

**A MASTER PLAN FOR
THE NATIONAL PARK OF ARTS AND
CULTURES
ABUJA, NIGERIA.**

b y

Gabriel Otoide

**A Practicum
Submitted to the University of Manitoba
in partial fulfillment of the
requirement for the degree of
Master of Landscape Architecture**

Winnipeg, Manitoba, 1990



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ABSTRACT

The proposed National Park for Arts and Culture at Abuja has been developed in response to Government ideals for cultural integration and national unity. With Nigeria being a country of very diverse cultures and ecosystems, the need for a forum to celebrate cultural heritage and diversity can not be overemphasized. Therefore, the location of the national park at the new Federal capital city at Abuja was intended to reaffirm the symbolism and social idealism that the new capital stands for in the search for national identity and unity. The site selected for this project presented some unique challenges and assets. Its close association with the cultural and governmental precincts of the new City combined with its strategic location at the terminus of the grand Civic axis provided a reference point to develop design frame work. Synthesis and evaluation of the cultural forms, order and orientation, provided the basic principles of spatial organization, hierarchy and articulation. The program that was developed for the Park called for a number of cultural activities which are both physical and ecological. These activities included:

1. The development of a National Arboretum and Botanical gardens.
2. The War Memorial and Museum.
3. Center for the Celebration of Cultural events.
4. National Arts and Film Center including Museums.
5. Passive recreation park.

The concept that was developed for the master plan provided a framework linkage network for a system of thematic parks. Each thematic park was developed to express a specific theme and symbolism yet related

and unified by spatial geometry, plant massing, paving patterns and surface treatment. It is hoped that when the park is fully developed, it will meet not only the recreational needs of the people of Abuja, but also the cultural aspirations of people of Nigeria in general.

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1.0

INTRODUCTION

1.1 THE BUILDING OF A NATION

"For what is known as Nigeria to day was until the begining of the nineteenth century not a nation. It was composed of vast territory inhabited by people of different linguistic, cultural, ethnic/national,religious groupings, living in their own and separate land mass."¹

The concept of Nigeria Nation was the creation of British Colonialism by joining people from different cultural backgrounds, religions, nationalities and territories into a political entity. The difficulties Nigeria faces as nation can be attributed to the British failure to recognize the vast differences that exist among the various ethnic groups. The British idea of nationalism as it relates to Nigeria neither gave the people a sense of common political unity nor a sense of nationalism. The creation of Nigeria was only formulated to satisfy British economic interest.

I. Okechukwu Ikejiani and M. Odinchezo Ikejiani, Nigeria: Political Imperative, (Enugu, 1986) pp. 54.

Nigeria brings together more people and more ethnically diverse groups than any other nation in Africa. 'The country only came into being as a political unit in 1914 as a result of the amalgamation of the north and southern provinces to form a colony and protectorate of Nigeria.'² The amalgamation brought a large number of people of various cultures and regions together. It was obvious from the beginning of the political association that the task of bringing the 'culturally diverse people' together will be very difficult since there was existing inter-tribal and political conflict among the major tribes who were vying to control the political destiny of the country. Prior to the political marriage imposed by the British colonialist, the northerners were predominantly Moslem, less educated and less receptive of western democratic ideas while the southerners were more educated and more receptive of western ideas. The wide gap in education and social thinking was a catalyst to the alienation between the two regions and their tribes. Apart from the convoluted ethnic diversities and languages, the complexity of the Nigerian political situation was further compounded by religious strife and by the sheer weight of its large population which today is in the excess of 100 million.

Troubled by religious and tribal problems, the newly independent nation was thrown into political turmoil in the course of ruling the country as one entity. The federation found itself in a political dilemma in terms of a balanced regional representation in Government. Regional / tribal politics

2. Sir. Alan Burns, *History of Nigeria* (London, 1969), PP. 16

become the doctrine of gaining political power. In most cases political parties tend to coalesce along tribal and regional lines instead of the normal democratic process- 'emphasis was placed on winning at all costs rather than seeking victory by free competition.'³ The three major tribes namely the Hausa-Fulani, the Yorubas and the Ibos which made up 75% of the population were in essence scrambling for political domination. Undemocratic attitudes combined with a strong determination to maintain a tribal political ruling class have denied the country its much needed aspirations for national unity and political stability required for development. 'Thus Nigeria divided by allegiance to three major tribes though it did form a basis for party alignment, did not do justice to the socio-culture reality.'⁴

When Nigeria became independent in 1960 as a federation, her greatest and most urgent task was to lay a foundation to build national unity among the ethnically diverse people. Following independence, 'it was how to bring about a consolidated nation, how to unite the various ethnic/national, religious and cultural groups and thus build Nigerian nationalism in the presence of Hausa-Fulani, Kanuri, Ibo, Yoruba, Edo, Ibibio, Ijaw ... nationalism and how to unite the Moslem north and the Christian south.'⁵ The Government saw nationalism and unity as a

3. Kenneth Post and Micheal Vickers, *Structure and Conflict in Nigeria* (London,1973), pp. 1

4. David D. Laitin, *Hegemony and Culture* (Chicago, 1986), pp.8

5. O. Ikejiani and M.O. Ikejiani, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 182

fundamental ingredient to national development- industrialization, education and social justice. The Government's views on development was meticulously structured to obtain political stability as the primary building block. The Government contended that economic development such as industrialization and education will only be achieved with a stable political system and national unity. Therefore, Nigeria's cautious and methodical approach to nation building is a conscious effort to create political harmony manifested in a fair and democratic society, filled with national pride and freedom.

From the foregoing description, one can easily deduce that the problem of building a unified country has not been particularly easy in Nigeria. Nigeria by its ethnic composition 'is highly complex state to run.'⁶ The hope for a happy and successful future for the country has not yet been realized as tribal politics, nepotism and corruption have undermined aspiration for national unity. The federal system of Government adopted at the wake of independence in 1960 has not worked well to unite people. The period following Independence has been overwhelmed by internal strife, tribalism, corruption, nepotism, social and political alienation. The federal system based on three regions to simplify political administration complicated matter and made national unity impossible. Regional divisions encouraged regional/tribal based

6. Guy Arnold, *Modern Nigeria (London, 1977), pp.35*

politics which helped re-echo the evils of tribalism. Figure 1 shows the regional divisions of Nigeria as at 1914-1966. At the pace of tribal and regional politics, the re-evaluation of the socio-political systems revealed a very disturbing outlook on the future of the country. First, the constitution adopted from the British was found to be unsuitable and unworkable in Nigerian political context. Secondly, the heterogenous mix of the population makes the transformation of the country into a united, democratic political entity arduous and complicated as respect for tribal sentiment and loyalty overwhelmed that of the nationalism. The resulting political scenerio was the creation of a ruling class dominated by a single tribe or region. Vast arrays of the country's minorities were unrepresented in the day to day affairs of the country. Especially, the peripheral tribes which make up 25 per cent of the population were left out in the political process. At this juncture, 'because of the evils of tribalism and sectionalism, whichever region had control at the centre through its dominant political party would at once be in a position to determine the economic, if not the political, fate of all other regions.'⁷ Tribalism, corruption and regionalism contaminated the country to its core. To administer the country efficiently and fairly require a delicate balance of political and tribal co-operation. In general, it was obvious that something was missing, something that would help to bring the people together as political sovereign nation free from the conflict of tribalism and social disunity.

7. Arthur A. Nwankwo and Samuel U. Ifejika, *The Making of a Nation: Biafra*, (London, 1969), pp. 33

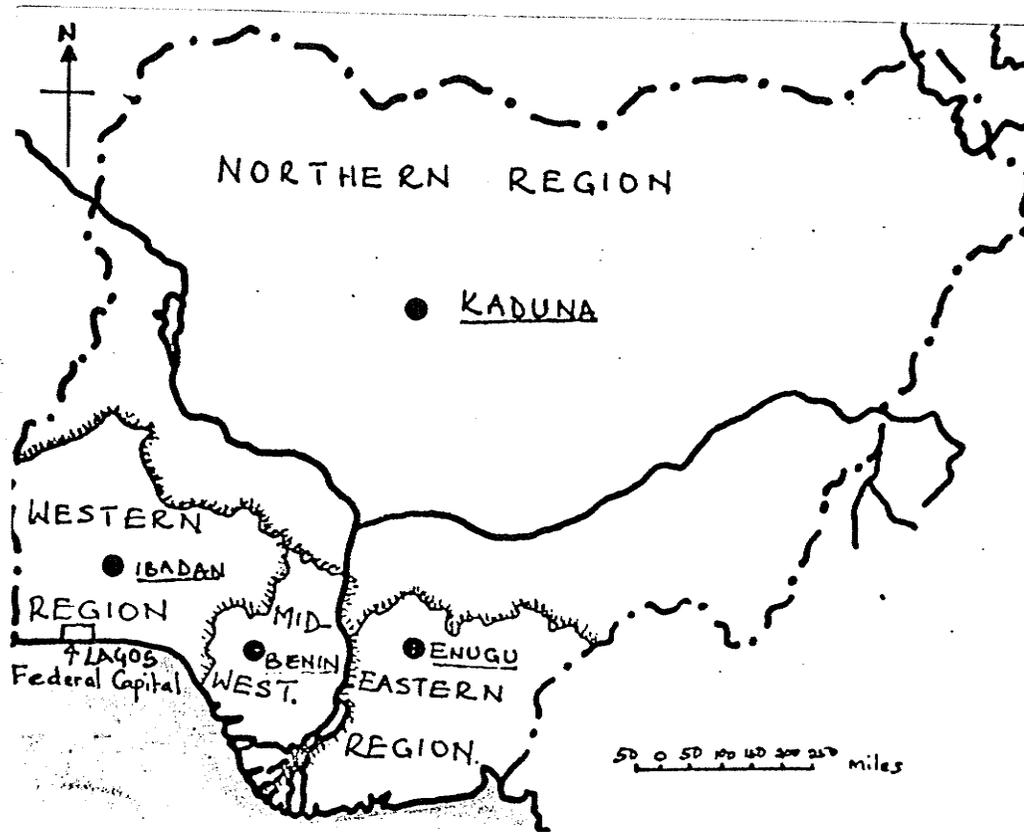


Figure 1. Nigeria Political Regions 1914-1966

Source: *A Descriptive Geography of Nigeria 3rd Ed.*

' Only a political party with a genuine main support in all tribes will help to detribalize politics and make it the promotion of national interest by available power.'⁸

The search for common identity and national unity was reinforced by the Nigerian civil war (Biafra) of 1967-1970. The war was a result of 'long-standing mistrust and mutual suspicion'⁹ among the three dominant tribes

8. Joseph Okapku, *Nigeria: The delima of Nationhood*, (New York,1972), pp. 36

9. Post and Vickers, *Op.,Cit* pp. 3

vying to control the political destiny of the country. The '*coup d'etat*' led by an Ibo army officer which ended the corrupted and tribalized first republic of 1960-1966 exacerbated the northern fears of Ibo dominance. The northerners totally dominated the politics and the administration of the country and desperately wanted the status quo to remain in their favour. Coups and counter coups took place and a power struggle ensued between the Ibos and the northerners. This culminated in violence and inter-tribal killings. The leaders of the Ibo tribe felt unfairly treated and proclaimed independence from Nigeria.

Following the civil war, it was obvious that Nigeria was about to undergo social and political change to dissolve social and tribal disunity; and to put the country in a more democratic structure for her future generations. True and very serious efforts were made by the ruling Military Government to rescue the country from the period of confusion; and to provide a solid base for national unity and reconciliation among the various ethnic groups. The first task under this new system was the drafting of a decree to reorganize the country's political regions. This decree resulted in the dissolution of old political regions and in its place, twelve new states were created to offset regional and tribal based politics, (see Figure 2)

Without a doubt, the experience of the war brought a manifest consciousness and an impetus for the rebirth of nationalism. The emergence of new idealism precipitated from the lessons of the civil war and the need for national reconciliation became inevitable in the face of instability and inter-tribal agitations. A social mobilization programme imbued with some measures to effect a fundamental change in inter-tribal

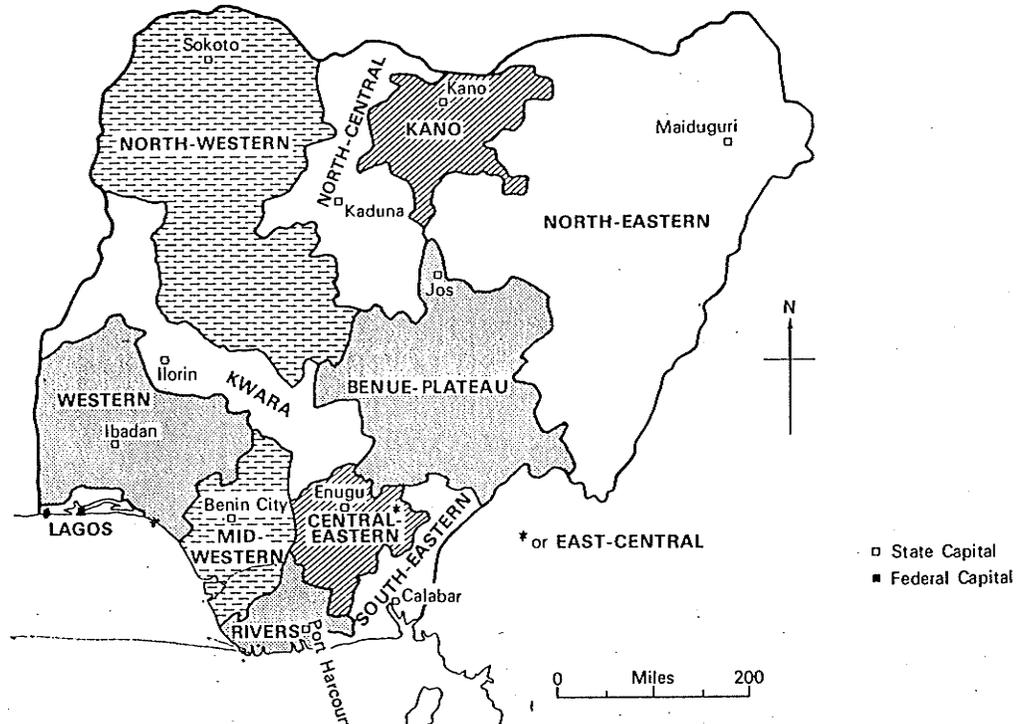


Figure 2. *Nigeria Political Regions 1966- 1975*

Source: *A New Geography of Nigeria*

relationship and also to help chart a co-ordinated idealistic course for the future of the country, was quickly inaugurated by the Government immediately after the civil war. The promotion and the consolidation of the spirit of nationalism as well as the interpolation of the 'ethnically-diverse' cultures were highlighted as the major elements of the programme.

Given that the differences between the peoples are sufficient to lead to instability or conflict, it is obvious that such a nation can only exist if there is a common bond and a kind of transcendental cultural web acting to hold them together. This implies the existence of an open and effective democratic central government which can superimpose its authority with sufficient force to effect a primordial orientation to nationalism instead of

being subservient to tribal loyalty. This can only occur through democratic process with a balanced ethnic representation in Government and also through inter-cultural co-operation. Mobilization from central authority geared towards participation in common economic and cultural systems will yield a fruitful result as long as they are not meant to stir up emotion. A harmonious human relationship can only be achieved when there is trust, fairness and a sense of tribal tolerance.

