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At first glance, this paper may well disappoint architect friends and colleagues. It is to be hoped, however, that the conceptual framework proposed will help us all to analyse with more perceptivity the building professions in West Africa and, at the same time, to see to what extent they can make a better contribution and provide more support to people's efforts to develop their economy, their policy and their culture — in short, to develop their society in the way they decide it should be developed.

Concern with procedures which lead to the nomination of architects seems to be part of an unstated assumption that to a certain extent this is linked to (and probably has an influence on) the quality of the built environment which results from the production process¹. Unfortunately, little information is published on nomination procedures (or it is somewhat inaccessible) and, to the author's knowledge, no empirical case studies explore these eventual linkages.

It is admitted however, in spite of considerable rhetoric to the contrary, that architectural quality is apparently not only a result of an individual's (or a group's) creativity, aesthetic sensibility and understanding of the relationships between spatial form and building techniques, but also to other — perhaps equally important — factors.

In spite of the lack of studies, it therefore seems possible to go further and to suggest that there is an inter-relationship between the environmental quality, the nomination procedure, the social practice of the architect and the terms of reference for the architectural work, whether these are stated or implicit. However, it may be hasty at this point to suggest linear and casual or determining relationships, one way or another. A basic hypothesis is, however, that these four aspects are closely linked to the nature of the building process, which in turn is largely determined by the type of capital that is engaged in the operation and the constraints proper to the use of that capital.

In order to explore this, it is first necessary to be a little clearer as to the terms used. In any process of producing the built environment, a certain number of intellectual tasks have to be accomplished. Due to a technical division of labour, in some cases (but not all — as we shall see later), these tasks are undertaken by a different set of persons from those who actually build or who organise and supervise the building work, these tasks, which we can refer to as architectural production², are in some cases part of those undertaken by Architects but in many more cases, they are undertaken by workers who do not have the professional qualifications which lead us to refer to them as Architects.

This refers not only, for instance, to the draughtsmen employed in official technical services who privately draw up the building plans for approval and to the head of a larger building firm's "Programme and Methods" office who decides upon or strongly influences the decision as to purchase of the firm's building machinery, or the head of products in a firm manufacturing and often assembling the parts of standardised industrial buildings etc., but also to a multitude of others who actually take design decisions (often unconsciously) such as master masons, smaller building entrepreneurs and, of course, to that important mass of people — the larger mass — who design their buildings without referring to officially laid down rules and regulations, whether in the camps, hills, hamlets and villages of the rural areas, the borough towns, the "other" city or the gaps left in the "beautiful" city (*la "belle" ville*).

It is the social practice of the workers who undertake these intellectual tasks which we will try to examine through a rapid look at some empirical examples: insofar as these tasks are part of architectural production, the workers will be referred to as architects. In doing so, two issues will be taken up both in the paper and are proposed for the discussion to follow: in what way does the social practice of the architects contribute to the carrying out of a strategy for

self-reliant development and to a greater participation of the users in the decision-making processes concerning their environment or, on the contrary, to a reinforcement of economic dependency, to internal and external relations of dominance? Having attempted to reply to this (or at least having tried to identify what must be analysed in order to do this), the issue can then be addressed as to what extent the outcome results from the peculiar set of relations which have been set up between different types of capital, the terms of reference and the nomination procedure?

Case 1: Rural construction in a cash-crop area of southwest Cameroon

House building is undertaken by individual planters: traditionally the process consisted of using a piece of family land allocated by the family or lineage head or the chief³, cutting poles and palm leaves, weaving palm-leaf roof "tiles" and erecting the building with family labour, in case of a need for extra labour, neighbours (often from the same lineage group) would contribute, the wife of the owner preparing a late afternoon meal or the owner providing palm wine. More recently, split planks have often replaced palm frond walls and still more recently with an increased monetisation of the economy — especially with the introduction of portable petrol-driven chain saws — sawn planks and posts are used.

