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Date December 21, 2000
THE POLITICIZATION OF DIFFERENCE:
NATIONALISM AND NATIONAL UNITY IN PRE-INDEPENDENT
INDIA, GHANA, NIGERIA, AND KENYA

ABSTRACT

In the historiography of the British Empire, indigenous independence movements have been characterized as ‘nationalistic’, that is, that they were motivated by a sense of national identity among the indigenous peoples which was expressed through the rejection of imperial control and the demand for indigenous self-government. However, the necessity to divide the colonial territory at independence between two indigenous groups in India and the insistence of indigenous groups within Ghana, Nigeria, and Kenya that their distinctive identities be safeguarded within constitutional systems that granted substantive powers to the regions within which those groups resided suggest that there was not, in fact, a unitary sense of identity among the indigenous populations of these colonial territories. The assumption, then, that indigenous independence movements represented ‘Indian’, ‘Ghanaian’, ‘Nigerian’, or ‘Kenyan’ nationalism needs to be re-evaluated.

The characterization of indigenous independence movements as ‘nationalistic’ is challenged in this study through a comparative analysis of the phenomenon within the contexts of India, the Gold Coast (Ghana), Nigeria, and Kenya. Particular attention is paid to the formulation by leaders of these independence movements of an inclusive conception of nationalism, and the degree to which this definition was accepted or rejected by the indigenous populations of those colonial states. What the analysis, supported by case studies of each colonial territory, demonstrates is that the attempts by these leaders to promote an inclusive sense of national identity had a divisive rather than unifying effect upon the indigenous population. Indeed, not only did the indigenous peoples continue to identify themselves according to regional, religious, ethnic, cultural, and linguistic distinctions, but these distinctions became politicized in the form of exclusive definitions of nationalism. The invocation of ‘nationalism’, therefore, actually had the effect of creating a greater awareness within the indigenous population of their differences, not their commonality, an awareness that ultimately led to the geographical or constitutional divisions within these states at independence.
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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my father,

Jack ('Johnny') Newton

1922 - 1980

MONUMENTUM AERE PERENNIIUS.
1. INTRODUCTION

In the twentieth century, nationalism became the raison d'être for numerous violent upheavals in human societies throughout the world, a pattern that seems to be continuing into the foreseeable future. After more than thirty years of observing the often cataclysmic impact of these disturbances, and the wretched toll of suffering that they have caused, I have come to believe that the concept of nationalism needs to be examined in the context of the deleterious effect that it has apparently had on human actions. Given the highly emotive nature of nationalism, such an examination must necessarily be conducted within a context that is distanced by time and space from contemporary or local concerns, in order that subjectivity can be minimized and a rational analysis constructed. Accordingly, I considered which context within my own specific field of interest, British Imperial and Commonwealth History, could provide an appropriate vehicle through which to examine the issue of the impact of nationalism. As the phenomenon of 'nationalist' independence movements within the Empire during the twentieth century clearly offered substantive scope for this kind of examination, this was the context chosen.

There are many examples of this phenomenon in British Imperial History, but I did not believe that one example alone could prove sufficient for my purposes. My intent was to construct an analytic model of the effect of nationalism within the context of independence movements, that is, during periods when the public debate over nationalism would presumably be relatively active. Thus, it seemed to be appropriate to examine several examples in the format of a comparative analysis, so that if there was a pattern to this phenomenon it could be
discerned and described. Each example would, of course, differ in specific details from all of the other examples; therefore, a pattern that could be formulated from the features common to all could be considered an applicable model for further examinations of the effect of ‘nationalism’ in similar historical situations within the British Empire. The number of examples to be included in this comparative analysis was determined by consideration of the optimum number required to establish a pattern of common factors, and which would include sufficient variables in the specific details of each situation to demonstrate that the model thus delineated could appropriately be applied to an even broader range of similar examples. Given these specifications, it seemed advisable to use four case studies because, although to examine this many historical situations would unavoidably place limits upon the depth of the analysis possible in each case, to be able to construct a pattern of common features from as many as four samples would confirm that the pattern was indeed applicable on the scale it was intended for.

With the context and purpose determined, there remained the question of which aspect of ‘nationalist’ independence movements the analysis and the construction of a pattern should be focussed on. Reviewing the historiography of twentieth-century British Imperial History, I came to the realization that nationalism has acted more as a divisive concept than the unifying one it has often been portrayed as being in the histories of the independence movements. Therefore, if I could discover through a comparative analysis that there was, in fact, a pattern that established the divisive nature of nationalism in the examples examined, then the assumption that nationalism ‘unified’ the peoples of colonial states in order that they could present a common front of opposition to continued imperial rule would have to be re-evaluated.

In order to determine the common features which would form the required pattern,
specific examples had to be selected from the many colonial territories within the British Empire which had experienced the phenomenon of 'nationalist' independence movements that would clearly demonstrate the reasons why nationalism had had a divisive effect, and what type of factors were necessary to this outcome. It seemed logical to assume that a divisive effect would be most pronounced in those territories where existing internal divisions among the peoples of those colonial states were so marked that the introduction of an inclusive or unifying definition of nationalism was likely to have been challenged. In other words, where groups within the indigenous population of such a territory might instead embrace a form of exclusive nationalism, defined by the existing internal divisions: regional, religious, ethnic, cultural, or linguistic. The conflict between those promoting an inclusive nationalism and those proposing an exclusive nationalism would thus demonstrate why and how the concept of nationalism had had a divisive impact. Therefore, in accordance with the requirements regarding variables mentioned above, India, the Gold Coast (Ghana), Nigeria, and Kenya were selected as suitable colonial states for the comparative analysis.

India was an obvious choice: it was the largest imperial possession in the twentieth century, the first of the non-white settler territories to obtain independence in this period, and the religious divisions within its population had been so pronounced that the colonial territory had to be divided geographically at independence in order to accommodate conflicting definitions of nationalism within the indigenous population. The Gold Coast (Ghana)—the first of the African imperial territories to be granted independence—was selected because its internal divisions, while also relatively well-defined, involved clear geographical as well as demographical differences within the colony and its population. The same factors were apparent in Nigeria,
though in this case, these geographical and demographical divisions were even more definitive than in the Gold Coast (Ghana). Indeed, these distinctions were so clear that three distinct regional administrative units had to be established prior to independence, a factor that would make unifying these units into one independent nation problematic. As for Kenya, it had not only its own distinct geographical and demographical divisions but also the additional factor of three non-indigenous resident groups (Arabs, Indians, and Europeans), thereby ensuring that there would be considerable scope for an examination of internal divisions within the population of this territory.

Thus, there would be four case studies, each with a unique collection of variables regarding the types of existing internal divisions, from which to construct a comparative analysis that would make it possible to discern and describe common features which could constitute a pattern to serve as an analytic model for further examinations of other colonial territories. All of the colonial territories chosen as case studies shared the basic requirements for selection: they encompassed within them a range of geographical, religious, ethnic, cultural, and linguistic divisions which had developed over the centuries prior to these territories becoming part of the British Empire, that is, these divisions were inherent in those territories. None of these territories had previously existed as a self-governing state, at least, not within the same parameters as those established by the imperial government. Therefore, in none of these cases had there been an existing or historical sense of that specific geographically-demarcated territory being a nation that had been shared by the population of that territory. Furthermore, in each case, a system of imperial administration had been constructed that required the cooperation of a class of indigenous collaborators, which usually consisted of members of the traditional élite
class of that territory. As British imperial control became established, a class of western-educated élite was created in these territories, and, in each case, it would be members of this class who would predominantly organize and support challenges to imperial control, or the independence movements. Moreover, from this latter group, specific individuals came to be acknowledged (by both the members of the independence movements and the British authorities) as the leaders of these movements in each of the territories. It would be these leaders who attempted to construct a concept of nationalism which they believed would act as a unifying factor in the struggle to organize and coordinate indigenous opposition to continued imperial rule, and who tried to promote the acceptance of their particular concept of nationalism by the majority of the indigenous population in their specific colonial territory.

It soon became clear that this would be the key factor in the analysis: the degree of acceptance within the indigenous population in each case of the leader's definition of nationalism. Thus, the primary focus for each case study became determining how each leader characterized nationalism in the context of his particular situation, and ascertaining the degree of acceptance accorded to this description by the indigenous population in his case. Accordingly, I had to select from the vast corpus of historiography on the British Empire those sources which would provide me with the most appropriate material from which to construct the four case studies, and which would include the specific information needed for the analysis.

In order to determine how each of the leaders of independence movements understood the meaning of the term 'nationalism', it was necessary to scrutinize those documents in which they would have been most likely to deal with how each developed his definition, and in what way(s) each intended to explain this to as broad an audience as possible. Such documents would
clearly be the most accurate sources for ascertaining precisely what these leaders believed they meant by nationalism, and for determining how they expressed their idea to the general public—including the indigenous population of their territories. Accordingly, autobiographies were an obvious resource, for all of the leaders in question had written autobiographies which included substantive explanations and descriptions of their political ideologies and activities. In addition, some of these individuals had written treatises on topics relating to these issues, which could provide further clues. There are also available collections of major speeches these individuals had delivered, which, it could reasonably be assumed, would have been selected because of the importance or relevance of the content in regard to elucidating the ideas of the individual. Because I was seeking information which these individuals intended to be in the public realm, that is, which was explicitly meant for public consumption, only published sources were considered to be appropriate. As the material within these sources was produced directly by the individuals themselves, it seemed appropriate to categorize these as primary sources.¹

The second type of sources required were those which could provide the material needed to determine the degree of acceptance of these definitions and expressions of nationalism by the indigenous population in each territory. Thus, it was necessary to consider how this determination could be reached. As it would be impossible to discover what was in the hearts and minds of every individual in every colonial territory, the only real indication of acceptance or rejection would be found in demonstrations of support or opposition for the leaders. For

¹I believe this holds true even for the editions of speeches, which, although selected and compiled by other authors, consist of the verbal utterances of these individuals. I did not consult unpublished material from these sources because my analysis was dependent upon the relationship to what these individuals deliberately intended the public to know about the way they defined ‘nationalism’ and their publics’ responses to that meaning.
example, election results would be a reasonable indication of the degree of acceptance, even if only by segments of the population (those who voted). Another indicator would be membership in organizations headed by these specific leaders. While such support might not necessarily have been directly or solely linked to the leaders’ explanations of nationalism (it could have been for certain policies the leaders espoused), it could be reasonably assumed that the form of nationalism described by the leaders would have been a factor. On the other hand, electoral support for or membership in organizations that opposed these leaders, especially where such opposition included a conflicting definition of nationalism, would indicate a degree of rejection of the leaders’ meaning. Thus, the most appropriate sources for this material would be those which provided sufficient detailed information on these aspects: monographs on the history of the period in each case during which such activities were taking place.

Given the geographical scope of my study, it was not possible to conduct extensive archival research for each case; therefore, it was necessary to select judiciously from the plethora of material on the topic of the dissolution of the British Empire and the various independence movements within each colony those secondary sources which could be considered reliable and reputable. As there are, to my knowledge, no sources which encompass the identical parameters of this study (i.e. India, the Gold Coast (Ghana), Nigeria, and Kenya), it was necessary to use material specific to each case, which could provide the required information and interpretations. While the most up-to-date historiography was consulted where available, it was discovered that many of the more recent monographs themselves relied heavily upon monographs produced closer to the post-independence periods in each case. Accordingly, I did likewise. Although contemporaneous historiography can have its drawbacks, it seemed to me that those historians
might have had greater insights into the public mood of the period than those writing later, who would be more dependent upon documentary evidence alone (this would be especially true for the case of India, for example).

Within these primary and secondary sources I discovered substantial information regarding the newspapers established and maintained (often at great effort) by the leaders of the independence movements in each of the colonial territories. It was clear that these leaders believed that newspapers were necessary instruments for the propagation of their ideas to the public. The information available in the primary and secondary sources has been used in the case studies to illustrate the importance which these leaders placed on disseminating their 'messages'—an indication of how much they wanted their ideas to be made public. It was also possible to obtain from these sources examples of the type of rhetoric used in some of these newspapers, which demonstrated the style of address utilized in this format, and this aspect has been incorporated into my analysis.

While it was possible to obtain sufficient information regarding the use of newspapers and the manner in which the leaders' ideas were presented in them for the requirements of this specific analysis, it became clear to me that the subject of indigenous newspapers has been neglected in the historiography of the independence movements. For example, I was unable to locate any source which provided information such as the percentages of each indigenous population that had access to which newspapers, the geographical breakdown of distribution, the time period during which each publication was operative, and—most importantly—the references
within each edition of each newspaper to the topic of 'nationalism'. Although this particular data was not essential to my purposes, because I simply needed to establish that the leaders had used newspapers to disseminate their definition of nationalism and to obtain some indication of the language used, its absence indicates that more attention should be paid to this aspect of British Imperial History. Of course, given that many of the newspapers were published in the local vernaculars, a comparative analysis on the scale of the one being conducted in this monograph would require that the author be fluent in all of the languages used, and it is highly unlikely that any historian would have the necessary knowledge. However, it should be possible for specialists in the various fields (India, Ghana, etc.) to conduct studies on the newspapers in the individual territories. Of particular interest, I believe, would be a comparative analysis of the material in both vernacular-language and English-language newspapers, to determine if the content was identical, or if it differed according to whether the readership was assumed to be wholly indigenous or restricted to those able to read English— which would include the imperial authorities. Once a sufficient number of studies had been produced, a comparative analysis of this type of material from several colonial territories could then be constructed which could provide considerable insight into the issue of 'nationalism' within the colonial context.

A further possible source of material relevant to my study was the substantial body of work extant which is devoted solely to constructing definitions of nationalism. A perusal of some of the major monographs on this topic led me to the conclusion that there is no all-

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2 From references within the sources, I was able to determine that there had been at least 35 newspapers in India contemporary to the independence movement period, 27 in the Gold Coast (Ghana), 20 in Nigeria, and 17 in Kenya. However, few editions of these newspapers are accessible outside of the archives in these countries, if they are even extant.
encompassing, universally accepted, definition of nationalism. Furthermore, this problem apparently extends to similar words which were used in both the primary and secondary sources such as nation and nationality. Given that the concept of nationalism (and, indeed, nation and nationality) is at the centre of the topic under examination, the problematic nature of its definition has to be of singular importance. This applies not only to the primary sources, and the issue of determining what each leader meant when using this term, but also to the secondary sources, which frequently describe these leaders as nationalists and the movements and political parties with which they were associated as nationalist. However, after careful consideration, I decided that the inclusion in this particular work of yet another review of the possible definition of nationalism on the theoretical level would not be appropriate. In essence, I am examining what specific leaders meant when they used the term, and whether or not their definition of the concept had any relevance to their audience. The explications of theoreticians of nationalism, while fascinating and instructive, did not really have a substantive impact on the effect of the concept in the context of the dialogue between leaders and indigenous populations and its impact on the various independence movements.

That being said, it would appear that this is another field of research which has great potential. A comparative analysis of the various indigenous leaders' definitions and explanations of the concept of nationalism and the numerous theories of nationalism would undoubtedly prove to be an extremely productive exercise. It might even encourage a substantive re-evaluation of the theoretical framework of the field. For example, while some work has been done in this
regard, it would seem that theoreticians need to focus more intently on the twentieth-century manifestations of nationalism, especially in the non-Western world, if there is to be any possibility of constructing a theory that can have a comprehensive application. At this point, theoretical explications are either too context-specific or so general that they have little real analytical utility. In any case, this monograph is primarily centred on the effect of nationalism, and not its definition. There is no intention of analyzing the leaders' theoretical constructs of nationalism, only in ascertaining how they described what they meant by the term and in determining whether or not their definitions were accepted by the indigenous populations. As will be seen in the case studies, the leaders tended to promote an inclusive categorization of the term, while the indigenous population tended to manifest acceptance of exclusive interpretations which reflected the inherent internal divisions within each of the colonial territories and thus demonstrated the divisive nature of nationalism in these contexts. An analysis of the definitions themselves would require a substantive exposition, if the issue is to be appropriately examined as indicated above. Therefore, for the analysis conducted in this monograph, I decided to maintain my focus on the divisive effect of nationalism, rather than investigate the definitional problems of the term.

The analysis itself is multi-faceted. Chapter 2 provides the background for all the cases, describing the inherent internal divisions of each, and the construction of a colonial state in each territory. This has been done in order to establish the context within which the independence movements, and the individual leaders, functioned. In the following four chapters, each colonial territory is dealt with individually. All five of these chapters, given space limitations, had to be

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3For example, Anthony D. Smith's *Theories of Nationalism*, Second Edition (London: Gerald Duckworth & Co., 1983) challenges the "Eurocentric ... standpoint" of much of the theoretical analysis conducted, p. xi.
constructed as selective synopses of events and developments. Selection was based on the need to maintain the focus on the leaders’ definition of nationalism and the manifestation of acceptance or rejection of this by the indigenous population. As a result, of course, the complexity of the pre-independence phase in each case has been simplified, but not, it is hoped, in such a way that important nuances have been ignored.

In Chapter 3 (India), the establishment of nationalist parties in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries has been examined, in order to highlight the primary importance of the Indian National Congress in this process, and the existence—at the very beginning of the independence movement phase—of division within the indigenous population, in the form of the Muslim League. This is followed by a lengthy section on Mohandas K. Gandhi, focussing on his program of satyagraha (non-violent non-cooperation program), and his emergence as the leader of Congress. Two further sections explain the development of organized opposition to Gandhi and the Congress from within the indigenous population, and the period immediately preceding independence, when the conflict between those who accepted Gandhi’s definition of India and those who did not became so divisive that the colonial territory had to be geographically divided at independence in order to accommodate this conflict—Partition. Because Gandhi is such a well-known historical figure, it was not believed necessary to include material on his early life in order to enhance an understanding of his position and the development of his ideology and program. Such information was believed necessary in the African cases, where the leaders might not be as famous as the Mahatma, although in these cases, this material was kept as minimal as possible.

Chapter 4 (the Gold Coast/Ghana), also begins with the early developments of indigenous opposition to colonial rule, moving on to a section on the establishment of the first ‘nationalist’
party, which includes a summary of the early years of Kwame Nkrumah and an explanation of his emergence as the primary leader of the independence movement in that territory. This is followed by a section on the rise of opposition to Nkrumah’s vision of Ghanaian nationalism, and the political organization of this opposition. The manifestation of this opposition through the ballot box is also described, culminating with the final election before independence.

The same basic pattern is followed in Chapter 5 (Nigeria), although this is a more complex example as there are two primary leadership figures: Obafemi Awolowo and Nnamdi Azikiwe. The initial section deals with the initial manifestations of indigenous rejection of colonial rule, followed by an explanation of the beginnings of political organization of this rejection. The emergence of both Awolowo and Azikiwe as leaders is then examined. The next two sections explore the polarization of the Nigerian independence movement, under the leadership of Awolowo and Azikiwe, which resulted in a deepening of regional divisions within the territory and considerable conflict between indigenous groups in the penultimate stage of negotiations leading towards independence.

In Chapter 6 (Kenya), the additional inherent problem of multiple non-indigenous groups resident within the territory is explained first, emphasizing the primary role of European settlers in the political organizations of the independence movement there. The development of the initial indigenous organizations is then studied, including the emergence of Jomo Kenyatta as the major indigenous leader in this case. This is followed by an examination of the evolution of indigenous political organization, and the increasing influence and participation in the independence movement of two important figures: Oginga Odinga and Tom Mboya. The splintering of the independence movement into a multitude of indigenous political parties, and
the complicated negotiation process leading to independence is then explored.

Thus, Chapter 2 establishes that all of the cases being studied share common features which accord with the requirements for selection: they encompass within them a range of geographical, religious, cultural, ethnic, and linguistic divisions inherent to those territories (that is, that existed prior to these territories becoming colonial states); and none of these territories had previously existed as a self-governing state, at least, not within the same parameters as those established by the imperial government. This means that, while each differed in particulars regarding the specifics of inherent internal divisions and in the details of their construction as colonial states, they shared sufficient commonalities as to be appropriate elements of a comparative analysis.

In addition, through the case studies in Chapters 3, 4, 5, and 6, a collection of common factors regarding the development of the independence movement becomes clearly discerned, creating a pattern applicable to each case, that confirms the suitability for each case for inclusion in a comparative analysis of independence movements and the particular ramifications of this being studied in this treatise. This pattern demonstrates that responses to the imposition and maintenance of imperial control went through a series of phases:

(1) an initial stage of violent resistance;

(2) the development of a class of collaborators, which enabled the British to administer the territory predominately through indigenous agents;

(3) the growth of an élite class of Western-educated professionals which became determined to participate in the administration and government of their homeland, and which established the first organizations to promote their interests;

(4) the evolution of these organizations into political interest groups which attempted to negotiate with the British authorities (both within the colonial territory and in Britain) a
series of constitutional reforms, with the eventual goal of indigenous self-government;

(5) the radicalization of a segment of this élite class, frustrated by the glacial progress towards self-government, which began to attempt to involve the non-Westernized masses in their political activities;

(6) the appearance of a charismatic leader from the élite class who was able to establish a relationship with substantive numbers of the indigenous population, and who either created his own political organization or took control of an existing one, and constituted it as a mass party;

(7) the articulation by this leader of his belief that the population and geography of this colonial territory constituted a ‘nation’ and that the demands for self-government were motivated by a sense of ‘nationalism’ within the population;

(8) the appearance of support among the indigenous population for the élite’s demands for self-government, demonstrated by the ability of the leader to attract large crowds to his public appearances, by a substantial increase in membership enrollment in his organization, and by the participation of substantive numbers of the indigenous population in protest activities;

(9) a marked increase in the pace of constitutional reform, which began to incorporate forms of democratic government, including the electoral process;

(10) the growth of indigenous political parties which represented sub-groups within the population (determined by the inherent internal regional, religious, cultural, or linguistic divisions), and which professed to be motivated by a ‘nationalism’ defined by their separate sense of identity;

(11) an often violent stage of inter (and intra) group conflict between the indigenous political parties and their supporters, as each party attempted to gain an advantageous position in the negotiation process and in the electoral contests;

(12) the solidification of the divisions within the indigenous population and the conflicting ‘nationalisms’ within the colonial territory, demonstrated by the results of the final pre-independence elections;

(13) a penultimate stage of constitutional negotiations to determine the composition of the independent state to be created from the colonial territory, during which agreement has to be reached between the indigenous political parties;

(14) the resolution of the conflict by the acknowledgement through the constitutional arrangements of the independent state that the ‘nationalistic’ divisions must be
recognized and accommodated.

This pattern having been established through the case studies, a further chapter (7) consists of a comparative analysis, which examines the similarities in each case regarding the leaders' definitions of nationalism and the demonstrations of acceptance or rejection of their definitions.

The comparative analysis in Chapter 7 will clearly demonstrate that the leaders' inclusive definitions of nationalism were indeed rejected by substantive numbers of the indigenous population, who manifested through their support for opposing political organizations their refusal to identify themselves in accordance with the form of nationalism that those leaders had promoted. Moreover, the rejection of an inclusive definition of nationalism, in each case, actually promoted in its stead the development of a variety of exclusive nationalisms, defined by the inherent internal divisions within each territory, that defied all attempts to construct a unified and uniform 'nation' out of the colonial state. Thus, the independence movements in each of these cases, rather than creating new nation-states from the colonial territories, actually served to promote the sense within substantive segments of the indigenous population in each one that they did not, in fact, 'belong' to that new nation at all. While the most definitive manifestation of this was the necessity to provide a separate state for one of these segments of the indigenous population—the partition of the colonial territory of India into the two independent states of India and Pakistan—in the African cases, the sense of 'separateness' had to be accommodated by negotiating regional divisions within the independent states which accorded (as much as possible) with the sense of nationalist identity acceptable to the peoples of each region.

However, despite the apparent clarity of these expressions of 'separateness' by the various segments of the indigenous populations, there is more to this issue than the ostensible
demonstration of conflicting definitions of nationalism. The process by which these expressions were made had a great deal to do with what those expressions were. The process, in fact, politicized the issue of identity, forcing the indigenous population to choose how to identify themselves. Indeed, it becomes clear, through the case studies, that the process of eliciting support for any of the political parties was based more on the parties’ ability to articulate their interest in resolving specific, local grievances that the indigenous population had with the colonial administration than on segments of the populations’ acceptance of the version of nationalism which each party espoused. This aspect only became a substantive factor once it became clear to the majority of the population in each case that self-government was imminent, and that it had become necessary to identify themselves with the political organization which could reasonably be expected to best promote the interests of the group with which they identified—based on their regional, religious, cultural, or linguistic affiliations.

While the indigenous populations were politicized by the process leading to independence; therefore, they were politicized not by an inherent desire to express their exclusive senses of nationalism but by the recognition that they were becoming part of a new political system. And, because the majority of these populations (unlike the Western-educated élites who led the political parties) were unfamiliar with this new system, which was based on the British parliamentary model, they naturally tended to be attracted to whichever political party presented a familiar facade. Thus the appeal of regional, religious, cultural, or linguistically-based parties. Moreover, the exclusive nationalistic rhetoric employed by these parties not only emphasized the identity-familiarity factor, it intensified the sense of division among the indigenous populations, which further encouraged individuals to identify with ‘their’ group, and
While it is impossible to determine at which point the individuals which constituted the indigenous populations began to identify themselves in nationalistic terms (or, indeed, if they ever did), what is clear is that the inclusive nationalisms that the leaders articulated were artificial constructs—they had not evolved from a sense of identity within the indigenous populations. In essence, each leader created a ‘nationalism’ that could accord with the parameters of the colonial territory—which was itself an artificial construct. Indian, Ghanaian, Nigerian, or Kenyan nationalism did not exist within any of the indigenous populations of these colonies prior to independence (and, it could be argued, it is questionable whether it has developed since independence). Yet the basis of the leaders’ demands for independence was that these colonies were ‘nations’, and, as such, entitled to govern themselves, to be free of imperial control. Therefore, ‘nationalism’ had to be their rallying cry.

While unwilling to cast aspersions on the integrity and sincerity of any of these leaders, there is an aspect to this use of ‘nationalism’ that must be addressed. Each wanted self-government for their particular colonial territory. In itself, this is an admirable and understandable aim: self-government implies that the state is administered to ensure that the interests of the state, and its population, are paramount (instead of being subservient to the interests of the imperial power). However, in reality, it is the interests of the élites in any state—whether colonial or independent—which are truly primary. The élites which created and led the independence movements were intent on removing imperial control in order to gain control for themselves: ‘self-government’ meant that they would be governing, instead of the imperial power and its indigenous collaborators. In order to accomplish this, they needed to
persuade the imperial power to relinquish control because they recognized that a violent overthrow of the imperial government was not feasible, given its control of the coercive forces of the state. However, as intellectual arguments did not seem to be productive (see phase (4) above), another approach was clearly needed. Although the British controlled the police and military forces in each colony, imperial policy demanded that expenditures for these be kept to a minimum. The British preferred to induce the acquiescence of the indigenous populations to imperial rule by governing, as much as possible, through collaborators, thus maintaining the illusion of indigenous administration. If this acquiescence could be disrupted, however, the British system would unravel, and the imperial government would be faced with the choice of either imposing control by force, in order to maintain the status quo, or of constructing a system which could gain the renewed acquiescence of the population.

Therefore, the élites which wanted a ‘self-governing’ system had to find a way to convince the British that the imperial system was no longer acceptable to the indigenous populations (phase (8) above). Because the ‘new’ system that they demanded was self-government, a complete relinquishment of imperial control, they needed to not only rouse the indigenous population sufficiently to convince the British that imperial control was no longer tenable, they had to present the British with a way to accept this. In the post-1918 era of ‘self-determination’ and in the context of the British imperial rationale (that imperial control was a ‘trusteeship’, and that the colonies would be given independence when they were ‘ready’ to govern themselves) indigenous élites were thus able to argue that their colonies were not only ‘ready’ for self-government, because they represented a class that had been educated in how to govern according to the British political system, but that—as ‘nations’—they had the right to
determine for themselves how to be governed, and by whom. Therefore, the incitement of the indigenous populations by the élites, to create the required disruption, had to be presented as expressions of 'nationalist' sentiments. This explains the leaders' emphasis on inclusive definitions of nationalism.

As the case studies demonstrate, however, the involvement of substantial numbers of the indigenous populations in the independence movements was not, in fact, primarily motivated by 'nationalist' sentiments—certainly not of the inclusive type. In spite of this, because sufficient disruption was created, and because the 'spokesmen' of the indigenous populations—the élite leaders—claimed that these disruptions represented 'nationalist' demands for independence, this is how they were, and have been, categorized.4

Accordingly, there is an obvious need for a re-interpretation of these historical situations. These were not 'nationalist independence movements' impelled by a sense of 'nationalism' among the indigenous populations, led by 'national' leaders who wanted to create a 'national' state for their peoples. Whatever the personal conviction of the individual leaders, these were in reality successful attempts by self-selected élite groups to gain political control of these colonial territories from the imperial power. While these élites in each territory may well have shared some form of a sense of inclusive nationalism as a motivating factor in their activities, to categorize the entire phenomenon as nationalist is clearly an over-simplification that not only distorts the interpretation of each case, but creates an incorrect impression for readers of these

4While the historiography, both contemporary and recent, varies in degrees of sympathy towards individual leaders or specific aspects of the independence movements, including some criticism of the categorization of 'nationalist' claims, the language of 'nationalist independence movements' is predominantly retained.
interpretations. Returning to the issue of theories of nationalism referred to above, if 'nationalism' and its related words are to be used, then clear and precise definitions must be provided to ensure that misunderstanding can be avoided. Some words carry so much 'baggage' that their content has to be explicitly described, else a mouse might be perceived to be an elephant.
2. ARTIFICIAL CONSTRUCTS: THE CREATION OF THE COLONIES

The colonial territories selected for this comparative analysis shared a collection of common features. None of them had previously existed as a self-governing state, at least, not within the same parameters as those established by the imperial government. In each case, the colonies had been gradually constructed by the imperial authorities through a cumulative process of absorbing sections of the territories into the colonial state, eventually creating and defining the geographical parameters of India, the Gold Coast (Ghana), Nigeria, and Kenya. Each of these imperial creations encompassed within its borders a range of geographical, religious, cultural, ethnic, and linguistic divisions which had been established during the centuries prior to these territories becoming part of the British Empire, and these divisions became incorporated into the fabric of the colonial state. During the ‘struggle for independence’ period in each of the colonies here being examined, these inherent divisions would constitute the foundations (and rationales) of the conflicts between indigenous groups over the structure and composition of the future independent states.

In order to comprehend the fundamental role that these divisions played in the indigenous conflicts in the eras immediately preceding independence in each of these colonial states, therefore, it is necessary to determine how these divisions were defined and established both before these territories became imperial constructs and during the construction of the colonial states. Accordingly, a synopsis of the origins and developments of these inherent divisions within each of these territories will be delineated in this chapter.
a) India

In the context of this monograph, the term ‘India’ (unless otherwise specified) will be used to represent the entire subcontinent of South Asia, bordered by the Himalayan Mountains on the north, the Hindu Kush and Baluchi Hills on the west, the Naga Hills in the east (which form a natural barrier to what is now Burma/Myanmar), the Arabian Sea along the western coast, and the Bay of Bengal along the eastern coast. These geographical boundaries form the familiar triangular shape of the subcontinent, more than two thousand miles across at the inverted ‘base’ of the triangle and two thousand miles from the ‘base’ to the ‘tip’, enclosing within these ‘natural’ borders a land area of over one and a half million square miles.¹

While India is separated from its neighbours by mountain ranges and the two sections of the Indian Ocean (the Arabian Sea and the Bay of Bengal), it is also divided internally by a number of topographical, climactic, and geological formations. South of the mountainous regions which form the northern borders is the broad expanse of the Indo-Gangetic Plain, defined by three major river systems: the Indus, the Ganges, and the Brahmaputra. Beyond this lies the central mountain belt, which effectively divides the southern two-thirds of the subcontinent from the northern third. The centre of the southern section is occupied by the Deccan Plateau, whose Western and Eastern Ghats (“steps”) lead down to the narrow coastal littoral strips along the western and eastern coasts. These large regions are further subdivided by deserts, such as the Thar in the north-west, or fertile valleys, such as Kashmir in the north. The topography of these regions additionally defines to a great extent the differing climatic zones within the subcontinent:

the snowy expanses of the Himalayas, the seasonal heat or cold of the northern Plains, the parched barrenness of the Deccan, and the tropical humidity of the coastal strips. The subcontinent is also defined by the monsoon season, which generally arrives on the central plains in the summer, the eastern coastal region in late autumn, and the north-west in the winter. The monsoon rains feed the river systems of the Indo-Gangetic Plain, bringing welcomed relief to the scorching summer heat in the northern Plains, and provide most of the water supply to the southern regions, although there is always risk of flooding from the sudden and substantial precipitation, especially in the eastern delta area of Bengal.²

The monsoon winds also brought the first inhabitants to the subcontinent, blowing their primitive craft from the coast of East Africa to the western coastal strip. At about the same time (the Paleolithic era), another group migrated from Central or East Asia, through the mountain passes into the Indus valley. Thus, from the beginnings of human habitation on the subcontinent, there have been regional, cultural, ethnic, linguistic, and religious distinctions between its occupants. As the millennia passed, other groups migrated into the fertile regions of the northern Plains and the coastal strips from the Mediterranean and Europe, driving earlier groups east, to the Ganges plains, or south. Indeed, the continued existence of tribal groups, long ago pushed to the geographical margins in the central plateau, the north-east, and the north-west,³ illustrates the lasting effects of these centuries of migration. Over time, the majority of the population became concentrated in graphically-separated pockets along the coasts and across the northern


Plains, leaving the deserts, jungles, and barren central plateau sparsely populated. This pattern of population density created distinct regional divisions between the inhabitants of the subcontinent which largely acceded with the topographical, climatic, and geographical distinctions of each region. Other divisive factors also developed over the centuries.

Each of these migrant groups brought into India their own cultural, linguistic, ethnic, and religious legacies, establishing the incredible diversity of India’s human society. For example, there are within India adherents to every major world religion: Hinduism, Islam, Buddhism, Christianity, Judaism. Moreover, these broad categories are deceptive, for each is divided into sects, and each sect has its followers. In addition, there are the "minor" religious groups: Sikhs, Parsees, Jains, and the variety of animistic practices of many of the tribal groups. While there are concentrations of some of these religious communities, for example, Sikhs tend to be found mainly in the Punjab, most are scattered throughout India. Although many religions are represented within India, however, the majority of its inhabitants can be classified as Hindu, though it must be remembered that, given the size of its population, "minorities" can often be

4 Wolpert, pp. 6-125. The first civilizations, the Harappa and the Mohenjo-daro, were established in the Indus valley circa 2300 BC to 1750 BC, p. 15. They were followed by the Aryans, who invaded through the Hindu Kush (as did most of the invaders who would follow them through the centuries) circa 1500 BC to 1000 BC, p. 25. The Aryans unified Northern India, under the leadership of the Mauryan Empire, circa 300 BC, p. 55. The greatest of the Mauryans, Ashoka, conquered most of the territory of the subcontinent, with the exception of three Dravidian kingdoms in the far south, during his reign from 269 to 232 BC, pp. 61-63. After Ashoka’s death, the Mauryan Empire declined, and the territory reverted to a collection of small kingdoms, some of the northern of which were reunited under the Gupta kings circa 320 to 700 AD, p. 88. The Indo-Gangetic plains were once again united during the period of the Delhi Sultinate (1206 - 1526 AD), pp. 109-119.

5 A.L. Basham, "Introduction," in A Cultural History of India, pp. 6 - 7. Basham claims that there are "three main racial types" represented in India: "the Proto-Australoid, the Palaeo-Mediterranean, and the Caucasoid or Indo-European." In addition, "[a]lmost every race of Central Asia found its way to India," as well as African slaves, "Persian and Arab traders," and "various European traders and conquerors," especially Portuguese and British.

6 Brown, pp. 18-31.
counted in the millions.

Furthermore, the waves of migration of different ethnic groups brought a variety of languages into India, and, as these migrant groups settled in various regions, these languages evolved regional linguistic and dialectical distinctions. As a result, language became a "part of regional identity, helping to perpetuate regional distinctiveness and loyalty," dividing rather than uniting Indians. And, of course, the distinct cultures of each group also became part of the identity of members of these groups, distinguishing them from members of other groups. Thus, during the thousands of years of migrations into India—long before the arrival of Europeans—a highly complex collection of diverse, and inherently divided, societies had been established on the subcontinent.

Moreover, legacies of mutual antagonism or antipathy between various groups had been created over the millennia, as migrant groups had usurped control over territories occupied by earlier migrants, either conquering them or driving them off of the most desirable land, and imposing upon the defeated groups new religions or cultures. During the long centuries of war and oppression, resentments which had resulted from these inter-group conflicts had intensified, especially the tensions between the various religious groups, in particular between the Hindus.

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Ibid., pp. 16-17. Brown categorizes the "four main families" of Indian languages as: "the Indo-Aryan, spoken in north and central India; Dravidian languages spoken in the southern third of the subcontinent; Tibeto-Chinese surviving in the north-east mountain area...; and the Austro-Asiatic tongues of the tribal people in India's central hill regions." She also points out that, while Sanskrit "forms the basis of the script and grammar of India's northern languages, [t]he southern languages are completely different—in sound, shape, and script. Within these language families,... there are different languages. And even within one language area there are numerous dialects." Ironically, while the British brought yet another language to India, English proved to be a unifying force, at least for the educated classes of Indians, who could at last communicate through a universal (for India) common language.
and Muslims, leaving a poisonous residue.\(^8\)

Eventually, this infected most of the population of the subcontinent because, at one time or another, inter-group conflict raged throughout India. Indeed, India’s history from the second millennium BC to the creation of the British Raj in the mid-nineteenth century C.E. can be described as a series of invasions and civil wars, as the different groups migrated into India, conquered the inhabitants and established their own ‘kingdoms’, which then disintegrated as factions of that group battled for control, only to be conquered by yet another wave of migrants.\(^9\) Because of the internecine conflicts, while a variety of substantial kingdoms and empires were created in India over the years, there has never been a political unity over the entire territory.\(^10\) Even the great Mughal Empire, at its height during the early period of Western incursions, only claimed to encompass all of northern and much of central India, and even this political homogeneity was largely illusionary. Many small kingdoms remained, especially in the south, and the Mughals relied extensively on the collaboration of a multitude of local traditional leaders.

\(^8\)For example, during the “war of destruction and plunder” by Mahmud of Ghazni from 1000 AD to 1025 AD, Hindu holy sites at Thaneswar, Mathura and Kanauj were destroyed, and 50,000 Hindus died trying to defend the temple at Somnath (in Gujarat). Hermann Kulke and Dietmar Rothermund, *A History of India*, Third Edition (London: Routledge, 1998) pp. 153-154. During the 1660s, in the reign of Aurangzeb, “construction of [Hindu] temples was severely restricted and in a few cases recently built shrines were destroyed; new taxes were imposed on temple pilgrimage and Hindu merchants, who paid twice the rate of Muslims; the jizya [head tax] upon tolerated non-believers ... was reimposed ...; and steps were taken to increase the proportion of Muslims in state employment,” Stein, p. 179. “When crowds gathered near [the] Red Fort to protest such inequity and blatant discrimination, imperial elephants were ordered out to crush them,” Wolpert, pp. 158-159. Hindus were not the only group to suffer from Muslim oppression: several Sikh gurus were murdered during the seventeenth century by the Mughal emperors’ orders, Wolpert, pp. 161-162.

\(^9\)See Kulke and Rothermund, pp. 16-197; Stein, pp. 45-197; and Wolpert, pp. 14-173.

\(^10\)See maps in Wolpert, pp. 64-66, which illustrate the territories of the Harappan Empire (ca. 2000 BC), the Mauryan Empire (ca. 300-200 BC), the Gupta Empire (ca. 300-400 AD), the Delhi Sultanate (ca. 1200 AD), and the Mughal Empire (ca. 1600 AD).
to maintain ostensible imperial suzerainty. As the Mughal Empire disintegrated during the eighteenth century, engulfing India once again in the chaos of civil war, many of these local leaders attempted to carve out their own autonomous fiefdoms. It was in this period that the Europeans, notably the French and British, became actively involved in the inter-Indian struggles for control over territory, and the British began to establish the foundations of the British Raj that would 'rule' India until 1947.

Europeans had first arrived on the south-west coast of the subcontinent in 1498, in the person of the Portuguese explorer Vasco da Gama. Its existence had hardly been a mystery, however, for European trade with India dated back to the Roman Empire. The Portuguese expedition was merely trying to reestablish direct contact with the lucrative Indian spice trade, in order to eliminate the Arabian middlemen who had taken over after the collapse of the Roman Empire. By 1510, the Portuguese had conquered the island of Goa, which became the first European colony on the subcontinent.

For almost a hundred years, the Portuguese enjoyed a monopoly over the spice trade from South Asia; however, given the substantial profits to be made from the trade they could not expect this to last. In 1601, The Company of Merchants of London trading into the East Indies

11The great Mughal emperor, Akbar, had conquered much of the territory of the subcontinent by 1595, but his direct control was limited to the northern states, Wolpert, pp. 126-134. See also C.A. Bayly, New Cambridge History of India, II.1: Indian Society and the Making of the British Empire (Cambridge University Press, 1988) pp. 7-32 for a discussion of the breakdown of the Mughal Empire during the eighteen century, as the system of collaboration deteriorated.

12Wolpert, p. 135.


14This first expedition made a profit of 3000% - an indication of the riches to be made from this trade, Wolpert, p. 136.
(commonly known as the East India Company, or EIC) was granted a charter by Queen Elizabeth I, and set out to establish its own trading links with the spice markets. The Dutch soon followed, creating their own East India company in 1602, and the French joined the competition in 1664.

For the next 150 years, through the entire seventeenth century and the first half of the eighteenth century, the Europeans battled amongst themselves for access to the spice trade throughout littoral Asia, from the coasts of India to the islands of Japan. In India, they each established enclaves on the coasts, usually by agreement with the Mughal Emperor or local authorities, as bases for their trading operations with the hinterland. Because of the violent nature of the inter-European competition, and also because of the unstable local conditions, these bases were heavily fortified, and each company gradually created its own military organization, to act both defensively and offensively. As the control of the Mughal Emperor over his subordinates weakened during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, the Europeans were drawn into the inter-Indian struggles for supremacy over the fragments of the Empire—in order to both protect and expand their own interests. To categorize this period as

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15The charter was dated 31 December 1600, but the first ships did not set out until February of 1601, Keay, pp. 9 and 14. As Keay noted, for most of the sixteenth century, the English had been going in "the wrong direction," seeking a route to the spice islands of Southeast Asia through the Arctic in the hope of avoiding unnecessary conflict with the Spanish and Portuguese, who had respectively discovered the western and eastern routes, p. 8

16Although Dutch merchants had been trading in the region for several years already, the creation of a formal company to handle the trade meant that the government (whether of the Netherlands or Britain) granted a monopoly over trade with the specified area, that is, that only the specified company could import goods from that area into the 'home' country, Stein, p. 205.

17Stein, p. 206.

18See Stein, pp. 184-200, for an account of the Mughal decline.
chaotic would be to understate the confusion of shifting alliances, military engagements, defeats and victories. However, with the Battle of Plassey on the 23rd of June 1757, the British emerged not only triumphant over their European opponents, but also as the dominant power in India. The Portuguese retained their colony at Goa and the French still held a few coastal outposts, but the Dutch had retreated from India to focus on their Indonesian holdings. The EIC, on the other hand, had not only firmly established its enclaves on the west (Bombay) and east (Madras) coasts, it now effectively controlled the rich province of Bengal.19

Over the next hundred years, the EIC gradually expanded the territory under its control, by either military occupation or treaty arrangements, until, by 1857, the Company was governing and administering approximately two-thirds of the subcontinent under the nominal ‘rule’ of the Mughal Emperor.20 This “rather strange phenomenon” of an empire created by a trading company caused considerable unease in London, given that the Company’s charter specified that “all territories which might be conquered by that company” could be claimed by the British Government.21 In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the Government was not interested in acquiring such territories, but perforce felt some responsibility for the regions of India now controlled by a British company.22 As a result, the British Government gradually

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19See Keay, pp. 14-320, for a fascinating account of this tumultuous period; and Wolpert, pp. 139-180, for a more condensed version. As both authors noted, however, the EIC triumph would not have been possible without the active participation and support of both Indian soldiers and influential segments of Indian society.

20S.M. Burke and Salim Al-Din Quraishi, The British Raj in India: An Historical Review (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1995) pp. 5-26. In 1688, the Company had leased the former Portuguese colony of Bombay from the Crown. Bombay had been part of the dowry for Catherine of Portugal when she had become the wife of Charles II.

21Kulke and Rothermund, p. 224. See also Stein, p. 212.

22The opportunity arose when the EIC announced in 1767 that it could not afford to pay its annual tax of £400,000 to the British Government, claiming that its military expenditures had been too costly. In fact, it
became more involved in Indian affairs, implementing a series of Regulating Acts which expanded the Government’s authority over EIC activities in India, and the structure of EIC governance and administration, until, by 1833, the EIC had been forced to relinquish all commercial activity in India and to focus solely on the administration of its territorial holdings.23

However, the British Government had little real control over the activities of British officials in India, including the governor-general. It could take from six months to a year for communications to travel one way between India and Britain in this period, nor was communication within India expeditious (especially between the widely-scattered centres of Bombay, Madras, and Bengal), so the administrators were very much ‘on their own’. As a result, organizational reforms were substantively constructed at the local level, which had the effect of confirming, and in some aspects intensifying, regional differences. For example, one system of landownership rights was implemented in Bengal and some areas of Madras, while another was used in most of Madras and Bombay, and yet another in northern India. In addition, officials tried as much as possible to accommodate local practices and traditions, for example, using Hindu and Muslim legal codes in the judiciary system, recognizing traditional village

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wanted a loan from the Government of more than a million pounds sterling to cover its debts. As individual members of the Company seemed to be having no difficulty in amassing substantial fortunes from their Indian adventures, the Government decided that the situation warranted investigation. Determining that the EIC had not only mismanaged the administration of its Indian territories but had also been guilty (both the Company and its officers) of such rapacious practices that the indigenous population of Bengal was starving, the Government decided to institute greater control over the Company’s activities, Wolpert, pp. 188-190.

23The Act of 1773, for example, “made provision for the appointment of a governor general and for the establishment of a council composed of four people sent from London who could advise and outvote the governor general.” The Act of 1784 created a Board of Control in London, 3 of whom were appointed by the government and 3 of whom were directors of the Company; the Board’s “decisions were binding on the governor general,” who now had “autocratic powers” in India. In 1813, the Company monopoly over Indian trade with Britain was cancelled, and in 1833, it was ordered “to liquidate all its commercial and industrial assets in India,” in effect, to cease operating as a trading company, Kulke and Rothermund, pp. 225-226 and 232.
hierarchical structures, and retaining Mughal state monopolies on salt and opium.24

Indeed, it could be said that it was the readiness of the early Company administrators to adapt British rule to Indian conditions enabled it to maintain control over its vast territorial holdings. By establishing a mutually-advantageous relationship with traditionally powerful groups within Indian society, such as large landowners, the commercial classes, and “the leadership strata of rural and many urban communities,” the British transformed these groups into effective collaborators which would support and sustain British rule.25 Thousands of Indians from the classes which had traditionally been employed in government service also readily switched their allegiance to the British. Although these collaborators were predominantly restricted to lower-level positions in the administration, their positions still provided substantive opportunities to wield considerable influence over local affairs “on behalf of patrons, clients, and relatives,” and were, therefore, much sought after.26

While these segments of Indian society reaped the benefits of cooperation with the EIC, however, others did not. There were the rulers who had lost territory to the ever-encroaching EIC empire, urban bankers and merchants who had lost business to their European competitors, and increasing numbers of Indians of all classes who were becoming unsettled by the ‘modernizing’ reforms of senior British administrators.27 The discontent erupted in the Mutiny

24Stein, pp. 212-216; see also Wolpert, 188-200.
25This was also true for the Indian sepoys (soldiers) of the Company Army, most of whom were recruited from groups with a tradition of military service, Stein, pp. 224-225.
26Brown, p. 69.
27The earlier policy of non-interference in Indian cultural and religious matters had given way by the 1820s to the evangelical fervour of certain officials, both military and civilian. Traditional practices, such as sati (the burning of a widow on her husband’s funeral pyre), had been banned, the Charter Act of 1833 had “opened
of 1857, when sepoys in a number of regiments in north-central India rebelled against their
British officers, and the Company temporarily lost control over much of the region. The sepoys’
apparent aim had been to restore traditional rule, including that of the Mughal Emperor,
but—thanks in large part to the active assistance of those segments of Indian society who believed
that they had more to gain from continued collaboration with the British—the Mutiny was
eventually suppressed and order restored.28

While British rule was reimposed over the region of the outbreak, the Mutiny had
effectively destroyed the legitimacy of the EIC as ruler. The British Government transferred all
authority over the Company’s territories to itself, and India became part of the British Empire
in 1858.29 From this point on, the parameters of British territory would remain unchanged. This
left approximately one-third of India ostensibly independent, governed by over 560 princes. 30

Under treaties signed between the British government and each of the princes, the British
recognized the independence of each of these princely states in all domestic matters, retaining
the right to maintain a presence at each court, in the form of a Resident, to ensure that British

India to unrestricted British emigration and enterprise, mercantile as well as missionary,” and even the Army was
infected with discontent, as some British officers became less sympathetic (and in some cases, antagonistic) towards traditional sepoys practices and beliefs. In addition, peasants were increasingly distressed by changes to
land tenure rights and high taxation. See Brown, pp. 72-78; Stein, pp. 221-226; and Wolpert, pp. 207-208, 212-217, 221-234.

28 See Brown, pp. 85-94; Stein, pp. 226-227; and Wolpert, pp. 234-238. The ferocity of the fighting and
the atrocities committed by both sides would leave a deep impression on both sides, and memories of the horrors
of the Mutiny would haunt Indians, and especially the British, for the remainder of the ‘British period’ in India.
Ever conscious of the degree to which they were ‘outnumbered’ by their ‘subjects’, the British were invariably
unnerved by any indication that the indigenous population might once again break out into violence.

29 The Government of India Act created the cabinet office of Secretary of State for India, who was to be
advised by a Council of India in London; the governor-general of India was now also designated as viceroy, and
was still responsible for the day-to-day administration, Wolpert, pp. 239-240.

30 Wolpert, p. 240; see also Brown, p. 67.
interests were safeguarded.\(^{31}\)

Thus, even though 'India' was considered part of the British Empire from 1858 until 1947, there were actually more than 560 political units within that territory, and 'British India' was simply the largest unit. Nor was there any geographical coherence to British India: the princely states were interspersed throughout the subcontinent, and of varying sizes, from small estates consisting of a single village to substantial territories, such as Hyderabad.\(^{32}\) The 'India' of the British Period, then, was more a state of mind than a political or territorial reality which encompassed the entire Indian subcontinent.

This held true even within the bounds of British India. Scattered throughout this enormous territory were a mere 1,300 British officials,\(^ {33}\) responsible for overseeing an indigenous population which would increase from approximately 200 million to nearly 400 million in this period.\(^ {34}\) Obviously, the necessity for local collaborators was high, and the British were successful throughout the period of their supremacy in obtaining the cooperation of many thousands of local authorities and individuals willing to work within the system, continuing the

\(^{31}\)Brown, pp. 67-68, 139-140. This policy reflected the fiscal conservatism of the British government: wars of expansion, and the suppression of the Great Mutiny had proved to be extremely expensive. By promising the princes that "all treaties and engagements made with them' would be 'scrupulously maintained," the British government might have left the map rather complicated, but they acquired a substantial and reliable group of loyal allies., Wolpert, p. 240.

\(^{32}\)Brown, pp. 67-68, 139-140.

\(^{33}\)"Even at the beginning of the twentieth century there were only 1300 ICS men," Brown, p. 59. By 1909, there were 1,142 ICS officials, 60 of whom were Indian. Brown, p. 148. By 1929, the figures were 894 European and 367 Indian officials, and by 1940, there were 588 European and 597 Indian members of the ICS, Brown, p. 247.

\(^{34}\)The first general census took place in 1871, so any figures prior to this are "guesstimates". Brown estimates that the population was approximately 200 million in the mid-nineteenth century (p. 118) and in 1941 (the last census for the British Period), the population was nearly 400 million (p. 253).
mutually-advantageous relationships begun by the EIC. This also meant, however, that beneath the superstructure of the British Raj was a complex layer formed by an indigenous élite which maintained and exercised considerable influence and power over local affairs, predominantly for the benefit of local interests.

Whatever political or ‘state’ unity that there was in India prior to 1947, therefore, was superficial at best, and existed only at the highest level of administration, in the form of the political unit of British India. This was governed ultimately by the British Parliament in London, and on a day-to-day basis by its representative, the Viceroy, in Calcutta, and his coterie of officials scattered throughout the subcontinent. This administrative and governing structure perched precariously on the apex of the hierarchical pyramid of the British Raj, welding the disparate regions and populations of the subcontinent together by a combination of the coercive threat of the military forces at its command, the so-called ‘steel framework’ of its administration, and the cooperation of its Indian collaborators. In reality, however, the Raj was upheld by the same factor that had formed its initial foundation: the inability of the diverse and divided segments of the population to overcome their differences and create a unified challenge to the British.

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35Brown, pp. 59-61.

36Burke and Quraishi, pp. 44-45. After 1858, the British government directed Indian affairs through the Secretary of State for India, advised by the India Council; "the Governor-General was given the additional title of Viceroy," and (under the Indian Councils Act of 1861), Legislative Councils were established in Calcutta, Bombay, and Madras to advise the Governor-General and the Governors of Bombay and Madras; legislative councils were also "created in Bengal, the North-Western Provinces and the Punjab."(p. 44) "The administration was the responsibility solely of the officials," p. 45.
b) The Gold Coast (Ghana)

The portion of West Africa which would be delineated by the imperial powers as the
Gold Coast is geographically divided from north to south into three regions: the northern
plateau, the forest zone (which incorporates the hill system which divides the northern plateau
from the coastal savannah), and the coastal region. There are also several rivers, flowing from
north to south, which, while providing limited access from the coast to the interior, have served
as natural boundaries within the territory.

Although the geography of the Gold Coast has resulted in a relatively clearly defined
division of the land surface of the territory, the succession of migrations from other parts of the
continent over the millennia, and of immigration by peoples from Europe, and the Middle East

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37The twentieth-century use of ‘Ghana’ as the name for the independent state which evolved from the
territories of the British Empire in this area must not be confused with the ancient state of ‘Ghana’, which
occupied a territory to the north-west of present-day Ghana, in an area now designated as southern Mauritania
and western Mali, Philip Curtin, “Africa North of the Forest in the Early Islamic Age,” in African History: From

38James Anquandah, Rediscovering Ghana’s Past (Accra: Sedco Publishing; Harlow, Essex: Longman,
described in the other sources (the coastal region, the forest zone, and the northern plateau) correspond with the
territorial divisions since recognized as the three main politically-defined regions of Gold Coast/Ghana, it is this
model which shall be used. See Raymond Bagulo Bening, Ghana: Regional Boundaries and National Integration

39Although some of the Akan groups “lay claim to autochthonous origin within their own localities,”
other groups acknowledge a distant origin—the Ga, for example, believe that they “originally came from the land
of Canaan under the leadership of the biblical Joshua,” Anquandah, pp. 86 and 113. See also John Carmichael,
African Eldorado: Ghana from Gold Coast to Independence (London: Gerald Duckworth & Co., 1993) pp. 55-61,
who also noted that the use of ‘Ghana’ as the name for the independent state in 1957 was recognition by the new
nation’s leaders of the Akan tradition that their group had migrated from the region of the ancient empire of
Ghana, pp 56-57. In any case, as Ward noted: “[t]he Gold Coast is part of the western Sudan, and over it for
thousands of years have flowed and ebbed the folk-wanderings of the African races,” p. 35.
in the last few centuries, defy an uncomplicated categorization of the cultural, linguistic, and ethnic divisions between the peoples of the territory.

Little is known about the earliest inhabitants of the area, although it appears that the resource which gave the Gold Coast its name was known to the ancient world of the Mediterranean, which indicates that some trade in gold must have taken place — presumably along the routes through the Sudan to Egypt. Indeed, there are some legends from the Sudan about the ancient peoples of the region of West Africa which includes the Gold Coast, but whoever these people were, present knowledge of them is limited to a few "palaeolithic implements." The paucity of substantive information about the peoples of West Africa prior to the era of European imperialism has resulted in their categorization by linguistic groups, and the waves of migration have been traced through the analysis of languages and dialects. Thus, it is

40The non-African population would be minimal in comparison to the African population, but its presence did have an impact on the events which will be discussed later.

41See Ward, pp. 32-35.

42Due to the climate and geological composition of West Africa, most physical remains have disappeared, although it is clear from the stone tools, etc. that have been found “that man has been living in West Africa for several millennia,” Anquandah, pp. 48-54. Carmichael stated that “traces of sedentary habitation” have been traced back as far as 35,000 years, p. 57. See also Ward, pp. 35-36. According to these legends, “the original inhabitants were a race of short stature and reddish complexion,” a reference also made in Herodotus. However, as there appears to be little trace of these peoples (although Ward referred to "the short reddish-complexioned individuals who are sometimes seen"), it would seem pointless to attempt to include this group in this explanation of the demographics of the Gold Coast.

43See Ward, p. 42: "It is possible to be sure about a language, but it is hardly possible to be sure about the origin and the composition of the people that speaks it. We know so little about the early history of the nations of the Gold Coast, we see such clear evidence of widespread recent migrations, invasions, conquests, and fusions, that we cannot feel sure that any tribe existing today has a history of more than a few centuries behind it. It may be significant that recorded tradition is so remarkably unanimous in beginning about the sixteenth or early seventeenth century. It is possible that it was then that the tribal organization that we see today took form. The tribes and nations that exist today may have arisen out of the older peoples whose names and identities have been lost... the fact that little is remembered of tribal history during the great period of wandering need not imply
believed that, around 1,000 C.E., there were groups of Guan-speaking peoples in the region.\textsuperscript{44} Two or three centuries later, the Guan were evidently conquered by Twi-speaking peoples (called the Akan peoples), who arrived in two major groups from the north-west. Elements of these groups migrated as far as the coast by approximately 1350, occupying over this period much of the territory of the Gold Coast, and splintering into various "tribes" which formed separate kingdoms throughout the area.\textsuperscript{45}

It is believed that, over the same period, two other groups migrated along the coastal region. The Ga-speaking peoples, moving overland and by canoe from Nigeria, "established themselves around the mouth of the Volta,"\textsuperscript{46} the largest river in the Gold Coast. The Ewe-speaking peoples migrated to the coastal plains and the lower Volta region from southern Togo.\textsuperscript{47}

By the time of the arrival on the coast of the first Europeans (the Portuguese, in the fifteenth century),\textsuperscript{48} therefore, the Gold Coast had been populated by a number of distinct

\textsuperscript{44}Flint, p. 67; see also Ward, pp. 39-40, 51. Ward concluded that the Guan themselves had moved into the region from the north, migrating along the Volta River, but emphasized the lack of substantive information about this early group.

\textsuperscript{45}Flint, pp. 65-68. Flint noted that "the Akan brought with them a fully developed social and political system which they imposed virtually without modification, for even though the Akan fragmented into different 'tribes' and formed a kaleidoscope of rival states, often at war with each other, the political theory behind their states and their detailed institutions remained practically identical," p. 67. See also Ward, pp. 37-38, 43-50, 52-56. In regard to this early period (pre 1500), it is important to recall Ward's statement that "[w]e are still working largely by conjecture," p. 51.

\textsuperscript{46}Flint, p. 68; see also Ward, pp. 38, 57-58.

\textsuperscript{47}Flint, pp. 23, 68; see also Ward, pp. 38, 58.

\textsuperscript{48}Portuguese expeditions along the west coast of Africa began in the 1420s, but did not reach the Gold Coast region until the 1470s, Ward, pp. 64-66.
groups of peoples. Trade had been established between the Ga and Ewe in the coastal regions, the remaining pockets of Guan, and the Akan groups in the forest and northern regions, which fed into the trading routes of North Africa. The proximity of the Akan group in the north to the Islamic states of North Africa resulted in this group becoming predominantly Muslim, and the Muslim influence seeped as far south as the coast, although to a limited degree. 49

To summarize a very complicated demography, the population of the northern region can be categorized as primarily Akan and Muslim (comprising less than 20% of the total population); the forest zone as predominantly Akan (comprising more than 50% of the total population); and the coastal region as divided between the Ga and the Ewe. 50 The Guan are scattered "in numerous groups along the Volta River basin, and further north." 51 These are, of course, the major linguistic divisions. Within each region, the major groups have sub-divided into "tribes" speaking a variety of dialects, which are often unintelligible even to other groups in the same linguistic category. 52

All of these "tribes" formed their own political/social/cultural units within defined territorial boundaries, many of which were mutually antagonistic. 53 This was especially true of

49Flint, pp. 68-69.

50Ibid., pp. 22-23.

51Ibid., p. 65.

See Ward, pp. 37-42 for a categorization of the major language groups and the areas of the Gold Coast in which these languages are spoken. As Ward pointed out, however, territorial-linguistic conformity is rare; in most regions of the Gold Coast, territorial-linguistic categorization is "complicated" (p. 39), and in some areas, it is "extremely complicated," p. 40.

52Flint, p. 67-68. See also Bourret, p. 11, who noted that by the time the Gold Coast was divided into three administrative zones by the British, "the Gold Coast Colony [zone] contained sixty-three different native states, Ashanti [sic] [the forest zone] twenty-five, and the Northern Territories twenty-one." See Ward, pp. 104-136, for an explanation of the "migrations within the Gold Coast itself, ... wars and the consolidation of
the Asante kingdom of the forest zone, which was formed in the late seventeenth century, and which met considerable resistance in its expansionist endeavours, especially from the Fante group in the coastal region. Thus, although the population of the territory of the Gold Coast can be divided into several major groups, the territory which each major group occupied was divided between numerous sub-groups, and the boundaries of each were not static, but in constant flux as each sub-group attempted to expand its territory, or defend it from the expansion of other sub-groups.

Into this complexity must now be added the Europeans, who first arrived on the Gold Coast in the form of two Portuguese ships in 1471. Over the following decades, the Portuguese built a series of forts along the coast, to act as trading posts to extract the resources of the area: "gold, slaves, ivory, and pepper." The Portuguese were unable to maintain their monopoly on West African trade, however, as the French (in the 1530s), the English (in the 1550s), and the Dutch (in the 1590s) began to encroach on the region.

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states" between 1600 and 1733, p.104.

54Flint, p. 24; see also Ward, pp. 104-136.

55Ward, p. 66.

56Beginning with the fort that was known as Elmina Castle, begun in 1481. The forts were to act as defence against both other European traders and "hostile tribes," Ward, p. 66. There would eventually be approximately 35 such forts (Portuguese, Dutch, English, etc.) along the coast, Ibid., p. 93.

57Ward, p. 71. However, the costs of defending their trade routes, maintaining their forts, etc. "was a heavy burden on the revenue of the trade." These costs increased as the Portuguese tried to defend their access to this "very valuable" trade.

58Ward, pp. 72-77. Many of the Portuguese forts were taken over by other Europeans during this period, especially the Dutch and the English, who created the triangle trade between Europe, West Africa, and the new colonies in the Americas. Slaves to work on the colonial plantations in the Caribbean, etc. became the major commodity from West Africa.
Competition was hot, and continued into the seventeenth century. By this time, the Dutch had replaced the Portuguese as the major power in coastal trade, but this was being vociferously contested by the English, French, Swedes, Danes, and German traders.

The real competition, however, was between the Dutch and the English, both of whom were eager to gain access to the lucrative slave trade of West Africa. A monopoly over English trade to the area was granted to the Company of Royal Adventurers of England Trading to Africa in 1660, and the Company proceeded to build its own forts along the coast. Unfortunately, the costs of construction, and of defence against the Dutch and their African allies, were more than the Company could financially bear. Its monopoly was taken over in 1672 by the new Royal African Company, whose fortunes were favoured by the rapid increase in demand for slaves to labour on the plantations of the Caribbean and the Americas through the

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59 Ward, pp. 77-80. The Dutch succeeded in driving the Portuguese out completely by 1642, exchanging in the peace treaty which settled the dispute their claims in Brazil for all Portuguese claims to territory on the Gold Coast.

60 Ward, pp. 81-83; although the English were the primary rivals, building their own forts along the coast.

61 Ibid., p. 83. The monopoly was to last, according to the charter, for 1,000 years. This time frame was also awarded to the Royal African Company which took over the monopoly in 1672 (see below). David Richardson, "The British Empire and the Atlantic Slave Trade, 1660-1807," in Oxford History of the British Empire: Vol. II, The Eighteenth Century, P.J. Marshall, ed. (Oxford University Press, 1998) pp. 444-445. Ward stated that the charter was awarded in 1662 (p. 83), but the earlier date of 1660 was used in the most recent account (Richardson, p. 444), so that is the date I have accepted. The Company's charter gave it a monopoly on English trade "from the Straits of Gibraltar to the Cape of Good Hope." It was not, however, the first such enterprise. In 1618, the Company of Adventurers of London Trading into Africa had received a charter, but fell into financial difficulties. It had been replaced in 1631 by another company of the same name, which was awarded a monopoly that extended from Cape Blanco to the Cape of Good Hope — "a direct challenge to the new Dutch West India Company ... only two years before with exactly the same field of operations," Ward, p. 77. All of these companies faced the same problem, however, of the financial costs of trying to establish a foothold on the coast against Portuguese and Dutch primacy.

62 The military effort was considerable, with open warfare breaking out in 1665. Peace was restored for a time with the Treaty of Breda, but this left only one fort in British hands, and financially ruined the Company. The new chartered Company began by purchasing the remaining fort from the old Company and by building three new ones to replace the losses to the Dutch, Ward, pp. 83-86.
latter quarter of the seventeenth century.\footnote{After decades of negotiation, the British were granted "the right to supply 4,800 slaves a year to Spanish America" in 1713. They already had a good market in the British colonies in the Caribbean and North America. "It was estimated that between 1680 and 1700 the... Company exported 140,000 slaves, and interlopers exported 160,000 more." By 1770, "192 British ships [were] employed in the slave trade," Ward, pp. 86-87. See Richardson, pp. 440-464, for a detailed analysis of the trade. By 1670, the English had become "the major shippers of slaves from Africa to America," p. 440.}

In many respects, the dynamics of the slave trade had a profound effect on the history of the peoples of West Africa. The substantial profits to be made from shipping the slaves to the New World brought to the region representatives from a variety of European nations,\footnote{By the late 1700s, "the annual slave trade was estimated at 38,000 British, 20,000 French, 10,000 Portuguese, 4,000 Dutch and 2,000 Danish, 74,000 in all," Ward, p. 87. It must be remembered that "only" approximately half of these were taken from the Gold Coast region. The coastline of West Africa now had the name "the Slave Coast," for obvious reason.} and the competition between them frequently became violent.\footnote{The fort-building continued, with the Dutch and British expanding their holdings and others building new ones. The trade was so profitable that the Portuguese tried to reestablish themselves on the coast, though without success. Even the Elector of Brandenburg became involved, sending an expedition in 1682 to establish a foothold. Ward described the construction/destruction of these forts as "kaleidoscopic changes in the occupation and ownership of the forts... during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries," pp. 91-93, as "the many local wars between the different European nations, and between the Europeans and the local tribes" raged along the coast, pp. 90-96.} They also sought allies among the coastal African groups, in order to acquire permission to build their forts, and to help defend their interests against other Europeans.\footnote{See Ward, pp. 90-96. The competition for access was directly related to the space available for the establishment of trading territories. The forts of rival European traders were only ten or eight ( p. 83), or even two ( p. 93) miles apart.} To facilitate this, the Europeans imported modern weaponry into West Africa and guns quickly became a popular trade item throughout the region.\footnote{This could backfire on the Europeans: in 1693, a group of Africans went to a Danish fort ostensibly to purchase guns; they ended up "testing" their purchases by overwhelming the Danish garrison and occupying the fort themselves for several months, making a handsome profit out of selling the fort back and looting the trade goods in the meantime, for a profit of almost 9,000 pounds sterling, Ward, pp. 93-94.}

In this period, Europeans tended to remain ensconced in their forts, their movement restricted by the...
Africans surrounding them, and by their lack of numbers. The inability of Europeans to survive the climate and diseases of the coastal plains, and the resultant high mortality rate, not only ensured that these numbers would remain small until the late nineteenth century, it also served as a deterrent against any desire to travel to the region for any extended period on the part of substantive numbers of Europeans. Therefore, the actual trade was left in the hands of the Africans, who brought the commodities (including slaves) to the Europeans huddled in their forts. As a result, the tribes of the coastal plains were the primary African beneficiaries of the export trade, and of the acquisition of European weapons.

While this meant that the coastal tribes were enabled to defend themselves against the encroachments of the burgeoning Ashanti empire of the central region of the Gold Coast, it also led to increased rivalry between the two groups because the Asante were determined to gain access to the lucrative coastal trade. During the late eighteenth century, Europeans would be drawn into this rivalry by their own competition. The British, now operating under the Company of African Merchants, developed an alliance with the coastal tribes, which had united into the Fante Confederation, and the Dutch supported the Asante, support which included supplies of

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68 Even into the early nineteenth century the mortality rate was alarming: "in 1826 the House of Commons was informed that" in less than two years, more than half the troops sent to the Gold Coast had died," Ward, pp. 89-90.

69 The coastal Africans acted as middlemen, buying slaves from the interior tribes and shipping them to the coast to be sold to the Europeans. As Ward pointed out, the policy of keeping the Europeans confined to their forts served two purposes for the coastal tribes: it prevented the Europeans from direct contact with interior groups (and, thereby, from cutting out the middlemen), and it ensured that the Europeans would be allied to them by trading ties that the Europeans would be willing to protect by aiding the coastal groups against attacks from their "powerful inland rivals," Ward, p. 88. These alliances were cemented through the rental arrangements made for the land on which the forts were built, Ibid., pp. 97-98.

70 See Ward, pp. 104-136 for an explanation of the rivalries and wars between the various African groups in the Gold Coast from 1600 to 1733. Ward concluded that "the economic background" to this conflict "may be summed up in three words: Slaves, salt and guns," p. 131.
The beginning of the nineteenth century brought a dramatic change to West Africa, when the British Government "outlawed British participation in slave-carrying" in 1807. With the loss of its most profitable commodity, the coastal trade rapidly stagnated, and the Company of

Asante "was known to be an insatiable market for firearms and powder," Ward, p. 147. See also Bourret, p. 15. These weapons were used in the multitude of campaigns the Ashanti waged in its expansionist wars of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. This entire period is notable for its violence. The Europeans conducted expeditions against each other's forts, the various African groups engaged in defensive and offensive wars against each other, and against the Europeans. The ebb and flow of these battles frequently washed up at the walls of the European forts, with dire consequences for their inhabitants. The primary contest was between the Fante tribes of the coastal region and the Asante of the interior. While the Danes and Dutch tended to favour the Asante (in fact, in 1792, the Danes asked the Ashanti for "a force of mercenaries to help ... in [their] wars with the eastern tribes" -- to the horror of the British, who "feared that if the Ashanti [sic] won, the European forts would be captured," Ward, p. 147), the British were more ambivalent. Although they did not want the Asante to win, they were reluctant to become actively involved as allies of the Fante. Unfortunately, as "tenants" of the Fante, they were inexorably drawn into the conflict. As a result, when the Asante swept victorious down to the coast in 1806, the British were forced to sign an ignominious peace treaty with Asante in order to preserve their forts. The Asante advance eventually faded away due to an outbreak of smallpox and dysentery, Ward, p. 156. However, the series of Asante invasions, in "1806, 1811, and 1814 had reduced the coastal regions of the Gold Coast to chaos. The military power of the Fante was broken; Akim and Akwapim ... had been overrun and shattered; the British, and still more the Dutch ad been forced to recognize the Ashanti [sic] supremacy; and the Fante country was formally incorporated in the Ashanti [sic] empire by being placed under the rule of Ashanti [sic] governors," Ward, p. 160. See Ward, pp. 137-160, for a full account.

Richardson, pp. 140. Given the economic impact this had to the many Africans involved in the trade, "abolition was not a popular move" in the Gold Coast, Ward, p. 161. See also David Kimble, A Political History of Ghana: The Rise of Gold Coast Nationalism 1850-1928 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963) p. 2: "abolition ... was strongly opposed ... by the African suppliers." The Danes had already realized this. The Danish Government had "prohibited the slave trade" in 1792, but the Danes on the Coast had been unable to prevent the local Africans, and other European slavers, from continuing to engage in the trade. Their endeavours to enforce the ban resulted in a minor war between the Danes and the locals, Ward, pp. 224-227. The Asante were especially disturbed: much of their wealth (which financed their empire) came from the slave trade, Bourret, p. 15. The full impact was, however, delayed for some time, as the Africans actively cooperated with the traders of other European nations to continue the trade, Kimble, p. 2. It would really not be until slavery was abolished in the U.S.A. (1862-5), Cuba, 1880-6, and Brazil, 1883-8) that the Atlantic slave trade lost its raison d'etre, Bourret, p. 15. See also Ward, p. 161. It must also be remembered that the trans-Saharan slave trade and the intra-West African slave trades continued unabated, and actually increased, after the British 'ban'. See Robin Law, "Introduction," in From Slave Trade to 'Legitimate' Commerce: The Commercial Transition in Nineteenth-Century West Africa, Robin Law, ed. (Cambridge University Press, 1995) pp. 6-7.

Although there was still "legitimate trade" ("rice, maize, indigo, palm oil and timber ... gold and ivory"), the focus for so long had been on slaves, and the economic organization of the region would have to be adapted if this legitimate trade were to increase in scale sufficient to warrant the maintenance of the forts, Ward, p. 161. In addition, the other commodities had been sold as "disposable surplus" in a primarily subsistence economy, to increase this surplus to the extent required by the market would require a substantive shift in
African Merchants fell into financial difficulties. The British Government, while reluctant to become officially involved in Gold Coast affairs, were pressured by traders still interested in the other commodities of the region to maintain control of the Company’s forts, although the Company itself had been abolished in 1821. After a brief, and disastrous, reign by the Governor of Sierra Leone, the forts were handed over to the Committee of Merchants in 1828. Their administrator, George Maclean, was effective in restoring stability to the region, primarily by establishing peace with the Asante. While this was beneficial for trade, the British Government became uneasy about the Committee’s activities, and decided to place relations with the African tribes on a more legalistic basis. Under the terms of the Foreign Jurisdiction Act

74 The loss of the slave trade, plus the difficulties outlined above in n. 72, were exacerbated by the continued problems with the Asante. "The Company's first object was steady trade and open trade routes" to the interior -- held by the Ashantis. The supremacy of the Ashanti, especially its claim to control the Fante region, was deemed incompatible with the Company's object; therefore, a series of expeditions, negotiations, and treaties attempted to stabilize the political/military situation. By 1831, a treaty between all the relevant groups was concluded, finally (although temporarily) bringing peace and stability to the Gold Coast, Ward, pp. 162-188. See also Bourret, pp. 15-17.

75 The possibility of British withdrawal was also strongly opposed by the Fante, Ward, p. 189.

76 Bourret, p. 16.

77 At the merchants' request, Bourret, p. 16. The merchants, now that some stability was being restored, "were expecting trade to revive," Ward, p. 189.

78 Bourret, pp. 16-17. See also Ward, pp. 190-193. It was Maclean who was responsible for successfully reaching agreement with the Asante in 1831, whereby they "renounced their claims of suzerainty over the coastal states and promised to keep the peace," Bourret, p. 17. He also "tripled the country's trade," David E. Apter, Ghana in Transition (New York: Atheneum, 1963) p. 33.

79 Alarmed by various, and evidently spurious, accusations by Maclean's enemies in Britain, a Select Committee of the House of Commons was appointed "to report on the state of the West African settlements." Maclean was exonerated, but the Committee determined that the British Government should take steps to legitimize the judicial and governmental processes that Maclean had begun, Ward, pp. 191-193. See also Bourret, pp. 16-17.
of 1843, the Government negotiated treaties with the coastal tribes which granted Britain judicial control over the Gold Coast.\footnote{This was called the Bond of 1844, and it established the "legal basis for British rule," although British authority was limited to judicial authority in the areas of the British "forts and settlements" and the immediate vicinities, Ward, p. 194. No official protectorate status or territorial concessions were mentioned in the agreement, an important point in the later disagreements between the British and the coastal chiefs, Bourret, p. 17. See also Apter, pp. 33-34, who noted that the "document has been subject to considerable misinterpretation," p. 33.}

Thus began the gradual acquisition of the Gold Coast as a colony of the Empire. In 1850, the Government purchased the Danish forts and separated governorship of the Gold Coast from Sierra Leone.\footnote{With the addition of the Danish forts, British "territory" was expanded to cover those forts and adjacent settlements, "the chiefs and people concerned giving their consent." Executive and legislative councils were established, which can be seen as a unilateral extension of the concessions made in the Bond of 1844, but fully in accord with the Foreign Jurisdiction Act of 1843, "which 'empowered the Crown to exercise any jurisdiction it might have in a foreign country in as full a manner as if that country had been acquired by conquest or cession,'" Ward, p. 195. Although this can be excused as a natural extension, given that "as more chiefs adhered to the Bond ... there was growing up among the people a desire for more Government activity such as medical and educational services and roads," Ward, pp. 195-196.} The new status of the coast, and the attempts by the British to create a form of colonial government, were perceived by the Asante as a threat to their interests, and they invaded the coastal plains.\footnote{As more of the coastal chiefs signed the Bond, and came under British influence, Asante access to the coast became increasingly limited, Ward, p. 199. The situation gradually deteriorated through the 1850s, with minor clashes between Asante groups and the groups in the territories now in the British "protectorate" areas. For example, Fante groups "began to arrest every Ashanti [sic] trader they could lay hands on," Ward, p. 211. The growing Asante resentment reached a head in 1862, when two fugitives from Asante were not returned by the British, as had been customary, Ward, pp. 212-214. The Asante began an invasion of the coastal territories in 1863. The war continued through 1864, with disastrous results for the British, due to a combination of incompetent leadership in the military and political officers in the Gold Coast, and dithering from the government in London. The British "advance" against Asante forces was marked by a series of ignominious retreats, which alarmed the coastal tribes, who believed this demonstrated the inability of the British to protect them from the Asante. The Asante apparently believed that they had amply demonstrated their superiority and withdrew into their own territory, Ward, pp. 215-220. While unnerving the British and alarming the coastal tribes, the Asante war also served to destabilize the coastal region as other tribes in the area attempted to assert themselves, Ward, pp. 220-231. As a result, by "186 almost the whole of what is now the Colony was on the edge of war," Ward, p. 230. See also Flint, p. 124.} The Government responded in 1865 with a Select Committee, which decided that there was no compelling reason to maintain control over the area, especially given...
the costs of subduing the Ashanti. It recommended abandoning the Gold Coast (though, interestingly, it also recommended that, if immediate abandonment "was impossible at once, steps should be taken to prepare Africans for the transition to self-government").

However, this policy was unacceptable to those who had an interest in maintaining British control over the territory. The Evangelical impetus which had led to the abolishment of slavery (as far as the British were concerned) had found a new cause in missionary work in the region and was intent on converting the "heathens" that Christianity had "saved" from slavery. Traders were still greatly interested in the non-human commodities of the region. The Fante were seriously alarmed at their prospects should they be abandoned to the Asante advance, and the small westernized elite among them were unwilling to lose their prospects to the reestablishment of a traditional administration. Nor were the local British officials ready to give up so easily.

83 Ward, pp. 232-233; see also Flint, pp. 12-125; and Bourret, pp. 17-18.

84 Flint, p. 125. One substantive result of the Committee's report was that the Gold Coast was once again placed under the authority of the Governor of Sierra Leone, Bourret, p. 18.


86 Bourret, pp. 18-19, missionaries were also concerned with "helping to develop legitimate commerce" in order to counter the financial appeal of the slave trade, Bourret, p. 19.

87 Bourret, pp. 18-19; see also Flint, p. 125.

88 Flint, p. 125: by this time, there were African merchants, newspapermen, lawyers, clergymen, and clerks in the administration. See also Ward, pp. 234-235, who believed that it was in response to the perceived readiness of the British to abandon its responsibilities to the African tribes which had placed themselves under British protection which created an early foundation for popular resentment against "the Government's indifference to the wishes of the people, and the presumption of the Government's evil intentions," p. 235.

89 As Flint pointed out, it could hardly be expected that these officials would "willingly ... carry out policies which would deprive them of their careers," p. 125. Nor were the "men on the spot" in agreement with the negative attitude current in England; they believed that the Gold Coast had a positive future, and that the British influence could be extended into the interior, Ward, p. 233.
As a result, the policy itself was abandoned, and the British moved instead to consolidate control.

In 1872, the Government finally reached agreement with the Dutch and bought their forts, thus eliminating the last of the European competition.\textsuperscript{90} In 1874, an army under the command of General Sir Garnet Wolseley fought its way to the Ashanti capital at Kumasi and forced the Asante to accept a peace treaty.\textsuperscript{91} The Government now recognized its control of the coastal plain by a unilateral declaration that the area south of Asante was now a British colony.\textsuperscript{92}

However, the renewed European competition to establish colonies in Africa in the late nineteenth century would lead to the expansion of British control inland. As the French and the Germans began to move into territories west and east of the Gold Coast, the British moved north.\textsuperscript{93} Attempts were made to establish a protectorate over Asante, but these attempts were rejected. Feeling pressured by the French and German advances, the British successfully invaded Asante in 1896, breaking up the empire and ensuring its destruction by signing individual treaties.

\textsuperscript{90}Bourret, p. 20. See also Ward, pp.236-248: negotiations had begun in 1867, with the British and Dutch trying to reach agreement on a division of the coastal region between them, but the Dutch eventually wearied of the constant battles with the Africans of the region, and handed over all of their holdings on the Gold Coast by 1872. The British were now the sole Europeans involved in the territory.

\textsuperscript{91}The Dutch forts had been the only remaining access for the Asante to the coastal trade; therefore, they resented the handover to the British and another war began as they tried to regain access. For once, the British government responded forcefully, sending troops from England, which, accompanied by a Fante army, conducted a lightning campaign into the interior that was successful in capturing and destroying the capital of Asante, Bourret, p. 20; see also Flint, p. 126-127; and Ward, pp. 265-283.

\textsuperscript{92}Flint, p. 127; see also Bourret, p. 20: the territory was now known as the Gold Coast Colony. It was again separated from Sierra Leone and given its own governor, and executive and legislative councils. The unilateral declaration, while unpopular with the Africans, was believed by the British to be the only solution to the problem of negotiating another Bond that would be acceptable to all of the chiefs of the region. According to the Foreign Jurisdiction Act, the British action was legitimate, Ward, pp. 262-264.

\textsuperscript{93}The Germans annexed Togoland (to the east of the Gold Coast) in 1884 and began to move north; the French established their Ivory Coast colony (to the west) in 1893 and were attempting to link up with their Saharan territories in the north, Flint, p. 137. See also Ward, pp. 315-319. Treaties were reached with both competitors, delineating the borders of each's colonies in the region: with the French, in 1889, 1893, and 1898, and with the Germans in 1890, and 1899, Bourret, p. 22; see also Ward, pp. 319-320.
with its component states. The initial protectorate status of Asante was changed to official colonial annexation in 1902, following the suppression of a revolt. At the same time, a series of treaties with the groups occupying the northern plateau region culminated in the declaration of a protectorate of the Northern Territories.

While this completed the colonization of the Gold Coast, it also served to administratively demarcate the geographic regions of the territory. The coastal region became the colony of the Gold Coast, the forest zone became the separate unit of Asante (although under the administration of the governor of the Gold Coast), and the northern plateau became the Protectorate of the Northern Territories. These geographical divisions thus became embedded in the political life of the colony, laying the foundation for the conflict between the segregated sections of the region which would so bedevil attempts to create a unified opposition within the indigenous population to British control.

c) Nigeria

While the territory which became the colony of Nigeria is also divided into three regions, the division is more complicated than that of the Gold Coast. There are four geographically defined bands north to south: the coastal mangrove swamp, the tropical rain forest zone, a larger zone of woodland and savannah, and, north of this, a plateau that reaches to the Sahara.

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94Bourret, pp. 20-21; Flint, p. 139-140; and Ward, pp. 306-311.
95Flint, p. 140; see also Ward, pp. 311-312.
96Bourret, pp. 21-22; Flint, p. 140; and Ward, p. 312
97Ward, p. 312. See also Bening, pp. 11-32.
However, the Niger River, flowing west to east across the centre of Nigeria, meets the Benue River, flowing east to west, and, together, they form the great Niger River which flows from the junction north to south, neatly dividing the southern region into eastern and western sections. It is this river system, therefore, that trisects Nigeria into its three primary regions: north, west, and east. Thus, while the Northern Region is mainly savannah, the Western and Eastern Regions are geographically a mixture of savannah, forest, and coastal swamp.

As with the Gold Coast, however, it is not as straightforward to delineate the cultural, linguistic, and ethnic divisions between the peoples of the territory. Again, little is known about the earliest inhabitants, but it is clear that the territory's history has been marked by a series of incursions from peoples from the west, east, and north of what is now Nigeria. As in the Gold Coast, language has become the defining demographic characteristic. This holds true even though there is some ethnic differentiation in the Northern Region due to the incursion of the

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99Burns, p. 25. The lack of information regarding the inhabitants of Nigeria has been exacerbated by the perpetual warfare between the various groups in the territory. For example, following the success of a Fulani jihad into the seven Hausa states in northern Nigeria in the early nineteenth century, the victor destroyed the written records of the Hausa. Burns, pp. 46-51. Modern archaeology has discovered some physical evidence of inhabitation of the region during the Stone Age., Elizabeth Isichei, *A History of Nigeria* (London: Longman, 1983) pp. 11-16.

100Although even this is problematic, given the "extensive intermingling of immigrant stocks," which has resulted in, for example, "the majority of those listed as Fulani speak[ing] the Hausa (not the Fulani) language as the mother tongue." Coleman, pp. 13-14. See also Isichei, who admitted to the difficulties, but asserted that "[i]t is probably impossible to write intelligibly about [Nigerians] without using the "shorthand" of "ethnic-cum-linguistic labels," although these "labels of ethnicity are, very often, of recent origin ... [and] ... [t]he geographical areas they describe change over time," p. 1, an attitude shared by Murray Last, "The Early Kingdoms of the Nigerian Savanna," in *History of West Africa, Vol. I*, Third Edition J.F.A. Ajayi and Michael Crowder, eds. (Harlow, Essex: Longman Group, 1985), who discussed the problematic use of linguistic analysis (p. 168) yet still used linguistic designations for specific groups—for example, “Chadic speakers,” p. 174.
Fulani (believed to be originally from the Mediterranean side of the Sahara)\textsuperscript{101} and the Shuwa Arabs (from the northeastern Sahara region).\textsuperscript{102} Over centuries of miscegenation with the various Negroid groups of West Africa, however, such ethnic physical differences have become largely irrelevant, except for small pockets of nomadic Fulani herdsmen and the Shuwa Arabs who remained in the far northeastern corner of Nigeria.\textsuperscript{103} This said, the linguistic divisions are still extremely complicated: "there are approximately 248 distinct languages" in Nigeria.\textsuperscript{104}

The Northern Region, which comprises about 75\% of the area of Nigeria, and is home to approximately 60\% of the population, is also home to the largest number of languages: "5 of the 10 largest linguistic groups (Hausa, Fulani, Kanuri, Tiv, and Nupe), and all but 14 of the 239

\textsuperscript{101}It is believed that the Fulani originated in Upper Egypt, spread across northern Africa, and a sub-group moved into northern Nigeria in the thirteenth century from settlements on the Atlantic coast of north Africa, Burns, p. 50. See also Coleman, p. 14. Isichei dated the move to the fifteenth century, p. 5.

\textsuperscript{102}The Shuwa were part of the Bornu empire of the eleventh century, once a substantial "influence ... throughout the greater part of the Sahara and the Sudan," Burns, p. 55. They were originally "famous as cavalry in the armies of old Bornu," and occupied the north-eastern region of the empire, near Lake Chad, Burns, p. 58. Although Isichei claimed that the Shuwa did not settle in this area until the fourteenth century, after leaving their original home in Egypt in the twelfth century, p. 5. The conflicting accounts illustrates the difficulties in constructing categorical summaries of the demographics of the region.

\textsuperscript{103}Burns, pp. 26-27, 53, 58; see also Coleman, pp. 14-15. Indeed, differentiation by race is inappropriate, especially in the northern regions, highlighting the more useful categorization of language group. "Language families not only straddle the desert-savanna frontier; they also cross the racial line. Hausa is one of the most widely spoken of all sub-Saharan languages, and its speakers are overwhelmingly both 'black' and sedentary. It is nevertheless related linguistically to Arabic, Berber, and Hebrew, not to th nearby languages of the savanna belt. Again, the Fula language, spoken by the people who are variously called Fulbe, Fulani, or Tukulor, is closely related to Wolof and Serer and other languages of Senegal, though many of the Fulbe are somewhat European in appearance—just as many negroid people from Mauritania to the Nilotic Sudan have Arabic as their home languages," Philip Curtin, "Africa North of the Forest in the Early Islamic Age," in African History: From Earliest Times to Independence, p. 69

\textsuperscript{104}There is also a great range in the size of linguistic groups: "from tiny units consisting of less than 700 people to groups numbering well above 5,000,000," Coleman, pp. 15-16. While these statistics date from the 1950s, they can be assumed to proportionally represent the situation prior to the era of statistical research. Isichei noted that the whole of West Africa, including Nigeria, "is remarkable for its large number of languages, and their high degree of mutual differentiation," p. 5.
small groups.\footnote{Coleman, pp. 18-24. See also Isichei, pp. 6-7; and Burns, pp. 46-58.} The major language groups in the Western Region are Yoruba and Edo,\footnote{Coleman, pp. 25-28. See also Isichei, pp. 7-8; and Burns, pp. 28-45: while the Edo were an "offshoot of the Yoruba nation," by the fifteenth century, they had formed their own kingdom of Benin at the coast.} and in the Eastern Region, Ibo, Ibibio-Efik, and Ijaw.\footnote{Coleman, pp. 28-33; see also Burns, pp. 59-62; and Isichei, pp. 8-9.} While, broadly speaking, these linguistic groups are coterminous with the geographical boundaries of Nigeria, "intertribal wars, migrations, and the internal slave trade," have served to "mix up" the peoples of the territory, especially in the Northern Region.\footnote{Coleman, p. 20. Although, as mentioned previously (see note 67), there are pockets throughout Nigeria which have remained more or less homogeneous, especially in those areas which are relatively inaccessible, such as the delta region and the mountains of the Bauchi plateau, Burns, pp. 59-61.}

As well as the more violent forms of contact, however, trade between the peoples of the various regions also served to mix the linguistic stew. While the major river system had not been as influential in establishing trade routes as might be expected (due to the difficulty in navigating many sections of it),\footnote{In spite of the size of the Niger River system, and the number of its tributaries, and the many other rivers of the region, until the nineteenth century, there was little river traffic and few river ports. Varying degrees and seasons of rainfall meant that the height of the rivers fluctuated (often substantially). There were innumerable obstacles, such as sandbars, which inhibited lengthy journeys even for shallow-draught boats. In addition, the history of overland migration into Nigeria (especially in the north) had resulted in the siting of areas of relatively heavy population away from the rivers, which meant that these regions had little access to the rivers for transportation purposes, Burns, pp. 21-23; see also Coleman, pp. 11-12.} in the southern areas, there were exchanges of goods between the peoples of the coast and those of the interior, and the northern areas were exposed to the great trading routes of the Sahara region.\footnote{Isichei, pp. 84-93. "Pre-colonial Nigeria was covered with a very dense network of markets and trade routes." Although most of the peoples of Nigeria were primarily subsistence farmers, there was also considerable metal, mineral, textile, pottery, jewelry, and leather production. These, together with surplus agricultural production (including domesticated animals), were exchanged through the trading routes, Isichei, pp. 21-73.} For the north, of course, this also meant the infusion of Islam.
While the Muslim impact was greatest in the Northern Region, Islam did filter south to some degree, predominantly into the Western Region.\footnote{Islam entered Nigeria during the thirteenth century, presumably with the early migrants from northern Africa, and greatly influenced the Hausa states, which quickly became Islamicized administratively, judicially, and socially, Burns, p. 47; see also Coleman, p. 22. By the early nineteenth century, there was a Fulani (Muslim) kingdom within the Yoruba region (in the south-west of Nigeria), Burns, pp. 31-32; see also Coleman, p. 25.}

Over the centuries, kingdoms rose and fell throughout Nigeria, a pattern that continued until the neutralizing force of the colonial power penetrated the interior. While there were many such kingdoms, there were also numerous small "states" within each region which could be classified as independent.\footnote{See Burns, pp. 25-61; and, especially, Coleman, pp. 18-33, and Isichei, pp. 129-170.} For example, in the territory of the Igbo in the south-east, there were an estimated 2,780 "small polities" in the early nineteenth century.\footnote{Isichei, p. 129.} Given the state of flux in Nigeria before colonization, however, there is not much point in attempting to categorize the political boundaries of the territory in this early period.\footnote{Indeed, for several groups—for example, the Tiv and the central Ibo—existed in what have been defined as ‘stateless societies,’ Robin Horton, “Stateless Societies in the History of West Africa,” in History of West Africa, Vol. I, pp. 87-128.} Although extremely simplistic, for the sake of brevity, the Northern Region will be categorized as predominantly Hausa-Fulani, the Western Region as predominantly Yoruba, and the Eastern Region as predominantly Ibo. It must be remembered that each region encompassed a wide variety (in size, style, and composition) of tribal states, and that, while the majority of the peoples of the Northern Region were Muslim, those in the Western and Eastern Regions adhered to a multiplicity of locally evolved and defined belief systems.\footnote{For example, the Yoruba believe that they are descended from "the first king at Ile-Ife" and refer to Ile-Ife "as the home of 400 divinities,” Ade Obayemi, “The Yoruba and Edo-speaking Peoples and Their}
As in the Gold Coast, an extremely complicated situation was further obfuscated with the arrival of Europeans on the coast in the fifteenth century. By 1485, the Portuguese had established trade with the kingdom of Benin, and the English followed in 1553. From that time until the abolishment of the slave trade by the British in 1807, the history of European contact in the territory of Nigeria was predominantly the infamous record of the slave trade. In contrast to the Gold Coast, however, the Europeans established few forts along the coast, preferring to make the short but navigable journey up river to the slave depots in Benin, or in the vast network of river estuaries, where they would make arrangements for trade with the local chiefs.

