
The Interplay of Town Planning and Colonialism: The Contributions of Albert Thompson to Urban Development in Lagos, 1920–1945

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the historical development of town planning in Lagos under colonialism. Unfortunately, the contributions of British town planners to the development of Lagos have not been given scholarly attention by historians. It is therefore against this background that this study attempts to historicize the development and politicization of town planning activity in the colony of Lagos from 1920 to the end of the Second World War in 1945. This work also highlights the contributions of the British town planners to urban development in colonial Lagos with particular emphasis on the prominent role played by Albert Thompson. During the period under study, the colonial government employed surveillance, inspection, and modification of built forms, provision of municipal facilities, and the demarcation of space to plan the environment. However, this paper also discusses the conspicuous challenges faced by town planning during the years of the Great Depression and the Second World War. Finally, some directions for future research are suggested.

INTRODUCTION

The town planning is rooted in the conscious regulation of the urban environment by the State (in one institutional guise or another). In Britain, some parts of Western Europe and some U.S. cities,

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it appeared as a response to the legacy of the nineteenth-century industrialism and problems associated with the management of urban growth. Around the turn of the century, the idea of a regulated use of private land in towns acquired an unprecedented appeal. The reformists argued that a healthy and pleasant environment could be obtained at little cost, while better housing promised to relieve social tensions. Cross-fertilization between national states permitted an international leap forward in planning theory and practice (Gordon 1993). Urban conditions were conducive; the imperatives for reform were well grounded as an elite group of highly influential people. In colonial Africa, the colonialists embarked on modern urbanization, which was mainly one-sided. Similarly, town-planning efforts in Africa during colonialism suggest that colonial cities were often dual cities, and spatially segregated between the colonial administrative employees and the native settlers (Gordon 1993). Town planning in Britain's colonies was thus intended to benefit the colonial officials and British business rather than the subject peoples (Home 1938). Nevertheless, these contributions cannot be neglected or wholly criticized as they have created a platform upon which modern town planning in Africa subsists. Town Planning as a modern phenomenon and a nineteenth-century term was first formally used by the British in 1906 as contained in Housing, Town Planning, *etc.* Act of 1909. The modern planning activity within the corporate Nigeria is traceable to Lagos, being the well-known point of early colonial adventure in the country. Before the appointment of Albert J. Thompson in 1928, the colonial planning was conducted without a resident professional town planner's participation. However, with Thompson's appointment as the colony's Town Planning Officer, the town planning in the colony of Lagos in particular received more professional flair. For example, Thompson redesigned the Yaba Housing Estate and prepared a report proposing strategies for economizing layouts between 1927 and 1928 (Njoh 2007: 76).

In order to achieve the objective of this paper, the work is divided into seven sections. The introductory section sets the tone of the entire study. The second examines colonialism and the advent of town planning, while the third discusses the influence of British town planning in Nigeria, the fourth highlights the contributions of Albert Thompson to Urban development in Lagos, the fifth exam-

ines town planning during the Great Depression. The sixth analyses the impact of the Second World War on town planning while the seventh is the summary and conclusion on how British influence affected the development of planning following the challenges of the Great Depression and the Second World War.

ADVENT OF TOWN PLANNING IN NIGERIA

Arguably, the colonial town planning in Nigeria was induced by two major tasks, namely, to enhance trade and to improve the comfort of the European settlers. The town planning schemes were also employed as a strategy for promoting public health. One should recall that the Lagos Town Improvement Ordinance promulgated in 1863 as the first known planning-related legislation was informed by the poor state of sanitation in Lagos. The colonial administration did not engage in developmental efforts for the general populace until the bubonic plague of early 1920 when planning of Lagos commenced. The administration concentrated efforts on the provision of housing to its staff in the railways, police, and civil bureaucrats; this led to the formation of government residential areas (G.R.A) and some African quarters. These efforts later led to the development of workers housing estates (Olugbenga 2014). Thus, town and regional planning in Nigeria started when the British colonial authorities had initiated programs towards housing development, improving road construction, building control, public health safety, environmental hygiene, zoning land for specific developmental purpose and the development of ports (Njoh 2007). The most striking of these programmes included the colonial government's initiatives on the project of massive building of new roads and construction of railway lines from Lagos to Ibadan between 1895 and 1912, Port Harcourt to Enugu line between 1913 and 1915 and the Kano – Apapa railway line to link the North across the south and to cement the geographical integration in the country (Oyemakinde 1974). However, the tremendous rise and increase in the volume of trade encouraged the British colonial government and private enterprises to commit huge sums of money to the development of infrastructures. Extensive schemes of harbor and dredging were undertaken and successfully completed. This facilitated and enabled the first ocean-going vessel to enter the Lagos seaport in 1913 (Olukoju 1992a).

