretary of States for the Colonies Lennox-Boyd reserved the right to ensure that “all shades of political opinion” would be represented.\(^{319}\) This selection procedure made participation exclusive because the AG, the NCNC and the NPC could use their influence to limit the representation of minorities. This demonstrates that

---


\(^{313}\) Memorandum on the Protection Treaties with the Chiefdoms of the River Province and Adjacent Areas of Nigeria ..., December 1956, FCO 141/13395.

\(^{314}\) Letter from the Secretarial Headquarters of the Conference of Rivers Chiefs and People to the Governor-General, 15 October 1956, FCO 141/13395.

\(^{315}\) Memorandum on the Protection Treaties with the Chiefdoms of the River Province and Adjacent Areas of Nigeria ..., December 1956, FCO 141/13395.

\(^{316}\) This letter is an example that parts of the Migrated Archives can be found under other references. In this case under WAF 68/352/02. Letter from J S Macpherson to Graham Page & Co, 17 July 1957, FCO 141/13395.


\(^{318}\) Minutes of a Meeting held at Government House ... to Discuss the Preliminary Arrangements for the Constitutional Conference, 6 January 1956, FCO 141/13385.

\(^{319}\) Letter from H Hare to Sir J Robertson, 16 February 1956, FCO 141/13385.
British policy-makers welcomed the “Eastern Crisis” because the conference could be postponed and the process towards self-governance would be slowed down.\(^{320}\) A reason was the huge workload of the colonial administration. The chief secretary in Nigeria Sir Hugo Marshall pointed out: “There is the cold, hard fact that we have not the human resources to change the administrative machinery again for the fifth time in nine or ten years.”\(^{321}\) This administrative burden limited the capacity to establish a good working government before independence. Therefore, Lennox-Boyd made the decision to postpone the conference until Azikiwe’s role in the African Continental Bank had been investigated in July 1956.\(^{322}\) The absence of the NCNC, who was the strongest party in the Eastern House of Assembly and the House of Representatives, was unrealistic because the conference would have little legitimacy. The AG and the NPC were dissatisfied. On the one hand, Awolowo argued that “some people” saw the timing in setting up the tribunal against Azikiwe was a British tactic to delay the conference and the AG were getting frustrated that the problems in the Eastern region” should delay self-governance.\(^{323}\) On the one hand, The NPC was “strongly opposed to all-Nigerian matters being dependent on the actions of Zik and N.C.N.C.”\(^{324}\) Nevertheless, the conference was delayed.

The longer preparation time allowed getting ready for the negotiations in detail. This time the Colonial office was eager to make as little constitutional concessions as possible. It assessed Nigeria as “unfit for independence for many years” because of “backwardness of its people ... inter-tribal fears and jealousies, and the corruption of much of its political life.”\(^{325}\) A confrontation with the AG and the NCNC was likely. The former was expected to press for new states, continued “Westernisation” of the civil service in the region, the return of Lagos to the West and self-governance.\(^{326}\) The latter had similar requests for reduced executive powers of the Governors, a uniform electoral laws based on universal adult suffrage, revenue allocation, redrawing of boundaries and self-governance.\(^{327}\) In contrast, the NPC was expected to conserve the existing constitution to give more time for self-governance. Other delegations were expected to join the AG and NCNC on the issue of new states, although

\(^{320}\) Letter from Sir T Lloyd to Sir H Marshall, 12 May 1955, FCO 141/13384.
\(^{322}\) Lynn, “The ‘Eastern Crisis’ of 1955–57, the Colonial Office, and Nigerian Decolonisation”: 104.
\(^{323}\) Letter from Sir J Robertson to T E Williamson, 31 August 1956, FCO 141/13398.
\(^{324}\) Personal Telegram no. 257 from Sir J Robertson to J Macpherson, 1 November 1956, FCO 141/13399.
\(^{326}\) “1956 Conference on the Constitution; Brief for His Excellency the Governor-General of the Federation,” 30 September 1955, FCO 141/13385.
\(^{327}\) Ibid.
there would be different opinions on their borders. Based on these expectations two negotiations tactic were planed. First, the huge problems of the administration should be outlined, highlighting the necessary additional time before self-governance. Second, the NPC should be supported in their opposition.

However, the big three shattered British expectations. The British colonial administration was surprised, when the House of Representatives voted for self-governance of Nigeria in 1959 a few weeks before the conference. Even the NPC, fearing to lose influence to nationalistic elements of the educated class in the North, supported the motion. Robertson got to the heart of the dilemma the Colonial Office was facing again: “either to give independence too soon and risk a complete breakdown of administration, or to hang on too long, risk ill-feeling and perhaps disturbance, and eventually to leave bitterness behind.”

The elaboration of the preparations makes three things clear. First, the colonial administration had enough capacities to control the date of the conference. Its power was eroding, but the British policy-makers were determined to lead Nigeria to independence. Second, the dominance of three parties was well established and new actors, such as the minorities, had a problem to get heard. The constitution did not set legally binding requirements in regards to the role of minorities. This power balance indicated that the constitutions shaped the political life, as Rothermund argues. Third, the situation in Nigeria was very fluid and could hardly be predicted.

---

328 Ibid.
329 Letter from Sir J Robertson to T B Williamson, 1 April 1957, CO554/1583.
330 Ibid.
4.3. Negotiations – British Delaying Tactics

The conferences began on 23 May at Lancaster House in London and ended on 26 June 1957. During a month of negotiations, the Colonial Office and Nigerian representatives dealt with issues of the “Lyttelton Constitution.” The most debated points were the relationship between federal government and self-governed regions, proposed states for minorities and the date for independence of Nigeria. The British negotiations tactic was to exploit their role as mediator between Nigerian interests and limits the number of constitutional changes.

The meetings were arranged similarly to the last conference. The 53 delegates and their advisors met twice a day for around 4 hours. Afterwards, the steering committee with about 20 persons discussed the day-to-day business and press-communiqués. Lennox-Boyd chaired both meetings. He opened each session with a summary of the British position, often accompanied by handing out a British memorandum. The political parties also had their own memoranda. On this basis the negotiations proceeded. The open discussions were factual as far as the formal minutes allow concluding. In contrast to the other conferences, the “Migrated Archives” do not include the communications between the British delegation and the Nigerian administration. The first meeting and the last meeting were reserved for speeches of the heads of the delegations. All talks were confidential and a pass was needed to access the meetings.