Until the ending of the slave trade, there was no incentive for the Europeans to explore Neighbours Before 1600," in History of West Africa, Vol. I, p. 294.

116 Although there are legends of earlier contact, the first "well-authenticated visits by Europeans" were not until the fifteenth century, Burns, pp. 65-66.

117 Burns, p. 67.

118 Burns, p. 77; see also Coleman, pp. 40-41. In spite of the prohibition on slaves being transported on British ships or taken to British colonies, it would take "another century... before slave-raiding was stamped out in Nigeria." It would be the need to suppress the trade in the interior which would impel the British to move inland. The conjunction of this need and the growing interest in exploration for its own sake would gradually expose the mysteries of the interior of Nigeria, and expose the Nigerians to the British. Burns, p. 77. By posting a Royal Navy squadron on the coast, the British gradually suppressed the exportation of slaves by other European traders, but it would not be until the 1850s that the coastal export trade could be said to have been controlled. Isichei, p. 98. The trade through the Sahara continued until well into the nineteenth century, although slavery was abolished in the primary markets of Tunisia (1846) and the Ottoman Empire (1857). It continued, however, in much of Arabia, Isichei, pp. 92-93. Unfortunately, the stimulus of the external slave trade had resulted in an increase in domestic slavery in Nigeria, and the economic shift in exports from slaves to other commodities actually meant that domestic slavery flourished because cheap labour was required to increase surplus production of ivory, agricultural products, metals, etc. for export, to replace the now defunct slave trade, sichei, pp. 104-107. In fact, the British authorities were still trying to end slavery in Northern Nigeria into the late 1938s, Paul E. Lovejoy and Jan S. Hogendorn, Slow Death for Slavery: The Course of Abolition in Northern Nigeria, 1897-1936 (Cambridge University Press, 1993) pp. 261-286.

119 Burns, pp. 74-77; see also Coleman, pp. 40-41. The trade also included food supplies for the slave ships and their cargoes, which created a considerable market for surplus agricultural production, Isichei, p. 97.
inland—the slaves were brought to them by the Africans, as were other ‘commodities’, such as palm oil and ivory.\textsuperscript{120} Eventually, however, they became aware of the existence of a "great river" in the hinterland, and the more adventurous determined to trace it.\textsuperscript{121} In 1788, the African Association was established in Britain to encourage such exploration, but the early venturers endured such horrendous hardships on their journeys that they all failed.\textsuperscript{122} (Because of the convoluted nature of the Niger estuary—and the mangrove swamps of the coast—they were unaware that this "great river" was the Niger, and that it was the source of the broad expanse of estuaries they had been trading on for three centuries. These explorers actually travelled overland to try to link up with the river and follow it to the coast, rather than travel from the coast upriver to find its source.)\textsuperscript{123} For decades, expedition followed expedition without success, until the British Government financed a small party in 1830 who managed (somewhat torturously) to determine that the Niger River did indeed reach the familiar coastline.\textsuperscript{124} An expedition set out in 1832 to explore and map the delta and determine how to link up with the

\textsuperscript{120}With the end of the slave trade, British merchants focussed their attention on the ‘legitimate’ trade trade items, such as palm oil, which increased substantially as a result, Coleman, p. 41. However, "the bulk transport of oil depended on navigable waterways," an incentive for both Africans and British to develop more effective trade routes to the interior to enable them to profit from the market (for Africans, to maintain their role as middlemen; for the British, to increase their share of the profits by trading directly with the producers), Isichei, pp. 98-99.

\textsuperscript{121}Burns, pp. 78-80. European knowledge of the interior of Africa was so abysmal in this era that it was believed that the Niger, and many of the other river systems, actually traversed Africa from east to west.

\textsuperscript{122}Burns, pp. 80-91.

\textsuperscript{123}The Niger "delta extends along the coast for over 100 miles, and for about 140 miles inland; the river here forms an intricate network of channels, dividing and subdividing, and a multitude of creeks connect these branches of the Niger not only with one another but also with other rivers, so that it is difficult to say whether some of the streams are part of the delta or belong to some other river system," so it is hardly surprising that they were confused, Burns, p. 21.

\textsuperscript{124}Burns, pp. 92-94. This expedition took seventeen months, and was full of perilous adventures, including encounters with less than hospitable African groups.
river itself. It would be years before the river was fully surveyed, however, and many perished in the series of explorations. Disease and inhospitable locals proved more than a match for steam power and persistence. It would not be until after the discovery of quinine in the early 1850s that the problem of disease could be countered, and decades more before the river would be completely surveyed.\textsuperscript{125}

It was during this period of exploration that the British gradually established a colonial claim over the territory which would become Nigeria. Although there had been some brief excursions by the Royal Navy into the region, to protect or avenge merchants who had been attacked up-river, until the 1840s, the British Government had not perceived a need for a formal presence. As the non-slave trade increased, and more and more British merchants became involved in the region, however, they began to pressure the Government to provide official representation on the coast, in order to regulate the trade and deal with the local chiefs. Accordingly, in 1849, the first British consul was appointed to the Bights of Biafra and Benin.\textsuperscript{126} Shortly after, as a result of a punitive expedition against the King of Lagos (who had refused to discontinue the slave trade in his kingdom), the British annexed that territory.\textsuperscript{127}

\textsuperscript{125}Burns, pp. 94-102. The upper reaches of many of the rivers continued until the twentieth century, for example, an expedition to the upper Benue was conducted in 1889, and another to the region "between the Benue and Lake Chad" was conducted in 1904. Even in the coastal region, exploration continued in this late period, Burns, p. 101.

\textsuperscript{126}Burns, pp. 111-114; see also Coleman, pp. 41-42. Ironically, a clause in the document appointing the consul, "which was crossed out, stated that the government 'have no intention to seek to gain Possession, either by purchase or otherwise, of any portion of the African Continent in those parts ...,'" Isichei, p. 362.

\textsuperscript{127}Shortly after assuming his post, the Consul had opened negotiations with the King, offering compensation from the British Government in exchange for his abandonment of the slave trade. However, the trade was too lucrative to make the offer very appealing, nor was the King appreciative of the British interference in the conduct of the trade. He attempted to incite other chiefs against the British and engaged in several attacks against British traders and their African allies. In 1851, a punitive naval expedition was successful in defeating the King, who was then forced to sign a treaty in 1852 agreeing to "the abolition of the traffic in slaves, the
officially became a colony.\textsuperscript{128}

For some time, however, this was the limit of the involvement in the region that the British Government desired. The interior of Nigeria was convulsed for much of the nineteenth century in inter and intra-tribal wars,\textsuperscript{129} and the Government had no intention of being drawn farther into the territory at such a high risk of extensive military engagements, and the expenses of such adventures. Lacking the imperative of sustaining coastal settlements that had encouraged the formalization of British control in the Gold Coast, the British Government preferred the minimalist approach in Nigeria.\textsuperscript{130}

This was not to say that they had no interest in the territory, however; the steadily increasing importance of the trade of the region, especially in palm oil, ensured the continuing attention of the Government. Through the 1860s and 1870s, the numbers of British merchants

\textsuperscript{128}Burns, p. 131. Lagos was not administered by the Consul in the Bights, but was "successively under the jurisdiction of the governor of the West African Settlements, resident in Sierra Leone (1866-1874), and the governor of the Gold Coast Colony (1874-1886)," before becoming a separate administrative unit of its own after the reorganization following the Berlin Conference, Coleman, p. 42.

\textsuperscript{129}In the northern regions, a jihad had been raging since the late eighteenth century, and a number of new states were formed as a result. These states then engaged in expansionist wars, including slave raids to the south, which spread the disruption throughout most of central Nigeria by the mid-nineteenth century. At the same time, the eastern and western region were in turmoil as the balance in power between weakening and strengthening states led to a number of violent conflicts, Isichei, pp. 202-239. See also Burns, pp. 135-138.

\textsuperscript{130}The expense of defending Lagos against the hostility of adjacent tribes (both against the British and amongst themselves) was considered enough of an outlay, Burns, pp. 132-138. The Government was not even interested in further acquisitions when they were offered: "[i]n 1881, two Cameroon prices asked Britain to establish a government in their area, but the Colonial Office refused ... [saying that] ... '[p]ast experience shows that the extension of British occupation would probably lead to wars with the interior native tribes, and heavy demands upon the British taxpayer,'" Isichei, p. 363.
and trading companies grew rapidly, and gradually expanded their business endeavours up-river into the interior.\textsuperscript{131} Indeed, British involvement in the area was so profound that "[t]he Berlin Conference of 1885 acknowledged British claims to the Niger Basin."\textsuperscript{132} The Government initially declined to extend its official suzerainty, however, and handed administrative control over the drainage basin of the Niger River (or the northern region) to the Royal Niger Company, chartered in 1886.\textsuperscript{133} The colony of Lagos on the western coast remained unchanged, while the consulate at the Bights of Benin and Biafra (the delta region) was designated as the Oil Rivers Protectorate.\textsuperscript{134}

Over the following decades, some adjustments would be made to these arrangements, as the British Government gradually expanded its official control over the region. In 1893, the Oil Rivers Protectorate was extended into the hinterland region, and renamed the Niger Coast Protectorate.\textsuperscript{135} In 1900, the monopoly territory of the Royal Niger Company was taken over by the British Government and restyled the Protectorate of Northern Nigeria.\textsuperscript{136}

\textsuperscript{131}Not without encountering considerable hostility from the local Africans, however, many of whom were now armed with modern weapons, thanks to the European traders, Burns, pp. 142-146.

\textsuperscript{132}Coleman, p. 41. Indeed, Britain and Germany signed several agreements (1885, 1886, 1890, 1893) formalizing the borders between "British" territory in Nigeria and "German" territory in the Cameroons. The French were rather more difficult to deal with because they were intent on creating an empire in the north adjacent to their Saharan colonies. The western and northern boundaries would not be mutually accepted until the turn of the century, Burns, pp. 160-162, 167-168, 186-187.

\textsuperscript{133}The Company united "the various competing British firms" on the Niger, and its charter gave it monopoly rights over the trade on the River, Isichei, p. 353. Although its impact on the people who lived on the banks of the Niger and its tributaries was "draconian," its control over the "interior districts" was extremely limited, Isichei, p. 366. See also Burns, pp. 157-170. However, its activities did serve to establish the British claim to "the rich hinterland of Nigeria, Burns, p. 170.

\textsuperscript{134}Burns, p. 171; see also Coleman, p. 42.

\textsuperscript{135}Ibid.

\textsuperscript{136}Burns, pp. 170, 183; see also Coleman, p. 42.
the Niger Coast Protectorate became the Protectorate of Southern Nigeria. In 1906, the Colony of Lagos was absorbed into what then became the Colony and Protectorate of Southern Nigeria, and in 1914, the entire territory, both northern and southern protectorates, were combined to form the Colony and Protectorate of Nigeria.\(^{137}\)

Nigeria was now officially a colony of the British Empire, but it was to remain, internally, in a state of flux. While the original Lagos colony retained its separate status throughout the colonial period, the administrative units in the northern and southern protectorate regions were repeatedly reconfigured. Although within each of these two regions the administrative organization would undergo substantive changes during the colonial period, the distinction between northern and southern region persisted. As a result, the colony was never really integrated. It remained, in essence, a federation of three areas: the northern region, the south-eastern region, and the south-western region (Lagos).\(^{138}\) The differences between these regions, both inherent (native) and those engendered by the colonial administration and its practices, would become embedded in Nigeria's political development, creating the same kind of situation which would make indigenous unity problematic as had been established in the Gold Coast/Ghana.

d) Kenya

The lines drawn on the imperialists' maps to delineate colonial borders were perhaps

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\(^{137}\)Coleman, p. 42. This was not, however, accomplished without considerable military expenditures as the British had to conquer those territories whose chiefs were unwilling to sign treaties ceding authority to the British, Burns, pp. 171-218. See also Isichei, pp. 365-377.

\(^{138}\)Burns, pp. 219-222; see also Coleman, pp. 42-48.
nowhere more arbitrary than in Kenya. Indeed, its boundaries appear to have been determined by what it was not, rather than by any coherent concept of a clearly defined territory. To the south, was the German colony of Tanganyika, to the west, the kingdom of Uganda, to the north, the kingdom of Ethiopia, and to the east, Italian Somaliland. The land between would be designated as Kenya.\footnote{G.H. Mungeam, \textit{British Rule in Kenya, 1895-1912: The Establishment of Administration in the East African Protectorate} (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1966) pp. 1-2. The formalization of this will be covered later, but suffice to add at this point that the designation of this territory as Kenya was seen as a way to "conveniently [fill] in the gap between Uganda and the coast,"Ibid., p. 1.}

This was a reflection, in some ways, of the mixed topography of the territory, which renders the categorization of any substantive geographical regions problematic. Within the territory, there are "a number of distinctive ecological zones, each one subdivided by more subtle variations within it."\footnote{Thomas Spear, \textit{Kenya's Past: An Introduction to Historical Methods in Africa} (London: Longman, 1981) p. xiv.} There is a narrow coastal plain, which includes numerous inlets and islands, initially forested. This is bordered by a ridge inland, which marks the edge of a dry savannah woodland plateau called the Taru. Within the Taru are two fertile areas: the flood plain of the Tana River in the north, and the high hills of the Taita region in the south, which are made fertile by the heavier rainfall there.\footnote{Ibid., pp. xiv-xvi.}

In fact, given the number of hill ranges and plateaus which demark Kenya, the variations in rainfall have served to define geographical regions in the territory between those of relative fertility and those which are classified as semiarid, and the differences in population ratios which have resulted. There are only two major rivers, the Tana and the Athi-Galana, both of which

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originate in the hills south of Mt. Kenya (which is more or less in the centre of Kenya). The Tana flows north-east and then south to the coast, and the Athi-Galana flows south-east and then east to the coast. The area to the north and east of the Tana is classified as semiarid savannah (with some scattered woodland forest). The region between the two rivers is also semiarid savannah (with pockets of woodland and tropical forests), while the area to the west of the Athi-Galana is a mixture of woodland and savannah, delineated by the hill ranges and plateaus of that region. In the foothills of Mt. Kilimanjaro, on the border with Tanganyika to the southwest of the Athi-Galana, there is also a small area of fertile forest. The hills and plateaus of the region around Mt. Kenya also include a variety of zones, the fertility of each is determined by its altitude (and resultant rainfall). This is the Central Highlands region, with its combination of dry woodland and grassland savannahs which would prove so attractive to European settlers in the twentieth century. To the west of Mt. Kenya lies the arid and inhospitable Great Rift Valley.\textsuperscript{142}

Thus, except for the Central Highlands\textsuperscript{143} and the ribbon of coastal forest, Kenya is a topographical intermixture of hills, savannahs, woodlands, and forests which cannot be delineated into clearly defined geographical regions. Even the famous Central Highlands includes "environments ... [which] vary enormously with altitude."\textsuperscript{144} Instead of the relatively distinct regional diversity of the Gold Coast, or even Nigeria, regional divisions in Kenya can be most

\textsuperscript{142}Ibid., pp. xvi-xvii. See also Godfrey Muriuki, \textit{A History of the Kikuyu, 1500-1900} (Nairobi: Oxford University Press, 1974) pp. 26-32.

\textsuperscript{143}In fact, the Central Highlands represent the one region in Kenya that can be described as being geographically "set ... off from areas beyond: on the north and west, the mountains and the Rift Valley; on the south and west, arid steppe and semidesert," Charles H. Ambler, \textit{Kenyan Communities in the Age of Imperialism: The Central Region in the Late Nineteenth Century} (Yale University Press, 1988) p. 4.

\textsuperscript{144}Spear, p. xvii.
effectively demarked by ecology, rather than geography. In other words, by the human use of
the land: agricultural or pastoral. Therefore, we can categorize the coastal plains as one region
(agricultural), the northeast and east as another (pastoral), the Central Highlands as a third
(agricultural), the west as a fourth (pastoral), the north-west as a fifth (pastoral), and the
south-west as the final zone (agricultural). 145 Although these categorizations are problematic
because they delineate an extremely complex topography into very broadly and simplistically
defined regions, they do serve to describe the existence and variety of geographical divisions
within Kenya.

The artificiality of these categorizations, and of the boundaries of Kenya itself, becomes
only too clear when an attempt is made to associate the different groups of the human occupants
of Kenya with a specific geographic territory. Kenya, after all, is believed to have been the site
of origin of the homo sapiens species itself, as archaeological research in the Rift Valley has
demonstrated. 146 Over the millions of years of migration and development, humans evolved into
the numerous ethnic groups which now populate the planet, and some of these returned to the
region of their ultimate origin from other parts of Africa during the last few millennia. As a
result, modern "Kenya has more than forty [of these] ethnic groups which, on the basis of
linguistics and geographic origin, fall into four broad categories: the Nilotic, Nilo-Hamitic,
Hamitic, and Bantu." 147

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145 Ibid., pp. xiv-xvii.

146 Ibid., p. 2. It is believed that the first humans originated in northern Kenya, around Lake Turkana.
See also David Gordon, "A History of Kenya," in Mario Azevedo, ed., Kenya: The Land, the People, and the

147 Vinston Burton and Roger Winsor, "Society, Culture, and the Kenyan Family," in Kenya: The Land,
the People, and the Nation, p. 15. The Hamitic group is also called the Cushitic-speaking peoples, although
Although there are remnants of what are "believed to be the first inhabitants of Kenya," the Dorobo, intermarriage with the various migrant groups over the millennia has reduced the discernible number of these to a "few hundred families," whose language is categorized as Nandi.\textsuperscript{148} As an indication of how complicated linguistic categorization is in Kenya, the Nandi language is now considered a sub-group of the Nilo-Hamitic,\textsuperscript{149} and is one of the "more than one hundred and twenty sub-cultures which share vernacular languages and dialects."\textsuperscript{150}

These sub-cultures represent millennia of migration and interaction between representatives of the four major ethnic/linguistic groups. As in the Gold Coast and Nigeria, there is little physical evidence of Kenya's prehistoric history, so the past has had to be constructed from linguistic analyses.\textsuperscript{151} From these, the migration of the major groups can be traced, and the modern population of Kenya categorized.

Thus, it is believed that the Hamitic group originated in the region known as the Horn

\textsuperscript{148}Ibid., p. 19. Also called the Dakalo. "Almost all modern Kenyans, however, trace their ancestors to groups who originated outside the region," Gordon, pp. 35-36. Predominant among the migrant groups were Bantu-speaking peoples, the major linguistic group in sub-Saharan Africa (although there are now approximately six hundred Bantu languages), who originated in the Cameroon/Nigeria region of West Africa, Jan Vansina, "The Roots of African Cultures," in African History: From Earliest Times to Independence, pp. 15-20.

\textsuperscript{149}Ibid., p. 18.

\textsuperscript{150}Ibid., p. 17.

\textsuperscript{151}See Spear, pp. 26-42, for a detailed analysis of the linguistic developments relevant to East Africa, and Kenya in particular. See also Steven Feierman, "Economy, Society and Language in Early East Africa," in African History: From Earliest Times to Independence, pp. 101-128.
of Africa and migrated south into northeastern Kenya "during the tenth and eleventh centuries." They now occupy "the eastern and northeastern regions." The Nilotic group migrated from the north-west, from "Sudan and Uganda during the fourteenth century," and are now found in the western region, around Lake Victoria. The Bantu group came from the west and south-west, from the Niger and Congo basins, in the fifteenth century, and now populate the coastal plain and Central Highlands regions. The Nilo-Hamitic group came from south-western Ethiopia in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and are now found in the western and south-western regions.

Needless to say, these are very general geographical designations, and the traditional territories claimed by each major group overlap within Kenya itself, as well as into areas outside of the boundaries of present-day Kenya, across the borders of what are now Somalia, Ethiopia, 

152Burton and Winsor, p. 19. Burke's categorization of Nilotic, Nilo-Hamitic, and Bantu tends to subsume the Hamitic group as defined by Burton and Winsor into his Nilotic and Nilo-Hamitic categories, but his time-frame and migration routes more or less match Burton and Winsor. Burke, pp. 187-191. The same, however, cannot be said for Burton and Winsor's co-contributor, Gordon, who used the categorization system of Cushite, Nilotic, and Bantu, and whose time frame places the earliest Cushites in Kenya in 2,000 B.C.E., the earliest Nilotics in 500 B.C.E., and the earliest Bantu in "the second century" (B.C.E. or C.E. not indicated). He apparently used similar calculations as Spear (pp. 26-42), although Spear was not noted as one of Gordon's references. However, as Gordon also used the later time-frame used by Burton and Winsor to delineate the "final" migrations into Kenya of the various groups, and their territorial residence as of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, I have simplified the "scholarly distinctions" noted in n.109 accordingly, Gordon, pp. 36-39. Regardless of the disputes over time-frames, all sources confirm that "Kenya was... a patchwork of ethnic groups of markedly different languages, appearance, customs, and traditions," Gordon, p. 39.

153Ibid., p. 21.
154Ibid., p. 19.
155Ibid., p. 19. The Bantu are "Africa's largest linguistic family ... represent[ing] almost two-thirds of Africa's population," Gordon, p. 36.
156Ibid., p. 21.
157Ibid., p. 19.
158Ibid., p. 21.
Sudan, Uganda, and Tanzania. This is especially true for the pastoral peoples, who wandered throughout their traditional territories in search of grazing, and to whom the borders as defined by Europeans would have little meaning.\textsuperscript{159}

While these pastoral groups, by virtue of their lifestyle, occupy much of the land area of Kenya, however, their numbers are relatively few. Demographically, the Bantu-speaking group dominate, accounting for "over 70 percent of the population," and three sub-groups of the Bantu, the Kikuyu, the Kamba, and the Luhya, alone compose "more than 50 percent" of the total population.\textsuperscript{160} Indeed, each of the major ethnic/linguistic groups is dominated by one or two large sub-groups.\textsuperscript{161} For the Hamitic, this is the Somali sub-group (3.5\% of the total population); for the Nilotic, it is the Luo (12.9\%); for the Nilo-Hamitic, the Maasai (1.6\%) and the Turkana (1.4\%); and for the Bantu, the Kikuyu (21.2\%), the Kamba (11.4\%), the Mijikenda (4.8\%), and the Luhya (14\%).\textsuperscript{162} Thus, a simplified geographical/ethnic association can be constructed as: Somali - north-eastern and eastern regions; Luo - western region (southern section); Maasai - south-western region; Turkana - north-western region; Kikuyu - Central Highlands region; Kamba - southern Central Highlands region; Mijikenda - coastal plains region; and the Luhya - western region (northern section).\textsuperscript{163}

\textsuperscript{159}Gordon refers to the problems that would ensue: among the Somali peoples, for example, "a secessionist movement seeking union with Somalia would later be suppressed with some difficulty," p. 39. It was a problem that most of the African colonies would face --and continue to find problematic.

\textsuperscript{160}Ibid., p. 17.

\textsuperscript{161}These sub-groups have their own distinct languages or dialects of the major group. See Spear, pp. 26-42.

\textsuperscript{162}See Table 1.4, Burton and Winsor, pp. 17-18.

\textsuperscript{163}Ibid., pp. 19-21.
While these African groups constitute 98% of the population of Kenya, the other 2% are a combination of Arabs, south-Asians, and Europeans.\textsuperscript{164} The Arabs, who began arriving as traders in the second century, are primarily located in the coastal plain region. They represent both of the major Islamic sects, Sunni and Shi'ite, and speak Arabic and Swahili.\textsuperscript{165} The south-Asians arrived in Kenya at the turn of the twentieth century from India as part of the British imperial apparatus.\textsuperscript{166} "At least 31 separate cultural and religious groups of Asians exist: Hindus, Sikhs, Sunni Muslims, Shi'a Muslims, and Goan Roman Catholics." Most originated from three areas of India: 70% from Gujarat, 20% from Eastern Punjab, and 10% from Goa, and speak the relevant languages from those regions. They came to work on the railway, and many remained to form the merchant class in colonial Kenya, residing predominantly in the urban centres of the coastal plains and the Central Highlands regions.\textsuperscript{167} The Europeans, primarily British, arrived in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries as colonial administrators (scattered throughout Kenya and in the urban centres) and, in the later period, as settlers into the climatically attractive Central Highlands region.\textsuperscript{168} Although the numbers of these non-African residents are relatively few, they represent the profound impact these peoples had on the indigenous population, and on the history of Kenya -- indeed, its very foundation as a

\textsuperscript{164}\textsuperscript{Ibid.}, p. 15.
\textsuperscript{165}\textsuperscript{Ibid.}, p. 22; see also Gordon, p. 39.
\textsuperscript{166}Indian traders had been visiting Zanzibar in the eighteenth century, and had "established themselves permanently in ever-increasing numbers" on that island by the early nineteenth century. Steven Feierman, "A Century of Ironies in East Africa (c. 1780-1890)," in African History: From Earliest Times to Independence, pp. 356-361. However, these were predominantly focussed on the ivory trade (from East Africa to Bombay), and obtained the ivory from Arab sources on Zanzibar; they did not venture into mainland Africa.
\textsuperscript{167}Burton and Winsor, pp. 21-22.
\textsuperscript{168}\textsuperscript{Ibid.}, pp. 22-23; see also Gordon, pp. 33-34.
nation-state. While Arab traders, as mentioned, arrived on the coast of Kenya in the second century, it was not until the late thirteenth century that "the full impact of Islam" hit the coastal towns. Although the Islamic religious expansion had long been absorbed in the north-eastern and eastern regions (moving south through Somalia -- and converting the Somali sub-group) -- it was not until this later period that the Arab became entrenched in Kenya. Arabs expanded the size and number of towns on the coast, and established sultanates in Zanzibar and along the rest of the East African coastline. This growth reflected the increasing importance of the East African trade in a variety of commodities, predominantly ivory, gold, and slaves, for the markets of the Arabia.

It was also in the fifteenth century that Europeans first arrived on the coast. Once the Cape of Good Hope had been successfully navigated by Bartholomew Diaz in 1486, Portuguese explorers followed the coast of East Africa to find a route to India and the Far East. By 1502, they had discovered that East Africa itself was an attractive destination, as a source of gold, and by the early sixteenth century, the Portuguese were heavily involved in an aggressive conquest of the coastal towns. However, they made little attempt to explore inland, content -- as the


170 Burton and Winsor, p. 21.

171 While "[t]he majority of the inhabitants of these towns were black men, ... the towns themselves were the creation of Arab colonists, some of whom were probably themselves black and some of whom undoubtedly intermarried with the peoples of the coast," Ingham, p. 3. It was due to this Arab influence that the Swahili language developed, as "a mixture of Bantu, Arab, Persian, and India ... [which] became the lingua franca of the area," Gordon, p. 39. The sultinates would develop from the "series of small city states" that the Arab colonists established along the coast, Gordon, p. 39. See also Ingham, pp. 4-5.

172 Ibid., pp. 6-9. See also Gordon, p. 40.
Arabs had been — with footholds on the coast to which Africans brought trade goods. After the initial violent impact of the Portuguese, the Arabs were able to resume their prosperous occupation of the coastal towns, especially as Portuguese power declined as a result of the competition in South Asia from the British and Dutch. The Portuguese were challenged on the East African coast itself by the expansionist Oman Empire of the Arabian Peninsula.

During the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, a series of fierce engagements raged between the forces from Oman and the Portuguese, until, by 1740, the Portuguese had been driven out of their forts and trading posts along the coast. The rest of the century was marked by considerable unrest, as various towns attempted to reject the Oman advances along the coast, and as several of the Oman governors in the region tried to establish their independence from the Oman ruling family. However, by the early nineteenth century, Oman had consolidated its control over the coast of East Africa through its conquest of Zanzibar. Again, though, this control was limited to the island of Zanzibar and the coastal towns. The rivalries

173Although an attempt was made in 1613 to advance inland and "take possession of the [gold] mines," the attempt was soon abandoned due to "the repeated attacks of hostile tribesmen," Ingham, p. 10. Even the determination of the Jesuit, Dominican, and Augustinian missionaries was no match for either the indigenous hostility or the already entrenched Islamic religion. The missionaries "had little effect" on the peoples of East Africa, Ibid., p. 11.

174It was a "tumultuous" period for the region, with reinforcements for the Portuguese arriving occasionally from Goa to try to fend off the various incursions from both the Arabian Peninsula and the Ottoman Empire. At one point, the Portuguese made an alliance with a marauding Bantu tribe which arrived in the region in the sixteenth century, but this soon backfired, and the Zimba not only attacked the Portuguese, but also their few African allies in the coastal towns, Ingham, pp. 11-16.

175The constant battles seriously weakened the Portuguese, whose era in East Africa, while lengthy, had been one of considerable and unremitting military adventures, and expenses. It had also been an extremely destructive period for the peoples of the coast, culturally, economically, and physically, Ingham, pp. 16-17. See also Gordon, p. 40.
on the coast had had little impact on the peoples of the interior.\textsuperscript{176}

While the military upheaval on the coast had not seeped inland, however, the growth of the slave trade during the eighteenth century did have a profound impact. Although the Arabs had long been engaged in buying slaves from the interior through their coastal outlets,\textsuperscript{177} the French were in need of an accessible market to purchase slaves for their colonies in the Indian Ocean region and in the West Indies. By the 1770s, arrangements had been made with the Arabs in Zanzibar and along the coast to provide slaves, and the trade increased substantially.\textsuperscript{178} The growing prosperity of the region attracted the attention of the British, who had largely ignored the entire area before, preferring to focus their energies on the creation of their Indian Empire. In 1798, during the Napoleonic Wars, in an attempt to curtail French interests in the Indian Ocean area, the British signed a treaty with the Sultan of Oman by which he agreed to cease trading with the French.\textsuperscript{179}

This establishment of friendly relations with the Sultan was to prove problematic in the early nineteenth century, however, when the British decided to oppose the slave trade which

\textsuperscript{176} Although the rivalries on the coast between the pro and anti-Oman residents and within the Omani empire (both in Oman and on the East Africa coast) were convulsive, Ingham, pp. 17-19.

\textsuperscript{177} The slave trade had begun early in East Africa: it was already "one of the chief exports" by 200 C.E., Ingham, pp. 1-2. "By the nineteenth century, there were well over 100,000 African slaves in Iraq and Persia," mostly from East Africa -- the trade from West Africa was well-established by 1000 C.E., Gordon, pp. 40-41.

\textsuperscript{178} The French can be said to have revived the slave trade, which had been in decline, ivory being the main attraction for traders, Ingham, p. 2. The French East India Company needed slaves in the eighteenth century for its various colonies in the Indian Ocean and South Asia. They established a "triangular trade" in this area similar to the long-established one in the Atlantic. The renewed activity, and the prosperity it brought, served to also revive the slave trade into Arabia, Ibid., pp. 20-222.

\textsuperscript{179} The treaty also blocked trade for the other British competitor in South Asia, the Dutch, Ingham, pp. 22-23.
provided such profit to the Sultan and his subjects. Accordingly, the British initially concentrated their efforts on making agreements with various African leaders in the region south of Zanzibar, and on conducting a naval campaign against the pirates in the Persian Gulf. The display of British power served to impress upon the Sultan the advantages of cooperation with the British, and, in 1822, he signed a treaty forbidding the participation of his subjects in the slave trade and authorizing the British "to seize Arab ships violating the terms of the agreement."

While the Treaty legitimized the British actions against the slave trade in the region, however, it also signified their recognition of the Sultan's domination of the area, an acknowledgment that would preclude for many years any willingness by the British Government to attempt any imperialist designs on East Africa. Ironically, the British presence and cooperation also enabled the Sultan to consolidate what had actually been an "extremely tenuous" hold over the region. He lost no time in imposing a more effective control over his recalcitrant subjects, and eliminating as many of the semi-independent governors as possible. The Sultan himself moved to the more salubrious island of Zanzibar in 1840, the better to

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180 In contrast to the "speed and vigour" of its "attack upon the slave-trade on the west coast of Africa ... after 1807," the British efforts on the East African coast "were a little tardy," Ingham, p. 23.

181 The "British appreciated the Sultan's dilemma. To abolish slavery completely would almost inevitably bring [the Sultan] into violent conflict with his subjects who already gave him plenty of trouble ... [and] would also involve heavy financial loss to [his] subjects and to the state of Oman itself which derived revenue from the sale of slaves by any subjects of the state. The British proposal, however, implied a readiness to allow the continuation of the slave-trade within the Sultan's Muslim dominions," Ingham, pp. 24-25.

182 This "hands-off" attitude was maintained, even when several appeals for protection against the Sultan were made by a number of the coastal city states to the British Government in Bombay, Ingham, pp. 26-32. See also Gordon, p. 42.
oversee his East African empire.\textsuperscript{183}

The Sultan's proximity served to substantially improve the economy of East Africa. He imported Indians to work within his administration and to engage in commerce.\textsuperscript{184} He encouraged trading expeditions into the interior, which expanded contact considerably with the peoples of the region.\textsuperscript{185} Unfortunately, all this activity also expanded the slave trade. Neither the Sultan nor his subjects had been persuaded by the treaty with the British to disengage from the trade, and, as trade in other items (especially ivory) increased, slaves were needed to work as porters, to bring those products to the coast, where they could then themselves be sold off. While the Arabs prospered considerably from all this, however, the peoples of the interior were exposed to a number of negative impacts. Incursions by the Arabs added to the disruptive inter-tribal disputes as these groups competed for alliances with the Arabs or established themselves as enemies. Slave-raiding became endemic, causing further disruptions. And, in the late 1860s, cholera spread along the trading routes which the Arabs had developed -- from the north and inland from the coast -- bringing an epidemic to the interior. The nineteenth century, for the Africans of the region, was marked, therefore, by the ravages of the slave trade, wars, and disease.\textsuperscript{186}

\textsuperscript{183}Ingham, pp. 25-35.

\textsuperscript{184}The Sultan had previously "welcomed them in Oman," and when he moved to Zanzibar, he "encouraged their settlement" there as well. Indians became his "leading advisers in financial matters." While both Hindus and Muslims "responded to the Sultan's friendship," Hindus "tended to return to India at regular intervals with their profits," while "the Muslims became permanent residents in Zanzibar or along the coast," no doubt a reflection of their greater compatibility with the Muslim community in East Africa, Ingham, p. 58.

\textsuperscript{185}It was in this era that Arab traders "began to penetrate deep into the interior," Ibid., p. 58.

\textsuperscript{186}Ingham, pp. 59-70. The Arabs tended to be rather ruthless in their methods: slaves had to be captured, after all. The violence inevitably escalated, as resistance hardened among the potential victims of the slave raids, and alliances between the Arabs and other tribes exacerbated the inter-tribal rivalries which already existed. See
It was also marked by an increase in foreign contact, as non-Arab explorers and traders "discovered" East Africa. Encouraged by the Sultan, who wanted to diversify and expand the economy of the region, Americans began trading on the coast as early as the 1830s. They were followed in the 1840s by the Germans of the Hanseatic Republics. The French, too, were quick to restore their interests, especially in the slave trade, and by the 1840s, were again flourishing, having reached an agreement with the Sultan. When the French demonstrated their determination to exert more power in the region by sending naval ships to the region, however, the Sultan became anxious. He was already concerned with the French slaving activities, but the prospect of French forces competing with his encouraged him to protest to the British Government.

Apart from some momentary bellicose posturing from Lord Palmerston, however, the British were not really interested in becoming involved in an anti-French program in the region.

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Also Gordon, pp. 41-42: while lamentable in its excesses and human suffering, the Sultan's efforts did considerably revive the economy of the coast and of Zanzibar. See also Spear, pp. 117-132. The impact on the interior was far-reaching. The increased demand of the traders for all manner of goods (including primarily grain and ivory) promoted the growth of the economies of the interior regions, but also brought considerable social change as the transitional economy caused shifts in the wealth and power of both individuals and groups, and a concomitant shift in allegiances within the tribes, especially as younger, more adaptable men began to challenge traditional authority. Such men were now likely to acquire wives from outside of the tribe, and to enlist poor men to their side in the intra-tribal power struggles.

Indeed, they were "the most important foreign traders" in the region in the early nineteenth century, although their numbers were relatively few, Ingham, pp. 71-72.

Like the Americans, the Germans "appeared to have no ambition to interfere in the administration of [the Sultan's] territories and he welcomed the extension of the Zanzibar trade which their presence encouraged." Treaties were signed with both the Americans and the German "representatives of the Hanseatic Republics of Lubeck, Bremen and Hamburg," Ingham, p. 73.

Ibid., pp. 73-75. By the nineteenth century, Zanzibar had become "the most important trading centre along the East African coast," making it an extremely attractive prize for the French, who were hoping to "establish a foothold" in the region. It is hardly surprising that the Sultan was concerned.
Direct British trade was "virtually non-existent," and the signing of a commercial treaty with Zanzibar in 1839 had only been intended to preserve friendly relations with the Sultan. The Government did appoint a Consul-General to Zanzibar in 1841, but his responsibilities were primarily to act as an agent of the Indian Government on behalf of the Indian immigrants. Their major concern remained the suppression of the slave trade, and they repeatedly pressured the Sultan to take more effective action on the matter. A further treaty on this was signed in 1845, but the Sultan remained powerless to enforce it upon his subjects. In any case, he was preoccupied with a series of revolts against his power, including from one of his own sons, and the French willingness to take advantage of any weakness by supporting the Sultan's opponents. When he died, in 1859, his empire was divided: Oman being given to one son, and Zanzibar to another.

Even though the official British policy was to remain only marginally involved in the affairs of East Africa, the weakness of the Sultan in the 1850s, and of his successors, forced the British to become more of a player in the region. While concern remained focussed on the slave trade and on curtailing French expansionist designs, the British were increasingly drawn into...

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190 Ingham, p. 76.

191 Ingham, pp. 75-76. The British were intent on maintaining the Sultan's cooperation, in the face of their "suspicions of French participation in the slave-trade" and their concern over the security of the "overland route through Egypt to India" which highlighted "the strategic importance of [the Sultan's] estate in Oman," p. 76.

192 The Sultan resisted the imposition of the treaty, but ultimately signed, possibly because "it was patent to all that it could not be rigidly enforced," Ingham, pp. 77-78. The resistance was not only based on the inability of the Sultan's subjects to perceived a moral obligation to desist in slave-trading; the profits were considerable, with around 45,000 slaves being exported annually in the 1840s and 1850s, Gordon, p. 41.

193 Ingham, pp. 79-80.
Zanzibar political affairs. An agreement was reached with the French in 1862 which guaranteed the independence of the Sultan, which effectively ended the French threat. In the 1870s, the anti-slavery forces were increased to assist the Sultan in his efforts to uphold the treaties, which also served to increase British influence in the area.

This interest had also been growing thanks to the activities of missionaries, who had originally arrived in the 1840s to promote their anti-slavery policies but who had since also become involved in the exploration of the interior. By the early 1880s, missionaries and explorers from all of the European imperial powers were busy signing treaties with the chiefs of

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194 The conflict between the Sultan in Oman and the Sultan in Zanzibar (who was the weaker of the two) was exacerbated by the French, who encouraged the Sultan of Oman in his attempts to overthrow the Sultan of Zanzibar. The British did not want to take sides, but neither did they want the status quo changed. Several naval expeditions were sent to the region, to deter invasion from Oman, and the efforts of the British to foster a settlement between the two Sultans (and to keep out the French) finally succeeded in 1861, when an agreement was negotiated by the British whereby the division of the empire between Oman and Zanzibar was recognized by both, and Zanzibar agreed to share the wealth by making annual payments to Oman, Ingham, pp. 80-83. At the heart of the dispute had been, of course, the disparity in wealth between Oman and Zanzibar. While the Sultan of Zanzibar had become extremely wealthy through the expanding trade of the area, however, the bulk of the profits were "appropriated by the European and American traders" and by the Indian traders and administrators: "the customs master ... [for example] was probably even wealthier" than the Sultan, one master in the 1850s was reputed to have "$30 million in a Bombay bank, the product of his East African activities," Spear, p. 141.

195 The British were intent on keeping the Sultans of Zanzibar and Oman independent, and did not appreciate the French efforts to undermine this. The French Government finally agreed to a formal joint declaration of the Sultans' independence when it concluded "that the strategic and economic value of a foothold in Zanzibar did not justify a clash with Britain," Ingham, p. 83.

196 An influence that was increasingly exerted by the Britons now acting as Consuls or as personal advisors to the Sultan. British intervention on the Sultan's behalf had served to demonstrate his dependence on their support, which added weight to this influence of individuals, Ingham, pp. 83-84.

197 Ingham, pp. 87-91, 103-114. While their proselyting endeavours were not overwhelmingly successful, their exploration of the interior of East Africa was substantial. Their reports enthused other organizations, such as the Royal Geographical Society, which also became involved in exploration in the region, most notably, of course, the famous (or infamous) Burton-Speke expedition to "discover" the source of the Nile in the 1850s (to which the Foreign Office also contributed funding), Ibid., pp. 91-103.
the interior, and, while the British were still loath to commit themselves officially to imperial adventures in East Africa, these activities forced them to pay more attention to what the others, especially the Germans, were doing.

By 1885, German imperial designs on East Africa were patently clear. Ships from the German fleet had arrived on the coast, and Germany had laid claim to much of the Sultan of Zanzibar's holdings on the mainland. While the British Government was willing to support the Sultan, if half-heartedly, its real concern was with the German advances into the interior, which were approaching the headwaters of the Nile. Given the strength of British interests in Egypt and the Sudan, this was perceived as a threat that had to be faced. By the Anglo-German Agreement of 1886 (confirmed in 1890), a British sphere of influence over the territory which would become Kenya was recognized. Still reluctant to become too involved, however, the British Government gave administrative authority over the sphere to the Imperial British East Africa Company (I.B.E.A.C.), chartered in 1888.

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198 Many of these activities were endorsed or encouraged by the "parent" government of the explorers and missionaries. This was, after all, the period of intense European imperial rivalry in Africa as a whole. George J. Moutafakis, "The Colonial Heritage of East Africa," in The Transformation of East Africa, pp 35, 44-45; see also Ingham, p. 34.

199 Considerable internal pressures were also being brought upon the British Government by the imperialist lobby and missionary organizations, Moutafakis, pp. 55-56.

200 Ingham, pp. 136-137.

201 The prime concern, of course, was protecting the routes to India, Mungeam, p. 7. In 1882, Britain had also (if not formally, in all but name) occupied Egypt, and "[f]or some not very clearly defined reason the protection of Egypt was also thought to involve the control of the Upper Nile," Ingham, p. 135.

202 Ingham, pp. 137-138; see also Moutafakis, p. 56, and Mungeam, p. 6.

203 Ingham, pp. 141-142. "From the first this was a struggling concern ..., [however, and] the Company fount itself unable to administer the country successfully, Mungeam, p. 7. The I.B.E.A.C. had believed that profits from "the ivory trade and the eventual development of the highlands" would enable them to cover the costs
It was the edge of the wedge that would draw Britain officially into East Africa, however. The Agreement of 1890 further defined the borders of the British sphere, and recognized a British Protectorate over Zanzibar. In the same year, the Brussels Act declared the suppression of the slave trade. As the trade was primarily conducted in the interior, this forced the British to become increasingly engaged on the mainland.\footnote{Ingham, pp. 148-149. As a signatory of the Brussels Act, Britain had an "obligation to do all in [its] power to suppress the slave-trade."} While the British Government persisted in its resistance to the extension of imperial responsibilities, the activities of the missionaries and representatives of the I.B.E.A.C. gradually forced its hand.\footnote{The Government's primary concern was the security of Uganda (as source of the Nile), but a railway was needed to provide ready access -- a railway from the East African coast. The Company did not have the financial means to build such a railroad, only the British Government did. In addition, the missionary societies, anti-slavery societies, and the imperialist lobby had been building popular support for annexation of Uganda, inexorably increasing the pressure on the Government, Mungeam, p. 57. See also Ingham, pp. 150-167.} In 1894, the Government declared a Protectorate over Uganda -- the key to the headwaters of the Nile.\footnote{By now, the I.B.E.A.C. was clearly failing, and faced with the threat of a power vacuum on the upper Nile and the probability of attack upon British missionaries and [their converts] if all support were withdrawn, Britain had little alternative but to step into the breach," Mungeam, pp. 7-8. See also Ingham, p. 167, and Moutafakis, p. 57.} The next step was merely the logical extension: in 1895, the I.B.E.A.C. charter was cancelled, and the British Government declared the East Africa Protectorate over the territory between Uganda and the coast, to be administered by the Foreign Office representative, the Consul in Zanzibar.\footnote{Ingham, pp. 171-173. By now, the British Consul-General at Zanzibar was already the administrator of the Sultan's territories on the mainland, so the British Government simply arranged a lease of these territories from the Sultan. The chiefs of the interior were not consulted, Ingham, pp. 172-173. See also Moutafakis, p. 57 and Mungeam, pp. 8-9. A protectorate over Zanzibar had already been declared, in 1890, so this further declaration "conveniently filled in the gap between Uganda and the coast," Mungeam, p. 1.}

While the Government was able to assume control over what outposts the I.B.E.A.C. had
been able to establish in the interior, it also had to assume responsibility for an area that can only be described as turbulent. The disorganization, and rapacious activities, of the Company had exacerbated the unrest of the region.\textsuperscript{208} Although, on the map at least, the territory was divided into four administrative provinces, it would be decades before any kind of order could be restored and effective administrative networks established.\textsuperscript{209} They were not even sure precisely where the borders of the Protectorate were as yet.\textsuperscript{210} In order to provide easier access to the interior (and especially to what was considered at the time the most important area of East Africa), the Government began constructing a railway into Uganda in 1897, an action that caused even more disruption among the tribes of the interior, and brought into Kenyan territory thousands of Indian construction workers (as mentioned previously).\textsuperscript{211} The "opening" of the territory also brought in European settlers, attracted by the now accessible Central Highlands.

\textsuperscript{208} The I.B.E.A.C. had especially poor relations with the Kikuyu of the Central Highlands, the major route to Uganda and one of the few fertile areas in the region. Its representatives had also managed to exacerbate the conflict between the Kikuyu and the Maasai. As a result, Kikuyu resistance was sustained and violent, Muriuki, pp. 142-155.

\textsuperscript{209} Mungeam, p. 47. Kikuyu resistance was weakened during the late 1890s due to plagues of locusts, drought, a cattle plague, and an outbreak of smallpox. Mortality rates in some areas ranged "from 50 to 95 per cent." Muriuki, pp. 155-156. While this did help to calm things down in the interior, until at least 1900, the administration had to deal with a series of revolts and outbreaks of violent resistance, made more difficult by the lack of funds and suitable administrators, Mungeam, pp. 21-45.

\textsuperscript{210} Indeed, the Government "had no clear idea" of what they had acquired, territorially or demographically, Ingham, p. 173. See also Mungeam, pp. 1-2.

\textsuperscript{211} Though reluctant to undertake the considerable expenses of construction, the Government was apparently panicked into action by the start of a German railway from their base at Dar-es-Salaam to Lake Victoria. The "nightmare" of this threat to the headwaters of the Nile, though "no one could explain how the Germans were actually going to stem the flow of the Nile ... and so threaten Egypt and the Sudan with ruin," was enough to force the British Government to invest the "enormous sums" required. The decision was rationalized by the assumption "that the railroad would stimulate commercial farming in the interior, generating the freight charges that would repay government expenditures and help increase trade out of Mombasa," Gordon, p. 43. The infusion of Indian "coolies" as construction workers caused considerable problems, as they tended to get into conflicts with the local Africans. However, in their wake came the Indian traders, who soon established a commercial network along the rail route, Mungeam, pp. 62-63. 15,000 Indian workers were imported (they also encountered difficulties with "[a] variety of exotic problems ... [including] ... man-eating lions," Ingham, p. 209.
region.  

In 1905, the Foreign Office handed the East African Protectorate (and Uganda, Central Africa, and British Somaliland) over to the Colonial Office, which was believed to be the more appropriate organization to handle the chaos.  

By now, the borders had been established, and in 1912, the territory was reorganized into administrative zones of seven provinces and one district. Broadly defined, the Northern Frontier District encompassed the north-eastern region, and the Somali group. Jubaland and Tanaland Provinces covered the eastern region, and the rest of the Somali group and the other sub-groups of the region. Coast Province contained the coastal plains region, and the Mijikenda peoples. Kenya Province was centred on the Mt. Kenya area of the Central Highlands region, and included the Kikuyu territory. Ukamba Province, the home -- among others -- of the Kamba, included the southern Central Highlands region. Naivasha Province encompassed the northwestern region of the Turkana as well as the south-western region of the Maasai. Nyanza Province corresponded with the western region of both the Luhya in the north and the Luo in the south.  

The organization of the territory was, however, as flimsy as the paper it was traced on. The various African tribes were not cooperative; in fact, they were frequently rebellious. Much

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212 The Europeans proved to be as troublesome as the Indians. As well as settlers, "traders, sportsmen, [and] missionaries" began to spread along the route, and -- much more problematic -- started to move into areas previously unbothered by European incursions, thereby upsetting the locals there as well, Mungeam, pp. 63-66.

213 The Foreign Office and Colonial Office had been consulting since 1895, but by 1904, it was felt that the Colonial Office was better equipped to handle the complicated land issues being raised by the increasing numbers of European settlers. The C.O. was none too pleased at this development, its Under-Secretary (Churchill) noting that "the Protectorate has been handed overe to us ... in confusion. The organisation [sic] of such a territory was not a work with which [the Foreign Office] was acquainted or in which they have displayed any aptitude," as quoted in Mungeam, p. 136.

214 See Map 2, Mungeam, p. 158. Mungeam described the gradual and tortuous establishment of the administrative system in Kenya.
of the country was apparently wasteland, and, therefore, not conducive to producing any revenue for the administration. The cost of the railway was horrendous, yet had to be met somehow because the British Government was not willing to absorb all of the expenses of the Protectorate, especially when the military costs of suppressing the various rebellions had also been considerable. In an attempt to salvage the situation, the administration encouraged the immigration of settlers from Britain, expelling substantial numbers of natives from the Central Highlands region in order to provide land for them.\textsuperscript{215} Although the initial settlers had to overcome a number of problems before the area became productive enough to entice even a few thousand to immigrate,\textsuperscript{216} by the end of World War I, the settler contingent had grown sufficiently for the administration to foresee the potential of the Protectorate fitting the model of a dominion-style state.\textsuperscript{217} The existence of a vast majority of by now extremely disgruntled Africans, and of an influential and prosperous community of South Asians, which, although small, still outnumbered the white settlers, did not appear to strike officialdom as problematic.\textsuperscript{218}

\textsuperscript{215}See Mungeam for details. The "Crown Lands Ordinance of 1902 had legalized the seizure of 'empty' lands ... and the expropriation of African farmers," Gordon, p. 44.

\textsuperscript{216}The problems included disease, insect infestations, experimentation with a variety of crops (coffee, ironically, had first been tried by the missionaries before being used as a commercial crop), stock-raiding or poisoning by local Africans, and the necessity to establish a processing and transportation infrastructure, Ingham, pp. 222-224. Lord Delamere, for all his faults, pioneered many of the experiments, a financial investment that few other settlers could afford, Gordon, pp. 44-46.

\textsuperscript{217}A Legislative Council had been established in 1907, one of the first steps in the creation of the model in Kenya. The settlers were also early to organize various associations to promote their interests to the administration, Ingham, pp. 220-221. Again, Delamere was one of the primary instigators, Gordon, p. 46. See also Mungeam, p. 185.

\textsuperscript{218}Although the Colonial Office was already concerned about the welfare of the Africans, especially following reports of violent actions taken against Africans by the white settlers, so much so that Churchill paid the Protectorate a personal visit in 1907 to judge the situation for himself, Mungeam, pp. 183-205. See also Ingham, p. 270.
Accordingly, in 1920, in an attempt to stabilize the situation and enable the Colonial Office to place the administration on a more familiar footing, "the East Africa Protectorate was dissolved... [and]... the area became Kenya Colony."\textsuperscript{219}

Thus, the foundations of the future state, and of the fierce battles (metaphorical and literal) that would be waged between the inhabitant groups -- African, Arab, South Asian, and European -- and between the African tribes, were laid.\textsuperscript{220} Indeed, Kenya rivalled India in its inherent geographic and demographic complexity, and in its history of inter and intra-group conflict. The existence of a numerically small but economically and politically powerful group of Europeans would ensure that attempts on the part of indigenous activists to unify opposition to British imperial rule would be even more problematic in Kenya than in any of the other cases in this study.

e) Conclusion

Clearly, in each of the colonies now examined, the dilemmas which had to be faced before (and after) independence are obvious. All of the colonies, especially those in Africa, were

\textsuperscript{219}Burke, "Political Evolution in Kenya," p. 204. See also Gordon, p. 47.

\textsuperscript{220}The British Government were well aware that such problems were only going to get worse, now the Protectorate was a Colony, which encouraged the white settlers to believe that they could soon take control themselves, as others had in Canada and the other dominions. "In 1923, ... the government issued ... the ... Devonshire Declaration, stating that 'primarily, Kenya is an African country ... and that the interests of the African natives must be paramount ... [however,] ... [t]he report also added ... that ... the interests of the other communities, European, Indian or Arab, must severally be safeguarded'." While this at least proclaimed a certain equality for all Kenya's inhabitants, it hardly served to clarify the situation, Gordon, p. 47. The Indian community had already begun to organize itself (they outnumbered the white community), Burke, "Political Evolution in Kenya," pp. 204-5. See also Ingham, pp. 271-276.
artificial constructs. They had been created by the imperial power, territorially demarcated in accordance with imperial interests over a period of time, in a process of cumulative territorial acquisition. Within these borders, each colony was divided geographically into distinct regions, ranging from the relatively clear divisions of the Gold Coast and Nigeria to the more complex topography of Kenya, and India, where the sheer size of the subcontinent and the patchwork quilt of princely states and British provinces exacerbated this factor. There was, therefore, no inherent physical unity within each colony. Nor was there any inherent coherence to the population: ethnic, religious, linguistic, cultural, and societal differences between the indigenous peoples in each colony were substantive. In addition, because of the way in which these territories had evolved into colonies, the indigenous peoples of the coastal regions had often been exposed to Western influences for a longer period than those of the interior regions, thus giving them a "head start" in adapting to Western language and administration. As the colonies matured, this would give them a distinct advantage in education, accessibility to positions of influence and power, and opportunities for economic prosperity. All of these factors would exacerbate the already existing intra-indigenous divisions and conflicts. The British had imposed a sense of unity to the colonies it created by the very creation of them. That this unity was superficial at best would be demonstrated as the indigenous peoples began to organize their rejection of their colonial status.

In the following four chapters, the process of organization by the indigenous peoples will be examined in each colony in turn: India, the Gold Coast (Ghana), Nigeria, and Kenya. The focus will be on the evolution of political organizations within each of the colonies, organizations which manifested a sustained and multi-faceted opposition to the continuation of imperial
control. It would be the existence and activities of these organizations that would apparently pave the road to independence for these colonies and, in many ways, create the political landscape of the new nation-states.

What will become clear in these examinations of each colony is that all experienced a similar pattern to this evolutionary process towards independence, in part because of the basic commonality of the way in which these colonies (and many others within the British Empire) were administered. Even at what might be termed the ‘height’ of its imperial strength, just before the Second World War, when the Empire was at its greatest size, the number of British civil servants was very small in comparison to the great expanse of territory and substantial population under their control. In all of the African territories, except Southern Rhodesia, less than 1,200 men were responsible for the administration of “more than a dozen colonies covering nearly 2 million square miles, with an estimated population of 43 million.” In India, with a population of 353 million, there were at most 1,250 civil servants. The simple fact was that British civil servants were too expensive for the colonial budgets: there were insufficient sources of revenue to support a substantive administrative network of British officials.

Accordingly, the British implemented a system that they had originated in India, that of retaining as much as possible (or implementing where necessary) the structure of traditional

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222 The reluctance of the British Government to expend any of its budget on colonial expenses is infamous; colonies were expected to be self-supporting. Efforts by colonial administrations to raise revenues through taxation, direct and indirect, often resulted in violent opposition, especially in Africa. It would not be until the 1930s, for example, that direct taxation could be implemented in the Gold Coast, Michael Crowder, *West Africa under Colonial Rule* (London: Hutchinson, 1968), p. 207.
governance. This method of ‘indirect rule’\textsuperscript{223} was cost-effective, both in financial and in manpower requirements, and enabled the British to control the colonies in furtherance of their own interests without substantially impacting the day-to-day life of the indigenous peoples (and, thus, further fostering resentment or resistance). Even in India, where ‘British India’ was ostensibly ruled directly, the “huge, multi-layered bureaucracy ... incorporated a vast array of village headmen, record-keepers, and other Indian officials” who handled local affairs for the British, and the princely states, while “nominally autonomous,” had British officials attached to their courts to ensure that British paramountcy was maintained.\textsuperscript{224} In Africa, the general practice was to use Africans in traditional positions of authority to act as intermediaries between the colonial power and the African population, in a form of “client-patron relationship,” similar to the princely states situation, whereby the “African subordinates were allowed to rule, though with some rough guidelines about the kind of rule they were to provide.”\textsuperscript{225}

However, this system also served to emphasize the role of the ‘traditional’ authorities, in particular the African ‘chiefs’, and, in many cases, to extend their authority in non-traditional ways.\textsuperscript{226} While these ‘traditional’ authorities were not hesitant in protesting against various

\textsuperscript{223}I am using the term ‘indirect rule’ here in its broadest sense, as distinguished from the meaning of ‘Indirect Rule’ which specifically defines the system formulated by Lord Lugard in Northern Nigeria. See Philip Curtin, “The Impact of Europe,” in \textit{African History: From Earliest Times to Independence}, pp. 425-433.

\textsuperscript{224}\textit{Cell}, pp. 236-237.

\textsuperscript{225}Curtin, “The Impact of Europe,” p. 426.

\textsuperscript{226}This was especially true with the practice of ‘Indirect Rule,’ which necessitated the British creation of “‘warrant chiefs’” in those areas “where no chiefs or other traditional authorities were visible,” Curtin, “The Impact of Europe,” p. 431. This was a profound problem in Kenya, where “most of the Kenyan African peoples did not have chiefs and were ruled through councils of elders,” and many “artificial chieftainships” had to be created. Robert L. Tignor, \textit{The Colonial Transformation of Kenya: The Kamba, Kikuyu, and Maasai from 1900 to 1939} (Princeton University Press, 1976) p. 42. While both ‘indirect rule’ and ‘Indirect Rule’ had the effect of emphasizing, and often increasing the power of, traditional ‘chiefs’, the bewildering variety of traditional
administrative decisions affecting their power or territorial claims; however, under this system
of indirect rule these indigenous collaborators formed a symbiotic relationship of mutual support
with the imperial power. Therefore, these collaborators maintained a conservative approach
towards political development within the colonies, in order to retain their positions of authority.

Meanwhile, those among the indigenous populations who had acquired some degree of
Western education, and especially those who had thus qualified themselves—they believed—for
positions of responsibility in the administration, began to challenge the legitimacy of not only the
British colonial administration, but also the authority of the ‘traditional’ élite who were
collaborating with the British. Although the educated élites would occasionally form alliances
with the traditional élite in opposition to the British in the colonies under examination, the
conflict between the two groups would prove to be divisive for the simple fact that this was a
struggle to determine who would wield political power in the embryonic nation-states of these
colonies, and, in the fullness of time, in the independent nation-states the colonies would give
birth to. For, even though many of the Western-educated élites had familial or class connections

 administrative systems—and of the British adaptations of them—precludes a brief exposition of the impact of this
practice. See John Smith, “The Relationship of the British Political Officer to his Chief in Northern Nigeria,”
254; Philip A. Igbeafe, “The Changing status [sic] of the Obas of Benin under Colonial Rule and Since
Phyllis Ferguson and Ivor Wilks, “Chiefs Constitutions and the British in Northern Ghana,” pp. 326-369; David
Status under Colonial Rule and Independence, Michael Crowder and Obaro Ikime, eds. (New York: Africana

This will be seen in the development of the Indian National Congress in the following chapter, and
in the chapters on the Gold Coast (Ghana), Nigeria, and Kenya. See also J.W. Tyler, “Education and National
Identity,” in Tradition and Transition in East Africa: Studies of the Tribal Element in the Modern Era, P.H.
Rule, pp. 372-389.
to the ‘traditional’ élites, as their numbers grew—especially to include those less well-connected—the drive to promote their own interests, regardless of the impact this might have on the ‘traditional’ élites, became increasingly paramount. The necessity to distinguish their interests from the ‘traditional’ élites meant that the Western-educated élites tended to identify themselves as ‘modern’ (as opposed to the ‘traditional’). Accordingly, they took a ‘modern’ (which, in this context, meant ‘Western’) approach to political development, arguing that the colonies should follow the liberal ideals that had established the ‘modern’ administrative and governance systems of Britain itself—and, of course, that they should play a prominent part in these systems, as befitting their educational status.

Thus, this factor of conflict between indigenous élites must be included in the examinations of the complex process of organizational development which will be examined in the following chapters. While this process culminated in each case with the achievement of independence from imperial control, the evolution from colony to ‘freedom’ would be difficult and complicated. Furthermore, one of the results of this process would be to politicize and, in many ways, institutionalize the internal divisions within each colony.
3. INDIA: THE GORDIAN KNOT

The territories of the Indian empire that the East India Company had created, and the British Government had taken control of, constituted the British Raj. Scattered throughout the subcontinent were the hundreds of princely states, which were ostensibly autonomous and self-governing. Geographically, therefore, the Indian subcontinent remained divided into a number of political units. The focus in this chapter is on the attempts by indigenous leaders to construct within the territories of the British Raj an effective challenge to the continuation of British rule. In order to do this, they had to persuade the diverse and divided segments of the indigenous population to overcome their differences and to demonstrate their unity in the cause for Indian self-government. It would prove to be a difficult and complicated task.

a) The establishment of nationalist parties

The establishment of Indian organizations had begun during the period of the EIC Raj, decades before the British Government officially took over responsibility for the Company’s territories on the subcontinent. These early organizations had been concerned with a variety of reactionary or modernizing issues, initially in response to the perceived religious challenge of the Christianity of the new rulers and later extending to respond to perceived challenges from indigenous religious challenges, and this pattern would continue through the nineteenth century. For example, Raja Ram Mohun Roy had founded the Brahmo Sabha in 1828 in an attempt "to
revitalize Hindu philosophic religious dogma in the light of Christian criticism,"\(^1\) while traditionalists had created the Dharma Sabha in 1830 in order “to defend orthodox beliefs and practices against western influence and Indian reform.”\(^2\) In 1875, Dayananda Saraswati had founded the Arya Samaj, which “blended reform with revivalism.”\(^3\) As this type of Hindu-based organization proliferated, Muslims felt the need to reinforce their sense of religious identity, with the establishment of organizations for the purpose of defending Islam against both the Christian missionary movement and the attempts by some of the Hindu groups to ‘reconvert’ Muslims to Hinduism. Thus, the Anjuman-i-Himayet-i-Islam was founded in 1885 and the Muslim Defence Association in 1894 to defend and promote orthodox Islam.\(^4\)

Moreover, organization was not confined to religious communities. Special interest groups formed their own associations, for example, the taluqdars (landowners) of Bengal, who founded the British Indian Association in 1861 “to defend and protect the special privileges of its wealthy members.”\(^5\) However, while it could be argued that these groups were political in nature, in that they attempted to influence specific policies of the government, they were not political in the sense that their purpose was to represent the political interests of Indians vis-à-vis the British. It was not until the formation of the Indian National Congress (INC) in 1885 that

\(^1\) Wolpert, p. 211.
\(^2\) Brown, p. 163.
\(^3\) Ibid., p. 162.
\(^4\) Ibid., pp. 164-165.
\(^5\) Wolpert, p. 242.
an organization existed which claimed to represent the political interests of all India.\textsuperscript{6}

The INC was established largely through the efforts of Allan Octavian Hume, a retired British civil servant, who had written to graduates of Calcutta University in 1883, urging them to form an organization which could promote the political development of India.\textsuperscript{7} For Hume, and those who responded to his call, the goal was to substantially enlarge the participation of Indians in the government and administration of British India, with the eventual, but distant at this point, aim of self-government on the model of dominions such as Canada.\textsuperscript{8}

In this early phase of the INC, the term "organization" is rather an overstatement, as Hume was the only person who was regularly active in INC affairs. He served as general-secretary from 1885 to 1906.\textsuperscript{9} The other members limited themselves to attendance at the

\textsuperscript{6}Although less than one hundred "representatives" attended the first congress, it was claimed at the time that "... it is difficult to conceive any gathering ... more thoroughly representative of the entire nation ...." Report of the First Indian National Congress (p. 5), as quoted in S.R. Mehrotra, The Emergence of the Indian National Congress (Delhi: Vikas Publications, 1971) p. 412.

\textsuperscript{7}Hume began his campaign soon after his retirement from the Indian Civil Service. Part of his letter read: "Constituting as you do a large body of the most highly educated Indians you should in the natural order of things, constitute also the most important source of all mental, moral, social and political progress in India." As quoted in Pansy Chaya Ghosh, The Development of the Indian National Congress, 1892-1909 (Calcutta: Firma KLM Private, 1985) p. xx. Ghosh also mentioned, however, that there is evidence "that the idea of forming a political union was conceived at a private meeting" of members of the Theosophical Convention in 1884. As, even in this account, Hume was apparently the prime mover, there seems to be little reason to question his standing as instigator of the organization. What is of greater importance to the future development of the INC was Hume's appeal to the western-educated elite, whom he saw as the "natural" leaders of such a movement. He did not make his appeal to the traditional ruling class of princes and wealthy landowners.

\textsuperscript{8}While the early Congress leaders argued that British rule was "illegitimate" because it was "foreign", they did not advocate immediate self-rule, preferring a gradualist approach. At the same time as they criticized British policies and government, they also made "profuse professions of loyalty to the Raj," a reflection of their appreciation, perhaps, of the advantages which they had reaped from the opportunities for education and economic advancement under the British system. While "[i]ndependence was their ultimate goal, ... realization of their goal was so distant that they rarely mentioned it." John R. McLane, "The Early Congress, Hindu Populism, and the Wider Society," in Congress and Indian Nationalism: The Pre-Independence Phase, Richard Sisson and Stanley Wolpert, eds. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988) pp. 48-49.

\textsuperscript{9}John R. McLane, Indian Nationalism and the Early Congress (Princeton University Press, 1977) p. 96.
annual meetings, or congresses, where they would debate issues and policies, and meet people from throughout India. This was seen as the primary purpose of the early congresses: the development of personal relationships between Indians who shared political interests, in order to provide the foundation for a truly nation-wide organization.\(^{10}\) Many of these participants were already involved in local or regional associations of various kinds,\(^{11}\) but recognized the potential advantages of affiliating themselves with others on a broader platform.\(^{12}\) However, this affiliation was, at first, not particularly compelling. Although transportation had improved substantially during the nineteenth century, travelling over long distances was still arduous, and this was reflected in the attendance at the early congresses. The site of the annual meetings changed every year, in an attempt to accommodate the logistic difficulties of India, which tended to result in the majority of participants in any particular year being from that region.\(^{13}\) In any case, the

\(^{10}\)This purpose was explicitly stated by the president of the first Congress, W.C. Bonnerjee, when he defined the "objects of the Congress": "(a) The promotion of personal intimacy and friendship amongst all the more earnest workers in our country's cause .... " The reason why this should be considered so important can be discerned in the second clause: "(b) The eradication by friendly intercourse of all possible race, creed, or provincial prejudices amongst all lovers of our country, and the fuller development and consolidation of [the] sentiments of national unity ....." As quoted in Mehrotra, p. 413. See also McLane, *Indian Nationalism*, pp. 50-51: "Most delegates regarded the Congress in the pre-1905 period as an annual meeting and a state of mind."

\(^{11}\)In fact, their activities in the various other organizations they were associated with often came into conflict; see McLane, *Indian Nationalism*, for a brief examination of the "divisiveness and diffuseness of Indian politics at the local level." (pp. 80-85) It is clear that any attempt to obtain a consensus on specifics would have been extremely difficult, given the conflicting loyalties represented within the INC (and within individuals). It is not surprising that the debates at these early Congresses tended to be limited to vague proposals or demands for increased employment opportunities within the administration, or that the purpose of the meetings was seen primarily as an opportunity for building "communication and friendship between provinces and religious groups." (McLane, *Indian Nationalism*, pp. 93-96)

\(^{12}\)The importance of establishing one "representative political organisation [sic]" was so obvious that the members of the All-India National Conference (which had met in 1883 and 1885 and represented a joint exercise of the British Indian Association, the Indian Association, and the Central Mohammedan Association) decided to merge with the INC at the 1886 Congress. (Ghosh, pp. xvii-xxiii).

\(^{13}\)See Chart C from Ghosh, pp. 25-26.
numbers involved were very small; in relation to the population of India, they were negligible.\textsuperscript{14}

While their numbers were few, however, they did represent the most elite segments of Indian society in British India. Most were from the highest caste--Brahmin--and many were wealthy (especially in relation to the vast majority of the population).\textsuperscript{15} In order to facilitate communications between them, English was used as the language of the INC, which meant that only those who had been in a position to acquire some level of western education could participate: a requirement that effectively excluded over 99\% of the population from participation.\textsuperscript{16} There was a preponderance of lawyers, especially among the leadership,\textsuperscript{17} a factor which was reflected in the legalistic approach that the INC took towards its activities in the initial phase of the organization.

The INC's approach also reflected the liberal attitudes of many of its members, acquired through their western education. They had studied the political history of Britain, and believed that its experience of an evolutionary process transforming autocratic government into representative government could be shared by India. Accordingly, they presented arguments to the British Government and the Government of India which substantiated their demands for

\textsuperscript{14}Total number of delegates to INC in first 20 years (1885 to 1904, inclusive) was 16,315. (Ghosh, pp. 25-26) The total population in 1901 was 285 million. (Sumit Sarkar, \textit{Modern India, 1885-1947}, Second Edition (London: Macmillan, 1989) p. 36)

\textsuperscript{15}McLane, \textit{Indian Nationalism}, p. 63; see also Ghosh, p. 11.

\textsuperscript{16}... less than 1 per cent ... in 1911 were literate in English, and only 6 per cent were able to read and write in their own language." (McLane, \textit{Indian Nationalism}, p. 4)

\textsuperscript{17}Ibid., pp. 52-63. McLane points out that of the 16 Indian presidents of the INC between 1885 and 1909, 11 were lawyers, as were over 1/3 of the delegates between 1885 and 1914. See Chart 4, Ghosh, p. 24: 1892-1909, 13,839 total delegates, 5,442 legal profession, 2,629 landed gentry, 2,091 commercial classes, 441 journalists and newspapermen, 408 medical profession, 438 teaching profession.
increased Indian responsibility and representation. A particular focus at this time was on improving employment opportunities for Indians in government services, both as a means of promoting the transformation process and of increasing career opportunities for the western-educated élite.

There was little focus, however, on issues which were of concern to the vast majority of the population. While many members saw themselves as liberal reformers, the INC avoided any discussion of social issues and opposed any economic reforms which could impinge upon the

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18See Edward C. Moulton, "The Early Congress and the Idea of Representative and Self-Governing Institutions on the Colonial Canadian Model," in The Congress and Indian Nationalism: Historical Perspectives, John L. Hill, ed. (London: Curzon Press; Wellesley Hills, MA: Riverdale Co., 1991), pp. 222-251. Moulton notes that the first petition urging the establishment of responsible government on the Canadian model was presented as early as 1852, and that various members of the Indian intelligentsia had made individual appeals through speeches and newspaper editorials in the decades which followed, (pp. 224-225) while organizations such as the Poona Sarvajanik Sabha and the Indian Association "formally called for representative institutions" and "gave extensive attention to the issue of representative government" prior to the establishment of Congress, for which it became "a top priority." (pp. 225-226) See also McLane, Indian Nationalism, p. 100, where he points out that the early Congress "leaders wanted to reform the system they had benefited from, not to overturn it."

19This included service as commissioned officers in the Indian Army, as well as in the civil service. Although there was "some embarrassment over the obvious self-serving nature of" these demands, because the only Indians likely to benefit were the western-educated class which predominated in the INC, they did have a valid complaint. Even though legislation had been in place since 1833 to assure qualified Indians of the opportunity for government service, few had been admitted during the 50 years which followed. Indianization of the administration was a logical, even necessary, step in the evolution of the Indianization of government, as the INC saw it.

20In Indian Nationalism, McLane explained that "[a] sizeable minority of the 86 most active members were 'reformed' in the sense of having abandoned some of the major constraints or prescriptions concerning" personal lifestyle and behaviour as a result of their exposure to western education, especially for those who had travelled to Britain. The resistance they encountered within their own family circles to their attempts to change their social practices, however, was characteristic of the resistance of Indian society as a whole to such "reforms," pp. 73-80. As Michelguglielmo Torri pointed out in "Westernized Middle Class": Intellectuals and Society in Late Colonial India," (in The Congress and Indian Nationalism: Historical Perspectives), "Indian society was completely dominated by deeply conservative classes." As a result, any attempt to include such issues in the program of the INC was simply not practical: too few were even interested in such matters, while the vast majority were adamantly opposed. To discuss them would be to expose deep divisions and animosities within the INC, which would be extremely counter-productive for the overriding aim of presenting a united front against the British, pp. 39-40.
interests of the landowning and commercial classes with which they were affiliated. While they were willing to employ rhetoric which blamed the British for the acute poverty of India's peasants, they themselves remained isolated from the peasants, and frequently acted against their best interests. Nor did they apparently want to involve the peasants in their organization, fearing the "volatility of the lower orders." When Hume, in an attempt to broaden the representative aspect of the INC, tried to increase the involvement of the public, the leaders of the INC disassociated themselves from his efforts, preferring to court support from the princes, landowners, and wealthy commercial interests.

This neglect of the peasants seriously undermined the INC's claim to represent all Indians, and allowed the British authorities to dismiss them as simply another special interest group. This judgement was reinforced, for the British, by the INC focus on issues which would only be of benefit to their members or supporters. As a result, the Government of India felt

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21 Of the 3 groups that dominated the INC, and provided the bulk of its financial support, 2 were the landowner/zamindar class and the commercial class, Ghosh, p. 11. These classes would be particularly concerned about government policies which could impact their prosperity, such as the free trade versus protectionist debates.

22 See McLane, Indian Nationalism, pp. 211-242 for an examination of Congress involvement in the Permanent Settlement issue, where it clearly supported a pro-landlord position -- so clearly that the government "chided ... nationalist critics for paying so much attention to zamindari interests and so little to tenant rights," p. 229.

23 See Ibid., pp. 67-73 for a description of "Elite Attitudes" toward the masses. As McLane pointed out, the early Congress leaders "had so little contact with [the masses] that they really did not know what to expect."

24 McLane suggested that the early Congress leaders "accepted the hierarchical character of Indian society," which might have explained their refusal to incorporate the peasantry into Congress: only the élite should be involved in government and administration, not the peasants, "The Early Congress," p. 50. When Hume acted on his own initiative (and his belief that it was necessary to obtain popular support in order to convince the British to accede to Congress' demands for more participation in government) and made direct appeals to the peasants, the government became alarmed, and "official bodies of the Congress specifically disassociated themselves from his view." Evidently, they feared the "spector [sic] of peasant insurrection" as much as the British did. Hume left India soon after this rebuff. McLane, Indian Nationalism, pp. 114-118.
justified in its policy toward the INC, which was predominately to ignore it. Frustrated, the INC established a branch in London in 1890, hoping to influence Members of Parliament to bring pressure on the Secretary of State for India to persuade the Government of India to be more responsive. Although there was some sympathy for their cause in Britain, their efforts were largely ineffective due to the lack of funding provided by the parent organization in India.

The lack of funding was also a problem in India. While the members of the INC, and its supporters, were strong on rhetoric, they were weak in every essential: funding, organization, commitment, and activity. After Hume had returned to England in 1892, there was no one who was willing or able to fill his place. The reality was that, although the INC had become acknowledged by the political and economic élites as their legitimate national organization, these élites were primarily concerned with local issues and politics, and that is where they focussed

25See W.H. Morris-Jones, "If It Be Real, What Does It Mean?": Some British Perceptions of the Indian National Congress," in *The Congress and Indian Nationalism: Historical Perspectives*, pp. 91-96, for an interesting analysis of the contrasting views of officialdom, as represented by Sir Auckland Colvin (a Lieutenant-Governor of the North-West Provinces) and Hume, as a British supporter of the INC. See also McLane, *Indian Nationalism*, pp. 21-32.

26Ghosh, pp. 12-15. Indeed, one of the most influential members of the INC, Dadabhai Naoroji, was elected to the House of Commons in 1892, to better represent the Indian issue in Parliament. See also McLane, *Indian Nationalism*, pp. 132-134. While Congress had initially believed that any real hope for reform in India could only be found in England, this hope faded when the Liberal government was defeated in the elections of 1895.

27McLane, *Indian Nationalism*, pp. 134-140. Ghosh points out that several British supporters, including Hume, "often had to spend money from their own pockets in order to carry out the Congress propaganda in England." (p. 11)

28Ibid., pp. 140-146.

29Ibid., 131-132, 174. This problem was demonstrated by the fact that Hume remained general-secretary of the INC until 1906, p. 96. By 1903, Hume had become so discouraged by the lack of activity by Congress in India, that he joined other British-based members in writing "A Call to Arms" in the *Hindustan Review*, urging nationalists to greater dedication to the cause, pp. 173-174.
their attention. Unfortunately, this attachment to other associations and special interest groups had an even greater negative effect on the INC than the evident neglect of funding and activity. It exacerbated the inherent divisions between Indians, pitting the interests of any one region against those of the others, creating an atmosphere of suspicion and mutual antagonism between the groups represented in the INC. As a result, there was no one who could be accepted as a truly ‘national’ leader, and few issues on which a consensus could be formed.

From its inception, then, the INC was the victim of a dilemma which would haunt it for the rest of its existence. In order to be a truly ‘national’ organization, the INC had to be inclusive: it could not define itself in any way which could be perceived as excluding a representative group within India. While the leadership and membership of the INC was, especially in the initial stage, extremely exclusive—and self-selected—it still had to maintain a policy of representing all Indians, at least rhetorically. But how can that be done in a society which was inherently divided into mutually exclusive groups? If the INC promoted the interests of landowners, it would be at the expense of the peasants. If it proposed the social reforms which many of its members supported, it would alienate traditionalists—both Hindu and Muslim. And how could it maintain its stance as a non-communal organization, especially during outbreaks of communal antagonism, when the vast majority of its membership was Hindu?

This problem was demonstrated early in the INC's history, with the proliferation of

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30 This was a reflection of the conflicting loyalties mentioned earlier, where members of Congress were also members of other organizations: local and/or regional, religious, political, professional, and social. In addition, as the British allowed more Indians into the administration, and reforms established municipal governments, competition between Indians for these positions increased the conflict. There was also a growing division within Congress between "moderates" and "extremists." McLane, *Indian Nationalism*, pp. 80-85.

31 See Torri, pp. 36-45, for a discussion on the difficulties faced by those attempting to bring together the disparate groups under the umbrella of the INC.
cow-protection societies in the 1880s and 1890s, which led to the communal riots of 1893. Although the INC tried desperately not to get involved, communal antagonism reached such a height that neutrality was not perceived as possible. Given the predominance of Hindus in the INC, therefore, Muslims increasingly identified the INC as exclusively Hindu. As a result, Muslim participation in the INC declined, weakening its claim of inclusive representation.

The problems of regionalism and communalism were further illustrated during the battle against the partition of Bengal in 1905. Bengal's capital, Calcutta, had long been a major centre of political organization and activity, and of the INC. Its leaders saw the partition as an attempt to weaken their power base, and opposed it vehemently, with boycotts and demonstrations. However, support from other regions was lukewarm at best because the

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32 McLane, in Indian Nationalism, devotes two chapters to the issue of "Cow Protection and National Politics," (pp. 271-308) and "Cow Protection Riots and their Aftermath," (pp. 309-331) an indication of the complexity and importance of this issue. As both Muslims and British ate beef, the Hindu opposition demonstrated during this period had intense communal ramifications; for all concerned, therefore, any INC involvement only served to emphasize the Hindu affiliations of the INC, especially for Muslims.

33 Ibid., p. 325. Muslim delegates to the annual congresses declined from 13.5% in 1885-1892 to 7.1% in 1893-1905, a clear sign of estrangement with the INC.

34 Bengal was the first centre of the British Raj, and the earliest region to be exposed to western education. Calcutta was the political centre of British India, the home of the viceroy and the central administration (until the capital was moved to New Delhi in 1910). Sarkar, pp. 108-109; see also Ghosh, pp. xv-xvii. By 1905, Calcutta had also become one of the centres of the Extremist wing of the INC. Burke and Quraishi, p. 121.

35 Which, in part, it was. The Indian Home Secretary, H.H. Risley, actually admitted that "... one of our main objects is to split up and thereby weaken a solid body of opponents to our rule." As quoted in Sarkar, p. 107. However, Sarkar argued that this political objective did not surface until 1903, while discussions about the heavy administrative burdens of the large and densely-populated province had been going on since the 1860s, p. 106. Specific territories had been detached in 1835 and 1874, but the Bengal of 1905 still had a population of 78,000,000 and an area of 190,000 sq. miles before partition. Burke and Quraishi, p. 109.

36 Ghosh, pp. 112-115. Objections to the proposal had been raised at the congresses of 1903, 1904, and 1905, p. 118.
effects of partition did not directly impact them politically or economically.\footnote{Rothermund argued that, even within Bengal, "participation in this agitation was more or less restricted to the dominant minority" of the western-educated élite. Dietmar Rothermund, *The Phases of Indian Nationalism and Other Essays* (Bombay: Nachiketa Publications, 1970) p. 149. As Sarkar pointed out, "while ... the Bengal Partition ... aroused widespread resentment throughout educated India, the extent and nature of specific responses were naturally determined by regional or local factors," p. 125. These responses were usually reactions to localized events or situations and had little to do with the specific case of Bengal, except for the fact that they were demonstrations of opposition to the British, pp. 125-135.}

In addition, many Muslims greeted the news with enthusiasm—partition was largely perceived by them as beneficial—so they saw the opposition towards partition as another confirmation that the INC was serving only Hindu interests.\footnote{Ghosh, pp. 121-122, although "some Muslim leaders ... opposed the Partition" and Congress leaders tried to emphasize Muslim participation in the protest demonstrations, and "made a particular appeal to the Muslims" to present a united front to the British, p. 122. McLane argued that it was during this period of agitation that Muslim opposition to the INC began to organize, *Indian Nationalism*, pp. 362-364.}

It was at this time that the Muslim élite community decided to form an organization to represent their own interests. The Muslim League (ML) was created in 1906 by a small group of Muslim leaders in order to provide them with a voice with which to counter the INC claims that it spoke for all Indians.\footnote{Shan Muhammad, *The Growth of Muslim Politics in India, 1900-1919* (New Delhi: Ashish Publishing House, 1991) pp. 49-88. The development of the League can be seen as a response to several factors: the perception among Muslims of an anti-Muslim bias during the anti-partition agitation of 1905 and other demonstrations of Hindu nationalism, unease about proposed changes to legislative councils, and concern that too many of the young educated Muslims were being drawn into the INC and away from Muslim organizations.} The Muslim League was the same type of élite organization as the early INC, consisting mainly of Muslim aristocrats, wealthy landowners, businessmen, lawyers, journalists, and teachers.\footnote{Ibid., pp. 74-75. It was indicative of the élite composition of the ML that its establishment was first suggested by the Aga Khan and the manifesto was written by the Nawab of Dacca and a select group of wealthy lawyers. Its membership was drawn from the Aligarh Movement group formed in the late nineteenth century, which was "confined to the upper classes," p. 7. Indeed, Muhammad argued that the establishment of an organization to assert the rights of Muslims "was the inevitable outcome of the political consciousness among the Muslims created by the Aligarh Movement," p. 80.} There were many other similarities between the two
organizations in their initial stages. Both professed loyalty to the Raj, both lobbied for greater inclusion of Indians in the decision-making processes (administrative and political), both claimed to represent their respective constituencies, although without any proof of such support being sought by either; both established branches in Britain to attempt to influence opinion there; and both were committed to a gradualist, constitutionalist approach to change.

The very existence of the ML, however, meant that any change had now to incorporate the concept that there were two communities of interest in India: Muslim and Hindu. As the British began to consider ways to appease the demands for greater participation by Indians, they had to devise the means by which both groups could be accommodated. During the preliminary stage of the development of the Indian Councils Act of 1909, John Morley (Secretary of State for India) and the Earl of Minto (Viceroy of India) were both approached by Indian leaders eager to have their suggestions incorporated. While Morley held discussions with the President of

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41The text of the Resolution which announced the formation of the Muslim League is illuminating: "That this meeting, composed of Mussalmans [sic] from all parts of India, assembled at Dacca, decides that a Political Association, styled the All-India Muslim League, be formed for the furtherance of the following objects: (a) To promote among the Mussalmans of India feelings of loyalty to the British Government and to remove any misconceptions that may arise as to the intentions of Government with regard to any of its measures; (b) to protect and advance the political rights and interests of Mussalmans of India and respectfully to represent their needs and aspirations to Government; (c) to prevent the rise among Mussalmans of India any feelings of hostility towards other communities without prejudice to the other objects of the League ...." C.H. Philips, ed., The Evolution of India and Pakistan, 1858 to 1947: Select Documents (London: Oxford University Press, 1962) p. 194.

42Muhammad, p. 81.

43Ibid., p. 79. Muhammad gleaned from "a number of speeches on record of the leaders of Muslim community who participated in the formation of the Muslim League revealing [that] ... [w]hat they desired was the safety of their educationally and economically backward community."

44Ibid., pp. 81-82.

45Indeed, they even had the same problems between Moderates and Extremists (termed "Radicals" in the ML). Ibid., pp. 128-129.
Congress, Gopal Krishna Gokhale, on the liberal reforms both believed necessary, Minto received a delegation of Muslim leaders, headed by the Aga Khan, which persuaded him that the political rights of the Muslim minority had to be safeguarded. As a result, the Act of 1909, while introducing the principle of elected representation to Indian government, also established the principle of minority protection through reserved seats and separate electorates. Even as the INC witnessed the first substantive fruits of their labours, therefore, the tree was poisoned. Its claim to represent all of India, the only real source of its authority in negotiations with the British, had been categorically denied: the Muslim League's insistence that the INC could not speak for Muslims had been accepted by the British and legitimized in the legislation of 1909.

As a result, the Moderates within the INC, who had succeeded in 1907 in purging the organization of the Extremist bloc which had derided the Moderates' insistence on constitutional change and loyalty to the Raj, (demanding instead a more obdurate, and, in some cases, violent approach) witnessed what many saw as a hollow victory for their efforts. Although it could

46Sarkar, p. 139. See also Philips, pp. 74-79 for correspondence between Morley and Minto on their meetings with Gokhale and other representatives of the INC and ML. Minto also held meetings with Gokhale on various issues, and believed that Gokhale's "demands seemed reasonable," Ghosh, p. 208.

47Beginning with the meeting in 1906 which preceded the establishment of the ML. See Philips, pp. 190-193 for text of the Address. A Memorandum regarding the proposed reforms followed in 1908. Philips, pp. 194-195. The Aga Khan was prominently involved in these meetings and correspondence, Burke and Quraishi, p. 130. It is interesting to note that the Aga Khan "explained at a later date that his deputation [in 1906] ... had asked that the Muslims of India should not be regarded as a mere minority, but as a nation within a nation whose rights and obligations should be guaranteed by statute," Burke and Quraishi, p. 126.

48Burke and Quraishi, pp. 126-127; Sarkar, pp. 139-140.


50Ghosh, pp. 225-233. Under the terms of the Act, only 25 seats on the Legislative Council of the Governor-General were to be elected by "certain special electorates--land-owners in 7 provinces, Muslims in 5
be argued that some progress had been made with the 1909 Act, in that the British had acknowledged the right of Indians to participate in the governing of India, it failed to give the INC the kind of substantive reforms that the Moderates had sought. While they had not expected full political independence, this being a goal so distant that few even spoke of it yet, they had believed that the reforms proposed by Morley and Minto would bring that goal considerably closer than this.\footnote{51}

The perceived failure of the INC over the 1909 Act weakened their position vis-a-vis the Extremists, who began to regain influence in the nationalist movement.\footnote{52} While leaders such as Balwantrao Gangadhar Tilak focussed their energies on new organizations (in Tilak's case, the Home Rule League),\footnote{53} others became convinced that violence was the only recourse.\footnote{54} For the

\footnote{51}When the reforms had been announced in 1908, "the first reaction of the Congress was one of overwhelming satisfaction." The proposals had been seen as "the crowning triumphs of constitutional agitation,"\footnote{Ghosh, p. 218. Having greeted the proposals with such elation and enthusiasm, their disappointment in the cautious and complicated regulations which appeared in 1909 was perhaps as immoderate as their earlier satisfaction had been.}

\footnote{52}Ironically, Morley and Minto had hoped that the 1909 Act would bolster the Moderates against the Extremists, Ghosh, pp. 237-238.