Lagos, which is one of the earliest administrative headquarters controlled by the British, was annexed in 1861. It was later developed as a new city that attracted people from neighboring towns and villages. The urban development in the city provided job opportunities for young school leavers and artisans to work in the newly established railway corporations and laborers in the road construction project of the city during this period. The urban development took place in other political and administrative headquarters such as Kaduna, Port-Harcourt, Enugu and Maiduguri due to the commercial and economic interest of the British and their domineering political influence. Thus, the infrastructural networks of roads and railways were laid to speed up the process of evacuating goods from the producers in their interior to the coastal ports for onward transmission to Europe (Fourchard 2001).

Similarly, the colonial authorities exercised political authority through spatial and physical planning. In this regard, they snatched at every opportunity to influence the spatial structure of villages, towns, and regions. This was done through the writing and promulgation of laws designed to regulate the timing and growth rate of the environment for construction purposes. According to Omotola (1991), the planning laws were created to protect the interests of colonial officials and other European residents and business entrepreneurs in the colony. This explains the reasons why the British colonial officials enacted laws to protect human health and welfare that were applied almost exclusively in the colonial districts of European settlers. Thus, the native settlers in the urban areas were segregated from the Europeans.

Urban regulations in the colony were specifically aimed at combating health problems faced by the Europeans in the colony (see DeLancey 1978; Curtin 1985; Aka 1993). The laws introduced by the colonial authorities in 1863 were the town improvement ordinance. Thirteen years later they were followed by the passage of the Land Act of 1876. This act gave the colonial secretary the authority to acquire for public use, either by agreement or compulsion, any land within the crown colony of Lagos. One year later, the swamp improvement ordinance of 1877 was passed. However, it is instructive to note that it was not until 1900 that this planning ordinance began to produce a far-reaching effect in other towns and cities in the interior areas of Nigeria.

In 1902, an ordinance establishing European-only reservation went into effect in major towns through the colony. This ordinance was in principle intended as a form of a social control device to separate the native from living in the European neighborhood. Fifteen years later another Township ordinance number 29 of the Township Act was introduced. This Act provided regulation on matters relating to health, hygiene, sanitation and the physical separation between the European settlers and the native settlers (Aka 1993). With the introduction of planning laws, the policy of land use compartmentalization marked the influence of British town planning in Lagos metropolis. This policy emphasized the planning of sites in conforming to predetermined standard. This standard was modeled along British practices that were in force in Britain. The land use policy in the colony regulated the features of plot size, floor area ratio, building heights and setback for buildings (Aka 1993).

In the same vein, urban planning laws under colonialism dealt with urban infrastructures and service provision, growth management, zoning, subdivision regulation, urban design and economic development. The planning schemes that were exercised in Lagos, for example, covered mainly housing and road mapping. Housing delivery under colonialism generally took its origins from the power relations between the British Crown and the Colony based on the need for housing. This was in tandem with a similar working class groups in Britain; the housing provision was through direct government intervention (Pugh 1994). The single family housing form was occupied by the colonial masters and the key beneficiaries who were the expatriate colonial workers and those who served and protected British interest and a few indigenes that formed the social focus group that served the interest of the British (Aradeon 1978). The colonial authorities believed that this was a logical approach to cater for their own. These houses were mainly constructed for the colonial/European settlers in the city of Lagos. The neighborhoods of the European Reserve Areas were characterized by their modern architectural designs and seclusion from the indigenes in colonial Lagos. For much of the colonial period, urban facilities were concentrated in the European residential areas and in the areas where public offices were located.

