Designing disorder: spatial ordering and ethno-religious conflicts inJos metropolis, North-Central Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

This paper interrogates the connection between colonial administrative policies, its urban planning strategies and contemporary conflicts in an African city. Urban design can shed light on the socio-political processes in the evolution of the city in Africa. Apart from the master-servant relationship that characterized Euro-African relationship in the built environment, colonial regularization, and rationalization of urban space foregrounded power relations between different African groups in the city. This promoted struggles for space between different African groups – indigenes and settlers. Relying on interviews, focus group discussions and archival sources, this article discusses the ways in which historical forces and colonialism, in this case, colonial administrative policies and urban planning ethos, promoted a certain spatial ordering and power relations among disparate racial, ethnic and religious groups and the grievances they invigorated underlie nascent ethno-religious conflicts in Jos. It does so because conventional explanations in the mushrooming literature on urban conflicts and violence in Nigeria have all too often presented the conflicts as though they are recent developments, inspired by the consequences of structural adjustment programme, resurgence of identity politics and the politics of local government creation.

KEYWORDS: Designing disorder, spatial ordering, planning policy, power relations, ethno-religious conflicts

Introduction

This article interrogates the connection between colonial administrative policies, its urban planning strategies and contemporary ethno-religious conflicts in Jos, capital of Plateau State, North-Central Nigeria. More specifically, it discusses the ways in which historical forces and colonialism, in this case, colonial administrative policies and urban planning ethos, promoted a certain spatial ordering and power relations among disparate racial, ethnic and religious groups and the grievances they invigorated which come to underlie nascent ethno-religious conflicts in Jos. It does so because conventional explanations of the

conflicts in the mushrooming literature on urban conflicts and violence in Nigeria have all too often presented the conflicts as though they are recent developments, inspired by the effects of structural adjustment programme, resurgence of identity politics and the politics of local government creation.[1]

The point is not that these factors are not directly or indirectly implicated in the conflicts or even do not help us make sense of the conflicts. Rather, the point being made is that the bulk of recent studies on the conflicts have given very minimal attention and therefore flippant consideration to colonial administrative policies and urban planning philosophy as underlying and crucial causal components of the conflicts.[2] Several studies tend to treat especially colonial urban planning policies in passing, as an aside or footnote, in unearthing the root causes of Jos conflicts.[3] Although colonial urban planning principles were, on the surface, designed to achieve lofty architectural standards, environmental aesthetics, public health and hygiene and the overall effectiveness of the urban built environment, a more critical analysis reveal that these qualities belie the genuine intentions of colonial urban planning ethos. They were tools of accomplishing and sustaining integral aspects of the broader vision of colonialism, 'including but not limited to self-preservation, cultural assimilation, political domination, social control, territorial conquest and the perpetuation and consolidation of colonial rule'.[4] As Myers and Murray succinctly put it, 'Colonial strategies of divide and rule left their spatial imprints on urban landscapes that were at once physical markers of urban difference and symbolic signifiers of the dominant and subordinate personalities of the sociocultural order'.[5]

Besides, there is a strong connection between the built environment and power. Kim Dovey's postulation that architecture and urban design frames everyday life and that such framings are imbued with practices of coercion, seduction, and authorization,[6] draws attention to how colonial use of power was deployed through the spatial structure of African cities. According to Dovey, 'place creation is determined by those in control of resources', be they political or economic resources.[7] His study on mediating power in 'the built form' established a strong connection between built environment and power. Power could be illustrated as capacity to achieve some ends. In human affairs, it is commonly viewed as achieving control over others.[8] It is on this basis that Dovey distinguished between 'power to' (power as capacity) and 'power over' (power as a relationship between individuals, agents or groups).[9] Although both analyses of power are relevant, the ability to define and control circumstances and events in order to favour one's interest is of greater importance in human interaction. This does not suggest that the notion of power and the idea of urban planning are intentionally structured to create chaos and be oppressive; however, they can be deployed to pursue specific hegemonic tendencies and selfish interests, which often generate group conflict.

There is, in fact, a growing consensus in the literature that colonial urban policies, mounted on the pillars of segregation and racial ideologies,[10] altered African cultural terrain,[11] restructured its urban spaces,[12] promoted horizontal inequalities and unequal power relations among and between local groups,[13] and ultimately laid the foundation of the many crisis and conflicts ravaging African cities.[14] In the case of Jos, there is equally abundant incontrovertible documentary evidence, emanating from the colonial archive in Nigeria, to hold colonial administrative strategies and urban planning policies responsible for the

colonial foundations of the conflicts and nascent conflicts in the postcolonial dispensation. In other words, the lingering consequences of colonial urban and administrative policies are partially accountable for the protracted and seemingly intractable ethno-religious conflicts that have kept Jos boiling and bloody in recent times.

In addition to archival materials, the paper relies on interviews and focus group discussions, and draws inspiration from plethora of incipient studies and emerging genre of scholarship which foreground African conflicts and development debacle. These include Africa's urban crises as well as internal but particularly external agents and forces of history that continue to shape the destinies of states and forge the fates of towns and cities on the continent.[15] All interviews and focus groups took place under the condition of anonymity. The participants were only identified by their professional and ethno-religious affinity. The article is thus, divided into four sections. The first section traces the pattern of migration of different racial, ethnic and religious groups into Jos and its transformation to a sprawling urban settlement in the twentieth century. The second section identifies and discusses colonial administrative policies and urban planning principles. That is, how they assigned separate spaces to different racial and ethno-religious identity groups, structured and restructured power relations among and between the groups and encouraged intergroup disharmony, rivalry, and conflicts in Jos. Section three explores the dynamics of the conflicts and the failure of colonial officials to effectively manage them. In the fourth section, the paper not only shows how the politics of nation building hardened pre-existing unequal power relations defined by colonial administrative policies but also how the consequences of British colonial urban planning strategies further fuelled the conflicts between the largely Christianized autochthonous groups and the Muslim-dominated Hausa and Fulani groups in Jos in the postcolonial era. The concluding section summarizes the arguments articulated in the paper.

Migration, evolution, and development of Jos

Situated on the northern edge of the Plateau, Jos is the administrative capital and economic hub of Nigeria's North-Central Plateau State. Like other colonial urban centres in Africa, the city bears certain features: huge population of immigrants, ethnic diversity, segregated settlements based on racial and ethnic identities and the tendency for the groups to be identified with specific occupations. Indigenous groups such as the Afizere, Anaguta, Berom, migrant Hausa, Fulani and other groups from Southern Nigeria like the Igbo and Yoruba, who for different reasons migrated to Jos at different historical periods, provide the town with a kaleidoscope of cultural traditions. In colonial times and early postcolonial years, the town hosted a thriving community of foreigners made up of European administrators, Asian and West African entrepreneurs, which gradually began to deplete at the onset of Nigeria's economic woes in the late 1970s, the intensification of ethno-religious belligerence and bloody violence in the 1990s.

