

ing this study based primarily on documentary sources available in public repositories, which I am responsible for interpreting, seemed more sensible to me.<sup>43</sup>

Because of the present study's focus on archival documents, it is inherently subject to a bias,<sup>44</sup> which considering alternative oral histories suffers from what Edward H. Carr called "fetishism of documents."<sup>45</sup> Most of the actors who speak from the archives are colonial administrators, whose notions of threat and security are prominently foregrounded by the sources. Archive-based studies cannot avoid relying almost exclusively on the observations of European imperialists and their activities. In any case, the relevant archival materials for this study are located within Europe and North America and only to a lesser extent in West Africa. Limited to the same archival materials, few have attempted to emphasize the African experience during this historical episode, for example, through the inclusion of handed down oral histories.

### 4.2.3 Research Procedure & Evaluation

The research procedure was similar in each archive: to be successful in the search, it was essential to understand the 'logic of classification' according to which the archive and its catalogue were constituted. Often overlooked, the archival structures and accompanying comments provide information about colonial or security consideration for the provenance of the documents. For example, the accompanying commentary of the *British National Archives* candidly writes:

"The general rule, as set out in a Colonial Office guidance telegram of 3 May 1961 on the 'disposal of classified records and accountable documents', was that successor Governments should not be given papers which, might embarrass HMG or other governments; might embarrass members of the police, military forces, public servants or others e.g. police informers; might compromise sources of intelligence information; or might be used unethically by Ministers in the successor government. [...] There would be little object in handing over documents which would patently be of no value to the successor government."<sup>46</sup>

Many documents were destroyed on this basis. In the case of the Ghanaian archives (PRAAD), the logic mimics the bureaucratic organization of the British colonial state. Documents from the Admiralty are kept under the entry "ADM" and are classified thereafter by topic and year. Although the archival documents were created in the same

43 Compare these reflections with Skinner, "West Africa's First Coup," p. 379.

44 Danso and Aning, "African experiences and alternativity in International Relations theorizing about security," pp. 78–79.

45 Edward H. Carr, *What is history? The George Macaulay Trevelyan lectures delivered in the University of Cambridge, January – March 1961*, 2nd ed., ed. R. W. Davies, Penguin history (London: Penguin Books, 1990), p. 16.

46 TNA, "Foreign and Commonwealth Office and Predecessors: Records of Former Colonial Administrations: Migrated Archives," accessed 03 April 2023, available from <https://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/details/r/C12269323>.

period, the British National Archives (TNA) arrange the documents according to ministerial jurisdiction: “CO” for Colonial Office, “FO” for Foreign Office, “FCO” for Foreign/Commonwealth Office. This is significant because as a trusteeship territory Togoland fell under the jurisdiction of both the Colonial Office and, in terms of the United Nations, was assigned to the Foreign Office. The archival holdings of the Togolese National Archives (TNA) are not arranged thematically but according to the places of origin, that is, the administrative regions: the *cercles*. Therefore, a new strategy to read through the archive structures had to be adopted repeatedly to assign individual documents to a series and thereby reconstruct entire exchanges.

After reviewing the respective archive structure, documents relevant to the research project were requested. Depending on the importance and significance for the research question, the document pages were photographed, underwent optical character recognition, and then were transferred to a personal digital archive according to their position in the archival structure. Notes on the research work were made to record daily impressions and questions that guided the further research process.

After the material was collected, the evaluation process began. The methodology is based on the procedure of qualitative data analysis according to Mayring.<sup>47</sup> However, the evaluation process was not inductive, but abductively designed, that is, the formation and refinement of theoretical assumptions was always compared with the collected material and modified in order to draw conclusions about regularities.<sup>48</sup> The study uses content-analytical methods, but explicitly analyses the collected data as part of a colonial discourse.<sup>49</sup>

Based on the overarching research question, the evaluation was guided by sub-questions such as how was (in)security communicated and what experiences have been revealed in the process? Which threat constructions were mobilised (terms and categories)? What shifts in security communication seem interesting? How is threat interpreted and to which audience is it communicated? Which security mode is established and what function do individual security speech acts fulfil?

The digitized archival documents were screened using Citavi computer software. During an explorative screening, initial categories were formed according to epistemological interest and text passages were indexed accordingly. Subsequently, the items of knowledge belonging to a keyword were subjected to a second, more in-depth sequence analysis for individual arguments, to refine indexing on the one hand and to establish cross-material references on the other, for example, to reconnect documents that were separated due to the way the archive was set up with response letters in other holdings. In addition, following the pragmatic reading of the contextual strand of securitisation,<sup>50</sup> the material was examined for security terminology in a theory-based manner by identifying text excerpts in which certain terms occur together, for example, ‘Ewe’ or

47 Mayring, *Qualitative content analysis*.

48 Udo Kelle and Susann Kluge, *Vom Einzelfall zum Typus: Fallvergleich und Fallkontrastierung in der qualitativen Sozialforschung*, 2nd ed., *Qualitative Sozialforschung* 15 (Wiesbaden: Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften, 2010), pp. 21–27.

49 Landwehr, *Historische Diskursanalyse*.

50 Balzacq, “The Three Faces of Securitization,” p. 172.

‘Togoland unification’ and ‘threat’ or ‘danger’. These securitisation text excerpts were also subjected to the procedure presented above and evaluated in terms of power relations, positionalities, narratives, the political background of the debates, and ideas about actors’ political strategies.