The Rule of the British Empire in Nigeria
(1861-1960)

A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for a Master’s Degree in Literature and Civilization

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Dedication

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Abstract

The nineteen century witnessed big changes in the world. The powerful countries were looking for sources to build their economy. Britain was a powerful country and because of the Industrial Revolution it started looking for raw materials resources outside its borders to satisfy its needs. As a consequence, it had started colonising lands in different continents as Africa and Nigeria was one of those colonies, which was colonised in 1861. It was characterised by abundance of natural resources which Britain needed.

From the ancient time, Great Britain was dealing with slave trade with Nigerian tribes whereby, the British had relations with Nigerians before colonising it. Great Britain had occupied Lagos port to stop the slave trade in 1861 then announced Lagos as a British colony. The British influence in the Nigerian area increased gradually over the 19th century, but Great Britain did not effectively start occupation of the Nigerian area until 1885 after the end of the Berlin Conference.

The dissertation is about the British colonial rule in Nigeria, from 1861 till independence in 1960 and the real reasons behind colonising it.

In general, this research discusses the causes of the British occupation and the impact of the British colonial rule on Nigerian economic growth and the social changes during its rule.

Keywords: Britain, Raw materials, Nigeria, Slave trade, British Empire, British colonial rule.
الملخص

شهد العالم في القرن التاسع عشر العديد من التغييرات، حيث أن الدول القوية أصبحت تبحث عن مصادر بناء اقتصادها. كانت بريطانيا دولة قوية و بسبب الثورة الصناعية بدأت في البحث عن الموارد خارج حدود مملكتها لتلبية احتياجاتها. و نتيجة لذلك، قامت بريطانيا باستعمار الأراضي في قارات مختلفة وكانت القارة الأفريقية و نيجيريا بالتحديد من تلك المستعمرات التي استعمرتها بداية من عام 1861. حيث أنها كانت تزخر بموارد طبيعية وثروات باطنية كانت بريطانيا في الأساس تبحث عنها.

كانت المملكة البريطانية منذ القدم تتعامل مع القبائل النيجارية من خلال تجارة الرقيق بحيث أنها وطدت علاقاتها مع النيجيريين قبل استعمارهم. بداية الاستعمار كانت مع لاكوس والتي كانت تقع بالساحل الإفريقي لأجل وقف تجارة العبيد وفي عام 1861 أعلنت كمستعمرة بريطانية. ومع نهاية القرن التاسع عشر، ازداد التفوذ البريطاني بعد ذلك ليمتد إلى المناطق الداخلية، ولكنها لم تبدأ فعليا باستعمارها إلا بعد نهاية مؤتمر برلين سنة 1885.

تتحرر هذا البحث حول الحكم الاستعماري البريطاني لنيجيريا أبتداءاً من عام 1861 حتى الاستقلال عام 1960 و الأسباب الحقيقية لاستعمارها.

يناقش هذا البحث بشكل عام، أسباب الاستعمار البريطاني و تأثير الحكم الاستعماري على النمو الاقتصادي والتغيرات الاجتماعية خلال فترة الاحتلال.

الكلمات المفتاحية:
بريطانيا، المواد الأولية، نيجيريا، تجارة العبيد، الإمبراطورية البريطانية، الحكم الاستعماري البريطاني.
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List of Abbreviations

AG  The Action Group
ATC  The African Trading Company
BUM  The Bornu Youth Movement
DPNC  The Democratic Party of Nigeria and Cameroon
NAC  The National African Company
NCNC  The National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons
NCNC  The National Convention of the Nigerian Citizens
NEPU  The Northern Elements Progress Union
NPC  The Northern People's Congress
RNC  The Royal Niger Company
UMBC  The United Middle Belt Congress
UNIP  The United National Independence Party
USA  United States of America
USSR  Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
WAC  The West African Company
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General Introduction

During the nineteenth century, the British Empire was looking for raw materials overseas to meet its increasing resources to grow its economy because of the second phase of the industrial revolution. It had constructed a second world wide empire based on conquered territories all over the world. It was the owner of the largest colonies in the whole world and Nigeria was one of them.

British intervention in the local political affairs of the coastal states in West Africa began with the abolition of slave trade and the subsequent establishment of commodity exchange centres along its coast during the second half of the nineteenth century. This had facilitated the interference of the British in the Nigerian area. By 1885 and after the Berlin Conference that had divided Africa into European colonies, the British started making treaties with tribes and establishing its colonies as quickstep to stop the French interference. Thereafter, the British government was able to penetrate into the vast hinterland, which had facilitated to bring all of the southern territories under British colonial rule.

The most important event was the conquest of Lagos between 1851 and 1861 that opened the gate for the Nigerian territory. The British influence spread into the hinterland from Lagos then the political control was formally established over Nigeria in 1906. The colonisation of Nigeria took a long period because of the Nigerian resistance; Britain took control of the southern then northern parts under the protectorate system; the Protectorate of Southern Nigeria (1899-1906) and the Protectorate of Northern Nigeria (1885-1900). Later in 1914, the British authorities amalgamated between Lagos, the southern and northern protectorates for economic reasons.

After the Second World War; the Nigerian nationalism developed and Britain decided to embark on colonial reforms. The rise of the awareness made the political parties asking for independence, the British thought about appointing the educated elites in administrations and
General Introduction

legislative councils. After including political parties in the British government; the demand for changing constitution and self-governing had increased. The federal elections of the Federal House of Representatives were held in 1959 and later in January 1960, the new Federal House of Representatives passed a resolution asking the British Government to fulfill its promise of giving Nigeria its independence. On October 1st 1960, Nigeria officially became independent country.

This dissertation is divided into three chapters. The first chapter deals with the pre-colonial period in Nigeria before the establishment of the British colonial rule (1800-1885) from different sides like authority, economy, religions and beliefs. Moreover it examines the British presence in Nigeria by the beginning of nineteenth century and its expansion in Lagos (1851-1861) then the southern and northern occupation (1850-1914) and the reasons of occupation. The second chapter examines the establishment of the British colonial rule, the crown colony of Lagos, the southern and northern protectorates, moreover the political, economic and socio-cultural policies in Nigeria. The third chapter discusses the decolonization movement in Nigeria (1945-1960), starting by the rise of nationalism after the Second World War and the role of political parties in making colonial reforms that led to federal elections then independence.

In order to illustrate what had been introduced, the dissertation will attempt to answer the following questions:

- Why did Great Britain colonise Nigeria?
- What was the reaction of the Nigerians?
- How did the British establish their colonial rule in Nigeria?
- What were their achievements there?

For answering the questions raised in this research work, it will examine important stages as the establishment of colonial rule in Nigeria starting by Lagos and later by northern
and southern lands which became later protectorates. Also, the economy that changed according to the British needs from self food sufficient to cash crops. Finally, the dissertation will discuss the nationalism movement the role of political parties to achieve independence.

The research uses different sources from books to articles that helped in collecting information.

This study also aims at exploring the history of Nigeria during the British rule, using a descriptive analytical research methodology based on historical events and facts related to the British colonialism of Nigeria from its beginning until the independence.
Chapter One

Nigeria before the Establishment of the British Colonial Rule (1800-1885)
1. Nigeria Historical Background

Introduction

Before the arrival of the British, Nigeria consisted of kingdoms, small villages and towns; ruled by governors or leaders. They were living in a harmony and dealing with each other, even if they were from different ethnic groups, religions and traditions.

They used to cultivate land to produce food crops and to trade with foreign merchants, Arabs, Portuguese, Spanish and British. Also, they had inter-marriages and cultural affiliations, especially during celebrations. Moreover, they had a perfect system in which their governments, economic, religious system and social life were related to their cultures and traditions. Their authorities used to settle any problem or conflicts between them peacefully to avoid battles and conflicts. The history of pre-colonial Nigeria shows that the system of life was well organized as well as the authority, community and economy too.