The first discussed item on the list was the regional self-governance. Lennox-Boyd kept the promise of his predecessor and offered it to the regional governments. However, he highlighted that there had to be financial security for civil servants in the regional public service. The AG and the NCNC welcomed Lennox-Boyd’s proposal and ask for self-governance, which was one of their central promises to the electorate. Moreover, the NPC and argued for safeguarding the federation against actions of self-governing regions because it did not want regional self-governance. The NPC’s reason was the same as at the last negotiations, the fear of Southern dominance. The compromise between the delegations was that the Governors-General got reserve powers against regional bills. The British approach

---

336 Ibid, 37.
to set conditions for self-governance worked and they could ensure the safety of their civil servants.

The issue of new states was highly controversial. The big three had propagated new states with the exception of their own region because they hoped to decrease their rivalries power basis. Lennox-Boyd proposed a British commission to investigate the fears of minorities and elaborate only the most substantive claims for new states. The NPC and NCNC delegates opposed any limitation and wanted that the commission would “free to examine all claims for all areas.”\(^{337}\) The AG opposed them because comprehensive investigations could seriously delay self-government.\(^ {338}\) Lennox-Boyd suggested a break and all could reflect on the impasse in the negotiation. In an unrecorded consultation with the three Nigerian Premiers all four agreed to let all claims investigate, but new states were the last resort.\(^ {339}\) The crucial characteristic of this debate was that it was decided without the minorities. The delegate, for the River Chiefs the lawyer Briiye questioned the decision because it possibly excluded new regions with territory of two different states. He was referenced to the commission, which would have no power to chance the decision. As a result, it was an exclusive debate that neglected minorities’ interests.

Lennox-Boyd highlighted took the position that a British “categorical statement” on independence was not possible until the structure of the federation was clear.\(^ {340}\) He rejected the joint memorandum for 1959 of all prime ministers and the Head of the South Cameroons.\(^ {341}\) A “blank cheque” for a specific date from the British government was impossible.\(^ {342}\) He brought the example the fears of minorities, which could not be taken lightly. In the following, the Nigerians asked for time to discuss the issue among them alone.\(^ {343}\) In inter-party discussion, all parties agreed on a memorandum on the future structure of the Nigerian state, with the exception of the NEPU and KNDP.\(^ {344}\) When the discussions of the proposed federal structure were almost finished, Lennox-Boyd proposed to meet again in 1960, after the next federal elections in Nigeria, to find a date. He avoided giving any specification, arguing that a fixed date was impossible. The results of regional self-governance and the issue of new


\(^{338}\) Ibid., 157.

\(^{339}\) Ibid., 160.

\(^{340}\) Ibid., 162.


\(^{342}\) Ibid., 168.


\(^{344}\) Both parties agreed first but later withdrew their support later. Ibid., 175.
states had to be decided first. The Nigerians were disappointed and reserved to themselves “the right to pursue the issue further with a view to impressing upon Her Majesty's Government the necessity for granting independence to the Federation of Nigeria no later than 2nd April 1960.” Compared to the first negotiations, the Nigerian tactic had fundamentally changed. Inter-party negotiations without the British resulted in a cohesive Nigerian position. The Nigerians stand firm on a specific date and Lennox-Boyd could only delay the decisions.

In comparison, the three items on the negotiation table demonstrate the British negotiations tactics. On self-government, the Colonial Office was able to obtain major concessions. On the other two items, only a postponement of the decisions was possible. On paper, the announced minority commission was very useful for the British. On the one hand, they could show themselves as protectors of minorities. On the other hand, they could use it as an excellent pretext to oppose any definite decision on a date for independence. However, this was primarily a tactical decision. The cooperation with the prime ministers, when there had been a deadlock on states, showed that Nigerians were integrated, but there was a hierarchy with the AG, the NCNC and the NPC at top. Against an almost unified party alliance for independence, Lennox-Boyd could do little and the tactic of mediating Nigerian demands failed. This unity showed that, in spite of their differences, Nigerian’s could work together. The Nigerians improved their negotiation skills and seemed to mistrust each other less.

Overall, the negotiations were the next step towards Nigerian independence. The Colonial Office options became limited and the crucial issue of independence was only postponed. The Nigerian delegations became emancipated and the colonial tool of a conference was losing its magic.

346 Ibid., 27.
347 It is important to emphasise “seemed” because formal documents did not catch the atmosphere of negotiations.
4.4. Results – Steps towards Independence

The results of the review of the “Lyttelton Constitution” had an impact on two levels. On the one hand, changes to the constitution continued. On the other hand, the power balance in the conflict over the transfer of the colonial state was shifting.

The constitutional chances were clear steps towards independence and the federal character was further developed. The Nigerians took over the government in the Southern regions and gained more control over the civil service. Moreover, a federal Prime Minister was introduced. This was an important step to establish all necessary structure to rule Nigeria without the British. Several commissions were established to elaborate on the decision and prepare the necessary drafts on the electoral law, the police and necessary fiscal changes.348 The British controlled these commissions and their findings. In the case of the minority commission the United Kingdom had veto power, when “administrative or economic points” were against new states.349 The reports of these commissions would be partly discussed in an ad hoc meeting in Lagos and a resumed conference.350 The proceeding was now one conference after another. Although the Colonial Office remained vague on independence, the constitutional changes already prepared it.

The most important result for decolonisation was that the constitutional conference became a robust conflict solving mechanism in two respects. On the one hand, the second conference prevailed against attempts to bypass it in the “Eastern Crisis.” On the other hand, it defended the existing balance of regional parties. Ethnic minorities exploited by the big three for own their goals, did not gain a foothold. Instead, the British lost the initiative to the AG, the NCNC and the NPC. Their agenda was to defend their interest not only against the British, but also Nigerian rivals.

---

348 Office, Report by the Nigeria Constitutional Conference held in London in May and June 1957, 16; 23; 28.
349 Ibid., 14.
350 Ibid., 93.
Chapter 5: Finding a date for independence - The Constitutional Conferences in 1958

5.1. Prelude – No Crisis

The conference in 1958 was a resumed conference in the narrow sense. However, it is worthwhile to look at it separately for two reasons. First, the participants made the final decisions that would determine self-governance in 1960. Second, the preparations and the proceedings were relatively smoothly, compared to the previous conferences. The reason was that the constitutional conference had become an established tool to prepare Nigeria and solve conflicts over the transfer of the government to Nigerian elites and Nigerianisation of the public service. That it was well established in 1958 allows looking back at the previous two conferences to outline change and continuity in the development of the constitutional conferences. The ten months between the conferences were relatively calm.