While some scholars claim that 'Jos was founded in 1915', even though 'there were enough residents to warrant the designation "Hausa Settlement Jos"' in 1912,[16] archaeological investigations and oral history confirm that the Afizere, Berom, and Anaguta – mainly adherents of traditional religion at the time – have lived in Jos since time immemorial.[17] It is on the fringes of these indigenous ethnic groups that Jos is situated. Other smaller groups

migrated to the area in the seventeenth century and merged with the Afizere, Anaguta and Berom aboriginal groups.[18] Internal strives and disputes within the Kanem-Bornu empire and Jukun-Kwararafa axis coupled with the activities of slave-raiders from the Fulani jihadists of Sokoto Caliphate, who constantly launched attacks on these empires for slaves, forced a mass movement of these smaller groups into the Middle Belt area and particularly Jos, where tin ore was in abundance and some form of local mining had been in existence.[19] These migrants were not always united since they experienced in-group frictions which led to splinter groups moving towards different directions in the Jos area.[20]

As for the predominantly Muslim Fulani and Hausa groups, pull and push factors account for their migration into Jos. On the push side, they were fired by religious adventurism and zeal to proselyte the indigenous people of Jos Plateau who they considered and treated as unbelievers.[21] Closely related to this was the need to capture slaves required to boost labour supply in the rapidly expanding Fulani Sokoto Caliphate.[22] On the pull side, the two groups were propelled to Jos by the abundance of arable land and the prospects of participating in its thriving tin mining industry. To achieve these goals, Fulani and Hausa military force from Bauchi and Zaria Emirates launched incessant attacks on Jos.[23] Although the attacks ended in fiasco, they, nevertheless, led to joint problem solving, a gentleman agreement for peace and the establishment of a trust relationship – *Amana* – which ushered a period of relative peace between the groups.[24] The migrants did not lose sight of the halcyon period as they took advantage of it. While the Hausa actively engaged in farming and traded especially in tin, the Fulani herded cattle until the intervention of agents of British colonialism began to disrupt the harmonious relationship enjoyed by the people.[25] As is well known, colonial intervention opened up another vista of hostility between British colonial military force and Jos aboriginal warriors.[26]

Apart from its favourable climate which led to the belief that Jos 'was one of the healthiest places in West Africa' and almost forced Lord Lugard to establish a European 'health and rest station' in the town, the British were primarily attracted to Jos because of their desire to exploit its large deposits of tin ore.[27] Contacts between Hausa tin ore traders and agents of the British Royal Niger Company, then stationed near River Niger, ignited British interest in the metal, and George R. Nicolaus was mandated to explore the Plateau for tin.[28] Nicolaus's samples of tin concentrate so much impressed the Directors of the Royal Niger Company in London that in 1903 the British invaded the Plateau with a full company of the West African Frontier Force (WAFF). After conquering local resistance, a permanent mining camp was set up in Naraguta, north of Jos, in 1904. This marked the beginning of European mining operations in Jos. Local tribal warriors continued to launch relentless attacks on the Europeans until 1907 when a series of military campaigns involving Yoruba and Hausa contingents of WAFF put an end to local opposition.[29]

While pacification of the hostile local tribes guaranteed tranquillity, the Government Station established in Naraguta in 1910 and Jos in 1913 respectively provided the tranquillity and stability required for the growth of the mining and iron-smelting industry. Indigenous mining technology gradually gave way for more modern and sophisticated technology as increased number of European firms, including a Portuguese firm and mineworkers, mostly Hausas, actively participated in the mining and iron smelting business.[30] The resultant increase in the production of tin ore was exported abroad to Liverpool. Human porterage or

river craft was used to ferry tin to neighbouring Zaria for onward transportation to Lagos. After 1914, freighting from Zaria to Lagos port was entirely by rail as tin ore exports increased tenfold between 1910 and 1916.[31]

Whereas Jos owes its initial development to the mining industry, it derived much of its urbanization and economic development to the establishment of relatively good system of rail and motor transportation which, in turn, increased migration, especially of Hausa mineworkers, traders from Southern Nigeria and the West African sub-region.[32] The construction of a railway line from Port Harcourt to Jos in 1927 immensely facilitated the migration of large number of Igbo traders to Jos.[33] Similarly, Yoruba traders, mostly from Ogbomosho, moved into the town to exploit the booming economic activities and growing commercial opportunities bolstered by the provision of other social services and infrastructures like hospitals and schools in Jos.[34] The extent to which trade and commerce was instrumental to the growth of Jos was also the extent to which it acted as impetus for interethnic conflicts among the traders whose interaction was largely defined by ethno-religious consideration.

The discussion so far draws attention to two crucial points. First, Jos evolved and developed along lines of intergroup struggles and conflicts. The violent and disruptive activities of the Fulani jihadists and their Hausa collaborators in the nineteenth century and the memories and emotions stirred up by the several British pacification campaigns, involving Yoruba and Hausa contingents of WAFF in the beginning of the twentieth century, promoted a feeling of bitterness and distrust of strangers in the psychology and minds of the indigenous groups. In the same way, the migrant groups nursed different forms and degrees of grievances and acrimony against themselves in their everyday interaction, which culminated, for instance, to the Igbo and Hausa violent conflict of 1945. That conflict became the first known and recorded case of urban violence in the chequered history of urbanization in Nigeria. In fact, the current official epithet of Jos as the 'Home of Peace and Tourism', is a travesty of sorts. It neither captures its rich history of intergroup violence in the precolonial and colonial dispensations nor does it depict the recurring conflagration that characterize indigene and settler relationship in post-colonial Jos.

The second point concerns the sprawling settlement emerging in Jos. The massive migration but gradual urbanization of Jos was, in the thinking of British colonial officials, conducted in a disorderly manner and capable of truncating the colonial vision of European racial superiority and hegemony as well as its ultimate mission of globalizing capitalist production and development. In order to strengthen its political control over Jos and impose colonial order on what was perceived as emerging 'disorderly' settlement, colonial officials did not hesitate to implement certain administrative and urban policies in Jos. Rather than douse the mutual distrust and bitterness existing between the indigenes and the settlers, the policies not only fostered a certain form of built environment that further aggravated the situation but also goaded the different ethno-religious groups in Jos on the path of recurring conflicts. These conflicts became the roots of the enduring ethnoreligious violence in contemporary Jos.