Nigeria's attempt to correct its political and cultural problems have been undergoing some re-evaluation and emphasis in both cultural and urban redevelopment dimensions since the end of civil war in 1970. Of all the national reconciliation measures undertaken by the Government, special attention was given to the concept of inter-tribal cultural cooperation in arts, music, dance and drama. The social implications of this concept was the realization of the sense of nationalism and identity through inter-cultural co-operations. There was a strongly belief that 'shared cultural identities facilitate collective, for people who share a culture can communicate with each other more easily.'¹⁰ Cultural identity can be used as a vehicle to generate a sense of nationalism. The emphasis laid on this programme resulted in the formation of inter-cultural councils at state and national levels. The task of these councils was to develop a strategy for cultural exchange and interaction. Cultural integration and evolution of a national culture became the cornerstone of the Government efforts to unite the tribally divided country. This programme was also initiated to encourage cultural revival. The first cultural events organized under this

10. Laitin, *Op. Cit.*, pp.11

programme took place in 1973. Since this event was first initiated in 1973, it has grown to become a yearly national event for the celebration of arts, sports and culture-the National festival of arts and culture. Since the National arts festival was first inaugurated as a full fledged national event, it has been undergoing changes to ensure full representation by all the cultural groups in the country. The event is currently being held in Lagos and the permanent site is yet to be determined. The Government's decision to encourage cultural integration has been gaining popularity since it started in 1973. This has become one of the highlights of the Government's achievement in its efforts to sustain national unity. The Government has found roots in the cultural typological systems, and has used them as iconographic instruments to establish a constructive spirit of nationalism.....to create a common ground, and to bridge cultural/tribal differences between the people. This was built on the spiritual concept of a verse in the former national Anthem of Nigeria which says " *the tongue may differ but in brotherhood we stand-----*"¹¹ Source: *Federal Government of Nigeria.*

1.2 THE EVOLUTION OF THE NEW FEDERAL CAPITAL

Beyond the commitment to cultural revival and assimilation, there were specific projects within the concept of social mobilization and national reconciliation designed to address both social and political issues basic to unity and national identity. One such project was the 'draft of a new constitution'. The Richardson Constitution adopted from the British system

11. Federal Government of Nigeria.

was found to be very fragile, vague and unsuitable to the democratic path that Nigeria and its people wanted. The new constitution was to provide some basic fundamental human rights and to ensure a well-balanced representation in government in accordance with the multi-ethnic character of Nigerian population. One of the most important element that was stressed in the new Constitution was the 'relocation of the Federal Capital' in a neutral area, centrally located and free from the dominance of any major tribal groups. The Federal Capital relocation together with the new constitution according to Government, was not only necessary to effect better and efficient administration of the country but also to encourage national integration and to provide a focal point for unity.

After much debate and scouting around the country, the Panel for the relocation of the Federal Capital selected virgin land at Abuja approximately at the center of Nigeria, (see figure 3). The relocation of the Federal capital at Abuja became one of the most ambitious projects undertaken by the government as a gesture of national reconciliation and unity. The relocation of the Federal capital in Nigeria was necessary in order to realize the full potential of nationalism and also to provide energy for national urban development. The Government envisioned a Capital that is 'secure, ethnically neutral, centrally accessible, and possessing ample resources' for future expansion, as a vehicle not only for national unity but also an impetus for urban development. The programme objectives for the location of the new Capital was to fulfill and stimulate a numbers of goals:

- 1.The promotion of national and cultural integration.
- 2.To promote national unity among the people.

- 3.To create a city where Nigerian cultural and ethnic diversities can be celebrated without prejudice.
- 4.To provide a forum where every Nigerian can express their sense of pride and belonging as well as Nigerian citizenship.
- 5.To provide a forum for equal opportunities and for the elimination of linguistic and sectional barriers.
- 6.To create a city that will help promote Nigeria's cultural heritage and symbolism.
- 7.To provide a model that will transform Nigeria's urban development to a sustainable level.

Source: *Federal Government of Nigeria publications*
December1, 1975.

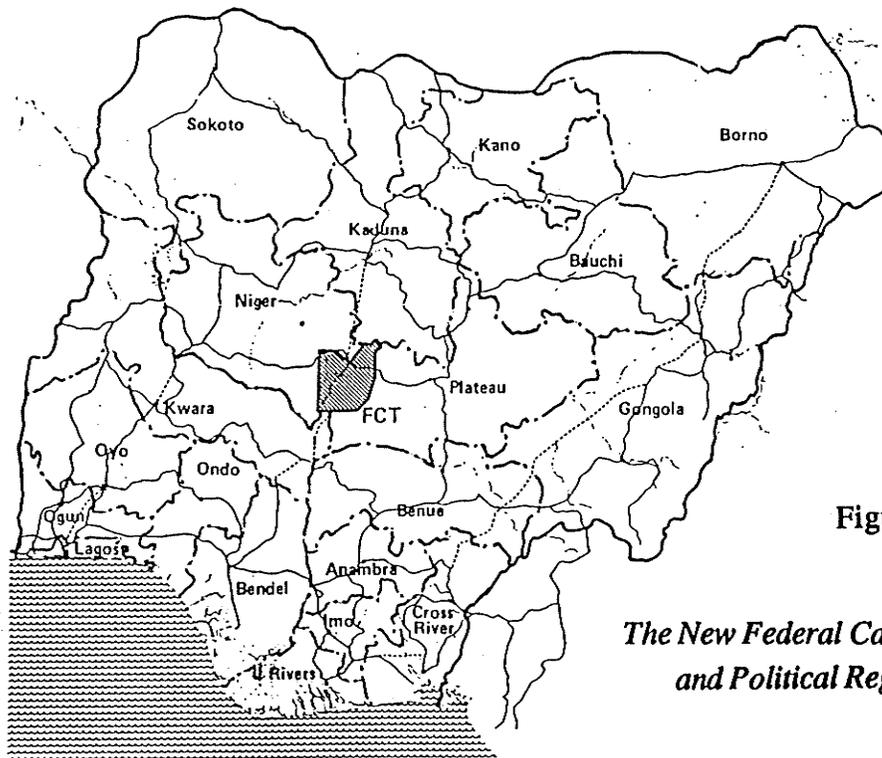


Figure 3.

*The New Federal Capital Territory
and Political Regions 1978*

Source: *Federal Capital Development Authority*

The city of Abuja the new Federal Capital is being built at the foot hills of a semi-circular ring of escarpments and inselbergs, (Figure 4) below.

Figure 4. *The Location of the New Capital city*

Source: *Federal Capital Development Authority*
The Master Plan for Abuja The New Federal Capital of Nigeria



The location of the new capital in a less populated area at the center of the country, is very ideal not only to eliminate the duplication of political functions but also to remove the legacy of a tribal city, both problems which complicated the suitability of Lagos to express the multi-ethnic character of Nigeria. Lagos is a Yoruba-dominated coastal city far from the hinterland. Its dual functions as State and Federal Capital complicates its validity to express national image. At the center of the country, the capital will provide a physically equal access to all the states as well as provide opportunity to express the richness and the gaiety of the Nigerian peoples and landscapes. Thus, the celebration of culture, political

symbolism and site heritage was a strong theme in the design and layout of the master plan, (see figure 14)

1.3 STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

It is within the context of the new capital symbolism imbued with social, political and cultural idealism that the development proposal for this practicum will be conducted. A nation that needs development must build its foundations from the strength of unity and stability. The constitutional mandate for the new capital will provide a framework to build a united and 'egalitarian nation'. The development of a Cultural Park at Abuja, especially at a strategic location in the capital city, will help to realign the country to the path of nationalism. The major objective of this study is to provide a place for inter-cultural expressions and opportunities to celebrate the heritage and cultures of the peoples of Nigeria. The location and design of the Cultural Park will be based on following ideas:

- 1.To provide a forum to celebrate Nigerian history and cultural heritage.
- 2.To provide a linkage system in recreation, culture, art, aesthetic and education.
- 3.To provide an area that is expressive of Nigerian national heritage, symbolism and cultural landscape.
- 4.To provide a forum to effect national redemption and subsequently to produce unity among the people.
- 5.To provide permanent site for the National arts and cultural festival.

National unity can only be achieved through trust and cultural understanding. The establishment of a national cultural park will provide a promising base for cultural linkage to build national unity and the feeling of common identity.

1.4 STUDY METHODOLOGY

The strategy employed for this study involved several critical components and steps which provided the analytical framework for the design. The procedures consisted three phases- Survey, Analysis, Design Development and eight components, (see figure 5)

1. (a) Historical Background
(b) The evolution of the New Capital.
2. (a) Cultural analysis.
 - I. Ethnic and cultural composition
 - II. Ecological composition
 - III. Urban typology
3. Site analysis and evaluation.
4. Environmental analysis
5. Programme developments.
6. Site design elements.
7. Design principles
8. The concept Master Plan.

All these components interact to provide the basic principles for the design of the proposed Cultural Park. Each component of the flow chart is briefly described below:

PHASE 1 - SURVEY

1. **HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**-tribal and political evolution, key issues and problems, the birth of nationalism and the development of the new Capital Territory at Abuja, Abuja in national context, and the master plan concept. The study area analysis and the study methodology are part of the phase 1 synthesis.

2. **THE EVOLUTION OF THE CAPITAL** -Analysis of the physical and environmental context. Analysis of the design components of the new capital.

3. **CULTURAL ANALYSIS**

a) **ETHNIC AND CULTURAL COMPOSITION**- The structures and tribes in the Nigerian cultural systems. The major cultural groups in the regions of the North, South and the Middle Belt are identified. These Groups include: the Hausa-Fulani, the Kanuri in the Northern sahel region; the Yorubas, the Benin, the Ibos, the Ibibio, the Efik, the Ijaw and the Calabaris of the southern regions; the Nupes, the Tiv, the Gwari, the Lopawa, Kamberi and Munshin e.t.c. of the Middle Belt. Key features of each tribe are identified including urban forms, social organizations, religions and art symbolisms. Important cultural events are also included in the analysis.

b) **ECOLOGICAL COMPOSITION**- Review of the character of the Nigerian ecosystems-Tropical rain forest, Savannah and Semi arid Sahel environments.

c) **URBAN TYPOLOGY**- Review of the traditional urban patterns. Three

prototypes are identified which include: the Forest, the Savannah and the Colonial/New Towns prototypes.

PHASE- 2 ANALYSIS

1. **STUDY SITE ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS**- Soil, climate, topography and vegetation of the new capital region and the study area in particular.

2. **PROGRAMME DEVELOPMENTS**-Activities, Symbolisms, culture and education and Survey of plant materials. Review of cultural systems in relation to the programme requirements for the Cultural park and its tangible socio-political implications.

3. **SITE DESIGN ELEMENTS**-Human and environmental elements-the Aso hill, the surrounding cultural landscapes, historic urban forms and geometry .

4. **DESIGN PRINCIPLES**-The process and ordering systems in the selection of forms, geometry, orientation, relationship and materials.

PHASE- 3 DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

1. **The concept Master Plan**-This plan illustrates the programs in conceptual forms basic to the celebration of cultural events. It encompasses various cultural activities and symbolisms.

FLOW CHART

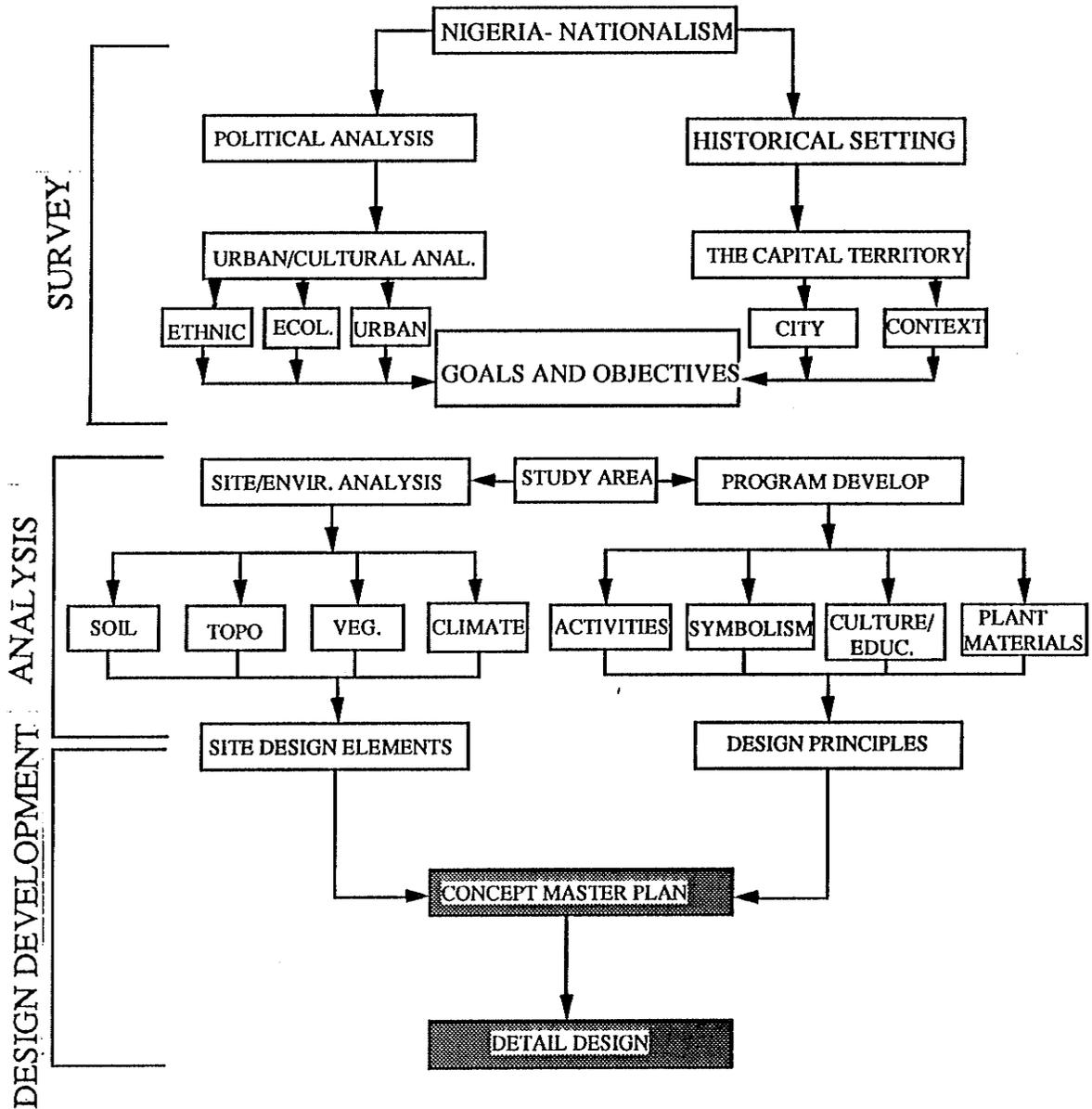


FIGURE 5

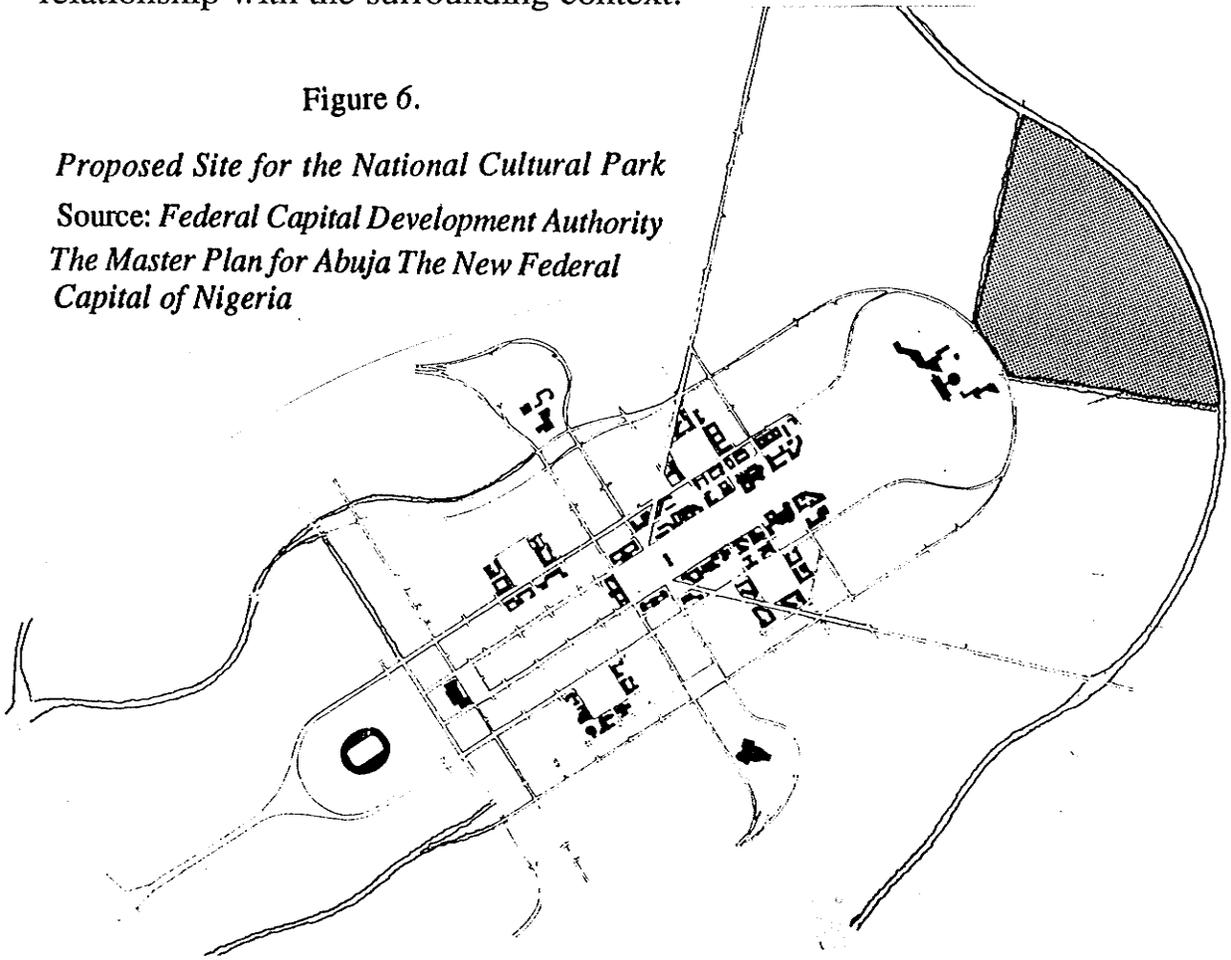
1.5

STUDY AREA

The area chosen for the development of the National Park is the fan-shaped terminus on the north-eastern portion of the central axis between the National Assembly and the magnificent Aso hill. Figure 6 shows the site in relationship with the surrounding context.

