THE COLONIZED SPACE OF DOMESTICATION:
THE BUNGALOW AND WOMEN IN COLONIAL NIGERIA

Heather Crichfield
Es instructora en cursos de diseño y teoría de la arquitectura en la Universidad de Puerto Rico.

INTRODUCTION

THIS PAPER looks at domestication in the colonial empire, specifically Nigeria, by focusing on the types of spatial constructions within and without the house that were created for colonia and colonized women by the political and economic agendas of the time. The boundaries, contours, and content of these spaces were both the instrument of implementation and the end product of man's mental constructions for the control of power and the subjugation of the 'other'. I look at the space of what is perhaps the icon of colonial housing worldwide: the bungalow.
CREATING NIGERIA
The African historian Adu Boahen, in his book *African Perspectives on Colonialism*, writes that the colonization of Africa came as a surprise for most African tribal nations. By 1880, the African economy had recovered from the economic losses brought on by the end of the slave trade in the mid-1850s. The end of the slave trade stopped the wars and raids that produced the slaves, equalized wealth distributions (through new exports such as ivory, peanuts, cotton, and rubber), and resulted in a less mobile and rising demographic. Boahen also states that from the African perspective, what the rulers and leaders had not taken into account or realized was that at the end of the nineteenth century they were no longer dealing with the same Europe with whom they had traded so extensively during the slave trade. “It was now a Europe which had witnessed the industrial revolution and was desperately in need of markets as well as raw materials.”

European trade policies had changed radically and its military power had advanced considerably. Instead of flint muskets, like the Africans had, they had acquired the breech-loading rifle and the Maxim gun. So within an incredibly short period of time –1880-1900– Europe had seized all of Africa, with the exceptions of Ethiopia and Liberia. Africa ceased to be sovereign and very quickly its people became colonial subjects of various European empires. While the city of Lagos had been under British rule since 1861, the Nigerian State was not founded until 1885. The British were in Nigeria to exploit human labor and extract the material resources of the country. Nigeria is comprised of several different African tribes –Igbo, Ibibio, Yoruba, Huasa, and Fulani being the major ones– who did not conceive of a nation-state like the Europeans did. Many of Nigeria’s problems after liberation are attributable to the overlay of a false spatial construct on an existing spatial construct with little concern for the after effects. Nigeria was liberated, and turned over to self-rule, in 1960.

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6 Boahen. p. 4.

7 Ibid. p. 26.

8 I do not mean to diminish or overstate the term ‘construct’ in this paper but to my mind, the colonial situation can only be explained as such. It was a fabrication with an economic end.
DOMESTICATION

The spatial is inextricably linked to the cultural: a relationship that is heightened and exacerbated in the colonial context. As the definitions above indicate, the question of domestication is the question of dominance. To domesticate, in the colonial sphere, is to make a ‘native’ culture fit for the intimate association with a colonizer: to bring the colonized up to the level of ‘ordinary people’ [i.e. Europeans] for the advantage of man [i.e. white male]. For the British in Nigeria, the project of domestication was a process and a specific instrument against the major obstacles of health and an impenetrable landscape. Through the project of domestication, the British finally started to make advances into the interior and ultimately succeeded in creating a united Nigerian State. They domesticated the land through the construction of railroads, mass-produced agriculture for exportation, the telegraph machine, and the building of ‘European Areas’. Domestication in Nigeria was one of the principal technological aspects of nineteenth and twentieth century colonialism. Architecture was a concrete [and iconic] mode for achieving domestication. The British occupying Nigeria were not interested in assimilating nor adopting local traditions surrounding the physical, cultural or social ways of space making. They were interested in either the domestication of the ‘native’ or the exclusion of the ‘native’; the former preferable because it implies a level of complicity. The issues and arguments the British made were typical of the duality of Western rhetoric. Many of these dialectics—angel vs. whore, organ vs. machine, luxury vs. comfort, clean vs. soiled, and opacity vs. transparency—were played out on the female body.
[Woman] is a double figure: the paradigm of nature when domesticated in the house and the paradigm of the alienation from nature when outside the house, untamed.\textsuperscript{12}