Colonial (urban) policies and spatial ordering

Colonial administrations never failed to grab with both hands opportunities for recreating and restructuring African spatial forms and functions, mainly because they were seen as auspicious moments for establishing absolute control and reasserting European supremacy and power over the colonized.[35] Hence, colonial urban planning policies supported by administrative laws were instrumental in establishing a form of built environment amenable to the twin objectives of domination and control of colonial Africa.[36] Space, as a finite resource, was perceived as a token of power and authority and therefore utilized as power over others.[37] As such, spatial ordering and urban planning policies as well as their implementation in Jos became conflict designing operation. Like the colonial authority that created it, the built environment in Africa was essentially political. It reflected the multiple interests of the colonizers, and to a large extent, was a 'silhouette of struggles' among the colonized subjects on the one hand and between the colonizers and the colonized on the other hand.[38]

As part of its urban planning and administrative policy in Nigeria, the British colonial administration promulgated the 1917 Townships Ordinance, establishing municipal control in Northern and Southern Nigeria and devolving authority to the natives.[39] Originating from a previous legislation of 1902 which empowered the Governor to declare specified areas as 'European Reservations', the Ordinance, in addition, addressed issues relating to control, finance and construction of buildings and streets in the townships and other urban settlements. The Townships Ordinance became an important legislative tool for colonial planning and control of Nigerian cities thus regulating who lived where. In fact, certain aspects of the Ordinance – the Native Ordinance – stipulated the creation of separate settlements for different groups: alien natives (Nigerian people) and natives (peoples of Northern Nigeria). By prescribing different settlements for different groups in Northern Nigeria, the policy also conformed to the vision of Lord Lugard and the British eminent administrative instrument, the Indirect Rule, which recommended that natives live in their own towns, under their own chiefs and Native Courts, except for aliens who are subject to the jurisdiction of the Native Court or Natives under the employment of Europeans who can live outside the Native Town.[40]

In 1913, Jos Government Station was established and residential sites mapped out, with separate spaces for different communities – Native Reservations for the natives which include mainly the Hausa and other groups of Nigerian extraction on the one hand and European Reservation for officers of the colonial administration on the other hand.[41] Native headmen, paid from the Township treasury, were appointed to control and administer the Native Reservation. Since the population of the Native Reservations consisted largely of aliens from different parts of Nigeria, it was not always easy to find suitable men for the administration of the Native Reservation. Thus, the choice of local administrators was, most times, informed by colonial politics and interests, which often favoured Hausa and Fulani Muslims. Consequently, Hausa Muslim authority figures were imposed as chiefs of Jos Native Town by the Emir of Bauchi. It should be noted that while British colonial officials were the ultimate administrators of Jos, the Emir of Bauchi was empowered by the British to appoint chiefs who presided over the affairs of the Native Town. The idea of separate

settlements was also extended to the courts of law. By 1920 or earlier, Moslem *Alkali* Courts were set up in the Native Town.[42]

Colonial disruption of existing spatial arrangement and subsequent residential restructuring of Jos was highly contested and resisted by the indigenous groups who perceived it as unnecessary intrusion into their social, political, religious and economic activities.[43] The restructuring brought together the Hausa who were predominantly Muslims and the indigenous groups who were mainly traditionalist and later Christians. But more importantly, the restructuring simultaneously created unequal power relations between the indigenous groups and the Hausa/Fulani immigrants and fostered conditions that heightened ethnic disharmony, religious differences, and intolerance. While the colonial policy practiced by the British administration in Nigeria might have worked well for a homogeneous population with a tradition of centralized government, it was ill-suited to Jos. Plotnicov suggests that 'as applied to Jos, it was paternalistic, preferential and inconsistent – all factors which eventually led to deep grievances among the immigrant Nigerian residents'.[44]

Intergroup grievances and conflicts

Jos indigenous groups saw the appointment of Hausa chiefs and their headship of the Native Town as an unwanted intrusion into their traditional political systems.[45] This is even more worrisome to the people considering the fact that several attempts in the precolonial past by forces from Bauchi and Zaria emirates to conquer and impose their authority on Jos was successfully rebuffed by a combined military force of the people of the area that became Jos.[46] It would therefore appear that what the emirs could not achieve through their military prowess, they accomplished through the collaboration of British colonial authorities. They began to demand that the appointment of the political head of Jos Town be reverted to the indigenes as was the case in the precolonial era. Instead of *Alkali* courts, the indigenes similarly advocated the establishment of 'Mixed' (Native) courts.[47]

Nevertheless, the British insisted on appointing Hausa Muslims as headmen, arguing that it reduced administrative problems in Jos.[48] Colonial officials had considered the Hausa more developed than the indigenes and regarded them fit for the administration of Jos. British preference for the Hausa may also have been informed by their attitude towards Northern Nigerian minorities as enslaved unfortunates. Robert Shenton reiterated this view when he claimed that the British had considered the light-skinned Fulani and the Sokoto Caliphate as more intelligent people and hence better equipped to dominate and rule the dark-skinned minority groups in Northern Nigeria.[49] In accordance with the above point, the British further asserted that relative to the Hausa, the indigenes lacked the administrative skills required to govern such difficult settlements like the Native Town.[50]

What however appears very important in the spatial ordering and Hausa control of settlements in Jos is British conclusion in 1914 that indigenous traditional rulers could not cope with large influx of Muslim workers into their areas which therefore necessitated the appointment of Muslim headmen.[51] Since the Hausa supplied most of the local labour in constructing the railway that linked Jos and Bukuru to other northern areas and the south and were able to 'occupy' the areas, the British contended that Hausa settlements in Jos

and Bukuru arose in connection with the building of the railway.[52] While railway construction provides an explanation to the emergence of settlements and increased Hausa migrants into Jos, it is less important in explaining the spatial organization of settlements and the control of such settlements by the Hausa.

The point to underscore here is that contrary to the British position, railway construction was necessitated by the tin mining industry which stimulated the emergence of settlement areas and the urgency for their control. As it was the norm in several parts of the world, mining of solid minerals such as gold and tin was associated with residential camps. For instance, Marjo de Theije and Ellen Bal's study of Brazilian gold miners in Surinam found that mine workers established settlement camps within mining sites for purposes of administrative efficiency, security, and control.[53] In Jos, mainly the Hausa provided colonial tin mining labour and this huge labour force resided within the mining camps[54] Initially, the tin mining sites were not part of the residential area as provided in Jos Master Plan 732/23.[55] But mining companies established mining camps for their workers in the residential areas, citing security concerns as reasons for establishing the camps. Mining areas subsequently expanded to include other areas not in the first plan of Jos.[56] Consequently, the mining sites became part of the living areas and since the Hausa dominated the camps they were appointed as headmen. Hausa dominance and control of several residential settlements in Jos continued even after collapse of the mining industry and further intensified the struggles between the Hausa and the indigenous groups who denounced colonial administrative and urban planning policies that favoured the Hausa control of the settlement.