Authority

Nigeria is a large country in West Africa with different ethnic groups. The population of Nigeria contained more than 250 different ethnic groups based on the Nigerian population census of 1953. Those ethnic groups settled in different parts of the country and had different traditions, customs and numerous languages spread in the whole country. The population of Nigeria was divided into categories according to its importance, number of population and location too. The most important tribe groups with a large number were: the Hausa, the Fulani, the Yoruba and the Igbo who were the most powerful dominators and leaders of the region. Other tribes were prominent but less important with low population rate as: the Ibibio, the Edo, the Tiv the Benue, the Nupe and the Kanuri. The remained ethnic groups were the smallest ones settled in the middle of Nigeria (Louahala 10).
Each community had its own political system and every kingdom or tribe had its own authority in the hands of the chiefs who were responsible for running the people's life. But there were some kingdoms which were ruled through centralised and decentralized system because of the vast land that was controlled or owned by those kingdoms. People were living under different administrative arrangements and political systems from kingdom to another owing to the differences in the ethnicity and languages. For example, pre-colonial political systems of Yoruba, Hausa and Fulani were chiefly centralised while Igbo was a headless, decentralised system. The Sokoto Islamic Caliphate was composed of several emirates in the north, and the dispersed Yoruba Empire connected coastal settlements with political groups in the interior through the strong Kingdom of Oyo. So; the authority was in the hand of the chiefs before the British occupation.

Economy

Nigeria was a coastal country that had different trade activities and deals starting by slave trade which was the important trade in fifteenth century. The Nigerian tribes practiced different economic activities in the tribe or with each other or with foreigners, those activities were different from trade to agriculture and so on.

Trade

At an early time there were economic activities in Nigeria; as trade deals in Nigerian territories between themselves and with other kingdoms as Sudan tradesmen and foreigners too; as Arabs Muslims who spread Islam in the North of Nigeria and the Europeans like Spanish, Portuguese and British too.

Agriculture

As the whole world, the most important and dominant basis of economy in Nigeria was agriculture. Nigeria was famous by its different food crops that were produced for local food
uses like: cocoa, yams, rice, maize, groundnuts, millet, bananas, different fruits and palm productions as oil, wine and kernels. For exported commodities cotton, rubber and timber were the most important ones (77).

**Stock Raising**

Animal husbandry was another economic activity for the Nigerians. They were raising goats and cows for its milk, beef and hides. Fishing also, was another activity used by coastal inhabitants in which it was the important basis activity there (77).

**Handcrafts:**

Handcrafts were important for the Nigerian communities; it was representing the tradition of Nigeria. Craftsmen were working on building boats especially in coast, blacksmithing, leather productions, construction and textile manufacturing (77).

**Religions and Beliefs**

Nigerian society is built up of different ethnic groups and religions too. From the past, Nigeria was known by its differences, religions and beliefs were one of them. The African Traditional Religion was the first and the old religion in Nigeria before the coming of Islam and Christianity; which referred to the religious beliefs and practices of the Africans. This religion is old as the old civilizations, which expressed their culture, tradition and beliefs through special practices (Ngbeaa and Achunike 156-158).

Later, Islam had appeared by Muslim merchants who were trading and travelling through the Nigerian north Sub-Sahara. Besides trading, they respected the Nigerian tribes’ beliefs and accepted them, in order to spread and convince those tribes by this new religion and Sokoto was the primary land of Islam (157).

Christianity emerged through the contact of the slave merchants with Africans, first by the Portuguese merchants in the fifteenth century and later by British missionaries in the
1800s. It started from Lagos port in the Nigerian north coastal lands and after the British occupation of Nigeria; the missionaries spread it through teaching illiterate tribes in hinterlands (157). To conclude, African Traditional Religion, Islam and Christianity were the main three religions in Nigeria before the British occupation.

2. The British Presence in Nigeria by the Beginning of the nineteenth Century

Before the nineteenth century the British were working on slave trade like other new comers to West Africa, competed with the Dutch by establishing national trading companies. The British bought slaves from slave traders from the west coast. They were exchanging their goods with slaves as a swap system, which was the dominant trading system in Nigeria at that time. By the slave abolishment that was announced by the British in 1807, the trade system had changed and big competition between companies had started (Atuonwu 3).

In the nineteenth century, Britain was the most powerful country in the world and Africa was considered as the source of all raw materials for the Europeans and Britain's needs too. Africa was avidity for them because of its wealthy natural resources that were needed in industry and as a new market for their industry. So, because of the industrial revolution that Britain was its leader in the nineteenth century and because of its needs for the raw material; Britain thought about having colonies in Africa, but it was not that easy because other Europeans had had the same goal; such as: the Spanish, Portuguese, French and Dutch. Britain was interested in opening markets for its manufactured goods and became the dominant commercial power in West Africa.

There was a great competition between Britain and the other Europeans, for more profits and a race to annexing raw materials (3). But there was the slave trade that made it difficult as a consequence the British Parliament passed an act in 1807 forbidding the slave trade for the British subjects. To undertake this scheme, Britain sent a naval force to patrol the West
African waters, but it was not sufficient. Four years later, Parliament enacted another act according to which heavy penalties would be imposed on those who would continue to trade in human beings. In 1815, the other European powers followed suit. Yet, it was primarily Britain in virtue of her great naval power which could uphold the anti-slave campaign. The latter made effective use of the trials of slavers, treaties with chiefs and diplomatic relations with foreign powers.

After the British abolishment of slave trade in 1807, they had started making treaties with locals and Europeans slave traders then controlling the west coasts in order to stop this illegal trade (archive). Indeed, a British naval squadron was established to ensure the implementation of the law, while British diplomats brought increasing pressure to bear on other nations to outlaw this trade. As a result, the Spanish slave trade ceased to exist after 1815 followed by the French in 1816 and later on by the Portuguese in 1817 (Oliver and Fage 136). It is important to note here that though the British diplomacy had succeeded to persuade the principal European nations to declare slave trade illegal by 1817, the West African squadron was unable to capture the slaving ships that continued to export slaves to the Americas.

The Berlin West African Conference of (1884-1885) held by the Europeans had marked the climax of the European competition for territory in Africa, a process commonly known as the scramble for Africa. In which each European country had taken an African land to settle there, they divided the African continent in order to deplete or drain its natural wealth and open new markets there. After that, the British started invading the hinterland to put its hand on Nigeria as Atuonwn states:

One of its important articles stipulated that each European power should establish an effective control over its sphere of
influence. Backed, therefore, by the gunboats and the maxim guns, the Britain began punitive expeditions into the hinterland to effectively establish control in the area (3).

By the end of the Berlin Conference, Nigeria became under the control of the British Empire, not all the Nigerian land but Lagos as the first territory in 1861.
Chapter One: Nigeria before the Establishment of the British Colonial Rule (1800-1885)

Map 1: The Expansion of the Legitimate Commerce in the nineteenth Century.

The British Expansion in Lagos (1851-1861)

By the nineteenth century, British officials, merchants and missionaries contributed to stop slave trade and encourage the legitimate commerce. The British in their quest to stop the slave trade, had concentrated on trying to stop both European and African traders from engaging in the slave commerce. They succeeded in persuading most of the Europeans to stop this trade, while they ratified anti-slave-trade treaties with West African coastal states. Those treaties were during the 1830s and 1840s with the major coastal states, but it was different with the coastal district of Lagos that refused to stop slave trade.

The British navy was the representative of the law and the useful hand against the slave trade in the West African coast. It had bombarded the states that refused to sign the treaties against slave trade. Lagos was one of the important bases of slave trade, so the British navy attacked it in 1851 because its king refused to sign the anti-slave-trade treaty and continued in this activity. Lagos attack and occupation in 1861, was the first step to the establishment of the British colonial rule in Nigeria (Louahala 103).

The first cause of the British occupation of Lagos was slave trade that was along west coast, in which it could control it and catch slave traders or their full ships whose taking slaves to the Americas for agriculture activities. The control of the African West coast made a type of competition between the British and European countries that wanted to control the area and start its expansion to the African coast lands there. Lagos occupation opened the door to the British merchants for commercializing their goods and find new markets by pervasiveness in hinterlands (103).

As a consequence, the British were thinking about securing the coast for economic reasons as opening the hinterland for British merchants to commercializing their goods. But this could not happen unless the British could secure themselves from international competitions by signing treaties with local chiefs. There was a strong fear from the French
who wanted to take the Nigerian lands and its headway towards the area. It was not only the French who wanted to settle there, but the Europeans who were thinking about African lands and wealth were looking for taking those lands. So the British took Lagos to secure its spoils from all the enemies.