Figure 6.

Proposed Site for the National Cultural Park
Source: Federal Capital Development Authority
The Master Plan for Abuja The New Federal
Capital of Nigeria



This site covers about 80 hectares of forest and parkland savannah surrounded by dramatic scenery of natural landmarks and symbolic national institutions. Generally the site lends itself to the most beautiful and the most important natural feature in the city. It is wedged and embraced by a horse-shoe mountain range which forms a dramatic backdrop to the city and

the site in particular. This area also constitutes the most important cultural and political hub in the Capital. It is within the vicinity of the National Assembly grounds and its supporting Legislative buildings, the Executive offices, the Presidential palace, the Supreme Courts, Ministries and Cultural institutions. The site is connected by the Northern expressway and two diagonal roads from the forecourt of the National Assembly.

In the master plan of the city of Abuja, this area was designated for the development of National Arboretum and Botanical Gardens, both of which fit into the educational and recreational values of a Cultural Park. The location of a Cultural park at this site not only will fit into the concept of the Government's intentions for the site but also will help to generate energy for national unity. Thus, the site as a Cultural Park will provide a context for the physical embodiment of the Nigerian cultural heritage and a focal point for national integration. The site was chosen based on the following criteria:

1. Its proximity to major political and cultural institutions.
2. Accessibility from residential and commercial districts.
3. Its relationship with the seat of Government-National Assembly, the executive Mansion and cultural institutions
4. Its strong visual and axial relationship with the most prominent and most important features around the site- the Aso hill.

5. Its rich ecosystems that represents a wide range cultures and environment.

6. Its position within a zone where national and cultural integration can easily be manifested.

Source: Report of the Committee on the location of the Federal Capital of Nigeria. Federal Republic of Nigeria. December 1, 1975.

The most important asset of the site is inherent in its visual accessibility with the surrounding cultural institutions and the natural elements. The site formed a harmonious visual and physical linkage between the Government precinct and the natural setting-a reminder to the government the essence of environmental consciousness and sustainable developments.



Figure 7. *North-east view to the Site with Aso Hill in the Background*



Figure 8. View to Aso hill from the site



Figure 9. Small lake on the North-west corner of the site



Figure 10. View of parkland Vegetation on the North-west corner

1.6

SITE ANALYSIS

1.6.1 CLIMATE

The climate of the study area does not differ very much from the rest of the Federal Capital Territory and the Middle Belt in general. The site lies within the Nigerian climatic zone of tropical continentality of high temperature and moderate rainfall. Like the rest of the Country, the climate of the Federal Capital Territory is dominated by the movement of two seasonal airmasses- the warm and moist South-westerly maritime air mass (April-October) and the warm and dry North-easterly airmass (November-March). The movement of these airmasses north and south have a great impact in seasonal variations in temperature, rainfall and cloudcover (Figure 11). The movement of these airmasses results in two identifiable climatic seasons:

a) Rainy season -April to October

b) Dry season -November to March.

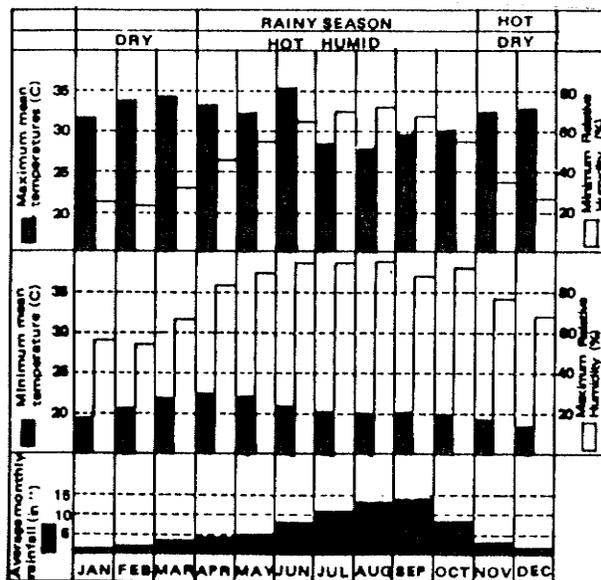


Figure 11.
Mean monthly Temperature,
Humidity and Rainfall.

Source: Federal Capital Development Authority.

1.6.1.1 RAINY SEASON

Rainfall in the study area is very moderate in terms of total annual accumulation which usually occurs when the moisture laden maritime south-westerly wind is dominant from April - October. At this time, the influence of the dry and hot North-easterly wind is centered over the Sahara desert. The total annual accumulation of rainfall is about 165cm which mostly falls in the months of July, August and September.

In general, there are 180-190 rain days annually; most of it occurs during the rainy season. During this period, the temperature is very moderate and usually registers within the range of 27-30 degrees centigrade. Diurnal recorded temperature averages at this time of the year are 7 degrees centigrade.

1.6.1.2 DRY SEASON

Dry season in the study area usually last between 5-6 months from November to March. During this period, the dry dusty North easterly airmass is dominant. Temperature is very high usually in the range of 35-38 degrees centigrade. Diurnal average temperature is also very high usually in the range of about 17-18 degrees centigrade. The more or less cloudless skies associated with this season are responsible for the sharp differences between day and night temperatures. This difference accounts for the high diurnal temperature record. The seasonal variations in temperature and rainfall are indicated in the chart below.

Apart from the above general climatic pattern, this particular section of the Capital city has a micro-climatic condition caused by the surrounding

mountain ranges and 'inselbergs'. The air disturbance caused by the mountains account for the frequent orographic and relief rainfalls experienced within the vicinity of Aso Hill and its immediate surroundings. The effect of this micro-climatic condition is responsible for the unique patterns of ecological varieties that exist in the study area. These vegetation patterns range from Swamp forest to Rainforest and savannah. Refer to figure 12 for detail.

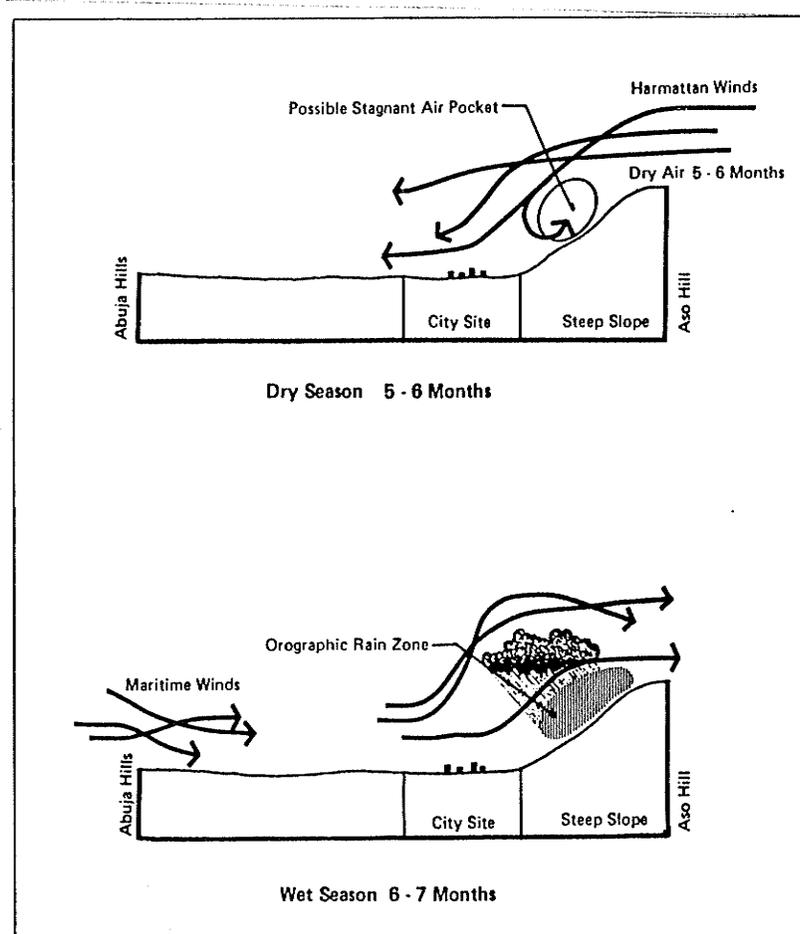


Figure 12. *Seasonal Wind Patterns.*
Source: *Federal Capital Development Authority*

1.6.2 SOIL/GEOLOGY

Although detailed soil information of the study area is not available, a general soil characteristic of adjacent land combined with physical observation should provide sufficient background to develop a general soil profile for this study. With the exception of some rocky areas, the soils in the majority of the study area are typically deep. The soils are also generally well drained and very fertile with a great potential for plant growth. The differences in soil types is the result of the differences in the geological content of the area. The most dominant geologic formations can be classified into three categories: a) granite, b) migmatitic gneiss and c) mica schist. These bedrock materials are covered by thick laterite deposits and other soils in most places. Local factors are responsible for variations in soil depth, stone or clay content, existence of iron pans, texture, erodibility factor and run-off potential.

It is important to note that the greatest cause of soil variation here is the influence of the river system. Permanent water resources in the site consist of the two river systems- River Digb and River Kupa. These rivers and their tributaries transverse the study area in a North-east to South-west direction in two sections. The soils can be loosely classified into four categories based on texture and the constituent parent materials over which they occur.

1. Ferruginous soils: This soil type consist varying texture usually loamy sand to sandy clay loam. Medium depth and well drained. This soil has moderate erodability and run-off potential. Underlying horizon is basically laterite soils with

some iron pan that impede drainage. The reddish laterite soils are often exposed in disturbed area.

2. Ferralitic soils occur in some lower lying areas under forest cover. These soils are highly fertile, deep and well drained.

3. Hill and rock complex soils occur in rocky areas both granite and migmatitic sections. They are shallow and well drained. The textures are stony or gravelly sand with some sandy loam. They have great potential for run-off.

4. Alluvial soils occur in valleys throughout the site with flood plains up to 60-70m in width. The Alluvial soils consist of various combination, of sand, silt, and clay and sometimes gravel. These soils are derived from the erosion of parent bedrocks and laterite elements. The soils presented here are very general and lack specific distribution patterns.

Source: *Interpreted from the landscape report for the Federal Capital Development Authority.*

1.6.2.1 TOPOGRAPHY

The topography of the study area consists of gently undulating sections interspersed by well pronounced wooded river channels and valleys. The general lay of the land shows a rise in elevation from south-west to north-east with the Aso hill at the highest point. The visual relationship between the site and the hill can be used as a design feature. In general, there is an absence of well pronounced rock outcrops. The site contains no physical constraint preventing development.

1.6.3 VEGETATION

The general characteristic of the vegetation is that of a park savanna except in the river valleys where there are large patches of forest or wooded areas. The profile of the vegetation can be divided into four major categories:

- 1.The Riverine Forest vegetation
- 2.Rainforest vegetation
- 3.Parks savanna vegetation
- 4.Mountain vegetation

The Riverine vegetation occurs on the low level sections of streams and river banks. This vegetation type can be further classified into two major groups:

- 1.Riparian vegetation. This subtropical ecotype has many large trees often with buttresses. Other vegetation types include palm, undergrowth of

shrubs, bamboos, epiphytes and lianas.

2. Raphial vegetation: Common species are: swamp forest or raphial vegetation. other vegetation species occurring at this section include palms, bamboo, and herbs. Common species: *Pandanus candelabrum*, *Raphia vinifera*, *Raphia rufia* and *Elaeis guineensis*.

1.6.3.1 RAIN FOREST ECOLOGY

This forest ecotype occurs in some humid areas and is mainly composed of fast growing trees typical of the equatorial rain forest zone of southern Nigeria. This vegetation type consists of different levels of canopies some towering up to 30- 45 meters. Undergrowth is sparse consisting only of young trees. The most dominant species here are: *Terminalia superba*, *Antiaris africana*, *Terminalia ivorensis*, *Anthocleista nobilis*, *Ceiba pentandra*, *Dracaena arborea*, *Cola gigantea*, *Khaya grandifolia*, *Chlorophora excelsa*.

1.6.3.2 THE PARK SAVANNAH

The parkland savannah is a stratified plant community of deciduous trees, shrubs and grasses. There are few evergreen plants with the exception of some succulents. Ground vegetation is mainly herbaceous; usually grasses.

Morphologically the park savannah consists of thick, tall, green layers of *Andropogon*, *Hyparrhesia* species and a shrub layer of *Terminalia*,

Philostigna, Amoua, Nauolea and Boulax. Ceneby species include Albiza, Butryrospernum, Daniella and Parkies.

1.6.3.3 MOUNTAIN VEGETATION.

This ecosystem consist of light adapted species of plants. The most important plant species are grasses and low shrubs. Common species types include: Adropogon gayanous.

2.0 THE NATIONAL AND REGIONAL CONTEXT OF THE NEW CAPITAL

2.1 PHYSICAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONTEXT

The new Capital Territory at Abuja is located roughly in the geographical center of Nigeria. The 8,000 square kilometre territory lies in a region of the Middle belt relatively inhabited or sparsely populated. The Capital city is being developed on a crescent of the Gwagwa plain in the north-eastern section. The new Territory is surrounded by three states namely, Niger State, Plateau State, Kaduna State from which the territory was carved out. Figure 3 shows the centrality of the new Capital Territory relative to Nigeria geographical context.

The Territory lies north of the low lying sections of the Niger/ Benue river valleys and below the Sahel savanna or the semi arid region of northern Nigeria. The Physical feature of the Territory consist of undulating low mountain ridges with large rock knobs or inselberg of massive proportions rising upto elevations over 2,000 feet. An extension of the Jos plateau also over-ran the territory creating large broad plains intermixed by low mountain ranges. These series of mountains ranges formed the watershed for the numerous streams and rivers that transverse the territory. The most important rivers providing portable water to the new city are River Gurara, River Usman, River Robo, River Mangol, River Itsu, River Iku, River Yewu, Kanama River and Afara-Bokwoi River. Figure 13. illustrates physical features of the New Capital city.