\footnote{54}The shift to militant nationalism began with Aurobindo Ghose, who established a "network of ... terrorist cells ... in Maharashtra and in Bengal" in 1902. Ghose based his ideology on selected appeals to the ancient Hindu gods such as Kali, Crane, pp. 66-67. Bengal became a centre for this movement during the anti-partition agitation of 1906; though the initial outbreaks were suppressed, the terrorists returned, this time to stay, in 1912. Interestingly, the terrorists were mainly drawn from the "respectable" and upper castes, western-educated youths whose ambitions for good careers had been thwarted by the high unemployment in this
remainder of their time in India, the British would have to face terrorist bombs and bullets. Even though the sporadic outbreaks of terrorism never really endangered the British position in India, the threat it invoked had a profound impact. The terrorist argument that they could destroy the Raj by killing the relatively few British inhabitants of India had a certain, if simplistic, appeal. Since the Mutiny of 1857, the British had always been acutely sensitive to the danger of a sustained and substantive armed resistance by Indians. Much care had been taken to ensure the loyalty of the Indian Army and to devise legislation to control or suppress any such sources of opposition. The potential danger of a mass uprising, even a local one, was a real anxiety, not only to the British, but also to the INC and ML, whose leaders were equally apprehensive about the ramifications of a roused peasantry. Unfortunately, the legislation which the British promulgated to repress such a threat inevitably invoked the opposition of the INC and ML. As


55Sarkar, pp. 123-125.

56Even Extremists were not loath to take this attitude: one leader in 1908 "urged... the people to do away with the foreigners to obtain "Swaraj," Basu, p. 48. Tilak himself was imprisoned in 1908 "for publishing newspaper articles approving of murder," Rumbold, p. 6.

57See Philips, "C. Army Policy and Organization 1848-1947," pp. 505-534. The British also ensured that civilians (at least Indian civilians) would not have legal access to firearms, through the Arms Act of 1878, Rumbold, p. 7.

58Beginning with the Vernacular Press Act of 1878, which sought to curb the "seditious language" of the vernacular newspapers, Philips, pp. 110-112. Further measures to control the "often critical if not inflammatory tone" of the Indian newspapers were coordinated in the Press Act of 1910, Brown, p. 139.

59Which was why the moderates of neither organization favoured attempts to politicize the masses. Their gradualist, constitutionalist approach required the continued presence of the British to provide the necessary protective climate for the orderly development of Indian nationalism and political evolution. An anecdote concerning Gokhale reveals the moderate attitude. When asked by Viceroy Hardinge what he would do if "all the British officials left for England, Gokhale unhesitatingly replied that he would telegraph them, before they reached Aden, to come back," Burke and Quraishi, p. 152.
supposed leaders of India, and committed adherents to liberal ideals, the INC in particular perforce had to reject any legislation which restricted or denied the civil rights of the Indian population. When the situation arose, as was inevitable, when the British proposed legislation which was widely perceived as a profound insult to Indian liberties, the INC was driven to the necessity of the politicization of the masses which they had tried for so long to avoid, and which would irrevocably change the history of India by bringing into prominence those who would lead it to independence: Mohandas K. Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru.

b) Trailing clouds of glory: Gandhi comes home

No one in 1915, when Gandhi returned to India from his long sojourn in South Africa, could have predicted his future accurately. While Gandhi had established a considerable reputation through his work in South Africa, he was a neophyte in Indian politics and his initial reception by the INC, while respectful, was not enthusiastic. Even his mentor, Gokhale, suggested that Gandhi travel around India for a year before becoming involved in political activity, so that he could become acquainted with the country and its problems. Obediently,

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60 Burke and Quraishi, p. 152. The INC and ML "protested against the repressive use of the Press Act and the Defence of India Act." See also K.P. Karunakaran, Continuity and Change in Indian Politics: A Study of the Political Philosophy of the Indian National Movement, 1885-1921 (New Delhi: People's Publishing House Private, 1964; 1966) pp. 42-44, where he described protests beginning in 1879, against the Vernacular Press Act, up to the 1916 Congress resolution against the Press Act of 1910. It must be remembered that these were men educated in the British liberal/constitutional tradition, many of whom were lawyers. Any restrictive legislation promulgated in India was judged by them according to this tradition.

61 This refers to the agitation concerning the Rowlatt Commission of 1918-19, which will be examined in detail later.
Gandhi did as Gokhale suggested.62

Gandhi's reception throughout his travels was indicative, however, of the isolation of the INC leadership from the majority of the population, as vast and enthusiastic crowds greeted him wherever he went.63 To the western-educated élite of the INC, Gandhi's religious approach to politics was disconcerting and impractical.64 They had already rejected Tilak's attempts to infuse the INC with a Hindu identity and to utilize the power of the population through boycott campaigns,65 nor had they believed in the efficacy or applicability of the theory of passive

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62Judith M. Brown, *Gandhi: Prisoner of Hope* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989) p. 97. See also Yogesh Chadha, *Rediscovering Gandhi* (London: Century Books, 1997) pp. 204-207. Although hundreds of the élite of Bombay attended various receptions in Gandhi's honour upon his arrival, it is indicative of the unease many felt about the methods he had used in South Africa that Gandhi was not admitted to Gokhale's Servants of India Society, even though Gokhale himself "strongly vouched for him." Chadha, p. 206. Gandhi recalled that "the members felt that, as there was a great difference between my ideals and methods of work and theirs, it might not be proper for me to join the Society." M.K. Gandhi, *An Autobiography, or, The Story of My Experiments With Truth*, trans. Mahadev Desai (Ahmedabad: Navajivan Publishing House, 1927; 1988) p. 437. This seems ironic, given that the Society, founded in 1905, "was dedicated to nation-building in India, within the British Empire, in a true missionary spirit aimed at spiritualizing public life," which would appear to be in accordance with Gandhi's rationale at this time, Chadha, p. 206. See also Brown, *Gandhi: Prisoner of Hope*, p. 98. Tragically, Gokhale died shortly after Gandhi arrived home, thereby depriving him of the undoubted benefits of such a high-level mentor, Chadha, p. 207.

63Especially in southern India, the homeland of many of the indentured labourers that Gandhi had worked with in South Africa, Chadha, p. 208. The enthusiasm increased as he travelled to several areas to involve himself, by invitation, in local disputes (an indication of the peasants' view of Gandhi as a "liberator"), Brown, Gandhi, p. 111. He worked on behalf of the indigo planters in Bihar, mill workers in Ahmedabad, and cultivators in Kheda during 1917, Chadha, pp. 218-229.

64Brown, *Gandhi: Prisoner of Hope*, p. 99. They more than likely did not appreciate it either when Gandhi "castigated their educational training and their values and told them they were traitors to their motherland by being willing 'victims' of the current system," p. 107.

65Already in the 1890s, Tilak had "experimented with a variety of political activities and ideas which went far beyond those most Congress leaders were willing to contemplate," McLane, *Indian Nationalism*, pp. 157-158. Although it can be argued that Gandhi "made the most effective use of Hindu symbols" (the fasting, vows of poverty, etc.) that enabled "him to attain the stature of a Hindu 'Great Soul,'" Wolpert, "The Indian National Congress in Nationalist Perspective," in *Congress and Indian Nationalism: The Pre-Independence Phase*, p. 24. The first substantive use of passive resistance was made during the boycott campaign of the anti-partition agitation in Bengal. The moderates in Congress demonstrated their antipathy for this method by withholding INC official support for the campaign, Crane, pp. 67-68.
resistance espoused by several of Gandhi's forerunners. Rationalism, liberalism, constitutionalism: these were their bywords; moral certainty had no place in nationalist politics.

For the majority of the population, on the other hand, who had no understanding of these isms, moral certainty was a familiar and profound anchor. To them, Gandhi was a guru, a spiritual leader, whose language and terms of reference could be easily comprehended in traditional terms. The title they gave him, and by which he would become known throughout the world, was a clear indication of their relationship with him: Mahatma, the great soul. It is impossible to determine whether it was this relationship which influenced Gandhi into increasingly manifesting himself in this image, or whether his complete renunciation of all things western was part of his personal evolution and the changes in his physical appearance and behaviour a natural development. In either case, he swiftly became the embodiment of a mahatma, dressing (or, rather, undressing) and conducting himself in accordance with the traditions of Indian ascetics. While this process further alienated Gandhi from the leaders of the INC, who perceived themselves as "modern" and Gandhi as increasingly reactionary, it served

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Especially the "Doctrine of Passive Resistance" espoused by Aurobindo Ghosh in 1907 for Extremists in Bengal (which did not include non-violence), Sarkar, pp. 113-114. This method was popular with Extremist leaders, such as Tilak and Bipin Chandra Pal, who both called for comprehensive boycotts against any dealings with the British, Karunakaran, pp. 79-82.

Brown described the "crowds who flocked to venerate this frail, toothless man in loincloth and steel-rimmed spectacles with a commanding presence and magnetic voice, and... numerous individuals who were attracted, even enslaved, by his religious authority, his compassion and bubbling humour, even when they doubted his political wisdom or his priorities which were so alien to those of the modern world," Gandhi, Prisoner of Hope, p. 1.

Gandhi described his evolution in thought, action, and appearance in his autobiography, which he preferred to view as "The Story of My Experiments With Truth." As Brown attested, "the debate ... whether the Mahatma and the politician coexisted uneasily in the one man, or whether the religious devotee consciously used the weapons of this world in the pursuit of higher goals" continues, Gandhi's Rise to Power: Indian Politics 1915-1922 (Cambridge University Press, 1972) p. 354.
to elevate his reputation and status with the public, and with some of the younger members of
the INC, who were becoming impatient with the gradualist, constitutionalist approach of their
elders.69

One of the earliest, and most devoted, of Gandhi's disciples was Jawaharlal Nehru, the
son of a wealthy lawyer and leader of the INC. Nehru's family was deeply Anglicized, and he
had spent much of his youth in England, at Harrow and Cambridge. He had returned to join his
father's flourishing legal practice, and soon became involved with him in the INC as well.70 But
the meetings and machinations of the INC 71 soon paled in comparison to the activities of Gandhi
in his efforts on behalf of the peasants of Bihar, which were avidly reported in the Indian press.72
Although Gandhi had by now rejected almost everything that the Nehru family held dear,
Jawaharlal was increasingly drawn to the little man in the loincloth. By the time they met, Nehru
was primed to fall under the charismatic spell that Gandhi seemed able to weave over so many.73

69See Brown, Rise to Power, pp. 343-347. Brown described the reaction of the masses as "a mixture of
religious adulation and millenarian anticipation," p. 345. Jawaharlal Nehru noted his response to Gandhi's
program of satyagraha: "Here at last was a way out of the tangle, a method of action which was straight and open
and possibly effective. I was afire with enthusiasm ... ," Jawaharlal Nehru, An Autobiography (London: John


71On his return to India, Nehru found that "[p]olitics, which to me meant aggressive nationalist activity
against foreign rule, offered no scope for this [although he] joined the Congress and took part in its occasional
meetings." He also found that Gokhale's Servants of India Society attractive, but did not join "because its politics
were too moderate," Nehru, Autobiography, p. 30.

72Nehru noted that Gandhi's "adventures and victory in Champaran ... filled [he and the other young

73Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru had first met at the Lucknow Congress in 1916, Nehru, Autobiography,
p. 35. However, it was Gandhi's publication of his satyagraha proposal in 1919 which captivated him, and put
him into deep conflict with his father, Motilal, a moderate leader in the INC. Motilal invited Gandhi to visit so
that they could discuss Jawaharlal's involvement in Gandhi's new movement, pp. 41-43. However, Jawaharlal
saw much of Gandhi during the Punjab inquiry the INC conducted after the Amritsar massacre of 1919, and, as
a result, found that his "[f]aith in [Gandhi's] political insight grew." Motilal was also undergoing a conversion
(i) The development of Gandhi's program of satyagraha

Gandhi had first cast his spell in South Africa. He spent almost twenty years (from 1893 to 1914) there, initially working as a lawyer for an expatriate Gujarati Muslim company. While continuing his "experiments" in his personal life, his experiences with colour prejudice and his exposure "to the insulting and degrading conditions in which his compatriots were forced to live" roused him to formulate various political strategies to protest and oppose these conditions. It was during these formative years that Gandhi also demonstrated an astute and acute practicality in his approach. Even though the political organizations were predominantly voluntary associations, he insisted on strict accounting practices and efficient administration of as a result of the massacre, and found himself drawing away from the liberal wing of the party. Jawaharlal declared that "[t]he Amritsar Congress was the first Gandhi Congress ... there could be no doubt ... that the majority of the delegates, and even more so the great crowds outside, looked to Gandhi for leadership," pp. 44-45.

Brown, Gandhi: Prisoner of Hope, p. 30. See also Gandhi, Autobiography, pp. 122-125. Gandhi managed to impress himself upon South Africa "within a few days" of his arrival by writing to the press about his intention to wear a turban in court. The papers "described [him] as an 'unwelcome visitor,'" (p. 125) "Gandhi described these in detail in his Autobiography. He was intent on "purifying" his life, through strict control of his diet (including medicines), by taking a vow of celibacy, and by exercising self-restraint in all things. Indeed, his Autobiography consists primarily of his explanation of his self-development, and ceases with a brief mention of the Nagpur Congress of 1920--the moment when his "political" career as a nationalist leader in India really began. Gandhi had no intention of writing the traditional form of autobiography we have come to expect from political leaders. The autobiography was initially published in weekly excerpts in the newspaper Young India, as a way for Gandhi to disseminate the philosophical basis for his program of satyagraha--to persuade others to undertake the same journey to self-purification, in preparation for the campaigns of non-violent non-cooperation which Gandhi believed would be the only moral way to achieve independence, Autobiography, pp. v-ix.


Although he waited until his work on behalf of his client had been concluded before getting fully involved. He wrote letters to the papers, organized petitions, sent letters to various officials and influential people in South Africa, India, and Britain, and helped organize the Natal Indian Congress, Chadha, pp. 61-68.
the organizations. He was extremely appreciative of the efficacy of arousing public opinion, in South Africa, in India, and in Britain, and committed considerable resources to the publication of newspapers and pamphlets, letter campaigns to public figures and influential newspapers in Britain and India, and the organization of public rallies.

While this early training in South Africa enabled Gandhi to hone his skills as a political activist, it was his concomitant development of the underlying philosophy for this activism which would make him such a formidable opponent. Drawing on his Hindu (and, especially, Jainist) background as well as his eclectic—but selective—readings of Western texts, Gandhi decided that the only methods which he could ethically apply in his activism had to be based on the ideal of non-violence. He believed that there must always be a moral basis for any activism, and that this moral basis can only be upheld if the activists conducted themselves in accordance with the highest moral standards. He took the ancient concept of passive resistance to a new level, endowing it with a moral certainty which would transform political protest with a spiritual


80 Gandhi was deeply influenced by his mother, who early impressed him with her religious discipline, especially in regards to fasting. Gandhi, Autobiography, pp. 4-5. He was also given an "early grounding in toleration" for religions, p. 38. Jainism was "[p]articularly strong" in Gandhi's home region and was "a significant determinant of his ultimate convictions as to the nature of truth, of his personal tolerance and high estimation of all major faiths with their particular insights into the mystery of truth, and of his supreme dedication to non-violence," Brown, Gandhi: Prisoner of Hope, p. 18.

resonance. He called this "satyagraha" or "truth force/soul force."\textsuperscript{82} In practice, this meant that when a law (or government regulation or an action by an opponent) was judged to be "immoral" or unjust, a proponent of satyagraha (a satyagrahi) would deliberately--but non-violently--break that law in order to register his protest against it. The resultant, inevitable punishment (usually jail) would then arouse greater awareness of the immoral/unjust law and the punishment of what would be perceived as a "prisoner of conscience" would serve to shame the opponent. Obviously, the greater the number of people willing to be imprisoned in such a way, the greater the pressure on the government/opponent to find an equitable solution.\textsuperscript{83} But the pressure would be a moral force:

The actions of a satyagrahi were founded in an implicit trust in human nature, in the conviction that truth would always triumph, and concessions from both parties except on central principles could bring peace, thus compromise marked no defeat for either but the far greater and more desirable triumph of truth and the strength of the human spirit.\textsuperscript{84}

Gandhi had used this process effectively several times in South Africa against various discriminatory acts, especially in regard to Indian indentured workers.\textsuperscript{85} It was the publicity surrounding these efforts which had circulated in India and had provided Gandhi with the reputation which would greet him on his return.\textsuperscript{86}


\textsuperscript{83}Brown, \textit{Gandhi: Prisoner of Hope}, pp. 55-57; see also Iyer, pp. 245-248.

\textsuperscript{84}Brown, \textit{Gandhi: Prisoner of Hope}, p. 57.


\textsuperscript{86}Brown, \textit{Gandhi: Prisoner of Hope}, p. 50-54. During his "South African period," Gandhi had travelled to both India and England to argue his case in person. He had made many important allies and connections in both countries, indeed, "as [he] became known as a legitimate and knowledgeable spokesman for South African Indians, his letters and articles were hospitably received in India's English language press, both Indian and British owned," p. 52. He also met many of the leaders of the nationalist movement, including Tilak and Gokhale,
It was this same process which Gandhi had used in his early local satyagraha campaigns in India, and which had so excited Nehru with its potential. These early successes, however, had encouraged Gandhi to believe that satyagraha could be applied on a much wider basis, and the opportunity soon arose for him to attempt this. While the campaign against the Rowlatt Acts would be the first demonstration of Gandhian politics in action, it would also be a decisive moment in the history of the nationalist movement in India: the final defeat of the Moderates in the INC and the beginning of the increasing, and deepening, fragmentation of the movement.

(ii) The initiation of satyagraha in India

In early 1918, the British Government in India had received the report of the Rowlatt Committee, which it had empowered to study the problem of terrorism within India and to make suggestions for its suppression once the powers provided through the Defence of India Act lapsed at the end of the War. Although the Secretary of State for India was "profoundly uneasy" about the recommendations of the Committee, the Government in India was anxious to promulgate what it perceived as appropriate legislation. The news was greeted in India with utter abhorrence, and significant acts of protest by nationalist leaders.

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87 Burke and Quraishi, pp. 179-180. "The Committee held all its sittings in camera," which prevented Indians from learning the full extent of the findings—or from contributing to the Report—until the Report was submitted on 15 April 1918. The Bills were introduced 6 February 1919. See also Rumbold, pp. 135-136.


89 See Rumbold, pp. 136-138. Some leaders took the step of resigning their positions with the administration, for example, Jinnah, who was a member of the Legislative Council. He sent a scathing letter to
Gandhi responded by formulating a "satyagraha pledge" which he forwarded to the Viceroy and, when the government did not respond with a promise to cancel the legislation, published the pledge and urged his compatriots to commit themselves to it. He further announced that a "hartal" would be held on April 6th, 1919, a day for "fasting and prayer" which would demonstrate Indian opposition. While "Gandhi seems to have intended Bombay city and Gujarat to be the heart of the movement" (it was his home base), the idea spread throughout India, and the hartal was observed in many of the larger towns. Unfortunately, the protests quickly became violent, and Gandhi himself called for an end to the campaign, undergoing a three-day fast as penance for the actions of his ‘followers’.

In spite of his deep distress over the violence, however, Gandhi did not view this rather inauspicious debut of satyagraha in India as a complete failure, but rather as a "miscalculation." He believed that it was simply a matter of educating the people to behave in the manner befitting the Viceroy, saying that "[t]he fundamental principles of justice have been uprooted and the constitutional rights of the people have been violated at a time when there is no real danger to the State, by an overfretful and incompetent bureaucracy which is neither responsible to the people nor in touch with real public opinion ... a Government that passes or sanctions such a law in times of peace forfeits its claim to be called a civilised [sic] Government." Stanley Wolpert, *Jinnah of Pakistan* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1984) pp. 61-62.

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90Gandhi, *Autobiography*, pp. 532-534. Gandhi was initially "at a loss" to determine how to conduct a satyagraha against the Bills without having to actually break the laws thus legislated—which were, after all, designed to control violent opposition. He finally decided to use a hartal as "an act of self-purification" for the people, to prepare them for the satyagraha campaigns which he knew would come. The effect of the hartal, in essence, a general strike, he believed would be sufficient to express opposition. See also Brown, *Gandhi: Prisoner of Hope*, pp. 128-131.

91A hartal is traditionally a day of mourning.

92Brown, *Gandhi: Prisoner of Hope*, p. 130; see also Chadha, pp. 233-235.

93Brown, *Gandhi: Prisoner of Hope*, p. 132; see also Chadha, pp. 235-236.

94Although he did admit it had been a "Himalayan miscalculation." Gandhi, *Autobiography*, p. 545. However, he still was not convinced that satyagraha had been responsible for the violence, Chadha, p. 241.
satyagrahis, and of more fully controlling future campaigns.\textsuperscript{95}

That there would be future campaigns was an obvious prospect, if for many an unsettling one. The campaign had clearly installed Gandhi as a political force in India. This was not a comforting thought for many of the veterans of the nationalist movement, who viewed Gandhi's methods as potentially dangerous,\textsuperscript{96} nor for the government, whose view was summarized by the Viceroy:

Dear me, what a d...d [sic] nuisance these saintly fanatics are! Gandhi is incapable of hurting a fly and is as honest as the day, but he enters quite lightheartedly on a course of action which is the negation of all government and may lead to much hardship to people who are ignorant and easily led astray.\textsuperscript{97}

It would not be only the "ignorant" who would be "led astray."

(iii) Gandhi 'conquers' Congress

Gandhi's highly idiosyncratic approach to politics, while deplored by both Indian leaders and British officials, did appeal strongly to those nationalists who had grown impatient with the

\textsuperscript{95}Gandhi, \textit{Autobiography}, p. 546: "it would be necessary to create a bank of well-tried, pure-hearted volunteers who thoroughly understood the strict conditions of Satyagraha. They could explain these to the people, and by sleepless vigilance keep them on the right path."

\textsuperscript{96}Wolpert, \textit{Jinnah}, pp. 69-70. Matters came to a head at the Calcutta Congress of 1920 (these events will be discussed in more detail in the following section). When Gandhi's proposal for a non-cooperation program received the support of the majority, it "was strongly opposed by Bengal's leading politicians" as well as Jinnah and Annie Besant (who "openly denounced his movement as a 'channel of hatred'"). Even Tilak "refused to accept Gandhi's lead," while the leader of the National Liberal Federation "called Gandhi a 'madman ... mad and arrogant.'" When Gandhi persuaded a majority of the Home Rule League in Bombay to accept his program, Jinnah resigned from the League. Responding to an appeal from Gandhi to rejoin, Jinnah replied that he was "fully convinced that [your program] must lead to disaster ... your extreme programme [sic] has for the moment struck the imagination mostly of the inexperienced youth and the ignorant and the illiterate. All this means complete disorganisation [sic] and chaos. What the consequence of this may be, I shudder to contemplate ... ," p. 70.

\textsuperscript{97}Brown, \textit{Gandhi: Prisoner of Hope}, p. 134.
gradualist, constitutionalist approach of their elders. It would be the support of the rising, predominantly young, new leadership of the INC which would enable Gandhi to establish himself as the acknowledged head of the nationalist movement. This task was made easier by the vacuum created at the leadership level by the deaths of many of the "old guard"—such as Mehta, Gokhale, and Tilak—and the marginalization of others—such as Annie Besant, one of the leading figures in the Theosophical Society, who had become deeply involved in the Indian political scene and who had been president of the INC during the First World War. In April, 1920, Gandhi was elected president of Besant's Home Rule League, and persuaded the delegates to accept his program of non-violent non-cooperation. He was also instrumental in the formulation of the revised edition of the INC constitution, being accredited with preparing the draft which was circulated during a special session of the INC in September of 1920, and adopted at the regular session at Nagpur in December of that year.

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98Ibid., p. 153. "[As a] result ... virtually no one could stand out as a continental figure against Gandhi and rally those who were sceptical of non-co-operation or opposed it outright." See also Chadha, pp. 248-249.

99Wolpert, History of India, p. 263. Besant had established the Central Hindu College at Benares in 1892, which became a university in 1916. She had also founded a Home Rule League in 1915 to promote demands for Indian self-government, announcing that "[t]he moment of England’s difficulty is the moment of India’s opportunity." Besant had already had a long career as a socialist and women’s rights advocate in England before moving to India, and was in her seventies by 1920, Chadha, p. 211.

100Brown, Gandhi: Prisoner of Hope, pp. 145-146. Gandhi was hesitant about becoming officially involved in any organization, but decided to accept the position because "he believed he could use the League to forward the causes with which he had identified, and which he felt would lead to self-government far more quickly [than] constitutional reform - he admitted the latter was of secondary importance to him ... some of the members were so disquieted at the idea that Gandhi might take the League into outright and unconstitutional opposition to the raj that they resigned, as the League's constitution was altered and its name was changed to the Swarajya Sabha."

It was at the Nagpur Congress that Gandhi's impact on the INC, and its future role in the nationalist movement, became institutionalized. The new constitution declared that the INC's intention was to work for the "attainment of self-government by the people of India by all peaceful and legitimate means." The deliberate omission of "constitutional means" signalled that the INC had decided to move beyond the parameters set since 1885: the era of polite discussions and gentlemanly negotiations was over. So, too, was the era of annual gatherings of the elite for speeches and debates. The INC was transformed into a fully operational organization. There was to be a full-time President (elected annually), Working Committee, and All-India Congress Committee. The Provincial Congress Committees were expanded, to reach down through the social pyramid: there would now be city, district, and village committees, to take the INC message as deeply as possible into Indian society, and to organize support for its activities. In place of the old provincial divisions, which had accorded with the provincial divisions within British India, "Congress" provinces were now delineated on a linguistic basis, increasing the number from nine to twenty-one. Officers of the INC at every level were to be elected on a substantially expanded franchise: full adult suffrage (male and female) subject only to the "signing of the creed and a nominal payment of four annas." The days of elitist politics seemed to be over for Gandhi was determined to expand INC membership far beyond the

102 Mittal, pp. 48-49.


104 Brown, *Gandhi: Prisoner of Hope*, pp. 158-159. Even the British took note of "the personal domination of Gandhi over all political leaders and followers alike," confirming The Bombay Chronicle's announcement "that this is a Gandhi Congress." See also Mittal, p. 50: "Gandhi was the first Congress leader who made strenuous efforts to provide mass base to the Congress organization" and it was his "unique personality and his pattern of life which attracted the Indian masses." This appeal was based largely on Gandhi's ability to "identify[ly] himself with the aspirations and characteristics of the Indian masses."
clique of lawyers which had monopolized it for so long. He even castigated the INC for using English at its meetings, arguing that Hindi should be spoken at all times, in order to broaden participation in the debates and to symbolize the INC's rejection of British dominance in India.\(^{105}\)

Yet, while it appeared that Gandhi had triumphed at Nagpur, in reality his success was, in many ways, superficial. Although he would from now on be accorded the title "father of the nation" as well as "Mahatma", few shared his philosophy. It was the power of his \textit{methods} and the organizational depth and strength he had brought to the INC that others would exploit to achieve their political goals. For Gandhi's ascension had coincided with another development in India: the passage of the Government of India Act of 1919, which expanded the franchise and provided for greater Indian participation in government.\(^{106}\)

The INC was quick to realize that, if they were to take full advantage of these new opportunities, they had to transform their organization. Instead of using their energies debating amongst themselves and petitioning the British, they now had to appeal to \textit{Indian} electorates.\(^{107}\) A clear, and indicative, demonstration of this shift was the severance of links with the INC group in London: India would be their only battlefield from now on.\(^{108}\)

\(^{105}\)Mittal, p. 50; see also Brown, \textit{Gandhi: Prisoner of Hope}, pp. 145-146: Gandhi proposed that Hindustani be used "as a national language," and Peter Brock, "Gandhi and the Hindi Movement: An Aspect of His Search for Truth," in \textit{The Congress and Indian Nationalism: Historical Perspectives}, pp. 287-297. Gandhi believed that the use of Hindustani could function as a unifying force because it was a combination of the Hindu used by Hindus and the Urdu used by Muslims.

\(^{106}\)Rumbold, pp. 154-170.

\(^{107}\)Brown, \textit{Gandhi: Prisoner of Hope}, pp. 154-158. Although Gandhi insisted that Congress boycott the first elections, as part of their non-cooperation program, many saw this as only a "temporary self-denial," p. 156.

\(^{108}\)Ibid., p. 158. The London group was perceived as too moderate now.
c) The battlefield of conflicting nationalisms

The history of the Indian independence movement from 1920 to 1947 is tortuously complex. During this period, there was a series of conferences between the British authorities (in India and in Britain) and a variety of Indian leaders at which the negotiations were extraordinarily complicated, and the attempt to construct a consensus among the Indians was invariably fruitless. Any attempt to construct a synopsis of these of those years would only serve to distort the reality far beyond what is historiographically acceptable, even for the purpose of this analysis. We shall, therefore, leave the broad highway of official negotiations and acts of legislation to travel the equally serpentine, but narrower, road of inter-Indian conflict on the ideological byway of the concept of Indian nationalism.

Gandhi himself repeatedly withdrew from the political fray after 1920, resurfacing only at moments of crisis to rally the masses on yet another satyagraha campaign or to attempt to untangle a Gordian knot during inter-Indian or Indian-British negotiations or to bring calm to an outbreak of violence.\(^{109}\) His place at the political centre was increasingly filled by Jawaharlal Nehru, the man who would become independent India's first prime minister.\(^{110}\) And Nehru's most

\(^{109}\) Dr. Jai Narain, “Gandhi and Congress Presidents,” in Mahatma Gandhi and the Indian National Congress: Studies in Gandhi's Contribution to the Development of the Indian National Congress, pp. 83-105. Gandhi refused office for himself, but continued to exert considerable influence on who would be elected president of INC. He tended to preoccupy himself more with the implementation of his Constructive Program, p. 91. See also H.S. Takulia, “Gandhi's Constructive Programme and the Indian National Congress,” and M.L. Sharma, “Gandhi's Constructive Programme and the Indian National Congress,’ in Ibid., pp. 239-270. He returned to the political stage during the Salt Satyagraha in 1930 and the Round Table Conference; see Chadha, pp. 287-298, 305-320.

\(^{110}\) Nehru was first elected president of Congress in 1929, Wolpert, Nehru, p. 98, and again in 1936, Narain, p. 96; he was appointed provisional prime minister after the elections of 1946, Wolpert, pp. 369-371, becoming prime minister of independent India in 1947.
obdurate opponent would increasingly become Mohammed Ali Jinnah, not the British. As political reforms brought independence ever closer, especially from the mid-1930s on, the very definition of India became the knot which no one could untie. Cutting it would eventually be the only viable solution, and the Indian subcontinent would be divided into two (which eventually became three) separate independent nation-states.

This was not at all what Gandhi had had in mind when he wrote his first treatise on the subject in 1908. In *Hind Swaraj or Indian Home Rule*, Gandhi asked "[w]ho is the nation?" His own response was that only those Indians who "conscientiously believe[d] that Indian civilization is the best," and rejected all that the British had brought to India (language, systems of law and administration, and products of the industrial revolution) could be considered truly "Indian" and worthy of home rule. Independence, to Gandhi, did not mean simply replacing the British with Indians; it meant replacing modern civilization with the ancient Indian civilization. He argued that before the British came to India, Indians

were one nation ... [o]ne thought inspired us. Our mode of life was the same ... India was one undivided land so made by nature ... therefore, ... it must be one nation ... Only ... [those] who consider [themselves] civilized and superior persons imagine that we are many nations.  

For Gandhi, the key to this concept was religion. If Indians would return to their ancient, pure, religious beliefs and practices, the inherent tolerance and piety of Indian civilization would eliminate the problem of discord. Modern civilization, with its basis in competition and

\[\text{\textsuperscript{111}}\text{The differences between Nehru and Jinnah had surfaced as early as the All-Parties Conference in 1928, Wolpert, } Jinnah, \text{ p. 93.}\]

\[\text{\textsuperscript{112}}\text{M.K. Gandhi, } Hind Swaraj or Indian Home Rule (Ahmedabad: Navajivan Publishing House, 1938; 1962) pp. 101-104.}\]

\[\text{\textsuperscript{113}}\text{Ibid., pp. 46-47.}\]
materialism, had been destroying the true nature of India.\textsuperscript{114} "Real home-rule is self-rule, or self-control,"\textsuperscript{115} which could only be achieved by a commitment to "simplicity and renunciation."\textsuperscript{116}

Gandhi would devote the next forty years to an admirable, though quixotic, campaign to persuade his fellow Indians (and everyone else) that all problems could be solved if only religion were placed at the centre of one's life. His prolific writings (filling ninety volumes), on a bewildering variety of topics, all bore witness to this belief.\textsuperscript{117} That he also remained, often deeply, involved in the rather less pious machinations of the independence movement confused many--allies as well as opponents--but Gandhi saw no contradiction between his beliefs and his behaviour. Although, by 1921, he had realized that the kind of swaraj that he had envisioned in 1908 was not possible (certainly, not in the foreseeable future), he had become determined to work for "the attainment of Parliamentary Swaraj in accordance with the wishes of the people of India," while remaining devoted to "individually working for the self-rule" he had described in \textit{Hind Swaraj}. He took some comfort in the thought that at least the non-violent approach he had suggested was being followed, even if not as wholeheartedly as he wished.\textsuperscript{118} However, it is part of the enigma that Gandhi became that his oft-avowed belief that Indians did not deserve independence unless they first accepted, and abided by, his belief in satyagraha did not deter him

\begin{footnotesize}
\footnote{\textsuperscript{114}Ibid., pp. 48-54.}
\footnote{\textsuperscript{115}Ibid., p. 104.}
\footnote{\textsuperscript{116}Ibid., pp. 102-104.}
\footnote{\textsuperscript{117}Chadha, pp. vii-viii.}
\footnote{\textsuperscript{118}Gandhi, \textit{Hind Swaraj}, pp. 16-18.}
\end{footnotesize}
from active participation in both negotiations and mass non-cooperation campaigns. Perhaps it is more a comment on the rigidity of those contemporaries who had to deal with Gandhi (and later commentators who try to understand him) that the fluidity of his stances on various issues proved (and proves) so bothersome. It did not appear to disturb Gandhi at all, for he admitted openly that he was "not at all concerned with appearing to be consistent," only with acting in accordance with "the Truth" as he saw it at any particular moment.\(^{119}\)

In the increasingly divisive nationalist politics of India, however, Gandhi's appeal to religiosity did little to defuse the growing inter-communal tensions. It could even be argued that the situation was made even more difficult by Gandhi's insistence that there was only one India and that he spoke for it. His refusal to accept that Muslims or any of the myriad other minorities needed "protection" from the Hindu majority ignored the realities of Indian society, and alienated (to say nothing of frustrated) the leaders of these communities.\(^{120}\) Nor was his insistence on the primacy of religion particularly acceptable to many in the INC, who rested their argument for supremacy in the nationalist struggle on the platform that only the INC could represent all Indians because it was a secular and not a communal party.\(^{121}\) The British response ran the gamut from those who perceived Gandhi as a deeply ethical man, working only for the good of

\(^{119}\)Ibid., p. 4.

\(^{120}\)Brown, Gandhi: Prisoner of Hope, p. 257. This was made obvious during the Round Table Conference in London in 1931, where Gandhi's attitude was "deeply offensive to the members of minority communities at the conference," although he "[s]imultaneously ... alienated and frightened almost all the Hindus present" as well.

\(^{121}\)Even Nehru "felt angry with him at his religious and sentimental approach to a political question," Nehru, Autobiography, p. 370. The issue of Gandhi's religious approach obviously deeply disturbed Nehru, who wrote of his "mental tussle" of trying to reconcile his respect and admiration for Gandhi with his disagreement with Gandhi "about many matters," pp. 506-507. He spent several chapters in his Autobiography trying to explain his frustration, pp. 504-552.
his country, to those who believed him to be a Machiavellian politician devoted to sophistry. Yet, from 1920 to his assassination in 1948, Gandhi remained to many Indians, especially the poor, the Mahatma—admired, respected, and adored (and, occasionally, obeyed).

However, there were others on the scene who, while never attaining Gandhi's stature throughout India, had reached leadership status, and each of them had their own version of Indian nationalism. None of them shared Gandhi's ideal vision of India, perhaps because none of them shared his religious convictions either. They were pragmatic men, products of that modern civilization which Gandhi so abhorred, and their visions accepted the limitations of reality, if unwillingly at times.

There were, of course, as many visions of India as there were divisions within Indian society. The INC adhered to what could be categorized as a form of geographically-defined nationalism: the subcontinent was India, all who lived in this territory were, therefore, Indian. The Muslim League had initially argued that the rights of the religious minority living within the bounds of the subcontinent could not be protected unless they were given special treatment politically. In the mid-1930s, this argument shifted to claim that the rights of the minority could not be sufficiently protected politically, therefore, the (Muslim) minority must be accorded its own geographical space on the subcontinent—partition. While this could be seen as a form of geographically-defined nationalism, it could also be categorized as a form of religiously-defined nationalism. There was also a Hindu variant of religiously-defined nationalism, the argument

122 This was demonstrated during Gandhi's visit to England in 1931 to attend the Round Table Conference. See Chadha, pp. 306-317. Perhaps one commentator summed up the contradictory attitudes best when he told Gandhi that "[y]ou are strange to many, even in your own country ... [y]ou are so sincere that you make some of us suspicious, and you are so simple that you bewilder some of us," p. 306. Another commented, on Gandhi's departure: "Mr. Gandhi has left our shores and carried his tortuosities with him, I sincerely hope, never to try our tempers and our patience again," p. 315. It would be a forlorn hope.
being that India was predominantly Hindu, therefore, India must be Hindu and all other religious
groups should be absorbed or expelled. To complicate matters further, those who were neither
Hindu nor Muslim saw no "home" for themselves with either, and insisted that their groups (the
tribes, the untouchables, Anglo-Indians, etc.) had to be seen as separate entities. Needless to
say, the rulers of the princely states preferred to be out of the equation altogether, arguing that
they were already quasi-independent states and could not be considered part of any future nation
of India because they already constituted 'nations' of their own. The concept of 'nation' and
'nationalism' clearly had myriad definitions within India.

To the people of India, this must have all seemed an esoteric debate, if, indeed, they were
even aware of it. They "belonged" to their families and their villages. Most had no first-hand
knowledge of the rest of their province, let alone the country as a whole. "Nationalism" was not
part of their sense of identity, or vocabulary. Their only understanding of a larger loyalty was
to their religion, so to argue that the people were roused into a nationalistic fervour by Gandhi,
or any of the other leaders, would be misleading. Even "independence" would have had little
meaning to them. The cost of salt, conditions of employment, land taxes, land ownership—all
these matters they could get excited about.123 But who governed in Delhi did not concern

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123 See D.A. Low, "Congress and 'Mass Contacts,' 1936-1937: Ideology, Interests, and Conflict over the
Congress was so concerned about the gulf between the Party and the masses that it established a Mass Contacts
Committee to ascertain how to rectify the situation. As Nehru saw the problem, Congress had to reach out to the
masses, to explain "'that we are of them and seek to cooperate with them in removing their social and economic
burdens.'" He undertook an extensive tour of the country, to address public meetings and proclaim this message;
he was ecstatic about his reception (he "frequently addressed a dozen meetings and upward of 100,000 people
a day") and believed that he had thus demonstrated the masses' attachment to Congress, p. 151. However, there
is really no way to determine if the crowds had actually turned out in support of Congress, or of Nehru, or if they
simply took the opportunity to participate in a public gathering in order to break the monotony of their lives. The
report of the Committee had found that few thought that Congress had any practical role to play in their lives,
or any real interest in their concerns (see p. 141). As Low pointed out, the British administration was well aware
that such success as Congress had achieved in the past had been based on its support for the peasants in particular
them. It did, however, concern those who wanted to be those who governed in Delhi, as well as those who wanted to be able to influence them. It was these Indians, the politicians and the landowners and capitalists with an economic stake in governance, who worried about what form independent India would take, and who were determined to ensure it would be the form which would most benefit them. As the British Raj labouriously proceeded through the stages of devolution of power that would bring independence to India, the landscape of Indian politics began to become more clearly defined by the élites as they carved out or cultivated their constituencies.

The complexities and varieties of these constituencies had clearly emerged at the Round Table Conference in London in 1930, which had been assembled to debate the possible parameters of the next set of constitutional reforms. While Gandhi alone represented Congress, there were dozens of other delegates, representing Muslims, Hindu Liberals, Sikhs, the Hindu localities on specific issues (and the government accordingly had instructed its local officials to ensure that any such future grievances were resolved, if possible, before Congress could become involved); Nehru was also well aware that Congress had only been able to activate the masses over issues that had directly concerned them, pp. 136-137. In any case, the issue became moot after the 1937 elections to the provincial legislatures. Congress realized that it only really needed sufficient support from the approximately 30 million electors, not the 200+ million peasants who did not qualify for the franchise. Accordingly, in 1937, Congress became “committed ...to elite-run electoral campaigns for state and national parliamentary elections” and far less concerned with mobilizing the masses, p. 154.

124 A familiar refrain was “Delhi is far away.”

125 There were three sessions to the Conference: 12 November 1930 to 19 January 1931, 7 September 1931 to 1 December 1931, and 17 November 1932 to 24 December 1932; to avoid getting as bogged down as the participants did, only those aspects relevant to our purposes of all three meetings will be mentioned, Burke and Quraishi, p.282.
Mahasabha,\textsuperscript{126} the Untouchables, the Anglo-Indians, the Christian Indians, the British business community, and the princely states.\textsuperscript{127} Rather optimistically, the British Government opened the Conference with the declaration "that it is the duty of the communities to come to an agreement among themselves."\textsuperscript{128} It was, from the outset, a forlorn hope because Gandhi would not budge from the Congress claim to represent all Indians,\textsuperscript{129} a stand that alienated all of the other delegates and frustrated the attempt to reach a consensus on the position of minorities.\textsuperscript{130} Or, at least, any consensus that included Gandhi. All of the minority delegates did eventually reach an agreement on their desire for separate electorates and the reservation of seats within any legislature for their groups--a clear indication that they rejected not only Congress' claim to represent all Indians, but also the assurance that minorities' rights did not need special protection. However, the delegates could not agree on the specifics of any such arrangement,

\begin{itemize}
\item[\textsuperscript{126}] A communal party, founded in 1914, it was allied with the Arya Samaj "in its campaign of 'reconversion' and 'purification' ... of Muslims," Wolpert, \textit{History of India}, p. 306.
\item[\textsuperscript{127}] Burke and Quraishi, p. 282. There were 57 delegates from British India and 16 from the princely states at the first meeting--which Congress boycotted. Gandhi did not turn up until the 2\textsuperscript{nd} session, p. 289.
\item[\textsuperscript{128}] Ibid., p. 285. This was in accordance with the official position of the British government "that each minority - Muslims, Sikhs, Untouchables, Christians, Parsis, Europeans - must be protected and satisfied before self-rule could be granted," Chadha, p. 310.
\item[\textsuperscript{129}] As he repeatedly said, Congress claimed "to represent all Indian interests and all classes." Speech to the Federal Structure Committee meeting, 15 September 1931, in B.K. Ahluwalia, ed., \textit{M.K. Gandhi: Select Speeches} (New Delhi: Sagar Publications, 1969) p. 221. Nor did his comment that the delegates were "not the chosen ones of the nation which we should be representing, but we are the chosen ones of the government" do much to endear him to the other Indian members of the Conference. It was, however, the bald truth: none of those present had been elected by the people of India; they were representatives of the various special interest groups, appointed as delegates by the Viceroy, Chadha, p. 308.
\item[\textsuperscript{130}] Although it must be noted that agreement on minority issues had not been reached at the first session either. Then, the Hindu Mahasabha and Sikh representatives had stymied attempts to reach a compromise over reserved seats. So Gandhi's position was not solely to blame, Sarkar, p. 309.
\end{itemize}
so the British Government, in order to break the impasse, simply announced (in the Communal Award statement of 4 August 1932) how the separate electorates and reserved seats would be assigned.\footnote{Christine E. Dobbin, \textit{Basic Documents in the Development of Modern India and Pakistan, 1835-1947} (London: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1970) pp. 115-117. Muslims, Sikhs, and Europeans were to vote in separate electorates to seats reserved for those minorities respectively. Untouchables were to vote for both general electorate seats and also in separate electorates for seats reserved for Untouchable representatives.}

While Gandhi’s personal stand on communal representation tended toward the ambiguous,\footnote{In \textit{Young India} (19 January 1930), he had written: “Independent India cannot afford to have communal representation and yet it must placate all communities, if the rule of independence is not based on coercion of minorities.” M.K. Gandhi, \textit{India of My Dreams}, compiled by R.K. Prahbu (Ahmedabad: Navajivan Publishing House, 1947; 1962) p. 277.} he was adamant in his opposition to separate electorates for Untouchables, so much so that he even “refused to accept Dr. B.R. Ambedkar’s claim to represent the Untouchables as a minority” at the Conference (an attitude that did not improve their relationship).\footnote{Chadha, p. 310. Ambedkar had long been recognized as a representative of Untouchable interests, he had “testified from 1919 all throughout the 1920s before official commissions, published newspapers, organized conferences, served in the Bombay Legislature, taught at Government Law College, supported three temple satyagrahas, and achieved a considerable following among politicized Untouchables and enlightened high-caste reformers. In 1930 he spoke at a Depressed Classes conference in Nagpur ... [and] was appointed to attend the Round Table Conference,” Zelliot, pp. 189-190. Gandhi’s dismissal of him was, therefore, at the very least tactless, as was his insistence that only he, not Ambedkar (who actually was an Untouchable), could truly represent them.} Defeated at the Conference, Gandhi opposed the Communal Award announcement regarding the Untouchables by going on a fast unto death.\footnote{He also wrote to the Secretary of State, explaining that his opposition to separate electorates for Untouchables was based on the fact that it would politicize the internal division between caste and non-caste Hindus. However, “it was clear that although he underlined the religious argument, the political implications of separate electorates were very important to him. Compounding separate electorates for Muslims, a similar concession to untouchables would shatter the united polity for which he had worked so long, and would cast Congress in the role of sectarian religious party rather than representative of an Indian nation. But he did not want to publicize this dimension of the problem or he felt it would only exacerbate communal conflict.” He also wrote to the Prime Minister, to announce his fast, and did not break it until the Government agreed to accept the Pact, Brown, \textit{Gandhi: Prisoner of Hope}, pp. 265-267.} Ambedkar was
thereby forced to concede on the separate electorates issue, but managed to not only salvage the reserved seats for Untouchables, but to increase the number substantially. This episode serves as an example of the primary aspects of Indian politics from 1930 to independence: the complexity of the issues involving the minority groups in India and their relationship to Congress, the determination of the leaders to squeeze out as much advantage as possible for their groups, the apparent impossibility of devising any arrangement that all parties would agree to (and the necessity, therefore, for the British to construct and impose the details of reforms in order that constitutional progress could continue), and the lengths to which Gandhi would go in order to 'persuade' his opponents. It would be these aspects which would shape, and it could also be said, to poison, political developments in India during this period.

Constitutionally, progress continued, with the Government of India Act of 1935. The Act was in two parts: the first concerned provincial government, and the second provided for the

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136 Agreement was reached on this in the Poona Pact, between Congress, the Hindu Mahasabha, and the Untouchable Party, none of whom were particularly pleased with it, but at least it resolved the fast and kept Gandhi alive. The Communal Award had allowed for 78 reserved seats in the provincial legislatures, the Pact increased this to 148. The government went along with the Pact, drawing "up a Schedule of those castes considered to be Untouchable in each province, and the term 'Scheduled Castes' was henceforth used for the some 600 different 'Untouchable' groups who qualified for the reserved seats," Zelliot, p. 190. For details of the Pact, see Dobbin, pp. 118-119.

137 Even his friends and allies were frequently "nonplussed" by what Gandhi would do when—as in this case—he used tactics which, as one remarked, marked a deplorable "flight from the way of reason and [used such an] ... inevitable moral coercion." Responses were, as usual, mixed. "Ambedkar predictably called it a political stunt. Officials, too, were sure the fast was a devious political manoeuvre, though they differed on what they thought it was meant to achieve. [The Viceroy] and the Bombay government thought it was designed to revive the failing civil disobedience movement and reassert Gandhi's political authority. Gandhi argued publicly that his intention was religious - to throw his whole weight against untouchability and sting the consciences of caste Hindus into right action by using a means of penance and purification accepted in Hinduism, Islam and Christianity. However, such public statements were an over-simplification both of his own reasoning and the likely effects of his action. For him nothing was 'only religious', religion and all life were inextricable, and this action was work for swaraj as he interpreted it just as much as civil disobedience; his talks with his goal companions indicated hat he was well aware of the political dimensions of his action. Further, though he denied that he intended any coercion he realized that some people might experience the fast as such," Brown, Gandhi: Prisoner of Hope, p. 266.
Establishment of a federal government. The federal system was to have consisted of a bicameral legislature: the Council of State and the Federal Assembly. Central to its implementation, however, was the willingness of the princes to accede to the federation, and not one prince was ready to give up his relative independence in order to become a member state of the Indian federation. As a result, the central government continued to function according to the provisions of the 1919 Act, and negotiations between the princely states and the government continued fitfully and inconclusively until independence. While much of the blame for the failure to ensure the implementation of the federal section of the 1935 Act could be allocated to both the princes and the government, Congress was also responsible for the princes' reluctance to change the status quo. It was openly hostile to the princes, and to their continued independence, declaring that the states were artificial constructs and the princes reactionary autocrats and anachronisms. In fact, Congress policy on the princely states was clear and absolute: autocratic rule was to be replaced with responsible government, and the states were to have "no independence." This attitude, expressed by the party that was by this time obviously the dominant force in Indian politics, was hardly conducive to garnering the support of the princes for any plan which could place their positions at risk.

Unfortunately, their refusal to participate in this stage of the development of the Indian state structure left the princes with little room to bargain when construction reached the

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138 Burke and Quraishi, pp. 297-300. Congress' opposition to the inclusion of the princes in the federal system was to be expected: "the centre was so constructed that the conservative elements such as the princes, the Muslims and the Scheduled Castes could thwart the... Congress." Indeed, the leader of the Labour Party in the House of Commons "protested that 'this Bill...is deliberately framed so as to exclude as far as possible the Congress party from effective power," Ibid., pp. 299-300.

penultimate stage of the final negotiations on independence. By 1947, the British were prepared to abandon the princes to the mercies of the new government of independent India (all of the treaties between the princes and the Crown were to lapse at independence), the internal stability of many states was threatened by increasing agitation by ‘peoples’ movements’ for political rights, and the princes’ dreams of continued independence were rapidly turning into nightmares. Thus, they had little choice but to accept the conditions that Congress offered them, and be absorbed into the new nation.\(^\text{140}\)

While the failure to implement the second section of the Act of 1935 left a legacy which would eventually doom the princes, the success of the implementation of the first section had a different, but even more profound, impact on the future of India by demonstrating the irreparable political schism between Hindus and Muslims that would tear India (and Indians) apart. The provisions of the Act itself did not directly cause the problem, but the ramifications of the changes that the Act brought to the provinces of British India, fed by the roiling waters of communal conflict, irrevocably damaged the political climate so badly that any realistic hope that India could cross the threshold of independence as a united nation was destroyed.

The Act organized British India into eleven provinces; in six of these, there was to be two legislative houses (a council and an assembly), and a single assembly in the other five. Except

\(^{140}\) Or the Muslim League-states did have some choice as to which new nation they joined. Both new governments initially offered more or less the same deal as the princes had had with the British: central control over defence, external affairs, and communications, and internal autonomy, at least for the time being. Within a year, however, the princes in India had been persuaded to hand over all authority in exchange for a financial settlement, Sarkar, pp. 450-451. The three states which tried to remain independent were soon absorbed: the Nawob of Janagarh was driven out by internal opposition and the state occupied by the Indian Army in November of 1947; Hyderabad was conquered by Indian troops in September of 1948 (after a year of fruitless negotiations); and Kashmir, invaded by tribesmen from Pakistan, acceded to India on 26 October 1947—the beginning of the “Kashmir Problem” which continues to plague both India and Pakistan, Burke and Quraishi, pp. 580-608.
for certain reserved powers left in the hands of the governors, each province was to be governed by its elected assembly. The franchise was expanded to create an electorate of approximately 35 million (of whom 6 million were women and 3.5 million were Untouchables), and these electors would vote in general and separate constituencies for the combination of general and reserved seats in each legislature (in accordance with the Communal Award and the Poona Pact arrangements). Elections were to be held in 1937.\(^{141}\)

During the debate on the Act in the central assembly in New Delhi in 1935, it was quickly made clear by both the Muslim League and Congress that neither found the provisions of the Act satisfactory. In fact, Congress had "wholly rejected" the terms of the Act at its session in 1934 (and would reject it again in 1936).\(^{142}\) While Jinnah (and the Muslim League) also found much to be desired in the new arrangements, he suggested that the fact that the new provincial legislatures were to be elected was an encouraging sign, and, although the Communal Award terms were not satisfactory as far as any of the parties were concerned, that they would have to do ""until a substitute is agreed upon by the various communities concerned."" At this stage, it seems clear that Jinnah was still hoping to form an alliance with the Congress in order to

\(^{141}\)See Wolpert, *History of India*, p. 323; and Burke and Quraishi, pp. 297-298. This increased the electorate five times over the previous number, to about 1/4 of all the adult population. Property qualifications still determined the right to vote, but these had been lowered. For details on specific numbers of seats in each legislature, etc., see S.R. Bakshi, *Congress, Muslim League and Partition of India* (New Delhi: Deep & Deep Publications, 1990) pp. 167-170. The reserved seats were for: Scheduled Castes, backward tribes, Muslims, Sikhs, Anglo-Indians, Europeans, women, Indian Christians, as well as for commerce, industry, landholders, graduates, and labour constituencies. To describe the electoral process as complicated is most certainly an under-statement, but it does make the property qualifications which limited the franchise more understandable—it was one way to limit the number of people who would have to figure out the system in order to vote.

\(^{142}\)Chadha, p. 343. Although, as it participated in the elections to the Legislative Assembly in 1934, Congress had not closed the door on constitutional activity for itself.

present a united front against the British in opposition to the terms of the Act. In a statement to the Associated Press, he said:

... nothing will give me greater happiness than to bring about complete co-operation and friendship between Hindus and Muslims. Muslims are in no way behind any other community in their demand for national self-government. The crux of the whole issue, therefore, is: can we completely assure Muslims that the safeguards to which they attach vital importance will be embodied in the future Constitution of India?\textsuperscript{144}

Unfortunately, his appeal fell on deaf ears. Congress remained obdurate in its refusal to accept the necessity for "safeguards," especially for Muslims.\textsuperscript{145}

Indeed, the whole tone of Nehru's attitude towards such demands speaks volumes as to the depth of the difficulty in finding a common ground on this issue. He wrote that as far as the Moslems in India are concerned, they are only technically a minority. They are vast in numbers and powerful in other ways, and it is patent that they cannot be coerced against their will. Just as the Hindus cannot be coerced against their will. If the two can not agree as organized groups, it will be unfortunate for India, and no one can say what the consequence will be. But let us always remember that in political and economic matters people do not function as religious groups. The lines of cleavage are different.

The real question of minority protection arises for others, who are neither Hindu nor Moslem. It seems amazing to me that any Indian, whether he is a Hindu, Moslem, Sikh, Christian, or adherent of any other faith, should seek protection against his own compatriots from a foreign authority. As a matter of fact they do not, except a few, who do it not because of religion but because of vested interests.

Let us be clear about it. This communal question is essentially one of protection of vested interests, and religion has always been a useful stalking horse for this purpose. Those who have feudal privileges and vested interests fear change and become the camp followers of British imperialism. The British Government, on the other hand delight in using the communal argument to deny freedom, democracy, or any major change, and to hold on to power and privilege in India. That is the \textit{raison d'etre} and the justification for this.

\textsuperscript{144}As quoted in Ibid., p. 136.

\textsuperscript{145}Congress' claim to represent all Indians was at the core of its policy on separate representation; it could not reconcile that claim with an admission that minorities needed their own seats or electorates, and instead argued that any such arrangements simply encouraged the growth of communal divisions, B.R. Tomlinson, \textit{The Indian National Congress and the Raj 1929-1942: The Penultimate Phase} (London: Macmillan Press, 1976) p. 40.
of communalism in India.\textsuperscript{146}

While he may have had a point in his accusation that vested interests were behind the demands for minority rights, the statement that he found it “amazing” that any person from a minority group would feel the need for protection from the overwhelming Hindu majority strikes a false note. After all, Nehru could hardly have been ignorant of the numerous violent clashes that had occurred between Hindus and Moslems, with increasing intensity, since the 1880s,\textsuperscript{147} nor of the Hindu Mahasabha’s “programs of forced ‘conversions’... of unwilling Muslims to Hinduism,”\textsuperscript{148} which must have alarmed Muslims throughout India by its inherent intolerance towards non-Hindus.

Yet Nehru seemed unwilling to recognize that the anxiety of the minorities had any foundation. For him, the fact that Congress had guaranteed freedom of religion and the protection of minority cultures, etc. in its Karachi Resolution of 1931\textsuperscript{149} was sufficient. Perhaps his refusal to acknowledge that there was a considerable difference between what had been

\begin{enumerate}
\item For example, between 1923 and 1927, there were riots and “disturbances” in Calcutta, Dacca, Patna, Rawalpindi, and Delhi, “and no less than 91 communal outbreaks in U.P.” Sarkar, p. 233. Ironically, communal riots continued even under Congress provincial governments: from October 1937 to September 1939, there were 60 recorded in the 8 Congress-controlled provinces, and 25 in the 3 non-Congress provinces, p. 356.
\item Wolpert, \textit{Jinnah}, p. 83. He was certainly not unaware of the alliance between the Mahasabha and the right wing of Congress, because he took steps to upset their plans to keep Muslims off of Congress provincial and district committees. Mushirul Hasan, “The Muslim Mass Contacts Campaign: Analysis of a Strategy of Political Mobilization,” in \textit{Congress and Indian Nationalism: The Pre-Independence Phase}, p. 215. While he dismissed the Mahasabha as “the counterpart of the Moslem League” saying that it was “as aggressively communal as the League” and that it was “peculiarly unfortunate in some of its leaders who indulge in irresponsible and violent diatribes, as indeed some of the Moslem League leaders also do,” he saw this only as “a constant irritant” because it took “the place of action.” He made no mention of the forcible conversions, Jawaharlal Nehru, \textit{The Discovery of India} (New York: John Day, 1946) p. 309.
\item Nehru, \textit{Unity of India}, p.406. These were part of the Fundamental Rights and Duties section of the Resolution.
\end{enumerate}
formulated by the Congress élite and the inter-communal dynamics on the streets was an illustration of the isolation of the élite from the emotions and thoughts of the masses. Or, it could have been a reflection of his obsession with the struggle for independence: anything that could interfere with the ultimate aim had to be dismissed as inconsequential or as an artificial, created obstacle. This could explain his attitude towards Jinnah, “whom he considered a Muslim ‘collaborator’ with British imperialists,” and treated with “contempt.” A speech he made to the 1936 All-India Students Conference, at its President’s (Jinnah) invitation, is very illuminating. While admitting that “one of [his] failings ... [was] that [he was] always fighting shy of the immediate problems which face us,” he dismissed the communal problem as

a nuisance ... because it diverts [our] attention from the real problems of the country. It is bad in itself because it makes us petty-minded, but ultimately it is utterly bad because it hides from our view the really big problems that affect our country.

He went on to say that

We are apt too much to think in terms of law and legal circumstances ... and safeguards and compromises—as if half a dozen prominent individuals and leaders can by meeting together solve the vast problems ... [leaders who] wanted to solve them for their selfish reasons ... these problems cannot be solved within the fabric of the structure of the present-day government.

Concluding with a return to the communal problem, he insisted that

you cannot consider the strength of a group or community by counting of heads ... The real thing is that if there was the question of numbers we thirty five crores [350 million] of people would not have become a slave country ... the fault lies with us ... It is because British people are united and we are not. So do not bother about percentages. It does not matter how many people there are in this group or that group.\(^{150}\)

Thus, in the course of one speech, he insulted Jinnah (who had introduced him most graciously) by referring to his cause as a “nuisance” (four times) and lumping him by implication with the

"selfish" leaders who had been responsible for not solving India's problems because they were concerned with legalities and compromises. He also blamed those who were concerned "about percentages" for the continued disunity which kept India "a slave country"—yet another dig at Jinnah, and all the minority leaders, and a brutal dismissal of minority concerns. Moreover, in his confession that he had a tendency to ignore "immediate problems," he explained the underlying cause of his refusal to acknowledge the real and immediate issue of communal division.

While Nehru seemed to take the position that the communal problem would disappear if it was ignored, Gandhi was consumed by his goal "to resolve communal tension and establish communal peace in India." Although he made a sincere and sustained attempt to bring the two communities together, and would ultimately be martyred to the cause, his efforts accomplished little. For, where Nehru saw it as a problem of the manipulation of communal differences by those who had socio-economic and political interests to protect, Gandhi saw it as a purely religious problem that could only be resolved by a moral and spiritual approach.

He failed to look at the problem in its proper historical perspective and, therefore, could not develop a proper approach to its examination. He took an oversimplified view of Hindu-Muslim conflicts. To him Hindu-Muslim tension in India was essentially due to religious differences...religious misunderstanding and intolerance....[His approach] was not based on a realistic appreciation of the total situation...[but on the belief that] both the communities [had] to adopt a policy of religious tolerance and mutual trust.\footnote{Gandhi was assassinated on 30 January 1948 by Nathuram Godse, an active member of the Hindu Mahasabha. He was one of many in the conspiracy to kill Gandhi for what Hindu fundamentalists saw as his betrayal of Hinduism, demonstrated by his tolerance toward Muslims, Chadha, pp. 469-503}

How to persuade countless millions of Hindus and Muslims to adopt this policy was, Gandhi \footnote{Khan Mohammad Afaque, \textit{Gandhian Approach to Communal Harmony: A Critical Study} (Delhi: Ajanta Publications (India), 1986) pp. 96-97.}
believed, through personal example and exhortation. He did have some temporary successes, when he underwent fasts to restore communal peace, but these were brief respites and seemed to have no lasting impact.\footnote{The fast of 1920 was followed by "serious riots" in 1924; the two major fasts undertaken in 1946-1947 (in Calcutta and Delhi) to stop the bloodshed between Hindus, Muslims, and Sikhs during the last days of the Raj, while effective in halting the violence in the immediate area (eventually), did nothing to stop the rampaging mobs elsewhere, and brought only temporary respite in those two cities, \textit{Ibid.}, pp. 33-49. As with the fast against Ambedkar, the threat of being blamed for the death of the Mahatma served to coerce cooperation from a sufficient number of people for the violence to be brought under control. However, Gandhi’s use of satyagraha to elicit the desired response from those against whom it was directed had a major flaw: cooperation was not obtained through convincing opponents to change their attitudes, only their actions, which is why the effects were always temporary. Gandhi’s hope that his example would persuade others to change their attitudes rested on the rather optimistic belief that others would want to change. This is where his failure to understand the full complexity of inter-communal tensions doomed his cause: it was simply not enough to remind Hindus and Muslims that the “pure” religion of each encouraged tolerance: envy, greed, resentments (both ancient and recent) fuel intolerance. Few human beings could (or can) purify their lives and natures, or undertake such a profound self-examination as Gandhi did, in order to exorcise these demons.} The proof that neither Gandhi’s nor Nehru’s approach to the problem would be effective was demonstrated during and after the 1937 elections to the provincial legislatures. Indeed, it could be argued that their attitudes made matters even worse.

While Congress seemed to have emerged from the elections triumphant, their victory did not really confirm their claim to represent all India. While gaining a majority of seats in six of the provinces, the percentages of the popular vote are far more illustrative of their actual support: Madras, 74 %; Bihar, 62.5 %; Orissa, 60 %; Central Provinces, 57 %; United Provinces, 59 %; Bombay, 49 %; Assam, 32 %; North West Frontier Province, 38 %; Bengal, 24 %; Punjab, 10 %; and Sind, 12 %. Thus, they accumulated an overall average of approximately 44 % support from an electorate of 13.3% of the total population.\footnote{Tomlinson, p. 71.} As politicians tend to, however, Congress leaders focussed their attention on the number of seats won, which encouraged them to take a much more positive attitude toward the election results.
Out of a total of 1,585 seats in the eleven legislatures, Congress had won 716 and were entitled to form the governments in Bihar, Central Provinces, Madras, Orissa, and United Provinces; its 86 out of 175 seats in Bombay gave it a virtual majority there; and in Assam, Bengal, and North West Frontier Province, it was the largest single party in each legislature. However, out of the 482 seats allocated to Muslims, Congress had only managed to find enough candidates to contest 58, and won just 26. Furthermore, while the Muslim League had only gained 105 of the Muslim seats (the Party was not organizationally prepared for the election), it was where it won those seats that should have been a warning sign to Congress: the League was most successful in those provinces with a Hindu majority population—where it could be assumed that Muslims would be most conscious of their communal position. Moreover, the remaining Muslim seats had gone to local parties or independents, whose stand on the communal issue was similar to the Muslim League’s.

However, instead of realizing from these results the depth of Muslim unease about Hindu political domination, Congress (led by Nehru) saw it as a repudiation of the policy of dealing with Muslim leaders, and instituted in its place a campaign to increase contact with the Muslim community. Convinced that their success with Hindus had been because of Congress policies aimed at the poorer classes (a puzzling conclusion, given the property qualifications for the franchise—the poorer classes would not have been voters), they determined “to impress on poor Muslim villagers that they would not lose under the Congress dispensation as their interests were

identical with those of the Hindu poorer classes.” The success of the campaign can be illustrated by the numbers of Muslims who became members of Congress: by mid-1938, only approximately 100,000 Muslims had enrolled, out of a total membership of almost 4,512,000. The campaign was cancelled in mid-1939.

While the campaign to enlist the Muslim masses failed, the concomitant decision to reject cooperation with the Muslim leaders had a devastating effect on nationalist unity. Indeed, relations between the two predominant leaders in the country, Jinnah and Nehru, had been irrevocably deteriorated by Nehru’s statement during the election campaign that

There are only two forces in the country, the Congress and the government ... To vote against the Congress candidate is to vote for the continuance of British domination ... It is the Congress alone which is capable of fighting the government. The opponents of the Congress are bound with each other by a community of interests. Their demands have nothing to do with the masses.

When Jinnah responded with “[t]here is a third party in this country and that is the Muslims,” Nehru replied “with gratuitous insult and acerbity” that the Muslim League represented only the interests of “the higher regions of the upper middle classes,” that it was not working for independence and against imperialism, and that he was closer to “the Muslim masses than most of the members of the Muslim League.” Nehru’s attitude towards Jinnah was a “fatal” mistake, for his statement served as the spur for Jinnah and the League to indeed get “closer” to the Muslim masses. And the way to do this, the “only ... possible way for the League to stir that

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156 Hasan, pp. 200-201.
157 Ibid., p.209.
158 Tomlinson, p. 86.
159 Hasan, p. 212. See Hasan, pp. 198-222, for an insightful and well-balanced account of the campaign, its impact, and the reasons for its failure.
mass, to awaken it, and to lure it to march behind Muslim leadership” was to invoke the call to
religion: “Islam in danger” was the unifying force that Jinnah and the League would harness.160

Before taking the fateful step, Jinnah tried yet again to construct an alliance with
Congress, suggesting that—in a demonstration of Indian national unity—the Congress and Muslim
League form coalition governments in the provinces. This was rejected by the Congress
leadership, who insisted that the League be dissolved and its members absorbed into Congress.

Jinnah’s appeal to Gandhi, to use his influence to moderate, received the following reply:

I wish I could do something, but I am utterly helpless. My faith in unity is as bright as
ever; only I see no daylight out of the impenetrable darkness, and in such darkness and
in such distress, I cry out to God for light.161

It was hardly a helpful response. Stymied, Jinnah gave up, and the die was cast. On 22 March
1940, Jinnah addressed a crowd of 100,000 supporters in Lahore, and laid out the policy that the
Muslim League would follow from that time forth: Muslims were no longer a minority in India,
they were a separate nation.

The problem in India is not of an inter-communal but manifestly of an international
character, and it must be treated as such. So long as this basic and fundamental truth is
not realized, any constitution that may be built will result in disaster and will prove
destructive and harmful not only to the [Muslims], but also to the British and Hindus. If
the British Government are really in earnest and sincere to secure the peace and
happiness of the people of this Subcontinent, the only course open to us all is to allow
the major nations separate homelands, by dividing India into “autonomous national
States.”162

In an explanation that was clearly an attack on both Nehru’s and Gandhi’s visions of India,

160 Wolpert, Jinnah, pp. 147-148.

161 Chadha, pp. 344-345.

162 Wolpert, Jinnah, pp. 180-182.
Jinnah added

It is extremely difficult to appreciate why our Hindu friends fail to understand the real nature of Islam and of Hinduism. They are not religions in the strict sense of word, but they are, in fact, different and distinct social orders, and it is a dream that the Hindus and the Muslims can ever evolve a common nationality. This misconception of one Indian nation has gone far beyond the limits and is the cause of most of our troubles and will lead India to destruction, if we fail to revise our notions in time.

The Hindus and the Muslims have two different religious philosophies, social customs and literatures. They neither intermarry, nor interdine together, and indeed they belong to two different civilizations which are based mainly on conflicting ideas and conceptions. Their aspects on life and of life are different. It is quite clear that the Hindus and the Muslims derive inspiration from different sources of history. They have different episodes. Very often the hero of one is a foe of the other and, likewise, their victories and defeats overlap. To yoke together two such nations under a single state, one as a numerical minority and the other as a majority, must lead to growing discontent and final destruction of any fabric that may be so built up for the government of such a state.

The resolution which passed at the Muslim League Conference thereby demanded that any future constitutional reforms must include the provision that the Muslim majority provinces in the north-west and north-east “should be grouped to constitute ‘Independent States.’”

The Congress response was predictable: Nehru called it a “mad scheme,” and Gandhi

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163 Chadha, p. 368. For the full text of the so-called “Pakistan Resolution” (the term “Pakistan” was not actually used in it), see Bakshi, pp. 191-192. Jinnah’s historical perspective on Hindu-Muslim relations differs sharply from both Nehru’s and Gandhi’s. See Nehru’s historical account in Discovery of India, where there is a notable lack of conflict mentioned. Indeed, he claimed that all “lived together peacefully as one people,” p. 170; and Gandhi’s assertion in Hind Swaraj, p. 46, that India was always “one nation.” It would appear that their nationalist fervour and idealism overwhelmed their historiographical objectivity. As Wolpert pointed out (History of India, p. 104): “It is difficult to imagine two religious ways of life more different than Islam and Hinduism.” The history of India is one of repeated waves of conquest, and the Muslim conquest of the 10th century left a “legacy of bitter Hindu-Muslim antipathy,” p. 107. During the Mughal era, with the exception of the Akbar period, religious tolerance towards Hindus was notable in its absence, p. 158. In ancient cultures, such as India’s, memories are long; there are numerous accounts during the British period of outbreaks of communal violence at the village level, where Muslims and Hindus often lived together (though in different sections of the village), caused by imagined or real religious insults. There is a long tradition of communal antagonism, therefore, which both Nehru and Gandhi preferred to ignore.

164 Wolpert, Nehru, p. 272.
was "deeply hurt." But it could hardly have come as a surprise. When the Congress provincial
governments had resigned at the start of World War II, Jinnah had announced a "Day of
Deliverance" for Muslims, declaring that they were now free from Congress rule, which had
conclusively demonstrated and proved the falsehood of the Congress claim that it
represents all interests justly and fairly, by its decidedly anti-Muslim policy ... the Congress ... [legislators] both in the discharge of their duties of the administration and in the legislatures have done their best to flout the Muslim opinion, to destroy Muslim
culture, and have interfered with their religious and social life, and trampled upon their
economic and political rights; ... in matters of differences and disputes the Congress ... invariably have sided with, supported and advanced the cause of the Hindus in total
disregard and to the prejudice of the Muslim interests ... and thereby created an
atmosphere which spread the belief amongst the Hindu public that there was established
a Hindu raj, and emboldened the Hindus, mostly Congressmen, to ill-treat Muslims at
various places and interfere with their elementary rights of freedom.\footnote{165 Chadha, p. 368. He refused to accept the contention that Hindus and Muslims were separate nations.}  

Nehru's refusal to address Muslim concerns at that time had clearly been a terrible mistake. He
had given Jinnah and the League substantive ammunition for their argument that Muslims could
not believe the declarations of the INC leaders regarding Muslim-Hindu equality under Congress
rule. Moreover, by his inaction, he had also demonstrated--to Hindus and Muslims alike--that the
INC leadership either could not or would not enforce their ideal even on the members of their
own party. As a result, the battle lines had been drawn, and in the final seven years of the British
Raj, while the leaders continued their interminable arguments and exchanged their mutual

\footnote{166 After reading Jinnah's statement, Gandhi realized "that any prospect of resolving the Hindu-Muslim problem by further talks was over," and even Nehru was impelled to make a minor attempt at reconciliation, Wolpert, \textit{Jinnah}, pp. 176-177. As Nehru had rejected even the suggestion by Muslim Congress members that he address the Muslim complaints (detailed in the Pirpur Report of 1938) against Congress governments, especially the one in the United Provinces, denying (in the face of considerable evidence) "that any discrimination against Muslims had taken place," however, his feeble response to Jinnah's declaration in 1939 was clearly too little, and far too late, Wolpert, \textit{Nehru}, pp. 249-250.}
recriminations through yet more tedious and fruitless rounds of negotiations, the “communal problem” would bathe India in blood.

d) Independence: Cutting the Gordian knot

Soon after the end of World War II, the newly-elected Labour Government in Britain decided that the time had come to cut the Gordian knot of communal divisions within India. New elections for both the central and provincial legislatures in India were announced, and the Viceroy reported to the provincial governors that there was a “‘determination to solve the Indian problem whether the Indians like the solution or not.’” The British had had enough.

The work that Jinnah had done to tie the Muslim community to the League after 1937 paid off. In the elections for the Central Legislative Assembly, the League won all of the Muslim seats, with 86.6% of the votes. In the provincial legislatures election, it took 442 of the 509 Muslim seats. Jinnah’s claim that the League spoke for India’s Muslims had been vindicated. While Congress was again successful in drawing the non-Muslim votes (91.3% for their Central Assembly seats), and in winning enough seats in eight of the provinces to form the majority, it faced not only the substantive challenge of the Muslim League, but also competition from the

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167 These continued during the War, but given the utter failure to reach even a minimal consensus during any of them, there does not seem to be much point in repeating the details here. Congress could be said to have “sat out” the War: most of its provincial legislatures resigned in protest (following the Working Committee’s instructions) when war was declared unilaterally by the Viceroy, and after the Quit India satyagraha of 1942, most of the leadership was in prison. The vacuum they left was filled by the Muslim League, which increased its activities and organization considerably in this period. See Burke and Quraishi, pp. 339-417, and Sarkar, pp. 375-413.

168 Burke and Quraishi, pp. 418-419. Labour had gained a substantive majority in the British elections, forming the new government on 26 July 1945, and it wanted “quick action irrespective of the problems that had to be faced.” With riots and mutinies within the Indian forces in early 1946, the need for a speedy solution before the loyalty of the Indian military—and its usefulness as a coercive force to maintain order—dissipated completely. Even Congress was alarmed by these disturbances, p. 421.
communists (which, in several provinces, became their principal opponents) and from the Akali Dal (the Sikh party in the Punjab). "The most significant feature of the elections, however, was the prevalence of communal voting ... "

It was a sign that communalism, rather than being subsumed into the nationalism that was supposedly driving the demands for independence, was actually intensifying, as the public began to realize what the future might hold. The pace, scope, and ferocity of communal violence steadily increased, especially after British Prime Minister Attlee made a statement on 20 February 1947 that Britain would be handing over power no "later than June 1948." While the Indian leaders continued to squabble over to whom the power would be handed,

At street level ... the prospect of the British leaving India in the near future intensified the communal war of succession, especially in the Punjab ... [where] Hindu and Muslim 'private armies' in the form of the RSSS and Muslim League National Guards were being trained for fighting.

While the new Viceroy, Lord Louis Mountbatten, tried to find some solution to the political crisis in Delhi, the Punjab "burst into flames of communal rioting and destruction" as Muslims,

169By now, the leader of the Sikhs, Tara Singh, held the position "that the Sikhs could accept Pakistan only if the Muslims agreed to a separate Sikh state," a policy that complicated an already hideously complex situation, Burke and Quraishi, p. 417.

170Sarkar, pp. 426-427. See also Burke and Quraishi, pp. 427-428. There were "reports of Hindu-Muslim riots, and of 'poisonous propaganda, especially in the Punjab' which increased as the election campaigns 'heated up,'" Wolpert, Jinnah, p. 254.

171Beginning with "Direct Action Day" (launched by Jinnah on 16 August 1946 to demonstrate the League's frustration with the progress of negotiations), which actually lasted a week, and became known as the "Great Killing." In the first 3 days, more than 5,000 were killed, 20,000 injured, and 100,000 made homeless in Calcutta. From there, it spread across northern India, and uncounted thousands--Hindu and Muslim--died, Wolpert, History of India, p. 344. Before it was all over, after independence had actually come and gone, the communal violence would claim millions of lives.

172Burke and Quraishi, p. 470.

173Ibid., p. 476. RSSS was the Rashtriya Swayam Sewak Sangh, affiliated with the Hindu Mahasabha.
Hindus, and Sikhs (urged on by their local leaders) took to the streets in an orgy of violence.\textsuperscript{174}

By September, eastern Bengal was ablaze with murder, arson, and rape as Muslim gangs attacked Hindus. As refugees poured into the neighbouring (predominantly Hindu) province of Bihar, Muslims there fell victim to Hindu mobs. It was an endless cycle of revenge. Gandhi threw himself into the vortex, travelling through east Bengal to attempt, by his presence, to staunch the bloodshed. Called upon by Muslims to attend to their distress in Bihar, he sent a manifesto to the Bihari Hindus, admonishing them for being no better than the Muslims in Bengal:

\begin{quote}
\textit{a bad act of one party is no justification for a similar act by the opposing party ... Is it nationalism to seek barbarously to crush the fourteen per cent of the Muslims in Bihar? The misdeeds of the Bihari Hindus may justify Quad-e-Azam [great leader] Jinnah’s taunt that Congress is a Hindu organization in spite of its boast that it has in its ranks a few Sikhs, Muslims, Christians, Parsis and others ... Let not Bihar, which has done so much to raise the prestige of Congress, be the first to dig its grave.}
\end{quote}

Walking from village to village in eastern Bengal, Gandhi even exhorted the Hindus to defend themselves against the violence, urging them to not stand by while their women were attacked, calling them “degraded ... by such cowardice.”\textsuperscript{175} It is an indication of the severity of the problem that Gandhi himself would advocate the abandonment of his passive, non-violent ideals.

However, it was too late, now, even for Gandhi to have much of an impact. On his pilgrimage through Bengal, he was met with hostility, expressed verbally and physically.\textsuperscript{176} By

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{174}Wolpert, \textit{History of India}, pp. 345-346. Mountbatten had arrived on 22 March 1947, to take over the final stage from the exhausted previous Viceroy, Field Marshal Archibald Wavell.
\item \textsuperscript{175}Chadha, pp. 417-420. Gandhi’s distress was overwhelming, he noted that he had “never experienced such darkness in [his] life,” p. 421.
\item \textsuperscript{176}Ibid., p. 423. Muslims boycotted his prayer meetings, “hung threatening placards on his route and advised the peasantry to keep away from him.” His path was “sometimes strewed [with] broken glass, brambles and filth” that the barefooted Mahatma had to walk over.
\end{itemize}
the summer of 1947, it was clear that

Gandhi's hold over the Congress and the masses had weakened considerably. Most of his mail was abusive and hateful. ... Hindus accused him of being partial to Muslims ... [who, in turn] demanded that he stop obstructing the creation of Pakistan. The nation was not responding to the Mahatma's plea for peace and brotherhood.

Asked by a Swedish journalist how he felt about India finally achieving "the freedom and independence" that he had fought for for so long, when it seemed as if India at this point [was] no longer following [his] way ... Gandhi looked at her very sternly and said: 'Madam, you may write in your paper that India has never followed my way.'

It was a tragic, yet realistic, recognition that his dream of non-violence and brotherhood was not to be realized.

At the same time, the realization hit the other leaders that the communal violence, more than all the rhetorical arguments that Jinnah could bring to bear, was a convincing argument that India was, indeed, two nations, if not more.

Private armies were tramping through rural as well as urban centers, half a million Muslim League "green shirts" and Congress "red shirts," the Hindu mahasabhas' [sic] "army of Shiva," and Sikh "soldiers of Khalistan" each marching under a banner of "God" to murder their "godless enemies," who were mostly helpless innocents.

The only way left to restore some semblance of law and order would be to physically separate the groups: Bengal and Punjab would have to be sundered. Pragmatism conquered idealism, and the concept of partition was accepted by both the INC and the Muslim League. It was announced that Independence Day would come on 15 August 1947, and the final details were

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177Ibid., p. 436.

178Wolpert, Nehru, p. 389.

179The possibility of creating a separate Bangladesh (land of Bengal) or Sikhistan/Khalistan (Sikh land of the pure) was "never seriously considered" by the British, despite demands by extremists, Ibid.
bickered over through the long, bloody summer.\textsuperscript{180}

Yet even after the flags of the new nations were raised in Karachi and Delhi, the “madness” continued, especially in Punjab. While Nehru despaired, and Gandhi fasted, the mobs rampaged on. The violence only began to peter out after it had claimed its most famous victim: Gandhi himself. He had almost been killed in Calcutta, where “Hindu Mahasabha extremists vented their frustrations at this saintly old man because he continued to urge nonviolent love rather than preaching hatred of Muslims.”\textsuperscript{181} When he relocated to Delhi in late 1947, to conduct a fast there against the killings, they tried again, and this time, they succeeded. Determined to “root out [the] poison” that had taken “the light ... out of our lives,” Nehru declared that

Mahatma Gandhi’s death is a grim and urgent reminder of the forces of hate and violence that are at work in our country and which imperil the freedom of the nation and darken her fair name. These forces must be swiftly controlled and rooted out ... There is no place today in India for any organisation preaching violence or communal hatred.\textsuperscript{182}

Thanks to the general sense of revulsion over Gandhi’s final (involuntary) sacrifice for the truncated, but independent India that he had done so much to create, Nehru was able “turn Gandhi’s death into a rallying cry for” secularism. The Hindu nationalist parties were banned,

\textsuperscript{180}Bakshi, pp. 258-260. As Nehru admitted, “... it was the compulsion of events ... A larger India would have constant troubles, constant disintegrating pulls ... and so we accepted ... The truth is that we were tired men ... We saw the fires burning in the Punjab and heard every day of the killings. The plan for partition [sic] offered a way out and we took it,” p. 260. Fifty committees were established to divide the inheritance of the British Raj between its two heirs. While they “were wrangling” over the spoils, up to 15 million people uprooted themselves and trudged (mostly on foot) towards their new homelands, hundreds of thousands would be killed by marauding gangs before they could reach the comparative safety of the new borders. The communal violence became “a holocaust of pain, looting, rape and murder,” Chadha, p. 437.

\textsuperscript{181}Nehru was “sick with horror” after visiting Punjab and seeing for himself the results of the “uncontrollable natural phenomenon” of communal hatred, Wolpert, Nehru, pp. 408-410.

\textsuperscript{182}Ibid., pp. 428-431.
and peace gradually was restored.\textsuperscript{183}

e) Conclusion

India had paid a terrible price for independence: the death of its most venerated leader, and of countless hundreds of thousands of its people; the brutal sundering of Punjab and Bengal to create a separate state for the Muslims; and a deepened legacy of mutual antagonism between Hindus and Muslims that still poisons inter-state and inter-group relations. Gandhi’s vision of one nation and one people proved to be an illusion. Nehru’s ideal of a secular state, wherein all would give their primary allegiance to their common citizenship, was incinerated in the crucible of communal hatred. Jinnah’s hope that a compromise could be reached to accommodate Muslim fears about their future in a Hindu-dominated democracy failed because neither Gandhi nor Nehru was willing to recognize that their dreams did not reflect the realities of India. And the inherent, and long-standing, divisions within the subcontinent became more starkly drawn during the tumultuous prelude to independence, as the process politicized the existing religious, ethnic, linguistic, cultural, and regional conflicts among the indigenous population. As Nehru witnessed Gandhi’s ashes being cast into the river at Allahabad, he expressed an understanding of the key to the problem that India had faced in its transition from colony to independent state:

Democracy demands discipline, tolerance and mutual regard. Freedom demands respect for the freedom of others. This great tragedy has happened because many persons, including some in high places, have poisoned the atmosphere of this country of ours.\textsuperscript{184}

\textsuperscript{183}In a tragic, and ironic, turn of events, after Nehru had convinced the government and the people to turn against the Hindu Mahasabha and the RSSS, many of whom were of the brahmin (priestly) caste, there was a number of anti-brahmin riots throughout India to avenge Gandhi’s death. Nehru then had to admonish “such zealots of secularism not to forget ‘Gandhiji’s teachings,’” p. 431.

\textsuperscript{184}Ibid., p. 432.
It had not been the inherent divisions within India that had led to so much tragedy. It had been the willingness of some to manipulate those divisions for their own purposes, and the neglect of others to come to terms with the inherent dangers of such divisions, that had caused the problem.

The western-educated élite had dreamed of creating on this vast and diverse subcontinent a version of the parliamentary democracy that had evolved in Britain, with the expectation that they would assume their 'rightful place' as the heirs to the British administration and government of India. In order to make this dream a reality, they had to convince the British that the indigenous population of the subcontinent rejected their colonial status and were demanding the right to govern themselves. Realizing that the British did not view them as legitimate representatives of the population, this élite perforce had to demonstrate that they *did* have the support of 'the people.' But 'the people' were predominantly *un*educated, and could not be expected to understand the concept of parliamentary democracy, or even the idea of 'independence' itself. Nor was there any possibility of 'the people' coming to such an understanding within the foreseeable future. However, it *was* possible to foment demonstrations of popular discontent, the prime example, of course, being Gandhi's Salt Satyagraha: focussing on a specific issue that 'the people' *could* understand and using that to organize public protest against the government. By promoting this protest under the leadership of a 'nationalist' party, such as the INC, the élite could claim that the population was demonstrating support for the party itself, thus giving the appearance of public support for the party's demands for self-government. As the British authorities could not reasonably expect to maintain control over the indigenous population through coercion, the appearance of widespread and substantive opposition was sufficient to convince the government that concessions had to be made to the
élite's demands.

However, as it became clear that the process of devolution of power into indigenous hands had begun, and that eventual self-government was no longer a futile dream, an additional factor became added to the process. The leaders of certain groups within the indigenous population became concerned that the interests of those groups (or the interests of their leaders) would not be adequately protected within the new system. This was of particular concern to the Muslim community, of course, but also to other groups who defined themselves (according to their religion, ethnicity, language, culture, or specific region) as distinct from other segments of the Indian subcontinent or its population. Accordingly, these groups formed organizations of their own, rejecting the claims of the INC that it represented all Indians, in order to promote the interests of their particular groups. The very act of proclaiming the distinctiveness of a group serves to emphasize its distinctiveness, thus the divisions within Indian society became more clearly defined.

As the process of devolution continued, and political power was gradually given to the organizations claiming to represent segments of the indigenous population, these organizations evolved into political parties, thereby politicizing the divisions that these parties represented. In order to gain support from the electorate, each party would invariably appeal to the sense of distinctiveness of members of their group, thus encouraging these people to identify themselves by the factors which made them feel distinct from the rest of the population. While this effectively negated the attempt of the INC to create within the population a sense of indigenous nationalism which accorded with the concept of the subcontinent being the 'home' of the Indian 'nation', there was also a darker and dangerous side to this appeal to distinctiveness. With the
competition for political power becoming more intense as independence grew closer, the rhetoric of appeal became increasingly antagonistic. The resultant atmosphere of ‘us’ and ‘them’ provided the fuel for the outbreaks of inter-group violence, which, in turn, added even more fuel to the antagonism.

The culmination, of course, was the apparent legitimization of the assertion that the INC did not represent ‘all’ India, and that India was, in fact, not one ‘nation’ but many. Pakistan had become a reality long before the borders were drawn, and the other ‘nations’ within the India that remained would continue to refuse to identify themselves as ‘Indian’. As Nehru realized (if a little late), the atmosphere had been “poisoned” during the period of transition towards independence by the politicization of the inherent divisions within India’s population, and no amount of idealistic rhetoric or demonstrations of saintliness by Gandhi would be an effective antidote.

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185 See Wolpert, A New History of India: for example, Sikhs have long demanded an independent Khalistan (p. 416), the “tribal states” of the north-east (Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, and Tripura) have been the source of considerable unrest (p. 411), there are separatist movements in Uttar Pradesh and Orissa (p. 432) and, of course, the bleeding sore of Jammu-Kashmir (pp. 434-436).
The British had constructed the colony of the Gold Coast by a process of negotiation, military conquest, and unilateral declarations. The foundation for their official involvement had been the Bond of 1844, a document negotiated with some of the Fante and other tribal chiefs which had formalized British jurisdiction in the coastal region. However, the terms of the Bond had been limited to the legitimization of British judicial authority over the areas of British settlement (primarily the forts) and adjacent localities, a nicety that the British had proved willing to ignore as they gradually extended their authority over the coastal region, and then moved inland. Because of the cumulative manner in which the British had eventually combined

1 There is a variety within the sources of ways to spell 'Fante' and 'Asante' ('Fanti', 'Ashante', 'Ashanti'). I will be using 'Fante' and 'Asante' as these appear to be the most widely accepted spellings.

2 The terms of the Bond were brief: "1. Whereas power and jurisdiction have been exercised for and on behalf of Her Majesty the Queen of Great Britain and Ireland, within divers countries and places adjacent to Her Majesty's forts and settlements on the Gold Coast; we, chiefs of countries and places so referred to, adjacent to the said forts and settlements, do hereby acknowledge that power and jurisdiction, and declare that the first objects of law are the protection of individuals and property. 2. Human sacrifices, and other barbarous customs, such as panyarring, are abominations, and contrary to law. 3. Murders, robberies, and other crimes and offences, will be tried and inquired of before the Queen's judicial officers and the chiefs of the districts, moulding the customs of the country to the general principles of British law," Ward, p. 194.

3 They apparently wished to avoid the "embarrassing" possibility of any of the chiefs objecting to a negotiated extension of jurisdiction, so unilaterally declared, in 1874, that the new Legislative Council of the Gold Coast Colony could legislate the extension of "[t]he Queen's powers and jurisdiction" throughout the new "protectorate". The "powers and jurisdiction" were also extended "to include the preservation of peace; the administration of both civil and criminal justice; the establishment and regulation of courts of justice (including native courts); the enactment of laws, 'framed with due regard to native law and customs where they are not repugnant to justice, equity and good conscience'; the hearing of appeals from native tribunals; the apprehension and trial of criminals in any part of the Protectorate; the abolition of human sacrifice, panyarring, judicial torture, and slave trading; measures concerning domestic slavery and pawnage; the protection and encouragement of trade, by means of roads, bridges, telegraphs, and other public works; the settlement of Chiefs' disputes; the promotion of public health and education; the establishment of municipalities; and the raising of revenue," Kimble, pp. 302-303.
the separate segments of the geographical territories of the Gold Coast region, however, these segments remained distinctive even within the colonial state. As members of the indigenous population attempted to create a unified opposition to the continuation of British rule, therefore, this geographical segmentation would prove to be the foundation for political conflict between indigenous groups.

a) The primary stage of indigenous opposition

By the 1850s, even the limited authority ceded by the Bond was being challenged by the Africans, in response to British attempts to expand their judicial rights over the indigenous peoples. In addition, the peoples of the coastal region were increasingly dissatisfied with the military protection provided by the British against their perennial enemy, Asante.4 Resentment about the increased British interference in local affairs and their refusal to allow the coastal tribes to form their own military forces5 united in 1865 under the leadership of the King of Cape Coast, Aggrey, who argued that because the British did not have legal ownership of any of the land of the Gold Coast, they "could not exercise any jurisdiction without the distinct consent of the

4In addition to the increase in judicial interference, the British had tried to solve the revenue problem by imposing a poll tax in 1852, but found this to be highly "unpopular," and withdrew it. Financial difficulties were exacerbated by the impact on coastal trade of a series of "Asante-Fante conflicts" which reduced one of the only sources of revenue the administration had, and made the administration even more reluctant to respond militarily to the Asante incursions. This was not in keeping with the "understanding" formed during the negotiations for the Bond that the British, in exchange, would protect the chiefs and their people. Understandably, they began to believe that they had surrendered some "of their ancient privileges" for nothing -- the promised "protection against their enemies and the provision of modern amenities" were clearly not "forthcoming." Francis Agbodeka, African Politics and British Policy in the Gold Coast, 1868-1900 (London: Longman; Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 1971) pp. 11- 12.