Road mapping was another significant contribution of the colonial authorities to city planning in Lagos. Mapping of the city provided a master layout plan for the city growth and development. The colonial mapping started in 1791 with the establishment of the Board of Ordnance Survey and the extension of British systems such as education, government, military, and operations to the colonies. It was clear to the colonial authorities that maps were essential for all development projects in the colonies. Thus, a program of topographic mapping had to be embarked upon prior to, or simultaneously with, the development projects. However, mapping in Nigeria is reported to have started in 1910, corresponding to the end of the Second World War, the pace was not commensurate with that of the colonial headquarter. The advent of the First and Second World Wars appeared to have placed the necessity for reliable and up-to-date maps in the British colonies. This made the colonial office be in need of maps of the colonies (including Nigeria) for various purposes. By 1945 the colonies office approved the establishment of the Directorate of colonial (Geodetic and Topographical) Surveys (DCS), which was later renamed to Directorate of Overseas (Geodetic and Topographic) Surveys DOS. This became the central mapping organization charged with the responsibility of carrying out geodetic and topography surveys in British colonies and was to be financed under the colonial development and welfare Act. They were, however, to carry out geodetic and topographical surveying and mapping if they had the resources (Balogun 1987; Obafemi 2003). Balogun (1992) has classified the colonial mapping in Nigeria into five different periods: the period dominated by exploration and the mapping of the Nigerian rivers (1788–1861); the period of colonial expansion and consolidation and the mapping of colonial units (1861–1910); revenue searching and mapping for geological and revenue surveys period (1910–1926); period of systematic triangulation (1926–1939); and the period of aerial survey and topographical mapping (1946–1960). Each period was marked with a definite mapping program. According to him, by 1939 when the Second World War started, the triangulation of the country had not been completed. However, the adequate foundation had been laid for accurate topographical mapping, which started after the war. In Lagos, the early British town planners who were invited by the colonial government to plan the

city articulated the city mapping. Thus, streets and roads linking one another and housing were named and numbered in serial order within the neighborhood in the mainland, Island and in other parts of Lagos state.

THE INFLUENCE OF BRITISH TOWN PLANNING IN THE COLONIES OF BRITISH WEST AFRICA

The British colonial authorities greatly influenced the town planning activity in Nigeria. According to Morris and Witchester (1983), Britain was the chief exporter of municipalities and broadcast them everywhere via the operation of its empire institutions. Half of the cities in the American East owe their genesis to the British Empire, most of the cities in Canada, many of the cities in Africa, all the cities of Australasia and the city-states of Singapore and Hong Kong. Urbanism was indeed the most lasting of the British imperial legacies in the colonies of the British West Africa. Modern cities in Nigeria and other parts of British West Africa were created through the British influence.

According to Home (1990), the British overseas expansion in Nigeria was achieved through the 'planting' of municipal and town planning activity. The British greatly influenced town planning with the wide geographical disparities in the level of urbanization and population. The introduction of laws and legal institutions of the imperialists into the British colonies in West Africa was an indispensable instrument for protecting and safeguarding their interests. For example, the ordinances, modeled along British laws, declared in 1863 stated that 'the laws of England shall have the same force and be administered in this settlement as in England, so far as such laws and such administration thereof can be rendered applicable to the circumstances of this settlement.' With the introduction of ordinances in the colonies of British Africa, the English law became a firm basis for the British colonial administration and town planning organization.

The British established their colonial presence first in the coastal areas and later in the hinterland, conquered the African territory and governed it directly, with no indigenous authority protest. The expansion into the interior of African colonies in Africa in the early twentieth century was controlled by the legal device of indirect rule. Town planning in Britain's colonies was thus intend-

ed to benefit the colonial officials and British business rather than the subject peoples. For instance, the large Yoruba towns of Western Nigeria with the exemption of Lagos, which was the political and economic hub of colonialism were virtually ignored by the town planners apparently because of official reluctance to interfere with the 'traditional' social structures. Apart from the creation of the ports, mining activity from extractive industries, communication and other new settlements created by the needs of colonial administration, the indigenous subjects attracted little or no town planning activity (Home 1990).

Colonial influence shaped the political structure of planning. The urban built environment expressed its aspirations and ideals through the funds received from colonial officials. It was to be well-ordered, sanitized and amenable to regulation. The strategies employed to achieve this were surveillance and inspection, the modification of built form, provision of municipal facilities and the demarcation of space. The desire to protect British interests in West Africa made it necessary to recruit town planners of British nationality into the departments of Land and survey, public works, and Health departments. The professional British town planners recruited by the colonial government were both architects as well as urban city planners (Home 1990).