The physical characteristics of the territory shows a general rise in elevation from the south-west to north- east and the geology consist of that

of a tilted plain. In general, the landscapes and physical features are the extensions of that of the surrounding regions.

Source: *Federal Capital Development Authority*
The Master Plan for Abuja The New Federal Capital of Nigeria

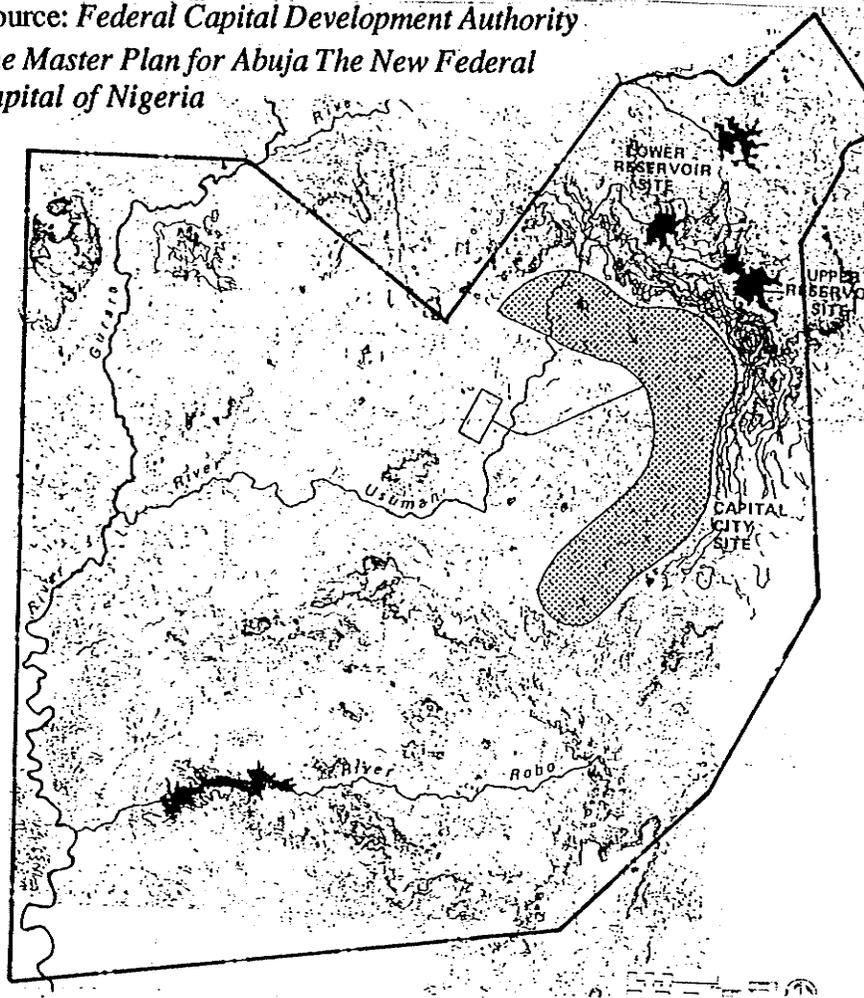


Figure 13. *Physical and Environmental Context of the Capital Site.*

The New Capital City is being served by four major road networks and numerous feeder roads from the north, south, east and west. The territory enjoys easy access from every part of Nigeria. Many highways that were included in the Capital master plan are being implemented and others are being planned. While the Territory enjoys regular air service, however, there are no water transportation and rail services.

2.2 ABUJA IN NATIONAL CONTEXT.

The development of the city of Abuja as the new Federal Capital signified an important milestone in the national effort to unify the culturally diversified people of Nigeria. For the people of Nigeria, Abuja symbolizes the renaissance of cultural and political realignment and the dawn of a new era in urban modernization process. It is within the context of this effort and aspirations for national development that the master plan was generated. According to the planners, 'the new capital city must be designed to project the physical image embodied in the national goals for unity and a viable urban environment for the administration of the country.'¹² Therefore, the master plan concept was developed from a combination of cultural, environmental and site resources. The plan evolved from the analysis of physical and environmental factors of the site including special design features based on the traditional urban patterns. Like most of the traditional historic cities, the location of the seat of Government was made to reinforce its authority and presence. The essence of emphasizing the symbolic presence of the Government at the center of political, social and cultural affairs of the new Capital was one of the special considerations for the design and spatial organization of the city. Hence the National government precinct is located at the strategic terminus of the grand axis and at higher elevation overlooking the city. Its symbolic presence was further articulated and reinforced by its alignment on the central axis with the monumental Aso hill. In general the design of the city is well structured to

12. Federal Capital Development Authority, (Abuja) Febuary 15, 1979.

reflect the important institutions and landscapes. It is essentially based on a combination of functions, tradition, environmental factors and western urban grid. Manifestation of traditional forms and expressions in spatial and open space organizations is exemplified by the nucleated arrangements of the residential districts. Figure 14 shows the master plan of the City.

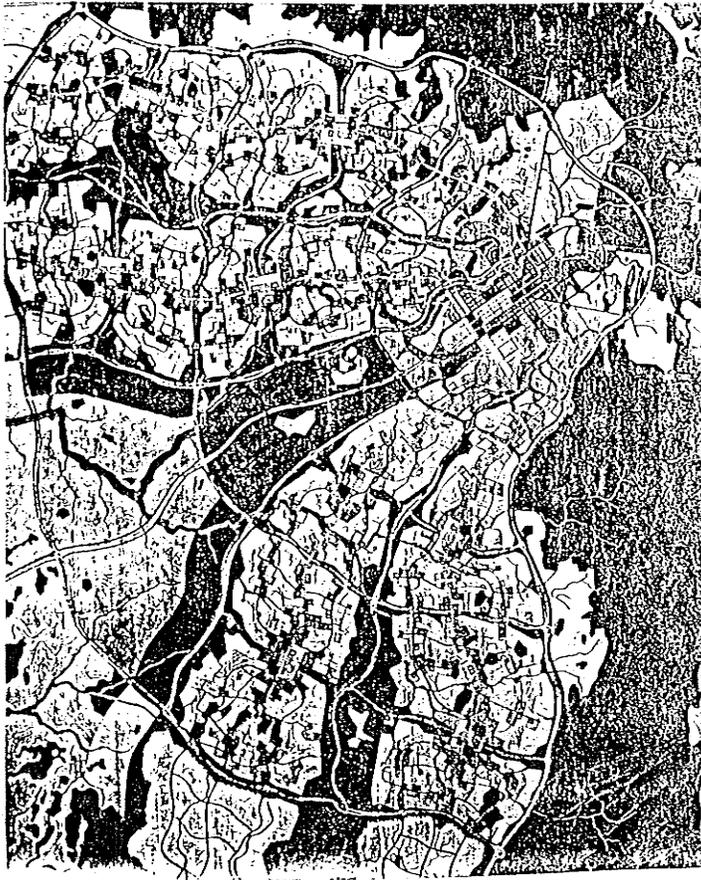


Figure 14.
The Master Plan of Abuja.

*Source: Federal Capital Development Authority
The Master Plan for Abuja The New Federal
Capital of Nigeria*

2.3 THE COMPONENTS OF THE MASTER PLAN

The basic structure of the master plan of the new Capital consist of a very broad central axis which contain the seat and supporting arms of the Government, the cultural and business institutions; and two wings of

highly structured residential zones which run south-east and west of the central axis. The remaining areas are greenbelts of recreational corridors, parkway systems and natural reserves. The central objective of the master plan was to exploit the site design elements such as the magnificent Aso hill to create spatial and visual order as well as to reinforce the locations of important institutions. The imposition of a grand axis focussed on the Aso hill provided the fundamental structure for the design and spatial organization of the city. The structure of the central axis is essentially a grided mall of cultural, political and business institutions arranged in a sequential order of functions and hierarchy. The political segment of the mall are located in a strategic area adjacent to the Aso hill overlooking the city. In essence, the structure of the city is comparable to that of a bird with Aso hills, the terminal point of the central axis as the head, the central axis as the body, the two residential zones as the wings and the tail tapers-off forming the airport zone. (Figure 14)

The site of the Capital city is located in a crescent plain at the foot of a semi-circular ring of high escarpment and low mountain ranges. The mountain ranges formed a northerly shield on the city thereby providing a very strong visual edge and focal point from all sections of the city. These rings of escarpment provided some of the starting points for the design concept and spatial organization. The highest point among the chains of mountains is the Aso hill, an enormous rocky inselberg of granite which rises more than 935 metres above sea level. This hill formed the most visual and the most dominant features of the landscape surrounding the city. (figure 7). According to the planners, the forceful shape of the low mountains ranges and particularly the commanding position of the Aso hill

was exploited as a major design element in the organization of the key institutions in the city. The grand axis aligned the seat of the Government and most of the cultural institutions to the Aso- Hill.

2.3.1 THE CENTRAL AXIS AND THE GOVERNMENT PRECINCT

In order to create a focal point for the government, the location of the Legislative body - the National Assembly was thoughtfully identified and designed to reflect its omnipotent presence and symbolism. Its location at the foot of the Aso hill overlooking the city was therefore, to reinforce and evoke her authority over the land and beyond. To symbolize the relationship of the hill and the Government precinct, a strong linear axis was overlaid and developed into what subsequently became the grand central axis- a design feature which anchored the spatial components of city to the surrounding landscape. All the important symbolic elements of the city are located along this axis in alignment with the Aso hill which forms a natural monument overseeing the city. The organization of the central axis is based on an orderly sequence of spaces which begins with the natural element- the Aso hill, the seat of the government including ministerial and cultural institutions, the Judicial, Municipal, markets, business, health institutions and sports. These various areas are sandwiched and linked by parks and parkway systems.

A few metres from the base of the Aso hill, an area at the head of the central axis is the site designated for the national Arboretum. This site forms a transition zone between the magnificent hill and the seat of the

Government and its supporting buildings. It is this area that is being considered for the development of a cultural park in my practicum proposal. Detail descriptions of the site has already been outlined under the topic "study area". The national Assembly and the supporting institutions formed the next node of spatial organization transversing the central axis. The national Assembly is flanked in both north and south by the residences of the President, the Vice-President and their guest houses. The National Assembly is also buffered from the Judicial and other institutions by a large greenbelt of park. A sequence of open space link one specific designated area to another. (Figure 15)

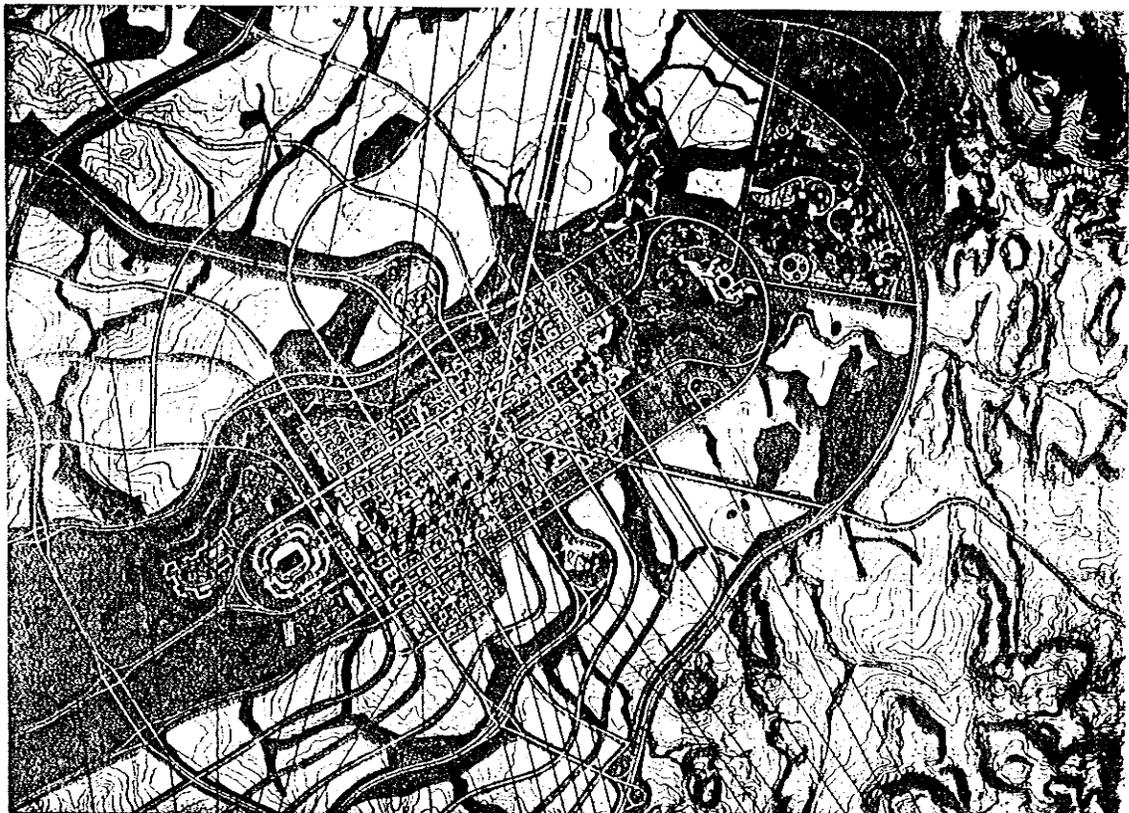


Figure 15. *The Central Axis.*

Source: *Federal Capital Development Authority*
The Master Plan for Abuja The New Federal
Capital of Nigeria

2.3.2 RESIDENTIAL ZONE

The layout of the residential districts shows a series of mini-cities of neighbourhood nodes or subnodes. The design though modern, reflects Nigerian urban tradition. The concept according to the planners is based on Nigerian heterogenous mix of culture and ethnic typomorphology. The neighbourhood pattern is planned to absorbed population growth and to also discourage ghettoization or tribal oriented settlement of clans and kinship. The planners think that the planned neighbourhood units will help to provide a "texture of physical organization and social identification". Therefore, the diverse mixture of housing and neighbourhood are seen as a vehicle to better cultural contact while providing sufficient allowance to express individuality. See figure 16 for residential organization. Generally, the concept addresses and makes reference to traditions and at the sametime provide some stimulation to the central goal of national unity which Nigeria needs in order to develop.

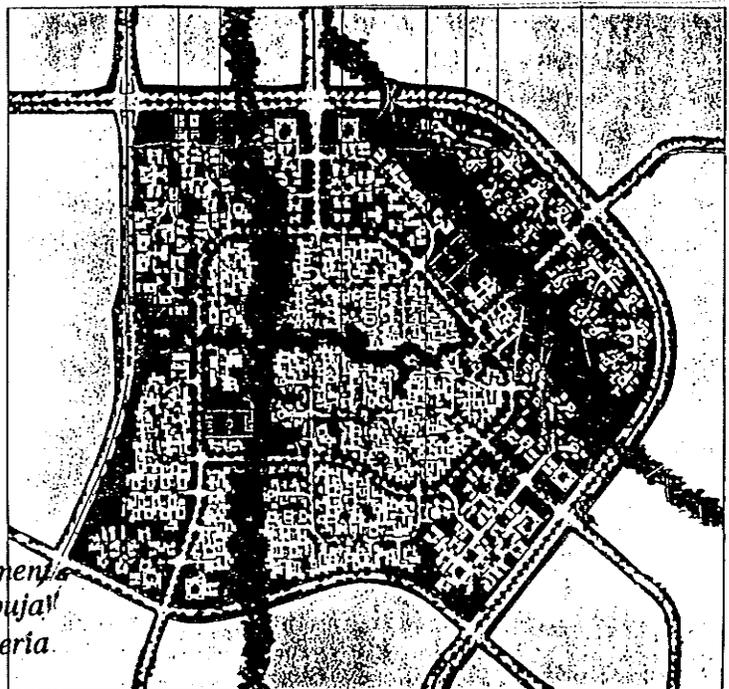


Figure 16.