The Eastern region was a troublemaker because the fundamental problems had not been solved at the conference. The financial policy of the Azikiwe government had caused an unbalanced budget. The regional government was “losing money by a combination of fantasy, inefficiency, and corruption.”\footnote{Minute by B L Barder on Approaching Difficulties in the Eastern Region, 11 December 1957, CO 554/2128.} These were the consequences of the “Eastern Crisis”, when the Colonial Office failed to remove a corrupt government. The Colonial Office was losing the fight against the corruption because neither Azikiwe nor his party was committed to it. Azikiwe blamed others for the corruption and portrayed the British policy as a perfidious plan against self-determination. British Estimates were that the policy of the NCNC would cause “as many as 50% of the expatriate Civil Servants” to leave within a year.\footnote{Ibid.} This would be a crucial blow to the already understaffed civil service. To compensate for the financial deficit, the tuition fees for schools were reintroduced. The decision was breaking the NCNC’s electoral promise of free education. Local riots broke out in February 1958. The assistant under-secretary Eastwood, an advocate for the removal of Azikiwe, thought about the suspension of the constitution again.\footnote{Letter from C G Eastwood to Sir J Robertson on the Political Implications of the Rioting in the Eastern Region, 10 February 1958, CO 554/1955.} However, the Colonial Office realised that the Nigerians had to deal with Azikiwe in the future. The troubles in the Eastern region highlight that Nigerian parties and the Colonial Office, which missed its target of a good government, accepted an inefficient administration. This was a problem that the constitutional conferences could not solve.
In February 1958 Robertson held an *ad hoc* conference in Lagos and final preparations for the next conference started. Robertson, the Governors and Eastwood agreed on unified electoral system. One electoral commission and one register were seen as essential to limit the costs and the preparation time of federal elections in the following year. The structure of the electoral system would determine the final elections before independence and the resumed conference had to ratify the electoral law. Other changes, such as a Nigerian Defence Council, were decided. Furthermore, the plans for the resumed conference were discussed and the preliminary choice September in London because the other commissions needed additional time to finalize their reports. This shows that the Nigerians were interrelated more into the planning process than the last times.

Independence became the Nigerian battle cry and in August, two motions emphasised self-government. These kinds of motions were a symbolic move to demonstrate the commitment against colonialism. It was the third expression of the wish for independence, after the motion in 1953 for self-governance in 1956 and after the motion in 1957 for independence in 1959. On the one side, these declarations were addressed to the Nigerian people. This was the point on the political agenda, which could be best communicated to the masses. On the other side, it showed the British that Nigeria would stand firm against further delays and remained united. The Northern House of Assembly voted for regional self-governance in 1959 because it was a formal requirement to make it possible that the Colonial Office would consider. It line of argument had been for years that no region could unilateral decide the fate of the federation because it would lead to fragmentation, such as a seceding North. The House of Representatives demanded self-governance for the federation until the 2 April 1960. This was the exact date they had proposed at the last conference. There were few alternatives for the Colonial Office because the Nigerian political parties weakened the central argument to delay independence.

In contrast to the first conferences, no crisis shaped the preparations. Although crisis destabilised British rules, they were opportunities to capitalise on inter-party rivalries. In this sense, this prelude was risky as well because there was a cohesive Nigerian front for independence. At the resumed conference, the Colonial Office would be confronted with the demands of the previous year. It could not take a breather because not only the implementation of the results of the last conference but also the planning of the resumed

354 Note of a Meeting of the Governor-General and Governors with Mr. Eastwood, 3 February 1958, FCO 141/13490.
355 Letter from C G Eastwood to Sir J Robertson, 28 February 1958, FCO 141/13490.
356 Lynn, ““We Cannot let the North Down”: British Policy and Nigeria in the 1950s,” 156.
conference demanded special attention. It was time to find a final answer to the dilemma of giving independent to Nigeria without an efficient administration and a trustworthy government.
5.2. British Preparations – Considering the Implications of Independence

The fact that it was a resumed conference made the preparation easier because no fundamental changes, for instance on the number of delegations, were necessary. The preparation of negotiating topics, such as independence, was more important. Nevertheless, the Colonial Office was aware that this conference would be decisive. A decisive role played the reports of the commissions. The crucial difference to the previous preparations was that technicalities of self-governance were discussed for the first time.

The last conference had predetermined the date, the location and the participants. The location of the conference was the only debated issue. There were Nigerian voices to hold it in Lagos. Awolowo argued that Nigerians should decide in Nigeria over Nigerian independence.\(^{357}\) Furthermore, the public opinion in Nigeria was against financing the expenses of the large delegations in London again.\(^{358}\) The Colonial Office successfully opposed this change because the Secretary of State for the Colonies could not leave London due to his obligations as minister.

The Minorities Commission was the most important step in the preparations because the minority question was a controversial issue. Named after its chair Harry Willink (1894-1973), the commission held open and private meetings in the regions between 23 November 1957 and 12 April 1958.\(^{359}\) It looked into fears of minorities caused by the imbalance of ethnic groups in the regions.\(^{360}\) The integrity of the commission was questionable.\(^{361}\) Willink kept close contact with the Colonial Office, which could influence the report. He sent the report before the publication to the Secretary of States for the Colonies. “He [the Secretary] may have the opportunity to mention to us any points where he thinks the wording might give offence.”\(^{362}\) The report was in line with the Colonial Office’s opinion and rejected new states. Additionally, the possible impact of the report was limited. When Sir Robertson spoke with the Western politician Chief Akrana about the report, the chief told him that the conference should accept the recommendations. He did not agree with the report on the issue of the control over the police, but “we can change the police afterwards, when we are

\(^{357}\) Letter from Awolowo to the Governor, 18 March 1958, FCO 141/13490.
\(^{358}\) Notes of a Meeting in the Colonial Office, 1 May 1958, FCO 141/13490.
\(^{360}\) Ibid., 2-3.
\(^{362}\) Letter from H Willink to Robertson, 12 April 1958, FCO 141/13490.
independent.”363 His honest statement proves that British decision-makers had to prepare for the changes independence could bring.

Independence dominated the “official mind” in the preparations because it was the new dominant frame that shaped the perspective of British decision-makers. During the planning, the question of an additional conference in 1959 arose in the Colonial Office. The independence of Ghana in 1957, which was one reason for Nigerian demands, had shown that a lot of technicalities, for example in regards to foreign relations, had to be dealt with. The impact of regional self-governance and the next federal elections could be assessed at an additional conference, which would allow the Colonial Office “to defer until as late as possible the final discussions.”364 The key problem was no longer the reform of the colonial state, but the position of an independent Nigeria within the international system.

This change is also visible in changes to the internal communication, which was restructured to keep it secret from the Nigerians after independence. The Colonial Office made the necessary decisions in a meeting on 1 March 1958 in London. The personal series of correspondence to the Secretary of State for the Colonies should be kept secret.365 A new communication series for the personal correspondence “would arouse deep suspicion and antagonism from the Governments of the self-governing Regions.”366 Therefore, the communication had to be restructured. This would make “unlikely to deduce ... the existence of the personal series.”367 The personal series is part of the “Migrated Archives” collection. It was kept secret for decades because it contains assessments of leading Nigerian politicians and had the potential to harm British credibility. The Colonial Office decided to deceive the Nigerians.

The negotiation aims changed because this time the focus was not on delaying independence, but making the necessary adjustment for an independent Nigeria. “Everyone [in the Colonial Office] felt that independence for Nigeria in 1960 was certain to come up and would probably be raised by all the delegations as the first item.”368 The plan was that Lennox-Boyd encourages the delegates to accept the report to avoid “a strong sense of abandonment” by the minorities. He should highlight that new states would automatically result in a later independence.369 Furthermore, self-governance for the North was accepted.370

363 Letter from Eastwood to Robertson, 30 August 1958, FCO 141/13490.
365 Notes of a Meeting in the Colonial Office, 1 May 1958, FCO 141/13490.
366 Ibid.
367 Ibid.
368 Note by A G H Gardener-Brown, 8 March 1958, FCO 141/13490.
Regional self-government was no longer a point of contention because the North had remained stable over the previous years. Both examples show the Colonial Office did plan a smooth transition at this point.