5In response to a threat from Asante in 1863, "educated Fante leaders of the Coast towns ... [demonstrated their] desire ... to build a united army for the defence of the land." The British, however, quickly disbanded the resultant Gold Coast Rifle Volunteer Corp. Ibid., pp. 16- 17.
chiefs and peoples. Other groups along the coast also organized protests against British authority, and, by 1869, these groups had coalesced to form the Fante Confederacy and the Accra Native Confederation, which coordinated their activities to present a united front against the British.

A combination of factors had served to dissipate this threat by 1873, including a lack of funds to maintain the organizations and military failures, but the British also responded actively to what was perceived as being a movement for self-government. The always useful stick and carrot approach was taken, with the carrot being most effective. By granting subsidies to various chiefs, the British made them allies and created divisions within the confederacies. The situation

6"Aggrey's two main concerns were the preservation of the traditional judicial rights and the military question, in connection with which he sought to establish a full-fledged army for the security of the state," Ibid., p. 17. Clearly, the coastal peoples were deeply concerned with the apparent lack of willingness or capacity of the British to protect them from Asante incursions, the only recompense they had believed they were receiving in exchange for granting the British judicial authority, according to the Bond. See also Kimble, pp. 192-221. Aggrey's challenge was a profound problem for the British, whose jurisdiction was dependent upon the consent of the chiefs, according to the Bond. In addition, Aggrey's kingdom of Cape Coast was rapidly becoming the centre of British administration in the region. Aggrey "was the first Chief in the Protectorate openly to express reasoned objections to British encroachment, the first actively to seek—or to be led by—the advice of educated confidants, and the first to send representatives to England to state his case," p. 193. While a Select Committee in London debated the issues, the Governor of the Colony arrested Aggrey and deported him to the colony of Sierra Leone, and the kingship was declared void. Aggrey was allowed to return to Cape Coast in 1869, provided he renounced his kingship, and there he died soon after. However, he had established the precedent of West African demands for self-government, and his example would encourage others, pp. 219-221.

7The formation of the confederacies was the culmination of a series of protests against the British by a number of chiefs in the coastal region, following the example of Aggrey. See Kimble, pp. 222-263; and Agbodeka, pp. 18-31. The chiefs also followed Aggrey's example of using the services of western-educated advisors, as can clearly be seen in the composition of the Mankessim Constitution for the Confederation, and the manner in which it was submitted to the British Government. See "B. Chiefs' Letter Submitting the Fanti Constitution to the Governor-in-Chief," (1871), "C. The Constitution of the Fanti Confederacy," and "D. Proposals for British Assistance and Collaboration from the Leaders of the Fanti Confederation," in Henry S. Wilson, ed., Origins of West African Nationalism (London: Macmillan; New York: St. Martin's Press, 1969) pp. 212-220.

8See Agbodeka, pp. 30-33; and Kimble, pp. 261-262.

9Agbodeka, p. 31. A revival of the practice of paying "stipends" to "chiefs and dignitaries" that had begun in 1844, but had ceased in the early 1860s "on grounds of economy," Agbodeka, p. 16.
also had the effect of promoting an expansionist policy by the British. Alarmed by the challenge to its authority, the British administration determined to enforce that authority even more. As a result, the British reacted aggressively to an invasion of the coastal region by the Asante in 1873, a response that culminated in the Asante War of 1873-4 and in the conquest of Asante itself (and its ultimate annexation in 1902). The successful foray against the Asante also served to convince the coastal tribes that the British would protect them against the Asante, and that armed resistance by themselves was no longer a viable option. While violent outbreaks would continue, especially in Asante and the Volta region, from now on, opposition to British policies would be channelled into political organizations.

For many years, the primary organization would be the Aborigines' Rights Protection

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10Summarized by the Governor in a letter to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, in response to the Fante Confederation missives: "I therefore concur with the members of the Confederation that an important change is required; either a scheme of native government, with certain financial and judicial powers, should be recognized, or steps should be taken to gradually introduce throughout the Protectorate the same system of Government that exists in the other Crown Colonies ... I therefore recommend to your Lordship to adopt that of extending the system of Colonial Administration," "E. Pope-Hennessy's Viewpoint," in Wilson, pp. 221-222. This was seen as the appropriate solution to the problem of conflicting authority in the Gold Coast, and the justification for the creation of the Colony in 1874. Again, this was a unilateral decision, so as to avoid the possible embarrassment of rejection by the chiefs of negotiations to determine the extent of British authority. See Kimble, pp. 302-303.


12Agbodeka, p. 56.

13The outbreaks were frequently inter-African, but inevitably involved the British as the "losers" often sought British protection. The Asante, for example, began a war against the Dwaben in 1875, and again threatened the coast in 1881. Relations between the Asante and the British could not be said to have "settled down" until the arrest and deportation of the Asante king in 1896, and the subsequent annexation of the territory, Wilks, pp. 515-548. See also Kimble, pp. 315-323. In the Volta region, the British attempts to expand jurisdiction in the east met sustained violent opposition, and the region was not "pacified" until 1889, Agbodeka, pp. 62-76.
Society (ARPS), established in 1897. Encouraged by the Aborigines' Protection Society in London, the meetings being held in the Cape Coast region to discuss a response to land-ownership legislation being implemented by the administration of Gold Coast Colony brought together "the kings, chiefs and people" in a common cause. To promote that cause, and "to deal with other matters relating to representation and taxation," they founded the ARPS. While anyone could join the Society, its activities were directed by an elected Committee of seven officers. The Committee proved to be very effective, sending a delegation to London to argue successfully against the proposed legislation, and in organizing opposition on other issues. Indeed, so well did it represent the views of the chiefs and the people that, until elected provincial councils were established in 1925, it was "recognized by the governor as a correct channel of local opinion."

14 Although "centred primarily in Cape Coast and the Western Province," it still represented "the first organized protest on anything approaching a national scale in the Gold Coast," Kimble, p. 330.

15 The ARPS had long been known "for its tireless campaigning on humanitarian and political issues affecting Africans," and actively promoted "united action," Ibid., pp. 330-331.

16 This was the Lands Bill of 1897, which was "to give the Crown rights of administration" over "public land ... African rights of ownership would no longer be automatically recognized." The proposal fuelled widespread opposition, not surprisingly, Kimble, pp. 340-355. The editor of The Gold Coast Chronicle pointed out that "this country has never been conquered or ceded to Her Majesty's Government ... [nor has Her Majesty laid] claim to the soil of this Colony which belonged to the people of the Gold Coast." 27 May 1897, as quoted in Kimble, pp. 340-341.

17 Agbodeka, p. 143.

18 Agbodeka, p. 143; see also Kimble, p. 341.

19 The Society also established its own newspaper, The Gold Coast Aborigines, to keep the people informed, and to raise support for the Society and its activities, including those of the delegation sent to London to protest the Land Bill, Agbodeka, pp. 144-146. Although "it was the educated, politically-conscious group [on the coast] who took the initiative in forming the Society," they ensured that as many chiefs were involved as possible, to counter the administration's suspicion and dislike of "scholars" protests, Kimble, pp. 342-343.

20 Bourret, p. 40. Although not all of the governors were enthused about the ARPS. A new governor in 1901, Sir Matthew Nathan, demanded "to know when the A.R.P.S. was formed, who were its members, the dates
While there was a consensus in "local opinion," the ARPS flourished, uniting both traditional and educated elites in its attempts to protect the rights of the people of Gold Coast Colony. The consensus was broken, however, by the terms of the 1925 Constitution, which established partially elected councils in each of the three provinces of the coastal region. Although this minor devolutionary step had been taken in response to increasing demands for indigenous participation in government, the system it established effectively institutionalized the authority of the chiefs, to the dismay of the educated élite, who had hoped that such reforms would have reflected a greater appreciation of their status as "modernists". In spite of the resultant breach between the educated élite and the chiefs, however, the upper-class status that they shared eventually drew them back together and the majority of the educated élite agreed to participate in the new system.

21 There was to be a new Legislative Council of 30 members, 16 officials (including the Governor), and 14 non-officials (5 European and 9 elected Africans). Of the elected Africans, 3 were to represent the municipalities of Accra, Cape Coast, and Sekondi, and the other 6 "were to be elected by three Provincial Councils of Chiefs," 1 from the Western Province, 2 from the Central Province, and 3 from the Eastern Province ("one from each of the three main language groups"), Kimble, pp. 441-442.

22 The Provincial Councils gave the chiefs "a prominence on a national level quite out of keeping with their traditional limits ... [and] placed the chiefs at a crucial position between central and local political structures," Apter, p. 134-135.

23 Although there was considerable opposition at first, including mass meetings, "opposition ... was generally expressed cautiously, to avoid offending the Chiefs," Kimble, p. 443. The sticking point for the educated class was that the chiefs would have twice the representation that they did in the Legislative Council, and they were afraid that the Provincial Councils of Chiefs would "use their increased power to hold up the political development of the Gold Coast," Bourret, p. 49. The disagreement between the chiefs and the intelligentsia was fundamentally, however, one of means -- they all wanted "eventual autonomy" from the British, a common cause that united them. Even J.E. Casely-Hayford, the founder of the British West African Congress, became reconciled to the Provincial Councils, allying with the leader of the chiefs, Nana Sir Ofori Atta in 1929 "to bring about a fusion of the hitherto divided interests" of the upper class, Bourret, pp. 54-55.
The minority that refused to be reconciled to the chiefs, or to the new system, retained the organization of the ARPS, and turned it into a more radical association.\textsuperscript{24} Coordinating with the West African National Congress (established in 1920 by representatives from Sierra Leone, the Gold Coast, Gambia, and Nigeria),\textsuperscript{25} the ARPS mounted a protest campaign against the 1925 Constitution, sending delegates to London to voice their opposition. Although they received some support from M.P.s, the delegation was largely ignored by the Colonial Office and by the colonial administration,\textsuperscript{26} which claimed that the Gold Coast was now amply represented by the indigenous members of the new councils.\textsuperscript{27}

In the period from 1925 to 1946, when a new constitution was framed, the new councils

\textsuperscript{24}Bourret, p. 55. This "rump" of the ARPS. were regarded as "ardent nationalists who refused to participate in British-ordained political structures," Apter, p. 36. The split within the ARPS. had begun in 1921, when it became clear that there were "two opposing factions" in the organization. See Kimble, pp. 396-398.

\textsuperscript{25}See Kimble, pp. 374-403. Also known as the National Congress of British West Africa, it shared much in common with the early Indian National Congress, as a small group of educated elite which met regularly to discuss constitutional reform and greater indigenous participation in administration and government. Its headquarters were in Sekondi, Gold Coast, home of its prime mover J.E. Casely-Hayford, and meetings were held at alternate sites in the British colonies of West Africa. It sent delegations to London, to argue its case, and "claimed [to represent] 'the intelligentsia and the advanced thought' of British West Africa and [stand] for the fundamental principles 'that have always actuated communities that have arrived at the stage of national consciousness'. Furthermore, it also claimed to represent the bulk of the indigenous inhabitants ... with the inherent right to submit complaints and propose reforms," pp. 387-388. The Congress was immediately opposed by the chiefs, led by Nana Ofori Atta, who "were determined ... that their own system of government should not be superseded by any other, nor disturbed in any way," p. 389. The dispute between the educated elite and the chiefs over which group was the legitimate representative of "the people" had thus begun, and would continue with varying degrees of ferocity until (and beyond) independence. The Congress disintegrated after Casely-Hayford's death in 1930, and its aim of West African unity was never fulfilled, as nationalist leaders in each colony preferred to focus on political reforms within their own territories. However, its brief existence had profoundly contributed to the debate on political developments in West Africa, pp. 402-403.

\textsuperscript{26}Kimble, pp. 449-451.

\textsuperscript{27}The 1925 Constitution was seen as "a challenge to nationalist leaders to make the new Legislative Council work, before they could reasonably present any fresh constitutional demands ... although the latest reforms were not entirely what they had hoped for, sufficient ground had been gained to make necessary a period of consolidation ... the Legislative Council had now come to be generally accepted as a forum for the expression of national opinion, and as a possible basis for responsible African government," Kimble, p. 403.
did seem to function as intended. The chiefs especially were apparently content with the British policy of gradual devolution of power, and willing, when possible, to be cooperative rather than confrontational (much like the early leaders of the Indian National Congress), as were the older members of the educated élite. Although some of the younger members continued to demand immediate self-government, their relatively low status ensured that they were ineffective in either appropriating support from the followers of the chiefs and educated élite or in eliciting a response from the colonial administration. Their time would come, as we shall see, but it was not yet.

With the exception of an occasional (but often powerful) economic-based protest, this period was relatively uneventful in the coastal region of the colony. As the urban centres were organized as municipalities, the educated élite gained positions in the administration and apprenticed as politicians, frequently operating as agents for the chiefs in their dealings with the colonial government.

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28 This is not to say that the years between 1925 and 1946 were without disputes between the British administration and the African members of the Legislative Council, the chiefs, and the educated élite. Debates over legislation often demonstrated the differing viewpoints between Africans and the British. See Bourret, pp. 50-71. This had the effect of solidifying "[t]he sympathy between the chiefs and the educated classes," as they increasingly saw themselves as united against the British. And the arenas for political debate also grew, with the establishment in the late 1930s of the Gold Coast Youth Conference and the Achimota Discussion Group, the latter providing a means for "representatives of the missions, the government, the provincial councils, and private citizens" to meet and discuss issues, p. 69.

29 Bourret, p. 70. The ARPS. continued to contest the leadership of the chiefs and the majority of the educated élite, sending their own delegation to London in 1934-35 to protest the proposed Waterworks Bill and Sedition code ordinance, pp. 69-70.

30 For example, the 1937-38 boycott over cocoa prices, led by the chiefs and supported "almost 100 per cent" by all Africans, including the educated élite, Bourret, pp. 66-68.

31 Although the number of Africans in positions in the administration remained lamentably small until after the Second World War (Bourret, pp. 68-69), the intelligentsia did function within the municipal, village, and legislative councils in this period. This activity was actually encouraged by the British, as a means of channelling their energies into productive avenues. It was believed that "they could use their influence and
Meanwhile, in Asante and the Northern Region the policy of indirect rule maintained (and in many ways strengthened) the authority of the chiefs and their councils. Due to the comparative lack of educational development in these areas, the growth of a "westernized" élite group was delayed and the establishment of nationalist parties would not occur until after 1946.

During the 1940s, a series of political reforms were instituted by the Colonial Office, culminating in the Burns Constitution of 1946. In essence, this established for the first time an indigenous majority in the Legislative Council, a Council which now represented both Gold Coast Colony and Asante. Only the members representing the municipalities (Accra, Cape Coast, Sekondi-Takoradi, and Kumasi) were directly elected, the nine provincial members being selected by provincial councils and the Asante Confederacy Council. Although the Legislative Council that it established was still primarily an advisory body, the Constitution was perceived as a substantive movement in the direction of eventual self-government, at least by the British.

b) The formation of the first 'nationalist' party

training to raise the standard of native administration," Ibid., p. 63.


33See Staniland, pp. 54-56, 98-101. Although "the Ashantis were eager for education ... [and] clamoured for government schools," even in the 1920s, there were only 30 missionary schools in the region, Bourret, p. 74.

34Although the arrangements also seemed to please the chiefs, for they had been given "extra-traditional authority." Apter, pp. 141-144.
Others were less impressed, however. A small group of the educated élite, taking encouragement from the example set by the Congress in India, which now appeared to be fulfilling its goal of independence, began to prepare for their own penultimate phase. In 1947, the United Gold Coast Convention was established, with the avowed aim that "by all legitimate and constitutional means the direction and control of government should pass into the hands of the people and their chiefs in the shortest possible time."35 It was soon apparent, however, that by "the people," the UGCC meant their own select group of people -- the educated, westernized élite -- and not the common people or even the chiefs. This was made clear in the declaration that one of the UGCC's aims was "to ensure that persons elected to represent the people and their natural rulers in the present Legislative Council shall be elected by reason of their competence ...," a criteria which suggested that the chiefs, while "natural rulers," were not necessarily appropriate representatives to operate within a western-style legislative body.36 The members of the UGCC, many of them lawyers,37 manifestly perceived themselves to be the truly "competent" class in this context, and began the process of creating an organization which would promote their status as the natural and logical inheritors of political power from the British colonial administration.

To facilitate the establishment of this organization, the members of the Working Committee of the UGCC required the services of a secretary, someone who could devote his

35Austin, pp. 52-53.

36Ibid., p. 53.

37Of the ten "leading members," seven were lawyers, Austin, n. 7, p. 52.
time and energy to the cause.38 There were by now a variety of societies and groups within the colony, many of which were clearly primed for unifying under a nationalist banner, and the UGCC was expectant of their support, in particular, from the "youth" groups.39 In the context of the Gold Coast (including Asanti), "youth" referred not as much to age as to status: the so-called "youngmen" were those without power within the traditional system of chiefs and councils.40 Many of them, however, had by now received at least an elementary education, and, as a group, were increasingly successful participants in the modernizing economy, factors which had diminished their allegiance to the traditional system.41 As a result, they were ripe for exploitation as supporters of an organization which offered them a greater stake in the political and economic affairs of the colony, and of the independent state which would evolve from it, hopefully in the near future.

While the UGCC recognized the inherent potential support that the "youngmen" could provide, they did not fully appreciate that the "youngmen" were far more radical than the UGCC.42 It would be their new secretary, taken into their nest like a cuckoo, who would harness the energy of the "youngmen" to a nationalist independence movement.

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38Ibid., p. 53.

39Ibid., pp. 55-57.


41This was even true in the deeply traditional Asante region, where the Asante Youth Association were, by 1947, demanding the political abdication of the chiefs, Austin, pp. 56-57.

42This would become readily apparent during the split between Nkrumah and the U.G.C.C. in 1949, Austin, p. 82.
(i) Nkrumah in the wings

The man himself, Kwame Nkrumah, harboured few illusions about the long-term compatibility of his "revolutionary ... ideas" and the "reactionary course" of the UGCC. When first approached, he had believed that it would be "quite useless to associate [himself] with a movement backed almost entirely by ... middle-class lawyers and merchants." Even though he "concluded that the sponsors of the movement [UGCC] were men whose political philosophy was contrary to the political aspirations of the people of the Gold Coast," he eventually decided to accept the offer, and returned to the colony in late 1947 to take up his duties.43

Nkrumah had been abroad for twelve years,44 attending university in the United States and in England, a considerable achievement for someone of his background. Although he had a "claim to two stools or chieftaincies," through his matrilineal line,45 his family's resources were limited. He had been born in a tiny village on the south-west coast of the colony, the only child of one of his father's wives. His father was a small-scale goldsmith and was often away peddling his wares in the surrounding villages. His mother, though illiterate herself, was determined that her son received an education, and sent him to the local missionary school.46 Even though poverty would plague his academic career, Nkrumah eventually graduated from the Prince of Wales' College at Achimota and began a teaching career.47 In 1935, he continued his education

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44Ibid., p. 66.
46Ibid., pp. 3-10.
at Lincoln University in the U.S., obtaining Bachelor degrees in economics, sociology, and theology, and a Master's degree in education. He then began a PhD. in philosophy, but financial difficulties and ill health delayed his progress, and at the end of the Second World War, he decided to relocate to London in order to complete his degree and to study law.\textsuperscript{48}

Nkrumah's education and career as a nationalist had run in parallel with his academic years. It was at college in Achimota that his "nationalism was first aroused," by Dr. Kwegyir Aggrey, the "assistant vice-principal and the first African member of the staff." However, he disagreed with Aggrey's belief that "the black and white races should work together," already convinced "that only a free and independent people--a people with a government of their own ..." could "claim" that equality necessary to be able to function in "harmony" with other races.\textsuperscript{49}

It was also at Achimota that he discovered his talent for persuasion, and for organization. After Aggrey's death, Nkrumah was instrumental in the formation of a Students' Society in Aggrey's honour, which functioned as "a debating society." As "a kind of game," Nkrumah would argue the minority view, developing his "'gift of the gab'" by "frequently converting many of [his] opponents to the point of view that [he] had conveniently supported." Together with the realization that, in his role as a prefect at the college, he "never had trouble in dealing with people and found that they were invariably co-operative and ready to do as [he] asked," Nkrumah learned how to use his "most valuable discovery," and acknowledged the primacy of

\textsuperscript{48}Ibid., 28-48.

\textsuperscript{49}Ibid., p. 14. Nkrumah made no reference at this point to the writings of other African leaders, such as J.E. Casely Hayford or Edward Wilmot Blyden, on this issue, though he did mention Marcus Garvey's "principle of 'Africa for the Africans,'" which his mentor, Dr. Aggrey, "never hesitated to attack." Given his opinion that Aggrey's idea was not "practicable" it would seem that Nkrumah himself was more inclined towards Garvey's ideas.
these talents in the "struggle" to come.  

After graduation, he continued to put these talents to work, organizing a Teachers' Association while employed at his first school at Elmina, and "literary societies" at his next posting in Axim. It was at Axim that he was introduced to politics, by the secretary of the National Congress of British West Africa, with whom he "had many long conversations."

His "nationalism was also revived ... through articles written in The African Morning Post by Nnamdi Azikiwe,"whom he "had first met ... [at] a meeting of the Gold Coast Teachers' Association."  

It had been as a result of the examples of men such as Azikiwe, and the encouragement of Aggrey and others, that Nkrumah had determined to continue his education in the United States. Through careful saving, and the generosity of several relatives, he was finally able to afford passage to the U.S. via England. While in London to obtain his visa, he learned of the Italian invasion of Ethiopia, news to which he had a profound reaction:

"it was almost as if the whole of London had suddenly declared war on me personally. For the next few minutes I could do nothing but glare at each impassive face wondering if those people could possibly realise the wickedness of colonialism, and praying that the day might come when I could play my part in bringing about the downfall of such a system. My nationalism surged to the fore; I was ready and willing to go through hell itself, if need be, in order to achieve my object."  

50 Ibid., p. 19.
51 Ibid., p. 21.
52 Ibid., p. 22.
53 Ibid., pp. 24-25.
54 Ibid., p. 27.
Although his bitterness towards whites would be tempered by the hospitality and friendliness of individuals he met on his journeys, the ferocity of his anti-colonialism would not fade. And his experiences of racial segregation in America\(^5^5\) made him receptive to the pan-African ideology of Marcus Garvey, whose "book ... did more than any other to fire [his] enthusiasm" to develop "a formula by which the whole colonial question and the problem of imperialism could be solved."\(^5^6\)

In spite of the onerous tasks of completing his studies and supporting himself, Nkrumah had devoted much of his time in America to these issues. He "helped to set up an African Studies Section" at the University of Pennsylvania, and organized "the African Students' Association of America and Canada," and "arranged for the publication of ... [its] official newspaper ... the *African Interpreter*.\(^5^7\) It was in response to the "internal conflict between the Nigerian and Gold Coast elements" within the Association that Nkrumah's adherence to the pan-African ideal had its first impact. Convinced that

unless territorial freedom was ultimately linked up with the Pan African movement for the liberation of the whole African continent, there would be no hope of freedom and equality for the African and for people of African descent in any part of the world,

Nkrumah ensured that the ideal "of West African unity ... became the accepted philosophy of the ... Association." Students were directed

... that when they returned to their respective territories they should work hard politically to organise particular areas, but that in so doing they should maintain close contact with the political activities of their territories. By this means they would maintain

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\(^5^5\)He "was so shocked that [he] could not move" at an encounter in Baltimore, Ibid., pp. 42-43.

\(^5^6\) Ibid., p. 45.

\(^5^7\) Ibid., p. 43.
not only unity within their own territories, but would pave the way for unity among all the territories in West Africa.\(^{58}\)

Nkrumah himself would endeavour to follow this directive once he returned to his homeland; in the meantime, his "aim was to learn the technique of organisation."\(^{59}\)

He took the opportunity to "acquaint [himself] with as many political organisations in the United States as [he] could," casting his net wide enough to encompass both Republicans and Trotskyites (from whom he "learned how an underground movement worked"). He was also in contact with... the Council on African Affairs, the Committee on Africa, the Committee on War and Peace Aims, the Committee on African Students, the Special Research Council of the National Association for the Advancement of Coloured People and the Urban League.\(^{60}\)

In addition to these practical examples of political organizations, he sought enlightenment in the theories of others, reading "Hegel, Karl Marx, Engels, Lenin and Mazzini... [whose] writings... did much to influence [him] in [his] revolutionary ideas and activities," being "particularly impressed" by Marx and Lenin.\(^{61}\)

The culmination of all this study came in the form of a pamphlet, composed while he was still in America, but not published (due to lack of funds) until he was in England in 1947. In *Towards Colonial Freedom*, subtitled "Africa in the struggle against world imperialism," the influence of Marx and Lenin can clearly be discerned. Nkrumah's thesis was that "[t]he basis of
colonial territorial dependence is economic, but the basis of the solution of the problem is political." Only through political action would there be "hope of freedom and independence," and the key to this was the "Organization of the Colonial Masses." It is apparent, in the pamphlet, that Nkrumah had already formulated the model which he would attempt to implement in the Gold Coast. He wrote:

The duty of any worthwhile colonial movement for national liberation, however, must be the organization of labour and of youth; and the abolition of political illiteracy. This should be accomplished through mass political education which keeps in constant contact with the masses of colonial peoples. This type of education should do away with that kind of intelligentsia who have become the very architects of colonial enslavement ... The organization must root itself and secure its basis and strength in the labour movement, the farmers (the workers and peasantry) and the youth ... It must have its own press. It cannot live separately from, nor deviate from the aims and aspirations of the masses, the organized force of labour, the organized farmers, and the responsible and cogent organization of youth. The pamphlet concluded with the exhortation: "PEOPLES OF THE COLONIES, UNITE: The working men of all countries are behind you," a sentiment Nkrumah found an opportunity to repeat in the "Declaration to the Colonial Peoples of the World," adopted by the Pan-African Congress of 1945 (COLONIAL AND SUBJECT PEOPLES OF THE WORLD - UNITE!), which also reiterated his belief that "there is only one road to effective action - the organization of the masses."

Although Nkrumah had already found his formula, its implementation would have to be

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63 Ibid., pp. 41-42.
64 Ibid., p. 43.
65 Ibid., pp. 44-45.
postponed until his return to the Gold Coast. Meanwhile, in London, he continued his involvement "with all political movements and parties," being particularly impressed by the English Communist Party's leaders. He joined the West African Students' Union, becoming its vice-president, and "[a]fter much organisation, the Union became an effective body both in taking care of new students ... and also in agitating for better conditions in West Africa by petitions to the Colonial Office." He also became engaged in the organization of the Fifth Pan African Congress in Manchester in 1945, writing one of the two declarations adopted by the Congress. Greatly excited and encouraged by what he saw as an "outlet for African nationalism and ... the awakening of African political consciousness" demonstrated at the Congress, Nkrumah worked with others (such as George Padmore and Jomo Kenyatta) to establish an organization to continue the momentum. He was appointed general secretary of the Working Committee, to set up a headquarters of the Congress in London "to act as a kind of clearing house for the various political movements that would take shape in the colonies." He also became the secretary of the West African National Secretariat, an associated organization that would focus on "directing the programme of self-government for the West African colonies, British as well as French." Both organizations soon had monthly papers, *The New African* of the West African National Secretariat, and *Pan Africa* of the Pan African Federation (established

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67 Ibid., pp. 52-53.
68 Ibid., p. 54.
69 Ibid.
70 Ibid., p. 55.
by Kenyatta and others in Manchester). Although lack of funding would soon curtail publication, Nkrumah's realization of the "necessity of a newspaper as an official organ ... to spread some of the ideas" of the organization was in accordance with the model of action delineated in *Towards Colonial Freedom*.

During the two years he spent in England, Nkrumah made full use of his opportunities to develop his organizational skills and to gain valuable experience in the practical application of his political theories. He also found time for an unconventional episode involving a quasi-secret organization known as The Circle. This was "a vanguard group - a political cadre - [whose purpose was] to train for revolutionary work in any part of the African continent." Membership was restricted to "those who were ideologically sound, and ... dedicated to the liberation struggle," and cost the substantial sum of seven guineas. The group's focus was "mainly West African unity," but this was seen "as merely a first step leading eventually to the unification of the entire African continent."

Although Nkrumah, in his explanation of this episode, minimized his personal contribution to the establishment of this organization, and the composition of its creed, it is

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71Ibid., pp. 56-57.

72Kwame Nkrumah, *Revolutionary Path* (New York: International Publishers, 1973) pp. 46-47. See pages 47-51 for the full "DOCUMENT KNOWN AS THE CIRCLE." Nkrumah also discussed this in his *Autobiography*, pp. 60-61, and provided the full "DOCUMENT" in an appendix. Even though "The Circle" was operational for only a short time, Nkrumah evidently considered "The Document" important enough to include in full in two publications.

73For example, in the *Autobiography*, he explained that one of the student groups which "met regularly for discussions at the headquarters" of the West African National Secretariat "became the vanguard group and we called ourselves 'The Circle.'" He was the chairman of this group, p. 60. In *Revolutionary Path*, it was explained "as a result of the regular meetings of groups of students and others who supported the West African National Secretariat" and that a "need was felt for a vanguard group," of which he "was made chairman," p. 46. In both accounts, the plural pronoun ("we, " "our, " "us," and "they") was used to describe decision-making and activities.
clear that he was the force behind it. Not only was he its chairman, one of its "laws" was that members must "accept the Leadership of Kwame Nkrumah." Not surprisingly, although "The Circle was very active for a time, .... [it] disintegrated" when Nkrumah left England in 1947. While The Circle was short-lived, its aims and laws can serve as a clear indication of Nkrumah's own political agenda.

Several factors are immediately apparent. There is an avowed dedication to West African (and pan-African) unity, and to the creation of "African Socialist Republics." There is a repeated emphasis on the necessity for "a stable organization of trained, selected and trusted men" to lead the struggle for independence, and to ensure that the masses are not led "astray." These men must be totally dedicated to the cause, absolutely loyal and obedient to the leader (Nkrumah), and must, "except as a last resort, avoid the use of violence." There is also a quasi-religious aspect to this devotion to the leader and the cause: Law 6 of The Circle required fasting once a month, and daily meditation "on the cause." While this appears to be a curious addition to a political creed, by "elevating" the cause to a crusade, the absolutism of loyalty, obedience, and dedication is made indisputable.

However, even though such documentation illustrates, at the very least, a disposition for

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74Revolutionary Path, p. 48 (Law #7).
75Ibid., p. 47.
76Ibid., pp. 47-50; see also Appendix B in Autobiography, pp. 303-304. In many ways, Nkrumah constructed his position as 'Leader' in accordance with the traditional paradigm of chieftaincy, especially with regard to the quasi-religious aspects. Indeed, Apter claimed that the traditional system provided "the orientational base out of which the charismatic authority of Nkrumah .. developed." However, traditional chiefs could not command absolute loyalty and obedience: traditionally, a chief was 'chosen' by the people, and could be 'destoole', or removed from office, an eventuality that Nkrumah did not apparently believe necessary to accommodate in his own case. See Apter, pp. 104-118.
dictatorial control on the part of Nkrumah, he was reluctant to overtly acknowledge this. He repeatedly used the collective pronoun to describe decision-making, and asserted that choices were made only "after consultation" with the group. For example, following an explanation of his repugnance for the aims and attitudes of the members of the UGCC, he rationalized his admitted desire to return to the Gold Coast to become "actively engaged in the national liberation struggle" by asserting that "the West African National Secretariat ... decided that it was perhaps best for [him] to accept the offer."

Thus, in spite of the conviction that his employment by the UGCC would be short-term, given that the ideological conflict between them would inevitably "make it impossible for [him] to work with them," Nkrumah accepted the terms of office and remuneration (and requested and received additional funds for travelling expenses), and returned to the Gold Coast to become the secretary of the UGCC in late 1947.

(ii) The cuckoo in the 'nationalist' nest

At first, it seemed that the UGCC's belief that Nkrumah could help them solve "the problem of how to reconcile the leadership of the intelligentsia with the broad masses of the people," and their confidence in his organizational abilities would be amply fulfilled. On his

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77See note 73 above.

78*Revolutionary Path*, p. 51; see also *Autobiography*, p. 61.

79*Autobiography*, p. 62; see also *Revolutionary Path*, p. 51.

80*Autobiography*, pp. 62-63; see also *Revolutionary Path*, p. 51 (although he did not mention the financial assistance in this account).

81*Autobiography*, p. 61; see also *Revolutionary Path*, p. 51.
arrival, Nkrumah was assured by the first African he met (an immigration officer) that "they, the Africans, had heard so much about [him], that [he] was coming back to [his] country to help them and that they had been waiting anxiously for [his] arrival...." At his first public meeting, "[t]he room was packed ... [by] a representative gathering of the working class of the country," who appeared, to Nkrumah, to be "ready to support any cause that would better their conditions." He then met with the Working Committee of the UGCC, and began work. By January of 1948, he had established a central office and had drawn up a plan of action for the organization to follow. The plan suggested that the Working Committee set up a "Shadow Cabinet," within its membership "to study the jobs of the various ministries" in preparation for independence. It also delineated a three-stage schedule for organization:

First Period:
(a) Co-ordination of all the various organisations under the United Gold Coast Convention: i.e. apart from individual Membership of the various Political, Social, Educational, Farmers' and Women's Organisations as well as Native Societies, Trade Unions, Co-operative Societies, etc., should be asked to affiliate to the Convention.
(b) The consolidation of branches already formed and the establishment of branches in every town and village of the country...

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82 Autobiography, p. 66.
83 Ibid., pp. 69-70.
84 Ibid., p. 70. This first meeting between Nkrumah and the Working Committee was very illuminating. The promised remuneration of one "hundred pounds a month and [the use of a] car" proved to have been "bait" as the UGCC "(which ... lacked any kind of programme or mass organisation) had no funds at all and had not even attempted to open a banking account." When Nkrumah offered to work for room and board, "[t]he whole roomful of them turned to look at [him] in astonishment. As each one was making an income of around two to three thousand a year, they must have thought [he] was either a pretty queer character or that in a shrewd way [he] was trying on something too clever for them to see ... they couldn't make [him] out." They eventually agreed on a salary of twenty-five pounds per month, but the episode highlighted the fundamental difference in attitude between Nkrumah and the Committee—and the lack of fiscal acumen of either: although Nkrumah would soon establish a financial base for the UGCC, he usually paid little attention to finances (as evidenced by the fragile financial status of his various enterprises), and how the UGCC intended to run an organization without funding beggars understanding.
(c) Convention Branches should be set up in each town and village throughout the Colony, Ashanti, the Northern Territories and Togoland. The chief ... of each town or village should be persuaded to become the Patron of the Branch.
(d) Vigorous Convention weekend schools should be opened wherever there is a branch of the Convention. The political mass education of the country for Self-Government should begin at these weekend schools.

Second Period:
To be marked by constant demonstrations throughout the country to test our organisational strength, making use of political crises.

Third Period:
(a) The convening of a Constitutional Assembly of the Gold Coast people to draw up the Constitution for Self-Government or National Independence.
(b) Organised demonstration, boycott and strike—our only weapons to support our pressure for Self-Government.\(^85\)

Here, then, was the theoretical model first described in *Towards Colonial Freedom* fleshted out, and, by being "approved in principle" by the UGCC, the word became the plan of action. Its creator, deigning rest, immediately set to work. Discovering that there were, in fact, no operational branches of the UGCC, Nkrumah immediately went on a tour of the country, and within six month, had succeeded in establishing "500 branches in the Colony alone," and raised enough funds to open a bank account for the Working Committee.\(^86\) He also held a series of "rallies, making contacts and delivering hundreds of speeches." During his travels, he

was not surprised to find a feeling of discontent and unrest among the people ... [which] ... together with a feeling of frustration among the educated Africans who saw no way of ever experiencing political power under the existing colonial regime, made fertile ground for nationalist agitation.\(^87\)

It would be this "consciousness of political and economic hardships and the social unrest after

\(^{85}\)Ibid., pp. 71-72; see also *Revolutionary Path*, pp. 53-54.

\(^{86}\)Ibid., pp. 73-74; see also *Revolutionary Path*, p. 54. It was not an easy time for Nkrumah—the car provided by the UGCC kept breaking down, often miles from any settlement (symbolic, perhaps, of the lack of practicality demonstrated by the UGCC).

\(^{87}\)Ibid., p. 74; see also *Revolutionary Path*, p. 54.
the war" which would provide the first political crisis that the UGCC could make use of.\textsuperscript{88}

In early 1948, a boycott of foreign merchants and a demonstration by the Ex-Servicemen's Union (which ended in bloodshed) were followed by rioting in the city of Accra.\textsuperscript{89} The UGCC took the opportunity to send telegrams to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, "on behalf of the people and the chiefs," asking "that a special commissioner be sent out immediately to hand over the administration to an interim government of the chiefs and people and to witness the immediate calling of a constituent assembly."\textsuperscript{90} The government deemed this a premature response to a brief breakdown in law and order,\textsuperscript{91} and concluded that the UGCC leadership had been responsible for fermenting the disturbances, and, therefore, should be detained until calm was restored.\textsuperscript{92} Incarcerated in Kumasi (in Asante), and later in

\textsuperscript{88}Ibid.

\textsuperscript{89}The boycott had been organized by some of the chiefs, to protest what the Africans perceived as "the exorbitant prices" of the "foreign shopkeepers," Ibid., p. 75. It was fairly successful, garnering wide-spread support throughout the Colony and Asanti. It was called off within a month, after negotiations (organized by the government) "between representatives of the Anti-Inflationary Campaign Committee, the Joint Provincial Council of Chiefs, and the Chamber of Commerce" reached an agreement on a reduction of prices. Unfortunately, the peaceful conclusion of the boycott was marred by the riots which followed a week later, after several marchers were killed and wounded during a demonstration by ex-servicemen, Austin, pp. 67-74.

\textsuperscript{90}Autobiography, pp. 77-78.

\textsuperscript{91}When the rioting spread as far as Kumasi, the government had declared a state of emergency, but the majority of chiefs in both Gold Coast Colony and Asante supported the government and its efforts "to restore order," Austin, pp. 74-80.

\textsuperscript{92}Although both Danquah and Nkrumah had travelled throughout the Colony and Asante during the boycott, trying to garner support, they had not been too successful: "at the time of the riots, there were only 13 branches and 1,765 paid-up members [of the UGCC] ... it was probably not until the riots had actually occurred and the leaders had been detained that support for the UGCC spread ... [However, while] [a]n attempt to link [officially] the boycott committee with the UGCC ... [failed] ... the local leaders of the youth societies and their followers were members of both movements." As Danquah and Nkrumah also had supported the Ex-Servicemen's Union at a public rally, it was clear that they were trying to take advantage of the unrest to promote their agenda, Austin, p. 73. However, while the government might be excused their suspicion of a plot by the UGCC, the situation in the colony during that period was unsettled. A variety of factors had fermented unrest in the country, and "tension was already high ... [t]he waters in which the UGCC leaders sought to fish were already troubled, therefore, by events outside their control, and although by their fishing they added to the turmoil, this was not
Tamale (in the Northern Territories), with the other members of the Working Committee—who blamed Nkrumah for their arrest—relations between Nkrumah and the others deteriorated.\(^{93}\)

Testifying before the Watson Commission (sent from London "to enquire into ... the recent disturbances") the Executive Committee of the UGCC "completely disowned" the plan of action that Nkrumah had submitted to them in January 1948, and apparently did their best to disassociate themselves from any responsibility for his actions.\(^{94}\) The Commission itself seemed to be most concerned with Nkrumah's apparent affiliation, while in England, with the Communist Party and his preoccupation with West African unity—both of which were perceived as threatening to the status quo of the British Empire in Africa. While Nkrumah, in his account of the report of the Commission, chose to focus on the Commission's "inclusion of the word 'Soviet'" in their report on his associations (eg. they referred to a "Union of West African Soviet Socialist Republics," instead of the "Union of West African Socialist Republics" used by Nkrumah),\(^{95}\) he did not comment on other aspects of the Report of the Commission, which would appear to have been pertinent. The Commission had noted that

Mr Nkrumah appears to be a mass orator among Africans of no mean attainments. Nevertheless he appeared before us as a "humble and obedient servant of the Convention", who had subordinated his private political convictions to those publicly expressed by his employers. From the internal evidence we are unable to accept this modest assessment of his position. As appears from the Minute Book, the warmth of his welcome is reflected in the enthusiastic invitation from one member of the Working

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\(^{93}\)Autobiography, pp. 79-83; see also Revolutionary Path, p. 55.

\(^{94}\)Ibid., pp. 84-85.

\(^{95}\)Ibid., p. 87; interestingly, Nkrumah repeated his objection to the inclusion of "Soviet" in the Report in Revolutionary Path, but did not include the rest of the Report's comments, p. 56.
Committee to Mr Nkrumah to "use the organisation as his own". From this it is clear that, for the time being at all events, he was occupying the role held by all party secretaries in totalitarian institutions, the real position of power.

In a working programme circulated just before the disturbances we have been inquiring into, Mr Nkrumah boldly proposed a programme which is all too familiar to those who have studied the technique of countries which have fallen the victims of Communist enslavement. We cannot accept the naive statement of the members of the Working Committee, that although this had been circulated, they did not read it. We are willing to believe that they did. On the other hand we feel that the Working Committee, fired by Mr Nkrumah's enthusiasm and drive, were eager to seize political power and for the time being were indifferent to the means adopted to attain it.  

While the anti-Communist prejudice of the members of the Commission undoubtedly inflamed their rhetoric, Nkrumah did not see fit to address this rather calumnious account of his character and activities, leaving "the report [to] speak for itself."

It is tempting to speculate that the reason that Nkrumah did not attempt to rebut the characterization of him in the Report was because it was, to a large extent, correct. It certainly appeared that the members of the Working Committee of the UGCC were beginning to believe this to be so. Soon after their release from confinement and return to the Colony, they began an investigation of Nkrumah's activities, especially the foundation of the Ghana College, an enterprise they claimed was "outside [his] authority."  

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96Ibid., p. 86.
97Ibid., p. 85.
98Ibid., pp. 88-92. He had opened the College to accommodate students who had been expelled when they had gone on a sympathy strike for the imprisoned leaders of the UGCC. While a subcommittee of the Working Committee had recommended the establishment of a school or to work towards getting the students accepted at another existing school, Nkrumah had taken matters into his own hands (and at his own expense), and made one of the recommended alternatives a reality. Given the exhortative nature of his speech at its opening, however, it was clear that he saw the College as a beginning of the "political mass education of the country for Self-Government" which he had planned for in the organizational program for the UGCC (First Period, (d)—see above). It was not only the establishment of the College, however, that perturbed the Committee: they also searched the files of the office—a clear indication of their growing suspicions regarding Nkrumah's activities.
achieved in the name of the Convention," the Committee "suggested ... that [he] resign [his] post as general secretary" and return to England. But Nkrumah was not prepared to back down, and his refusal to go quietly meant that the Committee could only remove him from office by publicly repudiating him. This, Nkrumah believed, they could not do because "certain members ... feared that [his] removal ... might cause the complete break-down of the movement. They could not blind themselves to the fact that [he] had a strong personal following ...."

They compromised by offering him the post of treasurer instead, which "suited [his] purpose," and he accepted. 99

This episode highlighted the quandry the UGCC was now in. In the first flush of enthusiasm upon Nkrumah's arrival, one of the leaders, Dr. J.B. Danquah, had announced at "two mass rallies in Sekondi and Accra" that "'[i]f all of us fail you, Kwame Nkrumah will never fail you.'" The people had apparently taken this to heart, for "hundreds of letters and telegrams ... poured into the office of the U.G.C.C." in support of Nkrumah. 100 The support of the masses which the UGCC had so desired was now, it seemed, irretrievably connected directly to Nkrumah. Even though "they feared the truth of certain suspicions they had about [him]," they could not dismiss him without risking the loss of mass support. 101 Fully aware of this, Nkrumah continued to implement the plan that the Committee had so publicly disowned.

In spite of the Committee's fear that "establishing a newspaper as an organ of the movement ... would probably get [them] embroiled in sedition cases," Nkrumah founded the Accra Evening News (as he referred to it, "my newspaper"). The paper was to be

99 Ibid., p. 92.
100 Ibid., p. 93.
101 Ibid.
the vanguard of the movement and its chief propagandist, agitator, mobiliser and political educationist. Day by day in its pages the people were reminded of their struggle for freedom, of the decaying colonial system and of the grim horrors of imperialism... Even those unable to read would gather themselves into groups while a literate person read the sheet to them... The mottoes appearing as part of the heading soon became household words. 'We prefer self-government with danger to servitude in tranquillity.' 'We have the right to live as men.' 'We have the right to govern ourselves.'

The Working Committee quickly responded with "a weekly paper of their own called The Ghana Statesman," but this (and two others, The National Times and Talking Drums) failed. Nkrumah's paper, however "proved such a success that ...[he] established the Morning Telegraph in Sekondi ... and ... the Cape Coast Daily Mail." All of his papers were continually "in financial difficulties," made worse by a series of libel challenges by "civil servants and ... the Commissioner of Police." While Nkrumah professed to be "not worried" about such expenses, because he "had no property to be impounded" to make payment, a collection was made by his supporters to pay off the most demanding of his creditors. When a later claim by Danquah awarded him damages and allowed him to buy "the rights of the paper," Nkrumah simply "continued to publish the same newspaper under a new name— the Ghana Evening News." Although he claimed that "[i]t became a common saying in the country that if you wanted to know the truth, you should read the Accra Evening News," the success of all of these libel suits would suggest that Nkrumah's version of the truth did not consistently meet legal standards.

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102Ibid., pp. 93-94. Further to note 98 above, the Committee's concerns seem well-founded, as the paper "was violently anti-colonial, anti-the-Coussey Committee [which was studying constitutional reforms], and anti-the-UGC," Austin, p. 81. Given the style of the language employed in the paper, the Committee's concern about becoming "embroiled in sedition cases" would appear to have been well-founded.

103Ibid., pp. 94-95.

104Ibid., pp. 95-96.

105Ibid., p. 95.
Such distinctions did not appear to worry Nkrumah, who was preparing for the "final split" with the UGCC. He "was determined ... to organise things in such a way that when this break came [he] would have the full support of the masses behind [him]." In spite of the Working Committee's opposition, he had established the Youth Study Group, which, in combination "with the Ashanti Youth Association and the Ghana Youth Association of Sekondi" became the Committee on Youth Organization (CYO). Although the CYO was supposed to operate as the "youth section of the national movement" in cooperation with the UGCC, "its programme of 'Self-Government Now'" was inherently "critical of the ... [UGCC's commitment to] 'Self-Government within the shortest possible time'." It did not take long, therefore, for the rift between the "more conservative" Working Committee and "the radical and progressive section of the movement," as represented by Nkrumah and his allies in the CYO (who claimed to be the voice of "the economic, social and political aspirations of the rank and file") to become an abyss. The Committee, "rightly" concluding that Nkrumah was ultimately "responsible" for this conflict, finally decided to throw this cuckoo out of their nest. Realizing that "this unpleasantness [was] brewing," Nkrumah travelled to his home village to prepare and to plan for "the time ... when decisive action was going to be necessary, when in all probability control would be in [his] hands."

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106Ibid., p. 96.

107Ibid., pp. 96-97. By this time, the Committee was not only worried about what they would do with Nkrumah (and without him), "they ... feared what he might do without them. They were now confronted with the growing demands put forward by the youth societies and, like the sorcerer's apprentice, they discovered that they had called up a force stronger than they liked which threatened to engulf them. Nkrumah was obviously responsible for a great deal of the propaganda which the Evening News and local youth rallies engaged in (much of it directed against the [UGCC]). Yet to dismiss him was almost certain to provoke a revolt among the youth groups from which the [UGCC] drew the bulk of its support," Austin, pp. 83-84. But the conundrum had to be faced; unfortunately for the UGCC, Nkrumah once more proved more decisive.
While the Working Committee plotted his expulsion, the CYO held "a special conference ... attended by all the youth organisations in the country," in June 1949. Nkrumah made the "final ruling" that a new "political party to lead the rank and file of the people" was needed. While "the most popular suggestion" for the name of the new organization was "The Ghana People's Party," Nkrumah decided that because "the people had learnt to associate [his] name with that of the United Gold Coast Convention, ... in order to carry the masses with [them], ... 'Convention' must appear as part of the name. The name that [they] eventually agreed upon was the 'Convention People's Party'."

The day before Nkrumah's expulsion from the UGCC was to be announced by the Working Committee, "the largest rally ever held in Accra" was organized by the CYO for Nkrumah's announcement of "formation of the Convention People's Party." Nkrumah used the opportunity to give a speech in which he "went over the whole of the political struggle since [his] return to the Gold Coast." He explained to the crowd that the demand "for immediate self-government" was necessary in order to take advantage of the existence in Britain (at least until the general election the following year) of a Labour Government, which "would be more favourably disposed towards" independence. It was on this matter, he claimed, that the CYO, representing "the rank and file of the U.G.C.C.," was in conflict with the Working Committee, which was "out to suppress this progressive youth organisation." As a result, he declared, "the

\*108Ibid., pp. 100-101; "they" also devised yet another manifesto, setting out "a six-point programme for the C.P.P." It is not clear when the full constitution of the CPP was composed: Nkrumah included the full text in both the *Autobiography* (Appendix A, pp. 291-302) and in *Revolutionary Path* (pp. 58-71), but did not specify when it was written (or by whom). In any case, it is a comprehensive document, detailing membership and organization on all levels. It can be seen, perhaps, as the culmination of the political ideology sketched out in Towards Colonial Freedom and "THE DOCUMENT KNOWN AS THE CIRCLE." Important to note is that Nkrumah is now "Life Chairman," and that his birthday is to be a Party national holiday.
C.Y.O. [had] decided on a line of action that [would] be consistent with the political aspirations
of the chiefs and the people of the country" and "to transform itself into a fully-fledged political
party with the object of promoting the fight for full self-government now." In accordance with
his practice of appearing to follow the wishes of the group, Nkrumah asked them if he should
"break away from any leadership which is faltering and quailing before imperialism and
colonialism [presumably referring to the Working Committee] and throw in [his] lot with the
chiefs and people of this country," their "unanimous shout of approval" giving him the assurance
that he "had the full support of the people." 109

Meanwhile, the Working Committee "and the remnants of their followers" brought in
arbitrators, to seek a resolution that would restore the unity of the independence movement.
They finally decided that Nkrumah "should be reinstated as general secretary [of the UGCC and]
that the C.P.P. should be dissolved." Although concerned that this "would ... antagonise [his]
supporters," Nkrumah agreed, on condition that "a new Executive Committee" be elected—a
condition, "as might be expected," that was unacceptable to the Working Committee. 110

109Ibid., 102-104. The timing of this rally was deliberately intended to take "the wind out of [the UGCC's]
sails" by announcing the formation of the CPP before the UGCC could announce Nkrumah's dismissal, p. 102.
"Nkrumah was to be 'served with charges' because he had disregarded 'the obligations of collective responsibility
and party discipline', had published opinions, views, and criticisms in the Evening News, 'assailing the decisions
and questioning the integrity of the Working Committee', and had undermined the [UGCC], abusing its leaders
and stealing its ideas," Austin, p. 84. For example, the Evening News had published unfounded accusations
against the Working Committee that they "had accepted large sums of money from the U.K. government ... to
deflect people's interests from politics to sports." Given that "1948-49 was a period of great emotion, when
rumours were grasped at because there was a great willingness to believe them," even such "preposterous" claims
could seriously damage the public perception of the UGCC, Austin, n. 67, p. 84. As Nkrumah was still officially
a member of the UGCC at the time, the charges levelled against him by the Working Committee seem
well-founded.

110Ibid., pp. 105-107. The members of the Working Committee had resigned in protest at the
recommendations of the first set of arbitrators, nor did they accept the recommendations of the second set. The
schism was too deep to be resolved, and no compromise seemed acceptable to both parties.
now positioned himself as the one who was willing to compromise for the good of the cause (while ensuring that he would not have to actually act on this 'willingness'), Nkrumah was now free to address the crowd once more as the champion of the 'nationalist cause' and accede to their demands that he resign from the UGCC and "lead [them in] the struggle." Nkrumah's response to the crowd's acclamation was disingenuous, but satisfied: he recorded that

[he] realised at once that they were sincere and determined. Above all [he] knew that they needed [him] to lead them. [He] had stirred their deepest feelings and they had shown their confidence in [him]; [he] could never fail them now. Quickly [he] made [his] mind up. "I will lead you!" [he] said. "This very day I will lead you!"

Standing before the "jubilant" crowd, Nkrumah "wrote out [his] official resignation and then read it to the people." Although overcome by "[t]he overwhelming support [he] had received from the masses," Nkrumah felt himself ready to face the "battle ... that [he] had wanted so badly, the conflict which could only end with the fulfilment of [his] promise to [his] people, who had shown so readily their implicit trust in [his] leadership." But from this point on, the conflict would "be three-sided, made up by the reactionary intellectuals and chiefs, the British Government and the politically awakened masses with their slogan of 'Self-Government Now'." There would soon prove to be more sides to the struggle than Nkrumah anticipated.

(iii) The 'people's man'

While Nkrumah had been occupying himself with the formation of his new party, the government had been working out its response to the apparent discontent in the colony.

111Ibid., p. 107.

112Ibid., pp. 107-108.
Following the recommendation of the Watson Commission that constitutional reform should be accelerated, the British Government established a new, all-African committee to make specific suggestions as to how the next constitutional reform should be configured. The members of the Coussey Committee were selected by the Governor "to represent all sections of the Gold Coast community and all shades of political opinion," and conferred with representatives from "the Joint Provincial Council of the Colony, the Ashanti Confederacy Council, and the Northern Territories Council" from January to August, 1949. In October, it presented its report, which recommended substantive and profound changes to the structure of government in the colony. The Coussey Report proposed a bi-cameral legislature, predominately elected (either directly or indirectly), and the replacement of most of the officials in the Executive Council by members of the legislature. As an alternative, it also provided a plan for one legislature. While accepting the bi-cameral plan as the ultimate goal, the British Government felt that such a structure was premature, given that no system of political parties of differing policy views yet existed in the colony, and modified the alternate suggestion as a temporary step. The resultant new Constitution of 1950 was announced, and elections for the new legislature were to be held in February of 1951.

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113 Ward, pp. 335-336; see also Apter, p. 170.

114 Ward, pp. 336-337; see also Austin, pp. 85-86, and Apter, pp. 175-177. Apter summarized the Report as a vision of "a rational system of representative government with both elected and appointed officials at every level of formal organization. It sought to unify predominantly British forms of local and central political structures into a viable over-all government for the formation of a national state, meanwhile providing room for some of the basic symbolic and sentimental aspects of traditional social structures. It specifically did not want to see chieftaincy destroyed," p. 176.

115 Ward, pp. 337-339, 341-342. Ward believed that the British Government, through its modifications on the Coussey Report, was demonstrating that what it "really desired was a disciplined assembly, and that it was so frightened of the prospect of an assembly divided into splinter parties that it overlooked the possibility that an assembly might be effectively disciplined by other means than a two-party system," p. 339. Yet the evolutionary
Needless to say, neither the Coussey Report nor the modifications announced by the British Government soon after the Report's publication were sufficient for Nkrumah, who continued to demand "Self-Government Now." Indeed, it was clear by March 1949, less than three months after the Coussey Committee had started hearings, that he expected to denounce their eventual report. In an editorial in the Accra Evening News, he told his readers "that we cannot completely rely on [the Coussey Committee] to produce the Constitution the people of this country demand." Accordingly, he said, even before the recommendations of the Committee could have been known, "we enter into a new period of political struggle—the period of POSITIVE ACTION." Called before the Ga State Council to explain what he meant by this (the Council was understandably concerned that he was advocating violence), he wrote a statement describing Positive Action as

the adoption of all legitimate and constitutional means by which we can cripple the forces of imperialism in this country. The weapons of Positive Action are: (1) Legitimate political agitation; (2) Newspaper and educational campaigns and (3) as a last resort, the constitutional application of strikes, boycotts, and non-co-operation based on the principle of absolute non-violence.

approach seemed to accord with conservative opinion in the colony, and the "anti-political bias" of the intelligentsia, Apter, pp. 177-178.

\[116\] Nkrumah, Revolutionary Path, p. 79. Although, in his Autobiography, he claimed that he had been willing to "first study the Coussey Report" before deciding whether or not "we found it favourable," p. 112.

\[117\] Ibid., p. 80.

\[118\] The Council had told him that they wanted "to discuss 'the unfortunate lawless elements in the country and any possible solution,'" but that "the whole idea of the meeting appeared to be to censure [him] for introducing the words Positive Action into the country and thereby threatening violence," Nkrumah, Autobiography, p. 110. See also Revolutionary Path, p. 85.

\[119\] Revolutionary Path, pp. 93-94. See pp. 91-95 for the full text of the published statement. However, while Nkrumah claimed that Positive Action was "based on the principle of absolute non-violence, as used by Gandhi in India," (Autobiography, p. 112) and that he "meant the kind of tactics employed by Gandhi, (Revolutionary Path, p. 86), his definition of "non-violence" was ambiguous. Claiming that, because the people
Acknowledging that "weapons" (1) and (2) were already being used, he declared that "the final stage [(3)] would not be used "until all the avenues of our political endeavours of attaining self-government have been closed."120

When the Report and the modified version that the government was to adopt were made public, Nkrumah, predictably, declared it "unsatisfactory ... [and] ... decided [that] some action would have to be taken." 121 Accordingly, he "called together the Ghana People's Representative Assembly" in November 1949 "to coalesce public opinion against the Coussey Report and to urge the people into effective action."122

Perhaps the convocation of the Assembly was Nkrumah's attempt to rectify the imbalance of representation that he had condemned in the Coussey Committee. He had complained at that time that "the workers ... and the trades union movement,"123 had been excluded from participation in the deliberations of the Coussey Committee. Now he claimed that "only two organisations in the country ... (apart from the statutory Territorial Councils)" were not

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120 Revolutionary Path, p. 95; see also Autobiography, p. 112.

121 Though, predictably, he used "we considered [it] unsatisfactory," Revolutionary Path, p. 87, striking an even more 'objective' tone in the Autobiography, where he said "[i]t was thought to be quite unsatisfactory," pp. 112-113. However, he did, for once, openly state that it was his decision that "some action would have to be taken," Autobiography, p. 113, owing to "the general discontent."

122 Autobiography, p. 113; see also Revolutionary Path, pp. 87 - 88.

123 Autobiography, p. 87.
represented at the Assembly which he had organized. Thus, he could argue that it was this Assembly that was truly representative of the 'people', saying that the composition of the Assembly, "consisting of [CPP] ... members, the CYO, trade unions, farmers' associations, ex-servicemen, and the local youth societies," would undoubtedly dissipate the dissatisfaction [that had] set in among a large section of the community [at the time of the Coussey Committee's nomination] who felt that, as the radical elements had been left out, the true political aspirations of the people could never be satisfied.

Of course, because it included these 'radical elements,' it was likely that it would act in accordance with Nkrumah's agenda, and it certainly lived up to expectations, resolving "that the Coussey report and His Majesty's Government's statement thereto are unacceptable to the country as a whole."

While the Assembly's declaration on behalf of "the country as a whole" was presumptuous, given that the chiefs "did not accept the views" expressed, Nkrumah "informed the Governor ... that if his administration continued to ignore the legitimate aspirations of the people," Positive Action would commence, and "warned the people to prepare."

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124Ibid., p. 113. These organizations were the UGCC and the Aborigines Rights Protection Society, whose "insulting reception" to Nkrumah's envoys "compelled [him] to withdraw the invitation." The Territorial Councils "refused to honour [his] invitation."

125Austin, p. 87.

126Autobiography, p. 87.

127Ibid., p. 113; see also Revolutionary Path, p. 88.

128Ibid., p. 113. The chiefs' response, Nkrumah felt was "so abusive ... that [he] felt that any hope of a compromise was out of the question." See also Revolutionary Path, p. 88.

129He informed the Governor in a letter, and the people in a "stirring article" on the front page of the Evening News and at a public meeting. "In short [he said] we were prepared for a showdown," Autobiography, p. 114. Naturally, he was "acting on [the] authority" of the executive committee of the CPP. See also Revolutionary Path, p. 88.
Yet, even though Nkrumah now had, as was his wont, received the "direction" from the group to proceed with his agenda, he seemed hesitant to take that "final step." In the *Evening News* of 15 December 1949, (and at a large public meeting the same day) he had told the people that the Governor had two weeks to accept ""the principle of a Constituent Assembly."" If he failed to do so, ""Positive Action may be declared any time after the said two weeks."" However, the deadline passed without any such declaration, even though Nkrumah claimed that ""the Government [had taken] the offensive by instituting a series of prosecutions against the editors"" of Nkrumah's newspapers, and Nkrumah himself.\(^{131}\) In spite of this provocation, in early January 1950, Nkrumah agreed to meet with the Colonial Secretary to discuss the demands of the Assembly and the threat of Positive Action. The first meeting between Nkrumah and Reginald Saloway (the Colonial Secretary) was held in camera, Nkrumah's three attending colleagues waiting outside; at the second meeting, Nkrumah was accompanied by ""three companions [whom he had chosen] from among those of the Party whose views were less radical than most.""\(^{132}\) Given the very radical nature of the issues under discussion, it is puzzling why Nkrumah would deliberately choose from among the more moderate members of the CPP those who would accompany him to such a meeting, where they could participate in the discussion -- and witness Nkrumah's performance.

Although Nkrumah, in his accounts of this period in both the *Autobiography* and

\(^{130}\)Ibid.

\(^{131}\)Ibid.

\(^{132}\)Ibid., p. 115-117; see also *Revolutionary Path*, p. 89. He recorded that Saloway "warned [him] ... that if anyone was killed or hurt [he] would be held personally responsible," *Revolutionary Path*, p. 89 and *Autobiography*, p. 116. Nkrumah did not record his response, if any, to Saloway's warning that Positive Action "would bring chaos and disorder."
Revolutionary Path, presented himself as in control of the situation, that is, as the leader whom "the people" followed, other protagonists believed that he had, in fact, lost control of his "followers." According to both the Governor, Sir Charles Arden-Clarke, and Saloway, Nkrumah had actually agreed to call off Positive Action and await developments after the election of 1951, a plan of action which appealed to the moderate members of the CPP. However, the radical members were already taking action. The TUC declared a general strike on January 6th; Nkrumah then called a public meeting, and announced that Positive Action was to begin with a general strike on January 8th. These events would appear to validate the belief of both Arden-Clarke and Saloway that Nkrumah and the leaders of the TUC no longer had any control over "the wild men": "enmeshed in the coils of their own propaganda," the leaders now had to scramble to get out in front of their followers.

Indeed, Nkrumah "rushed off to Cape Coast, Sekondi and Tarkwa" to announce the start of Positive Action, convinced that "[t]he political and social revolution of Ghana had started." However, although he claimed that he "had used the expression [Positive Action] frequently in the columns of the Evening News," it did not seem that it really had been "generally understood

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133 Austin, pp. 88-89. Indeed, "[a]n announcement that Positive Action had started was twice reported and twice denied in the [CPP] newspaper." See also David Rooney, Sir Charles Arden-Clarke (London: Rex Collins, 1982), p. 103. Nkrumah, on the other hand, claimed that announcements cancelling Positive Action were made by "Government officials" (Autobiography, p. 117) "[i]n an attempt to confuse the people," (Revolutionary Path, p. 89). In neither of his accounts does he acknowledge that any agreement was reached between him and Saloway.

134 According to Saloway (as quoted in Rooney, p. 113), "Nkrumah ... tried hard to get the Trades Union Congress to call off the General Strike, but the T.U.C. no longer had any control over the wild men." See also Austin, p. 89. Nkrumah saw it somewhat differently, claiming in his Autobiography (p. 117) that "[h]e had waited long enough" to proceed with the general strike and duly announced it on January 8th, though he acknowledged that the TUC "had already declared "a strike" on the 6th. In Revolutionary Path, he made no reference to the general strike by the TUC on the 6th, p. 89.

135 Autobiography, p. 117; see also Revolutionary Path, p. 89.
... [to mean] ... non-violent struggle." Work did indeed stop, and crowds poured into the streets, but in the resultant riots, two policemen were killed. The Government responded with "intensive efforts made over the radio ... encouraging people to go back to work," which they began to do, much to Nkrumah's "annoyance" when he returned to Accra and found "that the enthusiasm of the people in Positive Action was waning." He immediately held "one of the biggest rallies ever," and after speaking to the crowd for two hours, declared that "no Government propaganda machine could have succeeded in pacifying them or controlling them." The Government clearly agreed, announcing a state of emergency the same day (January 11th), followed by a curfew on the 17th. Nkrumah and other leaders were

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136 Revolutionary Path, p. 85. Nor had the people apparently been "impressed" by his reminder on December 15th "that there should be no looting or burning of buildings, no rioting, damage or disturbance of any sort," Autobiography, p. 114.

137 The policemen "had been killed in clashes with CPP supporters, Rooney, p. 103. Nkrumah made no mention of these deaths in his accounts of the Positive Action campaign, (perhaps because they had not been shot but stabbed to death, and this did not count as a use of "violence" as far as Nkrumah was concerned--see note 119 above--Rooney, p. 104), though he reported in detail about the government's raids on his newspaper and party offices and the arrests of his associates, declaring at one point that he knew he "was to be their final kill." Autobiography, p. 120. See Ibid., pp. 119-122 and Revolutionary Path, pp. 89-91 and 96. There is no apparent sense of irony in his statement about his own arrest: "No trouble and all quiet at the scene of arrest," the police reported. "Had they forgotten that Positive Action was a campaign of non-violence, I wondered" Nkrumah wrote, Autobiography, p. 122.

138 Revolutionary Path, p. 89. See also Rooney, p. 103, and Autobiography, pp. 117-118.

139 Autobiography, p. 117. When he saw "that an attempt was being made to resume normal business, [he] knew that further agitation was necessary," p. 118. In Revolutionary Path, he reported only that "some of the initial enthusiasm ... seemed to have evaporated," p. 89.

140 Ibid., p. 118. After the meeting, he claimed, "the atmosphere was so tense in Accra that the Governor declared a state of emergency," Revolutionary Path, p. 89.

141 Austin, p. 89. See also Rooney, pp. 103-104. At the emergency meeting of the Legislative Council called by the Governor to discuss and vote on the declaration of a state of emergency (which passed unanimously), the Governor told the Council that, on his travels in the colony, "he had sensed a very substantial body of opinion opposed to the violence and intimidation of the CPP, and now sensed a growing confidence that the Government would uphold law and order." He also "gave evidence of massive intimidation" by CPP supporters, claimed that the TUC "had no mandate for a general strike," and that the strikes had actually "been engineered by certain
arrested, though not before Nkrumah had attended a meeting with the Joint Provincial Council, where it became clear that the chiefs and the UGCC were united against Nkrumah, or, as Nkrumah claimed, that it became "quite obvious that the Joint Provincial Council of Chiefs and the Government were in league in attempting to deny the people's legitimate demands." The chiefs, naturally, saw it rather differently. They preferred to identify themselves with the "very large body of moderate and responsible people who were utterly opposed to the methods of the [CPP]" on whose behalf the "government had asserted its authority."

While Nkrumah was languishing in prison, having attained the prerequisite of nationalist members of the C.P.P." Reminding his listeners "that the eyes of the world were on the Gold Coast, to see if its people had the capacity and determination to shoulder their new responsibilities," under the terms of the new Constitution, and referring "to the hooliganism, intimidation and violence, and to the attempts to subvert authority, to bring the chiefs into disrepute and to coerce the Government," he appealed "for their loyalty and co-operation," which he duly received. In response to the state of emergency, Nkrumah's newspapers "fanned the flame by exhorting the workers to stand firm and to continue Positive Action," Autobiography, p. 119.

Some were charged, and convicted, "of promoting an illegal strike and attempting to coerce the government, others of sedition," Austin, p. 90. Nkrumah himself was sentenced to two years' imprisonment, and condemned to another year's imprisonment ... for publishing a so-called sedition article in the Cape Coast Daily Mail," Revolutionary Path, p. 90. It is in his account of his trials in the Autobiography that Nkrumah made his only mention of the murdered policemen, recording that he was "horrified by the rumour ... [that] someone in authority had conceived the ingenious idea that, as it had been impossible to pin the murder of the two African policemen killed during the clash with the ex-servicemen on any individual, and because I was responsible for declaring Positive Action, then I should be linked with the deaths of these two unfortunate men ... but, as [his] hand were perfectly clean with regard to this incident their investigations proved quite fruitless and the charge was never levelled against [him]." He did report that "the facts ... recited [at the trial] were a fairly accurate record of what had taken place," p. 124.

Revolutionary Path, p. 90; see also Autobiography, pp. 119-120. And it was at this point that Nkrumah openly threatened the chiefs, stating at a public meeting "that if the chiefs would not co-operate with the people in their struggle for freedom then a day might come when they 'will run away and leave their sandals behind them'," p. 120.

Austin, p. 90. However, as Austin pointed out, although the chiefs and the intelligentsia undoubtedly believed themselves to represent the "large body of moderate opinion," they were actually "now an ineffective minority ... The young men (and the commoners in general) flocked to join the CPP, partly in the confident expectation that self-government would prove a sovereign remedy for all the grievances of the post-war years, partly because they saw in the People's Party a national movement that corresponded to their own efforts to assert their rights in the Colony and Ashanti chiefdoms," pp. 90-91.
leaders—the martyrdom of jail—arrangements for the 1951 election continued, and, in spite of his opposition to the 1950 Constitution, he was determined that the CPP would take part in the elections. Ironically, the CPP and the Government worked in tandem to organize the elections, and especially to register the voters. All things considered, their success in registering a total of 40.5% of the eligible electorate by 1 January 1950 was an impressive achievement.

In accordance with many of the recommendations in the Coussey Report, the legislature was to consist of 9 nominated (3 each by the Chambers of Commerce and Mines, and 3 by the Governor) members and 75 elected members. Of the elected members, 38 were to be chosen through direct (urban--5 seats) and indirect (rural--33 seats) elections, and 37 chosen by the

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145Nkrumah, Autobiography, pp. 132-133. He considered "it ... vital that [the CPP] won a majority in the new Legislative Assembly. [He] had already made it clear to the party organisers ... that by all means they should contest every seat in the election." He was also determined, despite opposition from some of the party members, to stand for election himself, reasoning that the authorities would find it "very difficult ... to insist upon keeping [him] in prison" if he won. He improved his odds by declaring his candidacy in one of the Accra constituencies, replacing one of the other leaders of the CPP who was to have contested that seat. Given that Accra was one of the major centres of CPP activity and support, his choice is hardly surprising.

146Austin, pp. 110-113. The government recognized the contributions of the CPP in this effort, in their official Report on the First Election. Although credited as being substantially responsible for the success in registration, Austin's account of how the participation in the program by the CPP persuaded many who were "suspicious" of the government to register (often to the extent of insisting that the forms be provided only by the CPP) raises the question of how many more might have been registered if the CPP had not been so involved, i.e., how many non-CPP supporters were registered? This is especially relevant as there was a financial qualification for registration (e.g., in the rural districts, taxes had to be paid up to date), so there had to be considerable incentive for the people to pay what they owed in order to qualify. Given the degree of participation of the CPP in the registration program, and in the advertising campaign supporting it, and the ignorance of the populace about the electoral process, is it not reasonable to assume that at least some of them would have equated registration with support for the CPP, and thus, refused to participate? While Austin believed that the registration numbers did not fully reflect the support for the CPP, that if only there had been more time for the CPP to organize on a national level, and to instruct the people on what elections meant, the numbers would have been substantially higher, (p. 114) the same would surely hold true for those who opposed the CPP; if they had also had more time to organize, and to explain the ramifications of the election to their supporters, it is reasonable to assume that the numbers of opposition-supporting registered voters (and their votes) could well have made a significant difference to the election results. Apter's statement that "[a]n official report on the elections indicates that the attitude of the local chief was of great importance ... [i]n many instances no one would register until the chief had given his approval, and some were, for one reason or another, reluctant to support the elections wholeheartedly" (p. 199) would appear to substantiate my concerns.
territorial councils (11 from Gold Coast Colony, 6 from Asante, 1 from Southern Togoland, and 19 from the Northern Territories). The results demonstrated an impressive, but not wholehearted, support for the CPP, which won 29 of the rural seats and all 5 of the urban seats. The remaining elected seats went to the UGCC (2) and independents (2).  

However, even in the urban constituencies, centres of CPP activity, only 47.2% of registered electors voted. And while the CPP gained over 90% of those votes (including those cast in Nkrumah's constituency in Accra), in the rural contests, up to 20% of the votes went to non-CPP candidates. While, in the nascent politicization of the Gold Coast, a variety of short-lived political parties were formed in the months preceding the election, only three groups were functionally competing in the 1951 election: the CPP, the UGCC, and the chiefs.  

Although the UGCC failed to garner substantive support (even though their campaign platform

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147 See Austin, pp. 103-152 for a detailed examination of the 1951 election. The delimitation of constituency boundaries was a particularly thorny issue. The Ewart Committee had been given the thankless task of making the final decision. While the municipal districts had already been demarcated, in the rural areas, "lay a confusion of local chiefdoms and states built up by traditional rule, administrative decision, and legal argument, and the ... Committee was not prepared to override the local interests vested in these small administrative units." Accordingly, "parity of population between each electoral district gave way ... before the need to get the electoral boundary accepted." As Austin pointed out, this "raised one of the central questions of Ghanaian politics—the conflict of nationalist hopes and local interests," pp. 106-107.

148 Ibid., p. 141. Nkrumah recorded that he "had received the largest individual poll so far recorded in the history of the Gold Coast, 22,780 votes out of a possible 23,122," Autobiography, p. 134, but Accra was a 2 seat riding, and Austin recorded the results as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Candidate</th>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Votes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adjei, Ako</td>
<td>UGCC</td>
<td>1,451</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bossman, Kofi Aduma</td>
<td>NDP</td>
<td>666</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hutton-Mills, Thomas</td>
<td>CPP</td>
<td>19,812</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lamptey, E.O.O.</td>
<td>UGCC</td>
<td>1,630</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nkrumah, Kwame</td>
<td>CPP</td>
<td>20,780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ollennu, Nii Amaa</td>
<td>NDP</td>
<td>742</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

n. 11, p. 103. It is a minor dispute over numbers, perhaps, but indicative of Nkrumah's reluctance to acknowledge that his "hour of victory" was clouded in any way, Autobiography, p. 134.

149 The NDP, mentioned above in note 148, was the National Democratic Party, based in Accra; others included the Ghana Freedom Party (started by a European), the People's Democratic Party (Kumasi), the Gold Coast Labour Party, all of which had "faded" by the time elections were actually held. The NDP remained confined to Accra, Austin, pp. 138-139.
was almost identical to the CPP's),¹⁵⁰ the chiefs proved to be formidable opponents, especially in Asante and in the Northern Territories.¹⁵¹ Indeed, the 1951 election can be categorized as a preliminary bout in the fight for political power, as self-government was gradually—but relatively rapidly—devolved in the Gold Coast. This first election demonstrated the powerful appeal of the simplistic slogans of the CPP, and of the effectiveness of its organizational abilities,¹⁵² but the influence of the chiefs clearly remained strong. As it became increasingly obvious that independence would soon be granted, the clarion call of "Self-Government Now" of the CPP was drowned out by a cacophony of competing appeals for support, as the number of political organizations multiplied, to represent the groups now wrestling for political power.

For, after the election, the CPP (as the majority party in the legislature) became—in essence—the government. Nkrumah was released from prison to take his seat, and become the

¹⁵⁰See Austin: compare the CPP Manifesto (p. 130) and the UGCC Plan for the Nation (pp. 137-138). As Austin pointed out, "there was very little difference (except in the language used) between the CPP 'Goal' and the UGCC 'Plan'.

¹⁵¹See note 146 above. At a meeting of the chiefs, "[t]he decision was taken ... to oppose the CPP where the party was thought to be most vulnerable, in the rural chiefdoms within each constituency." Austin, p. 136. As Austin pointed out, although the chiefs "were slow to move, ... using their state council machinery ... and prevailing on local figures of importance to stand" for election, they had a substantive impact on the election. Nor were they hesitant to stand themselves. See Austin, pp. 142-144. In the territorial council elections, the chiefs ensured that they were well represented, Ibid., pp. 146-147. This being said, it must be noted that some of the chiefs did support the CPP, Ibid., p. 144.

¹⁵²Austin mentioned the "spectacular showmanship" of the CPP campaign, that mirrored the traditional ceremonial displays of the elections of chiefs: the party colours of red, white, and green on flags, "cloths, handbags, and belts" and even on the propaganda vans, the use of a distinct party salute "and the cry of 'Freedom', ... the sale of framed photographs of Nkrumah, processions, picnics, dances, songs and plays ensured that the party was seen to exist in as personal and colourful a form as it was possible to devise," Austin, p. 127. Party beliefs were "incorporated ... in a number of easily quoted maxims: 'The CPP is a Party of the People. In ourselves we are nothing; it is the people who give us strength.' 'The CPP has been built on service, sacrifice and suffering. 'Seek Ye first the Political Kingdom and All Things will be added unto it.' 'Vote wisely and God will Save Ghana from the Imperialists.' Together with the emotional appeals to "those who prefered [sic] self- government to servitude" and "to local pride," and "the projection of the CPP as the party of the Common Man ... which was given an immediate reception among not only the elementary-school-leavers in the youth societies but the commoners within the native authorities, ... there was the promise of immediate, material benefits as soon as self-government was attained," Austin, p. 131.
Leader of Government Business.\textsuperscript{153} Although Nkrumah had opposed the Constitution of 1950, and the new system of governance, he rationalized his acceptance of office thus:

> It was felt that had we not accepted office..., but had embarked on non-co-operation and remained in the Opposition, we would merely have been pursuing a negative course of action. It was moreover the opinion of the Party Executive that by taking part in the new government, we were at least preventing the 'stooges and reactionaries' from taking advantage of the position. Governmental positions could also help us to obtain the initiative in the continuing struggle for full self-government.\textsuperscript{154}

Given the "negative" response of the CPP to the Coussey Report and its consequences, and its readiness to follow a "course of action" prior to the election that had amply demonstrated the Party's willingness to disrupt government activity and the affairs of the colony as much as possible, this sudden willingness to take on such an active role in the government seems to be a seismic shift in policy. The explanation lies in the last two sentences of Nkrumah's statement. He realized the substantial "advantage" that would be available to those in office, and he was determined that none of his competitors would have access to it.

Indeed, he began to eliminate any access to power that his opponents had. Shortly after taking office, Nkrumah moved against the chiefs with reforms to local government structures. While the Coussey Report had suggested fundamental changes to local government, to increase the democratization of government in the colony (after considerable consultation with those responsible for local government—the chiefs and district officers—and "the people"), it had done

\textsuperscript{153}As he had expected. Further evidence of Nkrumah's autocratic tendencies can be found in his agreement with the Governor "that since the C.P.P. had won a majority only in the elected seats ... [he would not] select [his] ministers solely from the ranks of the Party [as this] might bring [him] into conflict with the territorial members and with other independent members of the Assembly." Although the central committee "objected to this proposal" initially, Nkrumah eventually persuaded them to accept his "suggestion,"\textit{Autobiography}, p. 139.

\textsuperscript{154}ibid., p. 142. On this page alone, there are several examples of Nkrumah's predilection for using "we" and "I" as interchangeable.
so under the assumption that the chiefs would be compensated for the diminution of local power by participation at the national level in the proposed second legislative chamber.\textsuperscript{155} Nkrumah, neglecting to acknowledge the contribution of the Coussey Committee, announced that he had decided to set up "three types of local councils ... District, Urban and Local." And, even though no second chamber existed to provide for participation by the chiefs, "they ... would have no voting right [sic] and no official status in the councils."\textsuperscript{156} When the CPP was elected to "over ninety per cent. of the seats in the two hundred and seventy new councils that had been established" in the elections of 1952,\textsuperscript{157} the chiefs' suspicions about the CPP's intentions towards them appeared to be well-founded.\textsuperscript{158}

This suspicion was to become certainty with the promulgation of a new constitution in 1954 whereby the legislative assembly (still only one chamber) was to become directly elected by secret ballot in 104 newly drawn up constituencies.\textsuperscript{159} Eliminated were the ex-officio

\textsuperscript{155}Rooney, p. 149.

\textsuperscript{156}Nkrumah, Autobiography, p. 154.

\textsuperscript{157}Ibid., p. 155.

\textsuperscript{158}Especially "when local government reforms were accompanied by the continuing party propaganda of the CPP, [the chiefs] felt more and more threatened." And rightly so, it appeared, as "[t]he apparently innocent local government changes ... affected both the role of the chief in an independent Ghana, and the relationship between central government and the regional administrative system" which they had traditionally dominated, Rooney, p. 149.

\textsuperscript{159}The Van Lare Commission was given the task of redelimiting the electoral districts in 1953, and was the cause of considerable discontent. While the Commission tried to use, "as far as possible, the boundaries of the local chiefdoms," because the constituencies were to be based more firmly on a proportional basis, some of the smaller chiefdoms were electorally absorbed into larger chiefdoms. This provoked many "an anguished petition" from the smaller chiefdoms, protesting that they had distinct identities which would not be represented in the new Assembly because their voters would always be in the minority in their constituencies. On the broader perspective, Asante complained that, given the substantive contribution to the nation's economy, and their traditional political domination of the Gold Coast, they had not been given a commensurate number of seats. In the "long and bitter debate" over this issue in the Assembly, the strength of Asante nationalism was clearly (if not stridently) expressed. See Austin, pp. 176- 180. Although the Asante demands were not met nor the other
ministers, the 6 representatives of mining and commercial interests, and the indirectly elected members (mostly chiefs). With its majority in the legislature, and the acquiescence of the Governor, the CPP was able to over-ride the growing opposition, and begin preparations for elections to the new assembly.

c) The ‘political kingdom’ spawns ‘political kingdoms’

The combination of constitutional changes and the increasing apprehension about CPP activities as government galvanized the opposition, and several newly organized political parties contested the election. The UGCC had been reconstituted in 1952 as the Ghana Congress Party (GCP), albeit as an uneasy coalition of the conservative intelligentsia and the chiefs. Its intention was to provide an "umbrella" for all opposition to the CPP, but its very inclusiveness meant that complaints satisfied, the intensity of the various protests did not bode well for the CPP's (and especially Nkrumah's) insistence that the people of Ghana were "fundamentally homogeneous...[and were not] plagued with religious and tribal problems," Nkrumah, Autobiography, p. 196.

160It is hardly surprising that the chiefs "opposed the elimination of the indirectly elected members, since that was the way most of them had obtained their seats in the 1951 parliament," Rooney, p. 150. For Nkrumah, "this state of affairs," whereby 1/3 of the Assembly "represented the chiefs and traditional authorities, ... could be tolerated no longer," Revolutionary Path, p. 99.

161Indeed, in acknowledgement of the Governor's contribution to the "Nkrumah Constitution," Nkrumah "prefer[red] to call [it] the Nkrumah/Arden-Clarke Constitution," Autobiography, p. 177. The Governor even made two trips to the Northern Territories (once with, and once without, Nkrumah) to try to still anxieties there that the new constitution would mean their dominance by the south. "My chief task [he said] is to prepare these people for the general election which will be held in six months time, warn them to resist the blandishments of the politicians, and impress on them the vital importance of electing their best man to represent them in the Assembly, and of ensuring that their members stand united and speak with one voice for the North. I am afraid Nkrumah and my other ministers will not like what I am doing but these people are entitled to honest and impartial advice from their Governor and that is what they are getting." From a letter to his family, as quoted in Rooney, p. 151. Rooney believed that "Arden-Clarke's close identification with the policies of the CPP seem to have followed a clear intellectual and philosophical decision that it was his responsibility as Governor to lead the country to an orderly handover of power," p. 132. As the CPP appeared to have the widest popular support, then supporting them as Governor would undoubtedly be the sensible thing for him to do.
it was consistently weakened by internal disputes.\textsuperscript{162} Other parties were much more exclusive. The Muslim Association Party (MAP) which, under the name Muslim Association, had already taken part in the municipal elections, was formed in early 1954 as a "violently anti-CPP" organization. Although statistically not much of a threat to the CPP, given its exclusive nature and restriction to the urban centres (predominantly Accra and Kumasi), its very existence raised the spectre of religious divisions within the colony.\textsuperscript{163} Regional divisions were represented by the Togoland Congress Party (TCP), established in 1953, which wanted to further the cause of Ewe "national identity,"\textsuperscript{164} and the Northern People's Party (NPP), formed just prior to the 1954 elections. The NPP reflected the insecurity in the Northern Territories over the centralization and anti-traditionalist policies of the CPP, and the belief in the Territories that the region's need for development would be subordinated to the CPP's drive for independence, which would place the peoples of the region at a distinct disadvantage vis-a-vis the other regions.\textsuperscript{165}

\textsuperscript{162}Austin, p. 181.

\textsuperscript{163}Ibid., pp. 187-189. In the municipal elections, MA candidates had garnered between 1/6th and 1/7th of the vote in Kumasi, Accra, and Sekoni-Takoradi. "True Moslems can never be friends with the CPP," the MA announced, "thus demonstrating again the narrowing circle of definition of self-government," p. 188.

\textsuperscript{164}See Austin, pp. 189-193. Togoland was an extremely complex problem. A former German colony, its territory had been divided into two "trust" territories (one French and one British) after World War I, now under the auspices of the United Nations. There were also Ewe inside the borders of Gold Coast colony, however, making a unification of the trust territories into one nation problematic because this would not include within its boundaries all the "peoples" of Togoland. The proposed absorption of British Togoland into the Gold Coast was not popular either. Indeed, little consensus could be discerned among the Ewe. However, the TCP was sure of one thing: the CPP were committed to "a slow smothering of Ewe national identity," p. 192. Under the 1954 Constitution, responsibility for Togoland was "reserved for the Governor--[a responsibility] which he would gladly have handed over," Rooney, p. 151. However, while the task of negotiating with the UN and with the representatives of Togoland lay with the Governor, the CPP was deeply involved in trying to persuade the Ewe to accept absorption—the Volta River Scheme, an extremely important development, was dependent upon the Gold Coast retaining control of that region (which was within Ewe territory), Rooney, pp. 151-153.

\textsuperscript{165}Austin, pp. 183-187. Again, even though the peoples of the Northern Territories were divided internally, they were united in their distrust of those from the south, and demonstrated an awareness of and loyalty to a distinct regional identity. This included the continued allegiance to traditional authorities (the chiefs),
In addition to these external threats, the actions of the CPP since 1951 had also caused dissent to appear within the Party itself. For all of Nkrumah's protestations about the need for "democracy" and consultation, the "Life Chairman" more often displayed a tendency for autocracy. Those who questioned his decisions were labelled "rebels": an example of this occurred in the election itself, when 81 party members, contrary to orders, proposed themselves as candidates instead of the ones "officially" sanctioned by the Party; they were duly expelled, because "they lacked team spirit." Although Nkrumah portrayed this as if it had been a dispute between the 81 individuals and the Party, it had actually been an attempt by local constituency organizations to reject "the authority of the central committee" in favour of promoting local interests, thereby demonstrating an internal opposition to the autocratic centralization of power within the Party itself. Nor were the more radical members satisfied with Nkrumah's shift from "Positive Action" to "Tactical Action," believing that such compromises (pragmatic though they may have been under the conditions the Party faced as government) would delay and, therefore, a conservative approach to reform. Although development had been far slower in the North, many of the chiefs' advisers were now educated, and had learned much from the CPP about how to organize the people: soon, the NPP had "adopted all the paraphernalia and techniques of a mass party: a flag, a salute ..., a slogan ('United We Stand' or 'Unity'), the holding of rallies ..., the use of propaganda vans, and the sale of a membership card," p. 187. See also Ladouceur, pp.79-121.

166Nkrumah, Autobiography, pp. 208-209. Distasteful though he found the "duty", he "turned a deaf ear to pleas and excuses. They had known the rules of the game" and must pay the price. He also tried to suggest that such "rebels" were simply selfishly interested in power, and, by juxtaposing this comment in the same paragraph as his statement that "a new party had been formed in the Northern Territories" (the NPP), clearly wanted the reader to make the "obvious" connection--thus negating any thought that the NPP might have had a reasonable cause. See also Ladouceur, p. 118: "the official reaction of the CPP to the formation of the NPP was to minimise [sic] its significance."

167See Austin, pp. 201-202, and 210-212. Austin attributed this problem to the sense that many had in 1954 that the major struggle (for self-government) was more or less won, so that nationalist interests could now be subordinated to local interests.
independence. There were also those who were increasingly disturbed by the evidence of corruption in the upper echelons of the Party, especially the new government ministers, which Nkrumah—in spite of his severe condemnation of such activities—either would not or could not control.

While, especially in hindsight, these developments should have caused concern, the CPP went into the 1954 elections sure of success. Because of the creation of new constituencies, voters had to be re-registered in a 3 week period immediately prior to the

168See Austin, pp. 153-199, for an account of the CPP's first term in office. See Autobiography, pp. 147-156, for Nkrumah's explanation of this shift. Compromise and co-operation were necessary if the CPP were to "prove" its ability to manage the affairs of the colony—a prerequisite for independence. Some supporters may have been disappointed by the failure to implement all of the promises of the election manifesto (one of which, interestingly, had been to create "[a]n upper house of the Legislature, known as the Senate, ... for the Chiefs"), Austin, p. 130; however, this could be credited to their lack of experience with the realities of democratic government. However, there was a group within the CPP, including several highly-placed members, which vehemently protested against what they saw as delays in the push for self-government. Some resigned, others were expelled, and the protests thus stilled; the majority of the Party was willing to accept Nkrumah's policy of Tactical Action, Austin, pp. 167-170. However, this episode also marked the end of what had been a "collective leadership" in the Party. Some of the protesters had "objected also to the growing adulation of Nkrumah," Austin, p. 166 — a phenomenon that would become even more emphasized by the time of the 1954 and 1956 elections. And, while Nkrumah admonished the members to "work according to the principles of democratic centralism" (Evening News, 7 August 1952, as quoted in Austin, p. 168), there was "a major attempt to strengthen party organization in order to exercise a closer control from headquarters" in the period immediately following this episode, Austin, p. 171.

169"Bribery and corruption ... must be stamped out," he wrote, Autobiography, p. 141. In order to demonstrate that the members had not sought office "for any personal aggrandisement, [they] had agreed that none of [the CPP] members in the Executive Council should go to live in the palatial ministerial bungalows that had been built for the purpose," p. 142. And they did not, refusing "to live in the bungalows provided for them in the outskirts of Accra, [living instead in] the large houses which they built and drew rent allowance for in town," Austin, p. 165. There were so many rumours and allegations of corruption that several commissions were established to inquire into a variety of financial scandals—including at least one involving Nkrumah himself. While the commissions found most of the allegations "not substantiated," several individuals were severely criticized (and some imprisoned). See Austin, pp. 164-166, especially notes 18 and 20. As Austin pointed out, while "there were many who saw these failings as a betrayal of what the party stood for in 1949, others ... were resentful because they had been denied what they considered should have been their proper share of the advantages of office," p. 166.

170They weren't alone, the British Government and the British officials in the colony also believed it "likely" that the CPP would succeed, Austin, p. 201.

171See note 159 above.
election, and the CPP was once again extremely active in the program. However, only 50.4% of the electorate were registered in time to vote, and, of these, only 58% actually voted.