*Typical Residential
Neighbourhood Plan*

*Source: Federal Capital Development
Authority The Master Plan for Abuja
The New Federal Capital of Nigeria.*

2.3.3. THE ROAD SYSTEMS

Basically the road network forms a series of loops and transportation spines that tranverse the city. Many parkway systems are also used as design elements to provide visual recreation along the routes. Figure 17.

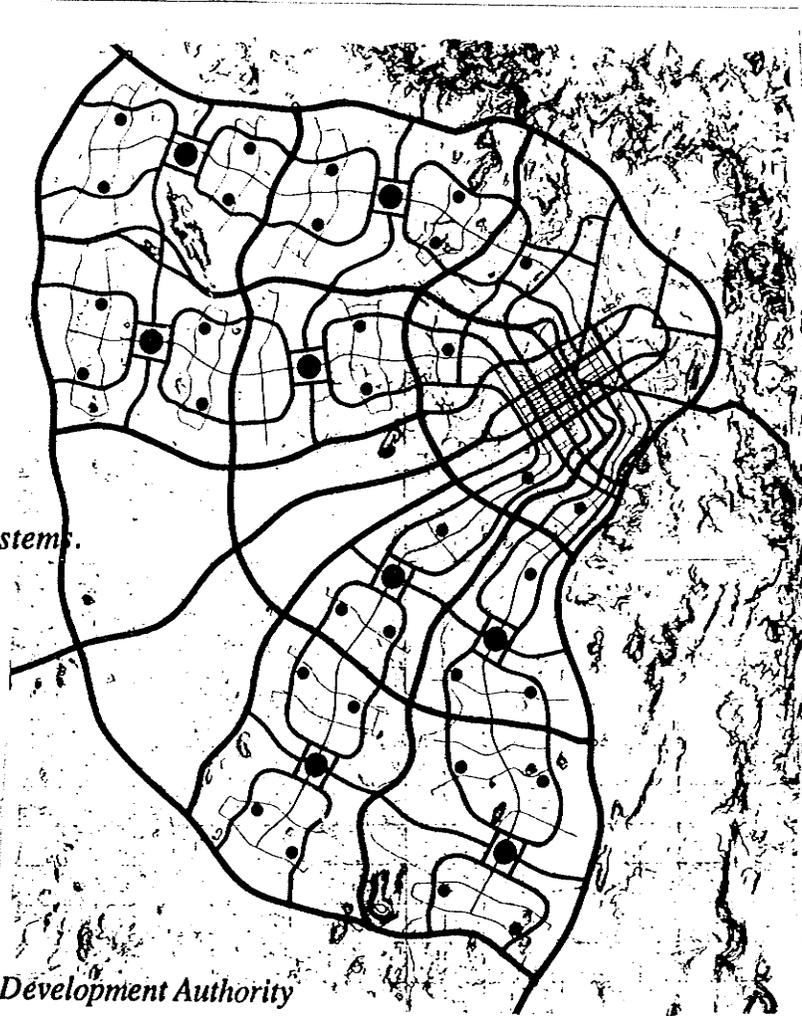


Figure 17.
Roads and Highway Systems.

Source: *Federal Capital Development Authority*
The Master Plan for Abuja The New Federal

2.3.4 GENERAL LAND USE ANALYSIS

The land use system is designed to highlight and reflect functional differentiation-the Government sector, Cultural sector, Business Sector, Sport sector and Residential sectors. The park and green spaces are well dispersed in form of neighbourhood units. Figure 18.



Figure 18. Land use and Land Development Nodes.

**Source: Federal Capital Development Authority
The Master Plan for Abuja The New Federal
Capital of Nigeria**

3.0. THE CONCEPT OF CULTURE

3.1. CULTURE AS A POINT OF DEPARTURE

In order to provide a design that will fit Nigerian multi-cultural character, it is important to provide broadbased information on the structure and socio-cultural systems of its people. The Nigerian population of more than 100 million contain a very diverse ethnic groups. Statistics have shown that more than 250 ethnic groups exist in the country with some groups numbering less than 10,000 people. Although Nigeria is not yet under the pressure of overpopulation, however, her population growth is out stripping its land area. With a population of over 100 million and a relative land area of only 923,768 sq. kilometres, it is one of the most densely populated countries in Africa.

In contrast to the industrialized western countries, Nigeria is still a rural country in many respects. A majority of its people live in rural settings with a ratio of 1:3 relative to the urban and rural population. Just like its ethnic multiplicity, Nigeria has a wealth of environmental and ecological systems ranging from the mangrove swamp forest and rain forest in the south to the Guinea savannah and the semi arid sahel savannah of the far north. It is within the context of the sociological, environmental and traditional implications that the cultural analysis will be conducted. In this part of the analysis, I will examine cultural aspects of social formation, religion and beliefs, customs, arts and settlement patterns or traditional urban typology. It is hoped that the cultural review will provide a necessary foundation to develop a concept for this study. However, before we look at the detailed cultural picture of Nigeria, it is important to make a

broad definition of the concept of "culture".

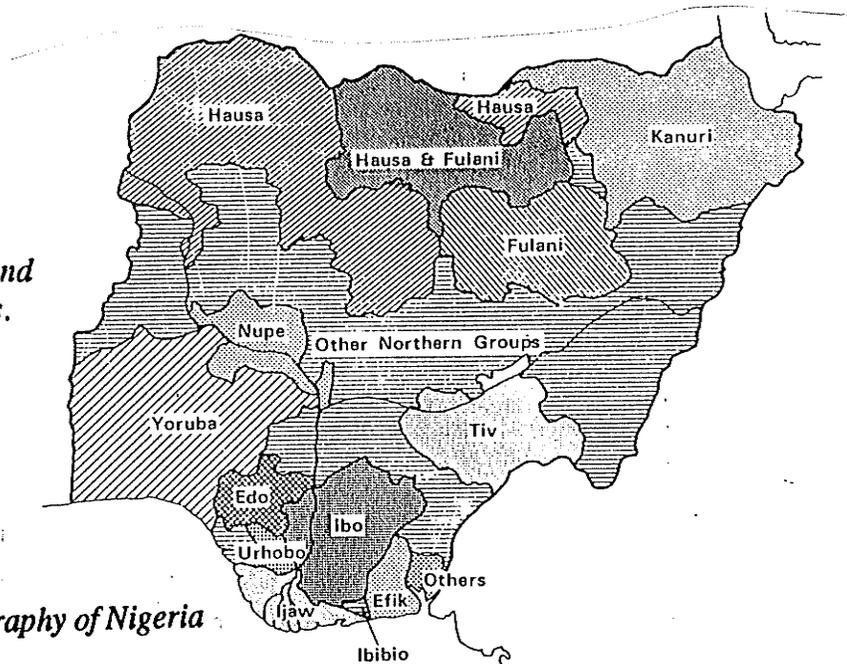
In a paper presented in Lagos symposium on Nigerian culture, Professor Adamu Mahdi of University of Sokoto defined culture as 'the totality of the way in which the people of a country or an ethnic group articulate their values and skills.'¹³ (*African Concord* May 3, 1988) He contends that only when the vast majority of the people accept these various cultural traits as theirs, can a country be said to have a culture of its own. Therefore, in its most simplistic definition culture mirrors a nation, its beliefs, arts, knowledge, morals, way of life, heritage values and the history of its people. Culture echoes the concept of humanity, social behaviour and inter-personal relationships. It is a complex phenomenon both common to all societies and yet helping to delineate one society from another. The products of a culture are determined by the constituents of its organizational structures, its richness and variety as well as its level of exchange and interaction with other societies. Like the universal laws of nature, the concept of culture can only be understood by acquainting oneself with the realities it exhibits. The interaction can be achieved through inter-cultural exchange in arts, music, dances and theatres.

13. Oguntayo A. and Igbeare F., *Mirror of a Nation: NIFEST 88, The African Concord Magazine (Lagos), May 3, 1988, p.42-49*

3.2 ETHNIC AND CULTURAL COMPOSITION

Nigeria's location at the crossroad of the continent of Africa and its favourable economic conditions and diverse environments encouraged the migration of various peoples into the territory for centuries. As a result, the present day cultural patterns show a richness and diversity uncommon in many other countries. A profile of the country cultural systems shows a mosaic of regional and ethnic based patterns. The regional based patterns are functions of ethnic composition, historical and social evolution as well as the influence of the surrounding environment. A combination of these factors are responsible for the varieties of cultures and peoples that abound in the country. They formed the differential cleavage between each region and culture. They also help to distinguish cultural varieties in terms of 'language, customs, dress, hair styles and general way of life'¹⁴. A broad view of Nigeria's cultural/tribal distribution is given in figure 19 and table 1. below.

Figure 19.
Nigerian Ethnic and Cultural Regions.



Source: *A New Geography of Nigeria*

14. Ileoje N.P., *A New Geography of Nigeria*, (Ibadan, 1965) pp.4

The cultural mosaic reveals core areas/regions of highly organized economic and social development, high population density and high degree of ethnic homogeneity, and fringe zones of low economic activities, sparse population and more varied ethnic composition. Based on the ethnic composition, the environment and way of life, four regions are easily discernable. These are: (1) the Northern social group of highly organized Islamic emirates. This area is within the Sahel Savannah zone (2) the Yoruba kingdoms and city-states of the south-west. These tribal group of people live within the Rain Forest zone of the South (3) the politically fragmented peoples of the Middle Belt. This region dominated by the Guinea Savannah, also formed the dividing line between the Southern and the Northern regions. (4) the small democratic societies of the Ibos on the central and Eastern fringes of the River Niger. The cultural groups in each of the identified regions consist of the following: the Hausa-Fulani and Kanuri of the North; the Nupe, Tiv, Gwari and Munshin of the middle belt; the Yoruba and Igbira of the west, the Edo, Urhobo and of the south central; the Ibo, Ibibio and Efik of the east; the Ijaw and Calabari of the Niger delta. Apart from these major tribes, there are other numerous indigenous minor tribes which form a mosaic of distinctive cultural and linguistic classes within the population.

TABLE 1

NIGERIA CULTURAL REGIONS AND ITS PEOPLES

<u>REGION</u>	<u>CULTURAL GROUPS</u>
<u>The Northern sahel</u>	Hausa, Fulani, Shuwa Arabs, the Kanuri, Margi, Gamergu, Mangas.
<u>The middle belt</u>	Tiv, Nupe, Igala, Idoma, Gwari, Igbirra
<u>The south-western</u>	The Yoruba
<u>Th South central</u>	Bini, Esan, Esako, Isoko, Ubhrobo, Isekiri. Owan, Igarra, Ika Ibo
<u>The East</u>	Ibo, Efik, Ibibbio
<u>The Niger Delta</u>	Ijaw, Calabari, `

Ethnic homogeneity is the main contrasting element in describing the cultural composition of each region but no region can boast of one ethnic composition or linguistic unit. However, in comparing the northern and southern regions, the Ibo of the eastern subregion and the Yoruba-western sector of the South possess a greater degree of ethnic homogeneity than the northern region. Three-quarters of the people of the West speak Yoruba while two-third of the people of the East speak Ibo as their first language. In comparison to the North, the Hausa language is only spoken by less than 50% of the population as mother tongue. However, the Hausa language is gradually being assimilated as the major means of interaction in the whole northern regions. It is important to note that the ethnic and linguistic contrasts between the North, the Middle Belt and the Southern regions are reinforced by religious complications.

The Trans-Sahara trade route and the Missionary expansionism at the

turn of the last century have contributed immensely to the cultural ways of life in Nigeria today.

The cultural assimilation by the major tribes in the country by way of urbanization and urban influences, is being reinforced by population mobility and social interaction.

3.3. ECOLOGICAL COMPOSITION

Nigeria possesses rich and diversified ecosystems which transcend many regional and cultural boundaries ranging from tropical to semi-arid environments. The composition and ecological distribution is closely related to climatic boundaries of the country. Since the country lies within the tropics, the climate and vegetation is not determined by temperature but by rainfall. Generally, the climate is dominated by the movement of two airmasses resulting in two marked seasons-Rainy season and Dry season. The length of each season varies from north to south in response to the dominant airmass. The warm and rain-bearing tropical maritime south-westerly airmass last from April to October and its influence is more extensive in the south. The dry and dusty continental north-easterly winds from the Sahara desert is experienced during the months of November to April. In general, the length of rainy season and total accumulation of precipitation decreases from south to north. While the rainy season may last nine months in the southern coastal regions, only four months of rainfall is experienced in the far north with a very well marked decrease in total accumulation of rainfall and soil moisture content. All in all, the movement of two airmasses north and south is responsible for the seasonal

In general, the ecology of the country can be classified into five descriptive zones.

3.3.1. Tropical Mangrove Swamp Forest: This aquatic ecosystem covers most of the coastal regions along the Atlantic ocean including the Niger Delta, and mouths of rivers and streams which feed into the Atlantic coast. The vegetation here forms three successions of very dense and highly stratified canopies. The upper canopy contains large trees towering up to 90-100 ft often with buttresses and stilt roots rising above the water level. There is also a distinctive and very rich undergrowth of thickets and epiphytes. Some of the most dominant species include *Rhizophora*, *Racemosa*, *R. Harrisonii*, *R. Mangle* and *Avicenna nitida*. This ecosystem is also a home for many mammals, birds, and insects.

3.3.2 Tropical Rain Forest: This forest ecotype lies north of the Mangrove swamp. This ecosystem covers most parts of southern Nigeria. This vegetation zone is one of the richest rain forest ecosystem in the world similar in character to the Brazilian Rain Forest. Like many tropical regions of the world, climatic changes and human impact have caused a large depletion of its vegetation composition, distribution, and size. The forest is highly stratified, however, three layers are identifiable. These consist of an upper layer canopy of giant trees, secondary stratum of closed canopy, and an undergrowth layer of herbs and epiphytes.

In an undisturbed condition, the forest upper storey of large trees can reach a height of up to 120 feet. In general, there is a very rich and dense concentration of undergrowth except in high forest where the reduction of

direct sunlight results in a sparse layer of slender, single stem shrubs, herbs and ground cover. One fascinating aspect of this ecotype is its rich variety of plant life, wildlife, mammals, birds, aquatic life and the profusion of insects. Epiphytes, lichens and algae are also very common. The forest contains a large collection of evergreen and deciduous plants some of which included Obeche, Iroko, Cottonwood, Mahogany, large species of Palms. Wildlife in this ecosystem includes monkeys, elephants and leopards to name a few.

3.3.3 Southern Guinea Woodland: This zone encompasses the northern fringes of the Rain Forest belt just below the Niger and Benue river valleys. As the name implies, this ecosystem was formed due to the impact of human activities and changes in climatic conditions not viable for true forest regeneration. This phenomena has created a well marked ecosystem which is a transition woodland containing patches of semi deciduous species of trees and true savannah species. Since the regenerative period is slower here due to insufficient soil moisture and precipitation necessary for a true forest ecosystem, the ecological composition was gradually displaced by the invasion of grass from the true savannah. Today, the feature of this ecosystem consist of patches of single-storey canopy of woodlands with some occasional taller emergent species of forest, tall grass and brushes. In general, the ecology is less diversified and predominantly contains species of grass and some deciduous plants. Some of the most notable plant species included *Azadirachta africana*, *Burkea africana* and *Andropogon*. This ecosystem is well adapted for many herbivores including elephants, Buffalo, leopard and antelopes.

3.3.4 Savannah: The gradual and progressive change in ecological composition from south to north is most noticeable in the Savannah region where the thick Rain forest of the south is completely replaced by an open grassland dotted with patches of stunted trees and brushes except in the river and stream valleys. However, within the Savannah, several ecotypes can be classified based on height, amount of tree cover, openness and height of grass. The most noticeable Savannah ecotypes included:

3.3.4.1. Northern Guinea Savannah: This ecological zone is in the immediate subregion north of the Southern Guinea Savannah woodland. It forms an ecological belt that stretches from the eastern fringes of the Adamawa mountains in the east to the Republic of Benin in the west. The ecological feature of this ecotype consist mainly of grasses and sparsely distributed trees of moderate height. Wildlife is abundant consisting of Lions, Hyena, antelope, deer and birds.