Lagos was not only considered as an important base to abolish slave trade; it was a strategic route to open the interior and to expand overpower in west of Africa. Indeed, the only way to take Lagos was by its occupation, because its location had facilitated the flourishing of slave trade. In order to stop this illegal trade, the British consul in Lagos suggested to taking over the city and conquering it. Even there was an objection by some members in the British government, but it was a good step to eliminate slave trade (104). The occupation of Lagos came after its ruler Kosoko (Oliver and Fage 141) refused to stop salve trade dealings and sign treaties that forbidden this trade as his peers along the West African coast signed and agreed this treaty. For all these reasons and in 1851, the British navy started bombarding Lagos, then took it after deposing its king Kosoko from his throne and appointed his uncle Akitoye who signed the treaty and entrusted to stop slave trade (105).

After a while, the British started their interference in the political system of Lagos then they decided to announce it as a British colony and a part of the British Empire in 1861. From the previous events interest in the Nigerian lands rose up and the prevalence of the British in the hinterlands to discover it heightened.
Map 2: The Slave Coast in the nineteenth Century.

The British Occupation of the Southern and Northern of Nigeria

Since the abolition of slave trade, the British government had been searching for a good way to end the slave business and introduce a legitimate trade especially in Africa. The British interest in Nigeria came in 1851 when they bombarded Lagos. The latter had an important location that facilitated the slave trade. Of course, the British Government thought about putting an end to slave trade and at the same time, they wanted to protect its economic investments and their citizens too (Ezeogidi 4).

When the British bombarded Lagos, then occupied it in 1861 and announced it as a British colony, they signed treaties with the local chiefs who forbade slave trade activities and secured British merchants and missionaries. Also, they made them promising to practice legal commerce. The fact is that the occupation of Lagos was the gate to access to the southern of Nigerian territories which were rich with natural resources that had needed for their industry. They established their administration there and started their commercial affairs (4).

After Lagos occupation and the competition that was between Europeans to take over the African lands, they met in Berlin Conference (1884-1885) in which they validated the access to scramble Africa by dividing the African continent between the European powers to colonise it. Later, the British government declared that it owned the Oil Rivers Protectorate in the Nigerian south eastern region. After scrambling Africa, British government was able to reach the interior Nigerian lands and establish their colonial rule (Louahala 101).

The British started their expansion through chartered companies as Goldie’s Royal Niger Company or their consuls, who guaranteed the protection of the British advance in the hinterlands. They faced a big resistance from the tribes there which made the British using power to deter them. The British found themselves in confrontation with the Nigerian powerful states in the Niger Delta that made the British dealing with them gingerly as Benin kingdom in the west and Opobo to the east of the Delta main river. Also, the Yoruba in the
west states which were so powerful that made the British negotiate with them peacefully to take their privileges and took control of them (101-149). After all these events, the British rushed to establish their administration in these territories in order to control and made it under the British colonial legitimate rule. Whereby, the remained states stayed under African rule system under the British supervision for political reasons (101).

The Berlin Conference that ended in 1885 had insisted that each European country should hurry to occupy the wanted land, using military forces before asking for its sovereignty. Britain did because of their fears from the French advance that had avidities in Nigerian lands. Companies that were in Nigerian territories as Goldie’s company and the Delta middlemen were in struggle with the Royal Niger Company whom wanted to take both companies and circumvent on, but the British solved the problem after the interference of the British consul. In the other side, there was a big resistance from natives that made the British government change its attitudes and started the conquest of the whole territories (149).

3. Reasons of the British Occupation of Nigeria

Nigeria is located on the West African coast; it's a patchwork of distinctive regions including deserts, mountains, steamy jungles and rivers with different ethnic groups. This vast area contains different raw materials and rich by natural resources. When Europeans started the slave trade in the West African lands they discovered how much it was rich, so they tried to exploit it with different ways. By the early 1880s European interest in Africa had increased dramatically; after the Berlin Conference (1884-1885) Africa was divided and by the end of 1914 Nigeria became part of British Empire. The British occupation of Nigeria was not only for abolish slavery trade; it was just a cover to reach its goal which was to steal the local resources (SSRN). The reasons of the British occupation of Nigeria can be summarized in the following factors.
Economic Reasons

Because of the industrial revolution and the British needs for the raw materials for their productions and as Nigeria was full of these natural resources; the British had started by the commercial exchanges and deals between the locals and the merchants as palm oil, ivory, gold, cocoa and other crops, then shipping them to the British factories. They wanted to sell their manufactured goods and open a market (Culbertson 18) and in Nigeria as a good invest for them. Also to keep its expatriate firms safe as the Royal Niger Company (RNC), the African Trading Company (ATC), West African Company (WAC) and the merchants made good relations with inhabitants there.

The Industrial Revolution had affected the work system in Britain as a consequence, people lost their jobs and the rate of unemployment had risen, because of the machines that replaced the labourers who were working in the industry field. The British government was obliged to find solution to this dilemma; it took some decisions as sending those jobless people to work in colonies and end this problem (WIKIPEDIA). The government succeeded in that decision and established jobs for their citizens, while the Nigerians were suffering from joblessness or working in the worst jobs. Colonies were also good a place for investments and because of high capitals; they invested in colonies as Nigeria. The British government decided to invest in the field of raw materials that were exported later to Britain in order to manufacture raw materials (GRIN).

The African economy was based on exchange and barter (Ocheni and Nwankwo 47) which was the most dominant commercial dealings in that period, so the British had to find a solution and monetise this economy. So they introduced a currency to exchange and make profits and established colonies to control the region. Furthermore, European colonists had to ensure that the Africans would consume their manufactured goods but it was not that easy because if there were no consumers for their products the industries would close-
The British wanted to bring the Western technology as industrialization in order to make great changes in transportation and communications especially in steam ships and railways which helped the British to move quickly and impose their commercial dominance. Medical advances also played an important role, especially medicines; it enabled Europeans and the British even the natives to survive from malaria and other tropical diseases and made the tropics more accessible for the British.

**Socio-cultural Reasons**

Socially, the British wanted to spread Christianity and civilize people in Africa in order to fight the spread of Islam on the continent especially northern part of West Africa. They saw the growing influence of Islam in North Africa and other parts of West Africa as a threat to the spread of Christianity and they must therefore be stopped. Even the African religion (pagan) was considered as a threat too. So they sent missionaries in order to teach them Christianity and civilization.

Another social reason was that they wanted to extend western civilization, culture and education. The British considered the Nigerians as backward and illiterate and saw it as their responsibility to educate and civilize them. Also, there was the idea of civilizing the savage natives of Africa and for many Christian missionaries it was a religious motive, because they believed that the Christians were civilized and their religion was morally superior and the only true religion (Nkomazana and Setume 38). The British claimed that they were there to help and protect weak persons and this was the idea of humanitarianism that they presented it for the Nigerians and the whole world.

**Political Reasons**

Another reason was the political one in which some European countries did not stop slave trade, even for the West coast merchants from the native people refused to stop this
illegal trade; as what happened in Lagos where the British navy bombarded it for that reason (Louahala 149). The same for some African ethnic groups were who hostile to the European explorers, merchants and traders, therefore the British saw that they needed to annex those territories where they had their explorers and merchants to protect their citizens. Also the French were looking for the Nigerian lands but the British hastened to take Nigeria through the Berlin Conference (1884-1885). Even for the Muslims in north Nigeria, they were thinking about destroying their civilization by sending missionaries and made treaties that were refused by the Sokoto people (Metz 33).

4. Conclusion

The life in Nigeria before the establishment of colonial rule was different in south and north; it was well organized in authority, community and economy. By the arrival of the British, the different aspects of life gradually changed.

The period between the occupation of Lagos in 1861 under the slogan of slavery abolition and Berlin Conference (1884-1885), made the British insisting to take Nigerian lands because of its natural resources. After the conquest of southern lands, they started making treaties and occupied the hinterlands in the north. At the end of 1914, the whole territory of Nigeria fell under the British control.
Chapter Two

The Establishment of the Colonial Rule (1861-1914)
1. Introduction

The colonisation of Nigeria took a long period starting by the occupation of Lagos in 1861 and ending by the conquest of the Sokoto Caliphate and announcing it as a protectorate in 1906. The British occupied Nigeria through different ways, peacefully by making treaties or using force as what happened in Lagos when the British navy bombarded it.