Roofing materials for the slightly better off cash crop farmer, the trader (buyer of cocoa/coffee; seller of drinks, hardware, small consumer goods), the owner of the "404" truck and for villagers absent because of a regular salaried job elsewhere (school teacher, policeman, clerk...) are increasingly corrugated galvanised iron or aluminium sheets; to a lesser extent, these same owners are gradually going over to cement block walls with wooden door and window frames and glass louvres. To a large extent, the building of public facilities

ties such as schools, — usually undertaken on villagers initiative — follows the same pattern

Monetary resources for building is family capital saved from the sale of cash crops — a little coffee but mainly cocoa (for which the producer receives about one third the world market price before paying his production costs) and to a lesser extent from the gathering of kola nuts and sale of food produce bought by traders supplying the markets in the coastal plantations and the towns of Victoria and Douala. Funds are frequently mobilised through an endogenous banking system in the form of yearly *esusu* groups of 10-12 persons saving together over a 5-6 year period⁴, or, in the case of public facilities, by compulsory subscriptions which vary according to the socially accepted wealth of a farmer (rates vary for large, medium, small and women farmers and “absent sons” with regular salaries contribute more

Labour capital is also mobilised, although decreasingly so as the building tasks pass from the family to craftsmen-farmers who bring technical capital (know-how) into the process but virtually no productive capital (except for chain-saw owners) and no entrepreneurial capital as all materials are bought beforehand by the building owners and labour costs (other than that of the craftsman himself) appear to be paid immediately as each agreed-to task is accomplished.

An increasing proportion — but a relatively modest amount — of commercial capital is involved by traders selling and transporting imported manufactured building materials (steel roofing sheets, hardware, glass) or import substitutes (aluminium roofing sheets, cement .).

As these changes come about, the external appearance of houses is deliberately modelled on that of the “nicer” houses seen by farmers in the particularly busy nearby market town of Kumba (60,000 inhabitants) or even better — according to them — seen in Douala, the country’s economic capital some 2 hours’ drive from the area. The internal spatial organisation

of town houses is recognised by rural home owners, however, as being particularly unsuitable for rural patterns of spatial use⁵ and plans tend to follow a more “traditional” layout although some planters more closely linked to cash-crop economy and to the State or political party structures tend to adopt rather different house plans which at first glance seem more similar to Western, urban models of spatial organisation (and presumably of spatial use).

For public facilities such as a school, plans follow the model of schools originally built by the Christian missions: an even number of classrooms (2, 4, 6) in low, one storey buildings with a double pitched roof located along 1, 2 or 3 sides of a grassed sports area. In the case of health centres, it appears practically unimaginable that anything but a “modern” building be constructed both as regards the use of materials and the spatial organisation although the latter does not result from standardised plans of the Health or Public Works authorities nor apparently from direct instructions from the rural health overseers (H.O.). However, the latter do have considerable influence over village health centre project committees, which are responsible for building. The H.O. is also responsible for reporting on (or even approving) house plans submitted for a building permit and this probably has much influence on the creation of new values as to what is and what is not, a good house plan

The house owner and the building project committee members, however, apparently retain extensive decision making powers as to the spatial organisation, the building form and choice of materials and techniques although, as has been pointed out, these are not free choices but to a very large extent, are *determined by the socio-economic context*⁶ which is that of an increasingly dependent society and economy⁷ The social practice of design might be summarized as that of deciding upon one’s own space and building form under peer-group pressure, with advice from building craftsmen who have a similar

formal educational level and a similar income, and under pressure from State employed technical staff.⁸

Case 2: House construction in Yoruba rural society

In Yorubaland of Nigeria, around the mid 1950’s and early 1960’s, housing was built by farmer-craftsmen who worked only occasionally in the building trade, by *mason-farmers* or *carpenter-farmers* who worked mainly in the building trade while continuing to farm, and, in an increasing number of cases, by building “contractors” employing as many as 20 or more full time workers plus a number of women and girls to carry water and clay to the site. The growing number of these entrepreneur-artisans led to a trend towards the gradual disappearance of intra-and inter-family assistance in house-building. New materials spread: concrete foundations, cement plastering, cement blocks for walls, prefabricated concrete balcony pillars, timber floors and staircases and glazed windows. Buildings put up by the community in the rural areas (mosques and chapels, schools, markets, health centres, meeting halls) follow the same trends (Crooke, 1966) Payment to the entrepreneurs sometimes was accomplished only on completion of the different stages of construction and thus there was not only family capital involved by the middle-level and better-off peasant farmers through the purchase of building materials in advance, but also entrepreneurial capital of small-scale commodity producers and, as in Case 1, technical capital.