In contrast to the other conferences, the situation was more serious for British policy-makers because the conference would shape independence, which would fundamentally shift the relationship between the British people and the Nigerian people. Nevertheless, the British administration was not powerless at this stage. The minority commission’s report was a way to influence Nigerian decisions because it was shaped by British interests. This was another instance that the minority question was subjected to political interests. The analysis of the preparations has shown the conference was aimed at creating an independent state.

370 Ibid., 81.
5.3. Negotiations – Clash over New States

The resumed conference met at Lancaster House between 29th September and 27th October in 1958.371 The delegates negotiated the outstanding questions of constitutional reform and assessed the reports on minorities and fiscal issue. The three Nigerian premiers were united on the issue of hierarchy of these items. The Sardauna of Sokoto said at the first plenary meeting: “The most important of these is the fixing of a date for the independence”372 Awolowo highlighted that independence for Nigeria is “imperative” and Azikiwe associated the NCNC with this aim.373 This part will reveal how the Colonial Office finally yielded to Nigerian demands for independence and that on other issues the Nigerian delegates were divided. The British delegates were the moderators to find a modus Vivendi in Nigeria.374 The administrative arrangements were similar to the last conference. There were plenary meetings twice a day for around five hours and the same Steering Committee was appointed.375

The items on the negotiation table can be classified into two categories. On the one hand, technicalities in relation to independence, such as citizenship, representation overseas and powers to safeguard the nation, were examined.376 That these technicalities were on the agenda indicates that perspective had shifted. On the other hand, general issues of the constitution, which were preconditions for independence, had to be discussed. The final structure of the state bureaucracy, for example a federal supreme court and the police, was the overlapping theme between both categories.377 Three items on the list were central. The delegations had to agree upon the self-governance for the Northern region. An answer to the fears of minorities had to be found, in particular the calls for new states. Finally, the Colonial Office had to make a decision on independence in 1960. In one way or another all these item had been negotiated at every conference before.

Although the conference was aboard, the administrations and the people in Nigeria were regularly informed about the process. The “Migrated Archives” allow in this case picturing the conference from a new perspective. There were three kinds of information,

371 There was a library with relevant documents, such as the independence acts of other colonies, available to all delegates.
373 Ibid., 9; 12.
377 The Colonial Office had successfully kept the police out of the reach of the political parties so far to avoid misuse.
which were accessible to different groups. First, the deputy Governor-General Sir Robert Grey informed the acting Governor-General and the acting Lieutenant-Governors about the negotiations. Second, confidential summaries of the negotiations were given to the council of ministers for the first time. Third, press communiqués and leaks in the delegations allowed Nigerian newspapers to inform the Nigerian people.\textsuperscript{378} As a result, these negotiations were significantly less secret.

The tensions between Nigerian parties had not been solved and their rivalry continued. “I can’t sit on liquidation of my father’s Empire” was the heading of the Daily Service on 17\textsuperscript{th} October in Nigeria. This quote is from the former British Prime Minister Winston Churchill. It was alleged that the Sardauna of Sokoto had made this statement against new states in the Northern region. The newspaper article was also about a day of “threats and abuses” from the NPC.\textsuperscript{379} There was another leakage from the conference, but the source could not be identified. It could have been in the NCNC delegation.\textsuperscript{380} The issue of new states escalated because it was the last opportunity to change the regional power basis of the parties before independence. A split of the Northern region would break the monopoly of the NPC in the North. The leakage to the press was a Nigerian tactic, not so much for the negotiations but for the supporters in Nigeria.

Contrary to the highly debated introduction self-government in the Southern regions, the delegates agreed on Northern regional autonomy in principle. The discussion of the British proposal made progress from the beginning.\textsuperscript{381} The AG and the NCNC, which seemed “much confused and divided,” used the opportunity to propose changes to regional government in general.\textsuperscript{382} Nevertheless, the delegates agreed to the British proposal for self-government with only a few adjustments.\textsuperscript{383} This smooth decision-making was due to the fact that regional self-governance was the necessary precondition for independence. The AG and the NCNC could not oppose the NPC’s request without delaying independence. This made it possible that the British to

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item[378] Personal Telegram no 172 from Gardener-Brown to Grey, 6 October 1958, FCO 141/13490.
\item[379] "I can't sit on liquidation of my Father's Empire", \textit{Daily Service}, 17 October 1958, FCO 141/13490.
\item[380] Ibid.; Personal Telegram no 153 from Gardener-Brown to Grey, 10 October 1958, FCO 141/13490.
\item[381] Personal Telegram no 171 from Gardener-Brown to Grey, 3 October 1958, FCO 141/13490.
\item[382] Personal Telegram no 172 from Gardener-Brown to Grey, 6 October 1958, FCO 141/13490.
\item[383] Nigeria Constitutional Conference: Progress Report by the Acting Secretary, 21 October 1958, FCO 141/13490.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
The fast decision-making was due to precedent of the self-governance in the Southern regions. Furthermore, the Southern parties had to accept the wishes of the North to gain independence.

In Contrast to only one meeting for the fiscal report\(^{384}\), the dispute over the minority report took several days. This report was the only opportunity to the Nigerian people to put local issues indirectly in front of the conference without the proxy of the educated elite. The mass had been excluded from the negotiations from the beginning. In his opening statement, Lennox-Boyd made it clear that the United Kingdom agreed to the recommendation and highlighted that new states would delay the date of independence. Grey describes that the delegations “suffered” several long speeches from Nigerians, up to two and a half hours.\(^{385}\) The AG, who saw itself as an advocate of minorities, opposed the NPC and NCNC. The other main parties agreed to the report. The delegates of the minorities, such as the River Chiefs, criticised that they did not had enough opportunity to make their statements in front of the commission.\(^{386}\) The issue was then postponed for a few days because of this impasse.\(^{387}\) Robertson saw no change in the protagonists, compared to last year.\(^{388}\) The minority commission’s report had not helped to find a compromise. At this point, Lennox-Boyd had to be a mediator between the groups again. He talked with the primers and the prime ministers to find a solution.

The compromise on the minority question was bad. On the 21 October was “the best day for a week.”\(^{389}\) The AG, the NPC and the NCNC accepted that new states before independence were not possible.\(^{390}\) Lennox-Boyd had convinced them by arguing that either new states or independence in 1960 were possible. The compromise was that the next constitution had to include the possibility to create new states after independence. In this sense the conflict had been frozen and was not solved. This becomes particularly clear, when taking into account that the representatives of minorities disagreed. The AG, the NCNC and the NPC made this decision. This compromise highlights that decision-making was exclusive and the big three dominated the negotiations.