When the British occupied Lagos in 1861, they appointed who had guaranteed the suppression of the slave commerce in the region and a new system had appeared to the Nigerian territories starting by Lagos in 1861 until they occupied the northern part of Nigeria and unified it in 1914. The British had established a new system that influenced the society there. Colonization under the rule of the British Empire had brought different changes to the Nigerian separated lands, especially in political, economic and socio-cultural life. The governing process had been changed by their arrival and occupation. On the political front, British colonial rule began from coastal areas with the establishment of Crown colonies using direct rule that was established there. Direct rule was a system which involved the use of British institutions implementing and the ideas of British government. However, British colonial rule in many territories was conducted through a system of indirect rule that involved governing the local population through indigenous political institutions using the chiefs of the local tribes. This type of governing took different forms, being dictated by local circumstances in the estimation of the colonialists. The particular form from place to place was dependent on the nature of the political institutions of the respective peoples. As a consequence; the peoples political, economical, social life and the institutions of the Nigerian regions were changed deeply and permanently in the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century. The British administrative system applied it to both northern and southern Nigeria emphasizing on the major political, social and economic changes that British colonial administration brought.
2. The Establishment of the British Colonial Rule in Nigeria (1850-1914)

By the British occupation to Lagos and the end of the Berlin Conference, the British started their conquest through treaties with some tribes or by military force. The Nigerian tribes found themselves in confrontation with the British troops who were more powerful than them which led them to resist or negotiate. Later they surrendered to the British, because they could not fight them and they became under the British colonial rule (Louahala 150).

After the British occupation of southern Nigeria they thought about the occupation of the Northern part and they did during the period 1900-1914. It was so clear for the British their next move which led them to northern lands which were full of raw materials that the British needed for its industry. It was the largest land and belonging to the Sokoto Islamic Caliphate that existed at the early of the sixteenth century. Sokoto had a well organized governing system where the Hausa and Fulani tribes lived and they embraced Islam as their official religion (168-170). (See Map 3)
Map 3: Routes of the Kano-Sokoto Expedition

Before the British reached to the Nigerian northern lands, there were business relations between the Sokoto Caliphate and the British merchants and companies too, who had also good relations with Ilorin, Nupe, Adamawa and Kano Emirates. But by 1880, European companies had a trade monopoly and interference in the political affairs of the Emirates which was refused by them and led to engage in struggles. This political interference with Emirates was by the companies that were in the northern territories, as the British Goldie’s Royal Niger Company and the French who were competing for their domination there. Later, the Goldie’s Royal Niger Company started attacking the Emirates that led the British government to cancel the tasks of the company in the south and take the responsibility to run it in north in the late of nineteenth century. Moreover, the British announced about Nigerian northern protectorate under the leadership of Frederick Lugard (Apata 111). This latter was assigned to establish the British administration rule for the protectorate, using military forces to impose the control and pursuance the pervasiveness of the Sokoto Caliphate and other Emirates in the northern lands. By the end of 1906, Lugard controlled the northern part of Nigeria and became part of the British lands (Louahala 170-171).

The administration under the rule of Lugard, had left the African political structure in order to keep the tribes under the British control. Furthermore, Lugard appointed the defeated chiefs of Emirates in the authority as administrators in their administration for the benefit of the locals and the British too. Lugard had had his own vision about ruling the protectorates (170-172), he thought about unification of the northern and southern protectorates because of economic needs and to link between the north and south under one administrative rule. He had amalgamated first between the southern protectorates and Lagos Crown Colony in 1906 as new step and experience of amalgamation. Later in 1914, he had unified the southern and northern protectorates under the rule of one administration (170-171).

Lugard believed in the military conquest, because it made the occupation easier and
useful for taming the Nigerians who were in his vision barbarous uncivilized and their lands needed to be taken. When Niger Company lost its charter in 1900, Lugard took the responsibility to impose control on northern lands by combating the Emirates and their troops and defeated them (181).

Lugard was a smart leader, after his appointment he started thinking about the conquest of Sokoto Caliphates. First, he attacked the small Emirates and by 1903 he occupied their lands, then he moved to combat the Sokoto Caliphate and run battles there ended by the defeat of the Sokoto and the surrender of it by 1906 and the end of the era of caliphate and the Muslims were left without leaders (180-184). Lugard had outfought the Sokoto Caliphate, but he did not settle all the northern lands because Sokoto did not own all the northern lands, so he decided to start peaceful treaties in order to control the remained northern Nigerian lands (185-187). Later, it became under the colonial rule and in 1914, the Colonial Office took the decision to amalgamate the northern and southern protectorates under one administration. This step was the proposal of Lugard, who was thinking about the economic lucre (189).

The occupation of Nigeria took a long period, first because of the resistance of the natives and second because of the vast land that made the occupation so hard. The period after the occupation of Lagos and the establishment of the southern and northern protectorates, then amalgamation in 1914, through several stages were full of historical events and battles that changed the Nigerian map.

The British conquest of Nigeria was not easy, it had taken different ways to takeover its land, through treaties and military forces troops which moved deeply to hinterlands in order to settle its colonial rule and control the Nigerian lands. These could not happen only by appointing the African chiefs or the defeated Nigerian leaders who had authority on their tribes or Emirates, as representatives of the Colonial Office to impose the colonial rule and subdue the Nigerian people. Lagos was the first British colony which the British colonial rule
succeeded to impose his regime in. The Southern Protectorate was ruled first by the Royal Niger Company which helped in its occupation later RNC was taken by the British after abrogation of its charter and the protectorate became a British colony. Finally, the northern protectorate had been occupied by the British after battles with the Sokoto Caliphate. By the end of 1906, the Nigerian lands were under the British colonial rule and a new era had begun for Nigeria. These were the important efforts of the British with the help of Lugard who had thought about the future of the British in Nigeria and focused on imposing the colonial rule there by using force or treaties (187-190).
Map 4: Colonial Nigeria in 1914.

The British Colonial Regime (1861-1914)

Since the occupation of Lagos in 1861, the British started interfering in the state affairs as a kind of imposing indirect control for reaching its goals; especially the political and the economic ones, as making treaties in different fields like abolition of the slave trade, the protection of their merchants in the state, and commerce dealings.

Before the Berlin Conference and after the British occupation of Lagos, a lot of events had started. When the British announced Lagos as a British colony in 1861, they started moving down to the hinterlands, until they reached to the Yorubaland and because of the great competition between the British and Europeans especially France the traditional enemy, they were racing to takeover lands. The anti slave trade treaties and commercial dealings with natives made the British more powerful there and the chances of occupation rose after the Berlin Conference that took another way (Oduwobi 20).

When the British started their conquest after the Berlin Conference and by 1890, they had made treaties with states and local chiefs in Yorubaland. These treaties were signed in order to show that they were under the British authority and no country had the right to interfere in those British properties (20).

The abolition of slave trade, led to the establishment of legitimate trade by the British in Nigerian colonies. It was not easy for them to establish their system, because they found some resistance from some tribes and kingdoms especially the Sokoto Caliphate and the Yoruba tribes who did not accept the existence of the white man in their lands. So the British made treaties with the chiefs of tribes and the protagonists of them; then gave them some powers in order to stay in the hands of the British. At the same time, the ruling system was indirect under the supervision of the British government, they started building the Nigerian political system and economy by establishing native courts (Attuonwu 9) and appointed their chiefs from the tribes in order to make the community there having their own authorities.
which could solve their problems and made them closer to the British as allies. They built the railways, imported and exported goods from and to the Nigerian British colonies.

By 1900, the British had reached the hinterlands and they established their colonial rule there. They founded the Lagos crown Colony at the first in the west coast, then the Southern Nigerian Protectorates in the southern part of Nigeria in Yorubaland and later the Northern Nigerian Protectorate in the northern part where the Sokoto Caliphate had defeated. The changes of the administration system was obviously clear, because of the impact of the British on the locals and its overpower on the area (Oduwobi 20).