3.3.4.2. Sudan Savannah: This is the largest ecosystem in Nigeria. It occupies most of the north central segment of the country except in the Jos plateau. ecological features here consist of short grasses with sparsely distributed trees which often have stunted growth. However, there is a profusion of wildlife and mammals. The most important plant species include Acacia, Combretum, Terminalia, Hyphaene thebaica and species of Andropogon.

3.3.4.3. Sahel or Semi-desert: This semi-arid environment is located in the most northerly region of the country on the Nigerian border with the Niger Republic. Here grass cover is thin and often dusty. Trees are very short in height and are with thick bark and narrow leave. Drought is most severe here. Annual precipitation is only 20 inches and lasts only 3 months. The plant ecology consist of grass species and trees which are sparse in number.

3.3.4.4 Freshwater Swamp: This ecotype is found along the banks of numerous interior rivers and streams that feed into the Atlantic Ocean as well as in the lake Chad basin and the Niger delta. These water saturated environments carry a large collections of specialized flora some of which include floating grasses, sedges and lilies. In general, the vegetation species varies with the depth of water. A number of trees that grow here have stilt roots which help anchor them to the ground. This ecosystem is the home for many aquatic birds and mammals.

3.4. URBAN TYPOLOGY

Nigeria has some basic Urban traditions. The traditions are based on centuries of human and cultural evolution. The traditional Urban forms in Nigeria can be described under three general prototypes based on its cultural and economic origin, it regional locational, climate, physical and environment factors as well as political origin. The three prototypical urban forms are:

(1) The Savannah City forms

- (2) The Forest traditional Urban type
- (3) The Colonial Cities/New Towns

3.4.1. THE SAVANNA CITIES.

The Savanana cities are typical of the semi-arid climate in Northern Nigeria. The structure of the urban plan originated from a combination of Islamic influence and the favourable environmental conditions which permitted not only animal husbandary and agricultural economy but also the creation of trading and marketing centers for the Trans-Sahara Trade Routes. These cities which were highly centralized were divided into wards of different cultural groups and economic and lineage classes. Neighbourhood are moderately ethnically. There were always designated areas for "foreigners". Orientation to natural elements and a center were some of the important design features. The dominant presence of a symbolic edifices of religious and political elements was also important. These cities can be classified as nucleated radial plans with central core of cultural and religious institutions-including the Palace of "the Emir", the markets/Bazaars religious complexes, centralized park and communal square. Main roads and lanes linked the central core- the palace and the cultural nerve centers to the city gates at the periphery. All in all, the marked features of the traditional Savannah cities are the encircled protected skin of a defensive walls. Figure 21 shows the ancient city of Kano and its environs.

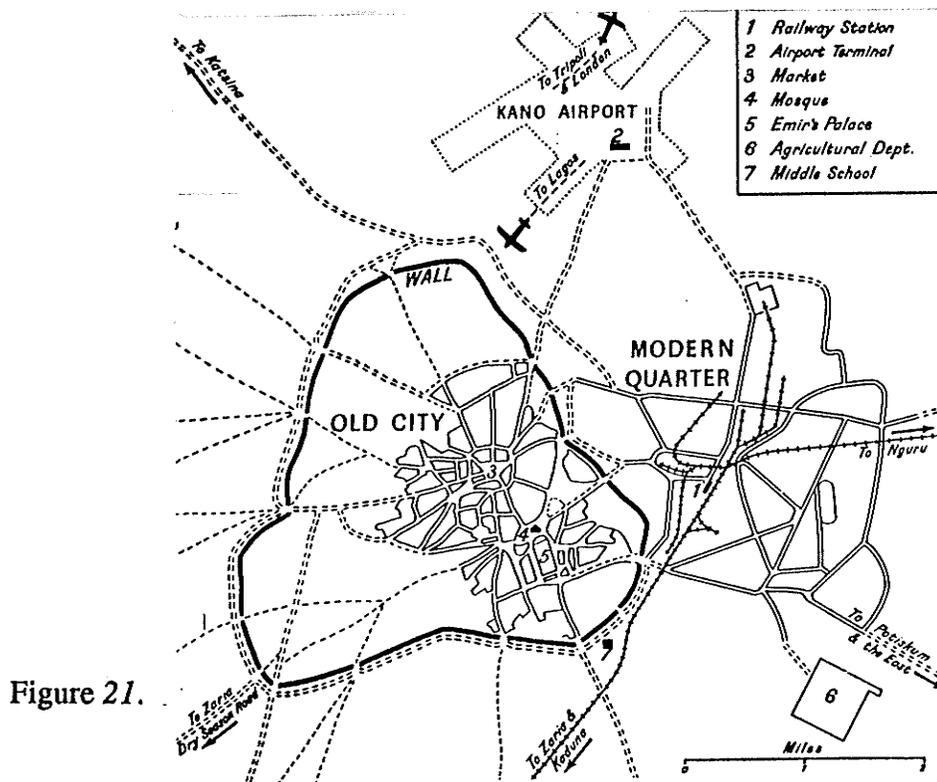


Figure 21.

Typical Savannah Cities Urban Prototype - the Ancient City of Kano.

Source: *A Descriptive Geography of Nigeria 3rd Ed*

3.4.2 THE FOREST CITIES.

The forest cities were the most dominant in the rain forest region of the South. They occurred in denser network in the West than the eastern regions of the South. The physical environment which permitted intensive agriculture practices at small scale levels and inter-cultural trade networks helped to reinforce this type of urbanism. The structures of these forest urban types can be described as radially nucleated with a highly dense cultural core and moderately diversified neighbourhood patterns in the large and medium sizes. A typical central or cultural core consists of the Palace, cultural and religious institutions, a park and a market square. Like

the Savannah cities, each city is protected by defensive walls or moats. Residential areas diffuse from the core to the perimeter. However, lineage residential pattern which was traditional is gradually being replaced by increasing labour and economic mobility brought by modern economic and political developments. See figure 22 below.

Source: *Habitat International*
Vol. 11 Number 2 1987

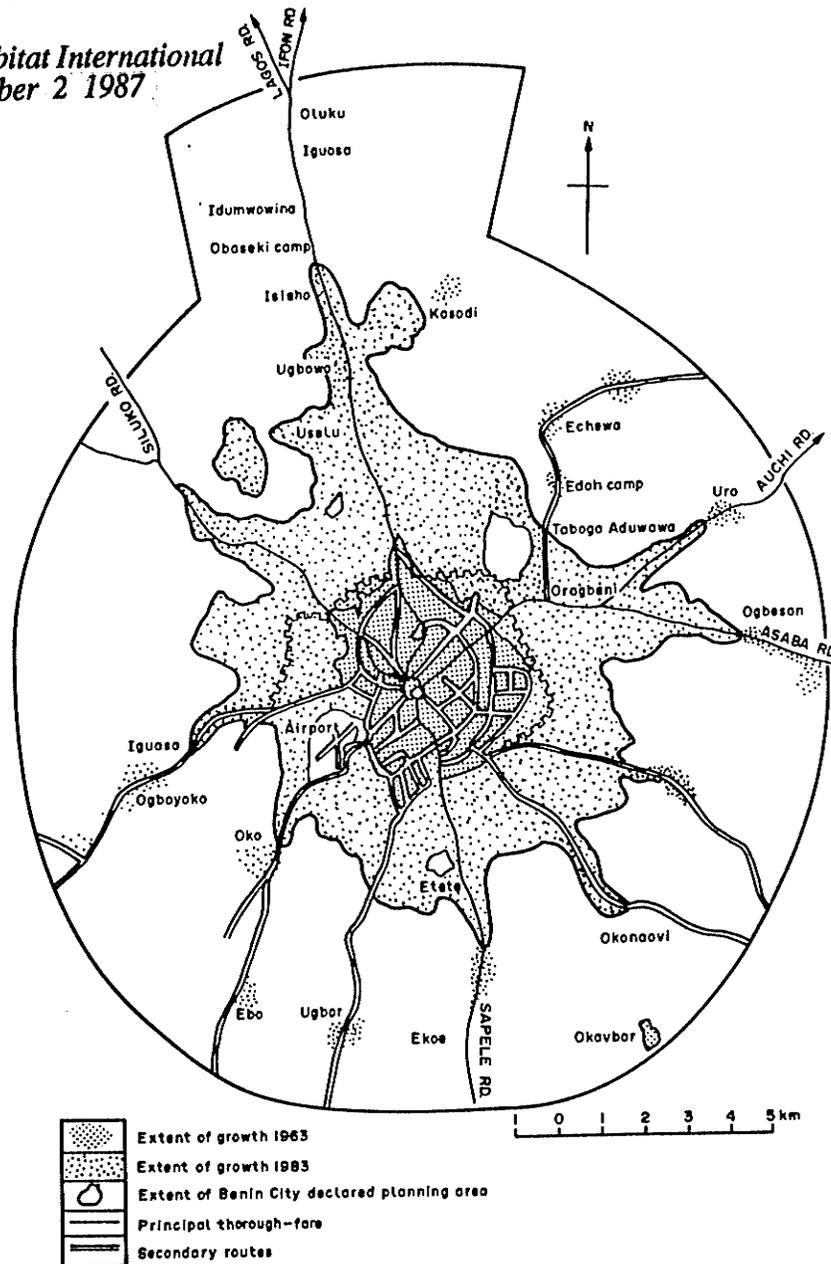


Figure 22. *Typical Forest Cities Urban Prototype-
Plan of the Ancient City of Benin.....*

3.4.3. THE NEW TOWNS

The new town are mainly cities developed during and after the colonial periods. They exhibits highly mobile and ethnically mixed residential patterns based on differentiated function and economic stratification. Agriculture open space are either limited or not existing. Markets and markets squares are highly disperse, cultural institutions are also highly disperse and are mainly within residential communities. In generally the structure of these Colonial Cities/New Towns are based a grid plan with a large commercialized central zone, (see figure 23).

The strongest elements of both the Savannah and Forest Urban forms are their highly functional central core of cultural, religious and political institutions. The concept of medieval urban space with centralized palace commerce manifested greatly in both the Forest and the Savannah citie.

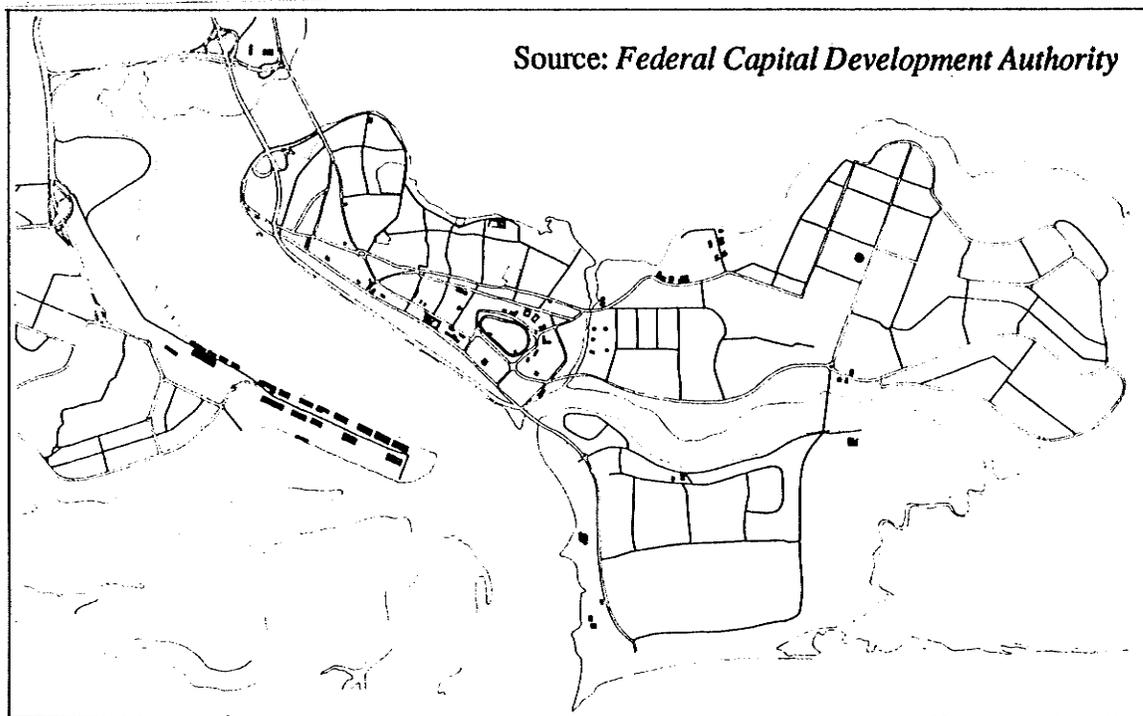


Figure 23. *Typical Modern/Colonial City- Map of Lagos.*

4.0

PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

4.1 ACTIVITIES

Since the main objective of the park is to provide a context for the celebration of culture and national unification, it will be necessary to reflect on the heritage of the various people and landscape in the design of the Park. The idea behind the park proposal is to complement the socio-cultural and political role of Abuja. The park must not only symbolize the significance of the city, but must also present a wholistic expressions of the cultural heritage of the peoples and landscapes that comprises all of Nigeria. Since Nigerian sovereignty spans several regions of different cultures and ecosystems, it is imperative, therefore, to provide a context which is not only symbolic of its people and environments but also provide a focus for cultural interpretation. The programmes for the proposed park, therefore, stems from the chronology of human and cultural activities basic to each environmental region and environment. These programs activities have their greatest cultural and social implications in agriculture, religions, arts and architecture. Further to cultural celebration, they were developed to support and encourage the national aspriation for unity and identity. In developing the terms of reference for the park, five major programs were identified which include:

- 1.) The National Arboretum
- 2.) The Permanent site for the National arts and cultural festival
- 3.) The national art Museum
- 4.) The National war Memorial and Museum

5.) Passive recreation park

These programs which are loaded with cultural and educational idealism, were found to be very appropriate to address the issues of cultural identification, history and the quest for identity and national unity. Their cultural implications will create a resonance effect-reviving a new way of thinking, and a better understanding between the various ethnic groups.

4.1.1.THE NATIONAL ARBORETUM

The national Arboretum with a large collection of plant species representing a wide range of regions and ecosystems will provide the opportunity to view the rich ecological varieties that abound in the Country. One significant aspect of the Arboretum will be the display of important plants that have great heritage as well as aesthetic and economic values. Nigeria being a country of mixed religions, the symbolic use of plants is more pervasive in traditional African religions as elements of purification. These plants represent purity and cleanliness in the eyes of the deities. The Arboretum, therefore must include these unique cultural traits and symbolisms in its plant exhibits.

The site for the Arboretum will be structured to provide a dynamic environment for wide varieties of ecological systems. With the exemption of some thematic programmes which require drier environments, the site for the Arboretum should be relegated to water courses or where the required ecosystems can easily be developed. Freshwater swamps and rainforest zones can do well in the river valley where soils and environmental conditions are ideal for growth and maturity. Guinea and Sahel savannahs

are ideal in the marginal areas of drier environments. The plant exhibits at the Arboretum will consist of: the Mangrove swamp forest, the Freshwater swamp, tropical rain forest, wooded savannah, true grass savannah, Sahel or semi desert ecosystems. These exhibits will be arranged in the form of thematic sequence and will be designed in such a way as to evoke environmental awareness and also to involve the visitor in the art of discovery. Plant labels and interpretive panels will provide information about the plant specimen, technique of propagation and ecological requirement.

Although the site has enough ecological divergence to support and complement new ecosystems, special management skill in developing soils and irrigation is required. By applying ecological principles for planting, a succession cycle without disruption in regeneration will be sustained.

Apart from plant displays, one other major objective of the Arboretum is that of scientific research and education. Several programmes for expanding the scientific knowledge about plant ecosystems will be integrated into the overall concept. The arboretum facilities and research laboratories will be located strategically to provide visitors with information and a better understanding of environmental ecology, plant associations, trophic level and niches of ecosystems. Recreational and cultural values will also be featured in the form of plant demonstrations in the nursery and laboratory/conservatory tours. Another important thematic area in the Arboretum is the Diplomatic sections for tree planting ceremonies. This will be developed in the areas adjacent to the National assembly.

