

INTRODUCTION TO NIGERIAN HISTORY

GNS 102 / CGNS

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The Decolonization Process in Nigeria

– Nationalism

Nationalism dates back to the nineteenth century when attempts to capture Lagos was met with some resistance from the people. It extended up to the twentieth century. However, most pundits attribute Nigeria's nationalism to the colonial era alone. More importantly, is the general belief that only the educated elites or men were nationalists.

This is the love for one's country to be independent. It also means feeling of being one due to same history. Early nationalists included Jaja of Opobo, Ovonramwen, Oba Kosoko, Nana of Itshekiri etc Nationalists of the 20th century included -Herbert Macaulay, Nnamdi Azikwe, Obafemi Awolowo, Ahmadu Bello, etc

- **Factors that contributed to the Struggle for Independence in Nigeria (Internal)**

- Colonial constitutional development e.g Clifford const. 1922, Richards, 1946,
- Establishment of political parties like NCNC,
- Growth of trade unions & labour organisation
- Political rallies
- The role of Newspaper-West African Pilot 1937, Eletu Ofe, etc
- Discriminating Colonial policies – educated elites were not allowed to participate in administration; farmers' products were priced very low.

- **External factors**

- Effect of the Second World War
- The Atlantic Charter signed between President Roosevelt of USA & Winston Churchill of Britain
- The independence of India
- The Labour party in Britain was opposed to colonisation.
- Associations like W.A.S.U and NCBCWA – National Congress of British colonies in West Africa put pressure on the colonial govt.
- International pressure from UNO, USA and Soviet Union who were opposed to colonisation.
- All these factors combined made Britain to grant independence to Nigeria on 1st Oct. 1960.

- Other factors were the role of indigenous resistance groups such as Ekumeku and Aro groups
- The Returning Ex-Service Men
- Strike Actions
- Revolutionary roles of women some groups among
- Willinks Commission 1957/58
- Constitutional Conferences, lagos, Ibadan and London
- Motion for Self Independence by Anthony Enahoro
- And by October 1960, Nigeria gained independence.

Assignments

- Examine the issues that affected Nigeria between 1960 and 1970
- What Led to the Nigerian Civil War?
- What could be gained from the Biafran Technology?
- What led to the various Coups and counter-coups between 1966 and 1975?