John Ruskin

The Victorian debate on women, nature, and dominance by man directly related to the manipulation and design of various physical spaces within society but perhaps the greatest impact was on private spaces of the house. While there were arguments made for women's rights during the nineteenth century [Mill and Wollstonecraft] the more predominant view was of a controlled well-placed female, not of a self-defining and empowered one. As Kate Millet (1973) has pointed out, perhaps the antithesis to John Stuart Mill's arguments on behalf of women are John Ruskin's arguments. Ruskin is more telling of the popular view on domestication during the mid to late 19th century. His book, The Seven Lamps of Architecture, was (and is) widely read by architects and greatly impacted building design. Ruskin's descriptions of architecture and women are truly enlightening for an understanding of the space society had defined for Victorian women. When discussing the differences between men and women Ruskin writes:

\begin{quote}
the man's power is active, progressive, defensive. He is eminently the doer, the creator, the discoverer, and the defender. His intellect is for speculation and invention; his energy for adventure, for war, and for conquest, wherever war is just, wherever conquest is necessary. But the woman's power is for rule, not for battle,—and her intellect is not for invention or creation, but for sweet ordering, arrangement and decision... her great function is Praise: she enters into no contest, but infallibly judges the crown of contest. By her office, and place, she is protected from all danger and temptation.\textsuperscript{13}
\end{quote}

This argument creates and supports the very worst image of the colonial woman: impotent and judgmental. Here Ruskin clearly shows how woman is not a creature of any self-action or 'power' to rule others but she clearly can judge them, due undoubtedly to her 'good nature'. He continues,

\begin{quote}
[Man] guards the woman from all this; within his house, as ruled by her, unless she herself has sought it, need enter no danger, or temptation, no cause of error or offense. This is the true nature of home—it is the place of Peace; the shelter, not only from all injury, but also from all terror, doubt, and division. In so far as it is not this, it is not home: so far as the anxieties of the outer life penetrate into it, and the inconsistently-minded, unknown, unloved, or hostile society of the outer world is allowed by either husband or wife to cross the threshold, it ceases to be home...wherever a true wife comes, this home is always around her... and for a noble woman it stretches far around her.\textsuperscript{14}
\end{quote}


\textsuperscript{14} Ibid: p. 101-102, (my emphasis).
The home is his, but if harm comes to it, it is because she has sought it. According to Ruskin, if the outer world violates the construct of home then all is lost. He also uses woman as the metaphor and embodiment of the idea of home and therefore the true nature of woman is ‘Peace’. When reading texts such as this, it is a wonder that British women were able to dwell in Nigeria at all. The restrictive cloak of perfection in which these women were dressed calls into question the type of presence she had in the home, especially within the colonial arena. Ruskin says that the home is “the woman's true place and power...so far as she rules, all must be right, or nothing is. She must be enduringly, incorruptibly good; instinctively, infallibly wise-wise, not for self-development, but for self-renunciation.”

If, in the colonies, there was a process of regressing social advancements for woman in order to protect them against perceived threats to the British way of life then the space of domestication well into the 20th century Nigerian colony still lies somewhere in the Victorian period. Joan Sharwood-Smith, a British woman who lived in Nigeria from 1939 until the late 1950’s, described this scene of Victorian propriety.

“We ascended the stairs in strict order, according to our husband’s seniority, the Resident's wife sedately leading. The operation completed, we descended the stairs in the same order and were shown our places at the dining table. A steward came in with the soup and we sat there for five minutes or more watching it cool as we waited for the men. From outside came a roar of male laughter and a cry of ‘Just time for one short one!’ Eventually the men joined us.”

How does this Victorian ideology affect the domestic reality of the Nigerian woman? Nigerian women were [re]educated by the now well-documented duo—Christianity and domesticity. Educating the ‘native girl’ in the technology of domesticity and the morality of Christianity was crucial to the colonial agenda. The role of missionary schools for Nigerian girls up to 1930, was to ‘inculcate good morals and modest behavior’ An alternate to the missionary schools were the marriage training houses—found mostly in the eastern provinces. These homes were used to train [domesticate] young women engaged to Christian men. In these homes, girls would be trained in a variety of skills: “They must learn to keep a house under native conditions, yet apply hygiene and order.” The prospective husband would pay for the education which would last anywhere from six months to three years. The education “emphasized the habits of good behavior and manners: punctuality, cleanliness, helpfulness, neatness, talking in moderate tones, decent language, regular bathing, and personal hygiene.” It was not until after World War II, in 1948, that Gladys Plummer, then Deputy Director of Education for Women, conducted a study that showed that the girls coming out of these schools, had not acquired useful skills for married life. What Plummer “discovered” and the British eventually understood was the very different role of women (in this case Yoruba) within the home. On the surface, especially for the Christian Yoruba, the role of Victorian-Edwardian wife and Yoruba wife were very similar; the wife's primary duty was to home, husband and children. However, the actual functioning of the two family structures was quite different. The Yoruba wife was not only economically responsible for herself but also for her
would become a tool for protection and subordination of British women.