Nigeria came into being in its present form in 1914, when Fredrick Lugard, the architect of British colonialism in Africa amalgamated the two protectorates of Northern and Southern Nigeria. These two protectorates in addition to the colony of Lagos were administered as separate colonies. The amalgamation signaled Britain’s complete and effective control in the three colonies under one government who ruled the three protectorates as one part.

**The Establishment of the Crown Colony of Lagos**

Lagos was the first British established colony in Nigeria, it was occupied in 1861. Its location in the African West coast made it a commercial city and an important interlined to the deep African lands to stop the French from expanding in Africa (Louahala 104).

Lagos was the city of slave trade deals because of its location, where slaves were shipped from its port. By the increase of the slave trade the British started negotiations with its king to sign the treaty that abolish slave trade but the ruler of Lagos, Kosoko (Oliver and Fage 141), refused to sign it. As a consequence, he was deposed from his crown after the British navy bombarded Lagos because he did not stop slave trade. Later, the British appointed Kosoko’s uncle the prince Akitoye, who had signed the anti slave trade treaty, and ensured to the British that Lagos would not trade in slaves again. By this step, the British had started its interference
in the state affairs. The British government appointed Campell Benjamin (Smith 402) in Lagos as a consul, in order to represent the British government there. When king Akitoye died in 1853, Campell appointed Akitoye’s son Documu in the king's place and stop Kosoko who still wanted to take his throne back (Louahal 105-106). Actually, the British consul was the person who ruled the state and because of his relations he developed the British merchants’ commerce there. Later he suggested announcing Lagos as a British colony under protectorate which later was taken in consideration in 1861 and became Lagos Crown colony. Lagos was near to Yorubaland where wars could reach it, so the British government commissioned the vice consul William McCoskry (411) to protect the state from the slave traders and from any outside attack and increase the business affairs there. Later, by 1861 the British Foreign office announced that Lagos is a British colony (Crowder 136).

When the British announced Lagos as a colony and part from the British Empire, European countries started contesting towards African lands. Later, the British government and in order to keep Lagos under its rule, had appointed a British governor with administrative and legislative council in 1862, consisted of British officials, merchants, missionaries and educated Africans to make the Africans satisfied and to protect the British existence and more benefits. The British started maintaining relations with the natives starting by Yorubaland tribes, who were the nearest lands to Lagos and had commercial relations with British merchants (Louahal 106). About the legislative council, Elisabeth Isichei, states:

> These councils consisted partly of British officials, and partly of non-officials, who were drawn from among British merchants and missionaries, and educated Africans. Although they were nominated by the Governor, they were not his tools, and these African members often used their position to subject the
government to searching criticism (Isichei 213).

The occupation of Lagos made Britain looking for more expansions in the southern lands of Nigeria, first to protect its merchants and their trade, second to secure the borders of Lagos from the attacks of the rebels who refused the British existence. Yoruba wars made a big threat to the British. As a result, the British thought about expanding more and starting their dilations in the south of the colony (Louahal 106-107).

**The Protectorate of Southern Nigeria (1899-1906)**

The occupation of Lagos had opened a big door to the Nigerian lands for the British who started making anti slavery treaties with the other states. When the Berlin Conference gave the Europeans the light for scrambling Africa; the British started taking over the Nigerian lands using treaties or by using military force for whom refused treaties.

The Foreign Office was overseen on the Protectorate of Southern Nigeria when it was constituted on 27th December 1899 and then its responsibility was transmitted to the Colonial office. The southern protectorate was ruled by the Royal Niger Company (RNC) that was controlling the southern territories, before the British government cancelled its job in 1899 and took the responsibility to administer the land. In 1903, because the southern protectorate was too vast and for some administrative reasons, the Colonial Office divided it into five zones in order to facilitate the administrative works there (Atuonwu 2-3). Burns states:

The Foreign Office handed over to the Colonial Office the control the Niger Coast Protectorate, and on the 1st January, 1900, this territory was renamed the Southern Nigeria Protectorate, the Delta
of the Niger and the land on either bank of the river as far the north
as Idah being included (Burns 220).

In 1906, the Colonial Office amalgamated the southern protectorate with Lagos Crown Colony and it became one territory under the name of the Colony and Protectorate of Southern Nigeria. Burns states:

On the 1st May, 1906, the Colony of Lagos and its protected territory were amalgamated with the Protectorate of Southern Nigeria under one administration, and designated the colony and Protectorate of Southern Nigeria, with Lagos as the seat of Government (222).

And by 1914, the southern protectorate had been unified with the northern protectorate to be the colony of Nigeria (WIKIPEDIA).

**The Protectorate of Northern Nigeria (1885-1900)**

The Scrambling of Africa had changed the African lands borders and the map of territories. The occupation of Lagos and the Yorubaland in the south led the British to move deeply using their merchants and companies to discover the north lands for the purpose of making alliances and contracts in order to maintain their existence after settling there. The National African Company (NAC) was settling in the north of the Niger-Benne basin, doing its work and at the same time signing treaties and preparing for occupying the lands there under the name of the British government. In 1882, NAC started signing treaties with the locals for her political benefits and the British government too in order to have a charter, but its demand had been refused by the government (Odegowi 20).

Even after the British government charter rejection, the NAC did not stop making treaties to secure its business and have some political privileges in the region. Later and in
the Berlin Conference, the British used these treaties as an evidence against the French and the Europeans who wanted to take this land. This step helped the NAC to have its charter in 1886, by the British government that commissioned the NAC to protect the British interests there. Later the NAC changed to the Royal Niger Company (RNC) (20-21).

The RNC moved down the Niger-Benue basin deeply to the Sokoto Caliphate in which it started making commercial treaties deals there. The Europeans as the French and Germans were not satisfied by the British existence there, so they tried to setup the RNC with the Caliph. Later, the challenge increased until the problem became a diplomatic one and needed to be solved. The British government met with the French and German governments between 1894 and 1899 in order to negotiate, finally they agreed to let the Sokoto to the British. On 1 January 1900, the British announced the north part (Sokoto lands) as a protectorate and the RNC charter had cancelled by the British government. In 1903, the north became an administration after the British defeated the tribes and Emirates who refused the British existence in the area and the conquest in general. Finally, Sokoto the capital of the caliphate was the last to fall in March 1903 (20-21).

In 1914, the northern protectorate had unified with the southern protectorate for economic reasons rather than political ones and because of the southern protectorate had budget surpluses. The colonial administration used it to cover the budget deficit in the northern protectorate to cover this offset deficit and by the amalgamation. By these changes and decisions, the future of the colony had changed (WIKIPEDIA).

3. The British Political Colonial Policy in Nigeria

Nigeria was administered as a Colony and Protectorate under indirect rule system, because of many reasons. The indirect rule was developed in Northern Nigeria and extended later on in most of British Africa. It was a system in which the British governed people in the colonies through their traditional rulers. It means their native rulers with their traditional
system in which they kept their tradition rule system under the supervision of the British colonial administration. Lugard was the first who practiced this system in the African colonies (SCOUT). Ashiru Owolabi states in his article: "What is indirect rule?":

It is a system of administration used by the British colonial government to govern the people through the use of traditional rulers and traditional political institutions. The indirect rule system was introduced into Nigeria by Lord Fredrick Lugard who was known to be the father of indirect rule in Nigeria. The British officials in Nigeria formulated and enforced policies and laws through the traditional rulers who only served as intermediaries between the people and the British government. However, the cultures and traditions of the people were respected and retained by the British authorities in order to make them more acceptable and welcomed by the people (SCOUT).

After refusing the British treaties in northern Nigeria, some tribes as the Fulani, the Hausa and kingdoms, as Sokoto Caliphate and small emirates had been occupied by the British troops. The conquest was not easy for the British, because of the nature of the region. Later they faced the administrative problem in which they could not rule this vast territory with few members of British officials (Louahal 193). The northern of Nigeria was famous by the inner conflicts, in which the British faced a problem of instability in colonial rule and commerce. Because of the vast lands and the instability of the colony, the British invited defeated chiefs and emirs to solve this problem by appointing them as their representatives but all of this was after they guaranteed their loyalty. The British African representatives ruled according to their laws, traditions and customs as they were before the British conquest as the agents of the
British in the colony (193).