Lennox-Boyd kept the British cabinet regularly informed about the progress of the conference for the first time. The conflict had reached the highest level of British decision-

\(^{384}\) Personal Telegram no 176 from Gardener-Brown to Grey, 10 October 1958, FCO 141/13490.
\(^{385}\) Personal Telegram no 173 from Gardener-Brown to Grey, 7 October 1958, FCO 141/13490; Personal telegram no 180 from Gardener-Brown to Grey, 13 October 1958, FCO 141/13490.
\(^{386}\) Personal Telegram no 179 from Gardener-Brown to Grey, 11 October 1958, FCO 141/13490.
\(^{387}\) Personal Telegram no 174 from Gardener-Brown to Grey, 8 October 1958, FCO 141/13490.
\(^{388}\) Letter from Sir J Robertson to R F A Grey, 9 October 1958, FCO 141/13490.
\(^{389}\) Personal telegram no 188 from Gardener-Brown to Grey, 21 October 1958, FCO 141/13490.
\(^{390}\) The AG reserved the right to raise the issue again, if it won the federal elections.
making and it was clear that a fundamental decision would come. On the 22 October the United Kingdom decided to grant independence to the Federation of Nigerian on the 1st October in 1960 because the negotiations had produced the necessary preconditions.\textsuperscript{391} This date was a few months later than the 2\textsuperscript{nd} April, the Nigerians had proposed. Nevertheless, the Nigerian delegates enthusiastically accepted the date without any discussions. The Colonial Office gave in to the Nigerian wish of independence within six years after the motion for self-governance in 1953. Azikiwe used the decision to outline in a memorandum that the struggle for self-governance started in 1920, when the National Congress of British West Africa petitioned for self-governance.\textsuperscript{392} In this forty years struggle the constitutional conference had accelerated the constitutional process beyond return.

Although the British policy-makers accomplished their negotiation aims, they did not win. The aims were minimalistic and focused on the remaining stumbling blocks for independence, which was a red line in 1953. The British negotiation tactics did not change much over three conferences. On the one hand, Nigerian demands were confronted with the practical requirements, such as a working civil service and a Nigerian government. Technicalities and the structure of the colonial state were the arguments for delaying constitutional progress. On the other hand, the Secretary of State for the Colonies used his role as mediator in cases of deadlocks between Nigerians to promote British proposals as compromise. Furthermore, the negotiations had become an institution with decision-making authority. The AG, the British, the NCNC and the NPC were the decision-makers. However, the conference in 1958 was no silver bullet.

\textsuperscript{391} Cabinet Conclusions, 22 October 1958, CC 75(58) 4.
5.4. Results – Independence in 1960

A conference is dependent on its participants because they make the decisions. This becomes particularly obvious at the conference in 1958, when less than hundred delegates, representing Nigeria, made the final decision at the eve of independence. At this chapter of the thesis, it is time to do three things. First, the results of this conference have to be assessed. Second, the ambivalence of the conferences can be shown. Third, a brief look ahead at the British-Nigerian relationship is informative.

The technicalities were the easiest issues to agree on at these negotiations. Federalism was the final answer for the strained relationship between centre and the regions. The Nigerian citizenship after independence, the position of Lagos and other points were mere formalities. The final form of institutions, such as a federal police, a second chamber and a federal supreme court, were designed. The British emergency powers would be transferred to the Nigerian government after independence. Even down to the censorship of films, the state became all the tools of an independent state. Moreover, the federal elections would be held on the basis of an updated electoral law, which introduced federal constituencies. However, the regions still had different electoral laws, which would be applied also at federal elections. The new federal parliament would be elected in 1959 and ask for independence in 1960.

The results were a major setback for the minorities. Around half of the population was an ethnic minority in their region. The fade of the River Chiefs, who belong to the Ijaw minority in the Eastern region, symbolises this defeat. The minority commission was not competent on the legal implication of the old treaties with the Crown. In a final decision at the conference, Lennox-Boyd outlined that there were no courts, which could interpret the validity of the treaties. The United Kingdom had decided that self-governance would bring an end to the protection of the Crown because the River Chiefs participated in the conferences. This was a disappointing result for the River Chiefs. Some minor changes, which the conference had agreed on, were not enough. The new constitution would have fundamental rights. There would be a few special areas within the regions to protect minorities. However, their function remained unclear. Moreover, after independence minorities could call for a law to become independence. However, the same political parties that denied new states in 1958 would decide it. In the case of the River Chiefs it would take a crushed uprising in

396 Ibid., 25.
February 1966 and a military decree in 1967 to establish the Rivers State.\textsuperscript{397} As a result, the conference froze existing conflicts within the Nigerian society along ethnic lines.

The dream of independence had become a unifying thought for the Nigerian political elite and the Nigerian people. The self-governance of the Northern region in 1959 symbolises this statement.\textsuperscript{398} The conservative NPC, which was always reserved on independence, made the condition to independence possible. Since 1957 the three major parties had partly worked together to lead Nigeria into self-governance. They made decolonisation possible against the resistance of the Colonial Office. The conference solved the dispute over two conflict items, which were Nigerianisation and independence, but failed overcome the conflict over the relationship between federal centre and regions.

This was the independence of a poorly designed state. Although there was constitutional change, the continuity cannot be neglected. The potential breaking points of the colonial state were not fixed, although everyone was aware of them. The Federation was asymmetrical. The three regions were dominated by the Northern region. This was against a fundamental precondition of federalism of equal units, which can balance each other.\textsuperscript{399} Moreover, the constitutional conferences had failed to address the fears of minorities adequately.\textsuperscript{400} Their fears are understandable because the three major parties, the AG, the NPC and the NCNC, had their power basis in their ethnic groups. They used governmental resources and ethnocentric electoral campaigns to extend their power. Thereby, they managed to claim the government from the British and defend it from the political opposition. Nigeria was technically ready for self-government but the political elite not ready for good government.

One crucial item on the British agenda was left over. A defence agreement to safeguard British military interests was a vital issue at the last conference in 1960.\textsuperscript{401} This conference was mainly on technicalities. Although the Nigerian political elite agreed on a defence agreement, it was never really implemented. The independent Nigerian people claimed their price. Lawal’s insightful comment on the failed defence agreement:

“This, in a nutshell, can be described as the fortune that befell Britain’s aspiration in an independent Nigeria, where the politicians seemed to have played along until independence, before allowing the

\textsuperscript{401} This point was already discussed at the cabinet meeting that decided Nigerian independence.
force of public opinion and the general anti-British feeling to take over their pre-independence pro-British attitude.\textsuperscript{402}

Conclusion

Although the constitutional conferences in London and Lagos have shaped the transfer of government to Nigerian elites, they have played a secondary role in historical studies on Nigerian decolonisation. Historians and other academics have interpreted them through the produced constitution and thereby they have neglected the process of constitution-making. Using a comparison between the conference in 1953/54, 1957 and 1958, this thesis has intended to clarify the structural role of the conferences within the constitutional reform process and to contribute to the historiographical understanding of the British management of the Nigerian decolonisation. I have assessed the conferences as a colonial instrument to stabilise colonial rule. Based on a historical analysis of the conferences, I have argued that the British policy-makers pursued a reactionary policy. Moreover, I have demonstrated that this colonial instrument was inadequate because the Colonial Office lost the initiative and thereby failed to determine the transfer of the control to Nigerian elites.

