**Sub-Saharan Africa**

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Whilst Africa has a rich and vast vernacular architectural heritage, much of this documentation has been covered extensively in anthropological research, focused particularly on housing, (Denyer, Prussin, Dmchowski, Schwertfegger, et al. ) the same cannot be said for the region’s architectural history in general.[[1]](#footnote-1) Despite the appearance of some ambitious tomes containing examples from Africa, such as John Donat’s *World Architecture* (1966), and the small number of general surveys prefaced with extensive introductions, including Udo Kultermann’s *New Directions in African Architecture* (1969)—both written in the post-independence era—little overarching analysis has emerged. To be sure, extensive surveys were conducted during the colonial period, and photographic studies of African and European buildings made by the likes of the Basel Mission, but, again, no systematic studies or comprehensive architectural ‘histories’ were produced. More recently, a number of journal articles have appeared, along with some broader surveys, such as Nnamdi Elleh’s *African Architecture* (1996), offering a wide encyclopedic approach. Antoni Folkers’ *Modern Architecture in Africa* takes a more thematic stance, raising important questions on preservation and monument care. Southern and anglophone West Africa have exploited the existence of architectural journals produced in those regions, such as the *South African Architectural Record* (1925) and the *West African Builder and Architect* (1950s-1970). More recently the release of official records following periods of censorship has facilitated further scholarship and enabled more critical discussion to develop.

South African scholars especially have developed numerous surveys, city studies, and monographs on the architectural development of Sub-Saharan Africa. This is in contrast to other parts of Africa where the historiography has taken a more quixotic and romantic form, focusing on architecture as an ‘improving’ Western intervention, employed specifically to ‘save’ the ‘noble African’, and as a cultural process designed to elevate communities from their ‘primitive’ origins to a Western, civilised mode of living. Even as late as the mid-twentieth century travel writers were offering some insight into how West Africa was viewed. For example, Elspeth Huxley noted that ‘Nigeria has no style or tradition either to inspire or constrain. The architects had a true *carte blanche*’.[[2]](#footnote-2)

In many ways the history of architecture in sub-Saharan Africa aligns with this characterisation, particularly in Britain’s former colonies. More specifically, the story of West African architecture has been presented primarily through the works of a handful of leading avant-garde architects, which has tended to obscure an entire body of work produced by the Public Works Department (PWD), and others outside of the popular architecture firmament. Although no doubt inspired by admirable intentions, the focus on these architects in both the contemporary professional press and subsequent historiography has meant that much interesting work went largely unreported. However, those architects that did manage to attract the interest of the British architectural press were granted extraordinary coverage. Entire editions of journals were devoted to British architects working overseas, and West Africa featured heavily in this reportage.[[3]](#footnote-3) The seductive black and white photographs with exaggerated contrast, deep shadows, and striking bold forms offered a glimpse into an exotic tropical otherness, far removed from the austerity of post war Britain and its ‘starchy English diet of schools and housing’.[[4]](#footnote-4) Publications such as Jane Drew’s *Village Housing in the Tropics: with special reference to West Africa* (1947), also stoked interest in the problems of designing in hot climates. In other regions, however, including Central Africa, and much of Francophone Africa, there was more limited coverage and research. Furthermore there are linguistic barriers to accessing the information that is available. The heterogeneous nature, and differential development of the continent also makes a comprehensive survey of this nature difficult to achieve successfully. For these reasons, what follows here is a survey of African architecture with limitations in coverage, that attempts a general survey of buildings with public, commercial, and domestic significance, across identified, predominantly Anglophone, regions of the continent.

**South Africa**

Although substantial fortresses were built on the West African coast (at Cape Coast and Elmina, for example) following the circumnavigation of the continent in the sixteenth century, it was Southern Africa that received the most sustained, non-indigenous settlement and architectural development in Africa. Of note is the original Dutch establishment of Cape Town and its fortress in 1679. As this part of the continent was under Dutch control until 1807, after which the British took over, the earlier development of substantial homesteads such as Groot Constantia (c.1792) and Stellenberg (c.1742) are identifiable by their characteristic pedimented gables and U-shaped planning arrangement **[Fig. 1]**. However, once in British hands, Cape architecture began leaning more towards English tastes, with architects in South Africa consciously adopting styles and methods from ‘home’ to inform their aesthetic choices.

For example, the ubiquitous St. Martin-in-the-Fields appears in Cradock by the 1860s, alongside numerous other churches built in a variety of gothic and classical styles to suit denominational palates, and coinciding with the formation of the Transvaal and Orange Free State.[[5]](#footnote-5) The Royal Observatory, designed by Sir John Rennie in 1821, also adopted the styles popular in England at the time, with its strong ‘Georgian’ cubic forms and heavy Doric portico. Other prominent buildings in Britain also informed designs in South Africa, such as the Library at Cape Town, which supposedly borrowed from the Fitzwilliam Museum at Cambridge completed just ten years earlier in 1848. Leeds Town Hall (1853-8), with its central domed tower, was also a favoured type that seemed to fit the architectural ambitions of the colony, with variants deployed at Port Elizabeth City Hall (1894) and Cape Town City Hall (Reid and Green, 1905). A loose and informal classical approach was used for these large buildings, eager to suggest historical refinement as well as recent success. The town hall designs edge towards the baroque and display eclectic faience flourishes with their corner conditions frequently embellished with campanile-cum-clock towers or monumental domes, as found at Pietermaritzburg Town Hall (1891) and City Hall, Durban (begun 1906).

Of similar architectural interest were the schools and colleges built to educate the settler elites offspring before departing to Oxbridge for further education. These include Bishops Diocesan College, Rondebosch, Cape Town (begun 1850), by William White, the original quadrangle of which was inspired by Radley College in England; St John’s College, Johannesburg (f. 1898), the main campus buildings of which were built to Oxford ‘quad’ layouts by Herbert Baker (about whom, more later); and Michaelhouse, Natal (f.1896), also by Baker **[Fig. 2]**.[[6]](#footnote-6) Furthermore, design influences from Britain could also be seen at local school level in cities such as Cape Town, where the architectural firm Parker and Forsyth, are credited with the construction of both the West End (Chapel Street) and East End (Trafalgar High) Schools (both *c*.1910). These are reputed to be the finest schools in Cape Town and built in an Edwardian style in English redbrick with separate boys and girls entrances and ventilation towers (for educational architecture and empire, see Bremner and Nelson in this volume [pp. xx-xx]).

The discovery of underground seams of gold in Witwatersrand in 1886 transformed the entire region, resulting in the creation of the entirely new city of Johannesburg. The city was laid out on a rectangular grid to aid the transaction of land sales prompting a young war correspondent, Winston Churchill, to comment, ‘we had marched nearly 500 miles through a country which, though full of promise, seemed to European eyes desolate and wild, and now we turned a corner suddenly, and there before us sprang the evidence of wealth, manufacture and bustling civilisation’.[[7]](#footnote-7) Indeed, this was not an imperial, civilising or faith-based aspect of colonialism, but perhaps the dominant driver of all colonial activity—the pursuit of resource extraction and wealth. Invariably wealth manifests itself through public display, and architecture is surely one of the most conspicuous modes of exhibiting success and fortune. Thus, the bustling, unpretentiously-named Johannesburg rapidly grew with arcades, offices, railways and banking halls.