The sub-Saharan colonies came late to the British Empire and were held for a relatively brief period of time (60 years in Nigeria). By the start of the British Nigerian colony in 1885, British [European] women had a 'history', circumspect at best, within the colonial project. As Helen Callaway states, "in men's memoirs of the colonial period European women appear if at all, as nameless figures in the background, while in widely-read anti-colonial novels (those of E.M. Forester and George Orwell, for example) women in the colonies are shown as shallow, self-centered and preoccupied with maintaining the hierarchy of their narrow social worlds"; the memsahibs. The European and especially British women already inhabited a strong stereotype of who they were by the time they went to Nigeria. The stereotype was neither empowering nor flattering and at worst represented what was wrong with the empire and its weaknesses: pettiness, racism, cruelty, and self-absorbed extravagance. By the 1920's, changes in British policy towards British women in Nigeria were a reaction to the problems of disease and of home. British women were seen as a remedy to and provider for the health of men. "This period marks the formation of the enclave, in its social as well as its physical dimensions." Once women and occasionally children started to enter Nigeria the British felt the need, to quickly 'circle the wagons' and 'protect their women'. The house became an enclave in and of itself, which was contained within the larger enclave of the 'European Areas'. Men became even more detached from the local men and the physical definitions of spatial segregation became more pronounced. It seems as though the attitude towards and the rights of British women in the colonies dragged behind those of the women in the metropole.

In general, there were two types of British women in Nigeria – the woman travel writer and the wives of civil servants who occupied positions within the home or as nurses and educators, and after 1940, as administrators. Women in administrative positions typically had no education in this area and were used only as interim staff between the exiting and entering patriarchies. There is the occasional circumstance, where a woman would occupy more of a role outside these realms such as the independent missionary and health workers, but they were rendered as the 'spectacular' exception to the rule and indeed many travel writers were described this way. The contradictory sentiments of the women travel writers, who, at the turn of the nineteenth century, were being hailed as the 'new woman' by suffragettes and women's rights movements are interesting. One of the most illustrious travel writers in West Africa, Mary Kingsley, was, in fact, dismayed at discovering that she was so considered. The surprising thing, in retrospect, is that these women who so boldly embraced the excitement and freedom of travel, who choose the world over their Victorian parlor, were typically quite conservative. It is also important to note that the majority of Victorians did not have access to travel books. Empire was translated for them through kitsch items, images, and constructed space.

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32 Callaway, p. 3.
34 Nigerian women may have served in some of these positions but my research did not verify this.
"But even in their traditional roles, women, by their very existence, confront and challenge men because they have been made the embodiment of the dominant culture’s unsolved problems."


West Africa, during the 19th century, was commonly seen as the antithesis of Europe. The myth of the Dark Continent was of both a savage brutal place where child-marriage and cannibalism were practiced and a place of perverse excitement and attraction for Europeans. In typical British bi-polar logic, the African was set up as the savage against the civilized Briton [European], chaotic as opposed to ordered, overtly sexual as opposed to properly moral. For the British, Sub-Saharan Africa was not only a backward and uncivilized ‘nature’ it was also full of lascivious, unscrupulous cannibals. This construct allowed for the justification, by the colonists, for what Cheryl McEwan calls the “twin tools of European imperialism, the civilizing mission and the Christianizing mission.”

Fear of disease added to the litany of fear-induced stereotypes about Nigeria and Western Africa that lead to the British belief that it was ‘No Place for A Woman’. In the early days of colonial Nigeria, it was government policy not to allow women and children to reside in Nigeria. The British never actively promoted the settlement of British families in Nigeria as they did in Kenya, North and South Rhodesia and South Africa. Firstly, because the European woman was seen as weak and in need of protection from the ‘native’ man and secondly, that women would distract or damage Britain’s politico-economic agenda.

If the colonial project can be described as a particularly male endeavor—a clash of patriarchies—and Nigeria (incorrectly) as a hyper-masculine society, then the addition of white memsahibs would be disastrous for the British occupation in Nigeria. Thus, the West African colonies became the ultimate ‘boys club’ in the minds of the British with little need to construct or conform to the moral code of Britain. In the eyes of the British, the local populations were morally loose and while the missionaries tried to remedy this, the British officers frequently took local women as mistresses, releasing themselves from stuffy British conduct. The uneasy reminder and keeper of British morality—the white woman—was well out of sight.

Because of the unique dynamic of colonial occupation in Nigeria, the Nigerian woman has a very limited presence in colonial documents or the colonial state of mind. In Nigeria, she was not even included within the British domestic sphere as a servant, unlike practices in southern and northern Africa. The rendering invisible of the local female population would have great consequences for the colonial woman in Nigeria.