Architecture and planning in colonial Nigeria shaped urban landscape since the British architects mainly designed buildings, public works and laying out of towns. In the early twentieth century, many architects were active as town planners in the colonies (Oladiti, Adeoye and Ajibade 2016). We can name but a few of them: Colonel R. H. Rowe, a civil engineer and the prime mover of the Lagos Executive Development Board, and Albert Thompson, an Architect and planning advisor and consultant to the ministry of Land Survey in Nigeria. Later, in 1942, Maxwell Fry and Jane Drew were appointed to serve as planning advisers to the Resident Minister of the colonies of British West Africa in Gambia, Nigeria, Ghana, and Sierra-Leone (Home 2013). And we also should include in this list Mr. K. W. Farm who held a diploma certificate in town planning. He was an Associate member of the Royal institute of British Architect (ARIBA) and an assistant to Maxwell Fry (Oladiti, Adeoye, and Ajibade 2016).

Other British town planners who worked in other colonies in Africa and Asia were Sir William McLean (1877–1967) who worked as a civil engineer in Sudan and Egypt, Mr. A. E. Mirams, who worked as a surveyor and engineer in Bombay and Uganda, and H. V. Lanchester (1863–1953), the founder of the Town Planning Institute; he worked in New Delhi, Madras and Zanzibar. Their histories and contributions to town planning are worth examining as case studies in the development of planning in India, Uganda, Egypt, and Singapore respectively (Home 1990).

These planners generally advised the colonial government on how to commence effective town planning in the city. This advice assisted town planning authorities, to initiate and implement town planning scheme dealing with land utilisation and layouts, tarring of major town roads, proposed new roads, market development, refuse collection, drainage of streams and swamps, conservancy service and sewerage scheme, car parks, improvement and extension of water supply, control of advertising and building control mechanism.

The British involvement in the laying of towns in the environment in West Africa synthesized the architecture of European culture in the design characteristics of new buildings like the prisons, the University College, government secretariat, European reserved areas and government hospital buildings. The erection of these structures by the Europeans provided the enabling environment for human activity, ranging from public buildings and parks or green space to the neighborhood. It included other supporting infrastructures such as water supply and energy networks. This was aimed at improving the community well-being with the construction of ‘aesthetically, health improved and environmentally friendly landscape and living structures’. The colonialists, through a coordinated development plan, built an environment that combined physical elements, resources and energy to create habitable, working and recreational environments for the administrators in British colonial West Africa (Njoh 2007).

ALBERT J. THOMPSON: HIS CONTRIBUTIONS TO TOWN PLANNING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT IN LAGOS

Albert Thompson (1878–1940) was a British town planner and architect who served as a government town planner in Nigeria from

1927 to 1932. He was born in London and trained as an architect in the practice of Raymond Unwin and Barry Parker in London. His main contribution to the planning of modern cities in the United Kingdom was recorded with the planning of Letchworth and Hampstead garden suburb. Before his new appointment in Nigeria, he had worked in South Africa for seven years where he designed the pinelands garden suburb of Cape Town and Durban estate. Pineland was a private township modeled closely on Letchworth, developed by a board of trustees on an 80-acre site granted by the Dutch government. Robert Home described the Pineland garden as the first garden city in South Africa. It was the first in the direction of trying on a small scale in Africa to design principles upon which great and inspiring achievements have been reached by the European and American nations in the building and rebuilding of cities. Thus, Thompson helped in planning places in South Africa and Nigeria, transposing garden city ideas to a range of colonial urban circumstances (Parham 2013).

In 1927, Albert J. Thompson left South Africa on an invitation by the colonial authority to take up a position as a Town Planning adviser with the colonial government in Nigeria, a position which he held for five years before his return to England in 1932. The period between 1927 and 1932 witnessed significant professional activities of British town planners in the city of Lagos. Prior to Thompson's posting to Nigeria, the British colony of Nigeria had no resident professional town planner with an extensive and vast experience in the planning of cities. The term and duration of his appointment were unknown. He was placed on a salary 1400 pounds per annum (with 240 pounds duty pay), on the recommendation of the consulting engineers for the Lagos drainage project, Howard Humphreys, and Sons, who had also worked in South Africa. However, there was evidence that his appointment became necessary following the criticism of the colonial government on the lack of foresight in planning of new layout and pressure on the rapid growth of Lagos due to commercial and trading activities and the acute shortage of housing for the accommodation needs of the growing number of natives working under the colonial administration. At that time, the Nigerian colony was spending heavily on capital projects (water, electricity, and hospitals). In addition, another important factor that may be attributed to his appointment in

Nigeria was that he had fervent enthusiasm for all that made for improvement in civic development and housing conditions in the urban metropolis and his relationship with consulting engineer whom he had earlier worked with in South Africa (Home 2013).

