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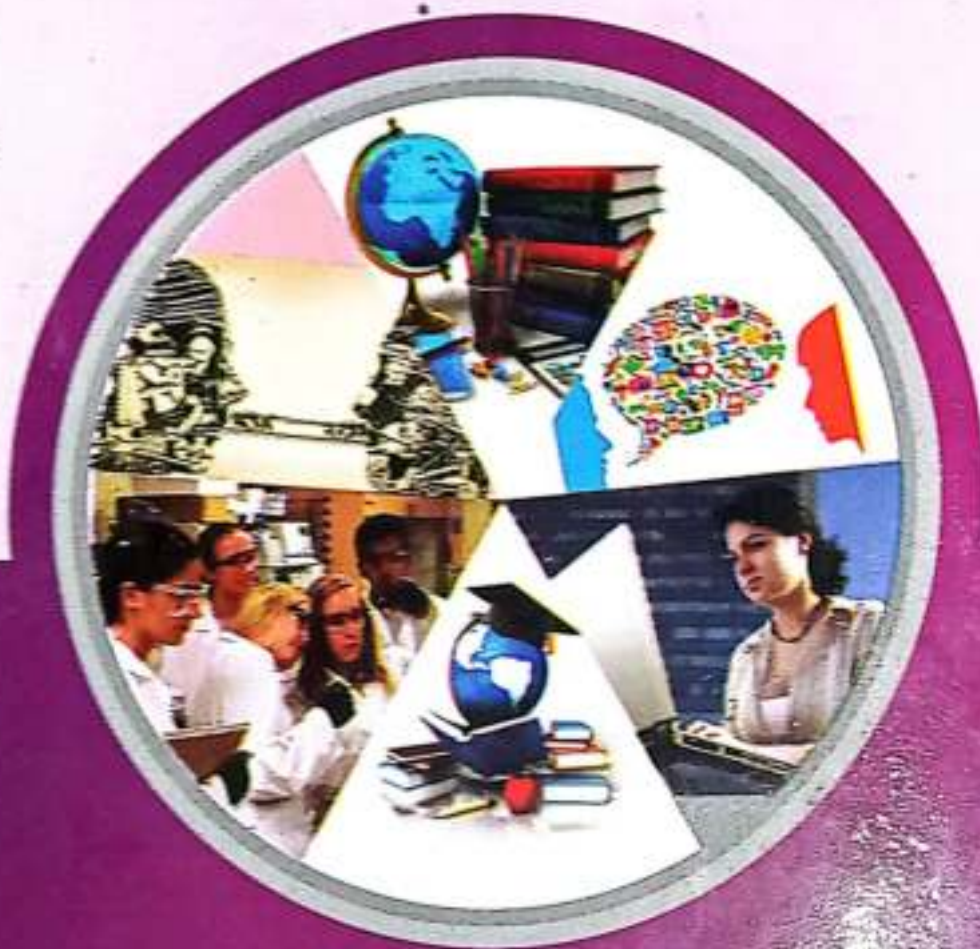
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RENAISSANCE UNIVERSITY JOURNAL OF MANAGEMENT AND SOCIAL SCIENCES (RUJMASS)

Volume 3, No. 1. December, 2017



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**RENAISSANCE UNIVERSITY
JOURNAL OF MANAGEMENT & SOCIAL SCIENCES
(RUJMASS)**

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**VOL. 3. NO: 1, 2017
ISSN: 2467 - 8139**

**RENAISSANCE UNIVERSITY UGBAWKA,
ENUGU STATE.**

Online, click [Rujmass journal](http://Rujmassjournal.com)

**JOURNAL OF PATENT DOCUMENTS & OTHER INFORMATION
(JPD)**

Vol. 2 No. 1, 2007
ISSN: 2007-0100

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DEVELOPMENT OF AMENITIES AND SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE IN ENUGU URBAN, 1917-1979.