A prominent example of this newfound wealth and its architectural consequences is the Italian Palazzo-style Beresford House, Johannesburg (1925-7), designed by Frederick Williamson (1890-1945), with its projecting canopy at first floor level offering solar shade to the large facade of glazing that the stone palace above seems to float over **[Fig. 3]**. Speculation and rising land prices forced higher density construction. The result was that multi-story buildings such as Union House (c.1932), by Stucke, Harrison and Williamson, began to dominate the skyline. Union House is a stripped classical ten-storey commercial development clad in stone, projecting into a tower at the corner and stepped back at cornice level, looking more to American developments than reticent commercial work of the United Kingdom. There was an apparent urgency in the new city of Johannesburg to break with the past architectural convention. This was coupled with the wealth necessary to take risks both in terms of construction and aesthetic choices. The rate of development prompted a town planning scheme for the city in 1936 outlining density levels of twenty Europeans per acre, along with road widths and building height ratios. Although the architectural technologies and methods may have been advanced, the politics were not. Like so many other examples of colonial urban development around the British empire, the scheme included a series of open spaces and tree-belts that acted as a ‘buffer’ space to the non-European townships.

**‘Hurrah for Despotism’**

It is impossible to discuss South Africa without including Herbert Baker (1862-1945). An architect of prolific output, he arrived in the Cape from London in 1892, eager to ‘transform South Africa out of all recognition and create a modern Dominion inside the British Empire’.[[8]](#footnote-8) After completing several commercial buildings in Cape Town he moved to Johannesburg in 1902 where he designed over ‘300 houses’ in a variety of styles, thus contributing to the domestic architecture of the region like no other architect before or since. Baker also designed a number of churches in what he described as a ‘primitive style of architecture’, such as St. John the Divine, Randfontein (1905). His country houses were opulent and stylistically diverse but nearly always with classical undertones and grandiose timber-panelled interiors. Others were informed by artisan trades, following a broad Arts and Crafts ethos. He was a devout follower of Cecil Rhodes (designing the ‘Hellenic’ Rhodes memorial in Cape Town at Table Mountain in 1912) and believed wholeheartedly in Britain’s imperial ‘mission’ **[Fig. x]**. This imperial dimension perhaps most forcibly expressed in Pretoria at the Union Buildings that overlook the town and the surrounding districts **[Fig. 4]**.[[9]](#footnote-9) This complex, built as an administrative centre as well as a commemoration of the Anglo-Boer union of Colony and Republics, was started in 1910 and largely completed by 1913, in time for Baker to work with his old colleague and collaborator Edwin Lutyens on the New Delhi project in India, which shares a similar language and architectural agenda, albeit on a much larger scale. Whereas Lutyens, reluctantly, incorporated some Indian motifs and decoration into his projects at Delhi, Baker preferred to disregard the local, ‘it must not be Indian, nor English, nor Roman but it must be Imperial’, he stated, a motto that he applied in Pretoria **[Fig. x]**.[[10]](#footnote-10)

Here Baker was not aiming to produce an architecture that was in anyway African; rather, the outcome was a cascading series of classical monuments that adorn stepped terraces centred upon an amphitheatre, establishing ‘in clear, unambiguous terms claims for British hegemony over Africa south of the Sahara’.[[11]](#footnote-11) There was also an attempt to represent symbolically the unity of four colonies from two nations, being brought together and centred around the (un-built) Temple of Peace. Of course, the African nations and tribes (and substantial Indian population) are conspicuously absent from the composition (see Irving chapter in this volume, pp. xx-xx).

Baker also wrote the introduction to the catalogue for the RIBA Exhibition of Dominion and Colonial Architecture in 1926, noting that, ‘it will be of interest to study what influences elemental and often pioneer conditions and different climates may have upon architecture of the new world or Greater Britain’.[[12]](#footnote-12) It was a telling statement, whilst acknowledging that materials, skills and climate undoubtedly influence an architectural proposal, the architecture should still pay duty to expressing an imagined or curated British quality. Several buildings were exhibited from South Africa, including work at Witwatersrand University by Cowin and Powers (with Emley) in 1920. Frederick Williamson was later invited to join the practice and introduced pre-cast concrete blocks at the University used in a rather triumphal classical manner in the library (1933).

**Transvaal Modernism**

The links between South Africa and the United Kingdom remained strong at this time, particularly in terms of architectural education and field trips around Europe. William Holford (1907-75), for example, worked for Cowin, Powers and Ellis before studying at Liverpool School of Architecture in 1925, later returning to oversee the planning of Durban and Pretoria after WW2. Many others did the same, including Adriaan Low Meiring (1904-79) who would go on to found the first School of Architecture in Pretoria in 1943, and the more progressive Max Policansky (b. 1909) who designed the sleek Judge Clothing and Cavalla Cigarette factories in Cape Town in 1936 **[Fig. 5]**. These links with Europe brought many emerging architects into contact with the avant-garde, particularly Le Corbusier, who had a significant impact on Rex Martienssen (1909-42) and Normal Hanson (1909-91). Others, such as the Cowin brothers, were less convinced by the claims of European Modernism, but still sought a new approach to design and construction. Douglas Cowin (fl. 1930s-50s) won the Rand Daily Mail Ideal Homes Competition in 1934 with a Meisian inspired pavilion.[[13]](#footnote-13) Martienssen was a formidable force at the new Witwatersrand school of architecture and designed the Corbusian-influenced House Stern in Johannesburg in 1934 (along with Fassler and Cooke), closely following the five points, with a carefully polished concrete finish.[[14]](#footnote-14)

**West Africa**

Whereas South Africa was a European settler colony and subsequently received investment for significant building projects, other parts of Africa were viewed, initially at least, merely as trading ports with a minimum level of infrastructure, construction, and certainly without the pomp and exaggerated monumentality that took place in the Rand. Of course vast coastal fortresses had been constructed between the fifteenth and seventeenth centuries to facilitate the triangular slave trade (see Maudlin chapter in this volume, p. x). However, since the abolition of slavery, West Africa experienced substantial periods of political stability and economic growth. During this period from the late eighteenth century onwards, modest housing was a more familiar sight, constructed along with trading bases, ports, and buildings funded by missionary organisations **[Fig. 6]**.

Initially this was very much an unregulated and haphazard form of development, lacking any real sense of coherent planning, including sanitary provision, until the later initiation of colonial town planning ordinances. Christian missionary organisations—mainly but not exclusively the Church Missionary Society, the Methodist and Presbyterian missions—produced some of the largest structures in Sierra Leone, Gold Coast, and Nigeria, largely in the form of churches, assembly halls, and schools. These structures were basic in design, utilising materials either locally available or carried in ship ballast for construction. Later, structures would include prefabricated iron kits imported from Glasgow or Liverpool.[[15]](#footnote-15) The most prominent schools were among those founded by the CMS, such as Fourah Bay College (Sierra Leone, c. 1900), and the British Colonial government’s advanced secondary colleges, including Achimota College (Legon, Gold Coast, 1924 ), with its campanile clock tower topped with a chateau-like roof, and King’s College, Lagos (f.1901)—both erected by the PWD. Missionary organisations were also responsible for the founding of educational institutions in the Gold Coast, at Mfantsipim (Methodist, 1876), and at Adisadel, Cape Coast (Anglican, 1910), and Akropong (buildings date from 1927), near Accra, with sparsely decorated but impressive structures arranged in courts that dominated the surroundings from their remote hilltop locations.