While the design and emergence of settlements in Jos – spatial ordering – are urban planning issues under the Township Ordinance, the conflicts generated in the implementation of the Ordinance required both urban planning and political solutions. Although in 1922 a proposal for the alteration of the layout of the new Jos Township was put up, it was not intended to placate the agitated groups. Indeed, it had less effect on the Native Town because much emphasis was placed on the Township – the non-native settlements.[57] The proposal sought to appropriate some part of the Native (Reservation) Town in expanding the new Jos Township. This was approved and implemented in 1925. The resultant loss of plots hitherto belonging to the Native Reservation led to another proposal for the abolition of the Native Reservation and making it part of a neutral zone where all peoples could reside. In principle, this was not achieved, but in practice, different groups including the Igbo and Yoruba were now residing in the Native Town alongside the Hausa and indigenous groups.

The wave of reorganization, which finally hit the Native Town in 1926 was intended to provide not only urban planning but political solution to the raging agitations against the imposition of Muslim Hausa hegemony on Jos indigenous groups. Initially, the British, in addition to the reasons highlighted earlier, claimed that the large number of separate and distinct linguistic units prevented any possibility of organizing the peoples into a single government. The agitations and subsequent reorganization fostered a new thinking among British officials whose new position suggested that it was unnecessary foisting any alien scheme of administration on the natives of Jos Plateau since the people would have evolved some sort of administration had the British not arrived.[58] In a correspondence to the

Secretary Northern Provinces, the Resident Plateau Province suggested that the most common title among the indigenous people is the Berom's *Gwom*, meaning Chief. It was, therefore, recommended and later adopted that the Berom words *Manje la Gwom* meaning Chiefs in Council be used to replace the Hausa term *Sarki da Majalisa*.[59] This was resisted by the Hausa. In order to douse the raging agitations, colonial authorities embarked on a reorganization exercise, which drastically altered the political administration of the area – as the indigenous groups took over all elements of power.[60]

Space, politics and the construction of ethno-religious conflicts in contemporary Jos

In its recent history, the city of Jos has been increasingly perceived as a zone of war, a centre of disorder and a city of chaos, violence, and insecurity.[61] These questions of insecurity, chaos and disorder as argued in the preceding section emanated from colonial management of space and how replication of that trend in the post-colonial era deepened pre-existing differences, sustained unequal power relations and affected nation-building project.

After independence, internal struggle for power and resources by the new state managers intensified and changed the course of the conflicts significantly. Whereas political independence brought changes to the composition of state managers, the character of the state remained intact.[62] According to Ake, 'the tendency to reproduce the past was reinforced by the dispositions of the dominant social forces in the postcolonial era'.[63] None of the emergent elite in the newly independent African state had any serious interest in transforming the state. While inter-elite wrangling and bickering intensified, inter- and intragroup conflicts proliferated.[64] This development further complicated existing conflicts especially in the urban areas.

As already observed, colonial urban and administrative policies created and sustained unequal power relations not only between African and European population but also amongst indigenous Nigerian groups in Jos. The tendency of the majority Hausa and Fulani groups to dominate northern minority groups was pursued with relentless zeal as they strived to extend their hegemony to other groups in the Nigerian federation after independence. Under the policy and slogan of 'One North, One People', the Hausa and Fulani elite sought to extract loyalties from the northern minorities while capturing and consolidating power.[65] But the minority ethnic groups in Jos would not kowtow to the whims and caprices of the dominant Hausa and Fulani elite without resistance.[66]

Colonial definitions of strangers and the devolving of 'Native Authority' in Jos complicated leadership struggle between the indigenous groups (Afizere, Anaguta, and Berom) and Hausa and Fulani groups. This led to the competition to control political offices in Jos especially the local government. Part of this complication resulted from a '1934 Order in Council in Northern Nigeria, which defined natives as colonial subjects in possession of a general mode of life the same as that of the general native community in a particular area'.[67] What this implied is that being a native and being within the jurisdiction of a Native Authority and its law meant looking like a native to the British.

In 1947, administrative reforms in the city led to the emergence of Bitrus Rwang Pam as the first *Gbong Gwom* Jos – the paramount ruler of Jos.[68] The reforms and emergence of the chief stimulated further bickering as the Hausa insisted that the 'paramount ruler' was chief of Berom and not chief of Jos.[69] While Rwang Pam remained the *Gbong Gwom*, it deepened political intrigues as each group attempted to wrestle control of the city. Thus, the groups engaged in intractable conflicts to resolve the issues created by colonial planning of Jos.

The desire of Jos indigenous groups to fully take charge of the structures of power led to the promulgation of the 'Chief of Jos Order' of 1969.[70] The 'Order' secured the control of Jos for the indigenous communities and the Gbong Gwom recognized as the paramount ruler of Jos. However, following previous colonial arrangements in which the choice of local administrators tended to favour the Hausa and Fulani Muslims, the Hausa felt dislodged from the political control of Jos and clung tenaciously to the Native Town division – the most economically and commercially viable areas of modern Jos, as their 'home land'.[71] This claim to the land has also been a significant driver of the conflict.

From the mid-1960s and 1980s, Nigeria came under the grip of military dictatorship and Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) respectively. These developments worsened the struggle for urban space and power. The military governments, led mostly by Hausa and Fulani officers at the Federal level, continued to appoint officers of Hausa and Fulani extraction as governors of Plateau State.[72] These set of military officers became crucial in promoting ethno-religious power tussle, which, in turn, was intensified by the introduction of SAP. Given its emphasis on civil society as the platform of articulating local development agenda, SAP radicalized primordial and communal identities in both rural and urban areas. In doing so, SAP renewed emphasis on identity difference in the urban areas, and revived simmering inter – and intra-group conflicts, most of which were forged under colonial rule.[73]

In 1991, the Babaginda military government created Jos North and Jos South Local Government Areas from old Jos LGA. This reinforced the question 'who owns Jos',[74] and intensified the politics of space in the city. Specifically, the creation of Jos North LGA changed the local political equations. Within the new Jos North, in particular, the indigenous groups – mainly Afizere and Berom – were no longer so predominant as most of them were then living with fewer admixtures of other ethnic groups such as Hausa, Fulani, Igbo and Yoruba groups in Jos South. The Jos indigenes saw this as a ploy to wrest the political control of the capital city from them. With this arrangement, it was expected that during elections to city-wide offices in Jos North, members of the majority group in the city – the Hausa and Fulani would emerge winners.