BY

ANI, UCHENNA S. PHD, MHSN

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY AND STRATEGIC STUDIES,

FEDERAL UNIVERSITY, NDUFU-ALIKE, IKWO, NIGERIA

uchennaani05@yahoo.com

AND

EZEONWUKA, INNOCENT F. PH.D, MHSN

RENAISSANCE UNIVERSITY, UGBAWKA, NIGERIA

EMAIL: egbuacho@gmail.com

Abstract

Social infrastructures and amenities are integral features of urban centers across the world. Its development in Enugu urban started with its assumption of a second class township status in 1917. Using a descriptive and interpretative frame work, this paper contends that since the inception of Enugu urban, development of amenities were championed more by Christian missionaries and private initiatives rather than the government. Also the colonial officers who designed the development of Enugu did so in favour of the upper and middle class groups to the detriment of the lower class groups. The indigenous people who took over after independence consolidated this process which widened the gap between the higher and lower income groups and entrenched urban poverty in the town. Largely primary and to an extent secondary sources were deployed for this work.

INTRODUCTION

Enugu is located in north-central Igboland in eastern Nigeria. It is bound to the north by Nike and Abor, to the south by Awkunanaw, to the east by Ogui and to the west by Ngwō. It lies precisely on an escarpment below the Milliken hills on latitude 6° 8' feet above sea level¹. Its topography is generally rough and is separated by pockets of rivulets and streams among which are, Aria, Asata, Obwetti (Ogbele) and Idaw rivers². The nature of its environment necessitated the need for a geographical survey carried out in the area by a team of British explorers led by Mr Kiston in 1909³. The result was the discovery of Coal which eventually led to the influx of people into the area that is today known as Enugu. As the population consistently grew owing to multiple government businesses, the town experienced a surge in 1945 which led to the first census in the town to determine the population of residents. The census showed that in the period, 35,000 people were resident in the town⁴.

The earliest map of Enugu District drawn in 1913 shows the site of Enugu before there was a colliery, railway or permanent settlements there. The ridge appears to the west, its edge broken into step spur and short valley and the plain to the east 500 feet below the ridge top and intersected by small streams (Aria and Asata) running east⁵. The streams emptied themselves into Ekulu river in the east, the native village of Enugu-Ngwō is shown on top of the ridge in the west, the only settlement shown on the plain is Ogui, a tiny hamlet on the eastern side of Ekulu river. The land between Ekulu river in the east and the ridge in the west which is the main site where Enugu was to emerge is empty⁶. This shows that from the earliest time to the

opening decades of the 20th century, the area that is total known as Enugu was of no importance and significance to outsiders. But for the local Ngwo people who own the land between the ridge and Ekulu River, the area was just a farm land⁷. Being predominantly farmers, the people of Ngwo descended the ridge with their families to cultivate varieties of crops on the land. They made temporal farm homes where they camp for nothing more than one native week at a time during the peak of yam cultivation and harvest to work with their families⁸.

On the site indicated, the coal mine and the railway terminus were established in 1915 and 1916 respectively. Bush houses for the Colliery manager and his assistant were built on the top of the ridge⁹. Houses for the first labourers in the coal mine were built below the mine on a spur nearby and bush houses for the first railway workers were built on top of the railway bridge over the Asata stream¹⁰.

In February 1917 the settlement was declared a second class township with the name Enugu-Ngwo Township¹¹. The town was named after Enugu-Ngwo; the owners of the vast open land between the ridge and Ekulu River where Enugu Township is established. With the assumption of a township status, the Local Authority (LA) was constituted to administer the township and as well carryout systematic development plan for the establishment of amenities and social infrastructure in the town¹². How the amenities were established, the agencies that established them, the groups targeted in establishing them and the realities that played out after their establishment is the main focus of this paper. In attempting a detailed

analysis of the subject matter, we will first examine the factors that led to the rise of Enugu, the inhabitants of Enugu and the development of amenities in the town.