Some sections of the Arboretum will be equipped with picnic and camping facilities. Networks of roads, foot and bike paths will supplement the monorail and cable cars transportation system. The theme of environmental mutualism which the Arboretum portrays will go a long way in transcending the concept of national integration.

THE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM FOR THE NATIONAL ARBORETUM

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| a) Conservatory | j) Observation tower |
| b) Nigerian Ecological gardens | k) Hiking and biking trail |
| i. Mangrove swamp forest | l) Library |
| ii. Fresh water marsh/lagoons | m) Nigerian Fruit/Agrarian garden |
| iii. Rain forest/tropical | n) International garden |
| iv. Wooded savannah | o) Demonstration gardens |
| v. Park savannah | p) Parking for 600 cars |
| vi. Tall grass savannah | TOTAL AREA = 60 ha |
| vii. Sudan Savannah | |
| viii. Sahel semi-arid ecology | |
| c) Herb/medicinal garden | |
| d) Botanical gardens | |
| e) Research/Nursery | |
| f) Production complex | |
| g) Administration and offices | |
| h) Visitor center | |
| i) Picnic area/Ampitheatre | |

4.1.2 NATIONAL FESTIVAL PLAZA

This is one of the most important programmes slated for the proposed park is the permanent site for the national festival of arts and culture. In fact, this was where the idea of a cultural park, which became the topic for this study, was first initiated. The need for cross cultural co-operation through inter-cultural activities has been at the forefront of the government agenda for national unity. Therefore, the idea of having a special forum for the celebration of cultural activities will go a long way in providing the needed inspiration and perspective for unity. The site for the festival plaza is intended to function as a center for cultural interpretation and can also serve as a breeding ground for inter-cultural contact and education. If one considers the importance of a culture in the socio-political affairs of a society, it is essential to sustain those fundamental elements that forms the building blocks of the society.

As the major focus, the festival complex will be the magnet for allcultural activities as well as those symbolic national ceremonies. Its location, therefore, must be planned functionally and strategically to reflect and evoke its prime importance to the city and the nation in general. Its location at the center of the site will focus upon its visual alignment with the National Assembly and the Aso hill. The Festival Plaza in its entirety is conceived as a setting for the celebration and exhibitions of Nigerian cultural heritage and therefore should provide the atmosphere for entertaining Nigerians and foreign tourists alike. Every region and tribe within the sovereignty of Nigeria will be represented here with its traditional architecture and urbanism, arts, crafts, dresses, food, music,

dance and drama. The conceptual nature of the festival Plaza is based on the celebration of unity in diversity within the notion of bringing together cultural artifacts, water, vegetation, arts, architecture and symbolism to express cultural identity.

Symbolism expressed in built form will not only create spatial effects but give meaning of the sense of a place-individual cultural identity.

Spatial elaboration within the confines of traditional urbanism and architecture will relate to an order of spatial hierarchy and movement through spaces. Gateways, walls and a moat will be replicated to evoke traditional walled cities and the moats of the ancient Benin empire. Geometrical organization of spaces will be oriented to the universal order of rectangle, squares, circles, and triangles. Expression of centrality and introversion will also be manifest in architectural spatial order.

Since this area will be the hub of cultural activities in the city, different transportation systems including monorail and cable cars are planned to provide additional means of transportation to the plaza and the park in general.

DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM FOR THE NATIONAL ART AND CULTURAL FESTIVAL PLAZA

- | | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| a) Festival grounds | g) Cultural plaza |
| b) Regatta/Fishing Festival | h) States pavillions complex/
demonstration booths |
| c) Offices/Administration | i) Restaurants |
| d) Police and security | j) Religious complexes |
| e) Sports-Durbar, Polo | k) Education center |
| f) Unity tower | |

TOTAL AREA = 50 ha

1) Parking for 2000 cars.

4.1.3. NATIONAL ART CENTER

Art symbolism is one of the most mystical and unique elements of the Nigerian social and religious systems. The graphic expression of ideas through art has always been an integral part of the society. It forms an important vocabulary for societal communication—from religious and funerary rites to kingship, from architecture to agriculture, and from social commentary to socialization. Other forms of art expression in Nigeria are Music and drama which are part of cultural satire. Palace and religious arts created the greatest impact in the evolution of art in Nigeria. Modern art works have combined traditional idealism and western influences to create a new medium in art expression.

The national art center, therefore, is intended to provide a focal point for art and cultural interpretation. Exhibits and displays of art work from different regions of the country will be presented in phases of evolution and functions. Sculpture park exhibits will present current and ancient sculptural work from different parts of the country. This park will be located in close proximity to the gallery and administrative buildings. Special features of the landform, water, vegetation will be shaped to support the theme of the sculptural exhibits and design layout. Sequential order of spaces will allow an orderly way of viewing the sculptural exhibits. The center will contain several buildings and pavillions, and parking for 200 cars are planned.

DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS FOR THE NATIONAL ART CENTER

- a) Offices and administration
- b) Pavillions/ Art Demonstrations
- c) Music and films Archive
- d) Sculptural park
- e) Art Gallery
- f) Cultural Museum
- g) Parking for 100 cars

TOTAL AREA = 20 ha

4.1.4. THE WAR MEMORIAL/WAR MUSEUM COMPLEX

The war memorial complex is intended to exhibit the momentos of the Nigerian war history particularly the civil war of 1966-1970. The Cenotaph and the tomb of the unknown soldier, are intended to commemorate the symbolism of human struggle, freedom and justice. The area will be furnished with plants and water features to evoke symbolic importance of this place in the national history. The exhibit will consist of both indoor and outdoor spaces-gardens.

DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM FOR THE NATIONAL WAR MEMORIAL

- a) Administration/offices
- c) War museum
- b)War memorial gardens
- d) Parking for 75 cars

TOTAL AREA = 15ha

4.1.5. PASSIVE RECREATION PARK

The entire cultural park should be conceived as a recreational facility. The demand for recreational opportunities at this stage of infrastructural development at Abuja has outstripped the available facilities in the city. This park will go a long way in contributing to the pervasive recreational needs of the people. Several nodes for recreation will be distributed throughout the thematic areas. In addition, the arboretum forest will provide an opportunity for biking, picnicking, and wildlife observations. The exhibits in the various thematic areas will also supplement the recreational needs in the site. Each exhibit nodes will be equipped with rest areas for refreshment and nature observation. Each thematic area will also be equipped with childrens playgrounds and water park. The availability of water in the site will encourage water related recreation. Development of a canal or lake for regatta and fishing festivals will also foster recreational opportunities.

PROGRAMS FOR THE PASSIVE RECREATIONAL AREAS

- a) Camping
- b) Water park
- c) Ampitheatre-story telling
- d) Bike and hiking

TOTAL AREA = 35 ha.

4.2. CULTURAL SYMBOLISM

Symbolism is the metaphysical form of human communication which formed the basis of many civilizations. Like many other cultures, symbolism is the bulwark of Nigerian socio-cultural systems. This vocabulary of communication has manifested itself in philosophy and religion, language and poetry, as well as architecture and art for many

centuries. These cultural elements were adopted by the people to generate a spirit of humanism and adaptation to land for survival. Symbolism provides a vocabulary for cultural expression. The language of the art transpires through art symbolism. These form the dominant elements of religions, kingship, rituals, ceremonies of birth and death. These symbolic cultural vocabulary still manifest in Nigerian societies today. The interrelationship of culture and symbolism is like a jigsaw puzzle; all the separate parts must fit together in order to translate and interpret the true meaning of a society.

4.3 CULTURE AND EDUCATION

The importance of the park as a place for inter-cultural co-operation and cultural realignment can not be overemphasized, as it is a symbolic expression of the Nigerian people and their heritage. The provision of various thematic areas is intended to afford a metaphysical overview of the cultural legacies in a very formal and informal settings. Some of these programmes are provided not only for recreational purposes but as a symbol of new age, a new thinking and the beginning of a new era in Nigerian socio-political system. The benefit of these programmes have great educational and cultural value as well as a basis for achieving national integration. The arboretum will provide opportunities for understanding the relationship between man and his environment, and the concept of mutual interrelationships. This concept of environmental mutualism is intended to evoke an essence of diversity and interdependence in nature which is analogous to cultural interdependency. The educational opportunities that the site will present is abundant.

4.4. PLANT MATERIALS

Like many other cultures, the symbolic use of plants in Nigeria plays a very significant role in special cultural ceremonies. Beyond their basic functions as landscape design elements, plants are often used for various purposes which range from ritualistic religious ceremonies and herbal medicines to shelter and shading devices. Symbolically, plants are used to sanctify shrines for deities as an element of purification or to invite the benevolent spirit of dead ancestors. Some of these plants are predominant in formal and informal traditional courtyards, houses and palaces.

In choosing plant materials for the park, it is imperative to use symbolic plant materials not only as spatial articulators but also to reflect their cultural value. These plants can be used to highlight and reinforce specific areas of the park for functional identification as well as to evoke the spirit of a sense of place and memory. In order to achieve these goals, planting design principles that reflect on cultural traits must be adopted. Planting order should be as such to define spatial formality and hierarchy as well as spatial elaboration and structural effect. As elements of composition in design, they can be used to direct views, vistas and to create special areas of interest.

5.0

DESIGN PROCESS

5.1 SITE DESIGN ELEMENTS

Generally, site design elements are those physical and aesthetic qualities of an environment which make it unique to interpret and enhance design forms and landscape expressions. They usually form the basis for design either as complementary elements or as tangible features that express spatial uniqueness. The site chosen for this project possesses some unique aesthetic and visual qualities that can be used for the design of the park. The categories of site design amenities that have been identified varies from elemental to highly visible natural features some which include:

- 1.) Views and vista within and away from the site.
- 2.) The presence of water bodies
- 3.) Land forms (level grassland, steep sloped valleys and rock outcrops.)
- 4.) Site ecology (diversified plant communities)

The scenic values of the site can be manipulated to create and reinforce visual access between each thematic area and also to link the site to the surrounding landscape. A continuation of the grand axis from the city center which visually links the National Assembly and the site to the Aso hill will provide a very strong base for spatial organization and structural orientations. A distribution of the visual panorama which is a very strong asset of the site will help to create a sense of continuity and contextual integration. Application of axis, ground textural treatment and plant massing between thematic areas will also help produce an integrated design composition.

Although the site does not possess large water bodies, the presence of a series of stream and creeks provides the opportunity for water related designs. As in many other cultures, water has always been an integral part of most Nigerian cultures. The fascination of water is timeless and very romantic. Romantic feelings from water stemmed from a combination of its virtues - its unique ceaseless movement of waves, its surface eddies and reflections. These qualities have been exploited by different cultures for many centuries. Water theme formed the basis of most of the Mogul, the Persian and even the Renaissance gardens of Italy and France. Water in most cases has been used to animate and accent spaces, to impose symbolic and aesthetic qualities and currently as an interactive medium for play and sports. The importance of water to the riverine peoples of the Niger delta can not be overemphasized. Since the study area is crossed by numerous streams and creeks, an individual water theme park which has strong roots in the cultural heritage of the people can be developed. Provision for water related festivals such as arogungun fishing festival, regatta and other water sports can be made within or in close association with the National festival complex. The presence of these amenities will provide a setting to celebrate water related cultural events at the park.

Landform as a design element can manifest itself in two ways. First, the symbolic presence of a prominent landform in close proximity to the study area will help to satisfy the traditional urge for ritualistic and spiritual affinity to nature. By providing a good visual linkage with the surrounding hills and mountains which is within the realm of traditional orientation, a spiritual bridge between the people and their ancestral spirits will be

established.

Secondly, by land manipulation, the relative varieties of landform can be transformed into design. The land can be shaped to create dynamic environments for play or to form landmarks relative to cultural idealism. Land terrace and furrows which is traditional to this particular area can become a form of landscape expression.

Consideration for the unique features of the site in terms of its ecological varieties can also become an important instrument for cultural landscape interpretations and translations. Local micro-climatic conditions combined with water from the river system aided the propagation of the plants (ecosystem) along the streams and creek channels. The site ecosystems range from riparian environments of freshwater swamps to rainforest and savannah ecologies. These ecosystems by and large represent a cross section of the Nigerian cultural landscapes. The existence of such a rich plant communities will provide a framework to develop an arboretum on the site. The interpretive and educational values of the site ecology will also provide a focus for environmental conservation, preservation and protection.

5.2. THE CONCEPTUAL APPROACH

5.2.1 INTRODUCTION

Based on National aspiration for unity, the concept for the master plan of the cultural park was generated from a combination of various events of human, environmental and political history. A reflection of these cultural orientations forms the idealistic base for the thoughts and rationale of the

design concept. The philosophical ideas behind the design concept included the fulfillment of the following objectives:

- 1.) To provide a focus for the celebration of cultural diversity and commonality.
- 2.) To provide reference points for historical and symbolic expressions.
- 3.) To provide a forum that will enhance and propagate the culture and environmental heritage of Nigeria.
- 4.) To provide a reference for contemporary Nigeria - Its modernity and future aspirations.

The challenge of these objectives will provide a reference for past and contemporary situations in Nigerian socia-cultural systems. Although Nigerian history provided a strong base for sociol-cultural identification, parts of current urban and cultural transformations are the results of western colonial influences. Since The colonial times, Nigeria has been exposed not only through international trade and commerce but also through politics and cultural exchanges. The influence of international or western ideology in planning can be seen in the master plan of the City of Abuja. The concept of the master plan employed a combination of western spatial system with indigenous urban nucleus. It is therefore, important to reach a design compromise in expressing the images representing contemporary culture - a combination of traditional images and western ideas in landscape and architectural expressions. Although the spatial ordering principle of Abuja attempted to replicate traditional notion of centrality and urban

nucleus, the manipulation of axes and grid systems are characteristic of western ideology. The marriage between western ideas and traditional forms can be meticulously applied for the design of the Park.

In order to achieve these goals, special design principles will be introduced as a guide to formulate design decisions, landscape design and architectural expressions harmonious to the traditional cultures.

5.3 DESIGN PRINCIPLES

Design principles are the underlying rules and procedures which determine design forms and overall development decisions. They usually provide the structural framework for design direction, guidelines and strategy to ensure appropriate development that is consistent to the philosophy and aspiration of the intended functions. The message and the idealistic meaning of a place may be lost if the design principles applied are weak and inconsistent with the functional intentions. Based on the data presented in the previous chapters relative to national aspirations for unity, the conceptual principles of the master plan for the National Cultural Park will be focused on spatial and cultural definitions as points of departure. The strategy for composing the design of each thematic zone is to transmit and celebrate cultural diversities and the evolution of cultural unification.

In developing the conceptual framework for the design, therefore, certain elements of the culture and physical environment were identified as essential ingredients appropriate to express cultural identity as well as a focal point for intercultural cooperation. The application of cultural vocabularies such as 'gateway' symbolizes entry into the Park will generate a feeling of spatial transition and a sense of enclosure. The

image of the park as a place for cultural celebration is very important. Therefore, the park must be designed to project and reflect its symbolism, image and heritage values for national identity. Contextual definition and spatial elaboration will provide a base for expressing symbolism, imageability and plant ecology of the park. In general, the design ingredients for the Park must include the following:

5.3.1.) Cultural symbolism- this will provide a reference for the past and present socio-cultural milieu in Nigeria. Symbolism has always been a very important feature of Nigeria socio-cultural systems. Its use tranverses all regions and tribes irrespective of language, social class and religion. For example the placement of a totem in the center or on the edge of an Ibibio village common in Cross River State does not only signifies the celebration of dieties but also provides a focus for cultural orientation and spiritual landmarks. It is very important, therefore, to use these strong iconographic elements as design tools in the development of the park. These cultural elements will not only be used to define and highlight important areas, but also to stimulate cultural awareness, the legacies, and memories of the past. It is important to note here that the essence of this park is not to create another open space for bandstands or political speeches, but create a forum for a special part of the human community devoted to the celebration of life and cultural heritage. It can only serve a useful purpose if the important facets of the various cultures are used as design language either as elements of spatial elaboration or to create focal points for design interest. This can be achieved by absorbing traditional forms, geometry, materials

and methods of fabrication, ordering systems and patterns into the design. Location and placement of individual thematic programmes will be carefully planned to provide spatial hierarchies, gestures of rich cultural diversity and an affinity to cultural commonality. Traditional architectonic forms such as walls gates, court yards, frontal treatment and decorative patterns and species of plants will be used in each thematic zone to create a feeling of identity, security and meaningful spaces. Figure 24. illustrates spatial symbolism.