When the British settlement had been officially improved and announced by the establishment of the northern protectorate, they remained the Sokoto administrative system there, as Burns states in his book History of Nigeria:

The policy of the government remained the same. This was to support the African rulers, their councils and their courts, their customs and their traditions, so long as these were not repugnant to our ideals of humanity and justice (Burns 212).

The indirect rule succeeded in the north protectorate, because of the good governance and the traditions that the inhabitants followed especially the tribal system that they could not contravene. For the southern protectorate, the indirect rule had failed because the British appointed chiefs who had no supporters in their tribes or villages. Also, in the southern protectorate there was no traditional system as in the northern one that people could depend on it (Louahal 194).

The British system of administration that was known popularly as Indirect Rule and more precisely as Native Authority System recognized the traditional authorities or the Nigerian leaders like chiefs; as local agents of government. The defeated African chiefs were obliged to rule under the British control, because if they did not cooperate with the British administrations, they would be replaced by others. So they accepted for their benefits and to protect their communities under the British colonial conditions (282-283).

The Lagos Crown Colony was under the direct governing of the British officers since the occupation in 1861. In 1862, the colony had a council that composed of British officers, British merchants, missionaries and local educated Nigerians. The duty of the council was to
protect the colony from the interior and exterior enemies first, and second to make
administrations run the state affairs like commerce, collecting taxes and low enforcement
(195). This council was not only in Lagos, it was practiced in all the British colonies in Africa
(Isichei 213).

The British conquest of Nigeria had brought a new political system to the region, in
different fields. The political system had changed from the traditional one, in which all the
community could run the region through their representatives and chiefs to a new one that the
British administrations were the only who put the law and force the natives to accept it.
These changes impacted the social structure of the Nigerian community and the traditional
authority had been disappeared eventually (Louahal 284).
Figure 1: The Structure of Government in British West Africa

4. The British Economic Policy in Nigeria

As it was said before, the occupation of Nigerian lands was not only for the abolition of slavery but it was for economic reasons as the amalgamation of Lagos, the northern and southern protectorates which developed the economic trade from Nigeria to Britain (Usman 430). The needs for the raw materials because of the industrial revolution; made the British looking for new investments and markets to import raw materials and export their products.

The establishment of British colonial administration set out to simplify the existing tax system and brought a new economic system to Nigeria called cash crops. The cash crop system made people changing their life attitudes, from being self food sufficient to planting commercial crops in order to sell for export. Nigerian local food system had been influenced because of the colonial economic system that had definitively modified and imposed for the benefits of the British economy and the Empire in general. As a result, the society turned from planting their food to cultivating cash crops and this impacted on the local economic system (Shokpeka and Nwaokocha 57-58).

The colonial system had contributed in changing the agricultural system in which the farmers turned all their crops to cash crops. This change affected food crops inside Nigeria, whereby the Nigerians started in consumption of the imported goods. The quest of changing the economic system could not succeed without the colonial system that based on incentivize of the farmers who planted cash crops. The British policy was focusing in maintaining its market in Nigeria, after that the British started selling their imported goods from the British market to the local market which changed to selling foreign goods more than local Nigerian goods (58).

The British Empire had expanded its imperial policy in Nigeria in which they exploited the Nigerian raw material and cash crops, exported it to Britain for manufacturing then returned it again to the colony in order to sell it as imported goods. For this reason, the British
built railroad between the northern and southern protectorates starting from 1890 in order to simplify the transportation of the raw materials from north Nigeria to the south Nigerian coasts to ship them to Britain. The exported materials were minerals as gold, silver and diamonds, also crops like cotton, rubber, cocoa, palm oil and groundnuts (COUNTRYSTUDIES). The small scale farmers dominated cash crops productions, while the whole structure of the trade largely benefitted British traders. From the British side, they imported cheap textiles and different stuff, like matches, tobacco, electronic goods and medicines from Britain as well as the rest of Europe (Yusuf 7). The alliances with Nigerians and the military power made Britain keeping its economic policy in Nigeria during the colonial rule that helped in the development of the British economy and the empire as a whole (COUNTRYSTUDIES).
Chapter Two: The Establishment of the Colonial Rule (1861-1914)

Table 1: Combined figures for southern Nigeria and Lagos the year they were amalgamated (Usman 433).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>PUBLIC WORKS</th>
<th>PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL</th>
<th>TOTAL EXTRAORDINARY PUBLIC WORKS</th>
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<td>1912</td>
<td>246,355</td>
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Table 2: Southern Nigeria: Revenue and Expenditure, 1900-1913(449).

<table>
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<th>Expenditure</th>
<th>Surplus/Deficit</th>
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<td>+571,887</td>
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Source: Colonial Reports-Annual: Southern Nigeria, 1907-1912.
5. The Socio-Cultural British Policy in Nigeria

Education in Nigeria had started by the missionaries with the British conquest. The missionaries were teaching Christianity to Nigerians, they taught them English in order to read the Bible and teach Christianity to others, it means only for religion reasons, but this was not the right solution for the education problems of the Nigerians. The British aim was to teach the natives the gospel. They built churches for evangelizing and schools to teach them English for reading and understanding the gospel. Also, they taught people English in order to read the bible and explain it to illiterates in the local language (Folasade 86).

Missionary campaigns were spread in southern Nigeria and accepted by Yoruba, Igbo and Ibibio tribes, but the northern part of Nigeria, where the Hausa and Fulani in Sokoto Caliphate did not accept this religion because they were already Muslims.

Islam was founded in the north, before the arrival of the British to Nigeria, by the Muslims tradesmen. They built a community in which the Islam was one of the most basic necessities of their life. They built schools to teach Quran and they were educated better than the south, because the south was depending on their traditions and the only education was about their tribes' culture (Hauwa 182-183).

After the amalgamation, the education policy system had been changed. There were differences in educational system between the south and the north of Nigeria. In the north the education was based on the Islamic religion and Arabic culture, while in the south it was based on the western education. The British policy did not allow missionaries to go to the north because of the treaties between the north protectorate Muslim representatives and the British Office, because Islam was the prominent religion in the region. By the end of the Second World War, the education policy system had changed according to the nationalism movement that asked for the equality between the parts of Nigeria (181-183). The society in north was not as south, where the southern part of Nigeria was enjoying a part from the
British luxuriate (not in meaning) and had been influenced by the European civilization manifestations; but at least, they had better life condition more than the northerners who were marginalized and had no good living standards.

6. Conclusion

The establishment of colonial rule after the Berlin Conference took a long period, because of the different ethnic groups and religions that were in Nigeria. The colonial era had started by the occupation, then announcement of northern and southern protectorates and ended by the amalgamation in 1914 that was useful and had good benefits for the British and Nigerians too. The suggestion of protectorates amalgamation was proposed by Lord Lugard who took the responsibility for it. The Colonial Office and British Governors had seen also that amalgamation of protectorates under one rule would help in different sides, from the political one and from the economic side too.

The British administrative system applied to both northern and southern Nigeria on the political, social and economic aspects that British colonial administration brought to the traditional authorities in the first half of the twentieth century; in order to avoid differences between the country parts. The indirect rule of the British representatives had facilitated making treaties, alliances and economic deals of goods import and export inside and outside of Nigeria. The impact of the British colonial rule was also on the social life, they built schools under the supervision of the church to teach Nigerians and finish the work of missionaries.
Chapter Three

Decolonisation Movement in Nigeria (1945-1960)
1. Introduction

After the Second World War, Britain had decided to start colonial reforms because of many factors as the pressure that was practised on Great Britain by USA and the USSR who were against colonialism. Also, the rise of nationalist movements in all the British colonies and Nigeria was one of them (Lawal 29).

The Colonial Office had changed its mentality and thought about the future of colonial rule in Nigeria. All this was because of the abhorrence feelings in the colonies, which gave the colonized people the soul of revolt to get their freedom (29-30).