Factors that led to the Rise of Enugu

The major catalyst that led to the rise of Enugu Township was coal. Hence the town is known as coal city up to the period of our review. The circumstance that led to the discovery of coal in Enugu started in 1903 when Mr. W.R Dustan, the director of the Imperial Institute of Mineral survey London, established the mineral survey department under the colonial government¹³. The department carried out series of geological survey in different parts of Nigeria; part of their initial findings was deposits of lignite near Aasba. In 1908, large deposits of lignite were discovered at Ibusa, Okpanam, Obomkpa and Nnewi¹⁴. While the imperial institute was still testing the quality of mineral already discovered for fuel purposes, large deposit of coal was discovered in Ngwo by a team of Geological exploration engineers led by Mr. Kiston in 1909¹⁵.

Mining operation started in November 1915 as Udi mine was opened in Enugu-Ngwo. The area that was of no significant to outsiders up to the opening years of the 20th century became very significant, not only for groups within Nigeria but to Europeans of different nationalities. Coal was the major catalyst that led to the rise of Enugu though the contribution of the First World War cannot be over looked. Though wars are accompanied with horrible experiences to people and societies in terms of loss of lives and properties, but to some groups it is a source of upliftment. The Enugu coal was abandoned as not good

enough by the report of Engr. S.A Marine in December 1910. It was the devastating effects of the war which hindered coal supplies to the British colonies in Africa that necessitated the exploitation.

Coal helped in the growth of transportation not only in Enugu but in other parts of Nigeria. Coal sustained the railway for more than five decades. It powered the locomotives which made the movement of goods and services easier and faster thereby contributing to the growth of Enugu economy. The exploitation of coal led to the influx of people from far and near into the town both European and groups within Nigeria in search for employment¹⁶.

Apart from providing employment opportunities, coal played an active role in attracting numerous European firms who contributed to the development of amenities and social infrastructure in Enugu. For instance, apart from the railway which was the main consumer of coal, two government departments, that is, Electrical Undertaking and the Marine; and three European firms viz United Africa Company (UAC), John Holt and Elder Dempster consumed coal¹⁷.

In 1949, the above listed firms and government establishment used 150,000 tons of coal, 65,000 went to the working of electricity, while the rest was used by river fleets and small coastal vessels¹⁸. The thermal power plant at Oji River was also dependent on coal. The station (Oji River) supplied electricity not only to Enugu but to other developing areas in Eastern Nigeria. The colliery generated funds for the development of Enugu. From 1917-1957 for instance, the colliery made annual average profit of \$20,000 (twenty thousand pounds) on a

capital investment of only \$3,500(three thousand five hundred pounds)¹⁹. Though, of the much fund generated from Enugu coal, very little was set aside for the development of the town²⁰. That notwithstanding, coal played a leading role in the growth and development of Enugu. It created employment; generated energy needed for development and encouraged large scale investment by numerous firms in the town, which boosted the Enugu economy.

The railway was linked to Enugu in 1916 because of the growing importance of the town owing to coal mining activities. It was linked to Enugu primarily to provide adequate transportation for the marketing of coal. Being the only coal field in the country in the period, the commodity was needed in numerous places within the country and beyond. In 1918 for instance 130,000 tons of coal was moved by the railway out of Enugu²¹. The northern line which was linked to Enugu in 1917 converted the town into a passage for northern Nigeria goods like sugarcane, groundnuts, onions, millet etc to the Port Harcourt sea port. In the passage of time; it gave rise to pastoral farming and meat business in Enugu. More slaughter houses were opened by the Local Authority with surge in cattle business.

With the railway, the movement of goods and services into Enugu became easy. Both local and foreign firms established their offices in the town. It provided ready market for agricultural produce harvested in the town and its environs²². The cheap transportation offered by the railway opened the town up to the influx of numerous entrepreneurs, workers, artisans and traders from different parts of the country and beyond. Enugu was made the Headquarter of Eastern Districts of the

Nigerian Railway Corporation. Enugu was also the host of a large traffic department and a mechanized engineering department which organized locomotive repairs and wagon construction. By 1936, the corporation had as much as 810 staff members working in Enugu²³.

Development of Amenities in Enugu.