The conflict deepened with ethnic political calculations on the ownership and control of Jos. This saw the appointment of Aminu Mato, a Hausa Muslim by Colonel Mohammed Mana, a Fulani Muslim (then Military Administrator of Plateau State) and the rejection of Mato by those who claim indigeneity in the city – the Afizere, Anaguta, and Berom. It led to violence and resulted in two deaths.[75] notes Similarly, the appointment of Samai'la Mohammed as the Coordinator of National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP) for Jos North in 2001 and his rejection by the local population has kept the conflict frozen with episodic

incidences of violence having occurred in 2001, 2008, 2010 and 2018 and casualty figure ranging over five thousand.[76]

Apart from the mutual pain, suspicion and distrust characterizing urban experience in Jos resulting from the existing relationships between ethno-religious groups in the city, spatial politics was complicated by the emergence of Christian areas – Kabong, Jos Jarawa, Angwan Rukuba, Hwolshe, and Muslim areas – Delimi, Gangare, Bauchi Road, Angwan Rogo, and Kasali Street. This significantly militarized the city and generated 'no go areas' – a situation where Christians and Muslims hardly cross the drawn lines. The conflict further convoluted with the arrival of new entrants into the city.[77] There was, in addition an increasing push of migrants into Jos arising from persistent insurgency in the North-East and other conflicts in neighbouring states. The arrival of the new migrants placed significant pressure on urban infrastructure, deepened the spatial distinction of Christians and Muslims and reinforced the 'no go area' phenomenon. A respondent claimed:

> In recent time, there has been increase in the number of migrants into Jos as a result of the Boko Haram insurgency in the North-East. Most of the victims of that insurgency have found home in Jos both Christians and Muslims. The arrival of such people increased anxiety in the city and deepened the struggle for space and contest for ownership of the city. Also, the recurring farmer/herder conflicts in local government areas surrounding Jos like Bassa, Barkin-Ladi, Bokkos and Riyom have pushed people into Jos for temporary shelter. Some of these second category of migrants usually return to their localities after the dust since they are mostly farmers and from within the state. The first category – mostly people who had ties to the city have remained in the area. These set of migrants have placed unusual pressure on urban amenities, increased the tendency for violent conflicts and created significant challenges for urban planning.[78]

The increasing flow of migrants into Jos necessitated the expansion of the city and required the review of existing urban planning policies – some of which were in place since colonial time – and the formulation of new policies to relax the tension in the city and bring about urban management and development. The overcrowded situation in the city centre – Masalacin Juma'a, Delimi, Gangare, Filn Sarki, and Murtala Mohammed –, which placed commercial and economic attention on those areas complicated the conflict as Muslim Hausa struggled for those commercial spaces with the Berom, Anaguta and Afizere Christians. In this connection, shanties and slums sprouted in the city and drew attention for urban policy review.

Research on urban planning and development in Jos shows that there was a total disregard for urban planning policies in the metropolis between 1975 and 2005, leading to the emergence of new slum settlements and increased threats to security.[79] This disregard for urban planning, persistent conflict and the increasing push of migrants into the city combined to induce the slums and shanties. To deal with the development, the Plateau State Government (PLSG) invoked the Greater Jos Master plan, M60 of 1927 (see Figure 1).[80]

Figure 1. Political Map M60.
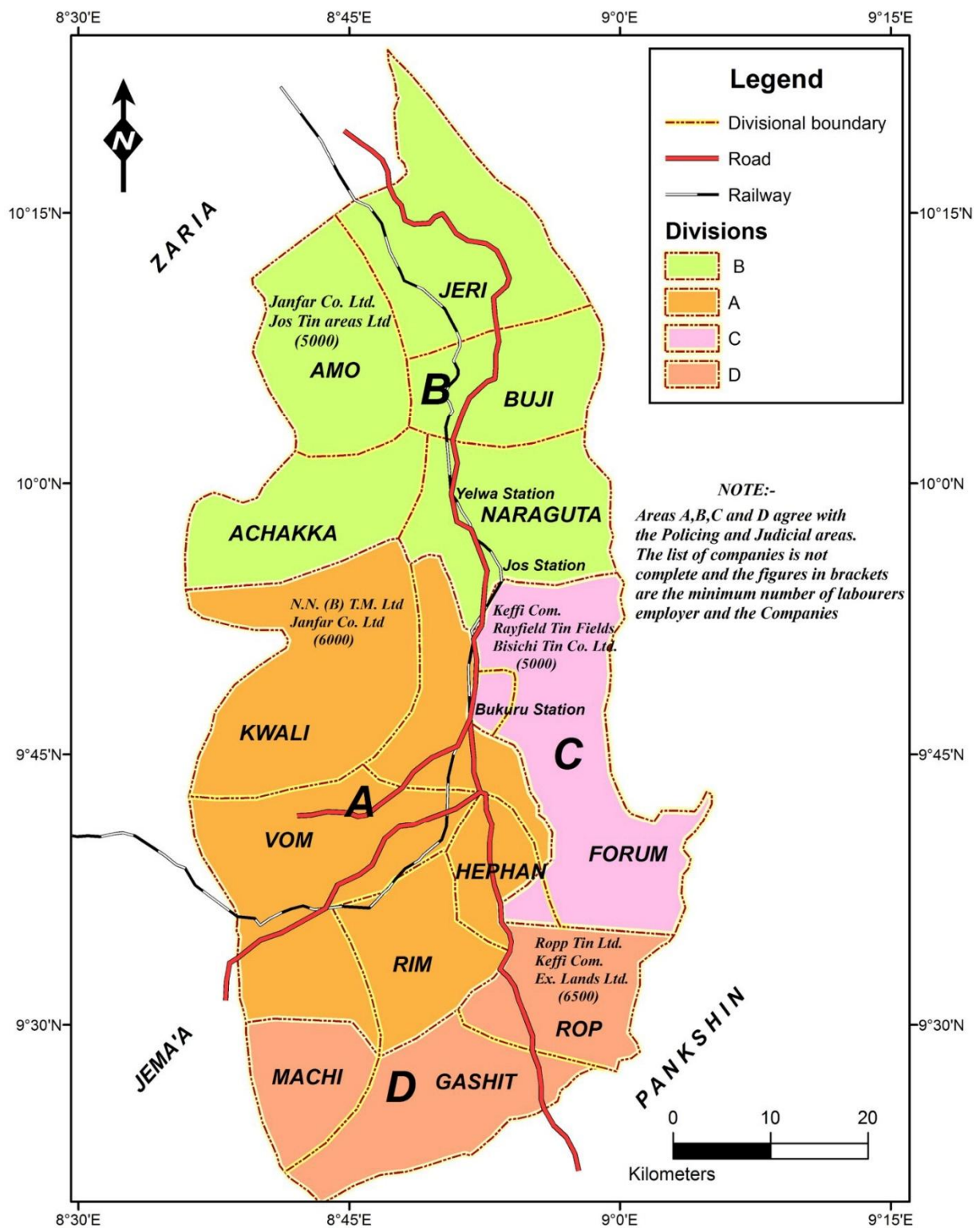
Source: Adapted from Political Map M60 0f 1927 and retrieved from National Archives Kaduna. Note: Nigeria National Archives, Political Map.