Thompson took up his post within the Land and Survey Department following the recommendation of the consulting engineers for the Lagos drainage project handled by Howard Humphrey and Sons. His first assignment in the ministry was to re-plan the Yaba housing estate, which was, according to the Nigeria Annual Colonial Report, 1924 the worst areas of Lagos town. He successfully completed this project where he achieved saving 25 acres land available from the original scheme. In 1928, the Lagos Town planning ordinance came into being in response to the outbreak of the bubonic plague which afflicted Lagos due to poor sanitary conditions (Home 2013).

The Lagos Executive Development Board (LEDB) was set up under this ordinance to undertake a comprehensive land use planning and development in the city of Lagos covering housing, slum clearance (re-development) and resettlement schemes. This board set out a general principle governing the land layout, construction of the African staff housing scheme in Surulere, improving drainage on Lagos Island after the plague of epidemic outbreaks in the city, the reclamation of Victoria Island, West Ikoyi, Apapa and the industrial layout of Apapa, Iganmu, and Ijora under the LEDB. The colonial government provided the initial funds of 200,000 pounds allocated to cover the cost of drainage, swamp reclamation, slum clearance, market planning and development of suburban estates for the African employees of government and European firms at Apapa, Yaba, and Surulere in the Lagos mainland (Henderson 1958) and (Omotola 1991).

Beyond Lagos, Thompson contributed immensely to town planning in the hinterland. His design plans contributed to the development of new settlements created by colonial government especially in Enugu, Warri, Sapele, Benin, and Onitsha. For example, Thompson prepared the report that attempted to economize road layouts and planned a new industrial area for coal-related processes; yet, the colonial authorities did not approve it. This was due to the fact that there were local resistances from the native inhabitants opposing the implementation of the scheme following the report

given by Albert Thompson to the colonial government. In addition to this, there came a drastic cut in the finances of the colonial administration on town planning due to the Great Depression of the 1930s (Home 2013). Following the years of the Great Depression (1929–1939) the planning activity was redundant in the Ministry of Land and Survey Department. Consequently, Thompson retrenched abruptly in Nigeria in 1932 (Home 2013).

TOWN PLANNING AND THE GREAT DEPRESSION IN LAGOS

Town planning during the years of the Great Depression was a period commonly described by historians as the period of stagnancy in the provision of town planning services in the city of Lagos and its environs. It was a period in which nothing happened due to the bankruptcy that befell the British colonial government in Nigeria. Owing to the financial stringency, no new roads were constructed, as well as limited social services like water medical; education, and sanitation were provided in urban areas during this period (Ochonu 2006).

There were drastic reductions in the constructions of public buildings and heavy retrenchment in staff to a minimum necessary for the administration of the Public Works Department henceforth (PWD) for the maintenance of services for roads, bridges, buildings and various electric light and water undertakings in Lagos metropolis. The economic hardship faced by the colonial government reduced government expenditure on public works, road construction, housing development, industrialization, land use control, transportation, municipal services, physical expansion, social organization, sanitation, public health and social projects (Ochonu 2009).

According to Olukoju (1992a) the Great Depression deeply affected every facet of the economy and society in Lagos, including town planning. A combination of issues has been ascribed to the causes of the great depression in Nigeria. First, the British commercial interest in the colonies of West Africa affected trade and economic growth in the society. Second, there was a reduction in the demand for West African produce, while at that time the profit from it would be used for the development of certain urban projects such as pipe-borne water supply, road construction, housing development and other basic essential services like sanitation and

environmental hygiene. Hence, the European merchants decided to limit the purchases of essential items of agricultural produce and impose a differential duty for palm kernel export. As a result, the sales of agricultural produce diminished under the instruction from the British imperial authorities. The Great Depression of the year 1931 was described by Robert Home as an *annus terribilis*. In Home's words, 'it was a period recognized in history as a tentative experiment or a luxury suitable for times of prosperity instead of an insurance against waste and the application of common – sense to city development' (Home 2013: 173).

