

planning in sub-Saharan Africa operated. During the “empire building” period, national rivalries were strengthened but at the same time there emerged international and inter-colonial coordination. This contemporary cooperation-cum-competition is well reflected in the Dakar conference, throwing some light on the meaning and implications of such transnational networks of scientific expertise. Not only were the planning interventions inspired by these networks in times of infectious-disease outbreak more rigid in the colonial arena by comparison to the metropolitan one; but also, planning interventions were initiated by the peripatetic role of medical officers of health who contributed to the diffusion of semi-scientific ideas among the colonial territories. Against this background another key issue will be discussed, i.e., residential segregation on a racial basis in British and French sub-Saharan Africa. The article is based, inter alia, on an archival file of the Conference that has not been gained attention so far in the academic literature.

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Planning in the Sub-Saharan African City: A Fixation with Formality

Amin Y Kamete

This article reflects on the response of urban planning and management to informality in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA). It argues that authorities in SSA have a fetish about formality and that the fetish is fuelled by an obsession with urban modernity. This fetish is built upon a desire for an urban modernity based on formal order that the authorities believe cannot coexist with the ‘disorder’ and ‘unruliness’ of informality. I interrogate the contention that informality is intolerable and needs to be eliminated or tamed. I conclude that the very configuration of urban governance and socio-economic systems in urban SSA makes informality inevitable and its eradication impossible.

On the Threshold of the Home: Borders of Spatial Segregation

Edna Langenthal

This article proposes a perspective on the built environment that attempts to enrich our thinking about planning from a qualitative angle, in particular the ethical angle, which has the potential to shape urban policy. The starting point is the concept of Hospitality, in the writings of French philosopher, Emmanuel Levinas, where hospitality has an ethical meaning, an event that takes place within an essential tension on the boundary between I and the other. On the one hand, it welcomes another into one's home, respecting his strangeness, and on the other, welcoming guests implies a threat and the risk of losing property via that same other. I will attempt to pinpoint how opening up one's home to another is an ethical act that poses a change in spatial approach relative to the built environment. Today, most of us live in an urban environment composed of built areas shaped by building facades. This article challenges the concept of the façade as flat, exterior visibility that frames or represents the contents of a building. Although Levinas does not make this connection explicit, I am proposing to understand the building façade as preserving the tension between the house's drawing inwards, and the events introduced from outside when welcoming a guest. This double movement suggests that the entire façade is a boundary, a place at the heart of which there is tension, essential conflict, a space of Hospitality.

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Inter-Colonial Networks of Scientific Expertise: Yellow Fever and Urban Planning in West Africa

Liora Bigon and Ambe J. Njoh

The organization, guiding rationale and conclusions of the conference on yellow fever that was held in Dakar in April 1928 give us insight on how inter-colonial networks for administering disease and urban