When those votes were counted, it was clear that the political scene in the Gold Coast had substantially changed in the three years since the first election to the Assembly. While the CPP garnered 55.4% of the total poll, non-CPP votes were a surprising 44.6%; however, due to the British system of "winner takes all," the CPP managed to win 72 of the 104 available seats. (Three of the seats were uncontested--the CPP won these.) A breakdown of the vote per region clearly illustrates the centres of CPP strength--and of its opposition:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>CPP</th>
<th>non-CPP</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Colony</td>
<td>178,226</td>
<td>85,581</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asante</td>
<td>95,845</td>
<td>67,209</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TVT</td>
<td>46,547</td>
<td>40,639</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North</td>
<td>71,199</td>
<td>121,474</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While in the Colony and Asante the majority of the non-CPP seats went to independents, in Trans-Volta-Togoland and the Northern Territories, they went to the TCP and NPP respectively. Nkrumah preferred to see the results as yet another "wonderful night,"

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172 "The game has started ... Register NOW!" was the clarion call, Austin, p. 207.
173 Of the 2,376,602 adults over the age of 21 who were eligible for registration, 1,225,603 registered, Austin, p. 207.
174 This was 30.7% of the total adult population, Austin, p. 238.
175 Austin, pp. 243-244. The final count was: CPP, 72 seats; Independents, 11; NPP, 15; MAP, 1; GCP, 1; TCP, 3; AYO (Anlo Youth Organization, TVT), 1. There is some discrepancy concerning these numbers in the various accounts (eg. Apter, p. 231; Bourret, p. 186; Ward, p. 347), but this appears to be as a result of the confusion over the independent seats. Austin, for example, included in the CPP and NPP totals the independents which were pro-CPP/NPP. Nkrumah's account is even more interesting: he credited the CPP with 72 seats, the NPP with 12, and the other 20 seats "for the most part" to independents. "[B]y the middle of 1956, the ... CPP had increased to [79] seats" as the independents "began to attach themselves to one party or another," Autobiography, p. 213.
observing that, "in spite of the" 81 expulsions, and "the emergence of the N.P.P. at the eleventh hour, we managed to win nine of the twenty-one seats in the Northern Territories" and 72 of the 104 in total. He did not mention the percentages of votes, however, which indicates (1) that he was only interested in the number of seats (and the concomitant power that would give him in the Assembly), and (2) that he was unwilling to acknowledge that almost 45% of the voters were against him. The latter was reflected in his refusal to accept the NPP as the Official Opposition, based on his assertion that, because the NPP would not be able to "form an alternative government" and because it was "a party organised on the basis of a single region," it did not qualify "as being an Opposition in the true sense." He did not, however, mention that his objection was "overruled by the Speaker," only that the CPP "was prepared to recognize the NPP as an unofficial Opposition."

While claiming to be "fully conscious of the value of informed and constructive criticism and ... fully determined to do everything possible to establish in the Assembly the procedures and conventions of parliamentary democracy," Nkrumah's "principle" for refusing to accept the NPP as Official Opposition can perhaps be more accurately traced to his belief that

[a] middle-class élite, without the battering-ram of the illiterate masses, can never hope

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176 Autobiography, p. 211.

177 Ibid., p. 214; see also Revolutionary Path, p. 116.

178 Austin, p. 252. "The opposition members 'walked out' of the Assembly" in protest. Nkrumah noted that his "constitutional point aroused deep interest. [His] political enemies snapped it up at once as being further proof that [he] was a dictator," Autobiography, p. 214.

179 Autobiography, p. 214; see also Revolutionary Path, p. 117. While protesting that this was a matter of "principle," he took the opportunity to make disparaging remarks about the opposition, stating that "[a]ll parties now opposed to the C.P.P. are known throughout the country as 'Domo,'" a word that was apparently the patois for democracy. "The word ... proved very apt in describing the sudden appearance of these parties, for literally it means 'mushroom' in the Twi language," Autobiography, pp. 214-215.
to smash the forces of colonialism ... [this] can be achieved only by a united people organised in a disciplined political party and led by that party.¹⁸⁰

For Nkrumah, the CPP was that party; therefore, any opposition to the CPP could only be representative of those who were willing to place parochial or individual interests above the interests of the nation as a whole, which was, of course, independence above all things (at least, as far as Nkrumah was concerned). It is clear, however, that his obsession with independence was blinding him to the fact that the opposition was not based on a rejection of independence, but on the rejection of the assumption that the CPP represented all of the peoples of the Gold Coast. Nkrumah’s obdurate refusal to acknowledge even the possibility that opposition to the CPP was founded on dissatisfaction with the CPP itself meant that he could not (or, perhaps, would not) accept the other parties as legitimate ‘voices of the people.’ Indeed, his attitude towards the other parties verged on the paranoid, as was amply illustrated in a speech he gave to the new Assembly in August 1954, when he

warned the House that ‘if we tolerate the formation of political parties on regional, sectional or religious bases, we shall not only be heading for political chaos but, worse still, we shall be sowing the seeds of the destruction of our national existence. Coming events cast their shadows before them, and the Government shall consider what steps should be taken to eradicate this emerging evil in our national life.’¹⁸¹

If the Gold Coast had still been at the stage where independence was the primary goal, this antagonism to opposition could be understandable. However, by 1954, it was clear that independence was rapidly approaching, so his assertion that

[i]n colonial countries where imperialism has succeeded dividing the nationalist movement along tribal lines, the anti-imperialist struggle is invariably weakened and the

¹⁸⁰Ibid., pp. 214-215.
¹⁸¹Austin, p. 252, n. 3.
main objectives of the nationalist movement, unity and independence, are sacrificed on the altar of tribalism does not carry the weight that he presumed it would. The opponents he tried to personify as traitors to the cause had a much more realistic, and pragmatic, appreciation of the situation than Nkrumah. They knew that "the cause" had already succeeded, and their focus had, accordingly, shifted to what the future within the new state held for them, and the fear that what Nkrumah was really interested in establishing was not just an independent Ghana, but a one-party state. Given his responses to this date to criticism (even "informed and constructive"), their anxiety about what the future could hold for those who disagreed with his policies was well-founded.

Matters came to a head early in the life of the 1954 Assembly, initiated by a government policy statement on the price to be paid to cocoa farmers. Cocoa was the primary export of the Gold Coast, and its importance to the economy was such that the government, through the Cocoa Marketing Board (CMB) and the Cocoa Purchasing Company (CPC), controlled

\[182 Autobiography, p. 215.\]

\[183 The propaganda during the election campaign of 1954 certainly lent credence to the disquieting suspicion that this would also be a one-man state. The personification of Nkrumah as the fount off all good ("the 'Hero of the revolution,'... 'Africa's Man of Destiny,'" etc.) was increasingly emphasized in the CPP newspapers and campaign activities (rallies, etc.), Austin, pp. 213-215.\]

\[184 The Cocoa Duty and Development Funds (Amendment) Bill, passed on August 13, 1954. It set the price to be paid to farmers for the next 4 years, with the stipulation that the government could use the surplus funds for development, Nkrumah. Autobiography, pp. 216-217. See also Austin, pp. 253-254.\]

\[185 Austin, p. 254, n. 5. In 1953 "out of a total export revenue of ... 89.7 million [sterling], cocoa constituted ... 66.1 million [sterling]."\]

\[186 The CMB had been set up by the colonial government in 1947, to act as the sole buyer and exporter of the crop, Bourret, p. 204. Between 1918 and 1938, prices had "fluctuated severely," and the foreign firms purchasing the crop formed a cartel in 1936 to keep the purchase price low. This led to a boycott by the Africans, and a parliamentary committee was sent to the colony in 1938 to study the situation. The Nowell Commission's report "strongly condemned not only the merchants' attempt to control the price, but also the inefficient and often dishonest methods of the African brokers and middlemen," (p. 66-67) The outbreak of World War II delayed the recommended implementation of a local board of control; during the War, "the British government itself..."\]
the sale of the commodity. In order to ameliorate the financial position of the farmers, in the face of the fluctuating international price of cocoa, the CMB and CPC set a standard price for the crop within the colony. The intention had been to "bank" surpluses (the difference between the price given to the farmers and the amount paid for the crop on the international market) and draw on this when the international market price was lower. However, the CPP (in control of the CMB and CPC since 1951) "viewed the reserves as a source for funding public development projects," a sore point with the farmers in Asante (which produced half of the crop) who did not appreciate "their" funds being used to benefit—disproportionately, they believed—other regions. In addition, prior to 1954, there had been complaints about corruption and misuse by the CPP of the CMB and CPC (which Nkrumah had seen as "an attempt ... to discredit [him] and the Government"), and the discontent that these complaints represented

marketed the cocoa," p. 68.

187Established in 1952 "as a statutory company to function as a subsidiary of the [CMB]. It was to buy cocoa for the Board and in 1953 it was made the Board's agent for issuing loans to cocoa farmers," Bourret, pp. 180-181.

188There were 2 uses for the reserve fund, "one for price stabilization ... the other ... for the rehabilitation of the cocoa industry, including aid to diseased farms and expenditure on research ... later the board also began to give grants for various purposes of general benefit to the cocoa farmers or to the industry as a whole," eg. donations to the Gold Coast University College and "scholarship funds for the children of farmers," Bourret, pp. 204-205. Although the world price doubled between 1948 and 1954, the CMB "set the price ... at an artificially low level and through the 1950s it averaged only just over 50 per cent of the world price," Rooney, p. 155.

189Jean Marie Allman, The Quills of the Porcupine: Asante Nationalism in an Emergent Ghana (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1993) p. 39. "The CPP saw the cocoa revenue as an almost limitless source of wealth, and cashed in quickly on the popularity which development schemes brought to the different parts of the country," Rooney, p. 155. The government instituted "a new policy by which it absorbed a large part of the cocoa profits through a higher export tax," Bourret, p. 205.

190Nkrumah, Autobiography, p. 257. In fact, the Jibowu Commission of 1956 reported that the CPC "had not only misused public funds but had done so for political purposes ... [it] was, in fact, controlled by the [CPP] and used 'for the purpose of winning adherents for the C.P.P.,' giving loans out of government-provided funds mainly to party sympathizers," Bourret, pp. 180-181. See also Austin, pp. 341-342, n. 25. Nkrumah claimed that the "allegation" that the CPP controlled the CPC was based "mainly on the fact that the affairs of the [CPC] were discussed at the Central Committee of [his] Party," Autobiography, p. 256. The Commission, however, said
became absorbed into the discontent among farmers that the new price was too low.

While Nkrumah claimed that "[i]n general, the cocoa farmers welcomed the Bill, but anti-CPP elements made use of it to attack the government by stirring up regional animosities," the "attack" was far more wide-spread than that. The farmers had been led to believe, during the 1954 campaign, that the price would be increased, and they deeply resented the government's proposal that the new price be the same as the previous year's. Given the importance of the cocoa crop in Asante, it is hardly surprising that protests there "began to take on a political character."

The "anti-CPP elements" that Nkrumah referred to included many of the "rebels" he had expelled from the CPP, who now formed alliances with the farmers' associations (including the United Ghana Farmers' Council, which had been affiliated with the CPP), the Asante Youth Association (AYA), and the chiefs: in short, everyone in Asante who had a grievance against the government.

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191 Nkrumah, Revolutionary Path, p. 117; see also Autobiography, p. 217.

192 Although the "official" CPP election manifesto "had avoided any promise of a higher price ... promises of a general increase in cocoa prices had certainly formed part of the local propaganda carried on in a number of constituencies." Even "the United Ghana Farmers' Council, despite its CPP affiliation," complained about the low price, Austin, p. 255. During the election campaign, CPP in the cocoa-growing regions had told the voters "that the recent introduction of a new ... 5 [pound] note had been made to facilitate the payment of 100x a load for the forthcoming main crop season." As the payment was now set at 72s., one can see why the farmers were discontented, Austin, p. 254.

193 Ibid., p. 255.
CPP was now drawn together. Thus, less than three months after the 1954 election, a new party had been formed which would head the growing opposition to the CPP: the National Liberation Movement (NLM). Nkrumah, however, still refused to acknowledge the depth and breadth of the opposition that this represented, claiming that the NLM "drew support from certain sections of the Ashanti people opposed to the Cocoa Duty and Development Funds (Amendment) Bill," and that "it was ... a movement on the part of the Asanteman Council to free themselves and those of the Ashanti people who supported them from the influence of democracy as represented by the [CPP]."

Nkrumah's obdurate dismissals of the NLM in both the *Autobiography* and *Revolutionary Path* make no mention of the resignation of three of the leading Asante members of the CPP, and their support of the NLM. Chief among them was J.E. Appiah, a man who had been close to Nkrumah for many years and a high official of the CPP. In his public announcement, Appiah

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194Ibid., pp. 255-261. See also Allman, pp. 40-41: the "economic issue" of the cocoa price had now become also a "political and national— that is, Asante national— issue," p. 40.

195At a rally on September 5, 1954, on "the site of the 1954 public expulsions of the CPP rebel candidates, ... [s]peaker after speaker reiterated the argument that the CPP was both expropriating the wealth of the Asante region and desecrating its cultural and historical traditions." Two weeks later, the NLM was formally "inaugurate[d]", Allman, pp. 44-46.

196Nkrumah, *Revolutionary Path*, p. 117.

197Nkrumah, *Autobiography*, p. 218. Allman's analysis of the situation in Asante argued that, on the contrary, this was a "youngmen's" movement, which forged alliances with the farmers, the chiefs, and the intelligentsia to create a "nationalist" response to the CPP. The cocoa issue was simply the catalyst, and the key to mass mobilization, Allman, pp. 46-49. See also Austin, pp. 265-267.

198This was important, not only because of the defection, but because it gave the NLM "spokesmen who were at least the intellectual equal of the CPP leaders," Austin, p. 268.

199Joseph Appiah, *Joe Appiah: The Autobiography of an African Patriot* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1990). Appia had been born into the aristocracy of Asante, both of his parents had received western education, and he was able to go to England to complete his own education (becoming a lawyer). He stayed in England for 10 years (1944-1954), becoming involved in many of the political organizations (West African
voiced the concerns of many:

[m]y cumulative experience of working with [the CPP] has made me realize that they are either unwilling or unable to appreciate the growing anxiety in the country and I feel that there is a fundamental dismissal of all criticism and a refusal to accept that mistakes have been made and dishonesties wittingly committed. They will not take the public into their confidence by explaining and answering for their actions. Furthermore, they do not seem to have any realistic solution to the present situation ... I find no just excuse for pegging the price of cocoa so low nor in the method adopted; the refusal of the Government to publish fully and at once the C.W.E. Commission Report 200 was a blow to democracy and justice; the refusal of the Government to investigate the [CPC's] activities constitutes a gross affront to public opinion; the doctrine of "Jobs for the boys" irrespective of qualification or integrity is today setting intelligence at a discount and endangering the very foundations of our future; the institution of Chieftaincy, the very symbol of our culture, tradition and democracy, is threatened unnecessarily by action and words; the violent attacks in the Party papers and on party platforms against any who dare to criticize the Government or think differently are grim forebodings of what might come ... 201

What did come was an increase in violence, as NLM and CPP supporters clashed in the streets, a physical reflection of the strident and often abusive language the associated newspapers

Students' Union, West African Labour Parliamentary Committee). He had been one of Nkrumah's closest companions during his stay in London. In 1952, Nkrumah appointed him as his personal representative in London, and the official representative of the CPP in Britain. A year later, he married the daughter of Sir Stafford Cripps. His sister was married to the future king of Asante. This was no "verandah boy."

200The Cooperative Wholesale Establishment (CEW) had been "founded in 1949 as a central importing agency for consumer societies. In 1953 the C.W.E. was subject to special investigation for financial irregularities, several of its employees were placed upon trial ... and it was closed down in 1954," Apter, p. 76.

201Appiah, pp. 240-241. He had returned to the Gold Coast in November of 1954, already aware of the charges being made against the CPP, having been fully informed by a colleague who had been sent to London for medical attention (and who had told him "that Nkrumah is aware of it all"). On his return, he was given the "evidence" this colleague had collected (p. 232). It was only after considerable effort to persuade Nkrumah to take action against the corruption failed that he made this statement. During these discussions, Nkrumah had "expressed a fundamental fear as he saw it; the party's attraction, to a very large measure, was based on ties of tribe, clan and blood; to dismiss the offending ministers and officials ... might lead to mass resignations from the party for loss of their vested interests--tangible and intangible." He also did not want to increase the cocoa price because this would force him to reduce "the grandiose development plans" he had in mind (p. 238). Appiah was to be repeatedly imprisoned by the government after independence.
of each party hurled at each other. The NLM quickly established a parallel political organization to the CPP in Asante and began its campaign to force the British Government to reconsider its planned schedule and structure for independence. The NLM now demanded a federal system for the emerging nation of Ghana, as the political embodiment of the regionalism that the NLM believed was inherent to Ghanaian culture, and representative, in particular, of Asante traditions. The avowed intention was to "protect" the minorities of the regions from

202 There were "many bloody battles ... almost daily" in Asante, and especially in Kumasi, Appiah, p. 243. The NLM had established its own newspaper, The Liberator, in 1955, "which was very much like its counterpart the Evening News—raucous, hard-hitting, and abusive," Austin, p. 269.

203 Including its own flag, salute, and propaganda van. Within a month, it was claimed, there were 60 local branches with 20,000 registered members. While the movement was primarily located in Asante, messages of support came from opposition groups throughout the colony. And, although the NLM had, to a great extent, been propelled into being by the "youngmen", the chiefs became active participants, Allman, pp. 51-55. Endorsement by the Kumasi State Council of Chiefs was also achieved, by persuading the Council that the NLM was not a political organization per se but a national movement. In Asante, it "was considered an abuse of sacred power" for them to become involved in national politics; by accepting the NLM as a national movement, which "stood above party politics," the chiefs were able to publically support it without sacrificing their "sacred power," Ibid., p. 60. It also quickly acquired its first martyr: 9 October 1954, the propaganda secretary of the NLM was stabbed to death by the regional propaganda secretary of the CPP, apparently the result of a confrontation after the CPP official had trashed the NLM office. Kumasi and its immediate environs "erupted" into demonstrations and riots. CPP officials had to be given police protection, and CPP propaganda vans had to be taken off the streets else their presence further incense the mobs. The government banned public meetings, but the murder had "served to unleash the frustrations of many; it was a powerful catalyst for mass mobilization and action," p. 59. Ibid., pp. 56-60.

204 The Executive Committee of the NLM (which now included the acting president of the State Council) sent a telegram to the Secretary of State "urging him to appoint a royal commission to investigate charges of bribery and corruption against the CPP government ... specifically ask[ing] the [CPC] be examined as well as the causes leading to the death of [the NLM official]. The cable concluded with this message: 'The Gold Coast [NLM] presently consisting of the chiefs and people of Ashanti [sic] has lost all confidence in the Gold Coast Government and its Prime Minister, Mr. Kwame Nkrumah,'" Ibid., p. 60.

205 Now backed, not only by the chiefs of the State Council, but also by the Asantehene (the "king") himself, who said that the NLM "was not a political party ... but a movement dedicated to] saving [the Asante] nation from destruction," Austin, p. 264. The assembled chiefs of the Asanteman Council, meeting 24 October 1954, "swore to support the NLM in so far as it sought to further the establishment of a federal form of government for the Gold Coast," and sent a petition to the Queen to ask "for the appointment of a Royal Commission to devise a federal constitution for the Gold Coast", point[ing] out that 'the traditional constitution of the Ashanti is federal in nature', and declar[ing] that 'we firmly believe that federation will benefit not only the component regions but the country as a whole in that it will reduce the risk of undue dictation from the Central Administration and the abuse of power," Ibid., p. 264. See also Allman, p. 62. The chiefs also pointed
the anticipated (and, as far as the people of Asante were concerned, already evidenced) tyranny of the CPP. 206

d) Independence: autonomy or autocracy?

The British Government, dismayed that its plans for a smooth hand-over of power to the CPP had apparently hit a substantial obstacle, initiated a flurry of consultations to try to resolve the situation. It had been working on the assumption that the 1954 elections had demonstrated the support of the majority of the population for the CPP's program for independence, and that all that remained to be done was to set a date and finalize the details of transfer.207 The apparent

out that their "advocacy of a federal set-up is a long standing one." At the same time as he endorsed the NLM, however, the Asantehene also expressed suspicions of the "youngmen" of the NLM, "an early indication that long-standing conflicts [between the chiefs and the "youngmen"] could not be swept permanently away" by the tide of common cause in Asante nationalism.

206There was a general "belief that Ashanti [sic] as a whole ... were being 'smothered' (to borrow an expression from the Togoland Congress) by a rival nationalist movement whose principal leaders were non-Ashanti," Austin, p. 267. "The argument used in memorandum after memorandum to the Queen, the Secretary of State, the Governor, and the general public all turned on the need to prevent a concentration of power at the centre in order to safeguard local liberties." The very development of the regional parties (NPP, NLM, and TCP) demonstrated, they argued, the "natural components" of the country. Rejecting the "western" model proposed by the CPP, the NLM and its supporters claimed that a federal system would better reflect "African precepts and experience," Ibid., pp. 277-281. While Austin tended to dismiss this as a propaganda ploy by the NLM and its allies (and especially the old UGCC leaders within the alliance) to garner popular support, the strength of the public response to the clarion call of Asante nationalism would argue that the "ploy" did indeed reflect a widely-felt need to protect regional traditions and autonomy. A need that was apparently not only recognized in Asante, for, "[o]n October 24, ... the NLM called together all of the leaders of the major opposition forces in the Gold Coast and received their unflinching support in the struggle for federation," Allman, p. 67. Representing the North, the NPP also formed an alliance with the NLM in opposition to the CPP. While agreeing that a federalist constitution was necessary to protect the regions from a too-powerful centre, however, the NPP also recognized that federalism would also mean that it would be unlikely that any of the wealth generated in Asante (from the cocoa exports) would then be distributed to the North to further its development. Therefore, their alliance "was more a show of solidarity with anti-CPP forces everywhere in the country than a deep commitment to the principles of federalism," Ladouceur, pp. 132-133.

207In September of 1954, it had been thought that the situation in Asante could be resolved if the government could just "explain away" the cocoa issue, Rooney, p. 158. However, the increasingly strident demands for an investigation into the CMB and CPC (especially as former CPP officials deserted to the NLM with their "inside knowledge .. about the nefarious practices of the [CPC]," Ibid., 158, and the escalating violence
strength of the NLM opposition now raised doubts about the "message" of the 1954 elections.

The British became hesitant to continue the process based solely upon those results, and, after the failure of the attempt to reach a compromise solution to the constitutional debate within the

after the "martyrdom" forced the British officials in the colony to take a more serious attitude. While the British officials within Asante "felt very considerable sympathy for the NLM... [which they] thought was fighting a just cause against a crude and hooligan element in the CPP led by a dubious, unreliable and corrupt government," the Governor "came to view it as a dangerous regional splinter group... and the biggest and most unexpected menace to the goal of independence," Ibid., p. 162, and initially sided with the CPP on the issue of allowing the 1954 election results to represent the will of the people. Indeed, his speeches so closely followed the CPP line that the Chief Regional Officer in Asante began receiving "[c]omplaints... that the Governor was no longer unbiased... [and] could not be trusted," Ibid., p. 167. This was demonstrated when, on a visit to Kumasi, his car was stoned by a mob, Ibid., p. 168. He also urged the Colonial Office to "give maximum support to the Gold Coast government and... not in any way [to] encourage the opposition," Ibid., p. 173. However, events in the colony, and the support being given the opposition by London newspapers (eg. the Daily Telegraph) and "expatriate business interests, which were apprehensive about their future in an independent Ghana dominated by Nkrumah" began to take their toll, Ibid., p. 173. Sir Frederick Bourne was sent to the colony "to consider every aspect of the new constitution," p. 176.

Indeed, for the first half of 1955, officials (both in London and in the colony) were actually afraid that the situation was going to escalate into civil war. "Even [the Governor] was forced to admit... that the NLM had extended its influence to a point where the Government can no longer regard it as a negligible force." Asante had become "for all practical purposes, ungovernable," Allman, pp. 106-108. By the end of 1955, the Secretary of State was telling the House of Commons that "he had some sympathy with [the] past situation [in Asante], and... that Her Majesty's Government wished to be satisfied that the independence constitution would be generally acceptable throughout the country." The venerable Times was already suggesting "that there should be another election before independence." At the same time, the NLM's lobbying effort in London to force the CPP to hold an inquiry into the CPC finally bore fruit. Although the Governor had been advising this for some time, "the CPP--knowing the NLM had damaging inside information-- stoutly resisted the demand." Now, however, the Secretary of State insisted, and Nkrumah was forced to take action, "though he delayed for several months before making the appointment." Rooney, pp. 179-180. As a result, the Commission's Report was not tabled until after the 1956 election, too late for its findings of corruption and bribery against the CPP to have any impact on the vote, Allman, pp. 163-164. See note 190 above. However, the fact that Nkrumah had finally been forced to respond to the allegations regarding the CPC was seen as "a significant victory" for the NLM, an indication of the increasing tendency of the British to accord it attention, Rooney, p. 180.
colony, decided that another election should be held to settle the issue.

Nkrumah could now no longer ignore the threat that the NLM represented. Professing his concern that another election would result in an increase in the already prevalent violence in Asante, and that "[c]onstitutionally and politically [he] did not see any necessity" for another election, he decided that another election should be held to settle the issue.

A number of conferences had been called and committees formed, but the opposition steadfastly refused to participate, demanding instead that a constituent assembly be held to discuss the issues. Without their participation, as they well knew, no such committee or conference could be considered "legitimate" because it would represent only the CPP, Allman, pp. 94-96. They even refuse to meet publically with Bourne (though there were some private meetings) because they "assumed that [he] would be as biased as the Select Committee had been." See Rooney, pp. 176-178. A final attempt was made with the Achimota Conference in February 1956, but the Governor was informed by the Asanteman Council "that [as] Ashanti [sic] and the Northern Territories were wholly unrepresented ... 'the conclusions of this farcical conference will be unacceptable, and the NLM would not be bound by its decisions,'" Rooney, p. 182.

Even the Governor had come to realize "that another election was the only answer," Rooney, p. 186.

Indeed, "[i]f the [CPP continued to ignore] the Ashanti [sic] movement, it was in danger of losing the support it still had in the region," Austin, p. 284. In spite of the growing sense of urgency in the face of the violence (both physically, in the streets, and rhetorically, in the newspapers of both the NLM and CPP), Nkrumah did his best to continue to ignore the danger until he was forced to come to terms with the threat the NLM represented. In his account of "The Ashanti [sic] Problem," in the Autobiography (pp. 216-222), Nkrumah made no mention of the NLM official who was murdered by the CPP official, and tended to pass the whole thing off as an attempt by the chiefs and malcontents "to free themselves ... from the influence of democracy as represented by the [CPP]" (p. 218). It was not until he covered "The 'Federation' Issue" in a later chapter that he acknowledged the extent of the "Problem". However, he was still fixated on the demand for federation (which, he argued, was impractical due to the size and financial resources of the colony—a reasonable argument, in itself), and did not appear to realize—or be prepared to acknowledge—the strength of the issues which underlay this demand, pp. 240-253.

He did not acknowledge, however, that much of the violence was between the NLM "Action Groupers" and his own CPP "Action Troopers," both paramilitary groups (the CPP's had been organized "[l]ong before the advent of the NLM"), Allman, pp. 63-64. Indeed, the NLM group had been a "deliberate copy and challenge to the Action Troopers of the CPP," Austin, p. 269. The degree of violence was truly alarming: bombings (including one at Nkrumah's house, Autobiography, pp. 219-220), riots, assaults, arson, murders, and even, as already mentioned, attacks on the Governor's car. See Allman, pp. 67, 79-80, 98-109. Nkrumah claimed that he had instructed his supporters not to "retaliate," but noted that "[i]f the police and the army had been in the hands of my Government, the revolt, disobedience and disregard of law, order and justice in Ashanti [sic] would never have happened," Autobiography, pp. 218-219. Security was still under the control of the Governor, and he preferred to follow a "more restrained and democratic course" of action. Rooney, p. 159. Thus, while Nkrumah told his supporters "that if he had controlled the police he could have smashed the NLM" (in a speech reported in the Evening News of December 13, 1955; as quoted in Rooney, p. 181), the Governor sent in police and army reinforcements, banned public meetings, and prohibited "the possession of arms and munitions," Allman, pp. 105-106. The increased police presence led to a large number of arrests and a gradual lessening of the overt violence, though security officials (as already mentioned) had been preparing for a complete breakdown of control, especially as the situation had "escalated ... into a state of terror" in early 1955, Allman, pp. 104-109.
election before independence,\textsuperscript{213} Nkrumah did all that he could to dissuade the British Government from this course of action.\textsuperscript{214} As both the Governor and the Secretary of State were adamant that another election was necessary, Nkrumah considered the "three possible courses of action" that he believed were open to him:

Firstly, to make a unilateral declaration of independence, which would be a revolutionary step and one which [he] would hesitate to take unless [he] was forced; secondly, to let the present constitution run its course until 1958, which would mean delaying self-government and throwing the country into a state of confusion, distrust and discontentment; and thirdly, to hold a general election in the near future.\textsuperscript{215}

Assured by the Governor and Secretary of State that they would ensure a "free and fair" election, he decided to go with option three.\textsuperscript{216} The Secretary of State then issued a statement that, following this election, "a motion calling for independence ... passed by a reasonable majority in ... [the] Legislature" would be accepted by the British Government.\textsuperscript{217} Elections were duly called for July 1956.\textsuperscript{218}

\textsuperscript{213}Nkrumah, \textit{Autobiography}, p. 248.
\textsuperscript{214}Including, as a last resort, sending a personal representative to London to present his case to the Secretary of State, \textit{Ibid.}, pp. 248-251.
\textsuperscript{215}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 252.
\textsuperscript{216}\textit{Ibid.} However, in February of 1956, he had already sought assurances from the Governor that, if an election was held, "even [if the CPP was returned to power] with the smallest of majorities and irrespective of the fact that the winning party might be in the minority in one or more of the regions of the country" that the British Government would still accept a resolution by the new Assembly for independence, pp. 246-247.
\textsuperscript{217}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 253.
\textsuperscript{218}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 252. Nkrumah was adamant that he was ultimately responsible for the decision. While the party executive had been "almost unanimous in voting against a general election" before the final word from the Secretary of State (p. 248), "they agreed to the Secretary of State's request for a general election" after Nkrumah had made his decision (pp. 252-253). They must have taken some persuading, for the party—and especially the leaders—were "uneasy" about what the results of another election would be. Although Nkrumah had announced at a rally in February 1956 that "he alone was the only man in the country ... to approve such a demand" (reported in the \textit{Daily Graphic}, as quoted in Austin, p. 305), other leaders were making "wild statements" about unilateral declarations of independence, Austin, pp. 304-305. This lends credence to Austin's belief "that a good
For all of Nkrumah's posturing on his "options," there really had been no alternative. To unilaterally declare independence, irregardless of the British response to it, would not only have confirmed the accusations of "dictator" levelled by the opposition, but, given the "nationalistic" rhetoric of the NLM, probably have resulted in a violent uprising (especially in Asante, and possibly in the other regions as well). The prospect would have been a daunting one for Nkrumah to face. To delay self-government until at least 1958 would not to have been to throw "the country into a state of confusion, distrust and discontentment"--it was already there. However, the delay might well have given the opposition in all the regions time to fully exploit this state, and to organize popular support for the federalist-style constitution they were promoting. Furthermore, a delay to the fulfilment of the promises Nkrumah had been making to his supporters might well have increased the internal discontent within the CPP, dangerously weakening Nkrumah's position. In this situation, it was in Nkrumah's best interests to call the election as soon as possible, before the opposition could make any further advances.

part of [the] last-minute negotiations were undertaken more to convince [Nkrumah's] own party executive that there was no alternative" to another election. "It was the Secretary of State ... who made the first public announcement" that a new election would be necessary, Austin, p. 309. This was, evidently, as a result of a meeting between Nkrumah and his cabinet and the Governor. The cabinet was proving, for once, to be resistant to Nkrumah's persuasive powers, and did not want to be seen to have given in to the NLM. The Governor, the Secretary of State, and Nkrumah had already agreed to allow Nkrumah to make the announcement, so that he could get "all the kudos for a statesmanlike and democratic decision." However, the cabinet believed "that things would be easier for them with their supporters and back benchers if" the Secretary of State announced first "that there could be no independence without ... holding a general election on the constitutional issue and then the P.M. announcing he would have one," Rooney, p. 187.

219The security officers had already been warning of this, and had become frustrated "with the government's inability to appreciate the broader ramifications of Asante nationalism's resurgence," Allman, p. 106.

220Nkrumah had already been concerned about the "difficulties" that the "transitional period had already given rise to [...] divided authority at high level, divided loyalties in the civil service, criticism against the Government ... ." To continue "[t]he uncertainty of [the] transitional period" would clearly be problematic, Autobiography, p. 244.
It proved to be a wise decision. The CPP won 71 of the 104 seats (5 were uncontested CPP wins). However, once again, the electoral system worked to the CPP's advantage. Only 50% of the registered voters cast a ballot in the contested elections, and these represented less than 30% of the adult population. The CPP garnered 57% of the total vote, and the opposition a combined 43%. A regional breakdown of the results shows little substantive change from the 1954 election, except in Asante:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>CPP</th>
<th>Non-CPP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Colony</td>
<td>179,024</td>
<td>42,602</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asante</td>
<td>96,968</td>
<td>127,601</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TVT</td>
<td>55,508</td>
<td>46,076</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North</td>
<td>66,641</td>
<td>82,837</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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The CPP overwhelmed the opposition in the Colony, winning all of the 44 seats there. It actually gained in the North, claiming 8 of the 21 seats (the NPP retained the 15 it had won in 1954), and maintained its 8 out of 15 for TVT. However, the situation in Asante illustrated the threat that an organized opposition could have posed to the CPP: of the 21 seats, the CPP won 8 and the NLM 12 (the remaining seat went to the MAP). That politics was becoming more organized was demonstrated by the decrease in support for independent candidates: in 1954, independents

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221 Austin, pp. 347-348. As Allman pointed out, despite all of the efforts of the parties during "two years of the most intense political battling the Gold Coast had witnessed," what marked the 1956 elections was "the failure of both [author's emphasis] parties [in Asante] to mobilize mass participation." In spite of the clear importance of the election, "the CPP's mandate was based on the electoral support of roughly 17 percent of the adult population (or 28.5 percent of registered voters. The NLM drew the votes of less than 13 percent of the adult population (or 21.5 percent of registered voters," less than the number which had voted in 1954., Allman, pp. 159-160. Joe Appiah, campaigning in Takoradi, reported a curious use of logic by the electorate, one of whom told him: "We really should throw [the CPP] out; but ... if we do we will have to put [the NLM] in, and this is full of lawyers, doctors, professors and too many wise men who may indulge in corruption too cleverly to defy detection [sic]. So in the end it might be better to vote in the not-so-clever Nkrumah and his C.P.P.; at least we can always catch them out in further corruption and bribery," Appiah, p. 246.

222 Ibid., p. 354. See also Bourret, p. 196. The Governor's reaction to the results was interesting, while he "had expected the CPP to get back," he seemed alarmed at the prospect of it being "with a dangerously large majority," Rooney, p. 194.
had garnered 22% of the total vote and won 11 seats;\textsuperscript{223} in 1956, the results were 5.57% of the total vote and 2 seats (in TVT).\textsuperscript{224}

Interesting though it would be to speculate on what might have happened had the election been delayed until 1958, it was clear that the CPP had again won a majority in the Assembly and was indeed, as Nkrumah had claimed, the only party with a truly "national" appeal.\textsuperscript{225} While the NLM and NPP tried to argue that the results in Asante and the Northern Territories had demonstrated support for their demands for a federalist constitution, the substantive support for the CPP even there served to nullify their claims.\textsuperscript{226} Accordingly, Nkrumah wasted no time in tabling before the Assembly a motion to request independence, and the motion was duly passed.\textsuperscript{227} The opposition parties boycotted the session, instead sending a delegation to London to ask the British Government "not to grant independence because the country was not ready for Parliamentary democracy."\textsuperscript{228} However, the Government's mind had

\textsuperscript{223}Ibid., p. 243.

\textsuperscript{224}Ibid., p.354.

\textsuperscript{225}Nkrumah, \textit{Autobiography}, p. 273. Nkrumah's relief is almost palpable. Although he had planned "a monster rally in Kumasi," during the election, he decided against going himself, fearing that his supporters would get out of control, because they "would be almost mad with excitement," p. 270.

\textsuperscript{226}However, they were "now on the defensive, and [the] leaders knew they had to secure the best terms they could, Austin, pp. 355-357. Meanwhile, the NLM opposition "intensified." There were charges that the government had been guilty of "malpractices" during the election, Rooney, p. 195.

\textsuperscript{227}Nkrumah, \textit{Autobiography}, pp. 278-281. Nkrumah believed that "[t]he cheer that arose from all parts of the House at the conclusion of [his] speech was ... the authentic voice of the people," p. 279. The Opposition was not in attendance, because they could not get through the crowd into the Assembly (deterred, Nkrumah said, by the boos "from a number of market women," p. 275. Appiah claimed that "Nkrumah got his C.P.P. vandals to attack the convoy of the entire opposition members" in order to prevent them reaching the Assembly in time to vote on the motion, Appiah, p. 246.

\textsuperscript{228}Nkrumah, \textit{Autobiography}, p. 279. They also registered "their serious lack of confidence in ... the Governor," Rooney, p. 195.
been made up by the election, and, on 15 September 1956, the Secretary of State announced that
the Gold Coast would become the independent nation of Ghana on 6 March 1957. Nkrumah's
dream had been realized.

Yet not fully on his terms. The opposition had succeeded in persuading the British that
regional aspirations should have a voice in the form of Regional Assemblies. Given this
concession, the opposition parties were now willing to support independence and continue their
struggle for greater regional representation during the debate over the new constitution.

Although the Constitution of 1957, passed shortly before independence day, did establish 5
regional assemblies for Ghana (Eastern, Western, Trans-Volta Togoland, Asante, and the
North), this would prove to be temporary. By late 1957, the CPP had banned "parties based
on tribal or religious allegiances" and began to take actions against the Regional Assemblies.

Nkrumah's proclamation in 1960 that "[t]he Convention People's Party is Ghana, and Ghana is
the Convention People's Party" effectively expressed the political structure of the new nation;
the one-party state that the opposition had so feared had become a reality.

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229 Nkrumah recorded this as "The Hour of Triumph," *Autobiography*, pp. 281-283.

230 And they wanted the Secretary of State to personally "mediate the constitutional dispute." The
deputation to London had succeeded in raising enough "misgivings" in the House of Commons that the Secretary
felt obliged "to personally intervene." Nkrumah, "was ... adamantly oppose[d] to the idea," but was persuaded
by the Governor to "publicly issue an invitation to the secretary in order to avoid having the visit appear as a
victory for the opposition," Allman, pp. 173-175.

231 The Constitution was passed in London on 22 February 1957, Bourret, pp. 199-200.

232 Allman, pp. 186-189. See also Austin, pp. 377-382. By late 1957, the government had already
ensured that all offices within the Regional Councils were occupied by CPP stalwarts. In addition, Muslim
leaders were deported, opposition members arrested, and chiefs destooleed and replaced by pro-CPP rivals. As
Austin put it, Nkrumah's "profound dislike ... of any open criticism of his rule" (pp. 370-371) ensured that any
opposition would not be tolerated once he had complete control of the government.

233 Allman, pp. 189-190.
e) Conclusion

While Ghana’s birth had not been accompanied by the bloodletting that had so marred the penultimate stage in India, independence had still come at a considerable cost. The disparate segments of the colony had been stitched together to create the new state, but the process had served to emphasize and politicize these internal divisions, deepening the conflict between the indigenous groups of the different regions. Although the particulars of the situation in the Gold Coast differ from those in India, the pattern of indigenous political development is the same.

In order to legitimize their demands for self-government, the western-educated élite had to create the appearance of widespread popular support for their cause. Leaders such as Nkrumah rallied crowds to protest against the colonial government by asserting that current economic and social problems could be resolved only through the acquisition of indigenous self-government. As the process of the devolution of power to indigenous representatives continued, the leaders of certain groups within the indigenous population became concerned that the interests of those groups (or the interests of their leaders) would not be adequately protected within the new system. These groups then formed political organizations of their own, rejecting the claims of the ‘nationalist’ party that it represented the indigenous population as a whole. As in the case of India, these organizations gained support from the electorate by encouraging these people to identify themselves by the factors which made them feel distinct from the rest of the population, thereby politicizing the internal divisions which these parties represented. As the competition for political power became more intense the closer independence loomed, the rhetoric of appeal became increasingly antagonistic. The resultant atmosphere of ‘us’ and ‘them’
provided the fuel for outbreaks of inter-group violence, which, in turn, added even more fuel to the antagonism. Again, the atmosphere had been "poisoned" and Nkrumah's fulminations against "tribal or religious allegiances" fell on deaf ears.

In many ways, it had been the very promotion of the concept of 'one nation' that Nkrumah envisioned that had brought about the polarization of the indigenous population into multi-national identifications. That this did not result in the geographical division of Ghana, as had happened in India, was more due to timing than necessity. If the parties which opposed the CPP had had more time to organize, there is reason to doubt that Ghana would have reached independence in the form that it did.
5. NIGERIA: THE FLICKERING FLAME OF NATIONAL UNITY

As in the Gold Coast and India, British territorial acquisition in Nigeria had been a prolonged process of treaty negotiation and military conquest. In some cases, such as Western Yorubaland, the British takeover had been nominally welcomed as a solution to the threat posed by intra-indigenous conflict.\(^1\) In most of Nigeria, however, especially in areas such as Iboland,\(^2\) where “the British had to conquer each town and village separately,”\(^3\) the process was much more difficult. Nor did initial success mean that British rule had forced the people to acknowledge British authority and dominance. “Official” rule remained superficial and tenuous, especially in the vast hinterland, and was intermittently challenged by indigenous groups well into the twentieth century, long after the region had ostensibly been “conquered”.\(^4\) Moreover, the existing geographical divisions within Nigeria had become institutionalized in the administrative and governing system constructed by the British, creating from the foundations of the colony the


\(^3\)Ibid., p. 2. While Coleman stated that “the occupation and pacification ... were carried out with comparatively little difficulty and with relatively little expense,” as he also remarked on the “substantial resistance” and the “frequent revolts” even after pacification, his conclusion that this had been a relatively easy accomplishment seems rather misplaced. See pp. 170-172.

\(^4\)Indeed, localized risings occurred as late as the 1930s, and the First World War period was marked by a series of rebellions, as the indigenous peoples took advantage of the Europeans’ preoccupation with the war in Europe. It required substantive forces to subdue these uprisings, an indication of the depth—and persistence—of resistance to British rule. See Isichei, pp. 396-399.
regional distinctions which would plague indigenous attempts to develop a unified opposition to British rule. These attempts would be made even more problematic by the rivalry between the two main protagonists in the struggle for leadership in the independence movement within Nigeria, Obafemi Awolowo and Nnamdi Azikiwe. The road towards self-government for Nigeria would be convoluted indeed.

a) The evolution of indigenous rejection of imperial rule

The British themselves had early recognized how difficult it would be to impose a unity of control over the territories of the Nigerian colony. Accordingly, they implemented the system of indirect rule, first devised by the High Commissioner of the Protectorate of Northern Nigeria in 1900, Sir (later Lord) Frederick Lugard. During the six years that it had taken him to “pacify” his Protectorate, Lugard had come to realize that direct administration in the region by the British would be prohibitively expensive in manpower requirements, both military and administrative, even if enough suitable recruits could have been persuaded to risk the inhospitable climate and conditions. In addition, the imposition of alien rule would have inevitably “antagonized and embittered” the indigenous ruling class, who would have encouraged their people to resist and reject British rule. Accordingly, he designed the system of indirect rule, whereby the Protectorate was divided into provinces, each of which was headed by a British

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6 Ironically, the most clear and concise explanation of Lugard’s system of indirect rule was given by a man who would become one of the leaders of Nigeria’s independence movement—Obafemi Awolowo, in his The People’s Republic (Ibadan: Oxford University Press, 1968) pp. 18-24.
Resident. Each province was further divided into administrative divisions, in the charge of District Officers. These officials were to be British, so the superstructure of administration was under direct British control. However,

The actual day-to-day administration ... was entrusted wholly to the Paramount Chiefs, or Natural Rulers ..., assisted by their traditional chiefs and councillors. Such legislative and executive bodies as well as such Courts and other political and civil institutions as they had evolved for themselves were allowed to continue to function, subject to such supervision and guidance as the Resident or the District Officer considered absolutely necessary. Their laws and customary usages, in so far as they were not repugnant to good conscience and the principles of justice and equity, were to be administered and upheld in all cases within their respective domains. Within all these limits, and so long as a Natural Ruler was amenable to official guidance and restraint and remained indubitably loyal to the British Government, he was to be given the fullest backing for all his actions by the Resident, to whom alone he was responsible in the discharge of his civil and public duties.7

The system was duly implemented in the North, and then transferred to the other regions of the colony, in spite of the fact that in some regions there had been no indigenous system of “Natural Rulers.” In these cases, Lugard simply appointed “influential persons” as warrant chiefs to take the role of paramount chiefs. Needless to say, those either confirmed in their (or given the) role as chiefs found the system to their liking. The people, however, were frequently less enthusiastic, and several severe revolts had to be suppressed, especially in those areas “where the system had either been imposed or introduced at the express request of the Natural Rulers” (for example, when the Alafin of Oyo asked the British to impose the system in his area, there was “an eruption in Iseyin in which many people were killed).8 What this system did, of course, besides make the administration of Nigeria more economical, was to ensure the loyalty

7Ibid., pp. 19-20.

8Ibid., p. 24. This was especially true in Western and Midwestern regions, where traditional leaders had not enjoyed the degree of authority accorded to them under the British system.
of the indigenous traditional leadership to the British, and to thus minimize the threat of an organized resistance to or rejection of British rule led by those who could appeal to the traditional loyalties of their people.\footnote{Indeed, this would be what Isichei saw as the inherent “weakness at the heart of the system ... that the ruler was answerable primarily to his colonial overlord ... rather than to the governed,” p. 381. See Isichei, pp. 380-393, for an exposition on the range of problems this caused as a result of “the practice to protect not only unsatisfactory rulers, but the system itself from every breath of criticism,” p. 380.}

The dynamics of the series of rebellions against British rule in the inter-war period clearly demonstrated, however, that traditional loyalty to the chiefs was not necessarily as substantive as the British had hoped, and would not deter the chiefs’ “subjects” from unilateral action—especially in those areas where warrant chiefs had been appointed by the British (and had, therefore, no “traditional” loyalty). Indeed, in some cases, such as the Egba Uprising of 1918 in Yorubaland and the Aba Riots of 1929 in the Eastern Region, both chiefs and Europeans were attacked during the riots over real or perceived grievances against the British administration and their collaborator-chiefs.\footnote{Coleman, pp. 173-174. See also Isichei, p. 400, and pp. 396-399 for further examples.}

In Yorubaland, in fact, the immediate cause of the revolt had been the imposition of the indirect rule system in the Egba Kingdom, which had previously enjoyed a measure of autonomy under the treaty it had negotiated with the British. The revolt was an opportunity to express the “[a]ccumulated grievances over administrative innovations of the British authorities,” of which the innovation of indirect rule had been, evidently, the last straw. While the revolt was suppressed, the ensuing enquiry determined that it had been “aided and abetted” by “educated Egbas resident in Lagos,” who were apparently disturbed by developments not only in their homeland, but also in Lagos. This case illustrated a phenomenon which would become more...
apparent as the nationalist movement in Nigeria developed, whereby educated persons, living in urban centres and away from their home villages, were able to instigate disturbances in those villages which, while based on local grievances, could be used to demonstrate anti-government sentiments at a more “national” level.\(^1\)

In contrast, the Aba Riots had been spontaneous (but well-organized) eruptions of discontent, which had nothing to do with educated elements or any proto-nationalist movement. They had been initiated and organized by illiterate (but clearly very capable) market women, demonstrating against actions (real or rumoured) taken by either the British or the local, indigenous, administration, and demanding the restoration of traditional government and administration. Their resentment about the changes the British had brought was not limited to cultural or social issues, however: the “widespread destruction of property and goods, belonging mainly to trading firms” also indicated a profound rejection of the changing economic system in the region.\(^2\)

The reactionary aspect of the Aba Riots was mirrored in a number of “minor nativistic religious movements” throughout Nigeria, especially before 1950, which “reflected [the] accumulated tensions within the social fabric of the community ... created by the shock of rapid cultural change.” In the Muslim North, this was illustrated by a series of Mahdist uprisings, although these declined after 1905, as the British implemented a “policy of not offending Moslem

\(^1\)Coleman, p. 173. See also Isichei, p. 398.

\(^2\)Ibid., pp. 174-175. An earlier example of the women’s resentment was that of the “nativistic revival” of 1925 in Iboland, when “[b]ands of dancing women marched up and down the country denouncing such innovations as British currency and native courts and demanding a return to the customs of olden times.” Ibid., p. 174. See also Isichei, pp. 399-400. What made the Aba Riots so remarkable was the way that it, and many of the reactionary protest movements, “transcend[ed] ethnic boundaries;” the rejection of the colonial power and its collaborators was clearly a wide-spread sentiment, Ibid., p. 400.
Religion was not only a factor in the reactionary anti-colonial protest movements, however, it also played a part in demonstrating indigenous rejection of colonial domination among the westernized elements of the population at a very early stage. In 1891, the United Native African Church was created by dissidents from the Anglican fold, who had decided that Christianity in Nigeria should be evangelized and governed by Africans, not Europeans. Others soon followed, as groups of congregationalist apostates from the Methodist and Baptist Churches (and more Anglicans), each formed new-African-- churches. While many of these retained at least some of the liturgy from their former affiliation, others rejected even this, creating their own interpretations of the Bible and forms of worship. There were even some “spontaneously organized groups,” which also defined themselves as Christian. All of these groups were assisted and encouraged in their secessionist activities by a variety “of small American sects (white and Negro) which provided literature, hymn books, and leaflets.” Unfortunately, the process of Africanizing Christianity, given the regrettably “strong tendency toward endless schism,” resulted in an ever-increasing multitude of sects, and made it impossible to create any form of umbrella organization that could combine the influence of the churches for any political purpose (a foreshadowing of the difficulties others would face in their attempts to create a unity among Nigerians). While the proliferation of African churches was a clear

13Ibid., p. 175.

14Coleman, pp. 175-176. See also Isichei, who dated the foundation of the “spirit of ecclesiastical nationalism” to the creation of the Ebenezer Baptist Church in 1888, p. 461.

15Coleman, pp. 175-177; see also Isichei, pp. 460-464. J.B. Webster believed that the “major political interest ... [of the African Christians elite] was in reforms to aid the spread of Christianity” because it was believed that this would prove a unifying force, “Political activity in British West Africa, 1900-1940,” in History
indication of the indigenous rejection of western control, other groups would express indigenous opposition to colonial rule on the political level.

b) The initiation of political organization

The first such organization, the People’s Union, was established in Lagos in 1908 “for the purpose of defending native rights.” Created by two African doctors “as a vehicle for popular protest,” the Union proved to be ineffective, but Lagos would continue to be the centre for the early phase of political mobilization in Nigeria. In 1913, a branch of the London-based Anti-Slavery and Aborigines Protection Society was established in Lagos. The Society’s primary concern about safeguarding indigenous land rights, which were perceived to be under threat at the time, would prove to be a cause that could unify the educated élite on the coast and the chiefs of the interior, as the élite sent representatives to the chiefs “to awaken [them] ... to the threat to their rights,” and the chiefs responded by joining a delegation to London to discuss the issue. Moreover, Nigerians were also paying close attention to developments in the wider world. Although direct Nigerian participation in organizations such as the West African National Congress was minimal, the rhetoric and ideas of the Congress, and of the Pan-African


16 It focussed its program on local opposition to “expropriation, changes in land tenure, and the water rate in particular.” While its failure to effect these issues and “disagreements among the leaders ... caused [it] to become moribund after 1916 ...[i]t ... was reorganized in 1923,” Coleman, p. 180. However, it “was never a significant political force,” Crowder, West Africa under Colonial Rule, p. 423.

17 The specific protest of 1912-13 concerning land issues in Lagos and the Yorubaland interior would also bring to prominence a future leader of the nationalist movement, Herbert Macaulay, of whom more will be said later, Crowder, West Africa under Colonial Rule, pp. 423-424.

18 For example, only 6 of the 52 delegates at the first Congress were from Nigeria, Ibid., p. 427. The Congress continued to be dominated by the “educated elements in the Gold Coast and Sierra Leone” because the
Congress of the same period, in combination with the influence of Marcus Garvey’s African nationalist arguments did serve to stimulate the debate within Nigeria. After 1914, the debate had become focussed on administrative issues. Lugard (now Governor of Nigeria—until 1918) restructured the government, creating three new councils. The Executive Council was an advisory board to the Governor, and its members were upper-level officials. The Nigerian Council, “a deliberative and advisory Council for the whole of Nigeria, excluding Lagos,” was intended to act as a public forum where the Governor could make statements of policy and the Council could “express an opinion on the ... statement.” Its members were all appointed by the Governor, and

comprised the Members of the Executive Council, Senior Residents, and a number of unofficial members (with a minority of African members of Southern Nigeria origin only) ... expatriate unofficial members represented business interests.

There was also a Legislative Council for the Colony of Lagos, which actually had the power to pass laws (“subject of course to the [Governor’s] reserved power”). While the majority of the Council were officials, two Africans were appointed as unofficial members. Although these new councils hardly represented a substantive move towards African participation in government, especially given that the system of indirect rule remained as the day-to-day administration of Nigeria, they were “wholeheartedly welcomed and supported” by “the majority of the educated élites in Southern Nigeria.” However,

there was an articulate minority, consisting of professionals based in Lagos, who did not

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Nigerians became preoccupied with internal divisions and issues, Coleman, pp. 192-195.

19Coleman, pp. 188-191.

hesitate to raise their voices in outright condemnation of it all. They expressed the view that if the British Government was sincere in its professed aim of training the people for eventual self-government, the [Governor] should ... have incorporated educated Nigerians into the business of Government at all levels, especially at the Divisional level. They condemned the ‘indirect rule’ system per se, and its introduction [sic] to Southern Nigeria.

Needless to say, it would be this “articulate minority” which would form the nucleus of the leadership in the political developments which followed.

It was in response to the constitutional changes of 1922 that the first opportunity arose for the development of political organizations. A new Legislative Council was created, of which four members were to be elected to represent Lagos (three) and Calabar (one). And, as Isichei remarked, “[e]lections tend to produce parties to fight them.” In Lagos, the Nigerian National Democratic Party (NNNDP) was founded by Herbert Macauley, one of the “articulate minority” who had long been agitating for greater Nigerian participation in government. It was perhaps indicative of Macauley’s history as a Nigerian activist that the Party, though “exclusively a Lagos

\[\text{21}^n\text{Ibid., p. 26.}\]

\[\text{22}^n\text{There were 31 official, and 21 unofficial members ... only 10 [of the unofficial members] were Nigerians. [Four] ... were elected on the basis of a franchise limited by property and income qualifications. The remaining six were nominated by the Governor to represent Egba, Colony, Rivers, Warri-Benin, Oyo, and Ibo Divisions. The 11 expatriate unofficial members represented banking, shipping, mining, and commercial interests,” Awolowo, People’s Republic, p. 27. There is a puzzling discrepancy in the numbers recorded in various authors’ accounts of this new Council: Burns stated the total was 30 official members, 4 elected, and 15 unofficials (p. 243); Isichei noted only 46 members, total (p. 402); Crowder (in West Africa under Colonial Rule, p. 455) claimed 26 official members and 19 unofficial; and Robert O. Tilman and Taylor Cole, eds., in The Nigerian Political Scene (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1962) said the Council has 27 officials and 19 Africans (p. 33). However, they all at least agreed that there were 4 elected members.}\]

\[\text{23}^n\text{Isichei, p. 402.}\]

\[\text{24}^n\text{Macauley was active in Nigerian politics from 1908 to 1946, Coleman, p. 197.}\]
organization," declared itself to be "National." Indeed, while its party program included two "specific objectives and demands" for Lagos in particular, it also included six for Nigeria, which were:

a) the establishment of branches and auxiliaries of the party in all areas of Nigeria;
b) the development of higher education and the introduction of compulsory education throughout Nigeria;
c) economic development of the natural resources of Nigeria under controlled private enterprise;
d) free and fair trade in Nigeria and equal treatment for native traders and producers of Nigeria;
e) the Africanization of the civil service;
f) the recognition of the National Congress of British West Africa and the pledge to work hand-in-hand with that body in support of its entire program.

However, while the aims of expanding the role of the NNDP outside of Lagos were never met, Macauley’s insistence on “a ‘national’ stand on issues ... fostered the consciousness, among Lagosians at least, that Lagos was part of a larger territory called Nigeria.” This recognition of belonging to a larger entity was reflected by the NNDP’s major electoral opponent, the Nigerian Youth Movement (NYM), which had begun as the Lagos Youth Movement. However, this awareness (such as it may have been) was confined to Lagos for the time being, together with the activity of political organization and activism. The rest of Nigeria remained

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25Ibid., p. 199.

26Although “its critics [claimed that it was] neither Nigerian, national, nor democratic,” Isichei, p. 402.

27Coleman, p. 198.

28Indeed, it never established branches anywhere else, “not even in Calabar, where at least there was the stimulus ... of ... a seat “ to be won in the elections, Crowder, West Africa under Colonial Rule, p. 462.

29Ibid., p. 199.

30Isichei, p. 402. The NYM was founded in 1934, Crowder, West Africa under Colonial Rule, p. 471.
under the system of indirect rule, and would remain politically quiescent until the late 1930s.\textsuperscript{31}

However, all was not as quiet as it seemed. Heralded by the establishment in London in 1925 of the West African Students’ Movement,

a series of youth organisations arose to challenge the established élite. Though many of the members of these organisations were far from young, the word Youth symbolised for them ... the rejection of the jaded ideas and lack of achievement that characterised the incumbent elected legislators. ... By the 1930's there was in each of the coastal capitals [of British West Africa] a quite substantial group of returned students and an increasing number of boys graduating from the secondary schools. In the depressed conditions of the times, it was not surprising that they began to organise themselves to obtain the reforms the incumbent legislators seemed unable or unwilling to.\textsuperscript{32}

The NYM had been founded by just such a group, and it would initially include among its members two of the leading figures of the Nigerian independence movement era: Obafemi Awolowo and Nnamdi Azikiwe.\textsuperscript{33}

c) “Awo” and “Zik”: laying the foundations of leadership

Although both men, for a time, were members of the NYM, their differences would eventually lead to an estrangement that would, in many ways, mirror the inherent divisions in Southern Nigeria, with Azikiwe representing the Ibo-dominated Eastern Region, and Awolowo the Yoruba-dominated Western Region. However, for a time during the late 1930s, both had found a common cause in the NYM as the only “nationalist” organization in Nigeria. The journeys that each had taken to reach this point of “nationalist” awareness and political

\textsuperscript{31}Coleman, p. 201. Including, it could be said, Calabar, where only one group, “the Calabar Improvement League engaged in some political activity,” and was duly elected to that seat, Ibid., p. 199.

\textsuperscript{32}Crowder, \textit{West Africa under Colonial Rule}, pp. 470-471.

\textsuperscript{33}Ibid., p. 472.
development had, to a great extent, been instrumental in forming their individual perspectives on Nigerian nationalism, and the political shape it should take.

(i) Obafemi Awolowo: the committed pragmatist

Awolowo’s formative years had been spent within the borders of Yorubaland, predominantly in the town of Ibadan, in the interior.  He had been born in 1909, in the village of Ikenne, to a farming family of moderate means but illustrious heritage. His father was a Christian convert, and Obafemi attended several Christian schools; although his academic career was disrupted several times after his father’s death by financial difficulties, he eventually gained acceptance to the teacher-training Wesley College in Ibadan, in 1927. A year later, he obtained employment as a provisional teacher in a local Wesleyan school.

It had been during his school years, in 1922, that Awolowo had become “saturated with the belief that the late Herbert Macauley [sic] was ‘The Champion And Defender Of Native Rights And Liberty’.” As an avid reader of Macaulay’s Lagos Daily News, Awolowo became an advocate of its “ultra-radical, intensely nationalistic, virulently and implacably anti-white” editorial policy. He also gleaned, from his other reading in this period, a “philosophy” which he believed was as “applicable to political or economic organisation as it [was] to an individual.”


35 His maternal lineage included “a distinguished military ancestry;” paternally, he was a descendant of “a warrior of note and fortune who [had] held many chieftaincy titles,” Ibid., p. 15. He himself held several “chieftaincy titles,” Ibid., pp. 18-19.

36 Ibid., p. 69.

37 Ibid.
The philosophy was based on the conviction that, in order "to get to the top, [an individual must] increase his size and weight in his particular calling ... mentally, professionally, morally, and spiritually."

Accordingly, he undertook further studies, becoming a shorthand typist; he then moved to Lagos (in 1929) to seek employment at a larger salary than could be obtained as a teacher.

The following decade was spent in a variety of pursuits, including a stint at the *Nigerian Daily Times*. It was while working for this newspaper that he had first encountered Azikiwe, whom - at the time - he had greatly admired. Agreeing with the "general belief that [Azikiwe] was the most outstanding Nigerian scholar in the academic history of the country," Awolowo had attended three lectures that Azikiwe gave in Lagos in 1934, proclaiming him as "[t]he genius of New Africa." When their paths crossed again, after Azikiwe’s return to Lagos in 1937 from the United States, however, Awolowo’s opinion of him changed dramatically, as will be seen.

In the meantime, Awolowo had continued his efforts to “reach the top.” He had focussed on business endeavours after 1934, in an effort to acquire sufficient funding to pursue a law degree in London (which he would succeed in accomplishing between 1944 and 1946). Meanwhile, he also had become involved in a variety of organizations, becoming Secretary of the Nigerian Youth Movement, Ibadan Branch, Executive Member of the Yaba Club, Assistant General Secretary of the Nigerian Motor Transport Union and the Secretary of its Ibadan Branch, Secretary of the Ibadan Branch of the Nigerian Produce Traders’ Association, and Literary Secretary of the Wesley Guild.

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38 Ibid., pp. 71-72.

39 Ibid., pp. 86-87.

40 Ibid., p. 98.
As well, he contributed articles to the *Nigerian Daily Times* and the *Daily Service* (the official newspaper of the NYM). Thus, Awolowo had become, in this intervening period, deeply involved in both the commercial and political life of Lagos and its environs. He had also become committed to the work of the NYM, considering it a vigilant, dynamic and selfless nationalist organisation. It lived up to and worked for its declared objectives and ideals, and spared no pains in fighting to uphold them. By its intrepid and enlightened leadership, it emboldened agitators in the country ... to speak their minds. It provided a unique platform for the unification of all the diverse ethnic groups that constitute Nigeria and a forum whereon all conscientious and right-thinking Nigerian patriots and nationalists could unfold their ideas and display their talents for the common good. The credit for the genesis of political awakening throughout the country, and of fostering this awareness without the slightest appeal to tribal or ethnic sentiments, belongs alone to the [NYM].

It was Azikiwe’s impact on that organization that would poison Awolowo’s attitude toward him.

Although, immediately following Azikiwe’s return to Nigeria in 1937, he had taken actions to promote the popularity of the NYM, after the Party’s electoral success in Lagos in 1938, Dr. Azikiwe’s newspaper, the *West African Pilot* began to publish articles and editorials that, Awolowo claimed, were detrimental to the NYM and its leaders. By 1940, Awolowo had reached the conclusion that Azikiwe was bent on destroying this nationalist organisation [the NYM] ... his policy was to corrode the self-respect of the Yoruba people ... to build up the Ibos as a master race ... to magnify his own vaunted contributions to the nationalist struggles ... to dwarf and misrepresent the achievements of his contemporaries ... and to discount and nullify the humble but sterling quota which older politicians had made to the country’s progress.

For Awolowo, who had spent the years between 1934 and 1940 deeply involved in the

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41Ibid., p. 131.

42For Awolowo’s account of Azikiwe’s impact on the NYM post-1938, see Chapter 11 in his *Autobiography*, pp. 133-159.

43Ibid., p. 135.
promotion of the vision of the NYM as the “platform for the unification of all the diverse ethnic groups” of Nigeria, Azikiwe’s apparently divisive intent was not only an attack on the NYM, but also on Awolowo’s Yoruba identity, to which he clearly remained strongly attached. Nor was Awolowo alone in his condemnation of Azikiwe’s activities.

As a result, the Party became bitterly divided between Azikiwe’s followers and the faction Awolowo belonged to. Ominously, the factions were ethnically based: Azikiwe’s followers tended to be Ibos, or others from the Eastern Region, while the second faction were predominantly Yoruba, from the Western Region. This would prove to be a portent for the future political development of Nigeria, as we shall see. For his part, Awolowo would consistently trace the origins of this rift to the venomous rhetorical attacks on the NYM leadership, and others, in Azikiwe’s *Pilot* – especially its overall anti-Yoruba tone and reportage.⁴⁴ This was evidence, as far as Awolowo and his faction were concerned, that Azikiwe was not the “nationalist” that he claimed to be, but was clearly affiliated with, and biassed towards, his native Ibo tribe.

(ii) Nnamdi Azikiwe: ‘man of destiny’

This accusation of ethnic loyalty might seem farfetched, given Azikiwe’s background. He had been born in northern Nigeria in 1904 and lived there until he was eight years old, becoming fluent in the Hausa language of the region. He had then been sent to live with his father’s family in Onitsha (in Ibo territory) to ensure that he also became fluent in his “mother tongue.” Two years later, he had travelled to Lagos to attend school. As a result of all these

⁴⁴See comments in Ibid., especially pp. 140-141.
early travels, he had spent little time in his ethnic homeland in the Eastern Region—in common with many Ibos, who travelled for work throughout Nigeria. However, he clearly was extremely aware of his heritage, devoting seven pages at the beginning of his autobiography to his genealogy, incidentally establishing his claim of descending (on both sides of his family) from royalty. Unlike Awolowo, Azikiwe’s family were not officially Christian, but his father had been educated, through the good offices of a Christian uncle, and Azikiwe also obtained his initial education at mission schools. His father worked as a clerk in the Nigerian Regiment, which had involved frequent moves throughout Nigeria, although the family’s stay in the north had been fairly lengthy. In 1921, Azikiwe too obtained employment as a government clerk in Lagos, but soon decided that his future did not lie in an underpaid subordinate role. At school, he had come under the influence of Dr. James Aggrey (who had been in Lagos in that period), and determined to follow his example and go to America for a university education.

Unfortunately, he lacked funds for the journey, a common plight for Africans at the time. He and some friends actually stowed away on a ship, ending up in the Gold Coast, where he weathered various adventures, eventually becoming a police officer in Accra. His interest in the “great prospects” available to him “in the Gold Coast Police Force” faded, however, with the arrival of his mother, who persuaded him to return to Nigeria, where his father had promised to

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45While many Nigerians travelled to different parts of the country in search of economic advantages, the Ibo in particular were drawn to the growing urban centres. By the early 1950s, Ibos “constituted[d] more than one-third of the non-indigenous population of the urban centers in the Northern and Western regions.” In the major centres, such as Lagos, the figure was close to 50%, Coleman, pp. 76-77.


47Ibid., p.60.
consider his desire to go to America. Intrinsic to his father’s decision to provide Azikiwe with the initial funding required, was the insults his father had endured at the hands of his European superiors throughout his 23 years as a civil servant. “He concluded that an African servant was merely a cog in the wheel of the machinery used to put the African in his place,” and came to agree with Azikiwe that “there was no need to remain a clerk for ever.” Accordingly, he gave Azikiwe the money to go to America for an education that would, they assumed, enable him to become much more than a clerk.

It was at college in the U.S. where Azikiwe acquired his nickname, and the name by which he would become known in his later career: “Zik”. Unfortunately, he was also called many other things during his stay there, a reflection of the racist attitudes of many of the whites he encountered. It is interesting to note that, during one encounter that he described in some detail, he told an American who was being particularly offensive that “[w]here I come from the British whites associate with us equally and we have no race problem.” Perhaps his exposure to the extremely unpleasant and pervasive racism he had been encountering in the U.S., especially given that it had been necessary for him to work in a variety of menial positions which would expose him to considerable incidents of humiliation, had put his father’s experience into a different perspective. But it was all very hard to bear, and his despair over his poverty and all that that entailed drove him at one point to attempt suicide.

Yet the interlude referred to above also illustrated Zik’s combative nature. He invariably fought back (at least verbally), and so he was able to recover his motivation and continue the

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48Ibid., p. 71.

49Ibid., p. 107.
long struggle to obtain the education that he had so desperately sought. By 1934, he had successfully completed his undergraduate degree, a certificate in journalism, an M.A. in political science, and an M.Sc. in anthropology. He had also worked as an instructor (in political science) at Lincoln University, and edited the Columbia University Summer Session Times. In addition, he

had ... [become] a member of many learned societies: the Royal Anthropological Institute, the Royal Economic Society, the American Society of International Law, the American Anthropological Association, the American Ethnological Society, the American Political Science Association and the Institute of Journalists. 50

While he had enjoyed academic life, he was not in a financial position to complete the PhD. that would have enabled him to settle in an academic career.

In any case, he was by now eager to return to Africa, “ready to continue suffering personal inconvenience, if need be, in order to do for Africa what that continent needed for a renaissance in thought and action.”51 His immediate problem was to find employment of some kind, and to this end, he conducted a wide-ranging campaign of application, which included a letter to his “boyhood hero, Herbert Macaulay, pleading [for employment] in the Lagos Daily News or in the Nigerian National Democratic Party,” arguing that he “should [be given] the opportunity to use [his] university training to reorganise the NNDP along modern lines.” Although he did not receive a response from Macaulay, his letter included an explanation of his philosophy that was most illuminating. He told Macaulay:

... I believe in the sanctity of human freedom, and I am prone to be more pragmatic ... I am not a radical, although my philosophical concept of Nigerian politics (or African

50Ibid., p. 187.
51Ibid., p. 160.
politics for that matter) is revolutionary in character. I am a liberal who would rather be a sane radical for the ultimate redemption of my people ... The sum-total of my philosophy therefore, is this: independent in all things and neutral in nothing affecting the welfare of Africa ... I ... believe that Nigeria and Africa need me as a budding leader ... I believe in action for the good of the public ... Whilst I detest a bloody revolution, my studies in economics and politics have widened my horizon to see the futility of armless Africans staging a non-profitable revolution ... I esteem Gandhism, but unfortunately, I am not fully convinced that Gandhism is the refuge of minority races ... On the other hand, I adore Garveyism—let us grant that his approach was fantastic and utopian—nevertheless, the philosophy of Garveyism, with its elements of race pride, race consciousness, nationalism and its correlant of economic stability, appeals to the modern political enthusiast, who keeps his head clear and steers away from chauvinism or ethnocentrism ... I respect the King and will continue to do so on my return ... I am returning not to stir my people blindly to mutiny, nor do I wish to inject in them the proletarian philosophy of Marxism on the perpetual existence of warfare between capital and labour ... Nevertheless, I am returning semi-Gandhic, semi-Garveyistic, non-chauvinistic, semi-ethnocentric, with a love for every one, of every clime on God’s earth.52

It is clear that Zik already considered himself a man of destiny, although his high opinion of his abilities did not appear to be shared by those to whom he had applied for employment. Out of thirty applications, he received one that actually offered him a job: as editor of the African Morning Post in Accra. He decided to accept, and

... to use [his] training in journalism for the re-education of our colonial administrators on the necessity for discarding distrust and suspicion and prejudice in favour of genuine inter-racial co-operation, which should be based on mutual respect, fellowship and goodwill.53

Although eager to begin his new career, he delayed his journey to the Gold Coast in order to prepare his first book, Liberia in World Politics, for publication, and to take a three-month detour to London.

While in England, Zik found time in his busy round of talks with other African activists

52Ibid., pp. 161-162.

53Ibid., pp. 177-181.
at the West African Students' Union, research at the British Museum, and discussions with Margery Perham about British colonial administration, to conduct an anthropological comparative study of British and American racial attitudes. He became "satisfied that, left to themselves, average English men and women do not care a hoot whether a person is black or white." Even though he found that a "colour bar" did exist, he claimed that it was more "subtle" and "tactful" than in America. In any case, Zik was hardly a man to accept discrimination: on the ship to the Gold Coast, he insisted that he be treated exactly the same as the European passengers; nor would he "tolerate any prejudice against [him], on the part of [his] own people, simply because of [his] skin colour.

Thus, Zik arrived in Accra on 31 October 1934, primed for action. First, however, he wanted to go home—to Lagos—to visit the friends and family he had not seen for nine years. Although he was pleased to be "welcomed privately by different sections of the Lagos community," he was disappointed "that only the Ibo-speaking peoples saw fit to welcome [him]."

\[55\] "Research Fellow of St Hugh's College, Oxford, and Research Lecturer in Colonial Administration in the University of Oxford," Perham was a firm supporter of Lord Lugard; but she also was open to other perspectives—discussing colonial policy with African students at the WASU hostel, and welcoming Africans into her home. Zik spent a weekend with her, and, although they disagreed on many issues, he became an admirer of her "academic ability" and her "common sense." Through Perham, he met others, including Sir William Edgar Hunt, Lieutenant-Governor of the Southern Provinces (Nigeria), and Major Hanns Vischer of the Colonial Office. These contacts "made [him] look at the brighter side of the problem of race relations in England," perhaps because all of these people sought him out, and were eager to discuss African affairs with him, Ibid., pp. 209-212.

\[56\] Ibid., p. 206.

\[57\] Ibid., pp. 201-203. He claimed that "the colour bar was not so pronounced ... in the lower strata of English society," p. 203.

\[55\] As he made abundantly clear to the African "boat boys" at Accra, when they tried to treat him as "inferior" to the European passengers, Ibid., pp. 213-217.

\[59\] Indeed, almost his first act on African soil was to promise these same "boat boys" that he would "fight their cause" of grievances against the shipping line in his newspaper, Ibid., p. 218.
publicly,” seeing it as evidence that, to his regret, “tribalism still existed in West Africa.” He himself, he “asserted ... was opposed to all forms of social prejudice,” and informed the delegations that were welcoming him that he “was a son of humanity and a citizen of the world.” Yet his speech to the delegations was not as straightforward an appeal against tribalism as Zik seemed to believe, for he added

As for me, I would rather be welcomed by the Ibo-speaking peoples, because I am an Ibo man; I speak Ibo; my culture is Ibo-orientated, and when it comes to tribal classification, naturally I am Ibo.

Small wonder that his audience “were stunned to silence.” Especially as he also claimed that two delegations were unnecessary to represent the Ibo community for

The Ibo-speaking peoples are one ... The difference between the two main groups is only artificial and colloquial ... Why all these artificial divisions among the Ibo-speaking peoples, who are a factor to be reckoned with in the future history of Nigeria, and who have a destiny in conjunction with the ... other tribes towards the crystallisation of a new Nigeria?

In a later public speech, Zik expanded on this topic, arguing that “a new approach to the problems of Africa,” could be made possible by the Africans cultivating spiritual balance, practicalising [sic] social regeneration, realising economic determinism, becoming mentally emancipated, and ushering in a political resurgence. By spiritual balance, [he] meant freedom of expression and respect for the opinion of others. Social regeneration implied the treatment of all Africans as brothers and sisters, irrespective of tribe, so as to crystallise a sense of oneness and identity of community interest. No longer should Africans draw a line of distinction, based on tribal or linguistic factors.

He urged his listeners to emancipate themselves from fear and servitude by developing an

59Ibid., p. 225.

60Ibid., pp. 225-226.
appreciation of the achievements of the African past, and of those individuals "who, in various field [sic] of human endeavour ... had demonstrated the capacity of the black peoples." He stated that Africans were not only "the equal of any race on earth, but ... [were] superior to some of the representatives of the various races of mankind." In a rousing finale, he announced that this credo

shall be the basis of my mission and become a crusade for national freedom and the liberation of Africa from the manacles of European imperialism. God helping me, Nigeria shall be free and out of the struggle shall emerge a new Africa. 61

Although his speech was greeted with great enthusiasm, some were concerned about the impact of his words. Zik asserted that he did not intend to incite the people but "to excite them from within, by carefully studied and well-directed self-criticism, towards a renascent community" that would unite the people in support of the "revolution," for he was well aware that "no social reform is possible without taking the masses into consideration." 62

However, when Zik returned to the Gold Coast, to begin his career as the editor of the African Morning Post, it soon appeared that incitement was what he had in mind. "Armed with [his] 'philosophy' of the 'New Africa,'" and with "supreme faith that [his] journalistic mission ... would be successful," he selected his staff and set to work. He established as his editorial policy that they "should punch hard at all elements which sought to slow down the progress of the Gold Coast to freedom," including in these "elements" the British colonial regime and its "allies ... the hard core of the African élite, who benefited immensely from the colonial set-up ... [and] certain African chauvinists, who disliked the idea of non-natives dabbling in Gold Coast

61Ibid., pp. 228-230.

62Ibid., pp. 230-231.
politics, and those who resented competition by strangers.” As a result, it was not long before the *Post* became deeply resented by many of the groups in the Gold Coast, “[e]ven some paramount chiefs publicly denounced [it] as inciting the youth of the Gold Coast against their elders.” Zik preferred to see the situation as “the battle line [being] drawn between the progressive elements and the conservatives.” It was hardly surprising that “[i]t was not long before [he] found [himself] in the dock arraigned with a three count charge of publishing seditious libel.”

Although Zik won the appeal of his conviction on these charges, he had been “obliged to resign” his post “[d]ue to misunderstanding over the jurisdiction of the editor-in-chief and the managing director ... and over certain financial matters.” So he decided that he should return to Nigeria, rather than start up a new paper in Accra, in order to “not give cause for any unpleasantness which could easily be avoided.”

Accordingly, less than three years after arriving in the Gold Coast, Zik was back in Lagos to establish the *West African Pilot*, the first of the Zik Group of Newspapers in Nigeria, with the motto “Show the light, and the people will find the way.” The first edition was published on November 22, 1937, the day after Zik had “reminded” his colleagues that their purpose was to “revolutionise journalism ... in Nigeria ..., and [to] demonstrate that journalism can be a successful business enterprise.”

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63Ibid., pp. 254-260.
64Ibid., pp. 283-285.
65Ibid., p. 290.
66Ibid., p. 291.
Zik not only increased circulation from 6,000 to over 10,000 copies between 1937 and 1939, the paper made sufficient profits to pay substantial dividends to its shareholders. Indeed, the initial enterprise was so successful that Zik began to establish his “Group” in 1940, beginning with the *Eastern Nigeria Guardian*, “published in Port Harcourt as the first daily newspaper in Eastern Nigeria.”

While the paper(s) were indeed evolving into “successful business enterprise[s],” however, Zik’s aim to revolutionize journalism in Nigeria had had a negative impact on finances. Various defensive actions against civil, criminal and seditious libel prosecutions made a deep bite into [the Group’s] budget and reserves. Apart from expensive solicitors’ fees, [it] had to pay heavy costs, punitive damages, exemplary fines and awkward settlements out of court.

Clearly, the claim in the first edition of the *Post* that it would act “in concert with its contemporaries, in a spirit of humility and candour and co-operation,” and that it did not “anticipate ... foes” had been naive, to say the least. Indeed, there were those, such as Awolowo, who would have argued that the editorial was disingenuous, and who claimed that Zik “was the first consummate propagandist that Nigeria produced,” using his papers for self-

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67One of his most imaginative ploys was to have collected a series of previously published articles he had written into a book, *Renascent Africa*, which was given free to anyone who bought a year’s subscription to the paper, Ibid., p. 300. By 1968, the book was into its third printing. Nnamdi Azikiwe, *Renascent Africa* (London: Frank Cass, 1968).

68It was soon followed by the *Nigerian Spokesman*, in Zik’s hometown of Onitsha, the *Southern Nigeria Defender* in Warri, the *Daily Comet* in Northern Nigeria, and the *Calabar Champion*, Ibid., pp. 301-302, 306-307. Zik also established, in 1944, the African Continental Bank Ltd., partly as an investment vehicle for the profits from the papers, Ibid., pp. 310-311. See pp. 420-421 for a list of the Zik Group and subsidiary companies.

69Ibid., p. 303. See pp. 321-347, in which details were given on some of the larger suits against the Zik Group, including three brought by Awolowo which were ultimately successful.

70Ibid., pp. 295-296.
promotion and the denigration of his opponents. Even less partisan observers have categorized Zik’s writing as “pungent, incisive, [and] sometimes malevolent.” Given that the *Daily Service*, the official paper of the NYM, became increasingly antagonistic towards Zik, reserving “its more deadly weapons and acerbic and virulent attacks for the *West African Pilot* and the *Comet,*” and “persistently critici[zing] Azikiwe,” the tone of public discourse deteriorated sharply after 1938.

While there was certainly an element of mutual personal antagonism illustrated in the newspaper war, it seemed to be more a reflection of the growing competition between leading members of the NYM for control over the nationalist independence movement. The increasing polarization of views resulted in Zik’s resignation from the executive of the NYM in 1939; by 1941, he had completely broken with the organization. While it is difficult to determine to what degree inter-tribal tensions were a causal factor in the disintegration of the NYM, it is clear that after 1941 political organizations became increasingly defined by their tribal affiliations.

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73 Akinjide Osuntokun, *Chief S. Ladoke Akintola: His Life and Times* (London: Frank Cass, 1984) p. 12. The editors of the *Daily Service* (which included Akintola) were convinced that Zik had been responsible for destroying the NYM “on the pretext that it was not militant or dynamic enough ... [but really] to pave the way for his own organisation.”

74 Sklar, p. 53.

75 The immediate cause for the breakup was apparently the argument within the NYM over the selection of a nominee for an election to the Legislative Council. The ensuing crisis was an illustration of the complexity of tribal relations: the selection of a Lagos Yoruba by the majority of the Party “led to allegations of tribal discrimination” because the rejected candidate was an Ijebu Yoruba, Ibid., pp. 53-54. See also Coleman, p. 227.
Although Zik had tried to maintain “his constant affirmation of non-tribal African values, ... his clash with the élite leadership of the [NYM] was both a sign of latent Ibo-Yoruba tension and a major contributing factor to the ethnic hostility that erupted later.” It was a hostility that would be predominantly represented by Azikiwe and Awolowo, as each created the political organizations that they would lead.

(iii) While the cat’s away: Azikiwe and the NCNC

Awolowo remained with the rump of an increasingly moribund NYM in the period immediately following the defection of Azikiwe and his followers, until he moved to London and engaged in legal studies. While he remained active in Nigerian affairs, his primary focus between 1941 and 1951 was on his business and legal careers. Meanwhile, Azikiwe, although he had announced that his resignation from the executive of the NYM had been “for compelling ‘business’ reasons,” continued to divide his time between business and politics. By 1944, he was in the process of organizing a new political group, which became the National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons (NCNC).

The NCNC evolved out of a movement by the leaders of the Nigerian Union of Students to create “a central organization ... to coordinate the political endeavors of existing associations.” The National Council of Nigeria that they created held its “inaugural meeting ... on August 26, 1944.”

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76Sklar, p. 55.

77Awolowo, Autobiography, pp. 102-111.

78In the Pilot, so it was a very public announcement, Sklar, p. 53.

1944, [with] over forty organizations, including political parties, tribal unions, trade unions, literary associations, professional associations, religious groups, social clubs and women's organizations ... represented.” Azikiwe became the General Secretary and Macaulay the President, thus bringing his NNDP into the fold. “By January 1945, the [NCNC] comprised 87 member unions, including three Cameroonian groups,” so the name was changed (from National Council of Nigeria to National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons) to signify the expanded nature of the organization. Its avowed goal was “to work in unity for the realization of our ultimate goal of self-government within the British Empire.”

Or, as Zik would explain three years later, when he was President:

The NCNC was founded in order to unify the various elements of our communities, to crystallize the natural aspirations of our people, to express in concrete form the trend of public opinion, and to emancipate our nation from the manacles of political bondage.

The opportunity for the NCNC to fulfill its avowed role came the following year, with the enactment of the “Richards Constitution” of 1946.

The Constitution was the usual convoluted construction, designed to initiate an embryonic parliamentary system without too substantive a change to the status quo. Three regional Houses of Assembly (Eastern, Western, and Northern) were to be established which “would have the right to pass their own regional budgets”, but which could “merely discuss general legislation.” In order to maintain the existing native authorities system of government, members to the new Assemblies were to be elected from those bodies. These members “would

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80 Sklar, pp. 57-58.

in turn select five of their number [from each Assembly] as their representatives to a broadened Nigeria-wide Legislative Council.” The new Governor, Sir Arthur Richards, “argued that this ... quasi-federal structure was a practical means ... [to] promote Nigerian unity and at the same time ... [to] provide within that unity for the country’s diverse elements.”

While the initial response by nationalists such as Azikiwe and Awolowo towards the quasi-federal structure was positive, there was much that they found to complain about in the rest of the Constitution. All agreed that it did not meet their expectations for greater Nigerian participation in government, and they were particularly “vehement in their denunciation” of the retention (indeed, strengthening) of the native authorities system. For, while the Constitution proposed that there be an “unofficial majority” of Nigerians in all of the Houses, many of these “unofficials” would inevitably be the “chiefs and emirs [who] owed their position to the government.” Nationalists argued that, not only would this create a conflict of interest for those who were presumably to act as representatives for the Nigerian people (and not the government), but that “bringing [the chiefs] into the Western apparatus of government, affronted their dignity and disparaged their symbolic role within the traditional system.” Of course, the real cause of the nationalists’ concern was the realization that the Constitution would ensure that the chiefs would maintain their position in the governmental structure and that their own opportunities would remain static because no expansion of the system of direct election would be implemented.

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82Coleman, p. 276.
83Ibid., p. 277.
84Ibid., pp. 278-279. However, “the overwhelming majority of chiefs and emirs supported the Richards Constitution,” which suggests that they were less concerned about their “dignity and ... symbolic role,” and more interested in retaining their substantive positions, pp. 279-280.
This had been precisely what the government had intended, for its "presumption was that the educated elements, who ... were the centrally-minded nationalists, would through demagoguery or the inertia of the masses capture all elective seats." This was of particular concern in the North, where educational, economic, and political development were still in the early stages, and leaders there were inherently suspicious of anything that might promote the domination of the South—and especially of the predominantly Southern "centrally-minded nationalists." The incorporation of the native authorities system into the new Assemblies thus eliminated the potential for the politically-organized Southern nationalists to overwhelm the "backward" Northerners, at least for the time being.

While the Northerners and some of the Southerners, such as Awolowo (though reluctantly), were willing to cooperate and wait to see how well the new structure would function, others—Azikiwe prominent among them—were determined to oppose it. As the protest movement increasingly organized support—and the NCNC's political affiliate, the NNDP, won all three of the Lagos seats in the Legislative Council (Azikiwe winning one of them)—it became clear to all concerned that they, too, would have to establish their own organizations, in order to ensure that their interests had a concerted voice. As a result, the new Constitution signalled "the start of serious party politics ... and the resort to political slogans and the manipulation of the masses" in both the North and South of Nigeria.  

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85 Ibid., p. 274.
86 Sklar, p. 61.
d) Rivalry and division: the organization of political parties

Azikiwe, of course, had a tremendous head-start over his opponents, and used his newspapers and his position as President of the NCNC after Macaulay’s death in May 1946 to full advantage, and the government itself provided him with the initial ammunition he needed to rally mass support. Four new ordinances were enacted in 1945 regarding mineral and land rights that appeared (at least superficially) to have the potential of threatening the rights of the peasants and the chiefs. The NCNC was quick to position itself on the side of the aggrieved, with Azikiwe’s papers leading the protest campaign of 1945-47. As a result,

the NCNC leaders were able to generate unprecedented popular support. Indeed, their campaign... showed how, in a colonial milieu, an array of disparate grievances, fears, hopes, and ambitions could be subsumed under the rubric of “nationalism,” how a universal belief that both relief and fulfillment were possible through self-government could be created, and how previously unmobilized groups could be drawn into a nationalist movement.\(^8^9\)

It soon became clear that the acclaimed leader of this movement was Azikiwe, who was capable of attracting the widest range of support. As Coleman explained, Zik had already gained the allegiance of some of the “principal groups” in Nigeria:

1) *Organized and unorganized labor*. The popular belief that Azikiwe was connected with the general strike, coupled with his consistent championing of workers’ grievances, brought him the support of the rank and file...

2) *Clerks, artisans, and teachers*. ... Azikiwe increasingly directed his columns and editorials to the social and recreational pursuits of the common clerk or artisan, who, flattered to see his name in print or his picture in the paper, was inspired to support Azikiwe politically and to become a habitual reader of his papers.

3) *Youths*. Azikiwe’s display of erudition and academic achievement, his genuine efforts to encourage athletics, his heroic Horatio Alger career, his interest in educational development, his vigorous press attacks upon Europeans and their follies, and his strong

\(^8^8\)Sklar, pp. 61-62.

\(^8^9\)Coleman, p. 282.
support of youth groups won for him a large following in the generation that came of age during the war and in the mid-1940's. The main accent of ... Renascent Africa was upon youth.

4) **Special-grievance groups.** Realizing that there was little likelihood that he would be called upon to assume responsibility for the policies he advocated, and driven by an intense resentment against alien rule, Azikiwe used his press to exploit all the grievances that came to his attention ... any African from the lowliest messenger to the wealthiest trader ... could secure immediate front-page publicity on any complaint against the government or against Europeans. Administrative officers, even in the remotest districts, were frequently harassed by urgent wires from central, regional, or provincial headquarters, requesting inquiries into allegations of “brutal and inhuman” treatment, discrimination, or denial of rights which appeared daily in ... Zik’s papers. With few exceptions, [these] allegations were so worded as to avoid charges of libel or sedition, but were sufficiently clear in meaning and intent to have the required psychological effect ...

5) **Organizational leaders.** Azikiwe’s newspapers gave full publicity to the activities of all tribal unions, social clubs, and other organizations throughout the provinces ... These groups in the provinces were the first to organize branches of the NCNC or, if they were radically inclined, of the Zikist Movement.

6) **Non-Yoruba educated elements.** ... among virtually all Ibos ... Azikiwe was deified; his name became a legend; he was the incarnation of all their hopes and aspirations ... he was likewise the idol of many previously inarticulate groups such as Cameroonian, Nupe, Tiv, Igbirra, Birom, and Idoma, and indeed of most of the Middle Belt; and a growing number of Hausa, Fulani, and Kanuri youths looked up to him as the national leader.

[While] Azikiwe gained his influence mainly through his press, [h]e also used the technique of frequent mass meetings in Lagos at which his lectures glorifying Africa, vilifying Europeans, and denouncing imperialism evoked great enthusiasm among his eager listeners.  

With such a solid basis of supporters already established, the campaign of 1945-47 only served to increase Azikiwe’s reputation, and the strange turn that the campaign quickly took on would prove even more profitable.

In July of 1945, Azikiwe announced that “[s]ome unknown persons [had] planned [his] assassination,” and went into hiding—but not before sending “an omnibus cablegram to several key individuals and organizations in the United Kingdom ... [claiming that there was a] ‘definite

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90Ibid., pp. 288-291.
plot to murder”’ him. This initiated a concerted international campaign on Azikiwe’s behalf, and raised Zik’s status to that of “a national hero in the eyes of the less sophisticated masses of Nigeria.” Less impressed were his political opponents.

Whether motivated by jealousy over his successful bid for leadership over the masses, or by revulsion at his exploitation of their credulity, they launched a full-scale attack upon him for his propagation of a “colossal falsehood.” They alleged that he had no reason to be apprehensive about his life, and that he had deliberately invented the story to make himself a martyr and gain cheap popularity.

Indeed, “the assassination episode ... terminated [any residual] good will” between the two groups, who would, from this point on, be “engaged in violent attacks on each other” in their papers. Indeed, as other groups began to organize themselves, the Pilot and the Daily Service, as the “voices” of the opposing camps, “published diatribes of unprecedented virulence with overtones that were disturbingly tribalistic.” This was, perhaps, hardly surprising, given that many of the organizations which became involved in the increasing politicalization of Nigerians in this period tended to emphasize tribal affiliations.