In February 1917, Enugu was made a second class township and was placed under the administrative control of the Local Authority (LA)²⁴. The Local Authority was made up of junior white officers reporting directly to the Resident at Onitsha Province. They were advised by the Township Advisory Board (TAB), which is comprised of the LA, medical officer, superintendent of prison, colliery manager, land officer, town engineer, assistant commissioner (political), the crown council and the local railway engineer²⁵. Part of the duties of the TAB and the LA was selection of sites within the township for development, preparing of layouts and allotment of plots within the sites and enforcement of regulations especially to public amenities in the town such as the town market, slaughter houses, cemetery etc²⁶. Typical of colonial rule in Africa, they developed amenities that were essential to their comfort and productivity within their residential sector of the town; other amenities which will facilitate the general development of the indigenous people in the town were neglected.

In housing and urban planning, the L.A from the onset of development divided the town into two sections. The white officers only permitted necessary interaction with the local people, for instance in the areas of some domestic services such as cleaning, gardening, gate keeping etc. the European and the natives settlement is clearly demarcated not

only by Aria and Obwetti (Ogbete) rivers but also a large parcel of land in the North-east of the railway station²⁷. As this major demarcation was established by the local authority, the indigenous people built on the existing bush settlement erected by Alfred Innoma and his colleagues on the bridge above the Udi coal mine to spread their settlements²⁸. The area later known as Alfred camp and its environs expanded with local effort. The buildings vary from mud to thatched houses that clustered around itself. Residents were all miners up to 1923 when the local railway workers and other people rendering different menial services to the Europeans built their houses in the settlement²⁹. As Iva mine was opened at Ukwuna, - an Ngwo farmland at the foot of Milken hill in 1920, native settlement sprang up in the area, residents were predominantly local miners³⁰.

In 1923, LA surveyed and plotted the area south of the Alfred camp for the construction of native settlement. The colliery took over some plots and constructed their first native staff quarters in the area. That same year, they also took over some plots at Iva camps 1 and 2 to construct quarters for their native staff³¹. The staff quarters were prototype buildings, detached double flats of two bedrooms each. The flats were not specious enough to sustain a decent living for nuclear family³².

Following the announcement of the relocation of the headquarters of Southern Province of Nigeria from Calabar to Enugu in 1927, the Local Authority in conjunction with the Township Advisory Board took an aggressive development plan for Enugu. In 1928, a professional town planner, Mr Hudson, was invited to put up a major

physical development plan of Enugu³³. In the plan, development attention was focused on the European location to a complete neglect of the native locations. Recommendations on industrial and residential areas, army barracks, markets, public parks and business districts were made. Though the LA did not accept all the recommendations made, the Europeans reservation area was plotted³⁴. The whole areas were opened up with well paved access roads and links. The plots were spacious at about 150ft by 100feet each. Economic and other trees were planted as the plots were demarcated with barb wires.

Miller Brothers, African and Eastern Trade Cooperation, African Oil Nut, John Holt, Bank of British West Africa, the Railway and The Nigerian colliery took over some plots to construct residential buildings for their European workers. Most of the buildings were three bedroom bungalow, a garage and distant boy's quarters. The government secretariat, the secretariat quarters and other government department were sited within the European section of the town³⁵. In the mid-1940s, the period of Nigerianisation of civil service and World War II, the number of people rendering different services in Enugu had a surge which necessitated the planning and extension of some native locations. For instance coal camp, Ogui and Asata. The colliery, railway, post and telegraph as other private firms constructed quarters for their local staff. Local private developers purchased plots in these areas and built their houses³⁶. Conscious efforts were made by the Europeans to curtail the infiltration of the European location by the natives. The native locations were only constructed to accommodate large number of people rendering services to the

colonial government and not to give comfort to the residents as with the European location.

By 1958 when Eastern Nigeria was granted self-government, the onus of the development of Enugu rested on the natives. Political leaders and top civil servants took over the positions and accommodation left behind by the Europeans and retained the existing polarity in the town; this time between the political class and top middle class civil servants on the one hand and the lower income earning group on the other hand. In the early 1960s, Independence Layout was opened as a prestige layout that housed the government lodge, parliament buildings, and ministerial quarters; Eastern Broadcasting house and Hotel Presidential³⁷. After the Nigerian – Biafra war, the government through the town planning authority commenced the planning of other layouts which include Achara layout, New Haven, Trans-Ekulu layout, Uwani layout extension. By the 1980s when these layouts were completed, it was obvious that the lower income groups were not considered, the modern block of flats with beautifully planned and paved environments were occupied by middle class civil servants and business people³⁸.