“In situations of imperial domination, men of the ruling group often assume the privilege of sexual relations with women of the subordinate group, while jealously placing their own women under the ‘protection’ of a prohibited boundary. The concept of ‘protection of women’ conceals an other dimension: not only of the ruling group maintaining control over the subordinate society, but also reinforcing control over its own women.” The bungalow compound
children and their education. The husband’s primary concern was for his parents and siblings. Domestic education subsequently took on a more economic emphasis. The colonial administration however, continued to emphasize domestic education as a way of propagating certain values. In addition, the colonial regime was interested in the technology of domestication to raise the general level of life to their own. “The state utilized the reformed domestic curriculum to inculcate and popularize new habits of orderliness, cleanliness, hygiene, first aid, and sanitation in order to improve health conditions and lessen maternal and infant mortality.”

Domestic science training expanded women’s ability to get jobs within the colonial economy; teaching, clerical, etc. The explosion of girls’ education in the 1940’s also corresponded to the “Nigerianization” of civil service. The period of “Nigerianization” was a time when the empire allowed more Nigerians to take up positions within the civil service.

What is domestication in such a supposedly ‘male’ environment? Many of the social structures developed in Nigeria for the European men were not atypical of the colonies (i.e. the social clubs: many, which had names, like the ‘Gin’ Club or the ‘Scotch’ Club). But all structures built in the early days of the West African colonies were built either as administrative structures or to service white men (houses, clubs, sports facilities, etc.). The ideal or icon of domestication—the home—played a different part within the colonial infrastructure. Because Dr. Ronald Ross, in Sierra Leone, determined that illness was caused in part by sleeping in close proximity to the Africans and to the ground, the officers in the West African colonies moved out of local residential areas and into isolated bungalows raised off the ground.

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19 Denzer, p.131.
20 Ibid. p. 133.

“NO PLACE FOR A WOMEN”:

**BRITISH WOMEN IN COLONIAL NIGERIA**

“I often found myself reflecting rather bitterly on the insignificant position of a woman in what is practically a man’s country [...]. If there is one spot on earth where a woman feels of no importance whatever, it is in Nigeria at the present day.”

Mrs. Tremlett - 1915

The British woman was somewhat of a dilemma for British men and for the colonial project. The work of the suffragists and British women’s movements abroad for the rights of foreign women posed serious and threatening questions for men. The Victorian era followed a time of significant change in the rhetoric surrounding the construct of ‘woman’ and ‘nature’, which took place at the beginning of colonial expansion and the time of the scientific revolution, roughly 1500’s – 1700’s. As Carolyn Merchant illustrates in her book *The Death of Nature*, the whole construct of nature and therefore women had to be altered from the mother-earth image—including women as purveyor of her own body— to account for shifts in industry, technology, and economy. Nature was rendered as a she-devil, wild, chaotic, uncivilized, and vengeful; something that man must control. Subsequently women were rendered the same. Nature was seen as a gift for man to be used, controlled, and ‘protected’ as he saw fit, due in part to figures like Francis Bacon (1561-1626). With the industrial revolution comes the Victorian preoccupation with ‘rituals of order and cleanliness’.

23 Such as the Indian Campaign by women including Josephine Butler and movements against FGM in Africa.
25 Some of the more striking examples were the witch trials in Britain and the American colonies.
THE AFRICAN WOMEN

“If the human body is universal, why does the body appear to have an exaggerated presence in the West relative to Yorubaland? A comparative research framework reveals that one major difference stems from which of the senses is privileged in the apprehension of reality — sight in the West and a multiplicity of senses anchored by hearing in Yorubaland.”

The term “African woman” is a problematic one in the sense that it renders the subject as a singular, monolithic identity. African women (and indeed Africa) are comprised of separate, individual people and cultures, each with their own distinct understanding of self. The term “African woman” can tend to act like a mask - rendering women as simple or same. When speaking/writing about the Nigerian woman in particular it is important to note that this is, to some extent, a Western construct. Nigeria refers to a multitude of different tribes, so the Igbo woman may take objection to being [re]defined so that she is the same as a Huasa or Yoruba woman. Even the term ‘woman’ as a gendered and inferior being is not a proper descriptive for all Nigerian women. Many European traditions were exported to Africa and one of the most critical to African women was the very notion of ‘woman’ (especially as an inferior creature) within the European consciousness. The Yoruba made anatomical distinctions between male and female; however, these distinctions did not take on any ‘social hierarchical dimensions’. Oyewumi shows that “colonization was a twofold process of racial inferiorization and gender subordination... the creation of ‘women’ as a category was one of the very first accomplishments of the colonial state.” Yoruba —and all Nigerian cultures— were severely hierarchical but unlike Western cultures, being a woman did not mean assuming an automatically inferior position. However, the western notion of woman was one idea that has survived colonialism in Nigeria.