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91Ibid., pp. 285-287. The government’s response, “that Azikiwe had declined to meet with the chief secretary to discuss the allegation, that at no time did he ask for police protection nor make available to the police or to the government evidence to support his charge,” had little impact on the furore.

92Ibid., p. 287.

93Ibid., p. 288. The episode, and the response by Zik’s opponents, also led to the formation of the Zikist Movement, which “sought not only to defend Azikiwe against his critics but to deify him as a leader and immortalize him for posterity. [The] West African Pilot was the principal organ of publicity for the movement.” While the Movement was active only between 1946 and 1950, the militancy of its adherents made any public disturbance of this period more violent, as “local Zikists, with a few highly mobile leaders ... sped from one town to another ... convening mass meetings and organized demonstrations; once a mob was mobilized it would proceed to assault Europeans, damage or destroy government property, and loot the stores of European firms; in order to disperse the mobs, the police were ordered to fire upon their leaders.” Such actions inevitably incited further demonstrations. Not surprisingly, it was declared illegal in 1950; although briefly reorganized as the Freedom Movement, it soon disintegrated from internal feuds, Ibid., pp. 296-302.

94Sklar, p. 70.
Ethnic organizations had long been part of the tangled mosaic of associations established throughout southern Nigeria to promote the interests of various groups. During the 1940s, these associations coalesced into pan-ethnic organizations which then became affiliated with the burgeoning political parties. One of the first to initiate this process was the pan-Ibo movement, which began in 1935 to unite the numerous “small Ibo village and class unions organized during the previous decade” into the Ibo Union (Lagos). In 1943, “a campaign [was launched] to federate all Ibo unions throughout Nigeria,” which resulted in the establishment of the Ibo Federal Union. While the initial intention had been to promote educational opportunities for its members, by 1946, the Union had become “one of the most active member organizations supporting the NCNC.” Although the Union was still primarily concerned with educational issues, the “apparently close alliance between the Pan-Ibo movement and the NCNC Pan-Nigeria movement ... alarmed the leaders of other nationalities, who saw what they suspected to be a growing threat of Ibo domination.”

Accordingly, non-Ibos too began to create their own ethnic organizations. While still in London, in 1945, Awolowo had “inaugurated a pan-Yoruba cultural society ... called the Egbe Omo Odudua (Society of the Descendants of Odudua—the culture hero and mythical

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55The first such association had been formed in 1928. They acted largely as a vehicle of communication between members of an ethnic group in the urban centres and their “home” villages and between the members within the urban centres. They reflected a phenomenon similar in many other diaspora-type situations, where those who have emigrated create associations that can maintain their cultural communities in their new locations. It is indicative that, of all “the major Nigerian ethnic groups, only the Hausa do not as a rule form tribal unions, which may reflect the primacy of Islam as an integrative factor in Hausa society,” Sklar, p. 65.

56Coleman, pp. 340-341. This perception was inflamed by the close association between the Ibo Union and Azikiwe, for whom the non-Ibo leaders had developed a deep antagonism, and whom they blamed for “tribalizing” the nationalist movement.

57Again, building on a process that had begun—in the case of the Yoruba—in 1918, with the Egba Society, and continued with the creation of a number of Yoruba-based associations, Ibid. p. 343.
progenitor of the Yoruba people).” Upon his return to Nigeria in 1946, Awolowo was instrumental in establishing the EOO “as a non-political cultural organization for men and women of Yoruba nationality, comparable to the Ibo Federal Union.” While, again, the emphasis of the organization was ostensibly on the promotion of education, its constitution clearly “attest[ed] to the progressive, nationalistic, and non-traditional implications of Yoruba pan-tribalism.”

The divisions between the Ibos and the Yoruba, now formally defined by their respective ethnic unions, became increasingly inflamed by ill-considered remarks made by the various leaders through their affiliated newspapers, principally the *West African Pilot* (owned by Azikiwe) and the *Daily Service* (representing the Yoruba). Indeed, the inter-group tension was so severe that “radicals on both sides descended upon the local markets and bought up all available machetes;” clearly, the potential for all of the inflamed rhetoric exploding into violence was becoming dangerously high.

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98While Awolowo did not take personal credit for the creation of the EOO as a society within Nigeria, his activities in London, and the care that he had taken to fully inform leading Yorubas in Nigeria of the EOO’s existence, and its constitution, and his continued efforts “to preach” when he returned clearly had an impact (Awolowo, *Autobiography*, pp. 168-171), especially given the high regard in which he was held “by the Yoruba professional and political elite of Lagos,” Sklar, p. 68.

99Sklar, pp. 67-69. Indeed, it is clear in the constitution that “nationalism” meant Yoruba nationalism. In their “Aims and Objects” for Yorubaland, the constitution stated that one of the association’s aims was “[t]o unite the various clans and tribes in Yorubaland and generally create and actively foster the idea of a single nationalism throughout Yorubaland,” while an aim for Nigeria as a whole was “[t]o encourage and aid in every way possible the creation and continuance of associations similar to the Society, among the other ethnical groups in Nigeria.”

100Coleman, p. 346. For example, in the *Pilot* of August 30, 1948, came the declaration “of battle against Egbe Omo Oduduwa ... It is the enemy of Nigeria; it must be crushed to the earth ... .” As quoted in Coleman, p. 346. On July 6, 1949, the *Pilot* announced “that the God of Africa has specially created the Ibo nation to lead the children of Africa from the bondage of the ages ... The martial prowess of the Ibo nation at all stages of human history has enabled them not only to conquer others but also to adapt themselves to the role of preserver.” As quoted in Coleman, p. 347. Small wonder that, in the *Egbe Omo Odudua Monthly Bulletin* of December 1948, Azikiwe was described as “the Arch Devil [come] to sow the seeds of distrust and hatred.” As quoted in Coleman, p. 346.
Perhaps in the realization that the politicization of ethnic difference, and the resulting increased tension between the groups, had effectively destroyed the possibility of creating a truly Nigerian nationalism, both the NCNC and the EOO turned to the idea of "a federal system based strictly upon tribal units." The proliferation of ethnic unions in this period, following the Ibo and Yoruba examples, would seem to support the contention that ethnic nationalism was becoming the unifying force in a splintered Nigerian polity. This was even the case in the North, which also witnessed a flurry of organizational creativity, culminating in 1949 with the establishment of the Jam'iyar Mutanen Arewa (Northern Nigerian Congress, or Northern Peoples' Congress—NPC).

It was no coincidence that all of this organizational activity took place during the late 1940s, for the government was at that time debating the formulation of a new constitution. The government engaged in a prolonged and extensive consultative process, during which "theoretically every Nigerian from the most illiterate peasant to the Emir of Kano and Nnamdi Azikiwe was to be consulted on what form of government he desired." As a result, "internal tensions between leaders of different ethnic or cultural groups were exacerbated in the open competitive struggle over such issues as representation, regional powers, and revenue allocations." The culmination of this tortuous process, the Macpherson Constitution of 1951, was, understandably, a complicated construction of a federalist-style of government. The

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101 Ibid., pp. 347-348.

102 Sklar, pp. 88-92. As Sklar noted, this organization also initially emphasized its non-political nature, claiming that it was a "purely social and cultural" association. The organizers did not have much choice, given that many of them were civil servants, "to whom overt political action was forbidden, or employees of Native Administrations, for whom such action would have been imprudent," p. 92.

103 Coleman, pp. 310-312.
Northern and Western Regions each had both a House of Chiefs and a House of Assembly, while the Eastern Region had only a House of Assembly. There was also a national House of Representatives. While there was the usual combination of appointed or selected members (chiefs and "officials"), the Houses of Assembly and the House of Representatives all had substantial numbers of elected members, although these were chosen through a convoluted system of indirect election.  

Convoluted though the system may have been, elections generate the creation of political parties. Accordingly, by the time the elections for the new Houses were held in 1951, the NCNC had reorganized itself "as a genuine political party based on individual membership," with Azikiwe as its president. The EOO had been persuaded by Awolowo to remain a "purely" cultural association, while a new organization—the Action Group (AG)—became the political party for Yoruba nationalists. Meanwhile, in the North, a radical group split from the NPC to become the Jami 'yyar Neman Sawaba, or Northern Elements Progressive Union (NEPU), while the NPC "declared itself a political party."

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104 See Awolowo, People's Republic, pp. 36-43, for a detailed explanation.

105 Sklar, pp. 114-16.

106 Awolowo, Autobiography, p. 221. It is worth noting that Awolowo had initiated the creation of the Action Group in March 1950, holding secret meetings with a small group of associates to discuss the need for an entirely new organization that would focus on political activity. This group of carefully selected, disciplined, and like-minded people met a number of times to formulate the ideals and program of the new party before announcing its existence in 1951. Awolowo believed that secrecy was essential in order to prevent Azikiwe from "nip[ping] it in the bud by means of his skilled and fierce propaganda, p. 218." See pp. 217-222 for his explanation of the evolution of the AG and its acceptance by the EOO. Their concern about Azikiwe's attitude was undoubtedly influenced by the way in which the EOO itself was "vilified" in Azikiwe's papers (see Osuntokun, p. 27).

Although there had been some organization in the North prior to 1950, including individual involvement with the NCNC, the Macpherson Constitution signalled the effective beginning of political activity there. The realization that there would soon be two Houses of government in the Region, one of which partially elected, and that half the seats in the national assembly (also elected) would be held by the North, provided the motivation for the development of political parties. The prospects also, however, exposed the deep internal divisions within the politicized class in the North. In broad terms, the battle for political power was between “a coalition of Western-educated conservatives” and the traditional rulers (represented by the NPC), whose platform was based on ‘protecting’ the North from “the threat of southern domination,” and “a small, highly articulate, radical group ... who felt that the real enemy was not future southern domination but the existing autocracy of the northern system” of traditional government (this group formed the NEPU). The conservative nature of the NPC was clearly demonstrated in its aim of “eventual self-government for Nigeria,” in contrast to the NEPU’s demand for “rapid independence.”

The more cautious approach of the NPC was not merely a reflection of the inherent conservatism of its members, but also of a deep antipathy towards the South—and especially its educated class. While this could partly be explained by religious and cultural differences, given

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108 Coleman, pp. 357-358.

109 Reynolds, p. 21.

110 Coleman, p. 359. See also Reynolds, p. 1. It has been argued that one of the reasons for the convoluted electoral system of the Macpherson Constitution was to ensure that the traditional system in the North be maintained, as much as possible, in order to avoid “potential democratic disruption” that could threaten “all the British had worked to establish in the North during the period of Colonial rule,” Reynolds, p. 18.

that Islam was predominant in the North, there was much more to “northern hostility” than that. Far less economically and politically developed than the South, many in the North “assume[d] that in a self-governing Nigeria the north would in effect be a backward protectorate governed by southerners.” It was a prospect that had little appeal, and the Northern attitude was clearly expressed by Mallam Abubakar Tafawa Balewa (of whom more later) in response to a motion by Azikiwe in the Legislative Council in 1948 “urging a united Nigerian outlook.” Balewa said that

Many [Nigerians] deceive themselves by thinking that Nigeria is one, ... particularly some of the press people. ... This is wrong. I am sorry to say that this presence of unity is artificial ... The Southern tribes who are now pouring into the North in ever increasing numbers, and are more or less domiciled here do not mix with the Northern people ... and we in the North look upon them as invaders.

Indeed, increased contact between the North and South seemed to have exacerbated the hostility. There were complaints “that southern clerks in the north discriminated against northerners in government offices, in railroad ticket offices, and in commercial firms,” and “that the southern press ridiculed the Hausa.”

The depth of the Northern resentment, hostility, and suspicion towards the South was demonstrated by the fact that neither the NCNC nor the AG, although both became actively engaged in soliciting support in the North, “had any significant success” there. Indeed,

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112 Coleman, pp. 360-361.

113 Ibid., p. 361.

114 Ibid., pp. 360-361. One Northerner was so disturbed by what was believed to be the Southern attitude towards the North that he said that “the common people of the North put more confidence in the white man than in ... their black Southern brothers ... .” These sentiments seemed to be shared by many of the “educated northerners and emirs,” and “were also frequently expressed in [newspaper] editorials.”

115 Reynolds, p. 22.
Northern conservative and moderate leaders were so determined to ‘protect’ the North from Southern control that during the consultative process prior to the Macpherson Constitution, they made the following demands:

(1) that there be no alteration of the north-south boundary in favor of the south; (2) that regional representation in the central House of Representatives be on a democratic (per capita) basis, and that the north therefore be given a minimum of 50 per cent of the ... [seats]; and (3) that central revenue be allocated to the regions on a democratic (per capita) basis.

Accompanying these demands was a veiled threat “that if they were not granted the north would, in effect, secede from Nigeria.”\(^{116}\) It must be noted, however, that this stance was not shared by the members of NEPU, which strongly supported “the idea of a united Nigeria,” and, indeed, “was ... in active liaison with, and received some assistance from, the NCNC.”\(^{117}\) Although this “alliance proved to be one of the NEPU’s greatest handicaps, for it made the organization extremely vulnerable to the charge of being an agent of southern domination,”\(^{118}\) as its principle “goal ... was to overthrow ... [the traditional rulers] and empower ... the region’s working class through the expansion of voting rights and the replacement of traditional rulers with elected officials,”\(^{119}\) its primary focus on “the reform of northern institutions” had considerable appeal among the dissidents of the region who were more concerned with domination by the traditional

\(^{116}\)Coleman, p. 362. This attitude continued, with “Northern leaders ... threatening to delay the move towards independence, or even refusing to participate in unitary government altogether if their demands [for other concessions] were not met,” Reynolds, p. 22.

\(^{117}\)Coleman, p. 366. The alliance was not formalized until 1954, and one of the enticements for the NEPU was undoubtedly “the extensive financial support” offered by the NCNC. Reynolds, p. 22. Azikiwe, for his part, praised “the patriotic efforts” of the NEPU in a public speech in 1951, Azikiwe, Zik: Selected Speeches, p. 170.

\(^{118}\)Coleman, p. 366.

\(^{119}\)Reynolds, p. 1.
This also meant, however, that the fundamental battle in the North was not between the British and those seeking independence, nor even between Northerners and Southerners, but between the two major political organizations within the North. In the South, meanwhile, the battle was clearly between the NCNC and the AG.

It was as obvious to those in the South as it was to those in the North that the new Constitution would strengthen regional power. Thus, the AG was from the beginning focussed on ensuring that it would be the party holding power in the Western Region. To do so, it intended "[t]o bring and organise within its fold all nationalists in the Western Region, so that they may work together as a united group, and submit themselves to party loyalty and discipline." The clarity of the AG’s aim—"the capture of power in the Western Region"—made it, arguably, the first real political party in Nigeria. As such, its leadership was collegial—and this at Awolowo’s insistence; ... it developed a definite program in a series of policy papers dealing with all aspects of governmental activity ... and pledged reforms if elected; [and] ... it developed a permanent organizational structure and utilized modern techniques of mass persuasion and electoral campaigning ...

Therefore, while it was willing “to explore all possibilities for and to co-operate wholeheartedly with other nationalists in the formation of a Nigeria-wide organization which shall work as a united team towards the realization of immediate self-government for Nigeria,” it presented itself during the 1951 election campaign as a clearly defined regional party. In order to increase its

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120 Coleman, p. 365.

121 For a brief overview of the principle political actors in the North, see Sklar, pp. 88-101.

122 Awolowo, Autobiography, p. 223.

123 Coleman, p. 350.
appeal to the non-Yoruba minorities within the region, "Awolowo consciously sought and largely succeeded in obtaining the cooperation of prominent leaders of some of the non-Yoruba tribes in the Western Region."

While the AG "made special efforts to prevent the organization from being stigmatized as Yoruba-dominated ... one of the main themes in the group's electoral campaign was common opposition to Azikiwe and to the threat of Ibo domination." The irony was presumably not appreciated by Azikiwe, who had been attempting to build a coalition of Nigerian organizations to lead the "demand for immediate self-government," an exercise which he found so frustrating that, in December of 1950, he announced that he would "retire from politics for five years," declaring that "it is obvious that our people are not ready and I must not impose on an unready people." Less than a month later, he had changed his mind, having been persuaded by supporters that his decision "would deter the progress of [the] country [and] embarrass [the] party." Rejoining the fray after his brief interlude, he declared that efforts must be made "to reconcile apparently irreconcilable elements" within the independence movement.

An attempt was made, in March of 1951, to bring the AG within the fold of the coalition, but the meeting stalled on the issue of regionalization. Azikiwe and the NCNC had adamantly

124 Ibid., pp. 349-350. Other groups included "the Edo, the Ishan, and the Jekri."

125 Ibid., emphasis mine.

126 Sklar, p. 83. This involved, at various stages, the NCNC, the NNDP, the NYM, and the Nigerian Labour Congress, among others, Ibid., pp. 83-85.

127 Ibid., p. 86.

128 Azikiwe, Selected Speeches, pp. 168-169.

129 Sklar, pp. 113-114. While "the announced purpose of the Action Group to become, eventually, the Western Regional Working Committee of a nationwide organization," it also believed, as one representative put
opposed the constitutionalization of "the tripartite division of the country" as set out in the Macpherson Constitution since its acceptance by the committee of the Legislative Council in January of 1950. However, Azikiwe's counter recommendation that "instead 'the division of the country [be] along the main ethnic and/or linguistic groups [i.e., 10] in order to enable each group to exercise local and cultural autonomy'" would have created the very ""Balkanization"" that he had faulted the regional division for. As his rationale was that his suggestion would fulfill "the desire of the non-Yoruba peoples of the Western Region to 'remain masters of [their] own destiny in a separate region," it appeared to many of his critics that in his quest for power Azikiwe was the foremost tribalist, playing upon tribal sentiment, especially among the non-Yoruba tribes in the Western Region and the Middle Belt tribes in the Northern Region, in order to dissociate them from the Yoruba and the Hausa in a regionalized Nigeria. \(^{130}\)

In any case, it did not seem to reconcile with the NCNC's "proclamation of unitary government as the constitutional goal of the party." \(^{131}\) Nor did this ethnic/linguistic division concept appear to be in accordance with Azikiwe's assertion (during the elections campaign) that "the NCNC believes in a common nationality for Nigeria," and that each of the regions' populations were so mixed "that it is not possible in [any of them] to say that any particular linguistic or ethnic group can or should dominate the rest by virtue of its numerical superiority." \(^{132}\) Perhaps Azikiwe should have spent more time reconciling the "apparently irreconcilable elements" of his own

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\(^{130}\) Coleman, pp. 348-349.

\(^{131}\) Sklar, p. 115. It was after the failure of the attempt to reconcile with the AG that the decision was made to abandon the concept of federalism, as the NCNC delegates now believed "that the Action Group had appropriated the principle of federalism for the end of regional separation."

\(^{132}\) Azikiwe, Selected Speeches, p. 178.
However, it seems more likely that Azikiwe was not interested at this point in devising a particularly clear policy because his aim was not, in fact, to have the NCNC act as a political party within the context of the Macpherson Constitution. In a statement to the Daily Times just before the election, he had said

... my aim in trying to get a majority in the regional and central legislatures is to firmly entrench the NCNCers in a strategic position where we would create a deadlock and paralyse the machinery of government and thus rip [up] the Macpherson Constitution and usher in a democratic one. This means that if we come to power, we shall not only refuse to become ministers, but we shall use our majority to prevent budgets from being passed ...  

As a modus operandi for a political party seeking power, this aim left more than a little to be desired. It is not even clear that such a plan would have resulted in the “glorious victory” that Azikiwe anticipated: the realization by the colonial authorities that governing Nigeria was no longer tenable, therefore, the only option was to grant immediate self-government. Yet this seemed to be all that Azikiwe offered the electorate, a point that Awolowo was quick to make, stating that “the Action Group was the only party that published policy papers as well as a manifesto”–a clear indication that the AG intended to govern if elected.

It was perhaps the only clear thing about the entire 1951 elections, a situation not helped by the tortuous process of indirect elections, which was a three-stage procedure requiring four

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133Sklar, n. 63, p. 116.

134Azikiwe, Zik: Selected Speeches, pp. 170-172. Stated in such magniloquent language that his message could be confused with a call to battle, rather than an appeal for votes

months to complete.\(^{136}\) Indeed, it was not until the Houses actually met in January of 1952 that it could be determined what the party standings were. While the NCNC (in the Eastern House of Assembly) and the NPC (in the Northern) had won "decisive majorities," the composition of the Western House was in flux for some time.\(^{137}\) Despite this, in the days before the House sat for the first time, Azikiwe was "declaring 'we have won resounding victory in the Western Provinces, by firmly entrenching the N.C.N.C. as an undisputed majority party in the House of Assembly.'" His optimism, however, was sadly misplaced: 49 members of the AG filed into the House, to be joined the following day by 3 defectors from the NCNC, leaving Azikiwe with only 27 members.\(^{138}\) To add insult to injury, the AG majority, during the elections for representatives to the Central House, ensured that Azikiwe was not one of them, thus relegating "the National President of the NCNC ... [to the position of] unofficial leader of the Opposition in the Western House of Assembly," and denying him a place in the "national" forum.\(^{139}\)

However, this proved to be moot. The system implemented in accordance with the Macpherson Constitution "could not function without cooperatively-inclined, effective party leadership in all regions and mutual forbearance at the Center. Neither of these conditions was

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\(^{136}\) See Awolowo, *People's Republic*, pp. 38-42, for a description of the indirect elections process. An interesting, if confusing (a reflection of the situation, not the authors' syntax), account of how this process worked in a specific case (Ibadan) is given in Kenneth W.J. Post and George D. Jenkins, *The Price of Liberty: Personality and Politics in Colonial Nigeria* (Cambridge University Press, 1973), pp. 102-121. The exception to the indirect system was in Lagos, where the five seats were determined by universal adult suffrage, Sklar, p. 115.

\(^{137}\) Sklar, p. 116.

\(^{138}\) Post and Jenkins, p. 116.

\(^{139}\) Sklar, pp. 117-118. The "bizarre episode" was also embarrassing on a party level, as one of the NCNC members refused to step down to allow Azikiwe to be elected to the Central House.
adequately achieved and the Constitution collapsed within 15 months.**140

e) The ravelled road to independence

The reasons for "the premature demise of the Macpherson Constitution" were many; however, the fundamental problem can perhaps best be discerned through Awolowo's statement that "some of ... [the] provisions [of the Constitution] turned out to be so easily amenable to political manoeuvres ... [and that] ... Nigerian nationalists ... were determined to exploit every loophole in it to wrest more and more powers from the British."**141 Indeed, within four months of taking office, the AG's failure to persuade the Governor to order "his subordinate officials ... to place a liberal rather than a rigid construction on the provisions of the constitution, or ... [to amend] the constitution itself," led to the Party's determination "to wreck the Macpherson Constitution as soon as a favourable opportunity offered itself."**142

In the Eastern Region, "Azikiwe’s frank hostility to the Constitution and his determination to bring it down, ... [while] not shared by a majority of the NCNC parliamentarians," was the official position of the Party. In fact, three of the NCNC Central Ministers were expelled for not following the Party line, at a convention in December of 1952. The same

convention nullified the previous "fair trial" decision of the National Executive Committee, ruling that the Constitution merited no further trial, and that party leaders

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**140**Ibid., p. 118.

**141**Awolowo, *People's Republic*, pp. 43-45.

**142**Awolowo, *Autobiography*, p. 237. See pp. 232-237 for an explanation of the AG's dissatisfaction with the "defects" in the Constitution that became apparent to them once in office.
should adopt positive means to produce its collapse.\textsuperscript{143}

Although this hard line resulted in a split in the Party, with several NCNC House members joining one of the opposition parties, the “wide margin of support” that Azikiwe held in “the crucial arena of the Ibo State Union” ensured that the remaining members followed orders and “paralyzed the constitutional system by voting to defeat or defer every bill before the [Eastern] House [of Assembly].”\textsuperscript{144}

The North was, in contrast, relatively tranquil during this period. In essence, this was because the Macpherson Constitution had—in reality—changed little about how the North was governed. Most of the members of the Assembly (and the representative in the Central Assembly) had been carefully selected by the emirs and chiefs to ensure that none were radically-inclined, and “were, in fact, officials of the Native Administrations.” As a result, “effective political power in the North was exercised by the British officials, the chiefs, and the top NPC politicians in that order.” It is hardly surprising, therefore, that none of the political turmoil of the southern assemblies was in evidence in the North.\textsuperscript{145} Even there, however, the status quo was shaken by the events of 1953.

The rivalry between the AG and the NCNC for “nationalist” status had impelled both to

\textsuperscript{143}Sklar, pp. 119-121. This whole affair clearly demonstrated a perversion of the theory of “democracy” espoused by Azikiwe in a public address in 1951 (Azikiwe, \textit{Zik: Selected Speeches}, p. 176): the convention was held in Jos, in the Middle Belt of the Northern Region, on a date when members of the Eastern Assembly were obliged to remain in the House for a budget debate. The “fair trial” decision had been made, in stark contrast, during a meeting in October of 1952 in Port Harcourt, where “a majority of the 115 parliamentarians” had voted for it. The opportunity was also taken at the convention to entrench Azikiwe’s powers, as president of the NCNC, over the NCNC members of both the Central and Eastern Houses of Assembly.

\textsuperscript{144}Sklar, pp. 122-124.

\textsuperscript{145}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 321.
commit themselves to a specific date upon which to focus the demand for independence. During the 1951 election campaign, the date had been fixed on 1956. The AC “upped the ante” at their December 1952 conference by resolving that the date should be even more specific: 1 December 1956. This was translated into a motion tabled in the House of Representatives in March of 1953: “That this House accepts as a primary political objective the attainment of self-government for Nigeria in 1956.” While hailed by some as signalling “the unmistakeable beginning of the end of British rule,” this extremely “controversial” action clearly demonstrated the distinct divergence between the North and South on the issue of self-government. An amendment, proposed by the leader of the NPC, changed “1956” to “as soon as practicable,” and the following debate “was bitter and tempestuous;” it ended with the AG and NCNC members walking out of the House.

It was the death knell of the Macpherson Constitution, and to any possibility of North-South political unity on independence. The division in the House “created ... an atmosphere of interregional antagonism” that carried into the streets and into the newspapers. Northern leaders were physically and rhetorically attacked in the South, and responded with an eight-point program which, if implemented, would have meant virtual secession of the Northern Region from Nigeria ... , [an] action [which] provoked even harsher criticism

146 An apparently arbitrary choice, based on the term of the Houses elected in 1951, Coleman, p. 398.
147 Awolowo, Autobiography, p. 238; see also Coleman, pp. 398-399.
148 Coleman, p. 399. In his account of the proceedings, Awolowo preferred to focus on the sudden unity between the AG and NCNC, and the obdurate refusal of the Northern members to cooperate—expressing a clear resentment that the North, holding the majority, would be able to vote “against ... freedom for [the] country,” Autobiography, pp. 240-241.
from the southern press and from [AG] and NCNC leaders. The northern leaders were repeatedly charged with being unrepresentative of their people; they were called "imperialist stooges"; and they were criticized as having "no minds of their own."150

When the AG sent a delegation151 to the northern city of Kano in May "with the aim of preaching to Northern Nigerians the idea of 'independence by 1956,'" local NPC leaders, understandably stung by these derogatory comments, announced that

Having abused us in the south, these very southerners have decided to come to the north to abuse us ... We have therefore organized about one thousand men ... to meet force with force; ... no lecture or meeting will be delivered by the southerners.152

Instead, there were riots which "deteriorated into an inter-ethnic massacre."153

Recognizing that "the Kano riots were but the surface manifestation of deep and unresolved tension" between the North and South,154 the British government decided to hold a conference in London in the summer of 1953 in order to discuss with all concerned parties a constitutional solution to the increasingly divisive political scene in Nigeria. This was to be "the

150Coleman, p. 399. See Osuntokun, pp. 42-43, for a list of the points. It was clearly a "power to the regions" document, as illustrated by point 2: "There shall be no central legislative body and no central executive or policy-making body for the whole of Nigeria."

151Both the AG and the NCNC had decided "to send delegations to northern cities to campaign for self-government in 1956," Coleman, p. 399; see also Feinstein, p. 159.

152Feinstein, p. 159.

153Osuntokun, pp. 39-42. While the hostility towards the AG delegation seems to have been instigated by the NPC leaders, the rioters did not appear to target Yoruba inhabitants of Kano. Instead, the majority of the violence was aimed at (and many of the resultant casualties of 36 killed and over 300 wounded came from) the Ibo community. Osuntokun argued that this indicated that the riots were not predominantly politically motivated, but an opportunity to express Northern antagonism towards Ibo traders by their Northern competitors (with a bit of religious discrimination thrown in—many of the Yoruba resident in the North were Muslim; the Ibo were not). Feinstein's comment that the NEPU, who also supported the Southern demand for self-government, were not attacked either seems to indicate that political difference had less to do with the riots than ethnic/tribal and economic antagonisms, p. 159.

154Coleman, p. 400.
most fateful constitutional deliberation in modern Nigerian history.”155 It was the first time that Nigerian representatives from the major political parties156 largely determined the details of the new constitution. The form of government that they finally agreed upon, in essence, was an acknowledgement that Nigeria could not be governed as a unitary state, a recognition that the regional divisions were too deep to be accommodated in anything other than a federation.

Accordingly, the new constitution specified that “limited and specific powers [would be] allocated to the federal government and residual powers [to the] regional governments.” Each regional government would now be headed by a premier, and all ministerial positions would be held by Nigerians. In order to placate Northern concerns, “full internal self-government would be granted to those regions desiring it in 1956,” and further discussions would be held at that time to determine how and when the final step to complete independence for Nigeria as a whole would be taken.157 All things considered, it was “an ingenious compromise” that effectively defused the Northern threat of secession while apparently conceding to Southern demands for self-government (yet without setting a final date for independence).158

The alliance between the AG and the NCNC, which had been a substantive factor in enabling the delegates to find a consensus on the fundamental shape of the new federalist

155Coleman, p. 371.

156This included delegates from the AG, the NCNC, the National Independence Party, the NEPU, and the NPC, as well as representatives from the Cameroons, and both the Nigerian and British governments, Sklar, n. 101, p. 133.

157Coleman, p. 371; see also Sklar, p. 133. Coleman provided a clear and concise table detailing the principal changes between the Constitutions of 1951, 1954, and 1957 on p. 372. Awolowo discussed the “radical constitutional changes” of 1953 in People’s Republic, pp. 48-50.

158Ibid., p. 402.
constitution, proved to be “short-lived,” however, as the issue of creating “a federal territory” of Lagos and its environs as the capital of the nation divided the AG and the NCNC (which allied on this point with the NPC).\textsuperscript{159} Nor, it must be noted, did the London agreement between the leaders meet with unanimous approval within Nigeria. The NCNC leaders’ acceptance of the federalist system, and especially Azikiwe’s declaration that the deal had given Nigeria “self-government on a platter of gold . . . , was repudiated publicly by youth leaders who charged that [their] delegates had forsaken the constitutional principles of the party” by abandoning “the principle of unitary government” in favour of federalism, an action perceived “as a betrayal of the nationalist ideal of ‘One Nigeria.’”\textsuperscript{160} While the Party papered over this internal dispute at its annual convention in early 1954, its concomitant adjustment of its constitutional policies “to accept the principle of federalism with the provisos that residual powers should be vested in the central government and that additional states or regions should be created”\textsuperscript{161} served to confuse political allies as well as competitors.\textsuperscript{162}

The results of the elections following the promulgation of the new constitution seemed quite clear, however: the leaders of the AG, the NCNC, and the NPC became premiers in the Western, Eastern, and Northern regions respectively. While the results can hardly be said to have been unexpected, the symmetry of parties and regions is deceptive, for although each “dominant

\textsuperscript{159} Awolowo, \textit{Autobiography}, p. 181. The AG “bitterly opposed” special status for Lagos, and especially the separation of it from the Western Region, “threatening the secession of the West over this issue.” Although it “backed down” from this extreme stance, the acrimony over Lagos was yet another indication of the deep divisions between the major political parties, Post and Jenkins, pp. 218-219.

\textsuperscript{160} Sklar, pp. 144-145.

\textsuperscript{161} Ibid., p. 145.

\textsuperscript{162} Awolowo described Azikiwe’s proclivity for changing policies “acrobatic,” \textit{Autobiography}, p. 244.
political party derived its popular support mainly from a dominant nationality group" in each region, "these dominant ethnic groups displayed varying degrees of solidarity." The ramifications of this were amply demonstrated in the elections to the Federal House, whereby each region held separate elections for seats in the House. According to the new constitution, the majority in each region would then select three ministers to form the Federal government. The NCNC, winning a majority in both Eastern and Western elections, nominated the six federal ministers from those regions, while the NPC—the clear winner in the north—designated the ministers from the Northern Region. As a result, the AG—the supposed "representative" party of the Western Region—was unrepresented in the Federal government. Given the renewed hostility between the AG and the NCNC and the antagonism between the AG and the NPC, this did not bode well for the AG. However, the potential threat that the NPC and the NCNC would ally against the AG at the Federal level was nullified by their mutual antipathy, clearly expressed in the announcement by the Executive Committee of the NPC that it would "not enter into any form of alliance with any political party which has its roots and origins in the South or

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163 Sklar, pp. 135-136.

164 Ibid., p. 145. In the East, the standings were: 32 seats for the NCNC, 4 for the United National Independence Party, 3 for the AG, and 3 independents. In a startling upset in the Western Region, the NCNC garnered 23 seats to the AG's 18. As expected, in the North, the NPC won 84 of the 92 seats.

165 Although "a parliamentary coalition uniting the Action Group and the NPC [had] seemed probable" when it had been assumed that the AG would be able to designate the 3 ministers from the Western Region following the Federal elections (Sklar, p. 145), presumably as a reflection of their mutual antipathy towards the NCNC, the fact that "after the 1953 Constitutional Conference ..., [the AG had] directed [its] campaign against [the NPC] as the enemy of Nigeria's freedom" (Awolowo, Autobiography, p. 253) would appear to have been rather a stumbling block to such an alliance. However, at the time the NPC and the AG were united in their opposition to the NCNC's policy "that the North, along with the other Regions, should be broken up into smaller units." In addition, while the NCNC "was in alliance with the N.E.P.U., the northern opposition party, ... the Action Group had not yet taken much part in northern politics" (Post and Jenkins, n. p. 243). In this light, the possibility of a coalition of the AG and the NPC in the Federal government against the NCNC could be perceived as politically expedient.
with a party which is Southern dominated.\textsuperscript{166}

Indeed, this statement merely expressed the continued, and in many ways deepening, conflict between the regions. As Nigeria adapted to the federalist system of governance, both regional rivalry and the drive for regional autonomy became even more pronounced. Under the new constitutional arrangement, revenue was allocated predominantly to the region of derivation, which meant that the population rich but production poor North, and to a lesser extent East, no longer benefited from the distribution of the export wealth from the West. This was a source, as can be imagined, of considerable inter-regional tension and competition.\textsuperscript{167}

Tensions were further exacerbated by the drive in each region to indigenize the bureaucracy in each administration. While both regions in the South focussed on enticing civil servants from throughout the country to return to their “homeland” and serve, in the North this policy took on a “radical exclusionist” emphasis. The traditional ruling class in the North were determined to maintain control, and systematically weeded out all Southerners from the administration, replacing them with educated Northerners and expatriates, a purge that “engender[ed] bitter Southern resentment.” The policy of exclusion extended to “government contracts, retail trade and ownership of land, [with the aim of ensuring that] ‘Northerners gain control of everything in the country.’” The use of the word “country” instead of “region” denoted the apparent “determination of the Northern ruling class to establish firm control over the federal state and its resources, and so to secure its dominance over the political classes of the

\textsuperscript{166}Post and Jenkins, p. 244.

Eastern and Western Regions,¹⁶⁸ which—given that the Federal House was elected on the basis of population, and the North had the largest population of any of the regions—did not seem to be an illogical expectation.

The South was hardly likely to find this aim acceptable, however, and the period between 1954 and independence was dominated by the competition between the ruling parties of the three regions. Of particular note were the strategies each employed to incite internal dissension within other regions. For example, in an attempt “to deny the NPC seats in its home region ... both the AG and the NCNC were active in the Northern Region, ... though ... neither ... had any significant success.” However, in 1954 the NCNC did form an alliance with the NEPU, the main northern opposition party, providing it with “extensive financial support,” which enabled the party to more effectively challenge the NPC.¹⁶⁹ A far more insidious strategy, and one which would have a profound impact on the internal cohesion of Nigeria, was aimed at the ethnic minorities within each region. All of the regional governing parties incited [minorities in the other regions] to oppose their government and demand separate regions, [these groups] would presumably support the party that had championed their cause. With this added support, each party hoped to win parliamentary control of the Federal Government, or at least to share control in coalition with another party. This was crucial to the ultimate aim of the strategy: capturing for the region and its political class the maximum feasible share of federal resources.¹⁷⁰

As minority fears “of political repression, socioeconomic discrimination, even cultural extinction by the majority groups” had been substantively increased by the realization that

¹⁶⁸Ibid., pp. 50-51.

¹⁶⁹Reynolds, p. 22.

¹⁷⁰Diamond, p. 52.
independence—and the resultant “unfettered control of regional governments” by the majority groups—was rapidly approaching, minority groups needed little encouragement to organize political parties which could promote and protect their interests. Therefore, although the AG and NCNC in particular made “significant electoral inroads” in other regions due to their support for minority parties and aims, the result of this strategy was an even greater stimulation of “ethnic cleavage in Nigeria.”  

Indeed, by the time of the 1957 Constitutional Conference, minority-group demands for separate states had become the most explosive issue in Nigerian politics. Elites of Ibibio, Efik, Ijaw and other non-Igbo ethnic minority groups in the southeastern corner of Nigeria were demanding that the Calabar, Ogoja and Rivers provinces be made a separate state (or even three states). Similarly, the Edo-speaking people of Benin province were seeking a Mid-West state separate from the West, while NCNC-allied leaders of the Yoruba Muslim population (who were dispersed in location but centred politically in Ibadan) began to petition for a Central Yoruba State that would excise Ibadan and Oyo provinces from the West. In the North, the NPC faced three separatist movements: by Yorubas in Kabba and Ilorin provinces to merge with the contiguous Western Region, by leaders of northeastern minorities (especially the Kanuri) for a state comprising Bornu and adjacent provinces, and - most significantly in number and territorial scope - by the predominantly non-Muslim ethnic groups in the provinces south of the emirates for a ‘Middle Belt State’.

The cacophony of these demands for the fragmentation of Nigeria by the minorities almost served to drown out the calls by the major parties, especially the AG and the NCNC, for independence. In fact, the Constitutional Conference of 1957 had to be delayed while a commission of inquiry investigated the problem, considering “lengthy memoranda from minority groups, state movements, antistate movements, and individuals having their own schemes for

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171Ibid., pp. 52-53.

172Diamond, pp. 52-53. See also Sklar, pp. 136-138; Coleman, pp. 366-367, 385-388.
redrawing the political map of Nigeria.\textsuperscript{173}  

The major parties, which had contributed to the problem through their support of minority demands, did not make the search for a solution an easy task. The NPC flatly opposed any plan which would involve the creation of new states within their region, and the AG and NCNC, while “long ... committed to the principle of ethnic self-determination ... nevertheless ... sought to limit the full application of self-determination in the regions they control[led].”\textsuperscript{174} The Commission’s report in essence “shelved” the problem, concluding that

minority fears ... would not be remedied by the creation of a new state in any one of the existing regions ... On the contrary, it seemed likely to the commission that new minority problems might well flow from the creation of new states. Moreover, the new states would be comparatively weak with respect to financial resources and trained administrative manpower. Finally, the commission did not think that tribal separatism should be embodied in the structure of Nigerian government.\textsuperscript{175}

\textsuperscript{173}Coleman, p. 393.

\textsuperscript{174}Coleman, pp. 393-395. Azikiwe spelled out in detail the NCNC “policy on the political future of Nigeria” in a speech in 1955. It is interesting to note that Policy 8, the “Right of Self-Determination,” is followed by Policy 9, “Equality of States,” which expresses a clear intention to ensure that no region, regardless of the size of its area or population, should “be in a position to dominate the other regions either individually or collectively.” This would appear to be a direct attack on the constitutional arrangement of 1954 which had accorded half the seats in the Federal House to the North, a supposition confirmed by the demand in Policy 9 that if any large region refused “to have its territory reduced, then all the Regions of the Federation” should have equal representation in both Houses “of the federal legislatures, irrespective of the size and population of each Region,” Azikiwe, Selected Speeches, p. 187; see pp. 184-189 for the complete text on policies. This raises the question of whether Azikiwe’s support for minority demands was more influenced by his aim to reduce the power of the North than by an altruistic concern for the rights of minority groups, especially given his opposition to such demands within the Eastern Region, which the NCNC claimed that it opposed these “on the ground that [the] ... sole rationale [for such a demand was] anti-Ibo sentiment,” Sklar, p. 137. For his part, Awolowo supported the creation of three new states (one in each region), rejecting the NCNC suggestion of seventeen on the grounds that is “would make nonsense of federalism, and indeed would amount to a backdoor reversion to a unitary system,” Awolowo, Autobiography, p. 190-191; see pp. 185-212 for his comprehensive exposition on the minorities issue. What becomes clear in Awolowo’s account are his concerns that the issue was being used to delay independence, which was his ultimate priority, and that the NCNC’s apparent aim of creating a large number of states would shift the balance of power in Nigeria from the regional governments to the federal government.

\textsuperscript{175}Sklar, pp. 138-139.
The recommendations met with the approval of the NPC and the NCNC, although the AG and the minority groups were adamantly opposed, and the Secretary of State for the Colonies accepted the report, stating that "the early creation of new states was not for practical reasons compatible with the request for independence in 1960."\[176\]

With the minorities issue cleared out of the way (though certainly not satisfactorily concluded), the conference could proceed with discussions on the new constitution. The eventual agreement accorded immediate self-government to the Western and Eastern Regions (the North preferred to wait until 1959), and included some adjustments to the Federal House, increasing the seats to 320 and creating the position of Prime Minister. It was also stipulated "that a Federal Senate based on the principle of equality of regional representation would be established after the next general election." The question of the date for independence, which all Nigerian leaders requested be in 1959, was postponed by the Secretary of State "until it was seen that Nigeria could 'take the strain of Regional self-government,' and other problems, especially the minorities question had been resolved." He did, however, assure the Nigerians that independence could be considered in 1960.\[177\]

Although not pleased with the delay to independence, the Nigerian representatives "reserved the right to pursue the matter further" and concluded the conference in a relatively amenable manner. While disappointed over some of the details, the NPC and AG were

\[176\] "However, a complex procedure for the creation of states in the future was incorporated into the Nigerian constitution," Sklar, p. 139. See also Awolowo, Autobiography, pp. 192-196; he claimed that the AG was forced to go along with the plan "under compulsion" in order not to postpone independence. There had been considerable debate over a possible date for independence, with the regional premiers finally agreeing on 1959 (in a memorandum submitted at the 1957 London conference), this was shifted to 1960 in the face of the Secretary of State's suggestion to wait until after the 1959 elections. Coleman, pp. 403-405.

\[177\] Sklar, pp. 192-194.
predominantly satisfied that they had achieved many of their aims, especially their determination to prevent the NCNC from "chang[ing] the shape of the federation in a radical fashion which would shift the balance of power to the center." As for Azikiwe, although he "voiced his 'painful disappointment'" with the results of the conference, his attention immediately had to shift to the more pressing problem of increasing internal dissent within the NCNC.

The trouble had been brewing for some time. A special convention of the Party had been held in April of 1957, ostensibly "to enable [the members] to give [their] mandate to the ... delegates" to the London Conference. In his address to the meeting, Azikiwe had expressed his hope that it would also serve to "scotch" the "widespread rumours that there [was] a rift among [the] leadership." Instead of refuting the "rumours," however, his speech seemed to be a veiled attack on those who challenged his leadership. In a bizarre, almost hysterically-worded account of yet another "attempt ... on [his] life," he seemed to be accusing his challengers of resorting to the method of assassination "in order to achieve ... political ambition" instead of using the "simpler process [of] demand[ing] abdication of powers." Announcing that the attempt had convinced him that "the time has come for me to make room so that others may shine," he declared that he would not "stand for re-election" at the next convention.

178Post and Jenkins, pp. 390-391.
179Sklar, p. 194.
180Azikiwe, Selected Speeches, pp. 193-197. The "assassin" had thrown a rock at Azikiwe's car, breaking one of the windows and narrowly missing his head. Azikiwe accredited the action to "the code of the jungle" that "prevails ... in the arena of politics." Yet nowhere in the speech did he associate the attack with any of his enemies from outside of the NCNC; there is no mention of the AG or the NPC, for example. Instead, he uses words such as "treachery," and invoked the names of Brutus and Judas, which suggest that he wanted his audience to interpret this as an internal "conspiracy." While his histrionic declamation could be attributed to his temperament, which, as Post and Jenkins noted, would "at times [bring] him almost to the point of collapse, accompanied by threats of resignation and fears of assassination" (p. 358), I suspect that this particular speech was more an attempt to discredit his challengers before the general membership of the Party, to defuse their
By the time that convention was held, however, Azikiwe seemed to have forgotten all about resigning, instead he demanded greater powers for the President to initiate disciplinary action against individuals, to dissolve party organs, and to revoke the certificates of affiliation of branches or member unions for actions contrary to the ideology, the best interests, or the Constitution of the NCNC.

Although this proposal was never actually discussed, the debate which did take place about the powers of the President was illustrative of the problems within the Party. Azikiwe “alluded bitterly to the chronic malady of dissension ... and to his party’s organizational deficiencies,” arguing “that drastic organizational remedies, ‘even in a totalitarian manner,’ had become necessary.” Others countered that the Party was (and should remain) based on a truly democratic structure. However, after much heated debate, Azikiwe achieved a form of victory, being granted the power to appoint officers to the highest positions at the national level of the Party. In the short term, however, it was a pyrrhic victory, for it did nothing to resolve the internal dissent, and, indeed, deepened the antagonism between the pro and anti-Azikiwe camps. In fact, a few months after the Convention of 1958, some of the dissidents (primarily from the Western Region) had “launched a new party, called the Democratic Party of Nigeria and the Cameroons.”

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181 Sklar, p. 195. Post and Jenkins asserted that “[t]he most valuable account of [this] Convention is in” Sklar’s book as he was actually “present at the plenary sessions,” note, p. 407.

182 Chief among them, Alhaji Adegoke Adelabu, who was the Vice-President of the NCNC and Leader of the Opposition in the Western House of Assembly. He was replaced as Vice-President when Azikiwe appointed “men unequivocally loyal to himself” to the three top positions of National Secretary, and first and second Vice-Presidents, Post and Jenkins, p. 410. Post and Jenkins’ account discusses in detail the career of Adelabu.

183 Sklar, pp. 195-203.
By the end of the year, however, most of the Western leaders had withdrawn from the new party. Some of them returned to the NCNC; others joined the Action Group, as did most of the supporters of the Reform Committee in the non-Ibo areas of the East ... [ultimately, therefore] Azikiwe’s leadership of the NCNC was unchallenged ... 184

While Azikiwe managed to retain his leadership of the NCNC, the tumultuous events of 1957-58 demonstrated the obstreperous nature of Nigerian politics.

The problems within the NCNC can be attributed to its “structural contradiction,” that is, the difficulty of reconciling the unitary, national ideology and organization of the Party with the necessity to function also—and in some ways, primarily—as a regional political entity.185 It must be remembered that it was really a conglomeration of a variety of organizations that had evolved into a political party in response to the changing political scene in Nigeria. So the increase in its internal disunity as independence approached—and especially as it became clear that power would be concentrated in the regional governments—was perhaps to be expected, as personal as well as group interests became paramount, and individuals competed for immediate (and potential) access to political office.

Gifted and ambitious individuals of every ethnicity coveted political office for its sheer power, its salary and perquisites, the status it conferred as 'big men' in their communities, and the vast wealth that could be accumulated in it through enterprising manipulation of the public trust.186

Even Azikiwe, for all his “nationalist, unitarian” proclamations, had been accused by members

184Sklar, p. 228. The Reform Committee consisted of a “rebel group” within the NCNC. See Ibid., pp. 216-230, for an explanation of these developments. It is clear that Azikiwe did not contribute productively to the “healing process” in this period, going so far as to accuse one of the leading members of the Party (who, understandably perhaps, became one of the leading members of the Reform Committee and the new party) of being involved in the “assassination conspiracy” of 1957.

185Sklar, p. 203.

186Diamond, p. 54.
of his own Party of having “become a regionalist for personal reasons,” so it is hardly surprising that mutual suspicion and competition would lead to open, and often vociferous, dissent. It was, perhaps, not what Nkrumah had meant when he urged Africans to “seek ye the political kingdom.”

Although neither of the other two major parties, the AG and the NPC, would endure the same degree of internal disruption, they too faced increasing difficulties as independence approached. While the AG seemed to be firmly entrenched as the government of the Western Region, inter and intra-tribal antagonisms (both recently and traditionally based) made it necessary that the leadership be divided between Awolowo–an Ijebu–and a representative of the Oyo-Yoruba (traditional enemies of the Ijebu). Luckily for Awolowo, the man elected as Deputy Party Leader, Ladoke Akintola, “was as brilliant a star as he was a team player,” and their partnership prospered. 

Awolowo also managed to avoid open conflict with the traditional rulers, in accordance with his determination
to harness the influence of the Obas and Chiefs for [his] purposes ... [while] ... tak[ing] steps to modify their rights and abrogate such of their privileges as were considered repugnant, to an extent that would both satisfy the commonalty and make the Obas and Chiefs feel secure in their traditional offices.

This had been accomplished by making the Obas and Chiefs part of the new “democratic local government councils,” established by the government of the Western Region in 1952.

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187 Sklar, pp. 194-195.

188 Osuntokun, pp. 50-51. Although the partnership had become a rivalry by 1962, precipitating a crisis within the AG. See Ibid., pp. 92-129. As this internal dispute took place after independence, it is outside of the scope of this analysis.

189 Awolowo, Autobiography, p. 262.

190 Ibid., p. 278.
However, all had not gone as well for the AG government. Part of the reason for the defeat of the AG in the federal elections of 1954 had been due to the unpopularity of some of the tax measures it had introduced, and its lack of support in the minority area of the Mid-West, which consistently refused to elect AG members to either the Regional or Federal seats. So, although the AG maintained a strong influence in the Western Region, and would remain the government there, in part as a result of its “impressive record of achievements,” and also because, as the government, it was “able to exert influence by means of its control of the chieftaincy apparatus and through the dispensation of patronage,” its control of the Region as a whole was “limited by ethnic, religious, and socio-economic factors which predispose[d] the people of various communities to reject” it.

The AG also had the same problem as the other major parties: trying to function as both a regional and a national party organization. This became more pronounced as “the growth of effective power at the center induced men of the rising class in Western Nigeria ... to turn toward political action on the national plane.” Units of the AG became increasingly—and successfully—operational in the other regions, with the result that, in the 1959 federal elections, the AG “obtained more seats in the Northern and Eastern Regions combined than it did in the Western Region.” (We will be examining the 1959 elections, and the system of party alliances which promoted AG success later.) The problematic impact of this expansionist policy was that it

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191 As Awolowo himself admitted, Ibid., p. 275.

192 This could well be why the AG was so in favour of the creation of a separate Mid-West state, which would excise this area from the Western Region and probably “ensure continued [AG] control of the regional government,” Sklar, p. 245.

193 Sklar, pp. 244-245.
divided the leadership of the AG into what would become (although not seriously until after independence) a division between the two leaders. Akintole had been an effective leader of the AG opposition in the Federal House since 1954, but when the time came to prepare for the federal election of 1959—when it was obvious that this would be the last federal election before independence—Akintole was told by Awolowo to stand aside in order to enable Awolowo to become the leader of the AG at the federal level. While there is a certain logic to Awolowo’s shift to the federal scene at this stage, his reluctance to automatically confer the premiership of the Western Region on Akintole in exchange lends credence to the suggestion that he did not want to be replaced at the regional level by someone who had “a separate independent following as a leader,” an indication that rivalry was a growing problem within the AG leadership. However, although each represented a different ideological faction of the AG (Awolowo the “socialist” wing, and Akintole the “liberal”), due to the maintenance of the Party’s pragmatic focus on social and economic issues from 1950 to 1960, it was able to avoid an ideological conflict that would have brought the leadership rivalry to the surface. In addition, Awolowo’s readiness in this period to accede to the wishes of the Party Executive—even when he did not

194 Osuntokun, pp. 50-69.

195 Ibid., p. 69. Awolowo had “declared [his] intention to leave Regional politics ... for the Centre” in 1957, stating “that the place for the leader of a nation-wide political organisation is the Centre,” and that he had only functioned as leader of the Western Region (since 1951) because it had been agreed at that point “that it was only at the Regional level that Party policies and programmes could be put into effect,” Autobiography, p. 292. His rationale, however, is puzzling, as the party had determined as early as 1950 that it would have to expand its activities to the national arena, (Sklar, p. 243) so the question of why Awolowo did not shift his attention to the centre far earlier remains unanswered.

196 Osuntokun, pp. 69-70.

197 The Party’s focus on pragmatic issues rather than an attempt to formulate “a clear ideological program” was a shrewd move, as such an attempt “would [have] split the party from top to bottom,” Sklar, p. 271.
personally agree—ensured that unity was maintained,¹⁹⁸ which enabled the AG to avoid—for now—the disruptive internal dissension faced by the NCNC at this time.

The situation in the North was both more complex and more simple. Simple because the leadership of the major party, the NPC, was primarily composed of the traditional rulers of the region, who continued to function as semi-feudal overlords. Complex because not only was traditional rule being challenged by the NEPU and the growing assertion of the minority groups, it was being, in a more insidious manner, undermined by the increasing influence of the educated and economic elite within the NPC.¹⁹⁹ This latter group, considered the “progressive” faction,²⁰⁰ was represented by Malam Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, who became First Vice-President of the Party in 1954, when the Sardauna of Sokoto (representing the traditional ruling class) was elected as General President.²⁰¹ While there were only “occasional reports of friction between the Sardauna and Balewa,” the traditional rulers’ suspicion of Balewa’s “radical” tendencies apparently ensured that his role was confined to the federal sphere, where his influence on regional affairs would be minimal. Accordingly, the Sardauna became the Premier of the Northern Region, and Balewa NPC leader in the Federal House,²⁰² and, from 1957, prime

¹⁹⁸See Sklar, pp. 261-283, for a discussion of the internal factions of the AG.

¹⁹⁹This group, “polarized around ... Balewa ... was more enlightened and more ready to accept reforms and change; the [group led by the Sardauna] agreed to such change only under extreme duress and with the express permission of the Sardauna ... the divergence was ever present and occasionally took more overt forms,” Feinstein, pp. 164-165.

²⁰⁰Sklar, pp. 369-370.

²⁰¹Sklar, pp. 321-322. See also Diamond, p. 47-48. While the Sardauna was heir “to the pre-eminent traditional office in the North, Sultan of Sokoto,” he was also “a shrewd, Western-educated defender of the traditional system [who] understood acutely the need to adapt it to the forces of modernisation.”

²⁰²Ibid., p. 370.
minister of the national government. Thus, in contrast to the pattern in the AG and the NCNC, the leader of the NPC remained as regional head while his subordinate moved to the centre—a reflection of the NPC’s obsession with the primacy of regional power and autonomy.

Yet the primacy of the NPC itself in the North was not absolute. As has been seen, radicals had split from the NPC at the very beginning of the political organization of the North, to establish the NEPU in 1950. Its leader, Mallam Aminu Kano, himself a member of the aristocracy, was committed to radical reform, which neither Balewa nor the Sardauna believed necessary. While the NEPU did not represent a substantive threat to the rule of the NPC, especially given its control of the coercive powers of the region (i.e. the police, and both secular and religious courts) and its willingness to use these to repress opposition, its propensity (many would say necessity) for forging alliances with other parties, both within the North and from outside, fed the dissident movement in the North.

Indeed, the political history of the North in the decade immediately preceding independence was marked by the pattern of shifting alliances between a variety of political parties. As we have seen, even the NPC flirted with both the AG and the NCNC on a number of occasions, depending on the perceived needs of the moment. Although the NEPU partnership with the NCNC remained relatively constant, the AG made frequent efforts “to woo NEPU...

203Coleman, p. 377.

204Feinstein, p. 167. Balewa preferred “slow, moderate reform” while the Sardauna accepted reform only if absolutely necessary, and only if the traditional power structure could be maintained.

205The NPC could also use “the pressures of the traditional clientage system” to ensure that the “disloyal” would be suitably dissuaded. There was also the “Yam Mahaukata” (Sons of Madmen), who had “semiofficial sanction” to use terrorist tactics against opponents of the NPC; the NEPU had its own “Positive Action Wing” as protectors, and clashes between the two groups exacerbated the often violent nature of politics in the North, Ibid., pp. 156-158. See also Reynolds, pp. 208-209.
by offers of massive financial or political support. In fact, in 1954, a faction of the NEPU leadership which voted in favour of switching the Party alliance from the NCNC to the AG “left the fold” when defeated, “putting great strain on ... NEPU’s inadequate cadre pool.” This was only one of the incidents which demonstrated the “constantly shifting relationships, alliances, and sectional leadership” within the NEPU, and illustrated the difficulties Aminu had to endure to keep the Party functioning. These difficulties would become even more complicated as the minority groups within the North began to organize politically, and the NEPU—and the Southern parties—tried to form alliances with these groups in attempts to build coalition opposition to the NPC.

In the area called the Middle Belt (which is actually “the lower North”), the predominantly Hausa/Muslim composition of the NEPU proved problematic in maintaining influence. Moreover, within the Middle Belt, a number of organizations were established in the early 1950s, which became divided into two main camps: “one leaning towards accommodation to and integration with the Muslim North and the other toward the creation of a separate Middle Belt region.” The former group was courted by the NPC and the latter by the NEPU/NCNC, but, given that both the integrationist group and the separatist groups were factions of the same party (the United Middle Belt Congress—an oxymoron if there ever was

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206Feinstein, p. 161. See also Reynolds, p. 52.

207Ibid., p. 175.

208Ibid., pp. 160-161.

209Sklar, p. 348.
The same dynamic prevailed in another of the major sub-regions of the North, the Bornu Province in the northeast. The primary opposition (to the NPC) party there was the Bornu Youth Movement (BYM), which allied at first with the NEPU/NCNC, and then switched (in 1958) to the AG. The BYM’s rationale for this switch is illustrative of the complex nature of Northern politics, and, indeed, of Nigerian politics in general.

Among the reasons given by the BYM for its realignment were the alleged intent of the NCNC to effect an alliance with the NPC, the failure of the NCNC to assist minority elements in the North during the presence in Nigeria of the Commission of Inquiry into Minority Fears, allegedly in order to appease the NPC, and the unequivocal support of the Action Group for the creation of a Bornu State. This maneuver [sic] split the lower classes in the Bornu capital city along tribal lines, since the BYM was almost exclusively a Kanuri party and the NEPU was mainly a Hausa party. (The Bornu branch of the Action Group was composed largely of Yoruba settlers in Yerwa town, and the local NCNC was mainly composed of Ibo settlers.) Yet the NPC did not derive unmixed satisfaction from the BYM-NEPU rupture, for it was deeply disturbed by Action Group penetration of the BYM. The Action Group had become the principal opponent of the [NPC] in the Federation of Nigeria, and it was pledged to dismember the Northern Region by creating additional states if it came to power. Moreover, the NPC correctly anticipated that the wealthy and resourceful [AG] would commit the full measure of its organizational and financial capabilities in order to secure a political foothold in the upper North.211

The stage was now set for the final electoral showdown before independence.

The elections of 1959 were hard-fought in all regions. While the NPC, as usual, confined its efforts to the Northern Region, the AG and the NCNC (and their various allies) battled for

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20 Coleman, pp. 366-367. See also Sklar, pp. 346-355. Even the AG managed to flirt with alliances in the Middle Belt area, thanks to its pro-separate states policy.

211 Sklar, pp. 341-342. It must be noted that the NEPU had also long “supported the breakup of the monolithic Northern Region, to give adequate voice to the larger minority groups,” (Feinstein, p. 207) which must have caused some conflict within the NEPU/NCNC alliance, given the NCNC policy towards the creation of states within the North—although the NCNC suggestion of dividing Nigeria into 14 or more states can hardly be said to have clarified their overall policy.
supremacy in the East and West, and to become the opposition in the North. It was a campaign marked by “vituperative rhetoric ... malicious incitement of ethnic prejudice ... violence and repression.”\textsuperscript{212} In spite of (or perhaps because of) the considerable upheaval during the campaign, the results of the election demonstrated the continued dominance of the major parties within their “home” regions, and are illustrative of the success (if limited) that the NCNC in particular had had in establishing itself as a party with “national” appeal.

In the Eastern Region, the NCNC/NEPU alliance received 64.6% of the vote (58 seats), the AG 23.1% (14 seats), and small parties/independents/the Niger Delta Congress (an NPC ally) 12.3% (1 seat). In the Western Region, the AG received 49.5% of the vote (33 seats), the NCNC/NEPU 40.2% (21 seats), and small parties/independents 8.6% (8 seats). The NPC did manage to get 1.7% of the vote, but no seats. In the North, the NPC received 61.2% of the vote (134 seats), the AG 17.2% (25 seats), the NCNC/NEPU 16.1% (8 seats), small parties/independents (including the Igbirra Tribal Union) 5.5% (7 seats—many of these became NPC allies). And in the capital region of Lagos, the NCNC/NEPU received 55.9% (2 seats), the AG 43.8% (1 seat), the NPC 0.2% (no seat), and small parties/independents 0.1% (no seat).

It would be the final totals which really determined the structure of the Federal House. The NPC only received 28.2% of the total vote, but this was enough—given the division of seats between the regions—to give the NPC 134 of the seats. The AG was close behind on total vote

\textsuperscript{212}Diamond, pp. 58-59. See also Feinstein, pp. 143-146, for an interesting discussion of the non-applicability of Gandhian non-violence to Nigerian politics. There had been countless incidents of violent clashes during all of the electoral campaigns of the 1950s, a pattern that would, unfortunately, continue after independence, a legacy perhaps of what Diamond noted: “the fanatical and tribalistic tone of the 1959 campaign (and the entire political decade) had dangerous behavioural consequences.” Given the descriptions of the violence in all of the sources, it is puzzling to read Awolowo’s assertion that Nigeria’s “road to freedom ... [had] been free from violence and bloodshed,” but—in context—it could be supposed that he was referring to Nigerian-British relations, and not intra-Nigerian, \textit{Autobiography}, p. 294.
(27.6%), but only received 73 seats. The NCNC/NEPU, with 36.1% of the total vote, ended up with 89 seats. “Others” (small parties/independents) acquired 8.1% of the total vote and 16 seats. 213

It was at this point that Nigerian politics took its perhaps most peculiar turn. The AG offered to form a coalition government with the NCNC/NEPU, the NPC also offered to form a coalition with the NCNC/NEPU, and the AG and NPC discussed a possible coalition between those parties. 214 In view of the North-South rivalry, and the previously expressed resentment in the South that the North had been accorded half of the seats in the Federal House (which, although a logical division as half of the population lived in the North, had the effect, given the division of the South into two rival regions, of giving the North de facto supremacy in the Federal legislature), an alliance between the Southern parties would have seemed a pragmatic solution. However, the almost pathological rivalry between the AG and the NCNC proved to be unsurmountable. 215 Despite the fact of the NEPU’s acrimonious opposition to the NPC, the NCNC decided to form a national partnership with the NPC, leaving the AG to form the

213Sklar, pp. 36-37. Azikiwe’s totals differ, claiming 142 seats for the NPC and Allied, 90 for the NCNC/NEPU, 73 for the AG, and 7 for independents, but I believe that Sklar’s numbers are more reliable, Selected Speeches, p. 203.

214Azikiwe, Selected Speeches, p. 204.

215Azikiwe gave a tortuous explanation of the debate within the NCNC over the possible alliance with the AG, and asserted that, although the AG had done “all that was humanly possible and honourable” to bring about the coalition, the members of the NCNC “had no faith in the leaders of this Action Group and so they opposed this coalition.” He then suggested that the AG’s activities and attitudes “of the past eight years ... and the last three months in particular” were to blame for the NCNC reluctance to form a partnership with it, Selected Speeches, pp. 204-207. Given the mutually acrimonious rhetoric (for example, Azikiwe’s reference to “Action Group Fascism,” Ibid., p. 199) that had so marked the political discourse of the previous decade, this accusation is specious at best. Sklar gave a more believable reason: the AG made “the creation of a new state in every region” a condition of the coalition; the risk of alienating the NEPU was evidently more acceptable. See Sklar, p. 508, and n. 69 on p. 508.
legislative opposition. Accordingly, Balewa resumed his position as Prime Minister, Awolowo became the Leader of the Opposition, and Azikiwe (finally acting on his long-avowed intention to retire from active politics) assumed "the honorific position of President of the Nigerian Senate." He was appointed as Governor-General, on the recommendation of Balewa, in November of 1960.

The need for any coalition between the NPC and another party could be questioned, for the NPC had a clear majority of the seats—and, although the combination of AG and NCNC/NEPU seats was far greater, there was little likelihood of this potential threat becoming a reality. While it could be argued that, in light of the fact that it would be this elected body which would petition the British Government for independence, such a formal alliance of the two largest parties in the country would most definitely add weight to the request, the obvious desire for independence that the AG had so strenuously voiced for so long would hardly suggest that the Party would oppose the request. Indeed, the motion of 14 January 1960 formalizing the demand for independence "passed unanimously." It seems more likely that the coalition was a demonstration of that shifting alliance pattern that had so marked politics in Nigeria, for despite the unity of all of the parties on the issue of independence, each was determined to accrue unto itself the greatest possible share of the prize of power, and would adapt as required to ensure success.

216 Feinstein, p. 186. Sklar believed that this outcome actually made sense because the NPC resented the AG incursion into the North far more than the internal opposition of the NEPU, p. 507.

217 Sklar, pp. 508-509.

f) Conclusion

And so it came to pass that Nigeria emerged as an independent nation on October 1, 1960. However, its Prime Minister's assertion that "Nigeria now stands well-built upon firm foundations" and his confidence that the acquisition of their "own citizenship, ... national flag, ... [and] ... national anthem [would ensure] that the flame of national unity will burn bright and strong," given the depth and strength of the internal conflicts which had developed along the path to independence, would prove to be rather too optimistic. "Mutual tolerance, trust, restraint and respect [had] all waned through the successive electoral struggles and intervening conflicts leaving a legacy that would make viable national unity an inevitable casualty of political expedience.

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219 Ibid., p. 59.
220 Ibid., p. 47.
221 Diamond, p. 63.
The inherent internal divisions within the colonial territory of Kenya would rival India for its geographical and indigenous demographical complexities. The situation was made even more complicated by the presence in the territory of a numerically small but economically and politically powerful group of European residents, and of two other immigrant communities, Arab and Indian. The attempts by indigenous activists to unify opposition to continued imperial rule would, therefore, be even more problematic than in any of the other cases.

a) Poisonous legacies: British policies and attitudes

By the time the Foreign Office handed responsibility for the East African territories which would constitute the colony of Kenya over to the Colonial Office in 1905, most of the initial violent responses to the imposition of British control had been overcome. It had been, however, a long, complicated, and bloody process which had pitted the British and their allies in a series of punitive expeditions against almost all of the ethnic groups of the territory. In many ways, this inauspicious formative stage for Kenya Colony established a poisonous legacy. The violent

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nature of African resistance, and its equally brutal repression by the British, established an ugly precedent for future incidents (as we shall see during the Mau Mau Emergency period).

The conscription of porters and auxiliaries from among the African tribes to assist, logistically and militarily, with the suppressive operations also had a lasting impact. For one thing, members of one tribe were thereby used to help repress another tribe—which, because of the duration and geographical range of the repressive process, meant that the “enemy” of the British in one expedition would be the “ally” in another, thus deepening or creating inter-tribal antagonisms. In addition, those tribal leaders unwilling or unable to provide conscripts were replaced in their leadership roles by more cooperative men, establishing a pattern of collaboration that the British would institutionalize through indirect rule administration. This, in effect, disrupted or destroyed traditional African power structures and increased the social instability that had resulted from the impact of the European incursion (and the wars). Furthermore, the practice of conscripting labour created a model of exploitation that would be used repeatedly in Kenya, and that would be the cause of deep and abiding resentment.

An even greater legacy of resentment, however, resulted from the appropriation of land

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2The situation was made even worse by a series of natural disasters that inflicted the indigenous population in the same period: droughts, locust plagues, and a variety of diseases. See Lonsdale, “The Conquest State of Kenya,” pp. 23-25; see also Tignor, pp. 15-17, Muriuki, p. 155, Ambler, pp. 1-4.

3For a detailed account of the resistance/repression and the ramifications, see Lonsdale, “Conquest State of Kenya,” pp. 13-44, and “Politics of Conquest in Western Kenya,” pp. 45-74. See also Tignor, pp. 18-22; and Marshall S. Clough, Fighting Two Sides: Kenyan Chiefs and Politicians, 1918-1940 (Niwot, CO: University of Colorado Press, 1990) pp. 8-10. As Clough pointed out, intra-tribal rivalries were also a factor in the repressive process: some of the Kikuyu, for example, even “turned to the [British] as allies to gain advantage” over other Kikuyu groups (p. 10). This tendency had been observed as early as 1893, see Tignor, p.21, and Muriuki, p. 156. Ambler remarked that “no society [in central Kenya]... had a uniform attitude towards outsiders,” p. 48. In fact, without “the divisions that were inherent in most African societies,” the conquest of Kenya would have been an even more time-consuming and costly effort. Ogot, “Kenya Under the British,” p. 259.
by the British. Following the passage of the 1901 East African (Lands) Order in Council, the British authorities surveyed and alienated substantial tracts of land (predominantly in the Central Highlands region), and opened these areas to European settlers. Some Africans, notably the Maasai (who were twice removed from their traditional lands) were shifted into “African reserves.” Others, especially the Kikuyu, became landless peasants (and a cheap and plentiful source of labour for the white farmers who began to trickle into the territory after 1903).

The incursion of European settlers was actively encouraged by the British government and by the administration in Kenya, which believed that the territory could be made into “a white man’s country.” While the settler community would include a wide range of nationalities, including a substantial settlement of Afrikaners, the majority were British citizens (emigrating from Britain or from one of the other settler dominions) and, although many of the settlers who arrived after 1918 were of moderate means, the first arrivals had predominantly been of the aristocratic class. It would be this latter group which would establish the “tone” of the British settler group, including its assumption of privilege: political and economic.

Because of this assumption, the white settlers would constitute a powerful political and

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5Tignor, pp. 22-41. The Maasai, Kamba, and Kikuyu were the tribes most impacted by the land appropriation.

6Ibid., pp. 22-28. This included a plan to settle ex-soldiers after World War I, and approximately 1,000 would take advantage of the government’s offer of “free grants of small farms” for those of low-income status, and the opportunity for the wealthier applicants “to purchase larger farms.” 2.5 million acres was set aside for this scheme, p. 23.

7Clough, p. 31.

8Elizabeth Hopkins, “Racial Minorities in British East Africa,” in The Transformation of East Africa, pp. 99-100. For example, among the immigrants were naturalized citizens of French or Central European extraction.
economic lobby group during the colonial years, far in excess of the relatively small size of the community. While the settlers constituted less than a third of the European population, they owned over five million acres of prime agricultural land and dominated the export market of the colony. Not surprisingly, they believed they should dominate the political life of the colony as well, an attitude that was predominantly shared by the British government and the Kenyan administration. Accordingly, "in response to settlers' demands," the Kenya Legislative Council (Legco) was established in 1907, consisting of a majority of officials from the administration and a minority of settlers nominated by the administration to represent settlers' interests. By 1911, "prominent settlers" had "formed the Convention of Associations in order to concentrate the power of ... [the] settler groups." Thus, even before the territory officially became a colony (in 1920), the settler community had laid claim to the political development of Kenya, in anticipation of eventual dominion status in the model of the white-dominated Union of South Africa.

However, the whites were not the only ones looking to the future. The Asian community, which was more than twice the size of the total European community, also

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9 Even though they only cultivated approximately ½ million of these acres (a loss of potential usage that infuriated—understandably—the African population which had been denied access to agricultural land), Tignor, p. 25.

10 The convention soon developed a position comparable to that of a lower house of a legislature: It was customarily opened by the governor; it debated the bills to be brought before the Legislative Council; it claimed the right to call officials to its sessions to question them on government policy. By 1918, the convention was powerful enough to have a say in the choice of a new governor ... Outside the convention, the district associations retained local power of their own and provided bases for [settler] politicians ... These bases were used to obtain appointment of influential settlers to district councils, road boards, and farming and marketing boards." Clough, p. 32.

11 In the 1921 census, there were 9,651 Europeans (of which 1,893 "were in some way connected to the land"), 22,822 Asians, 10,102 Arabs, and an estimated 2.3 million Africans (this is considered "an underestimate"), Keith Kyle, *The Politics of the Independence of Kenya* (London: Macmillan Press; New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999) p.5.
dreamed of eventual political domination—some even suggested that Kenya should be annexed by the Indian Empire, as a province of the Raj.\textsuperscript{12} Taking their example from political developments in India, they formed the Indian Association of Mombasa in 1900, and in 1914, a number of Indian organizations were absorbed into the East Africa Indian National Congress (EAINC), to represent their interests and to voice their grievances.\textsuperscript{13} Chief among these grievances was the lack of representation on the Legislative Council. An Indian had been appointed in 1909, following “a series of petitions,” but when his term expired in 1911, “the Indian seat was deliberately left vacant on the lame excuse that no prominent Indian with sufficient educational qualifications could be found.” When Europeans “were granted elective representation on the ... Council” in 1919, the Indian community was allowed to have two nominated members, a solution the Asian community did not find satisfactory.\textsuperscript{14} Indeed, this arrangement simply “aggravated the simmering Indian discontent,”\textsuperscript{15} a discontent that had been building for some time over a number of issues. In fact, at the first meeting of the EAINC, a “resolution calling attention to a number of grievances” had been forwarded to the British government. These included demands for

‘Full and complete equality of treatment in the eyes of the law’ for Indians, representation on the Legco, an end to the prohibition of Indians acquiring land in the highlands, and the abolition of segregation of Indian businesses and residences, allegedly

\textsuperscript{12}Ogot, “Kenya Under the British,” pp. 262-263. Indeed, the Aga Khan “suggested that East Africa be set aside for Indian colonisation.”

\textsuperscript{13}Clough, p. 34. See also Robert M. Maxon, \textit{Struggle for Kenya: The Loss and Reassertion of Imperial Initiative, 1912-1923} (London: Associated Universities Press, 1993) pp. 52-53.


\textsuperscript{15}Ibid., p. 35.
for health and sanitary reasons, in townships.\textsuperscript{16}

While the Governor “was totally unsympathetic” to these demands, suggesting “that there could be no equality between whites and Indians in any sphere,” the Colonial Office was “more liberally inclined and less willing to back the racist positions voiced by most settlers than was the colonial state in 1914.” While this dichotomy of attitudes had no immediate impact on the situation for Indians in Kenya, the fact that the EAINC had also forwarded a copy of their demands to the Secretary of State for India, thereby bringing these issues—and the treatment of Indians in Kenya—to the attention of the Government of India, which would from this point on take the position of advocate,\textsuperscript{17} served to raise the profile of Indian issues in the colony. The reception to their demands—illustrated by the Governor’s suggestion—also served to encourage the Indian community to seek alliances with the African groups which were being established to represent African political interests.

b) The initial stage of indigenous organization

The first of these African groups was the Kikuyu Association (KA), established by Chief Kinyanjui\textsuperscript{18} in 1919. Initially an alliance between the chiefs and the mission-educated Christians, the KA was created to represent Kikuyu interests, predominantly to organize petitions of

\textsuperscript{16}Maxon, pp. 52-53.

\textsuperscript{17}Ibid., p. 53. In fact, this would become known as “the Indian Question,” the cause of considerable discussions between the Government of India, the India Office, the Colonial Office, and the colonial government of Kenya.

\textsuperscript{18}He was the government-appointed paramount chief of the Kikuyu. Although “not popular among his people ... [his] power and influence were undoubted and unassailable ... even administrators had to approach him with the proper deference,” Clough, p. 18.
grievances and demands to the government, and especially to request "the return of ... alienated land."\(^{19}\) The KA soon expanded, acquiring "a significant urban constituency"\(^{20}\) among the African workers in Nairobi, who had their own specific grievances about wages and living conditions, but—because they maintained close ties with their families in the rural areas—they also approved of the KA position on rural matters: against the forced labour of girls and women on European plantations, against the abuse of administrative power by Chiefs' Assistants and against the restriction on Africans' use of the forest.\(^{21}\)

By 1921, however, a split had developed within the KA, and the urban members, led by Harry Thuku, formed their own organization: the Young Kikuyu Association (which was soon after renamed the East African Association—EAA).\(^{22}\)

Although himself a Kikuyu, Thuku established the EAA as a trans-tribal, indeed, a trans-East African, association to represent all of the African urban workers.\(^{23}\) He also quickly formed an alliance with the Asian community, realizing that the two "non-white" groups could work together in order to promote the interests of both.\(^{24}\) In fact, at the first meeting of the


\(^{20}\)Ibid., p. 29.

\(^{21}\)Ibid., p. 34. The African urban population was mixed, men having emigrated there from throughout East Africa; Kikuyu formed the majority of the Kenyan community, which also included Luo, Luyia, and Kamba groups. They were predominantly unmarried males, who had moved to Nairobi in search of economic opportunities, Ibid., pp. 29-31.


\(^{23}\)Within months of its creation, "the EAA had ... many members from different tribes" in accordance with Thuku's desire "to show people that we were all one family and that there was no difference between all the tribes of Kenya." On a visit "deep in Kikuyu country" Thuku "deliberately took along" individuals from the Nandi and Kavirondo tribes, and a Kamaba Muslim "in order to show the Kikuyu that there were many other people in Kenya," Ibid., p. 29.

\(^{24}\)Thuku had worked on the Leader, a Nairobi newspaper, with many Asians and knew M.A. Desai, the secretary of the Nairobi Indian Association. Thus, he had become aware of the grievances of the Asian community, and the organizations that had been created to voice them, Ibid., pp. 39-40. His association with
EAA, one of the resolutions called for the Asian delegates about to travel to London (to discuss the “Indian Question” with the Colonial Office)\textsuperscript{25} to also present to the British Government a list of grievances on behalf of Kenyan Africans. This was an important coup for the Asians: at the time, there was a heated dispute between the Asians and the settlers as to which group could be designated as the “watchdog” for African interests in the administration.\textsuperscript{26} This public declaration by an African organization in favour of the Asians, while appreciated by the Asians, however, was greeted with dismay by the KA.\textsuperscript{27} Chief Kinyanjui “formally disassociated himself from” the EAA’s statement, which officially signalled the split between the EAA and the KA.\textsuperscript{28}

Yet, while the EAA was to be short-lived (it effectively collapsed in 1922, when Thuku was deported), it had a profound impact, laying

the foundations upon which future generations of African politicians were to build: contact not only with the Indians, but with other African groups; the first political journalism; the first modern political use of a tribal oath; the spread of urban political ideas into the rural areas; the concomitant beginnings of District and District-Nairobi political links and organizations; and, most of all, the first African political challenge to the Government.\textsuperscript{29}

\textsuperscript{25}This was just the latest in a long series of delegations to London by the Indian community over the issues which had formed “the Indian Question” since 1909. The Colonial Office was under considerable pressure to resolve these issues—in particular the question of equality for Indians—from the India Office, the Secretary of State for India, the Government of India (which was, in turn, being pressured by Gandhi and the INC), and the EAINC. The resistance of the colonial administration of Kenya, and especially the white settlers, did not make resolution of the problem an easy matter. See Maxon, pp. 160-174, 213-230, 248-253, 254-260, 270-279.

\textsuperscript{26}Evidently, it was not believed appropriate for Africans to represent their own interests.

\textsuperscript{27}Possibly because the notification of this declaration had been sent by Thuku to the Secretary of State for the Colonies in the name of the KA—without the KA’s authority, Spencer, p. 41.

\textsuperscript{28}Spencer, p. 41.

\textsuperscript{29}Ibid., p. 42.
The EAA established its own newspaper, the *Tangazo*, published in both Luganda and Swahili; it opened contacts with other groups, including the Young Kavirondo Association (in Nyanza province) and the Young Baganda Association (in Uganda); and corresponded with Afro-American leaders (including Garvey and DuBois).

Within months, the EAA had garnered considerable attention and support, with Thuku travelling throughout the country to speak at public meetings. Tapping into the resentment of the African masses against the actions of the administration, and of the chiefs appointed by the administration, Thuku acquired a messianic image as the “true” representative of the masses. Unfortunately, the acclamation seemed to go to his head: at a meeting with the Kiambu chiefs, Thuku told them

“You Headmen are as nothing. There is an Indian named Gandhi; he was rejected at first, now everyone follows him and no one can stay him. I shall be as he is.”

That was one thing, however, that the chiefs were determined should not be. They protested about Thuku’s activities to the government, which was already concerned, and Thuku was

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30Ibid., pp. 42-43. For accounts of the EAA, see also Clough, pp. 55-64; Maxon, pp. 209-213; and Tignor, pp. 230-235. Thuku himself made contact with C.F. Andrews, who “had come to Kenya to investigate the condition of Indians” on behalf of Gandhi. They were introduced by Desai. Andrews agreed to take a message to the Colonial Office from Thuku; it was “Ask the King of England to stop the European settlers using the *jaboko* (rhino whip) on their Africans,” Thuku, p. 29.

31Ten thousand Africans attended a meeting at Thika (Spencer, p. 46), and Thuku’s public meetings would usually be attended by up to 5,000 (Clough, p. 58). In a letter to Desai in 1922, Thuku reported that over 25,000 had attended a meeting at Wethaga, over 20,000 at Kigwaya, and over 13,000 at Wangindu, Thuku, p. 91.

32Including the hut tax, forced labour, low wages, and the hated *kipande* (a mandatory registration certificate that all male Africans over the age of 16 had to carry at all times; it carried the individual’s name, location, and fingerprints and was used to ensure that workers could not “desert” their employers), Tignor, p. 159-160.

33Clough, p. 58.

34Quoted in Clough, p. 60.
arrested on 14 March 1922. When his followers attacked the police lines in Nairobi (and more than twenty people were killed), the government decided that Thuku should be deported to the town of Kismayu, near the Somalia border and far away from Nairobi. To ensure that this chapter would be completely closed, the EAA was banned and its other leaders also arrested or deported.

However, remnants of the organization remained active for a time, and, supported by Indians such as Desai, repeatedly petitioned the government for Thuku’s release, although to no avail. Impotent and effectively leader-less, the EAA had become moribund by late 1923; but other groups now surfaced, frequently led by former EAA members. One such was the Kiambu Kikuyu Association (KKA), formed shortly after Thuku’s arrest. It would be the first of many organizations established over the following decades, most of which would be localized and ethnically-based (instead of in the multi-ethnic “national” model of the EAA). Indeed, it could be said that this new model of organization represented an important stage of the learning-curve for African activists. The experience of the EAA had illustrated several factors in Kenyan colonial politics, most especially that the animosity of the chiefs and missionaries could have an

35 Thuku “knew that chiefs and missionaries had been collecting affidavits against “him, and that he had “made [himself] very unpopular with the administration, ... [so he] was not really surprised” to be arrested, Thuku, pp. 32-33.

36 The Colonial Office, although disturbed by the killing of the protesters, also believed that Thuku had become too dangerous to remain free., Maxon, p. 212. See also Clough, pp. 59-60; Spencer, pp. 47-48, 56; and Tignor, pp. 234-235. This was not to be the end of Thuku, however; he stayed busy in exile, teaching at a school he started for Indians and Somalis, and staying in touch as best as he could with events in Kenyan politics. He returned to Kenya in 1930, as we shall see, Thuku, pp.37-47.

37 The KKA was primarily concerned with land issues—which tended to be the priority for Kikuyu groups, as it was they who had suffered most from the alienation of native land (although the KKA also protested against “the labour registration system and the kipande,” as the EAA had). It was established by several former EAA members after the collapse of that organization “because [as one put it] we felt it unsafe to be without a party,” Spencer, pp. 56-57.
extremely detrimental impact, but also that the more militant the activities, the more determined
the government would be to suppress the organization it held responsible. Furthermore, many
believed that Thuku’s arrest and the ban on the EAA had demonstrated “the hostility of the
government toward panethnic organizations.” Moreover, those who had been involved in the
EAA had come to doubt the feasibility of one organization encompassing the interests of all
Africans, and to be concerned about the inherent conflicting loyalties in a multi-ethnic party.
However, Africans had also learned that they had the capacity and ability to function as political
activists in order to protest injustices and promote their interests, and that the difficulties of
doing so within the context of colonial Kenya should not deter them—the stakes were too high.

The lessons were duly put into practice with the formation of the Kikuyu Central
Association (KCA) in Nairobi in 1924.

The new association ... abandoned the interethnic orientation of the [EAA], focusing
[sic] more narrowly on Kikuyu interests. Moreover, it gave up the EAA’s confrontational
tactics, the mass meetings of protest and the oratorical denunciations of authority. ... [However, it] continued to consult some of the same Indian advisers who had helped
Harry Thuku, ... and used Indian-owned houses for meetings.

It also continued to attempt to represent all Kikuyu, not just those resident in Nairobi, in order
to establish itself as a truly Kikuyu organization. While the KCA did not forget Thuku,
repeatedly requesting his release, it seemed to be committed to a policy of “gradual change
within the colonial system,” thereby appearing less threatening than the EAA—and thus able to
garner support from those non-Africans who had “disapproved of Thuku but sympathized with

38 The British were frequently accused of using “divide and rule” tactics to prevent indigenous peoples
from unifying against imperial domination, so it is to be expected that the assumption of government hostility
toward the EAA on these grounds would seem reasonable.

39 Some even doubted that they could fully trust other Kikuyu,” Clough, p. 114.
Indeed, even though the KCA claimed that Thuku was its leader, the organization itself was accepted by the government as a legitimate voice for Kikuyu grievances. It would soon have a forum in which to raise those issues.

Realizing that the EAA represented a real demonstration of African discontent, the colonial administration decided that some arena had to be devised to contain this discontent by drawing the activists into a formal structure, rather than leave them with no option but public meetings. Accordingly, in 1924-5, Local Native Councils (LNC) were established “that would exercise limited legislative and executive functions, thereby providing Africans with tutelary experience in the ‘responsible’ conduct of their own affairs.” The KCA firmly established itself as a player in this new game, with ten of its members being elected to the fourteen-seat LNC in its base at Fort Hall in 1928. It also continued to petition, repeatedly and strongly, for the same issues:

the right to meet without official interference, economic and educational opportunity, Kikuyu unity, and, the central issue in Kikuyu politics, land ... announcing ... that ‘our association is formed inter alia for the purpose of protecting and safeguarding by constitutional means the interests of the Kikuyu community and their rights and liberties as citizens of the British Empire’.

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Such as influential missionaries, Maxon, pp. 114-115. Spencer claimed that it had actually been a missionary “who was largely responsible for the creation of the KCA” (p. 58), but Maxon’s account relegated this man (H.D. Hooper) to the position of providing “advice and assistance,” (p. 115). In either case, the members of the KKA were so convinced that the KCA was a more “acceptable” organization that they disbanded the KKA and joined the KCA, Spencer, pp. 57-58.

Spencer, p. 61. Again, Maxon seems to have a different interpretation, claiming that the KCA “clearly represented a break with the EAA,” although he also stated that, to many of those actually involved, this was simply a change of name. I believe Maxon is referring to the change in tactics rather than a substantive shift on the part of the activists, p. 114. Especially given that the KCA repeatedly referred to itself, in petitions to the government, as “formerly the East African Association,” Spencer, p.64, and Maxon, p. 114.

Berman, Control and Crisis in Colonial Kenya, p. 216. This began “in the more ‘advanced’(i.e., politically sensitive) districts, and then gradually extended through the other African areas, with 22 functioning by 1938.”
Their perseverance (and occasional success) brought them considerable popularity, though not with the chiefs. They were viewed with suspicion and hostility by the chiefs. The KCA's activities, especially in the rural areas, were necessarily clandestine. Public meetings required the permission of the local chief, which was usually denied. Agents of the chiefs kept known members under surveillance and tried to prevent their meeting together. There was also the risk that a chief would have a member arrested on trumped-up charges. While some of the hostility could be credited to the inherent conservative nature of the chiefs—and the concomitant distrust of any attempt to change the status quo—most seemed to be based on the realization that the KCA represented a challenge, to both their collective authority and the authority of each chief in his own location. (Of course, the KCA belief that the chiefs were obstacles to change, rather than potential allies against the colonial administration, did not encourage a sense of cooperation between the two groups.)

In spite of the difficulties, however, the KCA continued to grow, with new members taking an oath of loyalty at secret gatherings, and promising to attend meetings and "make contributions on demand." Although this process might appear a little sinister, in the light of its similarity to the darker aspects of the Mau Mau era (which shall be discussed in due course), it was simply in keeping with Kikuyu tradition, and with the necessity for eluding the notice of

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43 Spencer, pp. 64-65. Ironically, even though "most chiefs in Kiambu hated and feared the KCA" the organization "was in a strong enough position to operate openly, encouraged by some European officials and at least tolerated by the chiefs" in other areas, such as Murang'a. These were two of the districts in the Kikuyu Central Highlands region, Maxon, p. 119.

44 Oaths were used, in this case, "to enforce unity," but the taking of oaths was part of Kikuyu culture, "used in court cases to validate testimony and in time of war to bind fighting men together," so there was nothing remarkable about the KCA oaths. Maxon, p. 123. See also Jomo Kenyatta, Facing Mount Kenya: The Tribal Life of the Gikuyu (London: Martin Secker & Warburg, 1953) pp. 21, 223-225, 301. Kenyatta asserted that the term "Kikuyu" is incorrect; it should be Gikuyu, or in strict phonetic spelling Gekoyo. This form refers only to
the chiefs. And, in spite of the difficulties of recruitment, funding, and establishing an organization, by the late 1920s, the KCA had laid a firm foundation for political activism.\footnote{Maxon, pp. 119-126. Indeed, because the KCA (in its clandestine stage) would only recruit men, politically active women formed their own group—the Mumbi Central Association—with its "own oath and organized around the same issues that concerned the KCA. The women were not forming a rival political group; instead they were forcibly expressing their desire to be included in the political struggle," p.123. This was a clear demonstration of the growth of political awareness and activism in the Kikuyu heartland in this period, and of the appeal of the KCA as an organization.}

Taking the process to its next logical step, the leaders decided in 1927 to move the headquarters of the KCA to Nairobi, in order "to be near the central government ... [so that] their claim to speak for all the Kikuyu [could be made more] credible." The move—away from the rural areas controlled by the chiefs—also enabled the KCA to come out into the open, and marked the real beginning of the organization of the group. Accordingly, they opened an office in Nairobi and sought the services of a full-time secretary. Their first choice for the position, James Beauttah, was unavailable, but he recommended a Kiambu Kikuyu resident in Nairobi: Johnstone Kenyatta. While the leadership was not initially enthusiastic about Kenyatta, who had a reputation as ""a braggart, a drinker, and a great womanizer,"" they needed someone fluent in English, and Kenyatta was simply "the next best choice." He was also "energetic and enthusiastic" and willing to give up "a secure job in the Nairobi municipal water department" in exchange for "the freedom of the job, the attention it would focus on him, and, above all, the chance that it might take him to England." So began the political career of "modern Kenya's founding father."\footnote{Spencer, pp. 65-67. It is also speculated that Kenyatta demanded the same salary as he was receiving at the municipal job, as well as the use of a motor-cycle "to enable him to get around Kikuyuland properly," Jeremy Murray-Brown, Kenyatta (New York: E.P. Dutton & Co., 1973) pp. 121-122.}

the country itself. A Gikuyu person is Mu-Gikuyu, plural, A-Gikuyu,” Facing Mount Kenya, n. 1, p. xv. As most of my sources use "Kikuyu," however, I have employed that spelling in order to avoid unnecessary confusion.
(i) Inauspicious beginnings: The emergence of Kenyatta

Kenyatta's first recorded name was Kamau wa Ngengi, registered when he became a student at the Church of Scotland Mission at Kikuyu in 1909. Little, however, is known about his years prior to that, including the date of his birth. He was born "some time between 1890 and 1895" in the Kiambu district of the Central Highlands. His parents, who both died while Kenyatta was still a child, had a small farm—which, as the eldest son, he would inherit. In the meantime, he went to live with his grandfather, a medicine-man and seer. It was here that Kenyatta had his first encounter with Europeans—through the visit of a missionary—and it was this that decided him to seek the education that the missionaries offered.