The style was very much intended to remain distinct and removed from the villages. Hope Waddell College, Calabar (Nigeria), was designed and built at a similar location, removed from the native tribes, by the Scottish Presbyterian Mission. It was a mix of elevated PWD bungalows with imported prefabricated structures. Whereas at Katsina, and Barewa Colleges, both in Northern Nigeria, traditional mud construction was used as a pragmatic solution rather than transporting western building materials from the coast over 700 miles north, the cost of which would have been exorbitant. Furthermore, Sir Frederick Lugard (1858-1945) and others were ready to incorporate ‘Islamic’ culture, as well as its architecture, to facilitate the acceptance of British colonial rule and its infrastructure, including education, in Northern Nigeria. Others elsewhere in Africa also took a more sympathetic view towards the vernacular, such as Philip Capes Harris (1891-?), who, working in the PWD in Zanzibar, attempted to reconcile the local styles with his own proposals, producing numerous studies into the Arab-influenced architecture of the island, which he then incorporated into the remodelling of the Sultan’s Palace (1926-32). Some of his research was also applied to his design for another emerging building type, the hospital **[Fig. 7]**.[[16]](#footnote-16)

Although these rather eccentric examples exist, the typical approach of the PWD was one of aloof disregard for the local. In addition to ‘official architecture’, there were some private practitioners, such as Hugh Minty, who designed the Colonial Bank in Kumasi (1924) using reinforced concrete and concrete blocks. Also in Kumasi, Minty designed a shop and residence for Chief Kobina Mensah—a rather grand two storey building arranged in three bays complete with loggia and bracketed cornice.[[17]](#footnote-17)

Of the four British colonies in West Africa, Gold Coast (later Ghana) was usually the ‘pilot’ colony, where ideas were tested and explored. It also had substantial business links with Britain, dominated by the United Africa Company and other such conglomerates, as well as smaller firms such as Lever Brothers and Patterson Zochonis, who dealt in a variety of business affairs from timber and general produce through to gold and manganese mining.[[18]](#footnote-18) Lever would eventually go on to develop Leverville (now Lusanga) in Belgium controlled Congo, an illustration of the power and influence private business maintained throughout foreign as well as British controlled territories in Sub-Saharan Africa.

**Planning and Sanitation**

This lack of considered planning resulted in Herbert V. Lanchester (who had been working in Zanzibar) writing to the Colonial Office in 1926 noting the paucity of adequate built infrastructure, as well as the disparity that was emerging between the Dominions and the Colonies:

[T]here is at present no provision for laying out the growing towns in the colonies on the lines recognized in Europe, America, and most of our Dominions. In all such places there should be a definite plan defining the areas suited to commerce, industry and for the various classes of residents … .[[19]](#footnote-19)

His concerns were addressed at Takoradi, in Ghana, which had developed into a major port, with an integrated railway network leading to the mines of Tarkwa and to the interior cash crop territories. The dockland developments were mainly utilitarian stores and bonded warehouses, although the railway terminus had a tepid Bakeresque feel (as does the General Post Office in Accra, c.1930s), and several banking offices were built in a designated commercial district of the town in a *modern*, almost deco, style in early 1930s **[Fig. 8]**.[[20]](#footnote-20)

Takoradi seems to be something of an exception, or model development. European housing expanded in the south west of the town laid out in a meandering picturesque plan to house large bungalows, but the centre of the town planned in the mid-1920s adopted a strong ‘cart-wheel’ arrangement of interconnected boulevards centred on a circular hub, labelled on the plans as the ‘African Township’. A golf course divided the African from the European areas. The plan largely adhered to what the Colonial Office later advocated for all new developments:

In the case of town planning in West Africa, things have been considerably hampered by the lack of money, by the tendency of native towns to grow up haphazard, by the opposition of the local mercantile community to anything like the provision of a European quarter, and more than anything else by the demands of the Medical Sanitary Department. As you know, the idea paid down by the medical authorities is, a native town, a blank space of 440 yards at least, a business quarter, another blank space of 440 yards or so, and then a European residential quarter; the spaces of 440 yards being for choice a howling wilderness, the idea above all things, being an expanse of smooth concrete entailing no sort of hole where water can gather and mosquitos breed.[[21]](#footnote-21)

The author of this memorandum at least had the awareness to suggest this approach was ‘the complete negation of town planning, and is only possible where there is unlimited space and land does not cost much … . It never occurred to anybody that this sort of thing was rather unfair and in many ways impracticable’.[[22]](#footnote-22)

In near-by Sekondi a ruined PWD post office still survives, wonderfully panelled on the interior ‘to form a display of the various Gold Coast timbers, each panel being of a different variety and neatly labelled with the commercial and local names of the timber used’.[[23]](#footnote-23) Although the PWD produced some exceptionally mediocre buildings, the Post Office described above also demonstrated how they could sometimes be sensitive to the local and even extravagant, depending on which official was in charge. No doubt this diversity in approach and quality led to the formation of prescribed building standards that could also be financially efficient and easily replicated. The PWD produced a set of publications that were based on empirical knowledge gathered ‘in the field’ and written not as a single coherent volume but in parts or chapters, each concerned with a specific building type or design consideration that evolved with skills, experience, and technology. The manuals were used to teach and instruct, giving details on writing style, drawing equipment, and best practice in an attempt to establish a disciplined department not reliant on the expertise and knowledge of any one individual but, rather, on a set of draftsmen and architects who could be allocated to any project and pick up where another left off.[[24]](#footnote-24) The Post Office at Ibadan shows one of the variations on the PWD Post Office theme, designed *c*.1910, although, in this case, it does not conform to any of the published types suggesting that there was still latitude for creativity and expression within the PWD **[Fig. 9]**.

Towns were ranked according to size and importance, and different classes/types of buildings were built according to each town’s classification. The PWD guidebooks reveal a variety of different solutions for three main building types: hospitals, post offices and police stations. Indeed, these three types were the bare minimum required to govern—that is, places to maintain health, communication and order. The PWD also produced a guide to the selection of sites which contains the well-known ‘ideal plan’ for colonial townships, and its clearly articulated desire to separate the colonised from the colonisers with large tracts of open space, as the golf course had achieved in Takoradi.[[25]](#footnote-25) The bungalows were mainly designed with large projecting eaves that provided shelter to the porch and colonnaded logia below, but there were other variants produced that introduced the ‘local vernacular’ style rendered in mud with flat roofs and projecting crenulations at cornice level, an approach that sought to blend in, as well as using local skills and materials.