To a large extent, this technical capital was acquired by the entrepreneur when working for a period in town, building multi-storey houses mainly for two distinct types of *clientèle*: a national ‘elite’ who had had a formal education in English and worked in the colonial administration, and had singled themselves out from the rest of the population by the buildings they erected; and, the traditional chiefs who put up personal residences and palaces.

In both cases, they copied a style of “Brazilian” town houses which had been introduced into Lagos at the end of the 19th century by self-repatriated ex-slaves (Beier, 1960; 1967).

The design process of rural housing was largely inspired from this style by the artisan-entrepreneurs when they returned to the rural areas and proposed to better-off farmer peasants a “four-cornered” house consisting of buildings often two storeys high with several internally connecting rooms, a staircase, which stored apart from each other on their own plot, rather than forming the external perimeter of a compound with most rooms opening directly onto a central, enclosed courtyard (Crooke, 1966).

The social practice is thus the sub-contracting of design decisions by the owner to a technician who proposes a status-creating symbol and new patterns of spatial behaviour corresponding to this real or desired status. The technician is however the same as the building producer and the design decisions will therefore tend to be a tributary of the productive and entrepreneurial capital being used and the linkages (often through a kinship system) to the commercial capital responsible for supplying much of the new (and at that time, imported) materials such as glass and cement.

Case 3: Building in Pikine, a popular sector of Dakar, in the mid 1960's and the 1970's.

Even in the very first buildings installed in the more northerly quarters of Pikine, (Guediawaye), craftsmen's technical capital was engaged in building the pre-fabricated wooden shacks and their cement block foundations which were the first to be erected. Later, the importance of this capital increased as buildings gradually hardened up and building materials changed to cement blocks and metal or fibro-cement roofs or flat concrete slab terrace roofs. However, the amount of



Street in the Dakar suburb of Pikine

Photo C Little/Aga Khan Awards.



Carpenter-cabinet maker's shop in Pikine, Senegal.

Photo C Little/Aga Khan Awards.

productive capital remained low, as tools and equipment are still today minimal and entrepreneurial capital is not engaged, as all materials are bought by the owner of the house or public facility and all sub-contracts paid directly by him; a first advance in cash to the master-builder allows payment of day laborers (much below the officially set wage rates as use is often made of kins people or apprentices) and satisfaction of normal ongoing family needs of the master-mason, the last payment on completion being probably seen as entrepreneurial profit and capitalised elsewhere than in productive means for building (e.g. cattle, transport, a house for personal occupation, a child's secondary education, etc.)

Models of houses were at first a derivative of rural spatial patterns with considerable influence on house form from older rural building types in the south of Senegal (Mandingo and Diola housing with several rooms under one roof) and status imitation of the brick and stone buildings of the colonial period (army NCO's houses or of the Portuguese settlers), the decoration imitating railway station design (scallop fascia board and tile finials on the roof ridge) or that of colonial government buildings (plank imitation of stone balustrades) (Langley, 1967; 1973). To a certain extent, the master-masons have learnt their trade either through work as an apprentice and later as a day laborer for another master-craftsman, but increasingly through work on more important building sites for a larger national or even larger international building firm, more closely integrated with the dominated sector of their economy.

The social practice of design seems to be that of an exchange of ideas between owner and entrepreneur both referring to commonly-shared models of social status and suitable building types and forms, and having similar incomes and educational levels. In many cases, however, once the buildings are on a recognised plot and building according to an approved plan will allow the occupancy permit to be transformed into a land title, then the design

work is often done by the draughtsmen employed in the Survey, Town Planning or Public Works Offices during their spare time (and often in fact during official working hours using office supplies) and who take considerable care to ensure that the existence of the standard plans which are *supposed* to be available at very low cost is not made known to prospective house builders.