Attempts to implement the Greater Jos Master Plan were given political interpretations by the Hausa and non-Berom indigenous groups who emphasized a connection between colonial urban arrangement, contemporary city structure and spatial politics and conflicts in Jos. One respondent pointed to this relationship claiming that:

> Since colonial times, urban planning has determined the spatial politics of the city, land ownership and configured the production and reproduction of group inequality in the city. For me, the politicisation of the implementation of the Greater Jos Master Plan, the opening up of new residential areas and specific cultural identities taking over the areas such as New Abuja, Utan GRA and ECWA Staff, the quest to remain in certain areas by ethno-religious groups since colonial times and the tendency to resist urban renewal or emerging urban planning strategies following political interpretations of government efforts by various groups have combined to place the control of Jos – politically, economically, culturally and socially in the hands of some ethnic groups above others. This is the contention in Jos.[81]

This draws attention to an emerging understanding of socio-spatial causality of the Jos conflicts and the powerful forces arising from socially produced spaces such as urban ethnic territorial control and the struggle for economic spaces in the city. In this connection, spatial determinism of social action places in perspective how 'power over' others are constructed into the ordering of cities. In his study, Edward Soja deployed this spatial analysis to understand the workings of society including political conflicts. He noted that:

> A critical spatial perspective of some sort has become increasingly relevant to understanding the contemporary condition, whether we are pondering the increasing intervention of electronic media in our daily routines, trying to understand the multiplying geopolitical conflicts around the globe, or seeking ways to act politically to reduce poverty, racism, sexual discrimination, and environmental degradation.[82]

This spatial analysis, therefore, provides insights not only into how colonial urban planning ethos articulated belonging, exclusion and conflicts but also how post-colonial interventions and planning strategies foreground the constructions of narratives of belonging and conflicts, demonstration and identification with contested spaces,[83]

Besides, group interpretation of the intended implementation of the 'Greater Jos Master Plan' by the Jonah Jang administration claimed that the plan targeted the Hausa and the Fulani with a view to scrapping their settlements – Delimi, Gangare, Rikkos, Masalacin Juma'a, Bauchi Road and Nasarawa Gwom, undermine their economic strength and appropriate such space for the indigenous groups.[84] For some Hausa respondents, urban planning and policy making under the said administration were not genuinely intended to create built environments that could provide economic opportunities and deliver urban services in ways that stimulate physical and psychological city spaces that are conducive for peaceful inter-group interactions or harmonious relations. In his study on the role of urban planning in post-conflict cities, Bollens observed that:

During times of fundamental regime change and disruption, societal relationships become sufficiently scrambled that those seeking political power look for avenues and vehicles for expression. One important avenue for the expression of power is urban planning and its legitimized face of rationality.[85]

While most postcolonial idea of urban planning in Jos belied the notion of power manifesting majorly in housing, development of new areas, construction of markets and roads to connect the localities within the city, the desire has been to facilitate the functioning of human settlements and improve living conditions.[86] Yet, urban planning is considered a major tool of exclusion in Jos. For the residents, it illustrates a critical distinction between owners of the land and strangers but also a major instrument for connecting divided populations of a city. One FGD discussant drew attention to this when he claimed that:

Urban renewal initiated by the state government was an attempt to bring the conflicting communities together and reduce their pains. The expansion of the city centre and the opening up of roads to link the new areas with the existing ones has really created an enabling economic environment and reduced the plight of the residents. These initiatives have added to urban development and reduced the tension in the city. This is because it has the tendency to reunite the people despite the political interpretations given to them.[87]

What this implies is that urban planning and management protect diversity in cities while avoiding it generates a disconnected and conflict prone cities. Absence of such spaces of interaction hinders power sharing. In this connection, Bunte and Vinson,[88] demonstrated how the presence or absence of power-sharing determined the level of violence or non-violence around Jos. The point of departure is that urban planning provides the space for such bonding. However, city restructuring in Jos is not seen to belie such power rather it has been interpreted to mean promotion of indigenous groups' interest and a tactical elimination of the strength of opposing groups.

Apart from the expansion of the city, which extended the centre and opened new commercial and economic spaces, relocation of certain historical landmarks and public domains in the city suggested the effect of the conflict on urban structure. First, the Plateau State Government expressed its desire to expand the Gbong Gwom Jos Palace and create something befitting of the status of the throne. The Gbong Gwom Jos, Da Jacob Gyang Buba, the paramount ruler of Jos and Chairman of Plateau State Traditional Council of Chiefs is a former Comptroller General of Nigeria Custom Service. The palace was located beside the then Jos North LGA secretariat, close to Farinwata Street and off the popular and densely populated Masallacin Juma'a Street and a business district. The area is home to various ethno-religious groups but mainly Hausa and Fulani Muslims as well as Yoruba and Nupe. These factors and more increased the desire to create a more befitting palace for the Gbong Gwom.

The process began on Monday, 26 November 2012 when residents noticed large number of soldiers outside their homes. The soldiers who were said to have arrived the area in six Hilux

vans and an armoured tank and accompanied by officers of the Special Task Force (STF) merely wanted to ensure there was no breakdown of law and order while surveyors surveyed houses in the area in preparation for the expansion of the Gbong Gwom Jos Palace. On the said date, residents had trooped out in protest of a letter dated 14 November 2012 informing the residents that quantity surveyors were expected to survey their properties at 8:00am on Monday, November 26. This attempt was resisted by residents of the area who claimed that their houses were not for sale and that such properties were historical landmarks for them.