His academic career was not very successful: by the time he was ready to leave, in 1914, he had some knowledge of English, but his literary skills were considered low. However, it was here at the mission school that the dichotomy that would shape Kenyatta's future was first demonstrated. He not only underwent the traditional initiation ceremony required by the Kikuyu (in order to signify full membership in the tribe), but also became baptized as a Christian (Church

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47 In Kenyatta's case, names became an important indicator of his political evolution; as we shall see, the name tended to change whenever he reached a new stage, signifying a shift in his sense of identity, and in the way he wished to be identified by others.

48 Guy Arnold, *Kenyatta and the Politics of Kenya* (London: J.M. Dent & Sons, 1974) p. 15. "Wa Ngengi" means "son of Ngengi," but Ngengi was actually his step-father, the brother of his deceased father, Muigai, who had died when Kenyatta was small child, Murray-Brown, p. 42.

49 Arnold, p.15. Even Kenyatta himself could not be more accurate, for the Kikuyu did not keep such records at this time.

50 He was, apparently, intrigued by the missionary's ability to write messages, Murray-Brown, pp. 38-45. Up to this point, he had "received the usual education of Gikuyu boys," much of which he would relate in his book on the "Tribal Life of the Gikuyu," *Facing Mount Kenya*, p. xviii.
of Scotland version), and acquired yet another name: Johnstone Kamau. Thus, with a foot in both worlds, so to speak, Kenyatta spent the next few years moving from job to job and place to place, always honing in on Nairobi whenever possible because that was where the real opportunities lay. By 1919, his skills had improved sufficiently for him to gain employment “as an interpreter in the Supreme Court in Nairobi,” leaving there in 1922 to become an inspector in the municipal Water Department.

Civil servants, however, were not supposed to get involved in political activity, so the degree of Kenyatta’s association with the African organizations of Nairobi in the early 1920s is difficult to determine. At his trial in 1953, Kenyatta stated only that he had “sympathised” with the EAA, and that he “became a member of the [KCA] in 1928,” when asked by his “people ... to represent them.” However, it seems that he might have become a member of the EAA in 1922, and of the KCA in 1924, although not working “openly for [the KCA] and ... a full-time official of the Association” until early 1928, when he became General Secretary. It was at this

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51Ibid., pp. 60-64. He chose the “Johnstone” himself, as a combination of John and Peter, two of the original disciples. “Peter” became “stone” because “the missionaries would only allow one name—Kenyatta used a Biblical precedent here. “It was a small gesture of defiance at the mission rules,” which did tend to be rather harsh.

52Arnold, pp. 16-18. In spite of his poor record at the mission school, Kenyatta apparently had a “facility with language” and the greater exposure to English, available to him in Nairobi, quickly improved his skills. See Murray-Brown, pp. 84-89, for a more detailed account of the years between 1914 and 1919. At one point, Kenyatta sought refuge with the Maasai, to avoid being press-ganged into work as an army porter. His younger brother, Kongo, was not as lucky: he disappeared, possibly dying as “an unnamed Kikuyu among thousands who met their end in the Carrier Corp,” p. 87. Kenyatta himself managed to find clerical employment in a variety of places during this period. The job at the Water Department was the first financial security Kenyatta had had, it paid “an unusually high wage for an African ... [and] gave him financial independence. He could build his own home, send his [remaining] brother to the mission, buy better clothes, invest in a bicycle. Above all it gave him a new self-confidence ... ,”p. 110.


54Arnold, p. 21.
time that he began to refer to himself as “Johnstone Kenyatta.”

He also became the editor of the KCA’s monthly newspaper, the *Muigwihiania* (the “Reconciler”), the first African paper to appear in Kenya, published in Kikuyu. Its motto was “Pray and Work,” but its “battle-cry,” and the focus of its editorial policy, was “Give us back our land.” It aimed at “uniting the masses and teaching them how to help themselves,” as evidenced in the very practical articles about agricultural practices that Kenyatta included, as well as his exhortations to seek higher education. For the KCA, the paper was intended “to unite progressive elements among all Africans; and to act in a tribal ‘nationalist’ sense among the Kikuyu.”

While Kenyatta’s contributions to the paper were circumspect (“he supported the churches, district commissioners and chiefs; he urged on his fellow Africans the importance of agricultural and educational self-advancement; and he praised the role of the British Empire”), some of the “articles ... were more enigmatic, and its anti-government songs soon caused concern to the ... administration.” The concern would soon escalate, as the KCA and its paper became the voice for Kikuyu anger over the issue of female circumcision.

The problem had been brewing for some time, as part of the greater conflict between the teachings of the Christian missionaries and Kikuyu tradition. To Christians (including some

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55Murray-Brown, p. 123.

56At least, for the first 9 issues, Arnold, p. 22.

57Ibid.; see also Murray-Brown, pp. 123, 125-126. Kenyatta claimed to have “started [the] paper,” *Suffering Without Bitterness*, p. 25. However, Murray-Brown thought it “unlikely that Kenyatta himself took much hand in it. His role as editor was probably to advise on suitable material and to translate ... articles. The Association also wanted to promote its front man; the editor of a vernacular periodical had an added claim to speak for the tribe as a whole,” p. 126.

58Murray-Brown, p. 125.

59Arnold, p. 22.
Kikuyu), the practice of female circumcision was a barbarous, dangerous, and completely unnecessary mutilation of young women. To the Kikuyu, it was "regarded as the very essence of an institution which [had] enormous educational, social, moral, and religious implications." The government, while abhorring the practice, "decided that as the custom 'was of very ancient origin' it 'should not be interfered with,'" taking the stance that the Kikuyu should be weaned from the tradition through education. The missionaries, however, came to believe that direct action had to be taken, and declared that no one who approved of or engaged in the practice would be accepted by the Church—and this included teachers and students in the mission schools, the only education available to Africans. This precipitated the female circumcision crisis of 1928-1931.

While the crisis was predominantly limited to the Kiambu region, its impact on the Kikuyu as a whole was profound. Because of its adamant attack on what was portrayed as an attempt to destroy Kikuyu culture, "the membership and influence of the [KCA] soared," as

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60 Although termed "circumcision," the operation was rather more than that: it involved "the removal of the clitoris, labia minora and half the labia majora," done with "a piece of sharpened iron" and without anaesthetics, Murray-Brown, p. 155.

61 Ibid., pp. 157-159.

62 Kenyatta, Facing Mount Kenya, p. 133. Although, as with most traditional practices, the origins, meaning, and even the specifics of female circumcision had become blurred over time. "Some sections of the tribe [for instance] practised a less drastic form than others," Murray-Brown, p. 156.

63 Murray-Brown, p. 159. The government did undertake some measures to try to mitigate the most objectionable (on humanitarian and medical grounds) aspects of the practice, forcing the LNCs to pass regulations licencing circumcisers, for example, but "the restrictions were not only ineffective but were in fact ignored or defied everywhere," Clough, pp. 138-142.

64 Arnold, p. 23; Kenyatta, Facing Mount Kenya, pp. 130-133; and Murray-Brown, pp. 159-162.

65 Clough, pp. 142-147; see also Kyle, pp. 30-34.
did the reputation of its General Secretary, Kenyatta.\textsuperscript{66}

The highly emotional topic of circumcision radicalized the Kikuyu youth and provided the KCA, for the first time, with mass support. It polarized opinion within the tribe, the chiefs having to bear the odium of association with the government (which was itself bearing the odium of association with the missionaries).\textsuperscript{67}

African attendance in both mission congregations and schools declined substantially, and enrollment in the independent schools, established by the Kikuyu Independent Schools Association (KISA) and the Kikuyu Karing’a Educational Association, rose dramatically. Although these were not considered to provide as high a quality of education as the mission schools, they would “prove in time to be prime generators of nationalism outside European influences.”\textsuperscript{68}

Kenyatta, meanwhile, was in Britain during the height of the crisis, partly to seek permission from the Colonial Office for the Kikuyu to set up their own schools. He had been sent off in February of 1929 with a list of demands from the KCA.\textsuperscript{69} While the Colonial Office was less than welcoming, Kenyatta made many “unofficial” contacts with sympathizers in London, including some in the League Against Imperialism, who sent him to meetings in Germany and the Soviet Union. He wrote several articles for the \textit{Sunday Worker} and the \textit{Daily Worker}, in which he stated that

\textsuperscript{66}For reasons that are not clear, Kenyatta became the hero of the moment, even though he was not in the country at the time. Popular songs declared that he was “greater than the Governor of Kenya.” See Kyle, pp. 32-33, and Murray-Brown, pp. 160-161,

\textsuperscript{67}Kyle, p. 32.

\textsuperscript{68}Ibid. See also Clough, pp. 147-150. While the independent school movement had started shortly prior to 1929, the crisis prompted their proliferation: there were 34 by 1935. Although not ostensibly politically aligned, the KISA and KCA “worked in close cooperation on several occasions; men who were members of both organizations often saw their aims as identical,” p. 149.

\textsuperscript{69}He was accompanied by an Indian lawyer, Isher Dass, Arnold, p.24.
Discontent has always been rife among the natives and will be so until they govern themselves ... [Governor] Sir Edward Grigg talks of “agitation”; there is agitation, an agitation that meets a hearty response from robbed and maltreated Africans, and will not cease until we are our own rulers again.70

He also sent a letter to the Manchester Guardian (18 May 1930), explaining the KCA position:

The Kikuyu Central Association, of which I am the general secretary, is not a subversive organisation. Its object is to help the Kikuyu to improve himself as a better Mu-Kikuyu, not to “ape” the foreigner. Our aims and objects may be summarised briefly under the following five headings:
1. LAND.-To obtain a legal right, recognised by the local government, to the tenure of lands held by our tribe before the advent of the foreigner, and to prevent further encroachment by non-natives on the native reserves.
2. EDUCATION.-To obtain educational facilities of a practical nature to be financed from a portion of the taxes paid by us to the Government.
3. WOMEN’S HUT TAX.-To obtain the abolition of the ‘hut tax’ on women, which leads to their being forced into work outside the native reserves or into prostitution for the purpose of obtaining money to pay this tax.
4. REPRESENTATION IN THE LEGISLATURE.-To obtain the representation of native interest on the Legislative Council by native representatives elected by the natives themselves.
5. TRIBAL CUSTOMS.-To be permitted to retain our many good tribal customs, and by means of education to elevate the minds of our people to the willing rejection of the bad customs.

Evolving from these five points we hope to remove all lack of understanding between the various people who form the population of East Africa, so that we may all march together as loyal subjects of his Britannic Majesty along the road of Empire prosperity. I would like to ask if any fair minded Briton considers the policy of the [KCA] outlined above to savour in any way of sedition? The repression of native views, on subjects of such vital interest to my people, by means of legislative measures, can only be described as a short-sighted tightening up of the safety valve of free speech, which must inevitably result in a dangerous explosion—the one thing all sane men wish to avoid.71

It was a prophetic statement, but it also illustrated Kenyatta’s tendency, in spite of his harsh words in the other articles, towards conciliation and a constitutionalist approach.

70Sunday Worker, 27 October 1929, as quoted in Murray-Brown, p. 139.

71Quoted in Murray-Brown, pp. 147-148; see also Arnold, p. 26. Murray-Brown suspected that the article had actually been written by one of Kenyatta’s British allies, but it appeared under his name, and certainly expressed Kenyatta’s (and the KCA’s) views.
This tendency was evidenced in his response to the female circumcision crisis. While in London, he had been asked to speak to a number of groups about the issue, and had discussions with the Under-Secretary of State, during which he agreed “that it would be helpful if the government were to send medical teams into the reserves to explain why the operation was a danger to health” and “helped ... in the drafting of a letter written in Kikuyu to the KCA which ... asked the KCA leaders not to mix up circumcision with land and taxation matters.” It appears that he himself was “ambivalent” about the issue, so a moderate stance on circumcision itself was to be expected; however, “he strongly resented mission interference with Kikuyu custom,” which kept him aligned (more or less) with the official KCA position. When he returned to Kenya in 1930, he tried to moderate between the two sides, “to achieve a compromise that would end the conflict,” but neither the government nor the missionaries would cooperate. The crisis was finally suppressed in 1931: the government banned public meetings, arrested the president of the KCA, and encouraged the chiefs “to wipe out the KCA in Kiambu if necessary.” By this time, however, Kenyatta was back in England.

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72 Murray-Brown, pp. 162-163.

73 Clough, pp. 146-147; see also Murray-Brown, pp. 163-165, who claimed that “Kenyatta adopted the position that the KCA was not against the church ... It was the church ... not the KCA which had provoked the row and he, like the KCA, felt that it was wrong for the church to press for the abolition of the custom by legislative action. Its abolition could only be achieved through education ... But [he] stoutly denied ... that the [KCA], as a matter of policy, was in favour of female circumcision ... [and] claimed that he had written to the KCA telling them ‘they had no right to take action of any kind in the matter of circumcision’ as ‘it was not the business of a political body’.” This referred to the letter mentioned above, “but he had not signed it himself.” Given the strong stand the KCA had taken on the issue, either Kenyatta was completely out of touch with events in Kenya or he was trying to moderate the tone of the KCA from afar.

74 Clough, p. 147, see also Murray-Brown, p. 169.
(ii) Metamorphisis: The transformation of Johnstone into Jomo

Kenyatta was sent back to London by the KCA in 1931 to present its position to the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Closer Union in East Africa, and he would stay there until late 1946. While remaining the KCA representative in London throughout this period, Kenyatta lived a full, if poverty-stricken life. He lectured, wrote articles, attended college, met a wide range of people, and was involved in a number of organizations. He even managed the occasional trip to Europe, spending three months in Russia in 1932-33 and some time in Denmark in 1936. It was an eclectic life, to say the least, and demonstrated Kenyatta’s

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The KCA opposed “union since it feared that any such move would be a step nearer to establishing a South African type of government in East Africa,” Arnold, p. 26.

Although, it must be said, he did not seem to take his duties too seriously. In 1933, Thuku (now president of the KCA) reported that he “had heard nothing from Kenyatta” for some time, nor did he know “where Kenyatta stood in relation to the split in the ranks of the KCA” (more on that later). Indeed, at this point it seemed that “Kenyatta was playing a lone hand. He appeared to have cut himself off from tribal politics,” and did not even inform the KCA of his trips to the continent (which Thuku disapproved of, once he found out about them), Murray-Brown, pp. 200-201. This could have been simply another demonstration of Kenyatta’s tendency to keep “his life in compartments which were well sealed off from each other,” a facility which he seemed to employ throughout his time in Britain, Ibid., P. 218.

He was always desperate for funds; in 1934, he earned some money as an extra on the film Sanders of the River, an imperialist saga by Alexander Korda. He became friends with Paul Robeson, the famous Afro-American singer and activist—whose role in the film was to represent “the best qualities of tribal Africa in popular imagination,” Ibid., pp. 214-217. He also gave lessons in Kikuyu to missionaries, and provided material and translations for the Phonetics Department at University College, Ibid., p. 209. Despite considerable donations by English friends and supporters, his rather cavalier attitude towards their repeated generosity disappointed and alienated many of them, Ibid., pp. 210-211.

See Murray-Brown, pp. 177-256, for a full account of the sixteen years Kenyatta spent in England.

Ibid., pp. 194–199. It was during his time in Moscow on this trip that he became known as George Padmore’s “protégé.” Padmore lectured at the “training school for African revolutionaries” in Moscow that Kenyatta attended for a time. However, Kenyatta seemed to be “unimpressed by Soviet propaganda ... the one thing he took to heart ... was the importance of not being trapped into commitments which would restrict his own freedom of action.” This could explain why “no evidence was ever forthcoming that he received any material assistance from” the Russians.

At the invitation of Prince Peter of Greece; they had met at University College, London, Ibid., pp. 217-218.
adaptability and his willingness to take advantage of any opportunity that presented itself to further both his cause and his personal development.

He managed to combine both of these pursuits in his time at the London School of Economics, where he studied anthropology with Professor Bronislaw Malinowski. The series of seminar papers that Kenyatta presented during the course were published in 1938 as *Facing Mount Kenya: The Tribal Life of the Gikuyu* (which included a lengthy introduction by Malinowski).

Kenyatta’s thesis was that in its economic, social, religious and political aspects, Kikuyu tribal custom had a cohesion and integrity better than anything that the colonial system could offer. Chapters on land, education, religion and ancestor worship, political institutions—each in turn challenged the assumptions of the West.

Indeed, Kenyatta took pains throughout the book to make his point that, though the West might have “some progressive ideas” to impart to Africans, in practice, Europeans not only had “not been conspicuously zealous in imparting these … to the Africans,” they had “robbed [the African] of the material foundations of his [own] culture.” He berated the British Government for not living up to its own avowed intention “to work continuously for the training and education of the Africans towards a higher intellectual, moral, and economic level.” Such an attainment

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81His acceptance as a student “is something of a mystery.” He had no real academic qualifications (and relied on a grant from the International African Institute to pay for his fees), but Malinowski was evidently “keen to encourage native participation in anthropological research,” and was “[p]resumably … persuaded … that [Kenyatta] possessed sufficient qualifications” for completing the diploma course, Ibid., pp. 209-210. Interestingly, they apparently “shared certain prejudices, among them a dislike of Indians,” Ibid., p. 218. Kenyatta evidently had “the occasional skirmish with Indians” while in London, Ibid., p. 213.

82Murray-Brown, pp. 219-222. See also Arnold, pp. 68-82, for an analysis on how Kenyatta used an ostensibly anthropological treatise “as an anchor to which he attached an incisive attack upon all the colonial concepts governing Kenya at the time,” p. 68.


84From the Kenya White Paper of July, 1923. Quoted in Ibid., p. 197.
would not be possible, he claimed, so long as the colonial government denied [to the Africans] the most elementary human rights of self-expression, freedom of speech, the right to form social organisations to improve their condition, and above all, the right to move freely in their own country. These are the rights which the Gikuyu people had enjoyed from time immemorial until the arrival of the “mission of Great Britain.” Instead of advancing “towards a higher intellectual, moral, and economic level,” the African has been reduced to a state of serfdom; his initiative in social, economic and political structure has been denied, his spirit of manhood has been killed and he has been subjected to the most inferior position in human society. If he dares to express his opinion on any point, other than what is dictated to him, he is shouted at and black-listed as an “agitator.” The tribal democratic institutions which were the boast of the country, and the proof of tribal good sense, have been suppressed. Oppressive laws and ordinances ... have been imposed on the African people.

According to Kenyatta, the only way the African could “advance to a ‘higher level’ [would be] if he is free to express himself, to organise economically, politically, and socially, and to take part in the government of his own country.” Africans, Kenyatta declared “must fight unceasingly for [their] ... complete emancipation; for without this [they are] doomed to remain the prey of rival imperialisms.” And he had already decided how this was to be done:

the only way out is the mass organisation of workers and peasants of various tribes, and by having this unity we shall be in a position to put up a strong protest against this robbery and exploitation. ... With the support of all revolutionary workers and peasants we must redouble our efforts to break the bonds that bind us ... We can fight in unity with the workers and toilers of the whole world, and for a Free Africa.

Kenyatta would spend the years between the publication of *Facing Mount Kenya* and his return to Kenya in 1946 working with a variety of organizations to promote this ideal, including

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85Ibid., pp. 197-198.

86Ibid., p. 318.

the Friends of Ethiopia, and was deeply involved in the Pan-African Conference in Manchester in 1945. Thus, during this period, Kenyatta was engaged in the anti-imperialist/Pan-African movement, but with a “single-minded attention to the future of Kenya” and a pragmatic approach that set him apart from “his more doctrinaire colleagues.” It was at this time that he impressed Peter Mbiyu Koinange, son of senior chief Koinage, with his attitude that “all the tribal organizations in Kenya, including even the [LNCs] were really pursuing the same goal,” a reflection of his reputation “as a persuader, a conciliator, a man who settled quarrels.” Indeed, even though it might have been expected that Koinage and Kenyatta would have had an antagonistic relationship (for Kenyatta “had opposed his father’s appointment as Kikuyu representative to the joint select committee”), Kenyatta’s friendliness and benign attitude (and readiness to admit “that Koinage’s father had made an effective stand before the parliamentary committee”) enabled them to become colleagues. In fact, Koinage loaned Kenyatta “his hyrax and blue monkey cloak for the photograph” of the author which appeared in Facing Mount Kenya, the purpose being “to make [Kenyatta] seem more like a tribal elder than a Western student ... [so that his words] would carry greater conviction.” And it was Koinage who helped Kenyatta devise his new name (Johnstone now being considered too “European” for an African

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88 In a gesture of solidarity with the Ethiopians over the Italian invasion, Kenyatta was one of the first to greet Emperor Haile Selassie on his arrival in Britain. In 1937, this group became part of the International African Service Bureau (Padmore was one of its leaders) which had as its aim “to win ‘domestic rights, civil liberties and self-determination’ for the African,” Murray-Brown, pp. 229-230.

89 Ibid., pp. 253-254. See also Arnold, pp. 30-31.

90 Ibid., p. 230.

91 Clough, p. 127. A reputation that had been established in Kikuyuland in 1924, when he resolved “a bitter, divisive religious conflict ... [winning] his first laurels as a unifier of Kikuyu.”
Together they went through the alphabet trying out different combinations of vowels and consonants. From these efforts emerged the word Jomo. It sounded good, and it was close to a Kikuyu word describing the pulling of a sword from its scabbard. Kenyatta’s transformation was now complete.

For the time being, however, the sword would remain in its scabbard in London. Kenyatta’s long exile in England was certainly productive. He gained considerable experience and knowledge in political and international affairs, and made many useful contacts. His reputation as a defender of Kikuyu tradition and rights, and as an anti-imperialist/Pan-African activist grew, in Kenya and internationally. Moreover, his absence from Kenya also ensured that “his reputation remained unimpaired” by direct involvement in the political turmoil and conflict within Kenya in this period, a factor that would place him in a good position upon his return, as we shall see. For, during his extended absence, much had been happening to change the political climate and increase the political conflict, both intra and inter-group, within Kenya.

(iii) Interlude: Schisms, repression, and a “trust” announced

The political climate in Kenya was becoming increasingly polarized. For one thing, the female circumcision crisis had had a profound impact on relationships within the Kiambu region, illustrating and emphasizing the gulf between the new militant African political leaders and the colonial authorities and

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92 Murray-Brown, pp. 226-227. The also “sharpened a wooden plank for a spear so that the front cover [of the book] could give an ‘authentic’ impression of a tribal warrior,” Kyle, p. 36. It would not be the first, or last, time that Kenyatta took pains with his appearance and “props.”

93 Kyle, p. 36.
missions, as well as ... [the] gap between the African militants and the African élite that was prepared to work and co-operate with the government.94

A number of divisions resulted. As has been noted, resentment towards European (both missionary and governmental) interference in Kikuyu cultural traditions fuelled support for the KCA. The already fragile level of loyalty towards the chiefs was further deteriorated: their "prominent roles in the mission campaign against [circumcision] and in the government suppression of unrest [led to them being] branded ... as traitors."95 The Kikuyu response of creating independent schools, while solving the problem of being denied access to mission schools, had its own consequences: conflict over resources that involved the independents, the missions, and the government.96 In addition, the crisis deepened the existing antagonism between Christian and non-Christian Kikuyu; it also created schisms within the Christian-Kikuyu community.97 Break-away groups formed their own churches; of the five such formed by 1930, "the African Orthodox Church and the African Independent Pentecostal Church ... would be closely linked to Kikuyu Karing’ā Schools and KISA, respectively," in a demonstration of Kikuyu reorganization of both religion and education on their own terms—and a patent rejection of European authority in these realms.98 Therefore, while the crisis itself was considered

94Arnold, p. 24.
95Clough, p. 151.
96Ibid., p. 149.
98Clough, p. 150. This rejection had already been demonstrated in other areas of Kenya. In 1910, John Owalo had founded the Nomiya Luo in Nyanza, “building his own churches and primary schools.” In 1913, the cult of Mumbo had appeared in Central Nyanza which totally rejected Christianity. “The movement gained such momentum that its coincidence with the First World War necessitated drastic measure to suppress it ... though
"suppressed" by 1931, it would have lingering effects.

Unfortunately, the KCA was not able to take immediate advantage of the support it had garnered during the crisis period, for, until 1938, the organization itself would be riven by schisms.

Personality clashes, factional disputes, and profound political differences about the orientation and future direction of the KCA divided [its leaders] between 1931 and 1935. Their struggles for control of the association almost tore it apart.99

Their problems began with the return of Thuku in 1931. He quickly became disenchanted with the KCA leadership,100 and, although he was elected president, the "differences" between him and the other leaders over the basic philosophy of the Association soon led to a split.101 In 1935, Thuku and his supporters formed the Kikuyu Provincial Association (KPA), and took pains to disassociate himself and his followers from the KCA.102 In contrast to his earlier activities with the movement continued as a powerful protest organ ... until it was proscribed at the outbreak of the Second World War." These, and others, were demonstrations of localized anti-colonial responses. D.N. Sifuna, "Nationalism and Decolonisation," in Themes in Kenyan History, William R. Ochieng', ed. (Nairobi: Heinemann Kenya; London: James Currey; Athens: Ohio University Press, 1990) pp. 188-189. The formation of independent churches was both a religious and a political response, as an "outlet for popular protest against White rule," Oginga Odinga, Not Yet Uhuru: The Autobiography of Oginga Odinga (London: Heinemann, 1967) p. 75; see Ibid., pp. 68-75, for further examples.


100Most especially because members “had been collecting money for themselves in [his] name,” that is, ostensibly to send the funds to him in exile, but keeping it for themselves, Thuku, p. 49.

101Thuku preferred "gradual constitutional advance ... [while the others] stood for making a fundamental challenge to colonial rule," Kyle, p. 36. See also Thuku, pp. 55-56. The conflict had surfaced as early as 1933, when Thuku sued one of the other leaders for slander. Indeed, relations between Thuku and the others had been deteriorating since his return. Elected as President in 1932, he immediately set about reorganizing the KCA (which it desperately needed). Disputes over control of funding (for example, Thuku wanted “to limit the remittances sent ... to Kenyatta,” considering this “a waste of resources”) and Thuku’s belief that “a more constitutional mode of operations ... would bring more results” escalated to such a degree that supporters of the various factions within the KCA battled each other in the streets, Clough, pp. 170-171.

102Thuku, p. 60. In the booklet published to illustrate—to the government as well as to members—what the KPA stood for, it was stated that "Every member of this organization will be pledged to be loyal to His Majesty the King of Great Britain and the established Government and will be bound to do nothing which is not
the EAA, Thuku’s new organization “emphasized local reform and self-help” and encouraged cooperation with the government and the chiefs. 103

Meanwhile, what had been left of the KCA after Thuku’s withdrawal floundered for the next three years: demoralized, poorly-led, and financially strapped. It regained some of the support it had lost through Thuku’s defection as a result of its activities on behalf of evicted landholders in 1936, and through its association with the foundation of the Kenya African Teachers College—also strongly supported by Chief Koinange, in a striking demonstration of how his political attitudes had changed since the 1920s. 104 Revived by “the vigorous leadership of George K. Ndegwa,” the organization was renamed KCA (1938) “to distinguish it from its ineffective predecessor” and began to rebuild links with other political groups. By late 1938, the North Kavirondo Central Association (in Nyanza) and the KCA (1938) were issuing “joint statements on matters of policy.” They were soon joined by the Taita Hills Association (in the southeast) and the Ukamba Members Associations (in the Kamba homelands to the east), both of which had been formed in the late 1930s in response to increased government encroachment on their activities. 105 “By 1940 ... the THA and the UMA ‘were, in effect, branches of the KCA,’ attending KCA meetings and pooling expenses.” Unfortunately, this close association between

constitutional according to the British traditions or do anything which is calculated to disturb the peace, good order and Government.”

103Clough, p.171. See also Thuku, pp. 60-64. The relationship between the KPA and the chiefs remained fragile, however, a legacy of Thuku’s previous attacks on them and the fact that many of his members had been associated with the KCA.

104The idea for the College had been the Chief’s son’s—Peter—now back from England. Their “efforts ... established the Koinanges as an important force in the ranks of militant nationalism,” Clough, pp. 172-173.

105Kenyatta also “championed the Kamba cause in Britain through letters to the Manchester Guardian,” Clough, p. 175.
the groups proved to be a distinct disadvantage once World War II broke out. Suspected of disloyalty, the KCA, THA, and UMA were all banned in 1940 and their leaders arrested.\textsuperscript{106} Although they would be released by the end of the War, "the ban on the party was never raised," and the life of the KCA was effectively over in 1940.\textsuperscript{107}

This proscription of the KCA, based on extremely flimsy evidence, was really an attempt by the colonial government to silence African opposition to its policies.\textsuperscript{108} However, it had been becoming increasingly clear that African discontent was reaching dangerous levels. In 1939, there had been strikes and riots in Mombasa. In response, the government established a Native Advisory Council, consisting of "five Government nominees and twenty representatives of tribal associations and missionary societies," whose purpose was "to present 'native opinion' to the Municipal Native Affairs Committee."\textsuperscript{109} While hardly a momentous step, the composition of the Council demonstrated the government's preference for dealing with tribal associations, rather than political ones. Indeed, the government had encouraged the formation of tribal associations throughout the 1930s as vehicles for African organization.\textsuperscript{110} The tribal associations operated as social welfare agencies in the urban centres, providing a range of assistance to their members,

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\textsuperscript{106} Clough, p. 174-175.

\textsuperscript{107} Kyle, p. 36.

\textsuperscript{108} The Kenyan CID had been "investigating all three organizations, looking ... for evidence of any possible links to Britain's enemies," (Clough, p. 175) although nothing substantial was found, "information" from an informant was considered sufficient to label the associations as subversive, in spite of the fact that they "did not pose a substantial threat." Spencer, p. 96. All three organizations had been protesting against land alienation, forced relocations, and compulsory destocking programs initiated by the government, Clough, pp. 174-175.


\textsuperscript{110} Ibid., p. 280.
and maintaining contact with the "home" regions.\textsuperscript{111} By the 1940s, the government "started to regard tribal associations as legitimate representatives of their appropriate tribal groups" and would appoint members to the various advisory councils.\textsuperscript{112}

Yet, while the associations provided much-needed practical assistance to urban Africans, this type of organization (based on tribal affiliation) was a mixed blessing on the political level. On the one hand, they were neutral. They did, however, create a network of social control and leadership which could be mobilized and moved into the political arena. From the point of view of national unity, they could support or hinder its cause, on different occasions. It was when different tribal groups using their network of tribal associations, and evoking tribal loyalties, joined the political struggle for the centre of power, to defend what they, or their leaders, regarded as their vital interests, that we pass from the era of tribal solidarity to that of tribal chauvinism.\textsuperscript{113}

This "chauvinism" was fostered by the very existence of the tribal associations, for these emphasized the differences in language and customs between the groups, and made the members explicitly aware of their tribal identity, especially vis-à-vis those of other tribes. In the stressful conditions of urban life, tension between the groups frequently "exploded into violence."\textsuperscript{114} On the other hand, the very fact that so many tribal organizations were gathered together in the urban centres meant that inter-tribal cooperation was possible, and, as all Africans shared many of the same discontents, this encouraged the groups to work together for common purposes.

\textsuperscript{111}There were hundreds of such organizations throughout Kenya by 1960, an indication of their usefulness to their members, M. Tamarkin, "Tribal Associations, Tribal Solidarity, and Tribal Chauvinism in a Kenya Town," \textit{Journal of African History}, XIV, 2 (1973) pp. 258-260.

\textsuperscript{112}Ibid., pp. 263-264.

\textsuperscript{113}Ibid., p. 263.

\textsuperscript{114}Ibid., pp. 265-266.
As a result, a “variety of multi-tribal bodies and associations ... began to emerge in the early 1940s.” It would only be a matter of time before this trend would promote the creation of “national” political organizations.

Ironically, the government itself would be indirectly responsible for the foundation of the first of these. In 1944, the Governor announced that there would finally be an African representative on the Legislative Council, albeit one appointed by the government. While this was the tiniest of steps towards African representation (there were 38 non-African members in the Legco), it was a substantive breakthrough—the initial breach of the logjam of opposition to African participation in government. For, since the 1923 restructuring of the Legco, African interests had been “represented” predominantly by missionaries or ex-officials—not necessarily men who would be considered sympathetic to the African cause, at least by Africans. This ostensibly had been done in accordance with the general policy laid out in the Devonshire White Paper of 1923, which had been the Colonial Office’s final settlement of the “Indian Question”

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115 Ibid., pp. 266. One example would be the Nyanza African Union, in which were representatives of the Luo, the Abaluhya, the Kisi and the Nandi-Kipsigis.

116 Spencer, p. 125. The pressure from “backbenchers in the House of Commons and from the Labour Party,” from some of the more liberal Europeans in Kenya, and from the Africans themselves—culminating in a petition signed by “chiefs and local native council members” and presented to the Colonial Office by Chief Koinange—and a number of committee reports which recommended that Africans (including the soon-to-be ex servicemen) needed “an outlet for [their] political aspirations” provided the impetus for the government to take this step. The Governor, while acknowledging the wisdom of the move, admitted “that it is more to meet the demands of the more politically minded here and at home than because I believe the African cause will be much advanced by such representation,” Ibid., pp. 122-123.

117 For example, “R.W. Hemsted, a retired civil servant who had been one of the three members of the Land Commission which, most Africans thought, had sealed off the White Highlands forever ... Dr C.J. Wilson, also a civil servant, who, after he left the Council, was to produce a series of racist tracts stressing Britain’s imperial role in Kenya ... Colonel T.O. Fitzgerald ... notable in African affairs mainly because he had led the military force called out to deal with the Thuku riots ... [and] Montgomery, ... known for his disdainful regard for the treatment of Africans” were some of the appointees, Spencer, p. 119.
and the resolution, it had been hoped (rather optimistically), of the conflict between the white settlers and the Indian community. In the new Legco, Europeans elected 11 members, Indians 5, and Arabs 1; the majority would still be held by officials of the administration, which would appoint a representative for Africans. The numbers, however, did not reflect the ideal espoused in the Devonshire Statement, which supposedly established the primacy of African paramountcy by decreeing that

Primarily, Kenya is an African territory, and His Majesty’s Government think it necessary definitely to record their considered opinion that the interests of the African natives must be paramount, and that if, and when, those interests and the interests of the immigrant races should conflict, the former should prevail. Obviously, the interests of the other communities, European, Indian or Arab, must severally be safeguarded ... But in the administration of Kenya His Majesty’s Government regard themselves as exercising a trust on behalf of the African population, and they are unable to delegate or share this trust, the object of which may be defined as the protection and advancement of the native races.

While the Government assumed that this “trust” would last for the foreseeable future, and did not exert itself to ensure that the colonial government actually undertook to promote “the intellectual, moral and economic development of the African population” that it so piously pronounced necessary to prepare Africans for their eventual redemption of the “trust”, the Declaration did “place an insurmountable road block in the path of those in Kenya who wished to see the colony evolve into a settler-state on the South African or Southern Rhodesian model.”

118Maxon, p. 277.

119As quoted in Maxon, p. 276.

120Ibid., pp. 277-279. In essence, the Declaration signalled the Colonial Office’s recognition that the plan “to plant a ‘resident white civilization’ in Kenya” was not going to work. However, its earlier promotion of the plan meant that it retained some sense of responsibility for the welfare of the white settlers, who would continue to fight “to maintain their ascendancy” (political, economic, and social) in Kenya, Izuakor, pp.47-48.
Unfortunately, for the following forty years, it would be one of the few political steps that actually favoured Africans in any way. Even the 1944 announcement of the appointment of an African to the Legco was qualified by the affirmation “that it did not cancel the Government’s policy of building up African experience of democracy—slowly through the [LNCs].”\(^{121}\) In other words, Africans were to be relegated to active participation only at the local levels of government (where they had little real power) and a token presence in the colonial legislature. But African political activists were determined to take full advantage of this minuscule opportunity to function at the “national” level.

Shortly before the African member, Eliud Mathu, was officially appointed, a group of Africans in Nairobi, almost all of them civil servants, [had] talked increasingly of an organization that would have branches throughout the main tribal areas of Kenya and would not only provide Mathu with information, but be the base of the first country-wide African political party.\(^{122}\)

Accordingly, the Kenya African Union (KAU) was founded in October of 1944 by thirty-three Africans from “every important area and ethnic group in Kenya, except the Kalenjin,” who selected Thuku as the first president of the organization.\(^{123}\)

While the KAU was representative in the ethnic sense, membership was initially restricted to the educated élite. And these tended to be of a younger generation than those who

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\(^{121}\)Spencer, p. 124.

\(^{122}\)Ibid., p. 126.

\(^{123}\)Ibid., p. 128. The name of the organization was changed to the Kenya African Study Union, and back to Kenya African Union in 1946, but the sources differ as to whether KAU predated KASU or vice versa. Spencer stated that it began as KAU, was changed to KASU at the request of the administration (so that it would not appear too “political”) but reverted to “its original name” in 1946, Ibid., pp. 128-129, 145. Murray-Brown concurred, p. 262. However, Kyle believed that it began as KASU and then became KAU, pp. 38-40. The latter is also Odinga’s version, p. 97. As, in any case, KASU was the designation for less than two years, and the organization was predominantly known as KAU, I shall refer to it as KAU throughout, to avoid confusion.
had been involved in the previous attempt to create a nation-wide political organization, such as Thuku, and they found his now-moderate (it could also be said, lethargic) approach unsatisfactory. By January 1945, Thuku had been forced to resign, in favour of James Gichuru, the “efficient and energetic Secretary of the Kenya African Teachers Union,” under whose leadership, “there was a marked increase in the pace and scope of [KAU’s] activities.” The central branch in Nairobi drew up a set of “Rules and Regulations” which was distributed to the small branches being established throughout the country. The first edition of the organization’s periodical journal was published in April 1945: the *Sautiya Mwafrika* [*The African Voice*]. The KAU engaged in its first political action: a formal protest against proposed reforms giving ministerial responsibilities to one of the European representatives on the Legco (which, besides giving KAU “a new prominence,” revived “Asian interest in African politicians”). In spite of these positive moves, however, the KAU made little substantive progress during its first two years. Its officers could only devote part of their time to the organization, being employed elsewhere and frequently also involved in other associations; it had little support from outside of the élite group (many Africans saw it as “the teachers’ party” [and] more concerned with Nairobi than the [tribal] reserves); and, while the government had initially encouraged its formation, “there was often tension between the party and the District officials and their chiefs, who ... regarded [it] as a potential troublemaker.” Above all, of course, was the lack of funding: to pay for an office and staff, to distribute the paper, even to provide funding for representatives to travel outside of Nairobi in order to promote the party. Yet it did manage to lay the

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124 The Asian-African alliance of the KCA period had become moribund after the KCA was banned, there being no African organization for the Asian groups to associate themselves with.
foundations of "the first truly national African political movement,"125 and it became the stage upon which Kenyatta would first play his role as national leader.

(iv) The re-emergence of Kenyatta: The prodigal returns

Kenyatta had one final task to complete before returning home: the completion of a pamphlet for the International African Service Bureau (with which he had been affiliated since 1937) entitled *Kenya: The Land of Conflict*. While this could be categorized as a typical polemic tract on anti-imperialism, there were several aspects about it that are very indicative of the approach that Kenyatta would take from this point.

The cover design was of a map on which light radiated from East Africa. Beside it there was an African with a fur cloak round one shoulder, fingering his spear. It was Kenyatta of *Facing Mount Kenya* now stylized into a propaganda motif... It was an odd mixture of straightforward IASB political argument with Kenyatta's theme of an African Eden before the appearance of the European serpent, when there was plenty of land for all ... From a brief historical sketch and a list of grievances, Kenyatta moved easily into Kikuyu legend and then back again into political history. He made no real distinction between legend and politics ... he stressed in his pamphlet [that] the British were just too strong to be dislodged by rebellion ... 'What [Africans] ... demand' [he said] 'is a fundamental change in the present political, economic and social relationship between Europeans and Africans.'126

Thus we see Kenyatta positioning himself: pictorially as a representative of traditional Africa and textually as a mixture of tradition and modern political ideas. The emphasis on land placed him firmly with the Kikuyu (this being their major grievance) in their opposition to the colonial administration. While his "deep-seated caution held him back from an open commitment to violence or even to a more active political style," his statement that "it would be impossible to

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125Spencer, pp. 128-137.
126Murray-Brown, pp. 254-255.
turn [the British] out without a bloody insurrection," is clearly an implicit threat that if African demands were not met, violence was a definite possibility. He was thereby warning the British that they had two alternatives—"fundamental change" or "a bloody insurrection"—without himself taking direct responsibility for advocating a violent response.\footnote{128}

It certainly did not seem that Kenyatta personally believed that violence was necessary: on the trip home, he "spoke about a single Kenya in which all races, white and black, Arabs and Indians, could live and work in peace alongside each other. They should all think of themselves, he said, as Kenyans, not as Africans or Europeans or Asians."\footnote{129} It was an ideal that he voiced in a slightly different way when he reached Mombasa in September 1946, telling the crowd that greeted him that there should be "unity and an end to tribalism."\footnote{130} "It was time, he said, for Africans to stop speaking of themselves as members of separate tribes and to acknowledge their common destiny."\footnote{131} Yet one of his first actions in Kenya was to link himself even tighter to the Kikuyu tribe, by the formation of an alliance with Chief Koinange—sealed by marriage to one of the Chief's daughters—which "established [Kenyatta] among the traditional leadership of the

\footnotesize{\begin{enumerate}
\item[Ibid., p. 255.]
\item[Kenyatta would remain very cautious about associating himself in any way with violence, as will be seen during the Mau Mau crisis.]
\item[His vision embraced all humanity; in practical terms he knew well enough that his people could not do without Europeans whatever he might have said about the integrity of the tribe in \textit{Facing Mount Kenya}," Murray-Brown, p. 257. Nor did Kenyatta appear personally to be a racialist: he married a white woman while in England; though he seemed to have left her and their child to fend for themselves when he returned to Kenya, and did not even correspond with her again until 1956 (however, the correspondence was apparently mutually friendly and continued from that time on). He would eventually assign the royalties to \textit{Facing Mount Kenya} to his son from this marriage, and had his wife and son flown to Kenya to join in the independence celebrations, and meet the rest of the family, including Kenyatta's other wives. Ibid., pp. 246, 256, 341-342, 346, 370.]
\item[Arnold, p. 90.]
\item[Murray-Brown, p. 264.]
\end{enumerate}}
tribe."\(^{132}\) While this might be seen as another attempt to keep a foot in both camps, because Koinange was also now sympathetic to nationalist politics, it was not such a straddle as might first appear. Moreover, it provided Kenyatta with employment as well as status: he took over as Principal of the Independent Teachers' College when his brother-in-law, Peter Koinange, returned to Britain in 1947. In addition to the financial security, the position of Principal enabled Kenyatta to use the independent schools movement, "which he regarded as a convenient tribal network for political propaganda," to expand his contacts and propagate his ideas.\(^{133}\)

For the first few months, Kenyatta seemed content to ease back into the Kenyan political scene. While still ostensibly attached to the KCA,\(^{134}\) he made no effort to become actively engaged in KCA affairs.\(^{135}\) He did, however, make use of his reputation—with the government and the Kikuyu—to create "for himself an unofficial status as an alternative source of tribal authority to the government."\(^{136}\) This served to increase his standing as an intermediary between the government and the Kikuyu, and to enable him to further expand his range of contacts—especially with the masses. Moreover, this "unofficial" activity was in keeping with Kenyatta's tendency to avoid any situation which could limit his actions or statements. Thus,

\(^{132}\)Ibid., p. 266.
\(^{133}\)Murray-Brown, pp. 266-269.
\(^{134}\)Which had paid for his trip home, and organized the warm welcome he received in Mombasa and Nairobi, Spencer, p. 164.
\(^{135}\)While the KCA was still officially banned, its members focussed their attention on the LNCs, which they used "as a platform for KCA views." It was suggested, both by the government and by the KCA that Kenyatta join his local council, but he "preferred to remain uncommitted," Murray-Brown, p. 269.
\(^{136}\)For example, on one occasion he was invited to tour the Fort Hall district with the District Commissioner to "help quieten the people," Ibid., p. 269-270.
"[h]e was able to appear all things to all men, a man of mystery and of hidden power." 

Indeed, his actions during this period demonstrated his acute political instincts. He had been away for sixteen years, and needed to not only familiarize himself with the Kenya of 1946, but familiarize the Kenya of 1946 with him. There were now many Africans involved in political activism, and Kenyatta had to find a way to make himself stand out from the crowd. In this regard, "his showmanship" proved of great benefit: he would attend public meetings dressed in a cloak (which he claimed had been given to him by the Emperor of Ethiopia) and carrying "a theatrically monstrous ebony elephant-headed walking stick." Even the beard he had grown in his absence set him apart, as the Kikuyu tended to be clean-shaven.

Above all, however, he had an unmatched reputation with segments of the Kikuyu community, a legacy of his work with the KCA in the late 1920s, and of his status as "their" representative in London for so many years. For all that time, Kenyatta’s name had been a rallying point, used by the KCA to solicit funds (to be sent to him in London); thus, in a way, Kenyatta the man had become Kenyatta the myth by 1946, seen "as the unquestioned leader of the new nationalism." This image was enhanced by the perception that he had gained valuable experience and knowledge while in the imperial heartland, that could now be used for the benefit of the people’s cause. Yet, because of that absence, especially because it meant that he had not become involved with the factional battles of Kikuyu (or Kenyan) politics during the 1930s and early 1940s, little was really known of him.

137Ibid., p. 269.

138Ibid., pp. 268, 270-271.

139Ibid., p. 265.
To the old he was not too young, to the young he was not too old; to the illiterate he was not too educated, to the educated he was nobody's fool ... [thus] he was all things to all men.  

He perpetuated this appeal by maintaining a degree of ambiguity and ambivalence in his statements and actions. So successful was he in this that he was (and has been) categorized as both a moderate and an extremist; indeed, he

spent much of his political career weaving a delicate path between these two interpretations of his actions, so that either could be accepted, depending upon the wishes and viewpoint of the onlooker.  

For example, on the one hand there is his statement while en route to Kenya in 1946 that "all races ... should ... think of themselves ... as Kenyans, not as Africans or Europeans or Asians," yet, in "a private meeting in 1947 [he reportedly said] that he disliked Europeans and Asians and that in time they would all be removed from Africa." While his public utterances tended to be "more circumspect" than this, he

'was also ... adept at cloaking his inner intentions in such a way that the meaning, while abundantly clear to the rest of his audience, was sufficiently "safe" and vague to escape action by the authorities.'  

He would put this undeniably useful aptitude to good use after he finally made his move in June 1947, standing for election as President of KAU, where his months of preparation bore fruit:

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141Arnold, p. 104. "There was often no real telling what he meant ... ," Murray-Brown, p. 275.  
142Murray-Brown, p. 257.  
143Arnold, p. 103.  
144F.D. Corfield, as quoted in Arnold, p. 103. For example, when addressing a crowd in front of European observers—such as during his travels with the District Commissioner in Fort Hall—he "was reported to say one thing openly and then to take his tribesmen off by themselves where he spoke in that allusive Kikuyu idiom which defies translation ... ," Murray-Brown, p. 275.
Gichuru stepped “down to make way for him ... [and none of] the younger men disputed his right to national leadership.”

Kenyatta immediately began to try to organize the KAU into a truly nation-wide political party. He enforced central control so strongly that within two months, the Vice-President resigned in protest at his “dictatorial attitude and control over all the affairs of the [KAU].” However, the initial impact of Kenyatta’s leadership on both the growth and direction of the KAU was so profound that few appeared troubled by his methods. Thousands attended public meetings, drawn by “[t]he power of Kenyatta’s name,” and listened to his exhortations about “unity, hard work and ordered progress.” Kikuyu papers called him “the ‘Hero of our Race’, a ‘Saviour’ and ‘Great Elder’.”

In spite of the accolades and excitement, however, Kenyatta would encounter substantive difficulties in attaining his two major goals: “to establish himself as the accepted leader of the whole Kikuyu tribe, and ... to bring all the tribes of Kenya to follow his call for self-government.” Deep divisions remained among the Kikuyu, dating from the time of the female circumcision crisis and Thuku’s anti-chiefs campaign. Furthermore, many of the educated élite among the Kikuyu had become part of the colonial structure, and were not necessarily

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145 Murray-Brown, p. 270. Gichuru had actually offered to step aside as early as October 1946, but Kenyatta held off until he was ready, Spencer, p. 174.

146 Arnold, pp. 99-100.

147 Murray-Brown, p. 270; at one meeting in Fort Hall, “no less than 12 000 [were] present,” Spencer, p. 175.

148 In fact, he would frequently berate the African crowd, condemning idleness, uncleanliness, and dishonesty. Murray-Brown, p. 271. “Kenyatta did not make easy promises in his speeches; rather, he attacked the weak aspects of his followers’ characters and behaviour ... ,” Arnold, p. 107.

149 Murray-Brown, p. 271.
enthusiastic about its destruction. However, the biggest obstacle to expanding Kenyatta’s popularity beyond his Kiambu base was the very strength of his Kikuyu association. Other tribes, especially the traditional Kikuyu enemies, the Luo and Maasai, were not only inherently suspicious of Kikuyu leadership, but also believed that “the continued presence of the British administration was a surer guarantee of their sharing fairly in the benefits of progress” than involvement with the uncertainties of an anti-colonial struggle. And, as always, there was the difficulty of maintaining a union between the moderate and extremist elements within the KAU.

Kenyatta demonstrated again his cautious and careful approach. He first concentrated on firmly establishing his base in Kikuyuland, working from his headquarters at the College. From there, he would make occasional forays into other tribal heartlands, such as Kisumu in the Luo region. While he personally became more widely recognized, the attempt to expand KAU met with little success outside Kikuyuland (although some inroads were made into Kamba and Nyanza).

Kenyatta’s problems in building a coherent mass movement were formidable. Among them was the great unevenness of political awareness through the country, widespread tribal parochialism, the small number of educated English-speaking leaders, [emphasis

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150Ibid., p. 273. See also Arnold, p. 107; this suspicion extended to the KAU itself, which was perceived as “too much a Kikuyu party,” Spencer, p. 180.

151This included “the young militants, the Forty Group, who were prepared to go to much greater lengths, including the use of violence, in order to effect change,” Arnold, p. 105. Another serious problem was that the masses “were more militant than the KAU leadership” and did not automatically support its policies or programs, Spencer, p. 177.

152Arnold, p. 107.

153Where he met Odinga, who would become a “Disciple in Nationalism.” Odinga was focussed, at this time, “on organizing the Luo Union and cementing the unity of ... [the Luo] people” throughout Kenya, Odinga, pp. 98-101.
mine] and the inadequacies of social communication that could enable them to function as a national élite.\footnote{154}{Rosberg and Nottingham, p. 227.}

Yet Kenyatta did have some impact among this élite. For example, Oginga Odinga, an influential Luo businessman and activist, was so “moved” by Kenyatta’s speeches that he “threw [himself] into the work and spirit of the [KAU].”\footnote{155}{In particular, the one in which he said: “‘The tree of freedom is planted ... For it to grow it needs the water of human blood,’” Odinga, p. 101. Odinga would become one of Kenyatta’s most devoted disciples, although rather less moderate than his hero.} And the speeches themselves, with their articulation of “the concept of a ‘Kenya people,’” began to challenge “the meaning of the tribe as the highest political ideal.”\footnote{156}{Rosberg and Nottingham, p. 217.} So this period could be defined as a time of “spreading the word” rather than of establishing a solid political organization.

Kenyatta himself seemed to recognize the futility of turning the KAU into anything more than an association representing “a very small percentage of the ... Africans in Kenya.” In 1948, he “retreated” to the College and rarely left it for some months afterwards.\footnote{157}{Spencer, pp. 182-183.} For the next two years, at least on the surface, Kenyatta and the KAU would appear to be stagnating. However, behind the scenes, there was much confused and confusing activity: confusing because so much of it was taking place in secrecy; confused because there was a perplexing combination of linkage, competition, and opposition among the people involved in a variety of enterprises. It would all culminate in the Mau Mau “Emergency,” which officially lasted from 1952 to 1960, and during which all African national political parties had been banned.\footnote{158}{Marshall S. Clough, \textit{Mau Mau Memoirs: History, Memory, and Politics} (Boulder, CO and London: Lynne Reinner Pub., 1998) p. 32.}
c) A new phase: Violence, repression, and ‘multiracialism’

The Mau Mau phenomenon had a profound and complex impact on every aspect of life in Kenya, an impact so deep that it continues to resonate even today. Its importance—real and perceived—is evidenced by the plethora of interpretations and analyses that have been produced since 1952, an historiography that is extremely contention-riven. Indeed, this in itself illustrates the difficulties involved in not only defining Mau Mau (‘nationalist movement... tribal civil war, or... a revolution?’), but also determining its real causes and effects. As Odinga noted:

The date and place of birth of the revolt cannot be clearly pointed out; there were many beginnings and many origins. There was seething revolt among the people, on numerous levels, some national, some tribal, some clan, some of a sophisticated political nature, some expressive of the simplest form of anti-White hostility. There was a labyrinth of clandestine committees and organizations of one kind or another.


160Atieno-Odhiambo, p. 304.

161There is also a problem with sources: the Government of Kenya will not make public many of the remaining official files until 2013, Kinyatti, Kenya’s Freedom Struggle, p. xviii.

162Odinga, p. 123. Even the origins of the term “Mau Mau” itself “are more than a little obscure.” The name surfaced in 1948, “was formally outlawed in 1950, was never used by the movement itself ... [nor is it] an expression in either Swahili or Kikuyu,” Kyle, p. 48.
What little consensus there is on Mau Mau is confined to the following: (1) there was a sporadic series of violent outbreaks between 1952 and 1956, predominantly in the Kikuyuland region, and predominantly involving the Kikuyu—both as perpetrators and victims of the violence; (2) a program of sustained (and often brutal) repression was undertaken by the British in order to suppress the violence, a program that continued until 1956; (3) it was perceived as an expression of African frustration over the government’s lack of progress in resolving their grievances; and (4) the substantial costs and difficulties of restoring control and the severity of the violence convinced the British Government that “African majority rule [was] the only possible future for Kenya.”

Accordingly, rather than becoming entangled in an attempt to construct a synopsis of the Mau Mau phenomenon, reference to the Mau Mau will be limited to only those aspects which have direct relevance to the development of indigenous political organizations. Chief among these is the impact Mau Mau had on Kenyatta and on the KAU.

In the period between 1948 and 1952, the KAU was a battleground between the moderates and the militants, with Kenyatta—as usual—trying to straddle the abyss. The militants were becoming increasingly impatient with what they considered the too conciliatory approach of the moderates, while the moderates were becoming increasingly afraid that the actions and statements of the militants would prompt the government to repress the KAU as it had the KCA. Moreover, some of the militant members of the Central Committee of the KAU where


164 See Spencer, pp.202-235, for a detailed explanation of this period in the KAU. As he noted, there was one “essential point: there was no central cohering direction” within the party during this time, and no one seemed to be able to control events, p. 235.
now also involved in secret activities associated with the Mau Mau movement—thus linking, to the horror of the moderates, their organization with “the oathings, the robberies, and the growing unrest” that were by now so disturbing the government. By early 1952, the militants had succeeded in wresting control of the KAU from the moderates; “they formed their own secret Central Committee and began building up a network of subordinate secret cells throughout Kikuyuland ... [using] Kenyatta’s name freely in their propaganda.”

Meanwhile, Kenyatta was exhibiting his usual ambivalence. His production of a KAU flag (“green for the land, black for the African skin, and red for the blood of liberty”) apparently illustrated an accordance with the extremist racially-exclusive view of the future of Kenya. He remained President of the KAU, accepting “the legitimacy of the corporate will” that had placed the militants in control, implicitly also accepting their program, which now included “direct action” if the British did not agree to granting “independence within three years.” On the other hand, he made a series of speeches denouncing the growing violence and stating that KAU had

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165 The whole issue of the “oaths” of this period is one of the most contentious aspects of the Mau Mau debate, especially the participation of Kenyatta. It is impossible to determine exactly what his role or involvement was, though it appears that he was not the “mastermind of Mau Mau,” in spite of what the authorities at the time claimed. In regard to the oaths, while he did take part in many oathing ceremonies, these seemed to have been the traditional KCA style—assertions of loyalty to the tribe—and not of the extreme variety used by the Mau Mau. (In fact, the oaths that Kenyatta was involved in were “not meant to incite or to condone violence,” Spencer, p. 230.) However, due to his reputation, he acquired a symbolic role in this era, as “the paternal figure around whom all should gather,” so his name was included in many of the more extreme oaths, with the oath-takers swearing “that they would act on his behalf ... [even though] he knew little about [this],” Spencer, p.230. See also Murray-Brown, pp. 277-279, and p.282 (where he noted that, although it was believed that “the oaths now included ‘positive killing’ clauses, ... many who took them also said they had no idea what was actually involved”); and Clough, Mau Mau Memoirs, pp. 97-102, 109-110.

166 Murray-Brown, p. 282.

167 Ibid., pp. 281-282.
no part in Mau Mau.\textsuperscript{168} And, in the most public of statements—the testimony he gave at his trial (of which more later)—he presented himself as a confirmed moderate, defending the KAU as well as himself against the accusation that he (and it) had been involved in any way in Mau Mau. He told the court that

The aims of KAU were to unite the African people of Kenya; to prepare the way for introduction of democracy in Kenya; to defend and promote the interests of the African people by organizing and educating them in the struggle for better working and social conditions; to fight for equal rights for all Africans and break down racial barriers; to strive for extension to all African adults of the right to vote and to be elected to parliamentary and other representative bodies; to publish a political newspaper; to fight for freedom of assembly, press and movement ... To fight for equal rights does not mean fighting with fists or with a weapon, but to fight through negotiations and by constitutional means. We do not believe in violence at all, but in discussion and representation ... and we see no reason at all why all races in this country cannot work harmoniously together without any discrimination ... To my mind, colour is irrelevant.\textsuperscript{169}

At other public meetings during 1952 (before the trial), Kenyatta had “repeated that he did not know what ‘Mau Mau’ meant, that it did not exist in the Kikuyu language, that it was bad, and that if it were an animal he would strike it on the head and kill it.”\textsuperscript{170}

As the violence escalated through 1952, however, no public pronouncements by Kenyatta—in spite of his continued “unrivalled hold over the mass of the Kikuyu

\textsuperscript{168}Although these were undertaken after the government pressured him to do so, he “was so convincing that [the militants] warned him to temper his criticism,” which suggests that he was, for once, not ambiguous at all. What he actually believed, however, is anybody’s guess, Spencer, p. 230.

\textsuperscript{169}Kenyatta, Suffering Without Bitterness, pp. 27-28. Of course, given the circumstances, it would not have been prudent to state otherwise.

\textsuperscript{170}Spencer, p. 232. Kenyatta made repeated speeches during this period with the same theme: “freedom must be achieved by peaceful means, and that once they had gained their independence, Africans would safeguard other races living in Kenya,” Murray-Brown, p. 284. See Kenyatta, Suffering Without Bitterness, pp. 47-54, for the text of some of these speeches.
people”\textsuperscript{171}—seemed to have any effect.\textsuperscript{172} On the 20\textsuperscript{th} of October 1952, the government declared a State of Emergency and arrested the entire leadership of KAU.\textsuperscript{173} The party tried to reorganize, electing new officers, and focussed its efforts on Kenyatta’s trial. All for naught, however; on 8 June 1953, the KAU was officially declared “an unlawful society … [and] membership in [it] … a serious offence.”\textsuperscript{174}

Kenyatta fared as badly. He was tried and convicted of “managing an unlawful society… 'Mau Mau'” and sentenced to seven years hard labour and an indefinite term of “restriction.”\textsuperscript{175} Even at the time, it was seen by many as a travesty of justice, the “evidence remarkable for its weakness in the judicial sense.”\textsuperscript{176} However, it was clearly a political, rather than a criminal, trial and its conclusion was inevitable. The violence had escalated to barbaric excesses (although far more attention was paid to the admittedly horrific deaths of white settlers than the massacres of Africans)\textsuperscript{177} and the white community, which had always seen Kenyatta as an enemy, pressured the government to detain him (as it had Thuku). When Kenyatta’s “powerful friends” in London

\textsuperscript{171}Murray-Brown, p. 283.

\textsuperscript{172}In any case, no one was sure if he really meant what he said. The government suspected “that, through subtle use of Kikuyu metaphors, he was managing to convey the precisely opposite message … [while the militants in] the Central Committee … summoned [him and] asked him to stop these speeches forthwith because although, they said, they did not question his motives the terms in which he had denounced Mau Mau were too strong and would hamper the work of the organizers among those weaker brethren who might take him seriously … It was clear that his leadership (and perhaps his life) were at stake,” Kyle, p. 51.

\textsuperscript{173}Spencer, p. 250.

\textsuperscript{174}Ibid., pp. 250-255.

\textsuperscript{175}See Murray-Brown, pp. 300-321, for an account of the trial itself.

\textsuperscript{176}Ibid., p. 305.

\textsuperscript{177} Altogether only thirty-two European civilians were murdered in the whole course of the Mau Mau rising as against eighteen hundred African civilians,” Kyle, pp. 52-53. The methods of the murders were frequently gruesome, an aspect that received considerable coverage in the European papers, in Kenya and abroad.
raised questions about the government’s arrest of the KAU leaders, the government was “compelled ... to find some pretext for his detention.”\textsuperscript{178} Kenyatta himself understood what this was really all about, stating that, instead of trying to resolve the grievances which drove Africans into resorting to violence, or of cooperating with the KAU “to stamp out anything that was bad, such as Mau Mau,” the government took the opportunity to eliminate the only political organization, the KAU, which [was fighting] constitutionally for the rights of the African people, just as the Electors Union [was fighting] for the rights of the Europeans and the Indian National Congress for the rights of the Asians.\textsuperscript{179}

While the government did succeed in destroying the organization, its hope that Kenyatta—and the magic of his name—would also fade away would prove to be wishful thinking.

While Kenyatta languished in prison in far-off Lokitaung,\textsuperscript{180} the colonial government engaged in what can only be called a war against the Kikuyu,\textsuperscript{181} which included “[i]ntense

\textsuperscript{178}Murray-Brown, p. 300.

\textsuperscript{179}Kenyatta, \textit{Suffering Without Bitterness}, pp. 56-57.

\textsuperscript{180}Which “was as isolated a place as could be found in Kenya,” being in the far north, near the borders with Sudan and Ethiopia, Murray-Brown, pp. 322-323.

\textsuperscript{181}The Kikuyu were categorized as either “loyalists” (who were expected to enlist in the Home Guard and assist the military) or “suspects” (everyone else). Kikuyu residents of Nairobi were expelled, first to reception camps, where they were “screened” for Mau Mau sympathies, and then either sent back to the reserves or to detention camps. The size of the operation against Mau Mau illustrates not only the degree of threat that Mau Mau represented, but the determination of the government to suppress it: 11 infantry battalions were sent to Kenya, to be assisted by 20,000 police and 25,000 in the Home Guard (the cost to Britain was £60 million); 80,000 Kikuyu “were subjected to rehabilitation”, 30,000 were evicted from Nairobi; Mau Mau deaths are estimated at over 11,000, there were over 1,000 executions (less than 1/3 for homicide, the rest for ‘consorting with terrorists’ and ‘illegal possession of firearms’), between 600 and 700 of the security forces died (including 63 Europeans), Kyle, p. 61. Thousands more were arrested: by 1954, 17,000 were in prison and another 50,000 in detention camps, Murray-Brown, p.337. The Mau Mau also executed at least 3,000 “traitors,” Ibid., p. 327. While only 32 Europeans were murdered by the Mau Mau, (“fewer ... than the number of Europeans killed in traffic accidents in Nairobi during the same period”) the manner of their deaths, the isolation of white settlers on their farms (which made it difficult for the government forces to protect them), and the uncertainties of which of their African workers might be Mau Mau sympathizers made life for Europeans rather “tense,” Ibid., p. 328.
propaganda" aimed at "loyalist Kikuyu" and the other African tribes—to alienate the "loyalists" from the Mau Mau, and the other tribes from the Kikuyu. Clearly, any ideas that the Kikuyu, as the most politically-engaged of the African tribes, had about continuing their leadership role in the anti-colonialist movement were to be eliminated.

However, while the Emergency enabled the government to rein in the Kikuyu, the crisis also brought immediate pressures from all racial groups for the reorganization of the central government and increased access by unofficial politicians to decision-making positions in return for the "loyal support" of Europeans, Asians, and Africans for the war against "Mau Mau". It was at this point that the Colonial Office began to take a far more active role in the affairs of the colony. The Secretary of State, Oliver Lyttelton, visited Kenya several times between October 1952 and February 1954, and quickly came to the realization that the situation could only be stabilized if African grievances were resolved, and, in particular, that a legitimate outlet for African political activity be constructed. Faced with the obstinate and obstructive attitude of the white settlers, Lyttelton "bluntly told [them] that they could rely upon continued British support only if they accepted increased African participation in the government." Lyttelton then formulated what would be known as "multiracialism":

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182 Kyle, p. 62.

183 Berman, Control and Crisis, p. 395.

184 Ibid., p. 396. He was indeed "blunt," telling them: "Sixty thousand Europeans cannot expect to hold all the political power and to exclude Africans from the legislature and the government. ... You are suspicious and critical of what you term in a perjorative [sic] sense 'colonial office rule.' When as a result of over conservative and traditional policies you provoke an explosion, you are not slow to ask the British Government and the Colonial Office, which at other times you attack, for troops, aeroplanes and money to suppress a rebellion. I warn you that one day you will be let down. ... The security of your homes, the security of money, farms, and industries you have begun to build, cannot rest on battalions of British troops." As quoted in David F. Gordon, Decolonization and the State in Kenya (Boulder CO: Westview Press, 1986), p. 122.
a transitory stage ... in which the three main races shared responsibility for the running of the state. Multiracialism recognized and built upon the separate racial collectivities of the territory, seeking to manage conflict by establishing a coalition of racial leaders at the top of the political system.

Thus, the new Constitution (of 1954) created a Council of Ministers, “consisting of six official members, two nominated members, and six unofficial members.” Three of the “unofficial” ministers were to be European, two were to be Asian, and one was to be African.185

As the racial ratio of ministers was in inverse proportion to the sizes of the racial groups, this new Constitution might not appear to have been much in the way of “sharing” responsibility between the races, but it was, in fact, in many ways a momentous development. While Europeans were still clearly favoured (necessary at this stage to ensure their continued cooperation with the reform process), the inclusion of the other two races at this level of government was a demonstration by the Colonial Office that they were determined to not allow Kenya to become the kind of white dominion that had evolved in Rhodesia and South Africa. Moreover, the opening up of opportunities for Africans, limited though they may have been at this stage, not only went some way towards alleviating African grievances about participation in government, but also provided an inclusive option to anti-colonial activism for ambitious African politicians. As the Constitution included provisions that the Africans would soon be able to elect representatives to the Legco, the “option” was more substantial than the ministerial division made it seem.186

185There was also to be at least 3 “under-secretaries, one of whom would be an Arab and two ... Africans,” Donald Rothchild, Racial Bargaining in Independent Kenya: A Study of Minorities and Decolonization (London: Oxford University Press, 1973) p. 105.

186Gordon, pp. 126-127. See also Berman, Control and Crisis, pp. 396-397. While the principles of “representation by racial communities” and parity (“the number of European elected members [had to be] equal to the total of all of the other racial groups combined”) remained in effect, the number of African seats was
The Africans, however, found the proposals rather underwhelming. As Odinga pointed out, the ratio of ministers hardly reflected the situation in Kenya, whereby “Africans outnumbered Whites by one hundred to one.”\(^{187}\) Although two Africans were eventually persuaded to take up the available positions, most “waged a bitter battle against the Lyttelton conception of multiracialism,” arguing that it gave the smallest minority (the Europeans) the greatest representation, and the overwhelming majority (the Africans) the least. In fact, no one was particularly pleased with the arrangement. While moderate Europeans accepted that accommodation had to be made, they preferred to keep this as limited as possible. Conservative Europeans believed that any form of multiracialism “was ... a threat to the white man’s future in Kenya.” Even the Asian leaders were “resentful” of the proposals, one declaring “that the plan as based upon ‘racial inequalities rather than on multi-racial equality,” and “insisted upon equal representation of the three main races in the political process” as a minimum requirement.\(^{188}\)

The Lyttelton Constitution, therefore, instead of resolving the situation, or even buying time, as the Colonial Office had hoped,

actually opened almost a decade of intense political conflict. The cleavages and struggles of the society were now reproduced at the very centre of the state in an unstable ministerial stew of civil servants responsible to the Governor and the Colonial Office and local politicians responsible to their own racial/class communities.\(^{189}\)

This was made abundantly clear when the ban on African political parties was raised in 1955 and Africans began to reorganize.

\(^{187}\)Odinga, p. 137.

\(^{188}\)Rothchild, pp. 106-108.

\(^{189}\)Berman, Control and Crisis, p. 396.
d) Indigenous organization resumes: New stars on the horizon

As the ban on colony-wide political associations remained, the Africans were forced to be circumspect in the formation of their parties. Nairobi, still the centre of political activity (though it was now conducted primarily by the Luo because most of the Kikuyu had been removed by the government), established the Nairobi District African Congress (NDAC) in late 1955. Clement Argwings-Khodek, “the only African member of the Nairobi bar” at the time, became president—a rather unnerving prospect for the government, as he had served as defending counsel for accused Mau Mau—and “launched the slogan ‘Africa for the Africans.’” However, the NDAC was not the only organization in Nairobi that was grooming a candidate for the election to be held in 1957. The Kenya Federation of Labour (KFL), although not officially supposed to be directly involved in the political arena, persuaded its General Secretary, Tom Mboya, to stand for election as the “workers’ candidate.”

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190 The government, still leery of organizations such as the KAU, “restricted [organization] to the district level ... [except] among the Kikuyu, the Embu, and the Meru of the Central Province [where] only an advisory council composed of ‘Loyalists’ was permitted.” This area was still suspect because it had been the centre of Mau Mau activity, Rosberg and Notungham, p. 310.

191 They initially wanted to call it the Kenya African National Congress, then the African Congress, but had to settle for the “district” name in order to be given a licence to operate by the government. The licence stipulated “that the congress should not ‘affiliate, merge or otherwise combine with or participate in any other association, organization or society or any combination of such bodies,’” a clear sign of the government’s determination to curtail the development of any colony-wide African association, Kyle, p. 72.

192 Ibid., pp. 71-72.

193 Indeed, its application (in 1955) to be registered as a legal society faced considerable opposition from European members of Legco because of its politicization of a recent dock strike in Mombasa (and its successful organization of a number of unions in Kenya), and was only allowed because the government accepted that “a measure of political expression [by unions] had to be seen as legitimate,” David Goldsworthy, Tom Mboya: The Man Kenya Wanted to Forget (Nairobi: Heinemann; New York: Africana Publishing, 1982) pp. 42-46.

194 Ibid., pp. 69-70. It did not take much persuading: “Mboya very much wanted to stand.” His only real quandary had been where, and Nairobi was the best choice. “All his main connections, above all his labour connections, were drawn together in Nairobi. The only alternative would have been to stand in his home area...
Mboya was in a strong position to challenge Argwings-Khodek. The KFL “represented every one of the colony’s nine registered African trade unions,” and Mboya was ideally placed to take full advantage of his office as General Secretary. Though only twenty-five in 1955, he had already built a considerable reputation derived from his own talent, industry, command of political tactics and the bureaucratic game, and the strength of the international connections he was almost single-handedly forging with other trades union movements and the Labour Party in Britain. He also made good use of a “sabbatical” year in Oxford in 1955, meeting many influential scholars and politicians.

of South Nyanza, and that seemed out of the question because it would have meant abandoning the multi-tribal, urban, trade union base on which he had built his whole career, and making a completely fresh start in rural Luo politics.”

Ibid., p. 37.

In common with most Africans in this period, his birthdate was uncertain; he believed it to be 1930, Ibid., p. 6.

Ibid., pp. 39-41. He was also “a member of both the Labour Advisory Board and the Wages Advisory Board [1953], and early in 1955 he was appointed as one of the two African members of the new African Agricultural Workers Wages Committee (p. 30). Although connections had been made with the British Trades Union Congress, it was felt that the TUC was too closely linked with the Colonial Office Labour Advisory Committee to be too useful, therefore, (Mboya in particular) preferred the association with the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions in the U.S.A., which provided “the prospect of access to a very wide range of platforms and publications ..., ... to American money and patronage; and ... political support from a body uncompromised by any connections with British colonial policy, but one which the British had to respect,” pp. 21-22.

Although he had attended a Catholic college in Kenya, due to financial difficulties, he had to cease his formal education with the African Secondary School Certificate, Ibid., pp. 8-9 However, during a trip to Europe (undertaken to expand the international connections he had been making) in 1953/4, he had arranged a scholarship for a year’s study at the “workers’ college” (Ruskin) at Oxford, supported by the TUC and ICFTU, and by the Kenya government, who evidently felt “that if African trade unionism had to be, then Mboya was by far the most acceptable leader; and hence it was important that he be groomed in the right way by the right people.” He had to delay the return trip until 1955 in order to consolidate his position in the KFL, pp., 32-37. Among the notables he encountered during the 1955/6 trip was Margery Perham “the deeply respected doyenne of British Africanists, massively knowledgeable over the whole sweep of British administration in Africa,” who was deeply impressed by him (pp. 50-60) and who maintained a correspondence with Mboya until 1960, see Alison Smith, “‘Dear Mr Mboya’: Correspondence with a Kenya Nationalist,” Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History, XIX, 3 (October 1991) pp. 159-184.
From England, he went on to the United States, as the guest of the American Committee on Africa, where he expanded the KFL’s connections to include the AFL-CIO and persuaded that organization (and a number of individual philanthropists) to contribute considerable funding for scholarships. News of his activities—including television appearances—increased his growing reputation within Kenya, and on his return in October of 1956, he was greeted by “an exuberant African crowd ... and numerous reporters.” It marked, in many ways, his “arrival” as one of the leading African activists of the era. He was not, however, the only one. While Kenyatta was locked away, Mboya and Oginga Odinga would be “the stars of Kenya politics,” and the contrast and competition between them would have a profound impact on the course of events.

Odinga was also a Luo, but that was one of the few things he and Mboya had in common. About twenty years Mboya’s senior, Odinga brought substantially different experience to his political career. He had struggled hard to obtain an education, eventually becoming a primary-school teacher, and then headmaster of Maseno Veterinary School.

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199 Including $35,000 from the AFL-CIO to build a “Kenya Labor Center,” Goldsworthy, pp. 60-62.

200 Ibid., p. 62.

201 Kyle, p. 77.

202 Even this was not what it might appear. Mboya was a member of the “Suba” Luo, “one of three major sub-divisions of the Luo people in the South Nyanza region.” However, Mboya was actually born near Nairobi, on the estate at Thika where his father worked, and did not even see Nyanza until 1942, when he went to school at Yala. His schooling to that date had been so varied that “he already spoke Luo, Suba, Swahili, some Kikuyu and some English,” Goldsworthy, pp. 4-7. Odinga, on the other hand, was not only born in Central Nyanza (in approximately 1911), but remained close to home until 1934, when he left to attend Alliance High School near Nairobi, Odinga, pp. 4-36.

203 See Odinga, Not Yet Uhuru, for the source of information on his life.
However, he resigned his post at the end of 1946 due to a conflict with school officials, and went into business, establishing the Luo Thrift and Trading Corporation in 1947. The Company also ran a printing press in Nairobi, which published a number of African newspapers. Indeed, the Company engaged in a variety of enterprises, and while these were predominantly located in the Nyanza region, because it had shareholders from "virtually all the tribes in Kenya," Odinga considered it "in its own way, a national movement of the people." Although undoubtedly an exaggeration, the statement is illustrative of Odinga’s passionate devotion to the nationalist cause. Yet, while he believed “that all men are equal ... and should be respected as individuals, not as members of a particular tribe,” he also was instrumental in creating the Luo Union, to link members of the Luo tribe throughout East Africa. Operating as a welfare association (promoting education and cultural activities), the Luo Union also “built an unprecedented national consciousness and unity.” It was, after all, one of the few avenues the Africans could take in that period towards any kind of political consciousness. Odinga expanded his own political

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204 He had been suspended because his behaviour was considered “rude and unbalanced,” his European superiors concluded that he “was a revolutionary teacher... [and]... anti-European,” Odinga, pp. 59-60. They were not the only ones who had difficulty dealing with Odinga. “At one point he was in trouble with his tribe because of wife-beating ... his conduct ... [especially towards European officials] was less than decorous ... [and he] had a hoarse, high-pitched voice with which he used to express himself in great rushes of language that often culminated in a near-hysterical shriek,” Kyle, pp. 78-79. One Colonial Secretary, Reginald Maudling, commented “that Odinga was ‘the only man I have ever seen actually froth at the mouth in a moment of excitement, and his moments of excitement were many,’” Kyle, p. 148. At times, Odinga even "shocked" himself (Odinga, p. 54). While some of the more outlandish displays might have had something to do with the fact that he suffered from epilepsy (Kyle, p. 78), judging from Odinga’s own writings, and the many comments in the sources from those who knew him, I think it is fairly safe to say that he had a rather fiery and impatient temperament, exacerbated by his deeply-felt resentment towards the way Africans were treated by Europeans in Kenya. The sources often contrast his passionate (for want of a better word) behaviour with Mboya’s cool and collected style. The combination must have made for some very interesting encounters.

205 Odinga, p. 84.

206 Ibid., pp. 86-87.
experience by standing (successfully) for election to the Central Nyanza African District Council\(^{207}\) and becoming a member of KAU. He also travelled to India in 1953, and held discussions with Nehru on "the effects of the Emergency in immobilizing all political advance and of the directions in which nationalist expression could nevertheless break through,"\(^{208}\) a demonstration of the continued inter-action between indigenous leaders during the period of independence movements within the British Empire.

With the KAU banned, Odinga continued to work through the Luo Union during the Emergency period, travelling widely throughout East Africa to establish branches and explain the organization’s aims to the people, which were much broader than the name of the association suggested, as he explained:

> We wanted our people... to be united and as one, but we did not want a narrow-minded tribal organization. We told our people they had a role to play to free Kenya from imperialist and settler domination. We told them that the struggle raging during the Emergency years was their struggle too; we had to maintain a national, not a tribal spirit.\(^{209}\)

It was as a result of his work in these years that Odinga gained "a unique stature reflected by his nickname of 'Ja-Ramogi'."\(^{210}\) Thus, with his reputation among the Luo assured, Odinga was ready to step onto the national stage in the 1957 elections.

> It was to be a hotly contested election and, although the first in which Africans could

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\(^{207}\)Where he, inevitably, became embroiled in a number of confrontations with the European officials, pp. 90-94.

\(^{208}\)Ibid., p. 128.

\(^{209}\)Ibid., p. 131.

\(^{210}\)Kyle, p. 78. As Odinga explained it, "Ramogi is the legendary ancestor of the Luo and because I encouraged the preservation of our customary ways I was given a name symbolizing that I continued in the example of our ancestral fathers," Odinga, p. 133.
participate, few of them actually were able (or willing) to cast their votes. This could have been because the franchise system was so complicated, or because members of the Kikuyu, Embu, and Meru tribes "could qualify to vote only by providing positive evidence of loyalty to the government." In any case, limited though the number of messengers may have been, the message of the election was clear: the "militant brand of African nationalism was triumphant." Only two of the eight incumbents had been reelected: Daniel arap Moi in Rift Valley and James Muimi in Akamba—both "relatively quiet constituencies." The other six seats were won by Mboya (Nairobi), Odinga (Nyanza Central), Ronald Ngala (Coast), Lawrence Oguda (Nyanza South), Masinde Muliro (Nyanza North), and Bernard Mate (Central). Moreover, as an illustration of how badly the Kikuyu had been sidelined at this point, none of these members were Kikuyu. "Mboya, Odinga, and Oguda, were Luo, ... Muliro ... was Luhya, Mate was a Meru, Moi a Kalenjin, Muimi a Kamba, [and] Ngala a Giriama."

What united them, however, was their determination to destroy the Lyttelton Constitution, and they banded together into the African Elected Members Organization (AEMO)

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211It was a "qualitative franchise: African electors would be able to cast one, two, or three votes, depending on their qualifications in such areas as education, property ownership, government service, and seniority." The African adult population at the time was approximately 2 million; of these, it was estimated that about ½ million would be eligible to cast at least 1 vote. However, only 4 months was allowed for registration, therefore, given the complexity of the qualification process, it is perhaps not surprising that relatively few managed to register, Goldsworthy, p. 68. For example, in the Central Province, the population was overwhelmingly Kikuyu (1,150,00 out of 1,750,000) yet only 10,500 Kikuyu registered, compared to 21,150 Meru (who "had been signed up to vote by a keen District Commissioner"). In Nairobi, supposedly the most politically active area, only 2,078 Africans actually voted (casting 4,255 ballots), Kyle, pp. 76-77

212Rothchild, p. 109.

213Goldsworthy, pp. 73-74.
with that intent. For them, election to the Legco was simply a tactical move:

It meant that [they] ... could, in a sense, circumvent the regulations restricting African political activity. If they could not attempt to build a colony-wide nationalist organization, they could use Legco to begin building a colony-wide nationalist sentiment; for in Legco they could speak their political minds virtually without hindrance, and with plenty of attendant publicity.

They began immediately. None of them would accept the ministerial posts designated for African members. They totally rejected the policy of multiracialism, and demanded that a further fifteen African seats be established in order to give Africans a majority in the House. And they demanded "that the government should state Britain's ultimate goal for Kenya." They also escalated their activities outside the House, holding a number of public meetings, taking control of or organizing local associations in their constituencies, and ensuring that their arguments were published in as many outlets as possible. Many of the MLCs also took to wearing African costume, instead of European clothing, as a demonstration of their rejection of European domination.

Within six months, the Secretary of State (now Alan Lennox-Boyd) had been forced to visit Kenya to try to find a solution to the impasse. The Lennox-Boyd Constitution of 1958 increased the African seats to 14 (parity with the settlers), added a further 12 seats (4 for each
racial group) that were to be selected by the members of Legco, and stipulated that there would be a 10 year moratorium on constitutional reform. It was, however, to no avail. The new African members simply joined the others in rejecting this Constitution, and by the end of 1958 had boycotted Legco completely.\textsuperscript{219} Before leaving, Odinga caused an uproar in the House (and everywhere else) by speaking publicly the forbidden name of Kenyatta, declaring that he and his fellow prisoners were “in the heart of hearts of the Africans,… still the political leaders.”\textsuperscript{220}

Having opened Pandora’s Box, Odinga proceeded to scatter its contents as far as he could. He held a public meeting in Kisumu (attended by 6,000) to repeat what he had said and to ask for the public’s support. After reports of that meeting appeared in the press, the NDAC and the Mombasa African Democratic Union passed resolutions of support. He then took the battle into AEMO, which “eventually resolved … [to] press for Kenyatta’s release and his return to normal life, together with all those imprisoned, detained, or restricted under the Emergency.” This now became the clarion call at all meetings. The Nairobi Peoples Convention Party created the slogan “Uhuru na Kenyatta” while Odinga’s group used “Kenyatta na Uhuru”, to stress that only with the release of the Kenyatta generation of leaders could [they] have true independence.\textsuperscript{221} The cat was out of the bag, but Kenyatta, at least for now, remained firmly

\textsuperscript{219}Berman, \textit{Control and Crisis}, p. 399.

\textsuperscript{220}Odinga, pp. 156-161.

\textsuperscript{221}Odinga, pp. 156-161. The Nairobi Peoples Convention Party (NPCP) had been formed by Mboya’s supporters in 1957. Mboya had at first refused to hold office in the Party because he did not want to be perceived as “splitting the African political movement.” However, after a visit to Ghana in 1958, he decided to accept the post of president which had been held open for him, Goldsworthy, pp. 77, 99-100.
in it and the government was determined to keep him there.\textsuperscript{222}

It remained to be seen, however, how much longer the government could continue to control affairs in Kenya. By early 1959, it was not only the African MLCs who were demanding that a constitutional conference be held. The Asian, Arab, and one white member joined the Africans in the Constituency Elected Members Organization which sent a delegation (headed by Odinga) to London to argue their case with the Colonial Office.\textsuperscript{223} They were joined in their demands by another new association, the New Kenya Group (NKG), led by Michael Blundell, one of the more pragmatic European members.\textsuperscript{224} The Kenya Indian Congress turned up the heat by having its representatives in Legco threaten “to resign unless either the African elected members agreed to participate in the Government or a new constitutional conference were arranged.”\textsuperscript{225} Mboya added to the tense situation by instructing the district associations to work on the masses, telling them

\textsuperscript{222}In a speech to the Legco in November 1958, the Governor “warned those who would develop a cult of Jomo Kenyatta, ‘The Government has no intention of allowing him at the expiry of his sentence to return to any place near the scene of his former activities,” Kyle, p. 88.

\textsuperscript{223}Odinga, p. 163; see also Goldsworthy, p. 114: “there was ... a new-found appreciation by members of other races that co-operation with the Africans might become increasingly advisable in future.” However, Odinga’s “flirtation with the image of multiracialism” did not last long. He soon got into a conflict with the Asian members over their desire for “a qualitative franchise,” and “joined with Mboya and Kiano in issuing a declaration that ‘For the time being our struggle is an African struggle.’” CEMO broke up, 8 of the African MLCs joined the new Kenya National Party (KNP) which had just been formed by Muliro, and 4 others (“representing Kikuyus and Luos”) formed the Kenya Independence Movement (KIM), Kyle, pp. 93-94.

\textsuperscript{224}Blundell had long been concerned about the hardening of attitudes on all sides of the racial divide. The NKP was “an alliance of most of the elected Europeans, and all of the ‘specially elected’ Africans and Asians,” Goldsworthy, p. 115. They presented themselves as a multi-racial party which “openly faced the fact that [Africans] would ultimately rule the country” whose aim was “to create a nation of all races in which Africans played the major part,” Sir Michael Blundell, \textit{So Rough a Wind: The Kenya Memoirs of Sir Michael Blundell} (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1964) pp. 246-251.

\textsuperscript{225}Rothchild, p. 112 One of the resolutions passed at the 1958 meeting of the Congress stated: “That full support be given to the African community in all its just claims to a proper voice in the administration and government of the country and generally in all its demands.”
"We need simple signs and slogans to be popularized so as to express in one single word the significance of the struggle ... [W]e must sometimes raise the temperature to various levels to meet every situation ... In a mass movement we cannot indulge in the platitudes of those who desire to be called "reasonable", "responsible" or "moderate"."²²⁶

The government itself handed them a word: Hola, a detention camp where, in early 1959, eleven detainees were beaten to death.²²⁷ The ensuing uproar, in both Kenya and Britain, together with the fact that the Conservative Government in Britain had become determined to resolve the Kenya conundrum before the next general election (which they feared they might lose to the Labour Party, who were sure to be less than sympathetic to the settlers) finally led to the announcement of a constitutional conference.²²⁸

At the Lancaster House Conference of January-February 1960, it was the intention of the Colonial Secretary (now Iain Macleod) to formulate a new agreement which would accommodate African nationalist demands for greater representation but also construct the Legco in such a way as to encourage the continuation of the multiracial policy by favouring moderate groups such as the NKP. Thus, the new Constitution gave Africans 33 elected seats, a bare majority of the 65-seat Legislature. Twenty seats were reserved for the racial minorities and twelve "National Members" were created whose complex election scheme depended on support from among more than one racial group. ... [this] structure ... was intended to encourage each section of the minority to cooperate with each other, lest they all remain powerless ... Moreover, Macleod was fully aware that the unity of the African political leaders was precarious. Any split in the African elected majority, a virtual certainty, would leave the minority members holding the balance of power.²²⁹

²²⁶Kyle, p. 94.
²²⁷All of them were Kikuyu–some of the 20,000 still being held as Mau Mau supporters, Kyle, pp. 95-99.
²²⁸Ibid., p. 98.
²²⁹Gordon, pp. 140-142.
One move that seemed to guarantee a split among the Africans was the lifting of the ban on nation-wide political organizations which accompanied the implementation of the new Constitution. Within a few months, the political arena had changed considerably through the creation of a number of new political parties.

At first, it appeared that Africans would divide their political energies on tribal lines. Moi formed the Kalenjin Political Alliance, Ngala organized the Coast African People’s Union, the Maasai joined together in the Maasai United Front and Somalis in the Somali National Association, and Muliro took the remnants of the NKP into the Kenya African People’s Party. However, when the Kenya African National Union (KANU) was established in May 1960, the other parties (which variously represented a number of the smaller tribes) united in the Kenya African Democratic Union (KADU) in an attempt to balance the Kikuyu-Luo dominance in the KANU. The African electorate thus had two “national” parties to choose from: the apparently “moderate” KADU (which “received ... extensive administrative and policy assistance ... as well as financial aid” from the NKP) and the clearly “radical” KANU.

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230 B.A. Ogot and W.R. Ochieng', eds., *Decolonization and Independence in Kenya, 1940-93* (London: James Currey; Nairobi: E.A.E.P.; Athens: Ohio University Press, 1995) p. 65. See also Kyle, pp. 117-118; and Odinga, pp. 193-196. Odinga blamed the split between the African groups partly on the machinations of the all-white United Party, which “was appealing to the minority tribes to combine with it against the ‘Luo-Kikuyu combination of politicians’.” As for Muliro, Odinga “did not believe that [he] was a victim of the emotional appeal of tribalism but he found himself unable to work in the same party as Mboya and he exploited minority feeling to capture support from his home area and use that as a political base. Ngala was a different case. He ... had always been susceptible to settler propaganda .... ” Odinga’s reference to Muliro is ironic, given that he himself had considerable trouble getting along with Mboya, describing him at one point as “a rabid black dog that barked furiously and bit all in his path,” Odinga, p. 145. It also appears that Odinga did his best “to shut Mboya out from any position of leadership” in KANU, but was defeated (although narrowly) by the votes Mboya was able to garner from his followers in the Peoples Convention Party (which was absorbed into KANU) and the labour organizations, Goldsworthy, pp. 139-144.

231 Berman, *Control and Crisis*, p. 409.

232 Ogot and Ochieng’, p. 65.
However, the election campaign (held in 1961) was not conducted on a clear-cut basis that this choice between KADU and KANU might suggest.

Among the African politicians, the election was essentially a series of personalized struggles for position. And though most of the leading candidates campaigned under one or the other of the two main party banners, this did not mean that KANU confronted KADU in a disciplined and monolithic way. Rather, some of the most vigorously fought of all the contests were between members of KANU. For none of the active leaders commanded enough authority to organize his colleagues into an understood and accepted hierarchy. None even dared claim such authority, for fear of being accused of trying to usurp Kenyatta's position.  