Is this then a first step in a change in the decision making process in which the owner/user is partly excluded under the guise of technical competency; in which the behavioral spatial patterns are now imposed on the user by people who come from a different social class and thus have different spatial practice. It certainly seems so, and studies on similar phenomena in other spheres of development activity tend to show a disjunction in perception between the two groups, with the technicians looking down upon, almost despising, popular cultural values as uncouth or backward. (Langley, 1982, a, b)⁹.

Case 4: Housing and office accommodation in Abidjan Plateau and Cocody Deux Plateaux

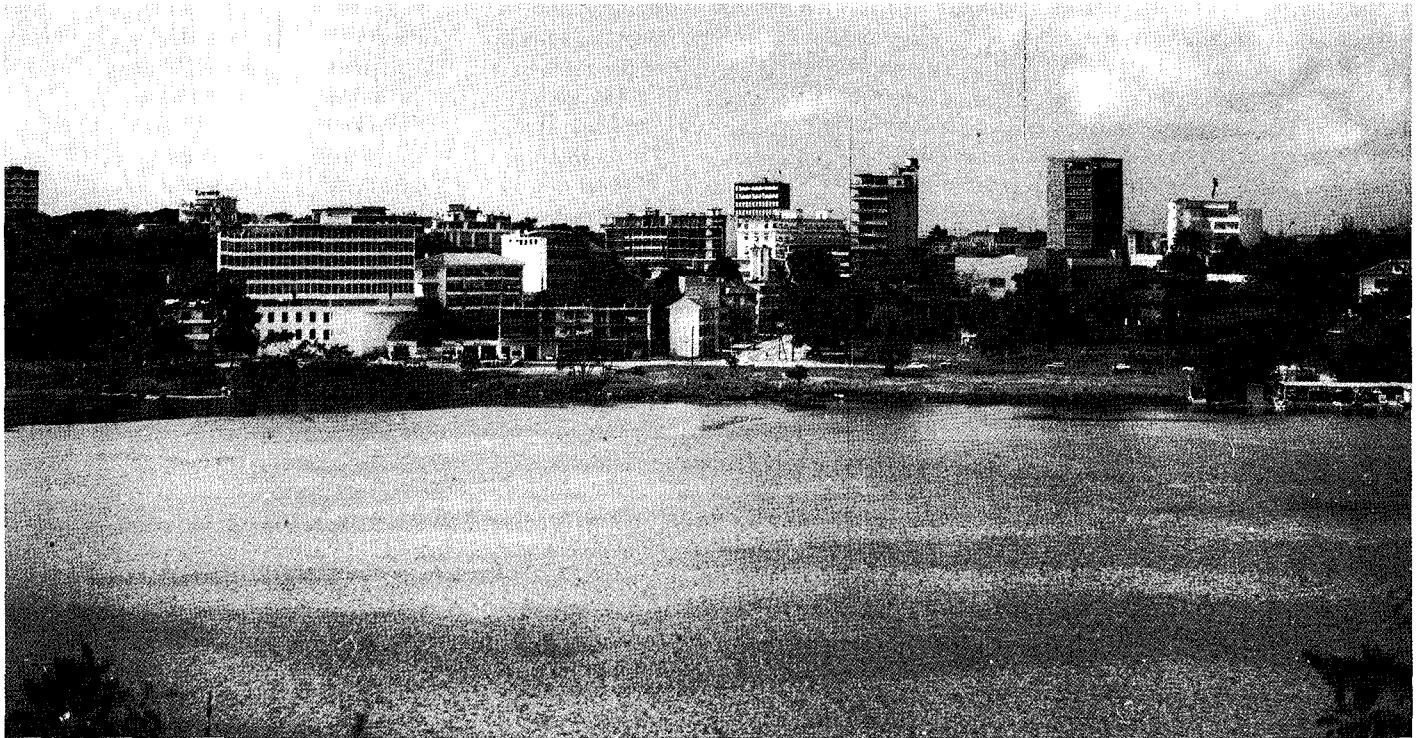
Different cases can be distinguished: private construction of one or a limited number of houses for rental purposes; private and public promotion of housing layouts; private or public construction of office accommodation. While the buildings are well enough known not to need further description (Abidjan University, 1974), an attempt to identify the types of capital involved and the social praxis of designers is still necessary.