Whilst most of the planning and architecture sought to improve the health and comfort of the European populations by the late 1920s, a significant policy emerged that began to address the ‘Development’ of the indigenous populations with the aim of stimulating economic growth in the Colonies as well as ‘to promote commerce with, or industry in, the United Kingdom’.[[26]](#footnote-26) Disasters and emergencies also accelerated change, such as an outbreak of plague in Kumasi in 1924, prompting the government to build 684 new dwellings. Various attempts were also made to address the slum problems in Accra in the 1930s.[[27]](#footnote-27) The 1939 Accra earthquake resulted in some government housing provision in the city, but generally, development was slow and reluctant, even with the establishment of a ‘Town Improvement Committee’.[[28]](#footnote-28) Lord Passfield sent out a circular letter from the Colonial Office to the colonies encouraging the employment of planning officers, noting:

I have been giving consideration to the question of town and regional planning … careful planning of this nature is essential to the fullest and healthiest development of which any particular area is capable … fortunately the technical personnel for giving this advice is now available, and there should be no difficulty in obtaining qualified men when they are required … these sources are those such as are provided by the Diploma in Town Planning of the London and Liverpool Universities, and the examination recently instituted by the Town Planning Institute. I therefore request that you will give your sympathetic consideration to this subject, particularly with regard to the desirability of appointing a Regional Planning Officer in all cases where considerable development of residential, commercial, industrial or transport conditions can be foreseen.[[29]](#footnote-29)

These subtle prompts and rousings had by 1946 evolved into a new Department of Housing in Ghana, with the powers to acquire land and prescribe building standards.[[30]](#footnote-30) It was hoped that by increasing commerce with the colonies the significant trade deficit that had steadily increased in the United Kingdom after WW1 would be reduced, and that British manufacturing, products, expertise and shipping would receive a significant boost. Construction was ideal in this regard as it utilised all of the above, and whilst the colonies were the beneficiaries in terms of gaining infrastructure and buildings, the real investment was spent furthering British interests and businesses. Various other reports were commissioned in the run up to and during WW2 specifically concerned with education, these were antecedents to the two Phelps Stokes Reports on Education (1921 and 1924),**[[31]](#footnote-31)** which had helped frame the structure and spread of education in West and South Africa after WW1, including *Mass Education in African Society*,[[32]](#footnote-32)and a report from the *Commission on Higher Education in West Africa*,[[33]](#footnote-33)prompting a review of the existing limited provision. The rationale from the Colonial Office was that a colony must be able to educate its future leaders if it was ever to achieve political independence, and so a programme of school building to address this need was initiated, centred largely on Ghana and Nigeria.

Whilst the discussion thus far has focused on West Africa, East African architecture emerged from a similar architectural past. Whilst segregation was not as starkly enforced as in Southern Africa, there were separate residential quarters, aspirationally built central business district architecture, and significant social infrastructure project covering schools, health centres and other facilities the significant difference to West Africa was that like Southern Africa, East African planners envisaged the presence of a permanent or long term settler population.[[34]](#footnote-34) Similar trends existed in Portuguese owned Angola and Mozambique.

**Tropical Modernism**

Much of the impetus behind architectural ‘development’ in British Sub-Saharan Africa was for the creation of an architecture that would in some way mirror the region’s transition to independence, and, as Mark Crinson discusses, Modernism was seen as a ‘neutral’ replacement to previous ‘colonial’ styles of building.[[35]](#footnote-35) Following a period serving in West Africa during WW2, Maxwell Fry was appointed Town Planning Advisor, and his wife, Jane Drew, as Chief of Staff to the British government.[[36]](#footnote-36) Together they developed numerous town planning reports and recommendations for the region, as well as writing a seminal guidebook entitled *Village Housing in the Tropics*.[[37]](#footnote-37) They also collaborated with Alfred “Bunny” Alcock on experimental, self-build housing estates in Kumasi, and were pioneers in seeking African opinion on planning and architecture.[[38]](#footnote-38) Initially, most of Fry and Drew’s work was pragmatic and based on organisational planning in the form of ‘sketch plans’ spanning across the entire region.[[39]](#footnote-39) At Bathurst, Gambia, for example, the practice provided new layouts for drains, which previously flooded and even flowed the wrong way.[[40]](#footnote-40) However, Fry claimed there were no precedents to follow, neither ‘in our own colonial buildings which were without character or the sort of response to natural conditions that we were seeking; nor in African building which taught us the value of shade but was of a passing order the beauty of which we could admire as it fell and decayed.[[41]](#footnote-41)

Despite this, he was invariably seduced by what he saw, describing Bathurst to Drew:

how charming it is. White walls enclosing gardens, wide grass grown streets, white robed men and gorgeously dressed Jollof women, all moving as if [they] were in a dream. And a waterside road lined with colour washed old stone buildings with arcaded fronts on the one side and all sorts of delightful foreshore messes on the other.[[42]](#footnote-42)

At Freetown Fry felt that a town plan was a, ‘complete luxury, until the port has a new deep water quay and a proper system of water storage’.[[43]](#footnote-43) A plan had been prepared by the PWD as early as 1929 to improve the water supply, but remained unexecuted.[[44]](#footnote-44) The matter was discussed in Parliament in 1944 with the Secretary of State for the Colonies questioned over the ‘failure to develop the harbour of Freetown to a standard worthy of the British Empire’.[[45]](#footnote-45) Freetown still suffered from water shortages despite having the highest rainfall on the coast. It was this experience in West Africa, coupled with Fry’s modernist credentials, that made the Fry-Drew partnership an ideal candidate for the school building programme in Ghana and Nigeria.

Initially they designed small extensions to the schools previously mentioned, quickly followed by substantial new-builds throughout the colony. Drew stated that the architectural character of their designs was generated by ‘the sunbreakers, grilles and other shading but breeze-permitting devices’, as well as a desire to ‘design in a way which, without in any sense copying African detail, gives a response which is African’.[[46]](#footnote-46) The forms were indebted to the PWD, but with subtle gestures such as the concrete balustrades and perforated screens incorporating local motifs. The schools all adopted similar planning arrangements centred on the assembly hall or chapel, flanked on either side by teaching and residential quarters with the administration facilities usually forming a ceremonial gateway. Staff housing lined the driveways approaching the school with ‘compound’ (courtyard) housing for the African staff and ‘Bungalows’ for the European staff. Principal among these projects are perhaps the Wesley Girls’ School in Cape Coast (1955) and Prempeh College, Kumasi (1952-53), which have a more refined finish and carefully composed series of external ‘spaces’ **[Fig. 10]**. Later on, they also designed several schools in Nigeria, including Holy Cross, Lagos (1960). Similar detailing and construction was adopted at Arya Girls’ Senior School in Nairobi, designed by T. G. Gedrych and Peer Abben, that placed a linear and elevated horizontal block above rubble-stone walls. Other examples can be found throughout East Africa, such as the European Primary School with its entire façade of pierced concrete walls, designed by C. A. Bransgrove at Dar es Salaam, and the School of Hygiene in Mbale designed by John Falconer of Deans and Partners. Heavily indebted in plan to the Impington Village College arrangement and Fry and Drew’s balustrade patterns it deploys a strong rhythmical façade arrangement of projecting and recessed blocks to provide shaded cover to study-bedroom balconies.

By the late 1940s Fry and Drew were considered experts in ‘tropical’ design and were eagerly recruited (although Herbert Baker and others were also considered) to design a new university college at Ibadan, after the recommendation of the *Commission on Higher Education in West Africa* (1945) and *Education for citizenship in Africa* (1948) reports.[[47]](#footnote-47) Fry considered the University project the crown of his career, although he later severely critiqued his own use of lacelike concrete screens which had almost become ‘tropical modern’ clichés by that point. The plan is similar to the Ghanaian school layouts with a sweeping driveway that leads to a composition of administration block, tower, bookshop and assembly hall, all arranged around a courtyard. The assembly building, Trenchard Hall, was funded by the UAC and named after its chairman. The layout of the campus is very spread out to encourage cross-ventilation, but this approach does result in a lack of cohesiveness. The residential quarters are arranged in quadrangles overlooking gardens and communal buildings, all utilising the concrete balustrades and screens and in some cases rather dramatic buildings such as Sultan Bello Hall, with its concrete dome. The library building stands out for its bold façade, not only providing shade but also becoming something of an emblem for a new type of architecture for a newly emerging nation. Air conditioning was initially considered but with the running costs proving too high, a concrete lattice screen was used to generate airflow and access corridors behind the screen further provide solar shade and a climatic buffer to the interior proper **[Fig. 11]**.[[48]](#footnote-48)