The neglect of lower income groups in the development of layouts led to the massive expansion of existing lower class slums and emergence of new ones. For instance the west ward expansion of Alfred camp gave rise to Aron's camp. The north ward expansion of coal camp led to the emergence of Ngenevu, Obed camp and Bunker. These settlements are unplanned slums with very high population density housing low income staff of University of Nigeria Teaching Hospital,

Coal and Railway Cooperation workers as well as lower income traders of the Enugu main market. Other slums sprang up around the high-brow layouts such as Ugbodoguw on the western part of Trans-Ekulu layout, Ugbo- Okonkwo on the eastern part of New Haven layout. They provided accommodation for low income civil servants, small holder business owners and artisans. Iva- valley, camps 1 and 2, Pottery and Agu-Abor developed at the foot of the Milken hill around the Iva coal miners quarters and COPEX quarters. The clusters are one of the largest settlements of low-income groups in Enugu.

In the low income settlements, there was no conscious effort by the government to provide social amenities such as good road network, proper electricity distribution plan among others. Transformers were not equitably installed to provide balanced high voltage, shabby connections and local maintenance by non-professional residents is common place. Portable water schemes are not extended to the areas, residents depend on the rivulets and streams within the town for their water needs. There are no hygiene and sanity facilities, open recreation facilities and well ventilated environment unlike the higher income group settlements. The nature of city development continued to force the low income groups into the sub-urban areas for instance Nike, Emene, Amechi, Ugwuaji and Ngwo village.

Health Facilities:

In 1917 when Enugu attained a township status, a medical officer was appointed who in turn established a medical center for the Europeans. In 1926 they opened a hospital for themselves, at Park Avenue. The hospital was run by white doctors, nurses and other attendants except

for the unskilled staff. Only Europeans were admitted in the hospital until about 1954 when it started admitting senior service personnel of the cooperation and other government departments³⁹. There is also the general hospital which started as a first aid center for miners in 1917. It was converted to general hospital in 1928; their services were extended beyond local miners to accommodate natives in habitants of the town. It started with 20 beds and rose gradually to 150 beds by 1955⁴⁰. The hospital is over-crowded both with in and out patients receiving treatment from very few medical personnel. The efficiency of the hospital is very low as it is difficult in most cases to get medical attention. Most low income earning natives inhabitants of Enugu owing to this resorted to local medication. For instance, up to the early 1980's, pregnant women travel to their villages when delivery is due⁴¹. In 1935 however, the Church Missionary Society (CMS) and the Roman Catholic Mission (RCM) opened maternity homes respectively to serve the health needs of pregnant mothers and new born babies in the native location of Enugu⁴². The CMS maternity home was subsequently upgraded to service the general health needs of the local people in 1953; the maternity homes recorded about 60% of births in Enugu⁴³.

At the end of the Nigerian-Biafra war, the general hospital was converted to specialist hospital and subsequently in November 1972, it was converted to a teaching hospital to service the University of Nigeria faculty of medical sciences⁴⁴. In 1971 Parklane hospital was converted to a general hospital. Other specialized hospitals were also established in Enugu of the period. For instance the Haile Selassie Institute of Orthopedic and Plastic Surgery after wards National

Orthopedic Hospital located at former Governor's lodge, Abakaliki road and also, the Federal Psychiatric Hospital at New Haven⁴⁵. The location of these hospitals in the high-brow areas of Enugu continued to widen the gap between the high and low income earning groups. Private medical practitioners took advantage of the high population density in Ogui, Asata and Uwani to site their hospitals. For instance, St Thomas Hospital, Asata; Mother of Christ Maternity Hospital, Ogui and Uwani Hospital⁴⁶. Owing to the cost of medications in the private hospitals, low income groups depended on patent medical stores for their health needs.