Individual rental houses might be seen as mobilising the family capital of members of a *compradore bourgeoisie*, although this would have to be confirmed (it could well be a bourgeoisie whose capital comes from trade or other sources). Larger private housing layouts mobilise mainly commercial capital through the banking system, but do not mobilize family capital, land or productive capital (i.e. the promoters are

not family businesses, building firms promoting their own constructions or land owners sponsoring the building of houses on their own land, using this as a source of capital to control the overall promotion process) and tend to be limited stock companies or bank subsidiary companies. As such, this appears as part of the enclave economy in which the latest stage of restructuring in a French or international capitalist economy (Topalov, 1974) is located directly in the Third World.

The promotion of office space by private investors also follows a similar pattern although the origin of the capital ventured and invested may be quite different, given the varying risks and rates of return involved; in both cases however, through the role of the banks as the mother company owning majority capital in a subsidiary or as a holding company owning a controlling percentage of shares in a limited stock company, there are specific common interests with the productive capital invested in the larger building firms which are linked to the same banks (Combes and Latapie, 1973; Langley et al., 1974). The characteristics of the capital involved in public promotion of housing and office space is not analysed here but in this case, as in all cases above, conceptual and technical design tasks are sub-contracted usually to private architectural, engineering and quantity surveying firms. These are using technical capital and an increasing amount of money capital, whose origin is usually that of family accumulation, or profits from earlier business operations in the same field of activity.

However, in order to resist the challenge of the building societies who frequently attempt to control the whole building operation either by using the services of larger (international) architectural and/or civil engineering consultancy firms, which are also partly or wholly financed or controlled by the same banks, or by integrating the technical tasks directly into their own structures, it is hypothesised that there is a tendency among smaller family concerns either to rely increasingly on bank credit (often once again from the



Skyscrapers in Abidjan, Ivory Coast, seen from Cocody

Photo Roger-Viollet

same banks which finance the promoters or building societies) or to regroup together with several other smaller firms, in a similar fashion to that taking place in the economic "centre" in the industrialised countries (Guffond et al., 1973). Resistance to pressure from larger building firms which tend to convert their own "Program and Methods" office into a design office would also take the same form.

What then is the social praxis during the design process as far as the relationships between users and designers is concerned: it can be supposed (and frequently observed) that the designers' principal contacts are with the client (the promoter) rather than the actual users, and that the disjunction between them which already appeared in situations similar to Case 3 will have grown here into a yawning gap, the

perception of user needs, of the awareness of the processes which must be set up in order to implement a strategy for self-reliant development have little chance of growing and of being transformed into practice in such a situation. The users of the building are alienated from the design and production process: instead of buildings with "a high use-value, one has an anonymous product which, in the final analysis, falls within the realm of assets (exchange value) and above all of image projection" (Ion, 1970).

This necessity to enhance the exchange value by projecting an image leads to buildings using the latest gimmicks in materials and forms which not only lower the use-value, but also mean that the building process is not thought out as a step in setting up linkages, backwards, forwards and sideways in the economy, nor

as a possibility of setting up new social relationships within the production process; on the contrary, the fashion — encouraged by an ideology which in fact masks the economically dominant relationships — tends to give a higher exchange value to an imported product than to one made locally.

Case 5: The village hall at Oussouye, Casamance¹⁰

This is an experiment in technical support to a process of self-help construction¹¹. Following the organisation of a village youth group (Ufulal)¹² which included members who had migrated to Dakar, long discussions took place on how to improve the village in order to stop the rural-urban drift and even allow some younger people

to come back from town and live decently in the village. Contacts were made with a staff member of the Human Development Directorate who had previously been a grammar school teacher in the village: he negotiated some official coverage for the group's activities (letter of encouragement from the Prime Minister's Office), and helped the group organise a survey, especially among the women, as to what was felt as the villagers' needs.