George Pace (1915-1975) designed the campus Chapel as a series of concrete parabolic arches and a free standing campanile, breaking away from the traditional mission hall style, utilising the construction skills of Italian contractors. The Catholic church on campus, although more conventional in its form, incorporated numerous examples of African craft such as the carved timber doorway and interior decoration **[Fig. 12]**. Universities were considered a prerequisite to gaining political independence and subsequently others were proposed elsewhere in Africa, including a University college in Salisbury, Southern Rhodesia (1953), and the University of Ghana, Legon (founded in 1948). The campus in Ghana was designed by Austen St Barbe Harrison (1891–1976) and R.P.S Hubbard (1910-1965). With its steep tiled roofs and formal symmetrical arrangements, it invokes a sense of tradition and longstanding respectability, rather than the quest for newness and ‘starting afresh’. In contrast, the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Kumasi (1953), designed by James Cubitt (1914-1983) and Kenneth Scott (1918-82), offers a more radical tropical Modern approach. The design (and environmental) principles developed by Fry and Drew were largely adhered to but the architecture was generally of a lighter construction and more delicately composed. Cubitt also integrated more sophisticated technological solutions into his schemes such as in the workshop building that deployed self-opening clerestory windows. The entire campus is an essay on how Modernism could be translated to suit the tropics, utilising cross-ventilation, narrow plans, and lattice wall structures, all executed in a precise and formalist vocabulary, leading the *Architectural Review* to describe it as ‘grand manner, but not grandiose’ **[Figs. 13-14]**.[[49]](#footnote-49)

**The Fluidity of Knowledge and Movement of Personnel**

The British empire was an interconnected, if disparate and disorganised, network. Expertise flowed freely from one territory to another as needs arose, and we see such transfers of expertise and personnel through many architecture and town planning projects in Africa. For example, Harrison had been previously employed in Mandate Palestine; Fry and Drew went on to work on various projects in Chandigarh; Leo De Syllas (1917-1964) had previously worked in the West Indies before designing several buildings in West Africa (as well as the town of Ajena, Ghana).[[50]](#footnote-50) A major influence on Fry and Drew’s work in Nigeria was the campus layout for the University College of the West Indies (c.1952), by Norman and Dawbarn. Fry had visited the West Indies and would have seen the UCWI campus by 1957 at the latest.[[51]](#footnote-51) Norman and Dawbarn in turn went on to work in East Africa at Makerere College in Kampala, Uganda (1963). Their approach at Makerere presents a further shift towards monumental masonry with concrete detailing, rather than expansive lattices of concrete, informed by Louis Kahn and Le Corbusier (as well as Gropius’s work at Impington Village College), whilst incorporating the Anglo-quadrangle model and study-bedroom typology. The bedrooms are also arranged on a forty-five degree angle, maintaining privacy and minimising solar gain, as well as forming a bold and startling design **[Fig. 15]**. William Holford acted as a go-between and ‘expert client’ for the Colonial Office in his role as architectural advisor and set about producing space standards and regulations for overseas educational buildings, he was also advisor to the Government of Rhodesia and Nyasaland in their development of the new federal capital at Salisbury and University College at Salisbury.[[52]](#footnote-52) Robert Gardner-Medwin had also worked in the West Indies before becoming part of the UN Housing mission in South East Asia, then helping to establish an architecture school in Nairobi in 1964.[[53]](#footnote-53) In 1967 Anthony Chitty and Robert Henning designed the University of Nairobi Administration building. The façade is arranged as a series of layered spaces created by a vast concrete brise soleil and projecting floor plates that create an interstitial zone between the exterior lawns and the glazed, climatically vulnerable, inner façade. At the same campus the Hyslop Building by Graham McCullough also utilises a composite approach to the façade, the outer layer being clad in a tessellating arrangement of circular metal tubes that sit proud of the glazing behind. It gives a more delicate quality than the concrete lattices whilst seeming to offer no relation to what takes place within the building.  
This network of experts controlled and dominated not only the design of significant buildings and the modes of procurement, but also the production of knowledge and validation of a particular type of architectural education. This was further formalised with the establishment of the RIBA Overseas Relations Committee and the establishment of the Commonwealth Association of Architects—both groups recognising how the changing political landscape required a new approach to both building procurement and architectural education.

The Colonial Office recognised that they had a body of expertise emerging in these ‘tropical experts’, but it was an uncoordinated and haphazard canon of knowledge with each set of architects establishing their own methods, construction systems and even space standards. To remedy this (and similar problems with other building types) the Building Research Station appointed a Colonial Liaison Officer in 1948, George Anthony Atkinson, who would act as an ‘expert client’ for the Colonial Office, as well as collating best building practice and disseminating the latest research findings through *Colonial Building Notes*. This was ultimately aimed at developing more economic forms of construction over which the Colonial Office was becoming increasingly concerned.[[54]](#footnote-54) A meeting was called for architects working on new colonial universities, with the participants agreeing to pool their design specifications and to share information on floor areas, residences, laboratories and lecture rooms. With these projects being awarded to private practitioners rather than the PWD, the body of knowledge that had been collated and published over previous decades was, it seems overlooked, and possibly even dismissed. Furthermore, an altogether more scientific approach to building physics was emerging at this time, with data established through experimentation, rather than the PWD’s ‘rule of thumb’ estimates and empirical fettling.

Two building research stations were established along these lines in 1952: one in Accra, Ghana, and the other in Zaria, Nigeria, to undertake scientific research in the field.[[55]](#footnote-55) In London a further formal exchange of expertise occurred through the conference on Tropical Architecture held at University College London in 1953, initiated by the Nigerian architect A. Adedokun Adeyemi in an attempt to share knowledge and to recognise the specialist demands of tropical construction. Talks were given on various aspects of Tropical Architecture, including materials and construction by Otto Koenigsberger, William Holford, G. A. Atkinson, Arthur Foyle and other architects, who were deemed ‘experts’, and who also had the greatest connections to the Colonial Office and the architectural media. A further conference was held on tropical architecture in Uganda in 1955, followed by ‘Design for Tropical Living’in Durban (1957), collating and sharing technical know-how amongst a group of experts. There was also recognition of the growing urbanised populations and the problems associated with sprawling settlements, as Holford noted in his Durban paper:

the overriding problem of most tropical countries is that of the increasing numbers of people in relation to economic resources and to food production. Most housing must therefore be low-cost housing; and as soon as a settlement becomes urban in character, densities must be high enough to prevent transport and other services from becoming increasingly uneconomic.[[56]](#footnote-56)

While a definite technical approach incorporating building physics and construction research was slowly being applied to school and university building, housing procurement was taking a different route.