The [re]positioning of African women is a highly controversial issue. There are critics, such as Oyeronke Oyewumi and Helen Callaway, who believe that the pre-colonial Nigerian woman was a powerful figure in economic and political affairs equal to men. Then there are those critics, such as Molara Ogundipe-Leslie and Tola Pearce, who believe that African society is inherently patriarchal and that the woman’s actual power in society is over-stated and fragile. It is difficult to know anything about these women but it seems important to note that prior to the colonial invasion, these women were heard and had some economic control. Although they were members of a patriarchal society in many respects they had more ‘power’ over their livelihood than the English woman did, and not because they were female. The English woman had little to no economic or political control precisely because she was a woman, but in the colonies she did enjoy a position of privilege because of her race and conceivably because of her class.
"Very few travel accounts mentioned African women, and those that did tended to reinforce the twin stereotypes of the oppressed wife in a polygamous household, or the lascivious female, associated with the prostitute in Britain."

Cheryl McEwan

Colonialism, in Nigeria, acted aggressively on the black woman's body and ignored her mind not surprisingly because it was undervalued in the British woman. Scholars and critics frequently refer to the 'doubly colonized' African female. It is not that women were doubly-colonized but doubly-OPpressed; once in the form of colonial oppression by the colonizers and then again by African men who "separately inferiorized and marginalized African women". The apparent ease with which Nigerian men pushed aside their women is difficult to understand and has not been well nuanced, especially given that the women were so economically empowered. According to Oyewumi, one very concrete example of the invisibility of African women (or is it an example of the blindness of researchers?) is illustrated by the experience of R. S. Rattray, an eminent colonial anthropologist of the Ashanti of Ghana. When he ‘discovered’ the significant role women played in Ghanaian society prior to colonial intervention he was surprised and asked the Ashanti elders why he did not know this. “In his words: ‘I have asked the old men and women why I did not know all this—I had spent many years in Ashanti. The answer is always the same: The white man never asked us this; you have dealings with and recognize only the men; we supposed the European considered women of no account, and we know you do not recognize them as we have always done.” The British attitude towards women played a major role. Callaway says that, “[t]he colonial government held political control and, in Bourdieu's words, 'the specifically symbolic power to impose the principals of the construction of reality’. Viewing the gender division in terms of women in the domestic sphere and men in the public forum, colonial officers created their administration on this basis. They also developed the new political order, in a process of continuing negotiations with African men, along these lines. In some cases, this significantly reduced the economic and political powers African women had previously held in pre-colonial societies; in all cases, male dominance was reinforced.”

For an apparently 'invisible' section of society, Nigerian women had very interesting ways of making themselves visible. Some of the most striking were the revolts by women in the 1920’s: the nwa obolia (dancing women) movement of 1925, the spirit movement in 1927, and most importantly the 'Women's War' of 1929. These movements highlight the autonomy and existence of a group of people who had been written on and over and whose new reality had been constructed by men (African and European) and European women.

In December of 1929, the women of the largely Igbo and Ibibio tribes in southeastern Nigeria, took up arms and revolted against the government. The trigger for their dissatisfaction was the rumor that the government would soon be placing a tax on them as it had done to the men. The poor and disrespectful treatment by the colonial government and the threat against their economic livelihood drove the women to revolt.
Nigeria was a contentious site, for more than any others the West African colonies were seen as a wholly male domain. West Africa was frequently referred to as the 'White Man's Grave', perceived as a land where white men could not survive and needed protection. Primarily from disease but also from the fear-generated stereotype of the savage cannibal. This myth was further heightened by the Europeans' late arrival to the interior of the continent. Even during the slave trade Europeans remained on the coast and rarely penetrated the West and Central African landscape (with certain exceptions). The British did not settle the interior of Nigeria until the mid-1800s. Thus the real fears of climate and disease and the more prejudicial fears stemming from their limited knowledge contributed to their view that Nigeria was a 'man's world'. In their view, penetrating and conquering the interior (of the body or land) was the right of men and not suitable for British women and children. This protectionist attitude of Victorian England towards their women earned West Africa the title -'No Place for a Woman'. Of course, this statement completely eluded the women of West Africa. Nigeria, in many ways, can be seen as an extreme case where women were rendered invisible, inappropriate, or spectacular.