Responses from the State Government through the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development indicated that the affected properties were those overlooking the palace and that the survey was aimed at assessing and addressing potential weakness to the safety of civil and traditional institution. The Government further claimed that the process was a reassessment of properties earlier assessed by the Chief Joshua Dariye administration between 2004 and 2005 but for which compensation were not paid. Then Commissioner for Housing and Urban Development, Engineer Solomon Maren suggested that government action was 'determined by the over-riding public interest of national security, safety of lives and property, preservation of revered public institutions and good governance'.[89]

While the government claimed that the action was targeted at urban upgrade, affected communities believe the action of the government had ulterior motives. As such, it was given a political interpretation and the communities resisted the move. Initially, in preparation for this expansion, the state government had relocated the Jos North Local Government Secretariat from adjacent the palace to Ibrahim Dasuki Street – former office of the Jos Metropolitan Development Board (JMDB), which was moved to Ahmadu Bello Way. However, the expansion of the Gbong Gwom Palace around Farinwata Street and Masallacin Juma'a could not be carried out and the idea was abandoned. In its determination to build a befitting palace for the paramount Berom ruler and the Chairman Plateau State Council of Chiefs, the State Government created an edifice in an area around Tudun Wada called *Jishe* – a Berom word meaning bamboo.

The masterpiece – a supposedly former Deputy Governor's Lodge was initially renovated as a new Government house.[90] At the completion of the edifice, the Governor's Lodge was temporarily moved from Rayfield to *Jishe*. Subsequently, the Government built a new Government house at Little Rayfield and relocated the Gbong Gwom Palace to the renovated edifice which was temporarily used as Governor's Lodge. The movement was announced by then Commissioner for Information and Communication, Barrister Olivia Dazyem, who claimed that the decision was taken for reasons of convenience and adequate space, as well as considerations for 'strengthening of the security of the person of his majesty, the Gbong Gwom Jos, which was threatened'.[91] Addressing the question of the relocations – Gbong Gwom Jos Palace, Jos North LGA Secretariat, JMDB and the Governor's Lodge, a respondent noted that:

> The relocations were more politically generated than an issue of urban planning. The seat of the Jos North LGA have been under contest for long. Since 2002, there has not been any democratically elected chairman and councillors in Jos North. This is because there is the fear that if election is conducted any time any day the Hausa

Muslim will win since they are in the majority in the local council. The secretariat was in the heart of Hausa Muslim dominated area as well as the paramount ruler's palace. So, moving them were strategic. Although there was the issue of space for the palace and a memory that it was previously a colonial office for the District Officer, the major concern was its proximity to Hausa neighbourhood and the fear for the security of the Gbong Gwom.[92]

Thus, while the relocation could be explained from the lenses of urban planning, it also has political and security explanation. The idea is that *Jishe* is an indigenous settlement and it feels safe to have the custodian of the Berom culture and tradition as well as the secretariat of the Plateau State Council of Chiefs in a relaxed environment like *Jishe.* For the LGA secretariat, its relocation to Ibrahim Dasuki – the former JMDB office – a more commercial than residential area with significant presence of Christian population appears to send a message to the Hausa Muslim population that the chairmanship of the LGA should be in the kitty of the indigenous Christian population. On the other hand, the relocation of the Governor's Lodge was purely an urban planning question since the location for government business had moved from one temporary location to the other since the creation of Plateau State in 1976.[93]

In addition, there is a significant contest between the Berom and Afizere over the area where the new Gbong Gwom Jos palace is located.[94] An Afizere respondent claimed that the area is an Afizere territory which is called *Gyese*, meaning dry bamboo.[95] Incidentally, the Berom word *Jishe* also means bamboo as claimed by a Berom respondent.[96] The area previously known as Tudun Wada became popular as *Jishe* in 2010 raising controversy and disagreement between the two indigenous groups as each claims the other is trying to erase its history from the area.

Consequently, the political identities in Jos have explored the questions of violent conflicts and urban planning ethos to engage with geographies of power relations. Spatial configurations of power in the city brought to light the production and reproduction of ethno-religious conflicts. Specifically, spatial planning and conflicts in Jos bears on the practices through which power relations become known, generated and brought into contestation through political activity.

Conclusion

Since the outbreak of severe violence in 2001, urban planning and regulations for Jos metropolis have not necessarily been concerned with the management of diversity. Rather, the conflict itself has had a way of altering the spatial ordering of the city, which has manifested mostly in the extreme form of spatial segregation. Under British rule, urban planning had moved from its focus in providing physical infrastructure and spatial structure for a modernized city to one where urban planning and regulations dovetailed into the management of political, administrative and social upheavals. Nevertheless, the processes of implementing the plan initiated other conflicts. The primary objective of the Township Ordinance of 1917 was the decentralization of municipal responsibility.[97]

Yet, the Township Ordinance as well as other urban 'spatial strategies' invoked in colonial Jos became crucial in describing the contestations associated with the evolution and ownership of Jos metropolis. Although the city became a space for assimilating differences, boundaries were created and maintained in colonial Jos as essential for inter-group relations. Thus, urban planning and regulations in colonial Jos defined the power relations among different Nigerian groups and facilitated forms of identity conflicts in the metropolis.

The point to underscore is that colonial division of Jos into Native Town and Township which spatially separated the indigenous Christians – Afizere, Anaguta, and Berom – from the Hausa and Fulani Muslims is implicated in structuring the conflicts in the city. In the postcolonial period, such practices hindered inter-group integration. The division deepened the gulf and inequality existing between the Christian Afizere, Anaguta and Berom and Muslim Hausa and Fulani. This reinforced the struggle for spaces between them. Thus, following the growing conflicts in post-colonial Jos, group separation in settlements worsened. It generated conflicts over qualifications for local citizenship and strengthened claims to space as indigenes and settlers in Jos.

Spatial municipal fragmentations along ethno-religious lines, therefore, generate conflicts and creates a sense of restricted development in a diverse society which has the tendency to undermine peace. This is because both real and imagined denial of social and economic opportunities tends to reinforce a sense of exclusion, discrimination, and conflicts. Such sentiments have given rise to not just social and psychological stigmatization and fear but also reinforces violence – a pattern that has become regular leading to the isolation of groups in specific residential and commercial spaces.[98] Such spaces have become motivations for mobilizing for further conflicts – a way of resisting levels of exclusion from and negotiating inclusion into the power structures of the city.

While we have established that historical forces and colonial administrative policies and urban planning ethos promoted a certain spatial ordering and power relations among disparate racial, ethnic and religious groups and the grievances they stimulated underlie the nascent ethno-religious conflicts in Jos, yet quality urban planning is crucial in addressing questions of spatial politics and conflicts in the city. As such, urban strategies and interventions should be deployed in ways that address the local manifestations of the long-term structural causes of the conflict and tension. Development and political interventions should counter individual and group-based feelings of marginality, disempowerment, discrimination, and unequal access to services and goods.