**Housing: Government Sponsored or Self-Build?**

Municipal housing was being built throughout the colonies in the immediate post-WW2 period, but was completely inadequate in accommodating the increasingly urbanised populations.[[57]](#footnote-57) This resulted in a policy shift that utilised Alcock’s self-build experiments (as well as those undertaken by Koenisgberger in India), leading to Africans being encouraged to build their own properties, constructed in accordance to European designs, supervision, and limited funding. Alcock’s guide, *How to plan your village* (1953), surmised this position.[[58]](#footnote-58) It was written as a story with the key protagonist—named Kwame (perhaps a tongue-in-cheek reference to the Ghanaian Prime Minister)—helping to build and plan his native village following a period study abroad. Furthermore, there was some recognition from the Colonial Office’s perspective that,

[w]hile numerous improvements could be suggested on purely hygienic and aesthetic grounds by European architects or designers, there was no certainty that such improvements and modifications would meet with a response from the people concerned…it was therefore decided that it was desirable that a sociologist should be appointed for each Chief Commissioner’s area, who would work in close association with the architects and town planning officers.[[59]](#footnote-59)

‘Scientific’ studies followed incorporating sociological advice and documentation - every aspect of African life was interrogated and recorded. The use of African labour also significantly reduced the financial burden on the Colonial Office, with ‘reward’ schemes being implemented so that whatever labour Africans invested they would receive 10% of the cost back to spend on local amenities. Although the motive behind the proposal may have been honourable and a means of promoting ownership, it was fundamentally a cost reduction exercise:

If it works, should prove a cheap way of getting a lot of good work done, since the cost of the communal facilities is not to exceed 10% of the estimated value of the work done by private enterprise, so that before the villagers get their village hall or what-not they will have to put in tens times its value on improvements on their own account.[[60]](#footnote-60)

Private one-off commissions continued in the wake of WW2, including residences (such as those designed by Edward Mills at Ikoyi[[61]](#footnote-61) and James Cubitt in Accra[[62]](#footnote-62)), but in terms of larger projects attention was devoted to the production of electricity, as well as irrigation. The development of large dams was in part inspired by the TVA work, including a degree of posturing with respect to technological supremacy and the display of industrialisation and ‘progress’. In addition to infrastructural works such as the Volta River Project in Ghana, and at Jinja north of Lake Victoria in Uganda, is Owen Falls Dam designed by Sir Alexander Gibb and partners, with the architect Harry Ford designing the power house that was clad in a local pink granite.[[63]](#footnote-63) Other projects in Uganda ran counter to the self-build approach taken in West Africa, such as low-rise flats built for the Kampala Municipal Council, designed by Deans, Inglis and Partners, which were raised on stilts to ‘prevent the effect of night-time radiation from heat absorbed in the ground’, as well as offering increased ventilation and better views over the lake.[[64]](#footnote-64) These projects received very little attention back in Britain, and even larger more prominent buildings such as the Legislative Council Building, Nairobi, by Harold Thornley Dyer (1904-1989) in 1955, and C. G. Andrews’ Magistrates’ Courts in Kampala did not garner much interest. The council building is an interesting ensemble of two perpendicular wings that intersect at a clock tower, ‘planned to be deliberately reminiscent in form to the Palace of Westminster.’[[65]](#footnote-65) Environmentally it makes use of large concrete grills as well as local stone, which the concrete portico outside the debating chamber attempting to bring some classical grandeur to the composition.

**Big Business and the Impact of Oil**

Although Maxwell Fry considered the ‘era of big spending’ to be over by 1960, the Colonial Office was not the only client active in Africa. Large banking and business corporations were eager to establish offices as independence loomed and the discovery of oil in Nigeria caused a surge in investment. The principles of tropical design were now being applied to new building types and construction methods. The Co-operative Bank in Lagos, for example, displayed the tropical Modern approach writ large across its entire façade of adjustable louvers. The same bank in Ibadan commissioned a small campus of buildings that included an office tower and community hall. Barclays Bank (referred to as ‘Dominion, Colonial and Overseas’ outside the United Kingdom) also had an extensive estate of banks in sub-Saharan Africa, including Ghana, Nigeria, Kenya, and South Africa. These were designed by James Cubitt, Fry, Drew Drake, and a number of other architects. In Nairobi, 1959, Amyas Douglas Connell designed the Norwich Union Insurance building as two interlocking rectilinear towers with light weight shading and prefabricated panels that seemed to anticipate the arrival of air-conditioning rather than exploiting passive cooling, where as his Crown Law Offices adopts a perforated screen punctuated with larger openings that allows the glazing to operate behind. , and attempting to generate a different vocabulary to the now rather staid grids, screens and patterned jalousie.Moreover, increased international business fuelled the requirement for better transportation links and old military airstrips and hangers were replaced with more glamorous commercial lounges, such as the Airports at Accra, designed by Norman and Dawbarn[[66]](#footnote-68) and Dar es Salaam designed by the PWD in 1961.

However, as Rhodri Windsor-Liscombe has argued, the deployment of Modernist architectural vocabularies in such buildings did not necessarily imply a move away from imperialist business practices during the decolonisation and subsequent Commonwealth periods in British Africa. It may be suggested that such architecture merely threw an apparent ‘liberalized façade’ over what was in effect the near untrammelled, if unofficial pursuit of corporate colonial interests.[[67]](#footnote-69) Indeed, large businesses were providing facilities beyond those required for their core business use, not only filling a gap in public sector provision, but also revealing a paternalistic agenda with their presence in Africa. The Manganese mining corporation funded a Community Centre in Tarkwa that encouraged its employees to spend their free time in ‘wholesome’ activities, and the Community Centre in Accra, funded by the UAC had a similar agenda. The Colonial Social Welfare Advisory Committee met in 1944 to discuss the establishment of ‘social centres’, conducting a survey on the existing provision of ‘reading rooms’ and ‘social meeting places’ throughout Africa, noting that ‘Cadbury Bros., Ltd., have undertaken to erect and equip two village halls at Sunum and Berekum as a contribution towards the scheme of mass education’.[[68]](#footnote-70) Thus, corporate commissions were quickly becoming the largest architectural commissions on offer in sub-Saharan Africa, with BP’s new headquarters in Lagos, designed by Fry and Drew, and completed just in time for the Independence celebrations in 1960, being a classic example. Other large businesses also commissioned new offices using the coterie of tropical Modernists active in the region, as seen, for example in the Elder Demptser shipping lines office buildings in Lagos and Freetown by James Cubitt and partners. In addition to office buildings expat dwellings such as the Shell petroleum company flats in Lagos, by Architects Co-Partnership, and large villas for Allen and Hanburys (1962) at Aba, by the husband and wife team Godwin and Hopwood (both of whom are still in practice in Lagos). Hotels were also required for the increasing number of commercial visitors, including the Bristol Hotel by the Architects Co-partnership in Lagos (1955).

Again, the political liberation of African territories did not result in the immediate cultural independence or the sudden expulsion of British architects and expertise; indeed, it has been argued that Modern architecture and its claims of ‘neutrality’ permitted the British presence to remain firmly rooted in the continent. This was not to say that African architects were not emerging, but that they had very limited publicity and coverage in the architectural press. The *West African Builder and Architect* journal was edited by one of the architects from the Fry and Drew office, Anthony Halliday; while the British-born Alan Vaughan Richards contributed regularly to the journal, arguably bringing a more ‘West African’ outlook to its architectural coverage and editorials.

There is little mention of African architects at this time, although an increasing number were training at universities in the United Kingdom, including John Dawe Tetlow (b.1913), while T.S. Clark became the head of the Ghanaian society of architects, responsible for selecting the architects for the new Tema and Volta River Projects in Ghana in 1954. This is in contrast to the more direct approach taken to commissions in other contexts, such as the appointment of Max Lock as consultant for the Kaduna Masterplan in Northern Nigeria as late as 1967.