As the analysis of the readjustment of the British Empire in the 1950s has highlighted, the British colonial system was transforming. The Second World War weakened the United Kingdom and British policy-makers had to adjust their colonial policy to suit a rapidly changing world. In Nigeria the colonial state structures were too rigid to deal with political transformations and the accompanying conflicts with Nigerians. Fears between ethnic and religious groups caused crises and broke the constitutional system. The result was an open situation, which was shaped by uncertainty with regards to the future of colonial rule. The British policy-makers had to adjust colonial structures, which had determined the relationship between the Nigerian people and the British colonial masters for decades, in order to accommodate Nigerian demands.

The British policy-makers designed the constitutional conference as conflict solving mechanism to keep the upper hand in this uncertain time. They reduced the complexity of the conflicts and focused on the key problems at hand. The conferences gave a clear structure for a greater predictability in the face of an uncertain situation in Nigeria. In contrast to the unstable political situation in Nigeria, British policy-makers were in charge of the conferences. Although the three conferences de-escalated the transfer of control over the colonial state, it increased Nigerian agency within the constitution-making process. The first conference was a British emergency response and institutionalised the negotiations between British and Nigerian politicians over constitutional reforms. The second conference in 1957 consolidated the power relations at the conferences, such as the dominance of the British
delegation and the big three Nigerian delegations. At the third conference the negotiations had shifted to discussions over the preparation for independence. The negotiations were smooth and successful for the first time because all participants agreed on a fixed future for Nigeria before the negotiations started.

Looking at the four stages – prelude, preparation, negotiation, result – of the conferences, it becomes clear that the British policy-makers had often to adjust their policy. Crises played a crucial role for the conferences because they destabilised Nigeria. They evince the colonial system was unstable. Crises can be interpreted as creators of opportunities for all participants in the constitution-making process. The analysis of the preparations has detected two characteristics. First, the AG, the NCNC and the NPC were well integrated and had a special status. They had the right to nominate the Nigerian participants and consented to the debated constitutional issues. Second, the British administration extended the preparations over time. Every Nigerian party agenda was catalogued and the way of negotiations was planned meticulously. The British policy-makers tried to predict negotiations and reduce uncertainty. However, the negotiations were not static. The Nigerian delegations were an explosive mixture that could blow up negotiations. They coordinated each other better at the later conferences and thereby outmanoeuvre British negotiators. The analysis of the fourth stage has highlighted that British policy-makers used constitutions to frame the transfer of control and stabilise the colonial state. The relationship between society and state was of secondary importance. In this sense, the examination of the four stages highlights that constitutions were an embodiment of the colonial balance of power.

The conferences were exclusive and limited agency in the reform process to a small number of conflict parties. On the one hand, the British policy-makers lost the capacity to carry through their reform policies. The intervention of Secretary of State for the Colonies was an admission of the weakness of the colonial administration in Nigeria. The conferences were the opportunity to efficiently use their decreasing influence. On the other hand, the three regional parties the AG, the NPC and the NPC gained more influence. They could limit the British room for manoeuvre and defend their crucial position within the colonial system against smaller parties and ethnic minorities. The masses had little agency, although the electorate was the power basis of political parties.

The analysis of constitutional issues, put into three categories, has pointed out that two conflicts existed. On the one hand, the discussions over Nigerianisation reveal that the hierarchical relationship between the British Empire and the Nigerian people was highly disputed. British policy-makers made huge concessions on this issue and could contain the
first conflict. On the other hand, the disputes over the relationship between centre and region within the colonial state indicate a second conflict between Nigerians. Colonial rule had created a hostile atmosphere and caused a competition between ethnic and religious groups, which mistrusted and feared each other. The Nigerian parties, such as the NPC, sought not only to take over control from the British colonial administration, but also to protect the colonial state from the influence of other Nigerian parties. The result was the political and cultural division between the Northern region and the two Southern regions. Ethnic minorities became subject to political capture. The issue of independence, which is the third category, was the driving force of both conflicts because it was the worst case for the Colonial Office and for the NPC in the first years and the best case for most Nigerian parties.

The outlined characteristics of the conferences lead to the main research question: To what extent were the constitutional conferences an adequate mechanism to manage constitutional reforms and the accompanying conflicts in Nigeria? I have argued the conferences were inadequate to accomplish British goals because they appeared to be double-edged sword. British policy makers had three central aims for Nigeria. A united country, a pro-British government and a gradual development was the aim of the transfer of government to Nigerian elites. On the one hand, the conferences succeeded in creating a united pro-British Nigeria. As mediator in the negotiation the British authorities could delay the process and structure the Nigerian take over, in particular limit escalations. On the other hand, the rapid rate of reforms, accelerated by developments in Ghana, could not be stopped. Moreover, the British assumption that unity would bring stability was a chimera. Corruption, internal division and an inefficient administration were not tackled and became a growing threat to stability. Moreover, the conferences did not solve both conflict layers. The conflict between British and Nigerian parties was solved. However, the conflicts between Nigerians were not solved, they became frozen conflicts. The Nigerian Civil War from 1967-1970 is the best example. Furthermore, it is also necessary to look not only at the three overreaching aims, which are rather vague, but also the British short-term goals at the conferences.

The British negotiators did not accomplish the British goals, which became defensive and minimal. The first British proposal was to discuss the mechanism of constitutional reforms of the colonial state in 1953. The British policy-makers decided with Nigerians over independence in 1958. There is a huge difference between both British positions. As a mediator they could delay changes, but this was a defensive strategy. Although negotiations targets were often met, this was only possible because of a supporting Nigeria party, in
particular of the NPC.\textsuperscript{403} Such negotiations illustrate how limited the British options had become.

This thesis has supported the historiographical argument of an improvised British decolonisation management by Flint and other historians, which was shaped by British reactions to local events. Based on these results of my historical analysis, it has become clear that British policy-makers structured rather than managed the process of transferring control to Nigerian elites. In contrast to Lawal and Lynn, this thesis has emphasised the process rather than the results to assess the British actions.\textsuperscript{404} The results of this thesis suggest that colonized played a crucial role in decolonisation and historians should not overestimate the capacities of the British Empire in the 1950s. Moreover, change and continuity shaped decolonisation. Although the British rulers hand over control, their creation of an instable power balance in Nigeria continued.