An overall project was gradually drawn up (*Ukanal fe* = "Let's Work Together") which included several agricultural activities to raise income, and a day-nursery to be set up during each rainy season in order to allow mothers to work their fields properly and without fear of losing their children (in a "normal" rainy season, 15-20 children died). This was run successfully for 2 years in the local primary school with some outside donations from friends, during which time no children died. It was then thought that a permanent building would be useful as this would also be a place where the women could meet and talk over their problems (as well as to drink palm wine if necessary).

The original idea was that a cement block and metal roof building, somewhat on the same lines as a primary school, should be built. A lecturer in the School of Architecture was approached to provide design support on his own time, and later the work was integrated (together with the lecturer) into an ENDA programme¹³. Through numerous discussions — which obviously were not without difficulty — the decision was taken to use local materials and labour as far as possible, to promote creation of job in craft activities using the investments made in the building; the design was also made more as an "umbrella" roof with totally independent enclosed spaces below, which is, in fact, an echo of the building tradition of the villagers' Diola society.

Not all the aims of the project have been achieved (for instance in the local production of building materials) but some degree of participation in the design

process by the building's future users has been achieved, as well as in the development process, given the practice of youth in teaching themselves awareness of development issues; this has allowed the lifting of some of the constraints imposed by an externally-produced ideology, which is often one of the factors limiting the wishes of technicians and the user group to set up a participatory decision-making process¹⁴. In addition, training of youth has been built into the project; and four persons having received training in building are now to teach youth in other villages through an inter-community project.

What type of capital is involved in such an operation? Out of a total investment of some 11 million francs CFA, approximately 4.5 million was in the form of funds received from bilateral aid agencies for "small-sized projects"; the rest consisted in land and transport provided by the municipality, experts' time and villagers' labour. This can be characterised as being devalued capital (i.e. not used to make a profit but to "keep the system working" and thus to ensure that, elsewhere, invested capital will maintain profit margins), technical capital — the latter having followed a process of ideological de-conditioning; labour capital which could rapidly become productive capital in the form of small-scale enterprises for building or for producing building components.

As an alternative to devalued capital, there was earlier a real transfer of personal wealth through donations from friends in the form of savings made from the sale of their own labour (private donations or charitable funds); in recent years it has become frequent to invest in small-scale development projects which support a change in the socio-economic system rather than being distributed as charity simply to allow survival. Whether such funds are originally transferred or the devalued capital used deliberately with this intention or not, they have created the possibility for it to be done insofar as they

are associated with the two other types of capital.

This rapid overview of five cases suggests quite strongly that there is a definite relationship between the type of capital involved and the degree to which self-reliant development and participation can be furthered, rather than increasing integration into dependency structures.

The only case where a participative practice and a modest attempt to promote self-reliant development has been observed is that where devalued capital is used in conjunction with labour capital and a particular type of technical capital: while this does not necessarily limit such practice only to processes in which such a combination exists, it may well be of prime importance in creating a situation in which this process can take place more readily.

Can it be hypothesised, therefore, that in general, given the underlying and all-pervading structures of domination and the dependency mechanisms from which it is difficult to escape, commercial capital, large-scale productive capital, or state-controlled capital cannot in general *on their own* lead to participation or to self-reliant development; alternatively, in the case of devalued capital used by the state it can do so, given a change in political control over its use, and especially if it is used in association with some form of popularly-controlled capital (productive, technical or labour), thus enlarging the degree of manoeuvre which is possible; this potential manoeuvre can be enlarged if the technical capital is prepared to accept that the conventional division of labour is broken down and that the technician does some of the building work and the people working on the building site (the future users) do some of the intellectual work.