By the early 1960s much of Sub-Saharan Africa, excluding South Africa, the Portuguese dependencies of Mozambique, and Angola, and Namibia, had achieved self rule or independence. With this came differing levels of national autonomy with respect to architectural design in many of the post-independence British colonies discussed. Both Nigeria and Ghana set up local professional institutes for architects, and had a small emerging number of indigenous architects who, within the decade, would come to dominate the profession locally.

In smaller countries the transition was less immediate, and even in Ghana and Nigeria, established British firms often remained involved in construction either with African architectural partners or as consultants on particular projects. For example, RMJM were consultants to the Federal Ministry of Education in Nigeria, and worked with the Nigerian firm Alex Ekwueme Architects on model secondary school projects across Nigeria, using the overseas building notes/UNESCO school standards as the basis for their post-1960 design.

However, as the 1960s progressed, and the political landscape changed as a result of power struggles and military conflict, the colonial era and early Modernism in architecture faded away. New alliances were formed and in some cases architects changed mid-project. Greater Lusaka was initially planned by William Holford and Brian Colquhoun in 1968, but they were replaced by Doxiadis Associates, prompting Brian Colquhoun to ponder: ‘I cannot help feeling that the present unpopularity of our Government had something to do with it.’[[69]](#footnote-71)

In the case of West Africa, these shifting alliances involved both Eastern and Western European, even Chinese, construction firms who were engaged to deliver large-scale infrastructure projects during the 1970s, while local architects came to dominate the domestic architectural scene left by departing expatriate firms.[[70]](#footnote-72) Thus, by the late 1970s only traces of colonial architecture remained intact, often transformed, remodelled, or sometimes totally erased by rapid urbanisation and development, or in some cases owing to the deleterious effects of urban insurrection and warfare. This was particularly true of most of what had been the British colonies in West, East, and Southern Africa, the exception being South Africa, which from the events of Sharpeville in 1966, became engulfed in nearly two decades of Nationalist rule. This directly influenced the nation’s architectural development, which became both politically contested and institutionally centred around ‘in-house’ architectural departments (with only the likes of Holford and Roy Kantorowich returning home to act as planning consultants). This was particularly true of areas such as education, and housing, and the efforts of architecture and planning NGOs, such as *Planact*, who tasked themselves with local efforts to deliver social infrastructure to apartheid’s displaced communities up until the 1990s.