The applied concepts and methods have shown that there is potential for further research on Nigerian decolonisation. My perspective has been focused on the British management of political transformation. The impact on the Nigerian society was only sketched. The example of ethnicity has indicated that decolonisation was also a transformation of cultural identities and the Nigerian society, as the rising demands of ethnic minorities and ethnocentric parties indicate. Moreover, in my research with “Migrated Archives” I saw signs that the “official mind” was shaped by stereotypes, such as the corrupt Nigerian elite and ethnic groups, of the Nigerian society.\textsuperscript{405} Exploring the perception of the Nigerian society by policy-makers in relation to political decision, could provide new insight on the impact of decolonisation, in particular in a comparison between colonial and post-colonial politics.

In the long term, an essential heritage of British colonial rule was ”an administrative structure of British design which turned its social and religious diversions into a political deadly polarization.”\textsuperscript{406} As the following quote in a BBC article from 2015 shows, the Nigerian people have not overcome this heritage, at least the political elites. “It is their [Nigerian politicians] own kind of local divide and rule. By the time they discover people will unanimously stand together for the good of all, the politicians will go and use the sentiment of

\textsuperscript{403} Lynn, ““We Cannot let the North Down”: British Policy and Nigeria in the 1950s,” 156-157.
\textsuperscript{405} Tignor, “Political Corruption in Nigeria before Independence,” 177-179.
\textsuperscript{406} Frederick Cooper, \textit{Africa since 1940: The Past of the Present} (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 171.
tribe, region or religion.” It is another exciting question, whether the Nigerian people had enough opportunities to overcome the social chasm running through their society in the 54 years of independence or had no chance because of postcolonial realities.

---

407 Ross, "Nigeria Elections: Mixing Religion and Politics."
Bibliography

Primary Sources

British National Archives

Office Instructions: Secret G Files, undated, FCO 141/13385.
Minute by Mr Lyttelton to Mr Churchill, 7 November 1951, CO 538/6696, no 12.
Letter from Sir J Macpherson to Sir T Lloyd, 8 January 1952, CO 967/173.
Inward Telegram no SX 1176 from HQ West Africa Command to Mr Lyttelton, 17 May 1952, CO 554/428, no 3.
Inward Savingram 1192 from Sir J Macpherson to Mr Lyttelton, 21 May 1952, CO 554/428, no 24.
Cabinet Memorandum by Mr Eden, 18 June 1952, CAB 129/53.
Draft Memorandum by the Northern Ministers and a select Committee of the Regional Legislature for the Minister of State for the Colonies from R Hopkinson, 1953, FCO 141/13363.
Brief for the Secretary of State on Action Group and NCNC Press Campaign against the Governor and the Administration of Nigeria, 1953, FCO 141/13369.
Notes for H E, 1953, FCO 141/13363.
Telegram from the Governor to The Secretary of State for the Colonies, 24 March 1953, FCO 141/13363.
Note of Conversation with Mr Awolowo, 9 April 1953, FCO 141/13363.
An Appreciation in Summarised Form of the Reactions of the Northern Region to the Present Political Crisis from Sir B Sharwood-Smith, 10 April 1953, FCO 141/13363.
Note from P S for H E, 10 April 1953, FCO 141/13368.
Some Conclusions of a Meeting at the Colonial Office under the Secretary of State's Chairmanship, 15 April 1953, FCO 141/13363.
Personal Telegram from the Governor Nigeria to Secretary of State, 20 April 1953, FCO 141/13363.
An Assessment of the political Situation in Nigeria, 9 May 1953, FCO 141/13363.
“Constitutional Developments in the Gold Coast and Nigeria”: Cabinet Memorandum by Mr Lyttelton, 13 May 1953, CAB 129/61.
Motion Introduced in the Northern House of Assembly, 22 May 1953, FCO 141/13368.
Telegram no 777 from the Governor Nigeria to the Secretary of State, 28 May 1953, FCO 141/13371.
Inward Telegram no 776 from Sir J Macpherson to Mr Lyttelton, 29 May 1953, CO 553/261, no 139.
Cablegram from the Muslim Welfare Association of Nigeria to the Secretary of State, 1 June 1953, FCO 141/13371.
Letter from N Azikiwe to Sir J Macpherson, 1 June 1953, FCO 141/13371.
Letter from O Awolowo to Sir J Macpherson, 1 June 1953, FCO 141/13371.
Note by O P Gunning, 5 June 1953, FCO 141/13371.
Personal Telegram no 73 from Secretary of State to the Governor Nigeria, 20 June 1953, FCO 141/13371.
Telegram no 905 from the Governor Nigeria to Secretary of State, 20 June 1953, FCO 141/13371.
Telegram no 1057 from the Governor Nigeria, to Secretary of State, 24 June 1953, FCO 141/13372.
Letter from the Ijaw Union to the Governor, 11 July 1953, FCO 141/13372.
Letter from Unknown to Gorell Barnes, 15 July 1953, FCO 141/13368.
Letter from A E T Benson to T B Williamson, 20 July 1953, CO 554/262, no 292.
Letter from A E T to T B Williamson, 21 July 1953, CO 554/258, no 1.
Letter from the Secretary of State for the Colonies to the Officer Administering the Government of Nigeria, 21 July 1953, FCO 141/13372.
Note of a Meeting with the Governor of Nigeria, 21 July 1953, FCO 141/13368.
Note of a Meeting with the Governor of Nigeria, 22 July 1953, FCO 141/13368.
Letter from K P Maddocks to A E T Benson, 5 August 1953, FCO 141/13369.
Letter from K P Maddocks to A E T Benson, 6 August 1953, FCO 141/13369.
Letter from K P Maddocks to A E T Benson, 10 August 1953, FCO 141/13369.
Minutes of the twelfth Plenary Meeting, 13 August 1953, CAB 133/129.
Minutes of the seventeenth Plenary Meeting, 19 August 1953, CAB 133/129.
Minutes of the eighteenth Plenary Meeting, 19 August 1953, CAB 133/129.
Minutes of the twenty-second Plenary Meeting, 22 August 1953, CAB 133 129.
Minutes of the eight Plenary Meeting, 28 January 1954, CAB 133/130.
Inward telegram no 133 from Sir J Macpherson to Mr Lennox-Boyd Concerning the Oyo Riots, 18 September 1954, Co 554/1236, no 7.

Minute by N B J Huijsman to T B Williamson Submitting an Appreciation, 2 December 1954, CO 554/850


Minute by A F F P News, 24 April 1955, FCO 141/13384.

Sir T Lloyd to Sir H Marshall, 12 May 1955, FCO 141/13384.

Letter from Sir T Lloyd to Sir H Marshall, 12 May 1955, FCO 141/13384.


Letter from T B Williamson to Sir C Pless, 3 June 1955, CO 554/1181.

Letter from Sir T Lloyd to Sir H Marshall, 12 May 1955, FCO 141/13384.


Letter from T B Williamson to Sir C Pless, 22 June 1955, CO 554/1181.


“1956 Conference on the Constitution; Brief for His Excellency the Governor-General of the Federation,” 30 September 1955, FCO 141/13385.

Minutes of a Meeting of Officials with Sir J Robertson and the Nigerian Governors, 4 October 1955, CO 554/1156.