Where capital — even devalued capital — is used in an attempt to achieve participation and self-reliant development and follows even some of the technical practices which permit this, (but where constraints on investment on a day-to-day basis do not allow it to be combined with the other two forms of capital), there is a

considerable danger that participation and self-reliant development cannot take root: a case in point is perhaps the attempt to build the middle-level technical training centres in Senegal (EMP) using the same building techniques as the Nianing Agricultural Training Centre, without accepting the constraints of the productive capital of small-scale producers (e.g. bidding regulations did not allow advances to pay day-wage laborers yet, as we have seen, no entrepreneurial capital is available); nor was the need apparently seen for locally-organised inter-village committees who could take decisions on building design (i.e. standard construction methods were used to reduce design costs, whereas the constraints of the peculiar type of technical capital is that it should be able to work directly with each user group to promote a decision-making process).

What can be observed today is that in many fields, the State cannot face up to the expectations which people have earlier placed in it, nor to the promise which, in some cases, it has made. In both situations, one way in which social stability can be maintained is to admit an association with more popularly-owned forms of capital and to accept the negotiation for power which is likely to follow. The corollary is that these popular owners must be able to negotiate, that architects can assist them in this negotiation and that the nomination procedures encourage this alliance between the architects and the users in this negotiation.

What nomination procedures might therefore, be envisaged? In what way could a grass-roots development group be advised so that it can ensure that the technicians with whom it will work will not dominate them culturally¹⁵?

A return to the case studies is necessary to attempt to answer this question: however it is extremely difficult to single out the nomination procedure as a set of identifiable and interlinked events, except perhaps in case four¹⁶.

How did the Yoruba peasant-farmer choose a mason or carpenter and how does

a resident of Pikine today do the same; by what combination of events did the Ufulal end up by working with an architect whose practice apparently responds to their perception of the technical skills which they need i.e. to be in charge of the building site (but also capable of negotiating official building approval) rather than a designer in more conventional terms?

What does emerge, therefore, seems to be the degree to which the terms of reference — whether explicitly stated or not — influence participatory practice and the attempt to promote self-reliant development and, in so doing, are a major factor in opening up the possibility of improved architectural quality.

Could the nomination procedures include more clearly-stated terms of reference which would encourage participatory practices and which would be worked out by the aspiring user groups together with a community development leader or animator (and would this not suppose that these development staff would have to be trained to understand the political economy of architectural production as well as in group structuring for participatory decision-making)? But in this, there appears to be little difference to the problems which arise with activities in other spheres of development activity: health, agriculture, town planning, public works, education, job creation¹⁷ ...

A final question, and perhaps one of the most difficult to answer with regard to the existing nomination procedures, and the potential terms of reference mentioned above: in what ways do they fit into local, national, regional and Islamic identities?

Notes

¹ Without attempting to define environmental (or architectural) quality, it should be said that use-value is a major element

² Defined in earlier research work (Langley et al, 1974) as being:

• the definition of the architectural object to be produced (analysis of building use, design of building

forms and the choice of techniques, procedures and materials to be used)

- the production of instructions which will allow the object to be built
- programming the production
- controlling production process
- controlling the final product
- controlling the use of the product

³ Land tenure practices which are changing will not be taken up in this paper. The overall building process is described in more detail in Langley, 1981; for a general description of research work and of the area see Langley, 1982a

⁴ A widely spread form of savings society in West Africa known variously as *esusu* or *susu*, *tontine njangi*, *likelemba* etc. Operating details vary but generally seem to have developed from a form of labour sharing and saving in rural areas (Laffite, 1982; Haggeblade, 1978; Mbaye d'Erheville, 1982)

⁵ Farmers interviewed, who declared having copied the formal aspects of town houses were amused when asked if they had requested town house owners to show them around as this was considered not only a breach of privacy but of no interest at all, given the obvious (to them) unsuitability of town house plans

⁶ For example, no one has "chosen" to use asbestos-cement sheet roofing as it has not been commercialised; no one has chosen to build in burnt brick and clay roof tiles or to roof with locally made sisal-cement or bagasse-cement sheets: although the techniques for the former were in use during the German occupation, those for the latter are totally unknown and proposals to experiment what is now a proven technique (ITDG) are normally met with incredulity even among graduates from local building training centres and the town planning and public works staff