During the years of the Great Depression, the Ministry of land and survey, the Public works department (PWD) and the Ministry of health together controlled town and country planning activities in Lagos. These ministries were very weak, largely unorganized, and with limited resources to operate effectively and functionally. They were often confused with the mission of an overall planning development and modernization. The much-needed guidance and encouragement from the colonial government were virtually insignificant. Thus, the federal government relegated the activities of town and country planning to the local government which was largely ill-prepared for the tasks (Aka 1993).

However, as challenging as the Great Depression was, it is instructive to note that Lagos and some other main administrative towns in Southern Nigeria nevertheless experienced certain town planning activities during the years of the Depression. This is evidenced by the colonial annual report of 1930 which clearly stated that public works in Lagos benefitted from municipal services like the provision of water and electricity supply. For example, Agege, a suburb of Lagos, was provided with a continuous supply of water from the main trunk to other parts of the city. The water supply in Lagos was improved with the addition of aeration and chemical purification plant at the Iju water works department. Similarly, there were significant improvements in electricity distribution in the generating power plant at the power station at Lagos to improve the street lighting system in the city (NAI 1930).

TOWN PLANNING IN THE COLONY OF NIGERIA AND THE SECOND WORLD WAR

Town planning growth and development faced many challenges during the years of the great depression, and the consequent out-

break of World War II had a major impact on the spending cuts by the colonial administration for the growth of planning in Nigeria. Throughout the war, finances used in the administration of the colonies were decreased and the sums allocated to planning were reduced. Given its status as a colony to Britain, Nigeria involuntarily participated in the Second World War (1939–1945). Britain was hardly prepared for the world war that eventually broke out in 1939 due to its financial incapability to financing the war. It was against this background that Britain needed all the possible support from the colonies to prosecute the war. Nigeria, one of the largest and biggest British colony provided the necessary finance and manpower required to Britain during World War II (Njoku 2015).

With the sudden outbreak of World War II, the funds originally allocated for the running of the Nigerian colony were diverted to provide relief to war victims in Britain and its allies. Sir Bernard Bourdillion, the governor of the Nigerian colony launched the Nigerian War Relief Fund (NWRF). This fund aimed at provision of relief materials to assists victims of the war in Britain and other allied countries (Njoku 1977–1978). The national working committee was organized to coordinate and distribute the funds. The donations to the NWRF were received from individuals, civil servants and compulsory levies on people working in the colonial establishments (*Ibid.*). The war inevitably affected the town planning development in several ways. First, there was no coordinated action or plan towards the improvement of road networks, waste management, building control, the building of educational institutions, construction of an international airport and bridges, of national parks and walkway and the introduction of an efficient and viable transport sector to run the growing economy. Throughout the war, the British imperial authority suspended all developmental and planning projects for the colony. Meanwhile, the Nigerian political leaders launched a campaign for their own subject status and demanded freedom and right to self-determination and democracy to Nigerians (Coleman 1965).

The transformation of the USA and the Soviet Union into the world leading powers, both declaiming against colonialism, together with Great Britain's general weakening as the world power undermined the foundations of colonialism in Africa (Darwin 1988). It was until the after-war period that some developmental

projects were introduced with a ten-year developmental plan for the reconstruction and rehabilitation of the colony. Among the major projects that were executed and completed in Lagos during the period was the construction of the first Nigerian international airport in 1947.

CONCLUSION

This study argues that colonialism has laid the foundations for the urban planning and development in Nigeria. However, due to many factors and events including the two World Wars and the Great Depression, the country failed to enjoy an effective coordination of urban planning development under colonialism. Most of the legislation of urban planning laws were not enforced and implemented by the colonial authorities. The planning advisors' suggestions were not carried out in the colonies due to limited financial support from the colonial government which was reluctant to give the political will and support needed for the implementation of the planning program in the colony of Lagos especially in the field of road transportation and road networking to link the mainland with the Island. The contributions of a British town planner Albert Thompson to the development of Lagos were a milestone in the building of the town layout of the city and in the creation of housing for expatriates and African natives working as civil servants in Lagos. The Great Depression and the eventual outbreak of the Second World War hampered the town planning in the city of Lagos until 1946 when a ten-year development plan was initiated by the colonial government aimed at the reconstruction of Nigeria. The future studies may be carried out by other local researchers on the contributions of Colonel R. H. Rowe and K. W. Farm to the urban development in Nigeria.

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