The physicality of colonization and how these tangible constructs reverberate on the society that creates them is interesting, particularly how women occupied and were framed to some extent by these constructs. How does the physical artifact of the house function as an instrument in the colonial project? How did the English woman exist in such a place and how is her place in society rendered by the bungalow? The construct and technology of domestication meant different things for the English and the Nigerians. How did the African woman 'exist' in such a construct? Where is the Nigerian woman in relation to the domesticated space of the colonizer? What happens to European and local patriarchies within these spaces? These questions need to be asked in order to adjust the heavily biased historical lens of architecture and to provide a possible site from which we can address future development.
BUNGALOW

"Talk of houses usually acts as a cover for that which is threatening about houses... The idea of a discourse can never be separated from a certain talk about houses, that is really to say a certain silence, not the absence of talk but a certain fold within the fabric of the folds in order to comprehend the strategic role of the house cannot involve simply listening to the overt discourse. It requires a different kind of reading, one that actively employs gestures that are at once more oblique and more brutal. And, in the end, the question of the house turns out to be precisely one of obliqueness and brutality." [45] (Cf. Wigley, 1993)

The bungalow was perhaps the clearest architectural example of the effect the colonies had on the metropole. The bungalow originated in India, coming from the Hindi Bangla, meaning ‘of or belonging to Bengal’. [46] This is a case where the British, after much physical hardship, learned to adopt the local building typology. Eventually, they were so thorough in the adaptation that the bungalow became associated with European housing. By 1778, at least, the bungalow had been transformed from the native hut to a housing type exclusively used by Europeans. It was a rare invention to have been so directly extracted from ‘native’ housing. These houses were differentiated from traditional English architect-designed homes by certain physical characteristics: thatched roof, verandah, one or two stories, and the use of ephemeral materials. It is the one building type that is the same in name, typology and is in use on all continents throughout the world. The effect of this building type on the metropole was direct but not immediate. The term ‘bungalow’, unlike Indian words for consumer products such as chintz, jute or calico, was not known in England until about 1758 and did not appear in the English dictionary until 1788. [47] The term bungalow became fully naturalized into the English language by 1850. [48] The bungalow housing type itself was transplanted to England in the 1800’s. In fact, Anthony King has traced the history back to the very first bungalow style house built in England in 1869, on the north coast of Kent. Bungalows, in England, were Victorian vacation homes and not typically permanent residences. At the turn of the century, the bungalow came to represent ‘flight from the city’ as it was always built in the countryside or by the seashore. The bungalow became the testing and development ground for prefabricated houses. By 1880, the English adapted their innovation, of the prefabricated bungalow, for use in resort towns to accommodate the rapidly increasing populations outside urban areas. It was around this time that the bungalow was re-introduced to the various colonies around the world. The innovation from India, went to England, was ingested and regurgitated, replete with proper British values and iconoclasm, and sent forth into the world. The bungalow arrived in West Africa around the 1890’s. [49] The physical artifact of the bungalow became an instrument of the global economy, urbanization, and the colonial project. In Nigeria, the bungalow would be used to dismantle the family compound (nuclear family), traditional forms of agriculture (land tenure, cultivation) and the cultural beliefs of the local population (polygamy, family structure). The full force of this technology

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[48] Ibid, p. 70.
can be seen at the local Nigerian scale but is truly ominous when viewed at the global scale. In an advertisement for prefabricated bungalows, King observes the insidious nature of the exportation of the bungalow and all it represents. He states that “[t]he Hindi/English/French/Spanish terminology here is not only evidence of the bungalow’s ubiquitous function; it also represents (where bungalow = colonial house = country house) the projection of a basic division of labor between town and country, through colonialism, onto a world wide scale.”