Note by Mr Lennox-Boyd on his Meeting with Dr Azikiwe, 10 November 1955, CO 554/1109.

Minute on the Representation at the 1956 Conference on the Constitution of Nigeria and the Minutes of a Meeting held at Government House ... to Discuss the Preliminary Arrangements for the Constitutional Conference, 6 January 1956, FCO 141/13385.

J W Robertson to A Lennox-Lloyd, 13 January 1956, FCO 141/13385.


Letter from H Hare to Sir J Robertson, 16 February 1956, FCO 141/13385.

Cabinet Policy Review Committee, 1 June 1956, CAB 134/1315.

CRO Paper on the Probable Development of the Commonwealth over the Next Ten or Fifteen Years, June 1956, CO 1032/51, no 112.

Circular Telegram no 292 from the CRO to UK High Commission, 24 July 1956, CO554/1127.


Letter from Sir J Robertson to T E Williamson, 31 August 1956, FCO 141/13398.

Personal Telegram no. 211 from the Governor-General to the Secretary of State, 16 September 1956, FCO 141/13398.

Letter from the Secretarial Headquarters of the Conference of Rivers Chiefs and People to the Governor-General, 15 October 1956, FCO 141/13395.

Personal Telegram no. 257 from Sir J Robertson to J Macpherson, 1 November 1956, FCO 141/13399.

Memorandum on the Protection Treaties with the Chiefdoms of the River Province and Adjacent Areas of Nigeria ..., December 1956, FCO 141/13395.

Outward Telegram from Mr Maclay to Sir Robertson, 3 January 1957, Co554/1140.


Minute by B L Barder on Approaching Difficulties in the Eastern Region, 11 December 1957, CO 554/2128.

Note of a Meeting of the Governor-General and Governors with Mr. Eastwood, 3 February 1958, FCO 141/13490.

Letter from C G Eastwood to Sir J Robertson, 28 February 1958, FCO 141/13490.

Note by A G H Gardener-Brown, 8 March 1958, FCO 141/13490.


Letter from H Willink to Robertson, 12 April 1958, FCO 141/13490.

Notes of a Meeting in the Colonial Office, 1 May 1958, FCO 141/13490.

Letter from the British Embassy in Washington to S Lloyd, 10 July 1958, FCO 141/13702.

Letter from Eastwood to Robertson, 30 August 1958, FCO 141/13490.


Personal Telegram no 171 from Gardener-Brown to Grey, 3 October 1958, FCO 141/13490.

Personal Telegram no 172 from Gardener-Brown to Grey, 6 October 1958, FCO 141/13490.

Personal Telegram no 173 from Gardener-Brown to Grey, 7 October 1958, FCO 141/13490.

Personal Telegram no 174 from Gardener-Brown to Grey, 8 October 1958, FCO 141/13490.


Personal Telegram no 176 from Gardener-Brown to Grey, 10 October 1958, FCO 141/13490.

Personal Telegram no 153 from Gardener-Brown to Grey, 10 October 1958, FCO 141/13490.

Personal Telegram no 179 from Gardener-Brown to Grey, 11 October 1958, FCO 141/13490.

Personal telegram no 180 from Gardener-Brown to Grey, 13 October 1958, FCO 141/13490.

“I can't sit on Liquidation of my Father's Empire”, Daily Service, 17 October 1958, FCO 141/13490.
Nigeria Constitutional Conference: Progress Report by the Acting Secretary, 21 October 1958, FCO 141/13490.

Personal Telegram no 188 from Gardener-Brown to Grey, 21 October 1958, FCO 141/13490.

Cabinet Conclusions, 22 October 1958, CC 75(58) 4.

Letter from Alhaji Abubakar Tafawa Balewa to Dr Nkrumah, 1 March 1959, CO 554/2122, no 89.

Letter from M G Smith to A F F P Newns, 14 May 1959, FCO 141/13491.

Letter from C F MacLaren to K J Maonochie, 26 June 1959, FCO 141/13715.

Memorandum by Officials of the Treasury, Foreign Office and Minister of Defence for Letter from L W C Pearce-Gervis to C F MacLaren, 30 June 1959, FCO 141/13715.

Letter from A W Snelling to S J Fingland, 1 February 1960, CO 35/9344, no 50.

Address by Mr Macmillan to both Houses of the Parliament of the Union of South Africa, 3 February 1960, DO 35/10570, no 53.

**Command Paper**

1956-57 Cmnd. 207 Report by the Nigeria Constitutional Conference held in London in May and June, 1957.


**Newspaper Articles**


“NIGERIA HEADING TOWARDS DANGER: Dr Azikiwe May Overcome Moderates” The Manchester Guardian. March 9, 1953


“Nigeria's road to independence Chief Obafemi Awolowo.” The Guardian (1959-2003); September 21, 1960;
Publications of Participants


Publications of the Colonial Office


Source Editions


**Secondary Sources**

**Literature**


Eckert, Andreas. „Afrikanische Intellektuelle und Activisten in Europa und die Dekolonisation Afrikas.“ Geschichte und Gesellschaft 37, no. 2 (2011): 244-274.

Eckert, Andreas. ““We Are All Planners Now.”” Planung und Dekoloniisation in Afrika. “
Eckert, Andreas, „Spätkoloniale Herrschaft, Dekoloniisation und internationale Ordnung.
Einführende Bemerkungen.“ In Dekoloniisation: Prozesse und Verflechtungen (1945-
Egbe, Enyi John. “Native Authorities and Local Government Reforms in Nigeria Since
Ekeh, Peter P. “Colonialism and the Two Publics in Africa: A Theoretical Statement.”
Constitution-Making Developments and the Historical and Political Factors That
Falola, Toyin. Colonialism and Violence in Nigeria. Bloomington: Indiana University Press,
2009.
Flint, John. “Planned Decolonization and Its Failure in British Africa.” African Affairs 82, no.
Flint, John. ““Managing nationalism”: The colonial office and NnamdiAzikiwe, 1932–43.”
Gifford, Prosser and WM. Roger Louis eds. Decolonization and African Independence. The
Goldberg, Melvin. "Decolonisation and Political Socialisation with Reference to West
Gordon, April A. Nigeria's Diverse Peoples: A Reference Sourcebook. Santa Barbara, CA:


**Online Sources**


Appendix
Maps
Map 1: Nigeria in 1953
Map excluded due to copyright reasons.

Map 2: *Ethnicity*

Map excluded due to copyright reasons.

Source: Frederick A. O. Schwarz, Nigeria. *The Tribes, the Nation, or the Race, the Politics of Independence* Cambridge, Mass: M.I.T. Press, 1965, 4.
Map 3: Religion

Map excluded due to copyright reasons.

Source: Frederick A. O. Schwarz, Nigeria. *The Tribes, the Nation, or the Race, the Politics of Independence* Cambridge, Mass: M.I.T. Press, 1965, 8.
Map 4: Regions in 1954
Map excluded due to copyright reasons.