1. P. Oliver, *Shelter in Africa* (London, 1971); S. Denyer, *African Traditional Architecture* (Nairobi, 1977); J. C. Moughtin, *Hausa Architecture* (London, 1985); and Vellinger *et* *al*, *Atlas of Vernacular Architecture of the World* (Abingdon, 2007). [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. E. Huxley, *Four Guineas: A Journey through West Africa* (London, 1954), p. 186. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. ‘Kumasi Special Issue’, *Arena: Architectural Association Journal*, 82 (July-August 1966); J. McKay Spence, ‘The new role of the architect in the tropics’, *Architectural Association Journal* (hereafter *AA Journal*), 71 (July-August 1955); G. A. Atkinson, ‘British architects in the tropics’, *AA Journal*, 69 (June 1953) pp. 7-21; M. Fry, ‘Town Planning in West Africa’, *The Architects' Year Book*,no.1 (1947), p. 72; M. Fry, ‘Town Planning in West Africa’, *African Affairs*, 45 (1946), pp. 197-204. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Atkinson, ‘British Architects in the Tropics’, pp. 7-21. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. For church architecture generally in South Africa, see D. Radford, ‘South African Christian Architecture’, in R. Elphick and R. Davenport (eds.), *Christianity in South Africa: A Political, Social & Cultural History* (Oxford, 1997), pp. 327-36. For Anglican architecture, see G. A. Bremner, ‘Pro Fide et Patria: Anglicanism and Ecclesiastical Architecture in Central and Southern Africa, 1848-1903’, in F. Demissie (ed.), Colonial Architecture and Urbanism in Africa: Intertwined and Contested Histories (Aldershot, 2012), pp. 239-76. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. P. Hawthorne and B. Bristow, *Historic Schools of South Africa* (Cape Town, 1993). For White, see G. Hunter, *William White: Pioneer Victorian Architect* (Reading, 2010), pp. 47-65. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. E. Rosenthal, in A. Macmillan (ed.), *Environs of the Golden City and Pretoria* (Cape Town, 1935), p. 11. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. C. Chipkin, *Johannesburg Style: Architecture and Society 1880-1960s*, (Cape Town, 1993), p. 39. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. T. R. Metcalf, *An Imperial Vision: Indian Architecture and the British Raj* (London, 1989), pp. 180-99. See also, M. Keath, ‘Visions of Greatness: Herbert Baker’s Imperial Idealism and the Union Buildings’, *Architecture South Africa* (May/June 1989), pp. 35-6. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Listed as personal correspondence between Baker and Lutyens in Chipkin, *Johannesburg Style*, p. 56. See also Baker’s own *Architecture and Personalities* (London, 1944), pp. 20-62, 216-22. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Ibid (Chipkin). [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. This exhibition was held at the RIBA galleries, 9 Conduit Street, London, between October 19 and November 17, 1926, See *Exhibition of Dominion and Colonial Architecture* (London, 1926), p. 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. See *South African Architectural Record* (October 1934), p. 266. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. See G. Herbert, *Martienssen and the International Style: the Modern Movement in South African Architecture* (Cape Town, 1975). [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. The most famous foundries in Glasgow were the Carron Company, Lion Foundry and Walter McFarlane’s Saracen Foundry. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. P. C. Harris, *Royal Institute of British Architects Journal*, 32 (April 1925), pp. 341-45. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. See ‘Colonial Bank, Coomassie, Ashanti’, *The Architect*, 112 (3 October 1924), pp.206-7, and ‘Proposed Bungalow at Kumasi, Ashanti’, *The Architect*, 114 (25 December 1925), p. 456. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. A. Macmillan (ed.), *Red Book of West Africa* (London, 1920; new impression 1968). [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. See Letter from H. V. Lanchester to Mr Ormsby-Gore Colonial Office, 11 July 1923, National Archives, Kew: CO 323/909. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. See the film ‘Takoradi Harbour and Railway Terminus, 1921-1928’ (Gold Coast Colony, 1928). [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. ‘Town Planning in the Colonies’, 1930, National Archives, Kew: CO 323/1080/9. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. Letter from Post Master General to the Acting Colonial Secretary, Victoriaburg, Accra, Public Records and Archives Administration Department (PRAAD), Accra: C.S.O. 14/3 42. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. For example, see *Departmental Regulations,* Public Works Department, Colony and Protectorate of Southern Nigeria, Lagos, 1911; *Information Book: Hospitals and Dispensaries*, Public Works Department, Nigeria, 1939; *Information Book: Post Offices*, Nigeria Public Works Department, 1946. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. *Selection of sites for towns and government residential areas* (Lagos, 1939). For an extended discussion, see A. Njoh, *Planning Power; Town Planning and Social Control in Colonial Africa* (London, 2007), p. 59; A. Njoh, *Urban Planning and Public Health in Africa; Historical, Theoretical and Practical Dimensions of a Continent's Water and Sanitation Problematic* (Farnham, 2012), p. 202; B. Liora, *A History of Urban Planning in Two West Africa Colonial Capitals; Residential Segregation in British Lagos and French Dakar (1850-1930)* (Lewiston, 2009); and R. Home, 'Town Planning, Segregation and Indirect Rule in Colonial Nigeria', *Third World Planning Review,* 5 (1983), pp. 165-75. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. As quoted in ‘Statement of Policy on Colonial Development and Welfare’, Colonial Office (London, 1940), p. 5. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. ‘Slum Clearance and Welfare Work’, 1938, National Archives, Kew: CO96 /752/12. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. Lord Passfield, ‘Circular sent to all colonies from Colonial Office, 18th September 1930, Town Planning in the Colonies 1930’. National Archives, Kew, CO 323/1080/9 [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. ‘Social Housing in the Gold Coast’, Colonial Building Notes, no2, September 1950 [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. See *Phelps Stokes Reports on Education in Africa* (ab. with introduction by L.J. Lewis) (London, 1962). [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. C. W. M. Cox, *Mass Education in African Society* (London, 1944). [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. ‘Report of the Commission on Higher Education in West Africa’ (London, 1945). [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. For this historical context see Scholtz, et al. (chapter 5, pp. 67 -94) and Nuzzaci, A (chapter 8, pp. 129 - 144 ) in Nunez Silva, Urban Planning in Sub-Saharan Africa (Taylor and Francis, 2015) [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. M. Crinson, *Modern Architecture and the End of Empire*, (Aldershot, 2003), pp. 128-56. See also Crinson chapter in this volume, pp. xx-xx. [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. ‘Maxwell Fry, Full Autobiography, 1985’, RIBA Archive: F&D/20/2, p. 89. [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. Fry, ‘Town Planning’ (1946), pp. 197-204. See also M. Fry and B. Benson, ‘Draft Townplanning Scheme for Bathurst and the Kombo Area’, Office of the Townplanning, West Africa, 1946 (written in 1944); M. Fry, ‘Developing “the Most Beautiful Town in West Africa”’, *West African Review* (June 1946), p. 625. [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. ‘Housing Schemes Kumasi, 1945-6’, National Archives, Kew: CO96/781/1. [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. Fry, ‘Town Planning in West Africa’, p. 197. [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. The planning problems of Bathurst were discussed in Parliament in 1949, and described as ‘frustrating’. It appears the plans were not being executed. See http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1949/feb/24/gambia-development [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. ‘Fry’s Memoires’, RIBA Archive: F&D/14/4, p. 16. [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. ‘Correspondence from Maxwell Fry to Jane Drew’ (17 August 1944), RIBA Archive: F&D/18/19. [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. Fry, ‘Town Planning in West Africa’ (1946), p. 198. Ships had to ‘dock’ at sea and rely on smaller boats to bring in and out the goods resulting in an inefficient and time consuming process. [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. See ‘Freetown: Canalisation of Streams and Surface Drainage’ (Typescript Correspondence, Annotated, and Memoranda Relating to Public Works in Freetown, between Acting Governor Cookson in Sierra Leone and the Colonial Office), Colonial Office (London, 1929). [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1944/jul/12/sierra-leone-freetown-harbour [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
46. Drew, ‘West Africa’, pp. 137-49. [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
47. See ‘Copy of Minutes’, National Archives, Kew: 33599/9/1/47, BW 90/309. [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
48. Letter from Walter Adams to G.A. Atkinson, 27 June 1950, National Archives, Kew: BW90/314 University College, Ibadan, Nigeria, June-Aug 1950. [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
49. “Recent Buildings in the Gold Coast’, *The Architectural Review*, 119 (May 1956), pp, 230-41. [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
50. ‘Town at Ajena, Ghana – Architect: Architects’ Co-Partnership’, *The Architects’ Journal* (February 1957), pp. 285-92. [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
51. ‘The new chairman for the site commission for the FC is Sir Charles Arden Clarke, recent Governor General of [the] Gold Coast. (now Ghana) He will certainly have *Fry and Drew* on his trail I shall try and “salt him down” in Trinidad at White Hall, Port of Spain’. Max Lock, notes in a Letter to Gerald, 19 December 1957, Max Lock Archive, University of Westminster, London: Box 5.8, letters from 1957. [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
52. Building: appointment of Sir William Holford as consultant architect; his visits to Rhodesia, National Archives, Kew: BW90/314 [↑](#footnote-ref-52)
53. There are many other examples. Most were employed in WW2 in the Corps of Royal Engineers, which gave them a grounding in tropical design and conditions. After the war they inherited, or were given, numerous re-building and housing projects. [↑](#footnote-ref-53)
54. See ‘Circular Dispatch’, 9 June 1948, National Archives, Kew: ‘Building in Tropical Countries, 1945-8’, BW90/1212. [↑](#footnote-ref-54)
55. *Colonial Building News* (September 1955). [↑](#footnote-ref-55)
56. W. Holford, ‘Design for Tropical Living’, Special Collections and Archives, Liverpool University: 1957 D147/LA4, 1. [↑](#footnote-ref-56)
57. G. A. Atkinson, ‘African Housing’, *African Affairs* (1950), pp. 228-37. [↑](#footnote-ref-57)
58. A. E. S. Alcock and H. Richards, *How to Plan you Village* (London, 1953). [↑](#footnote-ref-58)
59. Extract from Minutes of meeting of central Development Board (copy), undated c.1945, no other details of circulation, National Archives, Kew: ‘Village Housing in Nigeria’, CO583/274/1. [↑](#footnote-ref-59)
60. Draft letter to Mrs I. Bird, Treasury from J.B. Williams, 25 June 1945, National Archives, Kew: ‘Village Housing in Nigeria’, CO583/274/1. [↑](#footnote-ref-60)
61. See ‘Residences at Ikoyi, Lagos, Nigeria, W. Africa’, *The Builder* (29 April 1949), pp. 524-25. [↑](#footnote-ref-61)
62. ‘4 semi-detached houses at Accra, Gold Coast – Architects: James Cubitt, Scott & Partners’, *Architect & Building News* (7 October 1954), pp. 423-25. [↑](#footnote-ref-62)
63. ‘Buildings in Kampala, Jinja, and Mbale, Uganda’, *The Architects’ Journal,* 121 (April 1955), pp. 508-10. Harry Ford worked with Fry and Drew in West Africa and produced some of the drawings for *Village Housing in the Tropics*. [↑](#footnote-ref-63)
64. ‘Buildings in Kampala’, p. 508. [↑](#footnote-ref-64)
65. ‘Parliament Buildings for the Government of Kenya at Nairobi’, *The Architects’ Journal*, 121 (January 1955), pp. 38-9. Thornley Dyer went on to work in Bermuda. [↑](#footnote-ref-65)
66. ‘Terminal area, Accra airport’, *West African Builder and Architect* (September 1961), pp. 64-5. [↑](#footnote-ref-68)
67. R. Windsor-Liscombe, ‘Building Dominion and the Colonial Overseas: The Culture of British Fabrics of Financial Intervention in (South) Africa at the End of Empire’, in Demissie, *Colonial Architecture and Urbanism*, pp. 347-71. [↑](#footnote-ref-69)
68. See ‘Social Welfare Community Centres’, National Archives, Kew: CO 859/113/6. [↑](#footnote-ref-70)
69. Letter from Brian Colquhorn to William Holford, 2 July 1968, Special Collections & Archives, University of Liverpool: D147/SA17. [↑](#footnote-ref-71)
70. For China in West Africa, see C. Roskam, ‘Non-Aligned Architecture: China’s Designs on and in Ghana and Guinea, 1955-1992’, *Architectural History*, 58 (2015), pp. 261-91. [↑](#footnote-ref-72)