By the end of the Second World War, the British had begun their economic and political reforms. They had started by including the educated elites in the Nigerian administrations instead of traditional rulers who were under their direct command and at the service of the colonists, but this was not enough. The political parties were asking for more as engaging them in the legislatives council, so the British prepared elections in order to admit Nigerians in the management of the country affairs. The political transformation in Nigeria was rapid and in a short period (30-35).

The political parties preferred the peaceful way in which they used the political striving, they saw it as the best way to get what they wanted. Later, the British prepared for the decolonization after the federal elections of 1959 and parleyed with political parties who asked for independence, Nigerians succeeded and they got it in 1960 (35).

2. Nationalism Movement before 1945

By 1914, the British unified the Nigerian Southern and Northern Protectorates for political and economic reasons. At that period, the First World War had started and the Nigerians had participated with the British forces. During the war, the view of the Nigerians
changed towards the British power, they were thought that the white man undefeated as
Elizabeth Isichei states in her book History of West Africa since 1800:

But in the brief heyday of colonialism - between, perhaps, 1918 and 1945 both Europeans and Africans tended to think that colonialism had come forever, if not for good. On the rare occasions when officials contemplated the end of their regime, they saw it as being hundreds of years in the future. Africans inevitably often came to think so too. An Igbo chief once asked a government interpreter if there was any way of getting rid of the white man. He replied, ‘Impossible. The white man has come to stay as long as men lived (Isichei 202).

From that, the Nigerians started thinking about ways to defeat the British; they started first by political parties which presented the different parts of Nigerian districts which made by the educated elite. Also the Nigerian soldiers, who turned back from war, had a great role in nationalism movement as James K. Matthews states:

These tens-of-thousands of Nigerian veterans acted as catalysts of change on their return home. Their experiences had altered ideas, attitudes, and habits during the war, and made them not only receptive to additional changes in the post-war years especially socio-economic, military, and political – but also inclined to compel others to follow suit. The returned soldiers and carriers were, however, more accelerators of changes already under way in pre-war Nigeria than a force for new directions (Matthews 494).
The First World War had accelerated the nationalism movement in Nigeria and changed the attitudes of the returned soldiers from being colonised to asking for independence using the political parties.

3. The Rise of Nationalism in Nigeria and the Role of the Political Parties

The growth of nationalism had started from an early age; before even the amalgamation of the protectorates in 1914, from some tribes and states which refused the British conquest. After the Second World War in 1945, the raise of the awareness had developed by the political parties who had made the British thinking about preparing the educated elites to share the political life by engaging them in legislative councils. The political parties were also involved in the struggle of getting the rights of Nigerians to get their independence.

From the beginning, the British had ruled the country in indirect way, through the traditional rulers, who were illiterates and not against the colonial rule. After 1945 the end of Second World War and the beginning of liberation movements in the world, the Nigerian nationalists thought about handling the rule to the educated elites in administrations. This step was in order to change the basics of old administrations. Finally, the British accepted to recruit the educated elites in administrations, after the pressure of the nationalists and the Nigerian political parties (GUARDIAN).

The nationalism movement appeared after the First World War, when the Nigerians fought for the British side. The Nigerian soldiers saw the scare of the British soldiers and their fears from the enemy. The basis of the British invincible and superiority was broken in the eyes of the Nigerians and boosted their awareness of freedom and independence. In the Second World War, the African Nigerian soldiers took an informal education in order to be literate persons reading, writing and speaking to make their voices heard for the world (GURDIAN).
The voices of Nigerian nationalists grew up and the demand of independence made the British thinking about reforms and revision of the constitution that led later to constitutional reviews between 1949 and 1954 that changed the future of Nigeria from colonial rule, to self governing federal (GURDIAN).

The political parties had played a big role in the Nigerian political gate for gaining the Nigerian independence. They appeared before the Second World War, but the important ones were activated during and after the World War II; starting by the National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons (NCNC) which then changed to the National Convention of the Nigerian Citizens (NCNC) in 1944. The NCNC had started on a campaign and made a round in the whole country against the British colonialism; which led the NCNC to meet the Secretary of State of the colonies in London in 1947 (Udofia 440). Later, between 1948 and 1954 the constitution had changed so, in order to be a part of this political change, new political parties were founded as: the Northern Elements Progress Union (NEPU), the Northern People's Congress (NPC) which were based in northern Nigeria and the Action Group (AG) that was based in western Nigeria. Those were the main political parties in Nigeria who fought the British colonialism (440). Each part from Nigeria had been represented by its political party. They were seen as ethnic groups because of this division; like the Action Group controlled the Western House of Assembly, while the Northern People's Congress dominated in the Northern House of Assembly and the National Council of Nigerian Citizens controlled the Eastern House of Assembly (Chizea 50). There were thirteen parties which contested in the 1959 federal elections.

By 1951, the political parties started to put pressure on the colonial government to extend full self-governance to all regional assemblies in Nigeria, but the Nigerian Northern Region refused this move because it was not yet ready for self-government. For that reason, two constitutional conferences on this issue were held in London and Lagos between July
1953 and February 1954. After deliberations between the representatives of the three regions: Western, Eastern and Southern, they agreed on important issues which were emanated into the Lyttleton Constitution of 1954 that created federation of Nigeria represented on three regions, Northern, Western, and Eastern. For Lagos, it became a Federal Territory which ruled by the central government (Falola and Heaton 153).

Each region in 1956 had a full internal self-government, but no region did because it was not compelled and the Federation of Nigeria remained under the British colonial authority. The Federal government had also kept some responsibilities like banking, currency, external affairs, shipping, communications and defence. The political power was stationed in the regions in which their governments had gripped public outgoings that were derived from incomes (GURDIAN).

According to Toyin Falola and Matthew M. Heaton in their book A History of Nigeria, the central government was consisted of a unicameral legislature of 184 members, each member is derived from different federal parts, 92 came from the north, 42 from the west and the east equally, 6 from the British Cameroons, and 2 from the Federal Territory of Lagos (Falola and Heaton 153-154) They state:

The central government was made up of a unicameral legislature of 184 members, of whom ninety-two came from the north, forty-two each from the west and the east, six from the British Cameroons, and two from the Federal Territory of Lagos. Federal ministers were appointed by the leader of the majority party in each region’s legislature, with three ministers to be appointed from each region and one from the Cameroons. The ministers joined with the governor general, who remained a British official, and three other official ministers to form a central executive council. The Federal House of Representatives had the
jurisdiction to pass legislation relating to issues on exclusive legislative lists; Jurisdiction over legislation on all issues not on those lists devolved to the regional legislatures. Federal laws always overrode regional laws in cases of legislative overlap (154). (See figure 2)

**Figure 2:** The Central Government Legislatures

![Diagram showing the Central Government Legislatures with connections to North Region, West and East Regions, British Cameroons, and Federal of Lagos](source)


By this constitution, Nigeria got its independence because it had set up self governing rule under the Nigerian federal system that the British put it to facilitate the transfer of power to Nigerians (154).
4. The British Colonial Reforms

After the Second World War and the changes that happened in the world; the liberation movements and nationalism grew up in Nigeria. The British government started thinking about changing its attitudes by making reforms towards the Nigerian society, under political and economic changes that later led to the decolonisation then independence.

The British had started reforms in different fields, starting from the economy, the British built roads and railways to facilitate the goods transportation between the south and north of Nigeria. Also, they built ports in south coast of Nigeria for importation and exportation activities. This step made the Nigerian goods expand and coveted by other countries as cash crops, minerals and raw materials, conversely, Nigerians imported European goods as a type of exchanging (119). Moreover, changing the barter system to cash system and used the British currency for trade deals and in Nigeria (119). This economic policy made Nigerians depending on exporting cash crops and the Europeans dominated in exporting the cash crops (119).

The constitution also had been revised as a part of the colonial reforms; the Colonial Office appointed Nigerians educated elites in the administrations as a first step to stop the pressure of the political parties (Lawal 30). Later, they revised the constitution and acted Richards Constitution in 1946, but it was applied in 1947. This constitution reformed the legislative council (Falola and Heaton 147). The Macpherson Constitution (so called after the present Governor, Sir John Macpherson), which was promulgated on 29 June 1951, had been drawn up after a year of consultations with representative Africans.