⁷ The opportunities to establish sideways, backwards and forwards linkages in the economy in liaison with the realisation of rural water projects, as part of a policy to achieve "health for everyone by the year 2000" are not fully exploited, such as manufacture of plastic pipe as a side product of petrol refining; cast brass or cast aluminium taps by upgraded craftsmen at present making cast aluminium cooking pots; local production of cementitious materials on a small scale; gravel production using simple crushing machine, burnt brick making for storage and settlement tanks and paving around water taps, etc

⁸ Health overseers previously had repressive powers to inflict fines for non respect of building or public health regulations such as the prohibition for growing plantains — a basic food crop in the area — on a residential plot as they harbour mosquito larvae; the resentment of punishment still remains to some extent and health auxiliaries in a rural area try to overcome this by building on their social prestige (requests for white coats as uniform to show they are real health personnel) (Langley, in press; Hours, 1982)

⁹ This is not necessarily a basic obstacle to improvement in housing design as it may be considered as a secondary contradiction among people

¹⁰ Situated in an area with a compact pattern of settlements, the village has some 3500 inhabitants

¹¹ Ufulal: "Let Us Come Out"; this association followed an earlier attempt at youth self-organisation, cutting deliberately across religious boundaries, called "Don't be Surprised"

¹² ENDA = Environment and Development in the Third World, P O Box 3370, Dakar

¹³ A frequent occurrence for technical staff in any field of development activity (agriculture, building, health, social welfare ...) who attempt to promote popular participation in decision-making, is to encounter a response which could be summarised as "you are the person who knows ('*Na masta de qet book*') and therefore you should tell us what to do". Most technicians' reaction to this is to avoid an analysis of the mechanisms which condition such a response and return to technocratic and authoritarian practices

¹⁴ Verbal communication by François Barbier and Pierre-Yves Nicolas. See also Lambal et al. 1982

¹⁵ A danger inherent in the relationship between user groups and the technician is that the latter while believing in the ideology of participation, has not yet been won over to its practice. He not unfrequently finds it difficult to admit that the users know better than he does and even harder to allow the group to take decisions on the formal or technical aspects of the building when the result is not "beautiful" or "logical" according to his own values. He will tend to use his technical know-how to prevent the power of decision being taken out of his own hands (technical mystification) or worse still, unconsciously ally himself and his own power to the person who holds power with the group while continuing to believe that he has really "given the people a chance to speak" (Langley, 1977, p. 54)

¹⁶ A rapid attempt to identify procedures is given here:

- a) State bodies
 - own architectural services: appointment of staff is an important element of nomination procedure
 - short list of private firms
 - retainer fees
 - architects with special status (*Architectes des Palais Nationaux et Monuments Publics*)
 - preselection on preliminary bids
 - two stage competition
 - short listing on view of "dossier"
 - de facto short listing through regular work together
 - choice through recommendations
- b) Private investors with high capital investment (tends to be banking i.e. commercial capital)
 - own architectural services
 - short list of firms through regular working together
 - choice through business contacts
 - sub-contracting to building firms with their own design office (as for industrial buildings)
- c) Private investors with lower capital investment (tends to be family capital in shops, small housing layouts for rent or sale, private schools ...)
 - choice through recommendations of friends, kin or members of the same religious brotherhood
 - sub-contracting to (smaller) building firms (same religious brotherhood) who may in turn sub-contract to an architect or a draughtsman

d) Private investors building to produce use-value and not profit (individual houses, mosque, shops, craft workshop ...)

- technician through friend or kin recommendation
- sub-contracting to smaller builder or master craftsman

It can be noted that (a) and (b) tend to be in central, "modern" areas of the city whereas (c) and (d) tend to be on the periphery. Obviously, however, the reconquest of urban land for use by the better off groups within society often leads to gradually spreading enclaves of (a) and (b) in peripheral areas

¹⁷ Surprising as it may seem, many development staff not only are not trained and not adept at participatory methods but only pay lip-service

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