Education:

Western education in Enugu, just like in other parts of Igbo land was sponsored by Christian missions⁴⁷. The colonial government believed it did not have adequate financial resources to mount the structures and recruit teachers from England it only setup the educational departments and appointed director of education to guide and regulate education in the colony⁴⁸. The missionaries in turn appointed secretaries of education who developed curriculum in line with government specification, opened schools, recruited teachers and monitored the process of development. For the Church Missionary Society, the secretary for education in Onitsha Province where Enugu belongs is Rev G.T Basden. He supervised the establishment of schools in the whole of the province. He established the first school in Enugu, St Peter's primary school Ogbete Enugu in 1922⁴⁹. The major subjects taught in the school include English Language, Arithmetic, Religions Studies, Geography, European History, Basic Science and Hand work⁵⁰.

Primary education empowered local natives to the extent of communicating, writing in English and calculating figures. These assured them of jobs either with the government, the expatriate firms in Enugu or the Christian missions either as a school or church teacher. By the late 1930s the schools established by both CMS and RCM had a total number of 1,620 pupils with 1,400 in masculine gender⁵¹.

The first secondary school in Enugu is Collage of Immaculate Conception (CIC) established by the RCM in 1942. In 1948 the RCM also opened the Holy Rosary Collage, a high school for girls above 13 years of age. It was only in 1951 that the colonial government made the first effort at establishing a school in Enugu. They expended €150,000 (one hundred and fifty thousand pounds) to establish and equip a trade training center later known as Government Technical Collage (GTC). That same year, they opened Women Training Center (WTC) - a vocation teacher training center for women⁵². In 1959 and 1961 respectively, the CMS opened a high school for boys and girls at Awkwaw in the heart of the native location⁵³.

It is pertinent to say here that government interest in education heightened from 1958 when Eastern Nigeria was granted self-governing status. The National Archives was quickly established that same year. It is a repository for important documents that aid research and development. The Eastern Nigerian library was established in 1959 to run a comprehensive book lending and reference services for researchers⁵⁴. In 1961 the Enugu Campus of the University of Nigeria was established. It took over 200 hectare premises of former Collage

of Arts, Science and Technology. The campus housed the faculties of Law, Business Administration, Medicine and Environmental Sciences. In 1973, the Institute of Administration and the Collage of Technology were merged to form the Institute of Management and Technology (IMT)⁵⁵.

After the Nigerian-Biafra war, government intensified effort in the establishment of primary and high schools in Enugu. By 1979, there were 22 (twenty two) primary schools in different parts of Enugu with an enrolment of 22,221, pupils and 1,078 teachers; 5 secondary schools with total enrolment of 4,500 students and 175 teachers⁵⁶.

CONCLUSION:

Development of amenities and social infrastructures in Enugu started during the colonial period. Boahen noted that the positive effects of colonial development in Africa were not deliberately calculated, they are accidental by products of activities, or measures intended to promote the interest of the colonizers⁵⁷. The education system permitted in Enugu was not to empower the local natives for self-sufficient development rather it only empowered them to serve the purpose of the colonizers. That is why it took twenty two years from the establishment of the first primary school in 1920 to the establishment of the first secondary school in 1942. It was only from the early 1950s when the indigenous people have started playing Influential role in policy making and implementation that aggressive steps were taken to establish empowerment driven education.

There are reasons why for instance the European made their

settlement far away from the native settlement. So much could have been learnt by the native from the European in terms of western human development motivation and productivity had the division not been created. But for which ever reason they adopted this pattern of development, it set negative development precedence in the town which continued after the colonial period. The top and middle class groups that took over the positions and accommodations left behind by the Europeans colonialists widened the gap between them and the low income groups. Government policies and projects for instance development of layout, housing, electricity, water schemes, hygiene and environmental projects etc were all targeted to improve the lot of the high and middle class areas of the town. This pattern of development widened the gap between the high and low income groups in the town and as well entrenched urban poverty in the town.

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