What the British had done to their own country by turning the common lands into agricultural lands and developing the ‘country-side’, they would now do to Nigeria. The consequences would be grave for Nigerian societies. “The replacement of the peasant economy by the capitalist mode of production, even though it was not always total, required, to use Mabogunje’s phrase, ‘a more appropriate spatial order’.” The bungalow-compound and the European enclave would become this ‘more appropriate spatial order’. The reasons behind the introduction of the bungalow housing type were both implicit and explicit. The primary explanation for the importation of a foreign housing type was the ‘need to preserve the health and comfort of the inhabitants’. Some of the less explicit explanations were, to prevent disease thought to be acquired from Africans and African living styles, the lack of tolerance of climatic extremes, ‘expectations about the use of space’, and as symbols of power and prestige. The impact of this building type was most profound on the reformulation of the African family and on land division. King states, “The ownership of land began to be individualized, in the process eliminating all claims on it originating in kinship or neighborhood organizations, though family land did persist”. Because the bungalow not only embodied but also reinforced British ideals about the nuclear family it changed the way that one conceived of land division and ownership. Isolated bungalows became part of residential enclaves. The late 1910’s and the 1920’s became the period of development of the enclave. This is also the period when British wives started to arrive in Nigeria. These enclaves were called European Reservations and later, after World War II, they became known as Government Reservation Areas, which were no longer exclusively for whites. Wives were not allowed to work up until World War II, when the absence of men necessitated their help. King gives a very accurate description of the bungalow-and-compound and the European Reservation. “When laying out townships, each compound in the European Reservation was to be 100 yards in depth, 70 to 100 yards wide (viz., from 1 1/2 to 2 acres), and be enclosed by a live hedge, mud wall or substantial fence. Within this area, ornamental and shade trees and dhub grass were to be planted, through compounds were to be kept fairly clear [...] Servants’ quarters and stables would be at least 50 yards to the rear and near a backline, along which a sanitary lane was provided. The European Reservation was surrounded by a non-residential area 440 yards broad separating it from a non-European or Native Reservation.” The mastermind behind British administrative and urban development in Nigeria was a man named F.D. Lugard, the High Commissioner of Northern
Nigeria. Lugard was the man who developed the European Reservation. His reasons for separating the European population from the local were 1) mosquitoes—which were thought to be infected with disease because they preyed on the ‘natives’, 2) bush fires, again common to ‘native’ quarters, and 3) to cushion Europeans, ‘whose rest is disturbed by drumming and other noises dear to the Natives’. In addition, the European Reservation, it was argued, made life easier for the local government who would not have to deal with governing the Europeans, as they would be out of local jurisdiction and under direct colonial jurisdiction. “Physical separation helped to ensure the social distance necessary to maintain imperial authority […] there is widespread agreement that the original colonial housing forms and residential areas, together with post-colonial developments, provide a physical and spatial setting for social segregation.”

The bungalows first used in Nigeria were prefabricated, corrugated iron roofs and timber houses. They further developed in Nigeria using local building materials when necessary. Again, Lady Sharwood-Smith describes their bungalow in northern Nigeria as follows:

*The District Officer’s bungalow was a long, thatched building with verandas running along the whole length of the front and back. Inside, I was surprised to find comfortable easy chairs, cushions and carpets, for deck chairs and rush mats were all that I had expected. Attached to the walls were Bryan’s hunting trophies; skulls of horned animals, mounted on wooden shields. The cranium of a boar with fearsome tusks especially caught my eye.*

She later describes the bungalows that they stayed in, commenting that the British government provided most everything but ‘no soft furnishings, linens, or curtains’; the ‘soft’ items of femininity. These were homes that were not attached to Ruskin’s ideal female, or indeed any female at all. They were not quite domains of ‘Peace’ and repose as only a woman could offer but external, exposed, course spaces of Empire in West Africa. They were unsecure structures compared to the Victorian home and therefore ‘no place for a woman’. The female body, within the bungalow became exposed. “The security of a house is not its capacity to enclose or exclude, but its capacity to conceal.”

Eventually the prefabricated bungalows for officers were replaced with more ‘permanent’ structures. The bungalow, typically, is never meant to be a truly permanent structure, exposing the colonial attitude. They were there to rule (however indirectly) and extract but never, with perhaps the exception of India and settler colonies of the New World and Australia, were they to become part of the land that they inhabited. The desire was always to remain above the land, to elevate and improve upon the cultures that they found there.
[RE]SITING OF WOMEN VIS-À-VIS THE BUNGALOW

How did the bungalow reposition the African and European women within the Nigerian landscape? For the Victorian woman, the bungalow became an instrument that both exposed her and rendered her a tool of the colonial empire. The house, when in the Nigerian context, became a type of sexual monitor. The plan was unlike the typical multi-storied Victorian home. In the Victorian house, the various living spaces were separated by walls but also through distribution by intermediate spaces and vertical separation. The woman in her parlor (actually his parlor) was completely separated from the kitchen or bedroom. The houses tended to ‘protect’ the private spaces from the public. In the bungalow, however, the rooms were not so segregated. They were typically one story and where they were two—like many existing in Nigeria—the bottom floor served as storage and to elevate the living quarters off the ground. On the level of the living quarters, rooms and functions were essentially one next to the other without the use of intermediary spaces such as closets. The bedrooms, places for sleeping and procreation, were directly adjacent to the social spaces, i.e. living and dining rooms. Space such as the kitchen and bathroom were separated from the main cluster of rooms. “[…] Sir Rex Niven observes that the general standard of sexual morality was high between white people with such deterrents as houses very ‘open’ inside and outside, the silent movements of house-boys, and the visibility of parked cars in open compounds.” The inability to hide the car within the open expanse of the compound meant that everyone knew who was ‘at home’. It was a type of transparency that began to undress the Victorian-Edwardian women. She was no longer within the comfort of her social constructs. The heat of the tropics and the cultural shifts relating to climate, architecture and lifestyle removed the cloak of restriction and instead, veiled her body in a sheath of British morality and imperial objectives. She became the embodiment not just of domesticity but also of nationhood and empire. She, like the bungalow, was a tool of the imperial project. This is not such a stretch if we recall Ruskin’s comments on the woman as house; that wherever the ‘noble’ woman is, home is all around her.