For Kenyatta was still the key factor in Kenyan politics. In spite of the fact that Kenyatta "had ... many enemies among his own people," especially the "loyalists," and even though many of the younger politicians were ambivalent about their attitude towards Kenyatta,  it was clear even to ambitious politicians like Mboya "that so long as Kenyatta was alive ... [noone] else would be able to supplant the old man as the supreme unifying symbol for the nationalist movement." Indeed, as the divisions and contentions between the African politicians increased after 1960, "the more apparent it became that only Kenyatta had the potential authority to lead them." Accordingly, KANU's campaign was focussed on Kenyatta: "his face was on their posters, his name on their lips, and his legend won them a convincing majority of the votes."  

\[\text{Goldsworthy, p. 173.}\]

\[\text{Murray-Brown, p. 360. There was even an attempted assassination of Kenyatta while he was imprisoned—by some of the other prisoners, pp. 351-352.}\]

\[\text{Evidenced clearly by the "strong opposition" within AEMO to Odinga's statements in 1958, Odinga, pp.156-161.}\]

\[\text{Goldsworthy, p. 142.}\]

\[\text{Murray-Brown, p. 362. According to Odinga, each KANU candidate "had to sign the following pledge: If elected I promise to abide by the Governing Council decision that (a) Kenyatta, being the leader of our party and the father of our nationalism, must be the first Chief Minister or Prime Minister ...," Odinga, p. 203. Kenyatta had been elected President of KANU at its formation, James Gichuru as Acting President, Odinga as}\]
e) The symbolic fusion: Kenya/tea

KANU's appropriation of Kenyatta certainly seemed to have been effective. In the so-called "Kenyatta election" of 1961, in which "a remarkable 84 per cent of the electorate voted in the 44 contested seats," KANU garnered 67.4% of the vote (19 seats) and KADU received 16.4% (11 seats).\(^{238}\) It is impossible to ascertain, however, exactly what role the "Kenyatta issue" played in the election. Both KANU and KADU were demanding Kenyatta's release, and "held [him] in high regard". Indeed, both parties still hoped that Kenyatta when freed would be able to bring the two factions together to form one mass nationalist organization." Nor was there much to choose between the two parties in regards to the timetable for independence or "general economic policies."\(^{239}\) What really seemed to account for the ratio of votes was that (except in Nairobi) "tribal loyalties were paramount."\(^{240}\) It could be argued, then, that the reason KANU triumphed was because "more than 60 per cent of the African population" were Kikuyu, Luo, Embu, Meru, Kamba, and Kisii who voted according to their loyalty to the politicians of their tribes.\(^{241}\)

Their majority in the popular vote did not bring victory for KANU, however. KADU, in

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238 The remainder went to unaffiliated candidates, Kyle, p. 126.

239 'Ogot and Ochieng', p. 66.

240 Kyle, p. 126. Goldworthy described it as the "phenomenon of the one-party tribe," p.181. Moi's statement that "tribalism will live for at least another fifty years" (his rationale for founding the Baringo District Independent Party in 1958 to represent his own Tugen group) seemed to reflect reality far more than "the received wisdom of the intellectuals," Kyle, p. 77.

241 Berman, Control and Crisis, p. 409. This also worked for KADU, which "appeal[ed] to a sense of tribal unity and solidarity, ... encourag[ed] tribal antagonism and hatred, and ... mobiliz[ed] the network of leadership and social control established by the tribal associations," Tamarkin, p. 272.
cooperation with the NKG, managed to increase its numbers by ensuring that three of its candidates for the "national members" were elected (KANU only got one), and one KANU MLC "was induced by the offer of a ministry to cross the floor." Thus, when the time came for the members to actually take their seats in the House, the numbers were much more evenly balanced at 19 for KANU and 15 for KADU. Not that matters proceeded as planned. KANU announced a boycott of the Legco until Kenyatta was released. KADU then formed an alliance with NKG and formed a coalition government; KANU became the opposition, leaving KANU although not altogether unhappy at the prospect of a term in opposition attacking all its enemies at once – KADU, the Administration, the Lancaster House Constitution; ... at the same time frustrated at losing what it regarded as its rightful leadership role. 242

Perhaps too complacent that they had managed to get a moderate government installed, the colonial authorities decided to allow a delegation of some of the African leaders to visit Kenyatta, either "in the hope that they would return believing him senile" (and, presumably, would give up on the idea that he could play a leadership role), or that he would make "a clear statement of his political beliefs" (and alienate at least one of the African parties).

Kenyatta refused to oblige on either score. He appeared fit and abreast of the situation, glad to see Odinga, and talking about the future, not the past. He would not declare himself for either party ... but threatened to form a third if they could not resolve their differences. He stood, he said, for all Kenyans, and unity was the only important thing. 243

The colonial authorities were thus check-mated by the "old man."

Indeed, the whole exercise had backfired. KANU and KADU now joined together to

242Goldsworthy, pp. 181-182.

243Murray-Brown, p. 363.
demand his release, and independence in 1961. Moreover, sensing that it would be KANU, not KADU, that would “hold the key to Kenya’s future,” influential European leaders in Kenya “began to shift” their support from KADU to KANU. Even the colonial authorities (in Britain and Kenya) “came to recognize that it was KANU and their old nemesis Jomo Kenyatta, with whom they would have to deal if Kenya was to have a stable transferral of sovereignty.”

Accepting the inevitable, the government released Kenyatta on 14 August 1961, and he returned to his home in Kikuyuland, to be greeted by an exuberant crowd of 10,000. “Triumphant appearances throughout Kenya followed.” In his speeches, Kenyatta repeatedly emphasized “the themes of tolerance, unity and effort,” and in a perhaps non too subtle dig at the long years of government repression, “called for a KANU recruiting campaign so that Kenya could move to independence through well-ordered Party discipline and in the clear light of day.” He met with the reluctant Governor, was interviewed by the press, and agreed at last to accept the presidency of KANU. By January, 1962, he had been “returned unopposed for the Fort Hall constituency” and took his seat in the House. Within a month, he was leading the KANU

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244 Odinga, p. 215.

245 Although they still preferred the moderate wing, led by Mboya, to the radical section led by Odinga, Gordon, p. 147.

246 Emphasis mine: while this could have been aimed at the secret meetings of the Mau Mau, it is not unreasonable to assume that, in Kenyatta’s often sub-textual way, he was also referring to the secrecy previously required because of the government ban on political activities (and on African newspapers—see Odinga, p. 191), Kenyatta, Suffering Without Bitterness, p. 158.

247 Including the BBC, which broadcast a 45 minute interview in Britain in November.

248 Murray-Brown, pp. 365-367. KADU “repudiated his leadership” when he became President of KANU, Goldsworthy, p. 188. See also Odinga, p. 221. Kenyatta studied the political landscape for several weeks after his release before making up his mind to join KANU.
delegation to yet another constitutional conference at Lancaster House.  

Before leaving for London, Kenyatta’s first article in 16 years appeared in the *East African Standard*. On this momentous occasion, his message to the people of Kenya was one of reconciliation and reassurance:

‘I go to London as the President of KANU, with the assurance that the overwhelming majority of the people of Kenya are with me. KANU’s policy is based on the fundamental principle of complete equality for every citizen of Kenya. KANU will not accept any privilege for any tribe or race, and will fight against any individual discrimination based on tribe, race or religion. I believe in the complete integration of all the peoples of Kenya into one nation. I believe that in a free Kenya a person’s loyalty must be to his country, not to his tribe or race. ... KANU will insist on a strong unitary form of Government, elected by the people on universal adult franchise. ... It is a gross error to believe that the division of the country into “Regions” will in some way help to preserve individual liberties. On the contrary, it could easily lead to chaos and disintegration. We go to London not only to bring independence to our country, but to bring peace and brotherhood among its many peoples. We desire to bring love where there was hatred; peace where there was violence; confidence where there was suspicion.’

Thus it can be seen that, within the benign statements about his dream of a fully united and integrated Kenya, Kenyatta also expressed his (and KANU’s) determination to oppose KADU’s “call for the establishment of regional governments (majimbo), and the protection of their interests through a federal constitution.” This would prove to be one of the most contentious issues dealt with at the conference.

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249Kyle, p. 142-143.

250Kenyatta, *Suffering Without Bitterness*, pp. 168-169. It is interesting to note that, in 1961, one of the European ministers had reached the same conclusion as Kenyatta regarding the perils of regionalism, though for different reasons. K.W.S. MacKenzie had concluded “that, far from securing the interests of minority ethnic groups and races, decentralization would work against them by generating strong institutions in the comparatively advanced regions populated by the Kikuyu and Luo and much weaker ones in the regions where the smaller ethnic groups lived,” Gordon, p. 148.

251KADU feared “that a unitary state on the Westminster model which KANU favoured would place too much power in the hands of the majority party,” which, for them, represented the majority tribes, Ogot, “Kenya Under the British,” p. 288.
Indeed, so difficult was it to reach agreement on a new constitution, that the conference dragged on for two months. The Colonial Secretary (now Reginald Maudling) waited until the KANU and KADU representatives had argued themselves into exhaustion before suggesting a compromise between the two positions. It was now that Kenyatta’s role was ... crucial and ... saw the beginning of his exercise of real leadership. He addressed the KANU delegation, telling them that it was not possible to return with a report of failure. They might be forced to accept a constitution they did not want, but once they got independence they could change it later. KANU members, many by now eager for office, accepted this advice with varying degrees of enthusiasm. Even Odinga, however reluctantly, went along with it because it came from the lips of his hero-figure.252

The resultant agreement was an ungainly and complex combination of both KANU and KADU demands. However, it resolved the stalemate so that everyone could return to Kenya and form a coalition government that could hammer out the details of the next constitution.

It would not be an easy process, not least because it “was a thoroughly uneasy coalition” government.253 Many issues had yet to be resolved, and the flurry of commissions reporting on “regional boundaries, constituency delimitations, fiscal affairs,” etc. added to the tensions and uncertainty.254 For example, the Regional Boundaries Commission had the baffling task of reconciling the twin directives they had been given: the one to stay as close as possible to existing administrative boundaries and the other to pay heed to people’s preferences. ‘It is clearly established,’ they found, ‘that there is a compelling

252Kyle, p. 149. See pp. 143-150 for his exposition of the negotiations. See also Ogot and Ochieng’, pp. 69-73.

253Odinga, p. 233. Blundell agreed, declaring that “KADU are in a highly emotional and non-constructive mood; it is almost impossible to get them to see reason on anything.” as quoted in Kyle, p. 161. Nor was KANU in much better shape, undergoing yet another of its periods of factionalism and conflict between the leaders, in particular an increasing animosity between Mboya and the Kenyatta-Odinga duo, Goldsworthy, pp. 208-210.

254Kyle, p. 150.
and sincere desire on the part of many of the peoples of Kenya to be associated with some and not with others.” The Kamba ... were adamant in their desire not to be in the same region as the Maasai. No one wanted to be left in the same region either with the Kikuyu or with the Luo. The Embu (conditionally) and the Meru (absolutely) wanted to be no part of the first nor did the Luhya of the second .... “

There was also the small matter of the Somali demand that their area secede completely, which Kenyatta was emphatically opposed to.\textsuperscript{255} To add to the confusion, the British Government underwent a substantive restructuring during the same period, the Colonial Office was absorbed into the Commonwealth Relations Office, and yet another minister was now responsible: Duncan Sandys.\textsuperscript{256} However, by April of 1963, a constitution for self-government had finally been agreed upon,\textsuperscript{257} and the parties then prepared for the final election of the colonial period, to determine who would lead Kenya into independence.

While KANU was far better organized and funded than it had been for the previous

\textsuperscript{255}Ibid., pp. 169-171. The Governor’s “health collapsed under the strain” of trying to deal with all these difficulties, “and for nearly eight weeks, ... he wandered throughout the wilder parts of Kenya, communing ‘with more or less dumb animals who never made speeches and never gave a thought to Kenya’s politics’,” p. 171. The Northern Province People’s Progressive Party, (one of five Somali parties represented at the Conference of 1962) had led the argument there for separating “the eastern part of the [Northern Frontier] District ... immediately ... from Kenya ... [to be] prepared under British rule for subsequent amalgamation with the Somali Republic.” KANU’s response had been that if the Somalis wanted to live under a Somali government they should move to Somalia, pp. 156-158.

\textsuperscript{256}Ibid., pp. 162-163. The lack of continuity in approach due to the repeated change in Colonial Secretaries during this period did little to ease the tension and uncertainty. Blundell complained that he had met with 6 Secretaries during his political career, and that “the decision [to merge the two Offices] ... was a mistake, especially at a most critical juncture in our advance to independence, when a great amount of detailed thought and attention was required for our manifold and awkward problems. We did not get this ... ;” Blundell, p. 317.

\textsuperscript{257}Goldsworthy, p. 214. Odinga declared it “one of the most involved constitutions ever devised ... It ran to an overwhelming 223 pages. It has been called a constitution of checks and balances, but I would say there were more checks than anything else. Our population of eight million had to carry a many-tiered government apparatus: two central and seven regional assemblies (though the seventh was born later because the Somalis boycotted the elections on a demand for secession ...), and separate police forces, judiciaries, and public service commissions for each region,” Odinga, p. 233. Kyle stated that the constitution was 247 pages long, p. 175.
election, it was also faced with more opponents—many of them previous members of KANU itself. Some of the Luo had split away, forming their own Luo United Movement, and Pau Ngei (who had been tried along with Kenyatta) broke away to form the African People’s Party, drawing off most of his Kamba supporters, and “some individuals from other tribes.” Given the mutually antagonistic relations between many of the African leaders, it was hardly surprising that the election campaigns (for national, regional and local seats) “were marred by widespread thuggery, bribery and intimidations.”

The result was a clear victory for KANU, which won 83 of the 124 House of Representatives seats, including seats in every region. It won also a majority in the Senate and control of three of the seven regional assemblies: Central, Eastern, and Nyanza.

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258 Kenyatta had appointed Odinga to organize the Party during the coalition-government period, Odinga, p. 235. His biggest contribution was probably the funds he obtained “from communist sources.” However, it was Joseph Murumbi, the treasurer of the Party, who brought in “considerable sums from Morocco, Egypt and Ghana” and “brought about a very necessary tightening up of party discipline and central control.” By the time of the election, it was estimated that KANU had accumulated as much as L275,000, while KADU had only L35,000, Kyle, p. 172.

259 Initially established as the Luo Political Movement, by 4,000 Nairobi Luo who opposed the Kikuyu dominance in KANU, Goldsworthy, p. 209.

260 Kyle, p. 173. Ngei was considerably less conciliatory than Kenyatta towards the white minority.

261 While KANU announced that it “would not ‘stand by and watch the country go to ruin because a few people want to carve out little kingdoms for themselves under the guise of protecting tribal interests’, ... the KADU campaigns gave much evidence that tribalism was not dead,” for example, a Luhya candidate declared that “Unity with the Kikuyu is unity with death,” Kyle, p. 175.

262 Even between rival factions of KANU, Ogot and Ochieng’, p. 75.

263 Thanks to “Kenyatta’s name to draw the crowds, Mboya’s organizing ability and Odinga’s loyalty,” Murray-Brown, p. 368.

264 Goldsworthy, p. 215. “The actual figures were KANU 72, of whom seven had run as Independents but identified themselves immediately as KANU and another, elected as KADU, had instantly crossed over, KADU 32, APP 8, Independents 2. ... KANU took care that it should not suffer this time from indiscipline in the Special Elections. It won 11 of the 12 seats, ... including its two prominent European farmers ... It had an absolute majority in the Senate, with 20 seats (including two Independents who declared themselves for KANU) out of
Thus, in June 1963, Kenyatta became Kenya’s first Prime Minister. He immediately set out to demonstrate his ideal of unity, carefully constructing his cabinet to include representatives from each region, and meeting with the white settlers to (apparently) successfully reassure them that they had a future in independent Kenya. He also sent a delegation headed by Mboya (now Minister for Justice and Constitutional Affairs) to London to make the arrangements for the constitutional conference that would create an independent Kenya.

And so, in October of 1963, there was a final meeting to determine Kenya’s future. KANU, now in a far stronger position because of its overwhelming electoral victory, wanted substantive changes to the existing constitution. KADU, even more fearful now of KANU dominance, threatened civil war if their regional powers were diluted. In the face of KANU’s counter-threat that it would unilaterally declare independence if agreement was not reached on their terms, the Secretary of State decided to accede to KANU’s demands for a unitary civil service and police force and a change to the amendment of the constitution procedures, and revised the proposed Independence Bill accordingly.

38 against KADU’s 16 and APP’s 2,” Kyle, pp. 176-177.

265Murray-Brown, p. 368; see also Kyle, pp. 177 and 179. One settler even announced that “It’ll be all right so long as the Old Man is still around,” p. 179 an astounding reversal of attitude towards Kenyatta, and a demonstration of his persuasive powers.

266Goldsworthy, p. 218.

267KANU’s argument was that the existing arrangements were not flexible enough and would prove unworkable. They wanted, and got, “amendments to create one Public Service Commission ... instead of eight; a unified control and command of the entire Police force; and a change in the amendment machinery to enable changes [to the constitution] to take place on a two-thirds national referendum,” Jomo Kenyatta, Harambee! The Prime Minister of Kenya’s Speeches, 1963-1964 (Nairobi: Oxford University Press, 1964) p. 14.

268Kyle, pp. 189-193. It seems that pragmatism triumphed: “three of the most verbally bellicose Kalenjin figures in KADU ... crossed the floor and joined KANU.” Even Ngei dissolved the APP and rejoined KANU, p. 192.
Kenyatta returned home to prepare for independence day (12 December 1963), declaring to the welcoming crowd:

I do not regard our mission to London as a victory for KANU. This is a victory for Kenya, and for responsible and sensible policies aimed at the welfare of all our people. ... I invite the Opposition leaders to forget the past, and come together with us to form a united front to fight our real enemies—poverty, ignorance and disease. ... I see no shame in forgetting the past. To do this is an act of wisdom and courage that goes with genuine leadership. Here is our opportunity: let it never be said that we refused to take it.  

Kenyatta, for one, was not about to turn down the opportunity to lead his country into a new era.

f) Conclusion

However, the ‘new era’ did not signify that Kenya had miraculously become a united country at independence. KADU’s fears of KANU domination became the reality, as Kenyatta used the constitutional amendment formula to increase substantially the power of the executive (and, especially of the president), and Kenya quickly became a one-party state, as opposition party members crossed the floor in order to obtain positions of influence within the government. While the white settlers became reconciled to the ‘old man,’ taking up Kenyan citizenship in the belief that “‘[e]verything will be alright so long as ... [Kenyatta] is there,” others soon became disenchanted. Three years after independence, Odinga (the vice-president)  

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271 A trend that had begun even before independence, see B.A. Ogot, “The Decisive Years, 1956-63,” in *Decolonization & Independence in Kenya, 1940-93,* pp. 76-77.

272 Ochieng’, “Structural & political changes,” p. 93.
split with Kenyatta and formed an opposition party (the Kenya People’s Union), an indication of the continued factionalism within Kenyan politics. Although Kenyatta was able to maintain his rule, through the effective use of the coercive powers of the state, his shrewd manipulation of the factions in Kenyan society, and the continued support of his own ethnic base, the question of what would happen when the ‘old man’ was no longer in charge would hang over Kenya as an ever-sharpening sword. The divisions among Kenyans remained, apparently quiescent while Kenyatta ruled, but undiminished.

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273 He was joined by a number of defectors from KANU, Ibid., pp. 98-100.

274 Ibid., pp. 94-106.
As the case studies of India, the Gold Coast (Ghana), Nigeria, and Kenya have demonstrated, there was indeed a similar pattern of events and circumstances in these colonial territories during the pre-independence phase in each. This pattern, reduced to its most basic components, involved the creation of a political organization, led by members of the Western-educated indigenous elite, which challenged the legitimacy of imperial control by asserting that the indigenous population of the colony constituted a 'nation' and that this 'nation' had the inherent right to govern itself. In order to prove the existence of this 'nation', and its rejection of imperial rule, the political organization garnered popular support, inciting substantive numbers of the indigenous population to undertake activities which would demonstrate to the imperial authorities the solidarity between the indigenous population and its 'representative' political organization. The 'voice of the nation' thus having been heard, the imperial rulers eventually accepted that they could no longer impose their will over the colonial territory, and undertook a series of negotiations with 'the people's representatives' to arrange the relinquishment of imperial control and its replacement by the creation of a self-governing, independent state. On a mutually-acceptable date, the Union Jack would be furled, to accompany the British officials on their more or less dignified retreat, and a new flag would be raised amidst joyous celebration to signal the birth of the new 'nation' and the successful end of that colony's struggle for independence from imperialism and the triumph of indigenous nationalism over foreign rule.

The foregoing was, of course, a simplified version of the paradigm of how 'nationalist independence movements' evolved and functioned during the dissolution of the British Empire.
However, the brief synopses of the relevant events outlined in the case studies of India, the Gold Coast (Ghana), Nigeria, and Kenya provided within this dissertation demonstrate that this same basic pattern can be discerned in each of these cases. That is, that the paradigm can serve as an analytic template for the simplistic historiographical construction of expositions of the transitional period between imperial rule and independence. Thus, using this formula, it is possible to assert that the Indian National Congress (INC), the Convention People’s Party (CPP) in the Gold Coast (Ghana), the National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons (NCNC), and the Kenya African National Union (KANU) formed the ‘political organizations’ which challenged the legitimacy of imperial rule and mobilized the indigenous population in their respective colonial territories in order to demonstrate popular support for the organization’s demand for indigenous self-government. In other words, that these organizations represented the ‘nationalist independence movements’ within their respective colonial territories.

Yet the case studies also demonstrate that the simplistic paradigm described above does not, in fact, constitute a fully viable analytic framework because the complexities of the events of the transitional period in each case cannot be subsumed within this basic pattern. The studies show that the four organizations mentioned above did not, in reality, represent ‘the nation’, let alone the ‘nationalist independence movement.’ Indeed, in none of the cases was there evidence that a ‘nation’ existed to be so represented. Moreover, there were a number of other organizations in each case which also claimed to represent ‘national’ aspirations, and which had distinctly different definitions of what constituted that ‘nation’.

The failure of this basic pattern to adequately define the transitional process lies not with the factors which constructed the pattern, however, but with the historiographical assumption
that both defines and is constructed by this simplistic pattern. This assumption is founded on the belief that ‘nationalism’ was the primary motivational factor in the colonial independence movements.

This belief was initiated by the indigenous Western-educated élite who led the organizations which presented themselves as ‘representative’ of the indigenous population, and who articulated their demands for self-government in terms which would legitimize those demands. And because they had been educated in Western political history, they must have realized that to present their case as a ‘nationalist’ cause would accord with the Western tradition that associated ‘nation’ and ‘state’, a tradition that had particular resonance following the assertion of the right of ‘nations’ to ‘self-determination’, espoused as a rationale for the dismantlement of the Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman Empires at the end of World War I—by, among others, the British Government. Thus, by styling their demands for self-government as the expression of indigenous ‘nationalism’, the élite were able to argue that independence from imperial rule was not only a morally and politically legitimate goal, it was an inevitable and natural development in the history of the ‘nation.’

In this way, the ‘struggle for independence’ in the colonial territories was defined as being motivated by the ‘nationalism’ of the indigenous population, because those who professed to ‘represent’ that population (and who appeared to be supported by a substantive proportion of that population) declared it to be so. Thus, the assumption was formed. And those who wrote accounts of the transitional period during which this ‘nationalism’ was supposedly expressed (both at the time and later), working on this assumption, determined that the process described by the simplistic paradigm outlined above was what had actually taken place. In other
words, given that these demands for self-government were driven by ‘nationalism’, there must, therefore, have been ‘nationalist’ organizations which functioned in the manner described above, and there must have been a sense of ‘nationalism’ operating within the indigenous populations, and so forth. Thus, the paradigm was formed by the assumption.

Yet, as the case studies have demonstrated, the paradigm does not completely fit the events and circumstances of the transitional period in each of these colonial territories; therefore, it is clear that the assumption which formed it has to be discarded. The baby does not have to be thrown out with the bathwater, however: it is possible to construct an expanded version of the paradigm which can accommodate the individual complexities of each case and form a clear pattern for the transitional process. And that pattern provides a different interpretation of the motivational factor, which, being derived from the pattern (instead of being the underlying formative assumption for the construction of the pattern), is a more reasonable explanation of the process itself.

Thence we return to the four case studies. It is by comparing the similarities between them that the common factors which will become the constituent parts of the expanded, and more sophisticated, pattern can be discovered and defined. This pattern can then be used as a model, and tested further by future comparative case studies of the transitional period in the other colonial territories in the British Empire.¹

We begin with the most basic factor of all: the colonial territory itself. As described in Chapter 2, prior to the imposition of imperial control, none of these territories had existed as an

¹Rather than go through a tedious and repetitive recapitulation of the factors in the pattern in each case, I will employ generalizations to depict the common factors in all of the case studies, and make reference to specifics from the case studies where appropriate.
independent, self-governing state. In other words, 'India', the 'Gold Coast' ('Ghana'), 'Nigeria', and 'Kenya' did not exist politically or even geographically until so delineated by the British.

On the Indian subcontinent, thousands of years of invasions and civil wars had resulted in the formation of a multitude of autonomous and semi-autonomous kingdoms and provinces, but these had never been united into one polity. Indeed, even the British Raj included only two-thirds of the land surface of the subcontinent, the other third was divided between over five hundred (ostensibly) independent princely states. The borders of the African colonies were demarked by agreement between the European imperial powers in the late nineteenth century: the infamous 'lines drawn on a map' which did not reflect any of the indigenous linguistic, ethnic, geographical, cultural, religious, or socio-political boundaries.

Furthermore, each of these four territories contained within them a variety of geographical and anthropological divisions. That is, differences in the topography of each territory divided it internally into distinct regions: arid and semi-arid, grassland, jungle, coastal, mountain, and so forth. Although there was intermittent contact between individuals from the groups of indigenous populations inhabiting the different regions (primarily through trade or pilgrimage), the groups themselves were separated by these natural boundaries, and these geographical distinctions became part of the group identity.

The anthropological divisions (religious, linguistic, cultural, ethnic, etc.) were more complex. For example, in the Gold Coast (Ghana) and Nigeria, Muslims were primarily resident in the northern regions of those territories, while in India, Muslims lived throughout the subcontinent (though more densely located in the northern plains of the Indus and Ganges river basins than in the other regions). An example of the linguistic complications within one territory
would be Kenya, where the dominant Bantu-speaking population is itself divided into three major linguistic sub-groups (the Kikuyu, the Kamba, and the Luhya). As the case studies illustrate, the indigenous populations\(^2\) of each of the colonial territories were inherently divided into distinct groups (and sub-groups), categorized by their religion, language, ethnicity, and so forth, and it was by these categories that the groups—and the individuals within them—identified themselves.

For example, an Asante from central Ghana would identify him/herself as Asante, and not Ghanaian; a Kikuyu from the Central Highlands of Kenya would identify him/herself as Kikuyu, and not Kenyan; an Ibo from Eastern Nigeria would identify him/herself as Ibo, and not Nigerian; and a Sikh from the Punjab region would identify him/herself as Sikh, and not Indian, and so forth. Thus, it was by their specific regional, religious, linguistic, etc. affiliations that individuals within the indigenous populations of all of these four territories identified themselves and their groups.

Therefore, what is clear from the exposition of the pre-colonial conditions in the four case studies is that

(1) the geographical boundaries of the colonial territories were created by the imposition of imperial possession (i.e. ‘Kenya’ became ‘Kenya’ because of the lines drawn by Europeans on the map of Africa);

(2) there was no inherent geographical unity to any of these colonial territories (i.e. no natural features that were conterminous with the borders that demarcated the colony);

(3) there was no inherent anthropological unity either (i.e. the majority of the inhabitants did not share the same religion, language, ethnicity, etc.).

From this, it can reasonably be concluded that no ‘nation’ corresponding to the parameters of

\(^2\)In the case of Kenya, of course, there were also the Arab, Indian, and European populations. While resident in the territory (for generations in some cases), they were not, however, indigenous to that territory.
the eventual independent state existed in any of the four colonial territories prior to them becoming colonial territories. Therefore, there could not have been any ‘nationalist’ sentiment, or sense of belonging to a ‘nation’, among the indigenous population in the pre-colonial period.

Further evidence of this is to be found in the material in Chapter 2 and in the case studies (Chapters 3 to 6) which describes the initial responses in these territories to the imposition of imperial rule. Though varying in duration and intensity, this initial response was invariably a rejection (often violent) of the attempt to change the status quo, which was some type of indigenous governmental organization. However, the piecemeal approach of the British to territorial acquisition, combined with the imperial preference for administering these acquisitions through systems of indigenous collaborators (once suzerainty had been established), not only meant that indigenous group identities were maintained—because the British did not attempt to impose another identity upon each group—but also that the existing frequently antagonistic divisions between indigenous groups were also maintained, and, in some cases, deepened. An example of this can be found in the Gold Coast (Ghana), where accommodation was eventually reached by the British with the member groups of the Fante Confederacy, which then expected the British to protect them from incursions by their traditional enemy, the Asante. The British-Fante alliance (tenuous and insubstantial though it may have been) exacerbated the existing tensions between the Fante tribes and the Asante, who increased their incursive activities into Fante territory. In similar fashion, in all of these four territories, indigenous groups became allies of the British against other indigenous groups. In none of the cases did all (or even a majority) of the indigenous groups ally together against the British, even after British expansionist tendencies had become clear. For example, during the Mutiny in India in 1857, only in the
newly-annexed province of Oudh was there any real unified indigenous opposition; the rest of the rebellion was conducted in a scattered patchwork across northern India.³

While such violent expressions of indigenous rejection of imperial rule would sporadically break out in all of these four colonial territories throughout the colonial period in each, the British were invariably able to suppress them—and with the aid of other indigenous groups, for indigenous people were recruited into the coercive forces (military and police). Moreover, the imperial policy of employing indigenous civilian collaborators to function as part of the administrative structure ensured that these individuals, in positions of apparent influence and power, had little incentive to reject the legitimacy of the imperial authority which thus employed them. In each of the colonial territories, these indigenous collaborators formed a symbiotic relationship with the imperial authorities, becoming part of the patron-client system by which the British could establish and maintain imperial control.⁴

Whether rajah or wealthy landowner in India, or ‘tribal chief’ in the African colonies, the primary, day-to-day contact between the imperial government and the indigenous population was conducted through these indigenous agents. The systems of collaborators that the British

³While there was a substantial, if temporary, breakdown in British control in a variety of regions in the North, much of the disruption was localized. Even the military mutiny was confined to specific units of the Bengal Army. Although there were a number of rural rebellions in the wake of the mutiny, these were demonstrations of peasant discontent over specific grievances rather than of solidarity with the soldiers in a common cause. Some of the traditional rules, who had their own grievances against the British, also tried to use the opportunity to reestablish their feudal powers. However, indigenous factionalism ensured that no coordinated effort to reinstate indigenous rule of any form was successful. And, as referred to above, the British had the able assistance of their indigenous allies (especially the Sikhs) to suppress those indigenous groups which had rebelled against them. See Wolpert, History of India, pp. 234-238; Brown, Modern India, pp. 85-94; and Burke and Quraishi, pp. 27-47.

⁴See Colin Newbury, “Patrons, Clients, and Empire: The Subordination of Indigenous Hierarchies in Asia and Africa,” Journal of World History, Vol. II, #2 (Fall 2000) pp. 227-233. Newbury argued that this ‘patron-client’ model is a more flexible and appropriate categorization of the administrative systems established by the British in their colonial territories than the ‘indirect rule’ model.
established in each of the colonial territories varied in specifics, but were uniformly presented as ‘traditional’, despite the fact that none of these specific systems of local authority were, in fact, ‘traditional’ at all. While the creation by the British of ‘tribal chiefs’ for the Ibo in Nigeria, who had not actually had such a thing in their culture before, was an extreme example, in all of these territories, the local collaborative agencies were constructions of the imperial system. There had long been tribal chiefs and rajahs and landowners, of course, but the parameters of their authority over local residents and the terms under which they had acquired such positions had been far more flexible, and their status had been liable to challenge by indigenous rivals to a greater extent, than under the system imposed by the British. However, because the ‘job titles’ were familiar to the locals, and the imperial policies were filtered through these indigenous agents to the local populations, these agents became established as the ‘traditional élites’ in the colonial territories, representing, in an uncomfortable dichotomy, both the imperial power and the indigenous population.

It must be remembered that the indigenous populations in these colonies were predominantly rural peasants, engaged in either subsistence agriculture or as workers on large estates owned by others (or a combination of the two occupations) living in hundreds of thousands of villages scattered throughout the territories. Uneducated and un-informed, few had any awareness of (or interest in) what was happening outside of their locality. There had always been some kind of local authority, which had evolved out of those particular societies over time, which had been the font of influence and patronage as well as governance. Although there was considerable resentment of and opposition to the imposition of the new systems of authority (evidenced by peasant rebellions or riots—such as the rebellions in India during the Mutiny, or the
Aba Riots in Nigeria), there was no practicable alternative for the peasants but to adapt to the new systems. Whoever held the local position of authority, regardless of to what degree that authority was used to impose imperial policies that would be detrimental to local interests, was the de facto indigenous ‘élite’ in that locality, and the other residents had no option but to accept these as their ‘leaders’. And, because it was the imperial power which delegated this authority to the ‘traditional élite’, this élite was beholden to the imperial regime for their positions of authority, so they would be unlikely to risk losing their positions by opposing imperial policies.

In this manner, the British constructed an administrative system in each of these four colonial territories which consisted of the vast majority of the population—the peasants—at the bottom (as usual), a intermediary level of indigenous collaborators—the ‘traditional élite’—which functioned as the basis of the administration, and a tiny group of British officials perched (more precariously than they would care to admit) at the top. Despite sporadic outbreaks of peasant unrest, this system functioned with reasonable efficiency and, in accordance with imperial policy, cheaply (at least, as far as the British were concerned—the peasants undoubtedly did not share the same opinion regarding the taxes imposed upon them to pay the administrative expenses).

However, although this administrative state of equilibrium appeared to be relatively stable, it was considerably less likely that stasis could be maintained in the colonial territories than had been possible in their pre-colonial periods. In fact, there is a profound irony in the fact that it was the very imposition of imperial rule, and the administrative system that the imperial power introduced, that would be the root cell of the cancer that would eventually destroy imperial control. For it was imperial rule itself which not only initiated and magnified the disruptive forces that irrevocably changed the status quo in each territory, but which also
provided the motivation, the means, and the ideology that would nourish and be nourished by these disruptive forces.

Indeed, the disruption had begun before imperial rule was imposed, as a result of the contact between European traders and indigenous peoples. Indigenous economies adapted to accommodate the requirements of this trade, initiating a variety of changes in indigenous societies in traditional trading patterns, types of surplus production, and wealth distribution—and the social and political influence wealth provides—(both within specific trading groups and between different regions of these territories). As the ‘early contact/trade’ era evolved into the imperial period, new urban centres were established, or old ones expanded, as trading or administrative hubs, and the increased activity—and employment opportunities—attracted migrants from the rural areas. Although many of these migrants retained close ties and contacts with their native villages and families, as the decades passed, they evolved into a new class, becoming an urban indigenous population. While maintaining their traditional religious, linguistic, ethnic, and cultural practices, this new class—because of its more intense contact with imperial attitudes, practices, and ideas—developed different attitudes and interests from the rural indigenous population, attitudes and interests that reflected the different circumstances of urban life.

However, rural life also underwent substantive changes. As the export economy expanded, traditional production practices were forced to adapt. In many areas, Europeans and wealthy indigenous entrepreneurs accumulated large estates for commercial-scale agriculture, displacing thousands of peasants, who were thereby transformed from relatively independent

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5In those cases where the ‘trade’ was that of slaves (in West and East Africa), the ‘disruption’ to indigenous societies had been profound.
subsistence farmers to agricultural workers. Many of these became transient, migrating (with or without their families) in search of employment at the commercial farms, or even in the mines and factories which were also being developed. Therefore, the rural peasants also had considerable adjustments to make in order to adapt to the changing circumstances, and the rural population could no longer be categorized as an amorphous 'mass' but was differentiated by the varying degree and type of impact that the imposition of imperial possession—and its ramifications—had on the lives of individuals and groups. Thus the disruptive forces unleashed on the indigenous populations in each of these territories involved substantive economic, social, and demographic transformations.

Nor were these the only disruptive forces which would have such tremendous impacts on the indigenous peoples. New ideas and religions were also introduced, challenging the traditional belief systems, and causing further divisions in the indigenous population. Conversion to the various denominations of Christianity brought societal (and familial) disjunction for those individuals who chose to abandon or alter their indigenous religion and its practices, intensifying social tension—and anxieties among the indigenous population about the ramifications of imperial rule. Even if an individual did not convert to Christianity, but only attended one of the educational facilities established by Christian missionaries, the knowledge and skills (especially literacy) thus acquired would be sufficient to set him apart from his fellows.6

It would be through attendance at these schools that a new indigenous élite would emerge. Individuals from traditional élite families (both historically and imperially-created) and

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6While there were some schools for girls, the vast majority of those who attended these (or even indigenous) were boys.
their class of officials, members of the comprador and merchant classes, and even some individuals from the less-advantaged strata believed that the type of education available at the missionary schools would facilitate their integration into the imperial system that was being implemented in their homelands. The initial impetus was to become literate in the language of the imperial power, and to use this skill to obtain employment as translators or clerical workers in the administrative and judicial bureaucracies. Those who acquired this skill (though not necessarily the employment they desired) would constitute yet another indigenous class—predominantly in the urban centres—of semi-educated (and often, unemployed or underemployed), young men. While part of the urban indigenous population, they were distinctive because of their education, and their types of employment—or their expectations of employment. Having some degree of knowledge and absorption of the attitudes, practices, and ideas of the West (as represented by the imperial power, Britain), differentiated them from the un-educated indigenous groups; however, because they usually retained their religious/cultural/ethnic/linguistic affiliations, their position was an unsettled (and unsettling) state of completely belonging to neither the West nor to their indigenous group. This state, combined with their frequently disappointed expectations of what the benefits of Western education would bring them, imbued this group with a resentment and instability that would frequently prove volatile. As a result, this was the group that tended to become involved in any indigenous political activism that appeared to promise a resolution to the dichotomy between their expectations and their reality: greater indigenous participation in the administration of the colonial territory—and, especially, self-government—would provide more opportunities for

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7Thus becoming, in Newbury's model, part of the patron-client system.
employment, thereby improving this group's economic and social status. Moreover, these individuals had the skills (literacy, etc.) and the knowledge (however limited) needed for political organization, and the indigenous connections to facilitate the proselytism of political ideas. Thus, they made perfect 'soldiers' for the 'generals' of the indigenous independence movements.

These 'generals' were those who had acquired a greater degree of education than those just described. Usually members of the indigenous élite classes (whether religious, social, or economic), they had been able to progress beyond the primary or secondary education of the others, often becoming professionals (and, especially, lawyers). Not surprisingly, their expectations regarding employment in the imperial administrative and judicial structure were in accordance with their educational attainments. Indeed, they saw no reason why they should not occupy positions at the highest levels of the bureaucracy, which their education had qualified them for.

Furthermore, because the attainment of such high levels of education had usually required that they spend considerable amounts of time in the West (usually, but not solely, in Britain or in the United States) they themselves had become, to varying degrees, Westernized. That is, they had adopted far more of the Western 'package' of attitudes, practices, and ideas than any other indigenous groups, which served, in many ways, to alienate them from their indigenous cultures. However, while they assumed that their education and Westernization would make them the 'natural' partners of the imperial rulers, they were to be disappointed. The imperial structure, while ready to absorb them into the lower echelons of the bureaucracy, was not willing to accord them equal status with Europeans. Nor was it prepared to replace the 'traditional élite' system with an administration headed by this 'Western-educated élite'.
As a result, this new élite found itself in a disturbing position. At often great effort, these individuals had prepared themselves for participation at high levels of the imperial administration and judiciary; but then discovered that they would not be allowed to progress to those levels. In addition, because of their Westernization (which equated with modernization), they believed themselves far better qualified to fulfill the leadership roles being held by the ‘traditional élite’, but were also denied this option. As many of the Western-educated élite had close familial or class relationships with the ‘traditional élite’, the competition between the groups for recognition (from both the imperial rulers and the local population) as the legitimate indigenous leadership led to considerable, and complex, tensions between the indigenous élites. Consequently, cooperation between these élites in opposition to imperial policies or actions was problematic. Alliances were sporadic and often dissolved into increased antagonism.

The irony was that both of these groups were essentially conservative in nature. The ‘traditional élites’ wanted to maintain their positions of influence and power, while the ‘Westernized élites’ simply wanted, in essence, to ‘join the club’—to be incorporated into the patron-client system—and participate in the administration and government of their colonies at the appropriate (to them) level in the hierarchy. Therefore, although the two groups were not only usually from the same social and cultural backgrounds, but also shared specific grievances against the imperial authorities, they were unable to maintain a solid front because they were basically competing for the same positions.

The ‘Westernized élite’ had a certain advantage, however, in that their education had

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Groups, but not necessarily all of the individuals in those groups: some would become quite radical indeed.
trained them in Western political ideologies and practices. Denied what they believed to be their 'rightful' place, they proceeded to organize themselves into associations through which they could promote the interests of their class. Basing their arguments on their knowledge of British political history, they protested that they—who had been trained to function in and understand British political theory and practices—were the logical agents (and eventual successors) of the imperial rulers.

It was at this stage that the word 'national' came into use, in the names of these organizations: the Indian National Congress, the West African National Congress, the East African Indian National Congress (in Kenya), and so forth. It is clear, however, that—in these early stages of organization—'national' meant 'indigenous.' It was necessary to the argument of the 'Westernized élite' that they presented themselves as (1) the legitimate representatives of the indigenous population and (2) as equal in status to the British. The word 'indigenous', especially in the imperialist context, had a connotation of inferiority: the Western imperialists ruled over the 'natives'. Therefore, a sense of equality had to be established. The British were a 'nation', ergo, the people of the colonial territory were a 'nation'. But because the populations of these territories had not yet reached the same level of 'civilization' as the British, they could not reasonably be accorded equality with the British. Nevertheless, that portion of the population which had reached the same level—the 'Westernized élite'—could be, and believed that they should be. Thus, they presented themselves as the legitimate representatives of the 'nation', and signified this through including this word in the name of their organizations.

As the case studies demonstrate, however, these organizations represented only the 'Westernized élite' and their interests. Although they did attempt to draw into their associations
members from as many of the regional, religious, etc., groups throughout the territories as possible, these were still primarily members of this élite class, or those from the 'traditional élite' class who believed that participation in these organizations would be advantageous to their interests. No attempt was made, however, to involve the vast majority of the indigenous population in these organizations, which raises the question (as the imperial authorities were only too willing to do) of how, then, could these organizations claim to represent 'the nation'?

The answer, of course, is that they did not. They represented the interests of the élite classes, predominantly the 'Westernized' ones. And it was their interest in participating in the administration and government which was paramount, and upon which they focussed their efforts—even when these efforts were against the interests of the peasants who formed the majority of the indigenous population. For example, to strengthen their position (and to raise funds), alliances were formed with other influential (and wealthy) indigenous groups such as landowners. As a result, peasant grievances against these landowners were ignored by the 'national' associations that supposedly 'represented the people.'

Consequently, the imperial authorities were able to rebut the arguments of these organizations by claiming that it was they, and not the indigenous 'Westernized élites' who truly protected and promoted the interests of the indigenous populations. The 'national' organizations were dismissed as nothing but self-serving special interest groups, and their demands for political reform went largely ignored, although some token steps were taken to placate the élites.

This was particularly true in India, where the INC-wealthy landowners alliance effectively eliminated any possibility that the INC would take the peasants' side regarding grievances against landowners. Thus, Hume's attempt to reach out to the 'masses' was rejected by the INC leadership. Even in the period when Gandhi held sway over the INC, note that his 'mass' campaigns focussed on grievances against the imperial authorities, not on grievances against the influential and wealthy landowner or industrialist supporters of the INC.
and their supporters in Britain.

Frustrated by the constant rejection of their legitimacy, and the glacial progress towards indigenous participation in government, segments of the ‘Westernized élite’, especially the younger members, became radicalized. Impatient with the conservative approach of their elders, and no longer content to aspire merely to positions in the administrative and judicial hierarchies, they began to demand the abdication of imperial rule. Complete independence, and indigenous self-government, were now the goals. The question was, how to attain these?

One option, of course, was by violence. There was certainly sufficient dissatisfaction with imperial rule smouldering among the indigenous populations—if this could be harnessed, the overwhelming numerical superiority of the indigenous populations to the coercive forces of the colonial state should ensure that these forces would be neutralized, and the imperial power would lose control of the territory. There were several problems with this option, however, as the experiences of the Mutiny in India and a variety of revolts in the other territories had demonstrated: there were considerable difficulties inherent to violent rebellion against the British. To be successful, a revolt would have to be coherently organized and unified. A substantial proportion of the indigenous population throughout the territory would have to be consistently active participants. Large segments of the indigenous coercive forces (the only ones in the population with military training and access to modern weaponry) would have to be recruited to the rebel side. A leadership cadre would have to be constituted which could garner the necessary support from the indigenous population and the indigenous coercive forces, which would be representative of the disparate groups throughout the territory (to militate against the divisive factors within the indigenous population), and which was able to subordinate individual
ambitions to the common cause. And that common cause would have to be defined in such a way as to not only be agreed upon by all of these groups, but also to provide sufficient motivation for individuals and groups to take the momentous step (and considerable risk) of initiating and sustaining an armed rebellion.

It was extremely unlikely that all of these conditions could be met in any of the colonial territories. Moreover, even if it had been possible to launch a successful revolt, there was no guarantee that it would be effective in establishing the ‘Westernized élite’ as the governing class. Revolutions have the regrettable habit of not turning out quite as expected: once unleashed, the ‘people’ have shown an unfortunate tendency to be difficult to control, and those who initiate such violent upheavals are rarely the ones who ultimately benefit from them. The ‘Westernized élite’ must have been aware of the histories of the French Revolution and the February 1917 Revolution in Russia (given their educational experiences), and this knowledge would be sufficient to give any potential revolutionary cause to reflect on the possible risks of such action.

Recourse to violence, then, was not a particularly viable option. Although there would be a few individuals in each territory who succumbed to the attractions of violent activities, garnering some support for their simplistic approach of removing British control over the colonial territory by ensuring that British officials were prematurely planted six feet under the surface of that territory, such murderous attacks on individuals had little real impact on the security of imperial rule. The unfortunate victims were simply replaced, the coercive forces of the state were employed to avenge (and preempt) these actions, and the sporadic disruptions often had a detrimental impact on the very people on whose behalf the terrorist factions were supposedly acting: indigenous bystanders became part of the ‘collateral damage’ or suffered
because of the suppressive activities undertaken by the state to repress the terrorists. Therefore, violence was not only ineffective, it could also be counter-productive. Besides, it was so ‘uncivilized’, and hardly accorded with either the self-image of the ‘Westernized élite’ or their aspirations to be considered the equals of (and heirs to) the imperial authorities.

Hence, if it was not possible (or advisable) to employ violence to force the British to abandon imperial rule over the territory, another method had to be devised, one that could persuade the British to relinquish control— and to hand the government and administration over to the ‘Westernized élite’. This alternative approach would have to convince the British that continued imperial rule was untenable, that is, that the indigenous population no longer would acquiesce to being governed by an imperial power, and that it would be possible for the British to arrange a relatively peaceful and amicable end to imperial rule through negotiations with the group which not only appeared to ‘represent’ the people’s wishes, but also had the background and abilities to assume the governance and administrative roles of the British: the ‘Westernized élite’. One of the most persuasive aspects of this approach was that it would enable the British to retreat from the colonial territory without losing face: the British would appear to be acceding (with varying degrees of graciousness) to the wishes of the indigenous population to govern themselves, and yet leaving in their place a stable, functioning system of government and administration. This could be claimed to be a culmination of the “we are ruling in the best interests of the people until they are ‘ready’ to take care of themselves” theory of imperialism, which would make the abdication of imperial rule rather more palatable to the British psyche.

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10In essence, they hoped to create a new patron-client system, by encouraging the British authorities to support (become the patron of) “their political aims” rather than continue to maintain the traditional élite as clients. See Newbury, p. 233.
The method by which this set of conditions could be achieved was constructed from the necessary factors: the indigenous population had to demonstrate (in as controlled and peaceful a manner as possible, in order to avoid slippage into violent rebellion) its rejection of imperial rule; a group had to be established with the appropriate credentials (of being 'representative of the people' and of being 'ready to govern'); and it had to be clear that negotiations between this group and the British would be productive and effective. There was one more factor required to make this method fully effective: a leader who could bridge the gap between the 'Westernized élite' and the indigenous population, building a relationship (such that they would accept his direction in their demonstrative role) with a sufficient proportion of both the urban and rural indigenous populations to convince the British that 'the people' rejected imperial rule; who could, at the very least, paper over the factionalism within the élite classes to present a 'united front' against the British; and who not only had the ability to negotiate with the imperial authorities, but also was accepted by them as a legitimate negotiator.

Until such a leader appeared, indigenous efforts to create the necessary conditions for the British to take élite demands for self-government seriously were largely ineffective. As the case studies demonstrate, it was only after the appearance on the political scenes of Gandhi, Nkrumah, Azikiwe and Awolowo, and Kenyatta that the indigenous independence movements really began to have shape and substance. Indeed, the cases of Gandhi and Kenyatta are powerful illustrations of the necessity for a charismatic leader. Gandhi, for example, remained the figurehead of the independence movement in India despite his frequent retreats from the political battlefield and his displacement by other indigenous leaders such as Nehru during the penultimate negotiations with the British. Kenyatta's long absences from the scene, both while abroad and
while imprisoned in Kenya, seemed to serve to strengthen his image as leader; in fact, those who rose to leadership roles in his later period of absence, such as Odinga and Mboya, were careful to publicly proclaim themselves as subordinate to Kenyatta in the ‘national’ movement. Moreover, the image of Kenyatta as ‘leader’ was so effectively maintained that the British were forced to recant their vehement declarations that they would never deal with Kenyatta in order to proceed with the final negotiations regarding independence.

The reasons why it was these particular individuals who became ‘the leader’ in each of these cases can be discerned by a comparison of the similarities between them. Each can be categorized as ‘charismatic’, an attribute that is difficult to quantify except by the apparent capacity of such individuals to attract public attention (i.e. large crowds attend their public appearances) and support (i.e. substantive numbers of people seem to identify themselves as ‘followers’). The Weberian definition of charisma “as a certain quality of an individual personality by virtue of which he is considered extraordinary and treated as endowed with supernatural, superhuman, or exceptional powers or qualities” provides a qualitative formula by which to assess the individuals in these cases. What is particularly relevant in the Weberian analysis to this study, is the centrality of the charismatic individual’s belief that he has been “called upon to perform a great and life long task,” an attribute that all of these individuals clearly had. So strong is this belief, that it endows the individual with such self-confidence that he is able to inspire others to share this belief, creating a cadre of devoted followers, and a symbiotic relationship between the ‘leader’ and the ‘followers’. However, the ‘leader’ must also demonstrate his conviction that he has been ‘called’ to this great duty:

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He has to engage himself in a series of actions that indicate a growing strength of will, of courage, and of exceptional abilities. At the same time he has to refrain from certain worldly pleasures of the multitude and thus show his single-minded commitment to his task. By doing so, he is able to reinforce the conviction of his 'followers' that he indeed is as extraordinary as he—and they—believe. Furthermore, the appearance of the 'leader' has to happen at an appropriate juncture: conditions must exist which predispose the indigenous population to accept a 'leader' who seems to have the necessary attributes to resolve the difficulties which they are facing.

While Gandhi was a rather unique example of charismatic leadership, all of the others shared the same basic qualifications as he. Nehru, Nkrumah, Azikiwe, Awolowo, and Kenyatta all also clearly believed that they had a 'destiny' to fulfill, that they had been 'called' to 'lead their people' out of the oppression of imperial rule. They each prepared themselves for their future role by acquiring the education and experiences they would need—a program that often required considerable effort and sacrifice. They all demonstrated their commitment to 'duty' by their willingness to 'suffer for the cause': subordinating their personal, professional, and familial lives to their 'work'; enduring physical deprivations or punishments (or at least demonstrating their readiness to do so); accepting periods of incarceration as 'political' prisoners of the imperial

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12Ibid., p. 33.
13Ibid., pp. 33-34.
14In regards to education, it could be claimed that Nehru was an exception to this—his father's wealth and contacts enabled Nehru to attend school and university in England without much effort on his own part. However, the 'experiences' he sought (for example, living with peasants in order to better understand their conditions and grievances) were a personal choice, made after he had finished the formal education that his father had wished him to undertake, and after he had become convinced that he had an important role to play in the independence movement.
regime, and so forth. And they each 'appeared' at the appropriate time: in all of the cases, conditions had become (or were in the early stages of becoming) critical. Dissatisfaction with imperial rule among the élites was evidenced by the growth of organizations through which to express that dissatisfaction, but that also demonstrated the factionalism and conflict between the various élites. The indigenous populations—both urban and rural—had numerous grievances against the imperial administration, which no one in positions of authority (indigenous or imperial) seemed willing or able to resolve. Furthermore, the disruptive forces unleashed by the imposition of imperial control and the enforcement of imperial policies had effectively destabilized the indigenous societies. In the urban centres, closer contact between indigenous religious/ethnic/linguistic/cultural groups—in conjunction with the unsatisfactory living conditions and competition for employment—had exacerbated inter-group conflict. Because these urban groups maintained their association with their rural 'homelands', the divisive effects of this conflict were disseminated into the hinterlands, reinforcing the exclusive nature of group identity throughout the colonial territories. Moreover, the acceptance of some segments of the indigenous population of the distortions to their traditional administrative and governance systems imposed by imperial rule (the 'traditional élite and other collaborators) or of the 'superiority' of Western education, attitudes, etc. (the 'Westernized élite', converts to Christianity, students at missionary schools) constituted a challenge to traditional religions, languages, cultures, and ethnic identities. Indigenous groups were increasingly responding to this challenge by forceful reaffirmations of what they believed to be their traditions (for example, the Cow Protection League in India and the tribal associations in Nigeria), which also had the effect of emphasizing the distinctions between indigenous groups. Thus, conditions in each of
these territories had reached a stage of fermentation whereby the people were ready for the distillatory skills of the 'leader'.

For charisma was not enough—the leader needed to have the skills and ability to organize his 'followers' into effective political agents who could proselytize his 'message' to the indigenous population, marshal support for his 'cause', and incite (yet control) the demonstrations of popular support. This aspect is illustrated in the case studies' descriptions of how each of these leaders either took over control of existing political organizations or created their own. And, while each leader professed the 'democratic' nature of these organizations, it is clear that they expected the members to obey their ultimate authority. Those members who were unwilling to do so were either expelled from the organization, excluded from influential or powerful positions in the party's hierarchy, or discredited and neutralized. In every case, the organizations became organized: hierarchical structures were imposed; branch systems created; full-time office staffs (and premises) were established; logistical, fiscal, etc. responsibilities were assigned to specific officers; modes of communication (newspapers, etc.) were founded; and rules of membership were clearly defined. In other words, the 'talking shops' of the conservative 'Westernized élite' were superseded by or reconstituted as Western-style political parties, down to the last bolt in the machinery.

Thus, it was those individuals whose charismatic personalities and organizational skills, combined with an excellent sense of timing, who ascended to the role of 'leader' of the 'independence movements' in each of these territories. The characterization of their 'followers' (the members of those organizations) is a much more complex exercise.
While each leader had his coterie of devoted acolytes,\textsuperscript{15} it cannot be assumed that all of the 'followers' had been drawn to, or remained affiliated with, the leader because of his charismatic attraction. Even such professed devotees as Nehru (of Gandhi) and Odinga (of Kenyatta) clearly had their own agendas and ambitions, which they were not always willing to subordinate to the leader's policies. Defectors, such as Appiah in Ghana, did not hesitate to voice their disaffection with either the leader or the organization, thereby demonstrating the tenuousness of the bond between charismatic leader and 'follower'. Indeed, the number of dissenters within each organization who were either expelled or left of their own accord, and usually joined or created competing organizations, would suggest that it had been something other than the charismatic appeal of the leader which had prompted their initial attraction. Although it is extremely difficult to determine the motivations of each individual dissenter and/or defector,\textsuperscript{16} it seems reasonable to conclude that each had either become disenchanted by or disillusioned with the charismatic leader, or had never been enchanted in the first place or had illusions to lose. The former could be categorized as idealists, who abandoned the leader when it appeared to them that he did not share their ideals after all. The latter individuals could be described as opportunists rather than 'followers', climbing on the charismatic bandwagon when

\textsuperscript{15}Especially Gandhi, but as his 'movement' included such a wide range of aspects, from spiritual purification to self-sufficiency, it is difficult to determine what proportion of his disciples were predominantly focussed on the political (independence) part. Indeed, it is difficult to figure out how focussed on the latter Gandhi himself was at times.

\textsuperscript{16}Even if each had written an explanation of their decisions that was still available for analysis, few (if any) authors are absolutely objective, so the problem of discerning the real motivation would remain. See the selection of material in the Bibliography by George Egerton on the topic of political memoir, and the item by Milton Israel, "Indian Nationalist Voices: Autobiography and the Process of Return," in \textit{Political Memoir: Essays on the Politics of Memory}, George Egerton, ed. (London: Frank Cass & Co., 1994) for their informative and insightful analyses of this issue.
they thought it would serve their interests, and jumping off when they decided it would not. In
fact, even those ‘followers’ who remained within the organization can be categorized as either
idealists or opportunists.

To the ‘idealists’, the leader and his organization would represent the most viable vehicle
available for the attainment of their ‘ideal’. It would not even be necessary for these individuals
to personally respond to the charismatic appeal of the leader; for them, it was enough that he had
such an appeal to others. Because of this, they could expect that he would be able to attract
sufficient numbers from the indigenous population to demonstrate support for the ‘ideal’ of the
‘idealists’: independence from imperial rule. Providing that this remained the leader’s professed
goal, and that his policies and decisions were otherwise acceptable, or at least did not appear to
threaten the ultimate goal, ‘idealists’ would be motivated to expend their efforts on the leader’s
behalf. By doing so, they would be furthering their own ends by the most effective means
available to them.

The same motivation to actively participate in the leader’s organization would be true of
the ‘opportunists’, except that their ‘cause’ was personal: independence equalled self-
government, which would offer an array of benefits for the ambitious. The influence, patronage,
and power controlled by the ‘traditional élites’ and the imperial authorities would have to be
redistributed. Those deeply involved in the activities which brought about independence—in the
organizations which would be the expected heirs to the imperial legacy—would presumably be
able to ensure that they would be the first to benefit from such a redistribution. The eagerness
of ‘opportunists’ to reap the rewards of self-government was amply demonstrated in each case
during the devolution of power period, as municipalities, regions, and (eventually) entire colonial
territories were granted semi-autonomous status and indigenous government was instituted.\textsuperscript{17} The increase in membership in those organizations which were successful in the semi-autonomous stages in gaining access to political office (and the concomitant benefits) rather speaks for itself.

However, as Appiah's condemnation of "jobs for the boys" illustrates, the 'opportunists' had a multi-faceted negative impact on the independence movement itself—and on the organizations they joined. Their eagerness to replace the 'traditional élite' frequently resulted in their use of inflammatory and insulting rhetoric against this group, which substantially increased the tension and conflict between this élite and the 'Westernized élite' leadership of the independence organizations, making it any attempt to formulate a cooperative relationship between the two élites problematic at best. Moreover, the often rapacious activities and arrogant attitudes of the 'opportunists', once in office, offended the 'idealists', alienated those segments of the indigenous population which suffered the consequences of those activities and attitudes, and further increased the tension and conflict between the élites. All of this provided ammunition for opponents (indigenous and British) to use against the organizations to which these 'opportunists' belonged. Thus, for example, Jinnah was able to claim that the INC did not act in the interests of Muslims but only on behalf of Hindus, and the British could argue that the INC did not protect the peasants from oppression by the landlord class (many of whom were members or supporters of the INC) and therefore did not 'represent the people' but only the élites.

\textsuperscript{17}The most blatant example was in Kenya, when a number of opposition members crossed the floor to join the KANU government, even before independence had been granted, because it was clear by then that KANU would indeed form the government of independent Kenya. That the numbers only increased after does much to support this argument.
Despite these negative effects, however, little attempt was made by any of the leaders to rein in the 'opportunists'. The fact was that the leaders needed the 'opportunists' as much, if not more so, than the 'opportunists' needed them. No matter how charismatic the leader, truly committed acolytes and 'idealists' tend to be rather sparse. It can also be difficult for them to reconcile their 'ideals' or their idealized image of the leader with the pragmatic political decisions that the leader has to be willing to make if he is to become a serious contender (as far as the imperial authorities were concerned) for inclusion in the negotiations stage, which makes their dependability as supporters and effectiveness as activists problematic. 'Opportunists' are not only more reliable (for they can always be counted on to act in their own self-interests, so as long as the leader can make it appear that those self-interests can be accommodated, he will retain their support), there are considerably more of them.

It must be remembered that the leader's legitimacy—as 'representative of the people', as well as leader of the organization—rested on the perception that he had substantive support from the indigenous population. Given that the majority of the indigenous population in each of these territories was predominantly rural peasants, and therefore primarily concerned with basic survival, it is reasonable to assume that, while they might have been perfectly capable of appreciating 'ideals', they were hardly in a position to devote their limited resources to them. On the other hand, they likely would be willing to take whatever action was possible to support an organization which seemed to have the potential to improve their condition, or protect their interests. First, however, they had to be convinced that this was the organization's intent.

Consequently, the organization needed enough activists to disseminate its message over as broad an area as possible, in order for that message to reach the overwhelmingly rural
population. By the time each of these ‘leaders’ had appeared, the urban indigenous population had already become politicized: trade union activities, accessibility to the newspapers of various associations, and the relatively early advent of municipal indigenous government had all increased awareness of political issues and practices. This was especially true for those who had acquired at least a primary education, and some level of literacy. As previously mentioned, this class of predominantly young men constituted a pool of ‘soldiers’ for the independence organizations, by reason of their educational and experiential skills, and because they believed that self-government would bring greater employment opportunities. Usually unencumbered by family responsibilities, often unemployed or underemployed, they had the freedom of movement and spare time to engage in political activities. Because they had generally maintained their familial or group connections in the rural districts, they also had a range of ‘contacts’ in these areas which could be utilized to facilitate their attempts to ‘spread the word’ to the rural ‘masses’.

While it was fairly clear that independence could benefit this class of the urban indigenous population, however, it was less obvious what difference it would make to both the other urban classes and the rural indigenous population. Those segments of the urban indigenous population without the supposed benefits of a Western education\(^\text{18}\) which had become successful merchants and entrepreneurs were generally already participating in organizations, to ensure that their interests were protected in any proposed changes to that status quo. After all, they would not have become successful if they had not been adaptable.

Meanwhile, the uneducated urban working classes scratched out a living as labourers,\(^\text{18}\)Given the pool of educated clerical staff available for such jobs as required literacy, etc., such skills were not necessary to the attainment of commercial prosperity, but could be highly useful in that pursuit.
etc., employed by European companies or the imperial administration, or by wealthier indigenous classes (merchants, etc.). There was not much reason for them to assume that changing the existing political system (which would apparently simply replace the Europeans with indigenous administrators) would substantively affect their lot. For the rural peasants, the concept of 'independence' or 'self-government' had no relevance or meaning: the quality of his existence was precariously dependent on the whims of nature and the decisions of the local indigenous élite (whether landowner or tribal chieftain). It did not really matter who was ultimately 'in charge' in the territorial or regional capitals—it was the local authorities who had the greatest impact on the peasants.

Yet it was these two groups, the urban working classes and the rural peasants, which had to be mobilized to demonstrate 'the people's' rejection of imperial rule if the independence organizations were to be able to assert the legitimacy of their demands. Accordingly, a multi-faceted program was implemented that could incite support—or at least the appearance of support—from the indigenous population, using a combination of the charismatic appeal of the 'leader' and the focus of the organization on issues of local concern.

The 'leader' would make a number of appearances at public rallies in the urban centres, and conduct tours of the rural areas. The use of flags, music, and other attention-getting material would create an air of excitement and anticipation, drawing a crowd of curious onlookers which could be infused by the contagious enthusiasm of the leader's devotees. In predominantly illiterate societies with few sources of mass entertainment, such as radio, films, and television, events such as these rallies presumably would have appeared to be an appealing break to the monotonous daily routine. During the preparation for the leader's appearance, the event itself,
and in the afterglow, much would be made of the leader’s reputation and status. And, of course, the leader’s charismatic personality would be unleashed onto the crowd. The titles given to the leader would be ones traditionally used by the indigenous people (for example, ‘Mahatma’ Gandhi), and the leader would often dress in traditional costume rather than Western attire.\(^1\)

The idea overall was to present the leader in terms familiar to the indigenous population, and to emphasize the common identity they shared. Speeches would be rousing, and full of vague promises that all the present problems would be solved by ‘freedom’. Pithy slogans would be repeatedly used (for example, Nkrumah’s ‘Self-Government Now!’) that the crowd might not really comprehend, but that the people could understand was a rallying cry. In other words, the formulaic methods of demagogues would be employed to present the image, however transitory, that the crowd was responding to and agreeing with the leader. News of such ‘popular’ support would be disseminated throughout the territory by the cadres of the organization’s workers, to prepare other areas to receive the leader in a similar fashion.

While the leader would expound on the virtues of independence and the justice of the ‘national’ cause at such public gatherings (and in the organization’s newspapers and other modes of communication), it is reasonable to doubt that many in the crowd had any clear idea of what the leaders were talking about. Such things were alien to the traditional cultures. What meaning could ‘independence’ have to people who had only known feudal or tribal societal systems? In relation to Western political theories and practices, the indigenous populations (especially in the rural areas) were at a stage several centuries behind not only the British, but

\(^{19}\)The reader is asked to recall the care with which Gandhi, Odinga, and Kenyatta in particular took to dress as ‘traditionally’ as possible.
also their own ‘Westernized élites’. 20 What they could recognize, and voice their support for, were references to their grievances against the authorities (both imperial and the ‘traditional élites’): high taxation, alienation of land, appropriation of resources, insufficient investment in infrastructure, unfair competition for markets, unequal distribution of wealth, and so forth. If the organization and its leader promised to do something about these issues, then of course the ‘people’ would be willing to support them, through demonstrations, boycotts, or whatever methods the leader suggested that were within their capacity to utilize.

The most outstanding example of this was Gandhi’s ‘Salt March’: the incitement of a ‘mass’ protest against what was widely perceived by the indigenous population as an unreasonable tax on salt, a basic necessity in such a climate (and especially for those engaged in manual labour, the peasants, who could least afford to pay taxes of any kind). In a masterful demonstration of how effective such a focus on a specific issue could be in harnessing public support to a political leader, Gandhi undertook to personally walk about two hundred miles from his ashram to the coast, where he would produce his own, tax-free salt from the sea, in defiance of the law and the authorities. The March was well-publicized before he set out, and en route, he stopped in every village to explain what he was doing to the villagers and to encourage them to join him. At the final rally on the coast, he addressed a crowd of approximately 50,000,

20 It must be emphasized that this is in no way a negative reflection upon the intelligence or abilities of the indigenous populations. They understood and functioned within their traditional systems perfectly well (and were often more than a match for the Imperial administration in its attempts to impose a policy upon them that they did not want). However, they had not gone through the evolutionary experience in Western political development, so could hardly be expected to have any real knowledge or understanding of it—any more than a sixteenth-century English worker would have of nineteenth and twentieth-century English politics. They simply had not had the time, or the opportunity, to adapt to this new way of governance and figure out how it worked, let alone how it should (ideally) function, and what their duties and responsibilities were. It could be argued that many Western societies still face the same problem (without such a legitimate excuse).
including international journalists (as Gandhi had intended, these would ensure that the March would gain attention in the West—especially Britain and the United States—and promote his cause there, adding to the pressure on the imperial authorities in India). Needless to say, the INC ensured that reports of the March reached every corner of India, and soon there were outbreaks throughout the Raj of demonstrations, illicit salt production, and attempted raids on government salt supplies, followed by the usual riots and arrests. All in all, a very successful political campaign which ‘demonstrated’ the support of the indigenous population for Gandhi and the INC.21

While the other leaders might not quite have had Gandhi’s flair for the grand gesture, each used the same process of focusing campaigns on local issues, where there was already a substantial pool of indigenous resentment and sense of grievance to fuel demonstrations by the ‘masses’, organized by the local party cadres. Whenever possible, these local protests would be co-ordinated on a wider basis, as with Gandhi’s ‘nation-wide’ hartals, and would then give the impression of a ‘national’ demonstration of support for the leader and his organization.

It must be remembered that it was only necessary to create the appearance of ‘popular’ support. Given the imperial tendency to keep administrative expenses as low as possible, the resources of the police and military were always very limited; the coercive forces of the state were invariably vastly outnumbered, usually poorly trained and equipped, and, in any case, the majority of them had been recruited from the indigenous population; consequently, their loyalty to the imperial regime, and their effectiveness as an instrument of control were questionable.

Therefore, it did not take a very large crowd to alarm the authorities, especially as the ability of
the leader and his organization to control the crowd once it had been formed frequently proved
to be tenuous at best, as the number of ‘demonstrations’ that deteriorated into riots proved. As
a result, while the leaders consistently affirmed their commitment to ‘non-violence’, the intensity
and number of violent outbreaks increased substantially throughout all of these territories during
the transitionary period. Although this certainly served to substantiate the leaders’ assertions
that imperial rule was no longer tenable, it cannot be said that this was quite what the leaders had
planned—such levels of violence worked to no one’s benefit. The often brutal repression by the
authorities of these outbreaks naturally had a detrimental impact on relations between the
authorities and the indigenous population, adding to the resentment and sense of grievance.
Moreover, because the violence of the crowd (which all too quickly turned into a mob) was most
frequently unleashed against other indigenous groups, in expressions of inter-group rivalries and
antagonisms, relations between the indigenous groups deteriorated even further, and the divisions
within indigenous societies deepened and widened.22

For, despite the claims of the leaders and their organizations, they were not ‘supported’
by ‘the nation’. The indigenous population maintained their traditional identities: religious,
linguistic, regional, etc. With the possible exception of the leadership class of ‘Westernized
élites’, who publicly claimed to perceive of themselves, for example, as ‘Indian’ rather than
‘Hindu’ or ‘Muslim’ or ‘Bengali’ or ‘Tamil’, the vast majority of the people (including members
of the organizations) identified themselves as they always had. Indeed, the transitional process

22While the most extreme case of this phenomenon occurred in India, with the horrific escalation of
communal violence that culminated in the atrocities of the partition period, riots and inter (and intra) group
fighting was a common factor in all cases.
seemed to have the effect of intensifying traditional identities, instead of encouraging the development of a sense of 'nationalism', conterminous with the imperially-defined boundaries, within the population of these territories.

There can be little doubt that the 'leaders' defined 'nationalism' in this broadest of senses: all those within the borders of the colonial territory (including the princely states, in the case of India) belonged to the same 'nation'. That is, it did not matter what region an individual lived in, nor the particularities of his religion, language, ethnicity, or culture, he was—before all else—'Indian', or 'Ghanaian', or 'Nigerian', or 'Kenyan'. As has been discussed, it was central to the demands of these leaders, that the colonial territories be transformed into independent, self-governing states, that the populations be defined as inherent 'nations'. This even held in the African cases, where the borders of the colonial territories were clearly artificial constructs, which incorporated a number of traditionally separate groups of people. While the African 'leaders' toyed with the concept of Pan-Africanism (especially Nkrumah), they ultimately accepted the imperial boundaries as the borders of the new states. However (and it is a substantive 'however'), there were those who disagreed, and the closer independence came, the deeper and more divisive the disagreements became.

There had always been differences among the indigenous élites, of course, especially between the 'traditional' and the 'Westernized'. While all wanted greater indigenous control, they differed considerably on who should have that control, what system of control should be implemented, and by what means. As the case studies show, the conflict was serious, and sustained. It was also complex: alliances were formed, broken, and reconstituted between individuals and groups from each of the élites, at various times throughout the transitional
process from colonial to independent state, depending upon perceptions of common interests or specific issues. Contemporaneously, groups and individuals established formal associations through which to promote their particular interests, and to represent these interests to the imperial authorities, and, eventually, to the indigenous public. It cannot be emphasized enough that both élite groups were involved in such activities, and that there was considerable interaction between the groups. Organizational operations were not monopolized by the ‘Westernized élite’ or by the ‘leaders’ and their devotees. In each of these cases, numerous organizations were created—and evolved—during (and before) the transitionary period, and throughout each colonial territory by a wide variety of indigenous groups.

Indeed, most of these organizations had originally been formed in order to represent the interests of a particular segment of the indigenous populations: tribal associations, religion-based associations, and so forth. In response to the gradual devolution of power within each colonial territory during the transitionary period, these organizations became increasingly politicized, or were replaced by political organizations which represented those original groups. Therefore, from the beginning of this period, there were a number of organizations claiming to represent ‘the people’, but that defined ‘the people’ in different ways. Thus, for example, the Muslim League ‘represented’ only the Muslims in the indigenous population of ‘India’, or the Northern People’s Congress ‘represented’ only the indigenous population of the Northern Region of Nigeria. While membership in these organizations was not necessarily exclusive (especially for regional parties), each asserted that only it truly represented that specific segment of the

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23This was especially clear in the case of Northern Nigeria, where the traditional leaders allied “with their own educated elite to create a patronage party and capture regional and federal civil service posts in the preface to independence,” Newbury, p. 262.
indigenous population, challenging the claims of the 'national' party and competing with it for support from the 'people' (using many of the same methods to do so). Consequently, as indigenous representation in the various levels of government was expanded, and electoral processes instituted, the conflict between all of these organizations—and especially between the 'national' organization and the others—intensified, as the case studies have illustrated.

At the core of the conflict was the concept of democracy. Given that these were all British imperial possessions, it could be assumed that the British would gradually construct, during the devolutionary period, a system of governance similar to their own. Which meant parliamentary democracy: members of the government and opposition were elected by residents or members of specific constituencies to represent the interests of those constituents. And it was this kind of system that the 'Westernized élites' themselves were familiar with, through both their education and their experiences. There is an inherent problem with parliamentary democracy, however: the majority in each constituency elects that member, and the party holding the majority of seats in the parliament becomes the government. Even in societies where electors identify with a particular political party based on the economic or social policies of that party, this system can leave substantive segments of the electorate with the sense that their interests are not being fairly represented. Because the British system, at the constituency level, is based on the practice of 'first past the post', a member could (and often does) win the seat by the narrowest of margins over his or her opponents, thus the member might well not, in fact, have been chosen by the majority of the electorate in that constituency.24 If there are substantial

24For example, candidate A gets 4,500 votes, candidate B gets 4,499 votes; or candidate A gets 4,500, candidate B gets 4,250, and candidate C gets 4,100: while candidate A would win the seat, in the first case an almost equal number of the electors did not want this, and in the second case, almost twice as many electors voted
differences between the policies of the political parties, therefore, it is entirely possible that the policies of the government are not those with which the majority of the population would agree.

In societies where electors identify with a particular political party on the basis of their religious, ethnic, regional, etc. affiliations rather than for their social or economic policies, on the other hand, this problem can be perceived as dangerous instead of temporarily unsatisfactory. For, in this situation, the party which formed the government would also be a party which was perceived by the population as representing the interests of a specific religious, ethnic, etc. community, not a political ideology (which could have adherents from many different such communities). Therefore, electors (and other members of the population) which did not identify with the governing party would be prone to fears that the interests of the community which the governing party represented would be promoted, to the detriments of the interests of their own community. Furthermore, in societies where such a political system had not developed over time, so that the population could adapt and become familiar with its workings—and, to some extent at least, direct that development—there would be considerable misunderstanding of and uncertainty about the system and its impact on the lives of the people, who would be largely at its mercy.

Moreover, it would not only be the general population which would be concerned about their prospects under this system. The élites have their own interests to promote and to protect. It is rather difficult to do this if you are not in government, or, at the very least, have some way to influence or bring some pressure to bear upon the government. And the unfortunate fact of

\[\text{against candidate A. The same system, of course, was implemented throughout the British Empire, first in the settler dominions, such as Canada and Australia.}\]
life in any system is that there is only room at the upper levels of the hierarchy of power for a
limited number of individuals. It is not necessary for all the members of the élite class to be one
of those individuals, providing that those who are share the same interests as those who are not.
However, where the interests of the élites differ, those not in or affiliated with the government
are likely to be greatly concerned not only about their interests, but also the maintenance of their
élite status. This was clearly demonstrated in the attitude of the ‘traditional élite’ in each of the
case studies to the demands of the ‘Westernized élites’ for changes to the system of government.

It was also demonstrated in the responses of the ‘Westernized élites’ who were not
members of the ‘national’ organization. Their determination to form their own organizations,
and their insistence during the various stages of the negotiation process which constructed the
political system to be implemented in their particular colonial territories—before and at
independence—that ‘safeguards’ be included to ‘protect’ the communities that they ‘represented’
from the ‘tyranny of the majority’ were clear indications that they were alarmed at the prospect
of the ‘national’ organization becoming the government.25

Consequently, during the penultimate stage of the devolutionary period, as indigenous
government was gradually instituted in each of these territories, the intensity of the inter-group
conflict within the indigenous population substantially increased. Electoral campaigns were
marked by vituperative and inflammatory rhetoric and physical violence directed, not against the
imperial authorities, but against other indigenous parties and their supporters. This had the
effect of not only demonstrating the divisions between indigenous groups, but also of deepening

25Jinnah’s insistence that the Muslims of India required a separate state for themselves in order to
‘protect’ them from the tyranny of the Hindu majority demonstrated how extreme this attitude could become. In
the other cases, regionalism became the ‘safeguard’.
them. Just as the repressive actions of the imperial authorities in response to early indigenous protests had intensified indigenous resentment towards imperial rule, so too did the inter-group conflict at this later stage intensify the alienation between the groups.

The sense of alienation was encouraged by the leaders of organizations which professed to ‘represent’ the different groups. Their ‘message’ to their particular group was that only by supporting them could the interests of that group be represented and protected. And the actions and policies of the parties elected to the various levels of government in each of the territories during this transitional period often seemed to confirm their opponents’ claims, and demonstrate that the ‘majority’ group that these governing parties represented were receiving preferential treatment. The findings of the Pirpur Report in 1938 that INC provincial governments had clearly been biased in favour of Hindus is but one example. Fact or rumour, reality or perception—it really did not matter. Opposition parties’ claims of prejudicial actions or policies by the ‘national’ parties did not have to be actually experienced by members of the other communities in order for these claims to be believed. There already existed among the indigenous populations an amorphous anxiety about the impact all of these changes would have upon them, and traditional inter-group antagonisms had been revived and/or intensified during the politicization of the indigenous population phase by the competition between the various organizations for support. So it is hardly surprising that, as independence drew ever nearer, support for the opposition groups also increased.

This was demonstrated in the series of elections held before independence in each of the territories. Initially, the ‘national’ parties had received overwhelming electoral success, usually because they were the only organizations which were prepared at that time to fully participate
in such an exercise. However, in later elections, the opposition parties (having themselves become more organized and prepared by then) made substantial gains, thus legitimizing their claims to ‘represent’ specific indigenous groups, and thereby weakening the ‘national’ parties’ assertions that only they were the ‘voice of the people.’ As a result, the imperial authorities were able to argue that the opposition groups must be accommodated in the constitutional arrangements for that territory, in order that ‘the people’ be appropriately represented.

The convoluted systems of special electorates and reserved seats designed during the series of negotiations over the devolution of power in India during the first four decades of the twentieth century bear testament to the complexities involved in attempting to reconcile the conflicting demands of numerous groups to adapt the British model to indigenous conditions. Ultimately, the obdurate refusal of the Muslim League, representing the largest of the minority groups in India, to countenance any political system which did not accord to that community the constitutional arrangements that the Muslim League believed to be necessary in order the maintain the interests of the community resulted in a geographical political division of the sub-continent. The colonial boundaries were sundered, creating two (and eventually, three) separate states out of the colonial territory.

While this was an extreme example of the impact of the conflict between indigenous groups, the situation almost became as divisive in the African cases. There, the opposition groups also demanded clear geographical divisions—and, at times, this included the possibility of

26 For example, the Muslim League’s much improved showing in the 1946 elections in India, the percentages of the popular vote gained by the NLM in Asante (Ghana) during the 1958 elections, and the respective success of the AG in the Eastern Region and the NCNC/NEPU alliance in the Western Region elections in Nigeria in 1959. The situation in Kenya is not as clear, given that the opposition parties, except for KADU, had little time to organize electoral support before the last pre-independence election. However, the growth of the number of such parties did demonstrate considerable opposition to KANU.
creating separate states at independence.\textsuperscript{27} While this was ultimately avoided, the eventual constitutional settlements incorporated opposition demands by creating systems whereby the regions (broadly representing the geographical divisions—and the religious, ethnic, linguistic, etc. distinctions that these encompassed) were granted substantive powers vis-à-vis the central government. The ‘nationalist’ parties, unable to convincingly demonstrate that they alone ‘represented the people’, had no choice but to accept (however grudgingly) that opposition parties’ demands must be accommodated if agreement was to be reached, for the imperial power insisted on agreement before independence would be granted. Without a negotiated agreement on the constitutional arrangements for independence, the withdrawal of imperial rule—given the volatile and tense relationships between the indigenous groups—would almost certainly result in civil war. Far better for all concerned that a system of power-sharing between the groups be agreed upon before the coercive powers of the imperial authorities were removed. The African leaders had only to think of the bloody chaos in India during the period around independence, and of the violence in their own territories during election campaigns, to realize that, at this stage, compromise—while unpalatable—was the only sensible course to take.

Thus, the new states of India, Pakistan, Ghana, Nigeria, and Kenya were created out of the conglomerate of imperial colonial territories, each having a constitutionally-defined system of indigenous self-government, administration, and judicature. Yet can these ‘states’ also be categorized as ‘nations’, whose populations were united by a shared sense of ‘nationalism’? For the fact that these territories became instituted as independent ‘states’ must not be confused with

\textsuperscript{27}As, for example, the Northern Region threat in Nigeria, or the Somali demand to secede in Kenya, not to mention the rise of Asante separatism in Ghana.
the assumption that this means that they became at the same time 'nations', or even that their becoming 'states' was in some way a legitimization of their 'nationhood'. Despite a tendency by many authors to use the terms 'state' and 'nation' as if they were synonyms, or to combine them into 'nation-state' and thereby merge the two concepts, each has a separate—and distinct—meaning:

A state is a legal and political organisation, with the power to require obedience and loyalty from its citizens. A nation is a community of people, whose members are bound together by a sense of solidarity, a common culture, a national consciousness. Therefore, while some territorial polities might be both 'states' and 'nations', this duality is not necessarily true of all; indeed, it is not even necessary.

Therefore, it was not necessary for these colonial territories to be 'nations' in order for them to become 'states'. In fact, this is precisely what happened: they became 'states' in spite of the clear evidence that they were not 'nations', but inherently a collection of 'nations', according to the indigenous opposition parties. Yet the demands for independence by the 'Westernized élites' were, and have been, defined as expressions of the 'national' will. That is, that the people of the territory identified themselves as belonging to a specific 'nation' and that 'nation' wanted to be able to govern itself instead of being governed by 'foreigners' (the imperial power). As the case studies show, however, both of these statements were demonstrably untrue. The people identified themselves in a variety of ways: as Muslims, or Asante, or Northerners or


29Though I cannot think of any state at the present time whose population is completely homogeneous—even Iceland has both Protestants and Roman Catholics—there are a number of historical examples which can be classified as 'nation-states', where the population of the state shared a common language, ethnicity, religion, culture, and history—considered the basic definition of a 'nation'. 
Somali—not as ‘Indian’, Ghanaian, ‘Nigerian’, or ‘Kenyan’. Nor were the indigenous populations as a whole demanding self-government; in fact, it is reasonable to doubt that they even understood what this meant. The indigenous populations did want their specific grievances against the authorities resolved, but there is little indication that they thought that the replacement of imperial rule was a necessary factor. It was the élite classes which were concerned with who governed, and which created the circumstances (including the apparent demonstration of popular support for their demands) that led eventually to independence. And it was the competition and conflict between the élite classes for control of the government (during the period of the devolution of power) which politicized the ‘identity’ issue in each of the territories. As a result, the ‘nationalism’ asserted by leaders such as Gandhi, Nehru, Nkrumah, Azikiwe, and Kenyatta was rejected by the leaders of other groups within these territories, who claimed to represent distinct ‘nationalisms’ of their own. Thus, we find, for example, Jinnah arguing that Muslims were a separate nation, and that the conflict between Hindus and Muslims was not “inter-communal but manifestly of an international character” [emphasis mine]; and the Asantehene declaring that it was necessary to form a political party (the NLM) in order to save the Asante “nation from destruction;” and Balewa asserting that the people of Northern Nigeria did not consider themselves part of a ‘unified’ Nigeria; and the Northern Province People’s Progressive Party demanding that “the eastern part of the [Northern Frontier] District [be separated] ... from Kenya” so that it could become part of the Somali

30 Wolpert, Jinnah, pp. 180-182.

31 Austin, p. 264.

32 Indeed, he said that “this presence of unity is artificial” and that “we in the North look upon [Southerners migrating to the North] as invaders.” Coleman, p. 361.
Republic instead.\textsuperscript{33}

In spite of these challenges by other ‘nationalisms’, however, the ‘nationalist’ leaders in these territories persisted in their declarations that there was only one ‘nation’ within their respective colonies. For example, Nehru was obdurate in his adherence to the INC’s claim to represent \textit{all} Indians, irrespective of their religious or other affiliations. Indeed, he refused to accept the legitimacy of any claims by minority groups that they were inherently separate and blamed communal divisions on “vested interests,” declaring “that in political and economic matters people do not function as religious groups.”\textsuperscript{34} Likewise, Nkrumah perceived any dissent from his ‘nationalist’ vision as being prompted by reactionary forces among the ‘traditional élite’ or those who disagreed with political and economic policies of his party.\textsuperscript{35} In Nigeria, both Azikiwe and Awolowo consistently professed their belief in the ‘nation’, arguing that “conscientious and right-thinking Nigerian patriots and nationalists”\textsuperscript{36} should overcome the “artificial divisions” of tribalism and work together “towards the crystallisation of a new Nigeria.”\textsuperscript{37} For his part, Kenyatta did not even restrict his version of ‘nationalism’ to the indigenous people, stating that “all races ... should ... think of themselves ... as Kenyans, not as Africans or Europeans or Asians.”\textsuperscript{38} As for those who believed that their distinctive differences

\textsuperscript{33}Kyle, p. 157.

\textsuperscript{34}Nehru, \textit{Toward Freedom}, pp. 384-385.

\textsuperscript{35}Nkrumah, \textit{Autobiography}, p. 218, and \textit{Revolutionary Path}, p. 117.

\textsuperscript{36}Awolowo, \textit{Autobiography}, p. 131.


\textsuperscript{38}Murray-Brown, p. 257.
should be recognized by dividing the territory into semi-autonomous regions, Kenyatta declared that “a person’s loyalty must be to his country, not to his tribe or race” so to divide Kenya internally in this way would be “a gross error ... [that] ... could easily lead to chaos and disintegration.”39

Gandhi, as ever, was in a league of his own. India, he claimed, had always been “one nation ... Only ... [those] who consider [themselves] civilized and superior persons imagine that we are many nations.”40 As he included himself among the “civilized and superior persons,” the statement was as obfuscatory as many of his utterances. However, Gandhi was adept at being able to accommodate apparent contradictions. The argument that Muslims and others constituted separate nations within the colonial territory of India, however, was not a concept that he could accept. He alone represented ‘India’, and as for the escalating communal violence which was amply demonstrating the conflicting ‘nationalisms’ within India, his “faith in unity ... [was] as bright as ever.”41 Everyone just needed to work harder on mutual tolerance.

Unfortunately, especially for India, it was not that simple. Despite these leaders’ claims to the contrary, none of their respective colonial territories was a ‘nation’ struggling to govern itself. Whatever ‘nationalist’ sentiments the indigenous populations became imbued with, they cannot be said to have reflected the visions of unity that the ‘nationalist’ leaders had propounded. On the contrary, the ‘nationalist struggle for independence’ in each of these territories functioned more to intensify and define the inherent divisions that had already existed among the indigenous

40Gandhi, Hind Swaraj, pp. 46-47.
41Chadha, p. 345.
populations. Instead of ‘out of many nations came one,’ it was more the case that ‘out of the idea of one nation came many.’
The preceding case studies and comparative analysis have served to demonstrate that it is inappropriate and inaccurate to categorize the events during the phase immediately preceding independence in the colonial states in these cases as examples of 'nationalist independence movements' in action. Clearly, there is need for a careful reconsideration of the terminology used to explain these historical situations, in order that the historiography of such events can avoid misleading its consumers.

Throughout the literature which has been consulted for this study, both primary and secondary sources, the terms 'nation', 'national', 'nationalism', and 'nationalist' have been used freely. Few writers made any attempt to construct a workable definition of what they meant by these terms, and those who did tended to create definitions which accorded with their interpretation of events in the specific situation that they were referring to. For example, Coleman explained Nigerian 'nationalism' as "sentiment or activity opposed to alien control," and asserted that there were two types of this:

Traditional nationalism [which included] resistance to the initial British penetration and occupation, [and] early revolts ... and nativistic or messianic movements which provided psychological or emotional outlets for the tensions and frustrations produced by rapid cultural change ... [and] Modern nationalism [which] includes sentiments, activities, and organizational developments aimed explicitly at the self-government and independence of Nigeria ... \(^1\)

However, this definition makes no differentiation between the distinct groups within Nigeria which, at various times—and usually independently of the other groups—may have expressed such

\(^1\)Coleman, pp. 169-170.
‘sentiments’. Thus, there is the assumption that all of the members of the indigenous population felt the same motivational basis for any of their attempts to resist or reject imperial control. Furthermore, this definition hardly suffices to explain the inter-group conflict during the transitional period between acquiescence to imperial rule and independence, when what was clearly being expressed was resistance to or rejection of the replacement of imperial rule by ‘majority’ indigenous control. Nor do such ‘case specific’ definitions accord with the ‘traditional’ interpretation of ‘nationalism’, based on the Western European origins of the term, which suggest that ‘nationalism’ is a sentiment shared by a group of people with a common language, ethnicity, culture, and history.

Clearly, there is an acute problem with the definition of terms, as the copious literature on this issue illustrates. But it is a problem that has to be resolved. These are not words whose

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dictionary definitions can be universally applied. As this study has pointed out, and as has been discerned by numerous scholars,

the national idea, together with the idea of anti-imperialism, was little more than an ideology to justify the rule of small élites over a totally diversified body politic, although it actually bore little, if any resemblance to what nation and nation state had meant during the time when they were first developed as basic principles of a modern political order.³

Thus, to continue to use (or accept the use of) such terms as ‘nationalist independence movement’ is to seriously distort the historical account, and to encourage inaccurate and inappropriate interpretations of these events. This monograph has been constructed in order to demonstrate this problem, and to create a model for further investigations of this issue, so as to encourage debate among scholars not only of British Imperial History, but also any other field where this could be relevant.

What this treatise has demonstrated is that the introduction of the concept of nationalism by indigenous, Western-educated élite leaders in all four of the cases examined had a divisive rather than a unifying effect. The indigenous populations could not accept the leaders’ definitions of inclusive nationalism; they continued to identify themselves by the inherent regional, religious, ethnic, cultural, and linguistic categorizations which had distinguished groups within the population. Moreover, those distinct groups within the population in each case responded instead to those who proffered the concept of exclusive nationalism, in opposition to the inclusive version of the leaders. These distinctions then became embedded in the political

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landscape of these colonial territories as exponents of each version competed for electoral support from the indigenous populations in elections which served to increase inter (and often, intra) group conflicts. While, with the exception of India, these colonial territories were able to acquire independence without the necessity of physically separating the conflicting groups into separate independent states, the demands by minority groups within the indigenous populations for ‘protection’ from the majority (as represented by the ‘nationalist independence parties, such as the CPP, etc.) were manifestations of a sense of internal division. Thus, the invocation of ‘nationalism’ had resulted ultimately in a greater awareness within the indigenous population of their differences, not their commonality. This is not a healthy situation for any developing state.

Therefore, the ‘nationalism’ which Gandhi, Nehru, Nkrumah, Azikiwe, Awolowo, and Kenyatta voiced, and supposedly represented, did not exist. Nor did the ‘nation’ for which they respectively demanded independence. Whatever sentiments these individuals may have personally felt, their ‘nationalist’ claims had little foundation, no matter how eloquently expressed. Indeed, contrary to their intentions, their colonial territories each reached independence as many ‘nations’ instead of one.
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