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Notes

1 Adetula, "Development, Conflict and Peacebuilding"; Best, *Conflict and Peacebuilding*; Krause, "Non-violence and Civilian Agency"; Madueke, "From Neighbours to Deadly Enemies"; Jega, *Identity Transformation and Identity Politics.*

2 Madueke, "The Emergence and Development"; Krause, "Non-violence and Civilian Agency".

3 Madueke, "From Neighbours to Deadly Enemies" Krause, "Non-violence and Civilian Agency".

4 Njoh, *Planning Power*, xi.

5 Myers and Murray, "Introduction", 12.

6 Dovey, *Framing Places.*

7 Dovey, *Framing Places*, 1.

8 Watson, *Change and Continuity*; Cinnamon, "Mobility".

9 Dovey, *Framing Places*, 9.

10 Nightingale, *Segregation.*

11 Bissel, *Urban Design*; Hashim, *Language and Collective Mobilization*; Salm and Falola, *African Urban Spaces.*

12 Njoh, *Planning Power.*

13 Nnabuihe, "Horizontal Inequalities and Ethno-religious Conflicts"; Onwuzuruigbo, "Horizontal Inequalities and Communal Conflicts".

14 Onwuzuruigbo, "Space of Power".

15 Akyeampong and others, "Introduction"; Fredericks and Diouf, *The Arts of Citizenship in African Cities*; Acemoglu and Robinson, *Why Nations Fail.*

16 Plotnicov, *Strangers to the City*, 41.

17 Nigeria National Archives, Administration of Plateau Provinces; Stobart, Assessment Report; Shaw, "Prehistory".

18 Ames, *Gazetteers*; Morrison, "Jos Plateau Societies", Mangvwat, "A History of Class".

19 Bingel, *Jos*; Mangvwat, "A History of Class".

20 Ames, *Gazetteers*.

21 Morrison, "Jos Plateau Societies".

22 Nnabuihe, "Ethno-religious Conflict".

23 Focus Group Discussion with Berom Community, November 5, 2014.

24 Interview with Anaguta chief, March 13, 2016; Interview with Afizere chief, March 8, 2016.

25 Interview with Afizere chief, March 8, 2016.

26 Bukar, "Disintegration of an Agricultural Infrastructure"; Bingel, *Jos*.

27 Plotnicov, *Strangers to the City*, 30.

28 Egwu, "Ethnicity and Citizenship in Urban Nigeria" 112.

29 Ames, *Gazetteers*; Plotnicov, *Strangers to the City*; Bukar, "Disintegration of an Agricultural Infrastructure."

30 Plotnicov, *Strangers to the City*.

31 Ibid.

32 Interview with Berom local historian, November 5, 2014.

33 Plotnicov, "An Early Nigerian."

34 Interview with Yoruba Elder, March 8, 2016.

35 Njoh, *Planning Power*.

36 See Braverman and others, *The Expanding Spaces of Law*.

37 Dovey, *Framing Places*.

38 Njoh, *Planning Power*.

39 Lugard, *Political Memoranda*.

40 Ibid., 417.

41 Nigeria National Archives, Administration of Plateau Provinces.

42 Plotnicov, *Strangers to the City*; Sklar, *Nigerian Political Parties*.

43 Shenton, *The Development of Capitalism*, 22–3.

44 Plotnicov, *Strangers to the City*, 40.

45 Nigeria National Archives, Administration of Plateau Province.

46 Stobart, Assessment Report; Ames, *Gazetteers*; Morrison, "Jos Plateau Societies".

47 Plotnicov, *Strangers to the City*.

48 Nigeria National Archives, Control of Settlements.

49 Shenton, *The Development of Capitalism*, 23.

50 Nigeria National Archives, Control of Settlements.

51 Isichie, "Colonialism", 187.

52 Beck, Report No. 64 on Jos Division.

53 De Theije and Bal, "Flexible Migrants".

54 Freund, *Capital and Labour*.

55 Nigeria National Archive, Jos Town Planning.

56 Ibid.

57 Ibid.

58 Nigeria National Archives, Administration of Plateau Provinces.

59 Nigeria National Archives, Reorganisation of Jos Division.

60 Nigeria National Archives, Administration of Plateau Provinces.

61 Madueke, "The Emergence and Development".

62 Ake, *Democracy*, 3.

63 Ake, *Democracy*, 4.

64 Ibid.

65 Nnabuihe, "Autochthony and Space"; Nnabuihe, "Horizontal Inequalities".

66 Interview with professional historian, University of Jos, March 10, 2019.

67 Kendhammer, "Citizenship", 403.

68 Nnabuihe, "Horizontal Inequalities".

69 Interview with Hausa Elder, NTA Road Jos, October 14, 2012.

70 Ibid.

71 Interview with Anaguta chief, March 13, 2016.

72 Interview with Berom chief, October 4, 2014.

73 Madueke, "The Emergence and Development".

74 Plotnicov, "Who Owns Jos?".

75 Nnabuihe, "Autochthony and Space"; Nnabuihe, "Horizontal Inequalities".

76 Madueke, "The Emergence and Development"; Nnabuihe, "Autochthony and Space".

77 Interview with Professor of Architecture, University of Jos, June 28, 2019.

78 Ibid.

79 Dung-Gwom, Hirse, and Pwat, "Four Year Strategic Plan"; Wapwera, "Non-Implementation".

80 Interview with State official – Jos Metropolitan Development Board (JMDB), March 11, 2016.

81 Interview with Professor of Political Science, University of Jos, March 13, 2016.

82 Soja, *Seeking*, 14–15.

83 Bigon, "Names, Norms and Forms".

84 Interview with Hausa chief, March 9, 2016.

85 Bollens, "Urban Planning", 94.

86 Interview with Urban Planning Officer, Ministry of Environment, Plateau State, March 18, 2016.

87 Focus Group Discussion with Anaguta community, October 22, 2014.

88 Bunte and Vinson, "Local Power-Sharing".

89 Maren, "Palace Expansion", Interview with Sadiq.

90 Sadiq, "Fresh Controversy".

91 Sadiq, "Fresh Controversy".

92 Interview with Hausa Community Leader, March 11, 2016.

93 Idegu, "Finally".

94 Nnabuihe, "Autochthony and Space".

95 Interview with Afizere Elder, June 28, 2019.

96 Interview with Berom Elder, March 11, 2016.

97 Lugard, *Political Memoranda*, 405.

98 Nnabuihe, "Horizontal Inequalities".

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