The Nigerian political parties did not stop their struggle against the British; they pushed the British to revise the constitution again. In 1951, they replaced the Richard constitution by Macpherson constitution (STUDYHQ) in which and for the first time, Nigerians partnered with the British in formulating the constitution. This was a big achievement for the political
parties as Fidakinte and Abdulkareem state in their article "The Travails of Nigerian Federalism 1951-1999:

The 1951 Constitution, which went through an unprecedented process of consultation with the peoples of Nigeria, can be regarded as the first that attempted to draw up a federal constitution for Nigeria (Fadakinte and Abdulkareem 22).

In Macpherson constitution, there was a new council minister from the three districts: Western, Northern and Eastern provinces, which had to participate in the drafting policies of Nigerian administrations (Louahala 337). Because of Macpherson constitution, new political parties had appeared in the political field, the Action Group (AG) in Western Nigeria and Northern People's Congress (NCP) in Northern Nigeria (Ugiagbe 28) Imuetinyan Ugiagbe states in his article:

This Constitution nevertheless gave birth to many political parties that sprang up during and after 1951 and these parties played a very important role in asserting the pressures that bear upon the bringing down of the subsequent constitution (28).

This constitution had changed the path of 1951-1952 elections which gave new Nigerian country leaders who engaged in the drafting constitutions and ruling the country under new government. Until that time, the British did not think about impart the full management to the Nigerians (Louahala 432).
Chapter Three : Decolonisation Movement in Nigeria (1945-1960)

The Macpherson Constitution had been dropped and replaced later by Lyttleton Constitution (1954-1958) that prepared for the independence, then the Robertson Constitution that led to Nigeria independence ((Ugiagbe 28-29). Lawal states:

Nigeria’s post-independence foreign policy became a campaign issue in the elections that were organized in 1959, before independence. The character of Nigeria’s post-independence foreign policy could no longer be ignored by the Nigerian political parties (Lawal 36).

5. Federal Elections

The constitutional conferences of 1957 and 1958 in which the Nigerians demanded the self-governing (Awa 74-75), led to the Federal Elections of the Federal House of Representatives, these elections were held on December 12th, 1959. The political parties had participated in the federal elections as the NPC, NCNC, NEPU and AG; those were the most nominated (Rahmani 238) and others like Democratic Party of Nigeria and Cameroon (DPNC), the United Middle Belt Congress (UMBC), the Bornu Youth Movement (BUM), the United National Independence Party (UNIP), and the Mabolaje (252).

Elections were under conditions; the elector must be over 21 years old, resident in Nigeria for three sequential years, mentally qualified, also he/she must not have pensioned more than six months, and did not belong to a public office (238). There was a big competition between parties. Parties in general campaigned all over the country for a grand mobilization of the public (See Table 3).

There were violence activities during parties’ electoral campaigns in the whole country. There were (7,185,555) Nigerian electors participated from 9, 036,083 registered voters(240).
The result was: NCNC had the largest number of voters about 2,592,629, then NPC with 2,027,194 and the AG with 1,986,839 voters (240). (See Table 3)

The NPC was the first, it won by 143 seats, 135 seats in the North, and the 8 remained seats were divided by the alliance of NDC and Mabolaje, the NDC got one seat in the East and the Mabolaje 7 seats in the West. The alliance of NCNC-NEPU were the second and got 89 seats, 58 in East, 21 in West, 8 in North, and 2 in Lagos. The AG was classified as a third with 73 seats divides on: the West 33 seats, the North 25 seats, the East 14 seats, and 1 seat in Lagos. The independent candidates won 7 seats, 6 in the North and 1 in the West (240). (See Table 4)
### Table 3: Number of Voters in the Federal Election 1959

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party (coalition)</th>
<th>Eastern Region</th>
<th>Northern Region</th>
<th>Western Region</th>
<th>Lagos Federal Territory</th>
<th>National Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Northern People’s Congress</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>1,994,054</td>
<td>32,960</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>2,027,194</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NCNC-NEPU</td>
<td>1,246,984</td>
<td>525,575</td>
<td>758,462</td>
<td>61,608</td>
<td>2,592,629</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AG</td>
<td>445,154</td>
<td>559,878</td>
<td>933,680</td>
<td>48,137</td>
<td>1,986,839</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>236,626</td>
<td>179,022</td>
<td>162,107</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>578,893</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total valid votes</td>
<td>1,929,754</td>
<td>3,258,520</td>
<td>1,887,209</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>7,187,555</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registered voters</td>
<td>2,598,234</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>9,036,083</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** http://africanelection.tripod.com/ng-detail.htm (241).
Table 4: Results of Elections

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party</th>
<th>North</th>
<th>East</th>
<th>West</th>
<th>Lagos</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N.P.C and allies</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>1*</td>
<td>7*</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N.C.N.C/ NEPU Alliance</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AG</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>174</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>312</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6. Decolonisation and Independence

The new Representatives Federal House had instructed a verdict in January 1960, in which they asked the British Government to accomplish its promise of giving Nigeria its independence. As a result of the resolution, the Representatives of Federal House met in London from May 10th 1960 to May 19th 1960 presented in the Federal Prime Minister, the Regional Premiers, the President of the Senate, other federal and regional representatives in order to discuss with the British representatives about the independence of Nigeria. The consequence of the meeting was the formulation of Nigerian Independence Constitution (244).

A set of undertakings were made to clinch the principles of democracy and guarantees against any power abuse. These included making an Electoral Commission aimed to delimit constituencies and elections control. Also, the General Governor represented the queen of England, they retained the right of appeal to the Privy Council and the Federal House of Representatives labeled Parliament. Finally; the General Governor and Regional Governors had non-conferring of executive powers (244).

Also, both of the Federal Prime Minister and the Regional Premiers had agreed to an Anglo-Nigerian Defence alliance according to which there would be interchange defence assistance. Also, both of British and Nigerian Governments would have facilities for aircraft. These agreements would not come into force only after the independence and by the consent of both parliamentary chambers (244-245). It was important for Nigeria to join the Commonwealth to have prerogatives, they asked the British for being a member of commonwealth and the British agreed (245).

On July 15th 1960, the Secretary of State Lain Macleod (1959- 1961) had submitted independence constitution of Nigeria to the House of Commons to get the final agreement (245).
Finally, there was a constitutional draft about Southern Cameroons to determine whether Southern Cameroons would be separated from Nigeria on her independence or not and they decided that plebiscites in 1961 (245). On October 1st 1960, Nigeria became officially an independent nation after a big political struggle with British.

7. Conclusion

The growth of nationalism made Nigerians think about decolonisation. The parties had played a great role in finding the way to be involved in the political sphere; like working in administrations and legislative council that led them to elections.

The final election was held in 1959 to determine Nigeria’s first step to independent government. British undertook decolonisation in a conscious manner and with the belief and interest in maintaining a reasonable amount of continuity in the direction of socio-economic and political developments in Nigeria.

On October 1, 1960, Nigeria became a fully sovereign state in the British Commonwealth after 100 years of occupation.

In fact, the federal machinery was very fragile. The new country, united in the euphoria of its independence, was still divided on many levels. Regionalism and ethnicity remained major problems barring the development of a national identity that led them later to a civil war.
General Conclusion

The British occupation of Nigeria and the establishment of colonial rule brought different changes in the composition of Nigeria, from divided tribes and kingdoms to a unified country that struggled for its independence. After the occupation, the founding of administrations in the southern part of Nigeria was not easy as the northern part which was well organized because of the old Sokoto Caliphate administrative system. The British appointed the defeated chiefs to rule under their supervision.

The amalgamation in 1914 had highlighted a lot of differences between the south and the north and made the British thought about some reforms especially in education and economy. The evolution that happened after the Second World War made educated elites involved in administration as a part of the British reforms in the colony. The same for the political parties which emerged and involved in the political issues like election and constitutional reforms that led to independence.

Nigeria gained political independence in 1960; it was still far from being economically independent. The country continued to be reliant on export agriculture for the majority of its revenues, and European firms continued to control the export economy.

Very little industrial development had been undertaken, and the industry was still largely owned by European companies. Nigeria’s political independence was therefore coupled with a continuing economic dependence; as the country was reliant on European knowledge, connections, and technologies also on international market conditions.
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