The bungalow was literally transparent. Only one room deep with windows on all sides meant that one could see all the way through. The need to allow air to pass through to help cool the space added to the sense of transparency and insecurity. The Victorian ideals of opacity were no longer possible here. The climate was so difficult for the British that the living that typically occurred within the home was moved outdoors, usually onto the verandah. This too, was counter-ideological for the Victorian but was aided by the compound surrounding the bungalow.

Perhaps one of the most distinct features of the bungalow is the verandah. The verandah was critical in regulating the temperature of the interior rooms. Any space with direct sunlight hitting its outside walls would be unoccupiable during the mid-afternoon in Nigeria. In addition, the tropical climate greatly impacted the layout of rooms. “Most agreed that bungalows were best only one room deep; to fill verandahs with bathrooms and store rooms defeated their purpose. This was where one-and-a-half centuries of Indian experience were put to good use: bathrooms in the corners of verandahs did not interfere with through air circulation for the rooms.”

This British compound is very different from the Nigerian compound. The Nigerian compound contained the extended family and allowed the community to seep in. Living typically happened under very transparent conditions compared to the English (Denyer, 1978). Where British and African practice diverged “was that all domestic activities, eating, sleeping, bathing, should, in general, be undertaken inside the house, out of sight of the indigenous inhabitants.” Woman and house were both constructed to further the aims of the colonial empire and enforce domesticity. The British woman, in her dress (pressed white cotton) and in his house, preserved and executed the colonies civilizing mission. Society, within the colony, enforced her behaviors. In the ‘wilds’ of Africa, among the savages, it was she who was expected to conduct herself and those around her in the most British of fashion. She was not encouraged to go outside the enclave and when she did, she was always expected to conduct herself as a moral, clean, and good woman. The house—bungalow—was used as a tool to separate the civil (British habitation) from the uncivil (nature/savages). The bungalow helped to dismantle traditional African family structure. As Christianity enforced monogamy and the nuclear family, the bungalow provided the space to house the family in a ‘clean’ space safe from any unseemly improprieties (i.e. polygamy) the
house also helped shift the focus from subsistence farming to capitalism – another colonial agenda. The isolated property meant the need for tools and technology to maintain it and within the house “the spatial division into separate rooms encouraged the acquisition of goods to fill them.”

For the Nigerian woman, the bungalow became an instrument that rendered her invisible to colonial society. The lascivious, exposed, dark (read: unclean, not white) African female body was a threat to the colonist. Because the Nigerian woman was not invited to participate in the colonial project she was outside of the bungalow compound. “From a social and cultural viewpoint, the bungalow was a form of shelter designed for a single person, or nuclear family, often with servants, but socially (though not administratively) unconnected with the surrounding population.”

In Nigeria, the woman was never a servant within the colonial home. The servants were always male and housework was considered a skilled wage labor, therefore it was man's work. This will completely sever the Nigerian woman from the interior world of the British enclave. She will not be seen and therefore she will not 'exist' as a key figure within the colonial project. If the Western world privileges the visual (as Oyewumi states) and the Nigerian woman is not in sight, then the construct of her existence, as contrived by the British, ceased to be of consequence. Her body, through Christianity; her livelihood, through colonial rule; and her family, through both, are controlled and regulated but she is never acknowledged.

The problem with the emphasis on dwelling forms ability to affect social, cultural, and political change is controversial because it raises questions of architectural determinism and as Mabogunje says “because of its implicit cultural imperialism and the consequent failure to acknowledge the real impact, and present-day results, of both colonialism and neo-colonialism.” However, the architecture, the house or bungalow is used to define acceptable social space and reconstruct the ‘savages’ world. Even after independence, 95% of the new homes being built in high-class areas were bungalows. It is a form that continues to affect Nigerian social structure and helped to reposition the Nigerian woman's place in society.