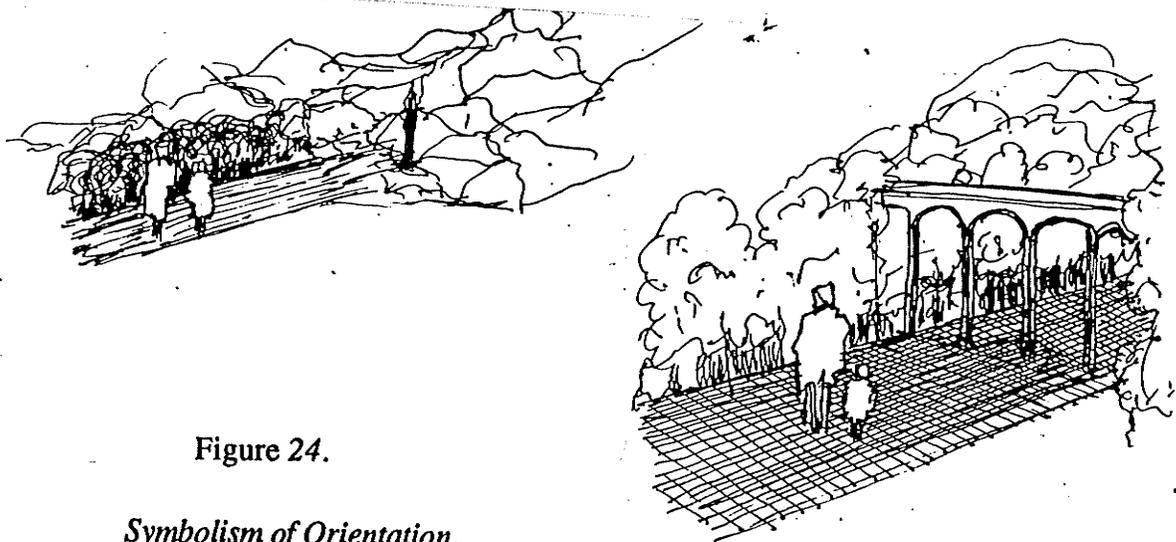


Figure 24.

*Symbolism of Orientation,
Spatial Transition and Centrality.*

All in all, symbolism will be presented as a physical and cultural system, a language for spatial identification, treatment and elaboration.

5.3.2.) Ecological abstraction-Ecological systems of any country are part and parcel of cultural heritage. The diverse ecosystems that abound in many regions of Nigeria possess a high heritage values necessary for

cultural interpretation and identity. The introduction of environmental culture into the park theme was not just to create an opportunity for recreation, but more importantly to promote better awareness for ecological conservation, protection and preservation. The experience of forest depletion in Nigeria in the last 100 years necessitates a program such as an Arboretum to be present at the Park. With this in mind, the design of the Arboretum will be made to provide a plausible and educational experience for the park visitors. One can only assume that the presence of a cultural facility such as an arboretum/botanical gardens will provide an impetus for people to be more conscious and sensitive to issues relating to environmental quality and the degradation from deforestation, oil spills and desert encroachments. Since the existing conditions of the site provides for the development of a wide range of ecosystems that tranverse many regions of the country, the arboretum would function as a center for ecological research , cultural and environmental interpretation. This can also be seen as a way of expressing cultural integration- by providing opportunities to view different regions of the country in a micro scale at a glance. The intention of this concept is to translate the notion of interdependency in human and environmental systems, an idea imbeded in the concept to psychologically effect cultural mutualism and the essence of human ecology. The exhibition of a wide variety of plant materials and research in agricultural techniques, will also provide an impetus for agricultural development and the government's aim for self sufficiency in food production.

The idea of ecological abstraction will take a wholistic approach in

design and planning. The site for the Arboretum will be divided into ecological zones in order of natural plant associations and environments. With the ecological exhibits, Flowers, Ornamental, herbal and fruit gardens from different climatic regions will also be a major part of the exhibit in the Botanical gardens. The site for the Arboretum will be located where plausible conditions for the different ecosystems representing different regions can be easily generated. The immediate area close to or along the river courses on the western section of the site has great potential for developing a Cultural Park.

5.3.3.) Imageability- Imageability can be classified and defined in three terms namely identity, structure and spatial meaning. Imageability relates to the special treatment, identity, symbolism and character that helps to translate a sense of a place in a spatial arrangement. According to Kevin Lynch in his treatise on imageability, 'nothing is experienced by itself but always in relation to its surrounding, the sequence of events leading up to it, the memory of past experiences.'¹⁵ Imageability is that special quality of a space or object which can help to evoke a strong image or translate the meaning of place. The design of the cultural Park, therefore, requires a special treatment not only to project the significance of the Government/cultural precinct but also to fully realize its symbolic location at the terminus of the most important cultural and political elements in the city. Therefore, a strong and evoking image of the Park can be achieved by dividing the site into small thematic segments each relating to one another by spatial hierarchical and spatial orientation defined by series of focal

15. Kevin Lynch, *The Image Of the City*, (Cambridge, Massachussetts, 1986), pp. 1

points relative to traditional system. Symbolic devices can be used to define nodes, edges, paths and landmarks within the site in relation to the surrounding context. (figure 25)

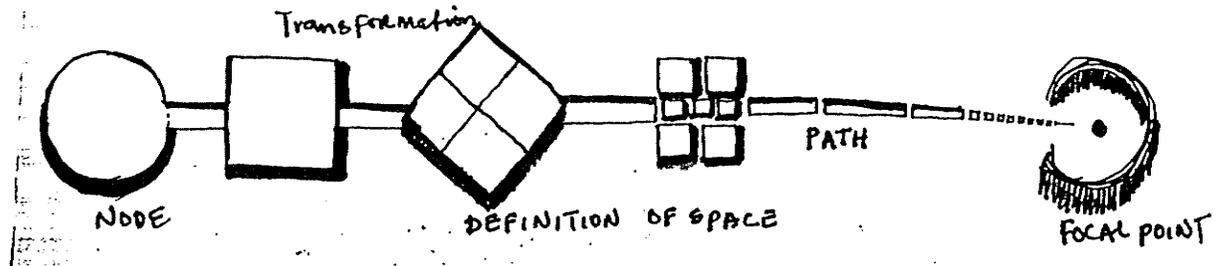


Figure 25. *Spatial Image by Transformation of Nodes, Edge, Path and Formality.*

The Festival plaza will be located at a commanding position at the center and in an axial relationship with National Assembly and the the Aso hill. The central core with its many cultural features such as statues, Mosque, Church, fountains and observation tower will be surrounded by state pavillions and demonstration booths. The notion of medieval organization basic to traditional settlements will manifest in the order of spaces and building elements at the Festival Plaza.

5.3.4.) Integration- This provides a base for relating one area to another. By exploring a spatial ordering principles using the existing axial and visual order, one can achieve contextual integration.

In general, the overall concept, prescribed a strong base not only for the celebration of culture but also opportunities for education and recreation.

6.0

DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

The planning and design strategy that was adopted to develop the master plan for the Park evolved from a combination of site design elements, cultural history and symbolism. These elements were seen as important ingredient to reiterate the notion of cultural celebration. The fundamental principle of the concept was therefore, to create a series of thematic nodes for cultural events depicting the history and heritage of the people. The method that was used in developing the Master plan for the Park involved overlay system. Due to the size of the site and the intensity of the programs slated for the Park, an overlay method was devised not only to provide an integrated approach to the overall design of the Park but also to provide a base for analyzing the constituent elements of the site. The site elements were divided into categories of specific features for design purpose ranging from vegetation to building footprints. Each category was represented in form of schematic overlay. Each overlay was designed and manipulated to characterize a specific design feature. Each layer was developed separately and yet reflective of the character of the preceding layer in sequential order. The overlays that were analyzed and integrated into the Master plan included: 1.) Contour Schematic, 2.) Vegetation Schematics, 3.) Landscape Schematics, 4.) Vehicular Schematics, 5.) Monorail and Pedestrianways Schematic, 6.) Building Schematics, 7) Grid Schematics. The grid schematics consisted of the super grid and the city grid. These grid systems provided the base for locating thematic features, orientation and alignment. The contour schematics basically showed the condition of the existing contours. The Vegetation overlays identified the

flora, ecosystems and plant communities of the Park. The landscape schematics identified the changes to elevations, contours and the manipulation of the landscape to create features such as the lakes and canal. The vehicular layer showed all road alignments and parking lots. It also highlighted the two vehicular categories of cars and bus routes. The monorail and pedestrian overlay indicated pedestrian pathways and monorail systems. The building overlay showed building locations and their footprints. The combination of these layers provided the base for the Concept Master Plan of the Park. With the overlay system, it was possible to identify not only suitable areas for design development but also the framework for the overall spatial and landscape organization. Figure 26 illustrates the overlay system.

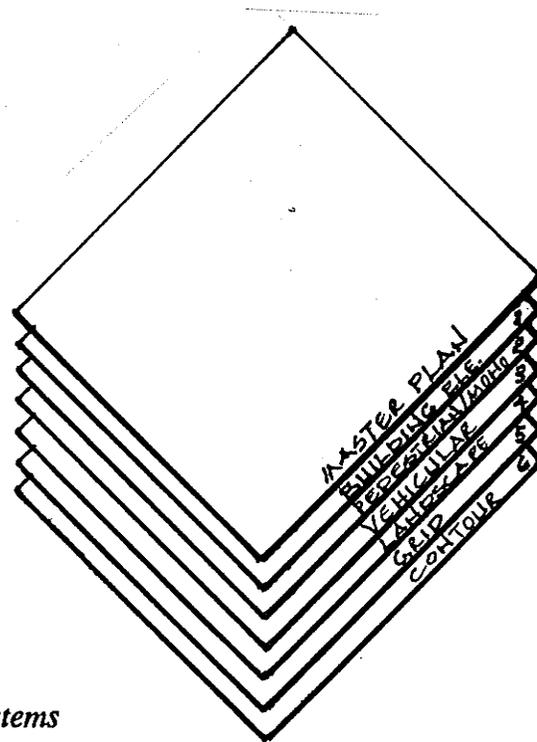


Figure 26 *The Overlay Systems*

In order to effect unity in spatial order and hierarchy that will help to transform the site into its intended functions and symbolism, a number of

design ideas using axis, geometry and plant massing were employed to articulate landscaping views, vista, spatial order, quality and transition. These ideas were explored to formulate order and form that will help to express:

1. The articulation and accentuation of the symbolism of access to the park-basic to the traditional city walls, gates, and moats.
2. The articulation of the site design element such as contours, vegetation to create spatial and environmental experience.
3. The development of the spatial ordering principle that expresses traditional orientation and architecture.
4. The development of axis and vista to maintain and complement visual linkage with the city and the Aso hill.
5. The expression of the notions of centrality and nodes basic to traditional urban form. This was intended to relate spatial forms, geometry and symbolism to the traditional urban character.
6. The abstraction of vegetation to create spatial transition, ecology and environmental context representing different regions of the country.
7. Spatial hierarchy relative to the location of thematic areas and their form. This was an important aspect of the overall master plan.
8. The hierarchial order of means of transportation on the site such as, vehicular route, monorail system, pedestrian pathways, and parking.
9. The articulation of symbolism and spatial adage to create diversity and spatial quality and interest.

These design ideas provided the framework for articulating not only the indigenous ordering principles but also the western spatial geometry. The symbolism of the Park as a place for Cultural celebration demands a special design approach that will help to reaffirm its cultural significant to the Nigerian People. The search for an ordering system gave rise to the "Supergrid", a cultural feature which is basic to all traditional forms of orientation in Nigeria. Basic to all Nigerian cultures, there is a general consciousness for orientaion to the natural axes (the four points on the compass) not only for religious ceremonies but also as a traditional alignment natural deities. Relationship to the movement of the overhead sun which is almost constant all year round is very important. According to the Nigerian tradition 'the world is supported by four corners',¹⁶ Therefore, the use of these natural axes as spatial ordering principles at the park will help to reinforce the symbolism of the park as an importan cultural element. The "Supergrid" is essentially a 200m x 200m grid laid out in north-south and east-west orientation. (Figure 27).

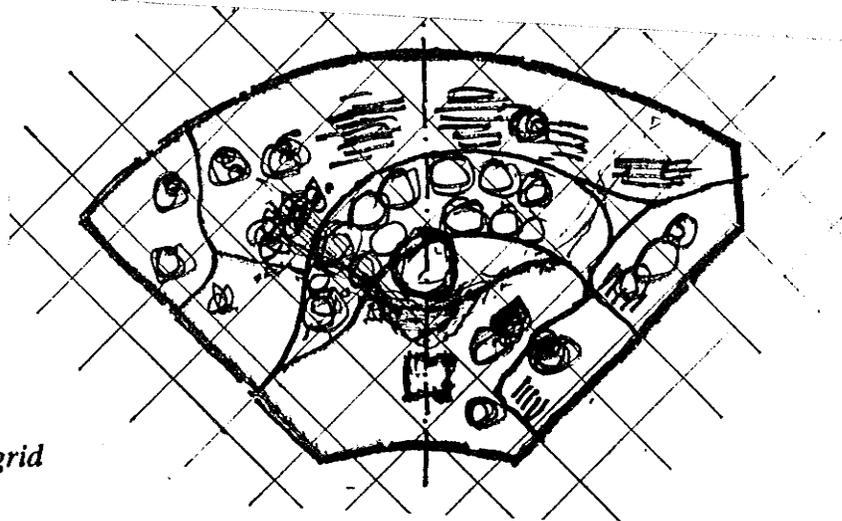


Figure 27 *The Supergrid*

16. R.E.Dennett, *Nigerian Studies*(London, 1968), pp. 70-72.

The imposition of this grid on the site provided a reference point for the concept and the overall spatial organization of the park. The location of thematic areas in their order of hierarchy was achieved by a combination of this grid and site design elements. The placement of buildings, entry and exit points as well as thematic areas were based on the axial relationship of the supergrid. While the grid provided the framework for the design, spatial elaboration and articulation, the overall concept was reinforced by the introduction of centralized formal axes, renaissance geometry, symbolic elements and planting concepts that reflected on tradition and environmental context. The orientation of the canal which followed the north-south axis was meant to symbolize dialogue between peoples of all cultural boundaries. The location of the information center on the canal supported by stilts was intended to transmit the architecture of the cultures of the Riverine areas of Nigeria.

THE CULTURAL FESTIVAL PLAZA

To achieve the notion of centrality basic to traditional urban form, the Cultural festival which formed the hub of the cultural celebrations, was deliberately placed at a formalized center of the site where the axis from the city intersected the supergrid. This axis which was developed into a formalized promenade further reinforced by plant massing to create a focal point as well as a strong visual alignment with the National Monument at the base of the Aso hill. In general, development along the axis formed continuous nodes of activities which varied from elemental to monumentalism. These nodes included statues, Plazas, Ampitheatre, Lake

and the monuments and fountain's of the War Memorial. The location of the festival plaza also provided visibility to the Aso hill was to reiterate the people affinity to nature-an ideal concept to foster nature worship.

The organization of the pavillions were based on miedeval concept. The pavillions were arranged to create peripheral nodes of cultural activities around the central plaza. The display of cultural and urban tradition here was a conscious effort to reflect on the notion of traditional urban history especially to reinforce the image and symbolism of the festival plaza where most of the cultural activities in the Park will take place. The hierarchial medieval organization of the spaces here were intended to conjure the notion of the traditional urban centers and subordinate peripheral subcenters. (figure 28)

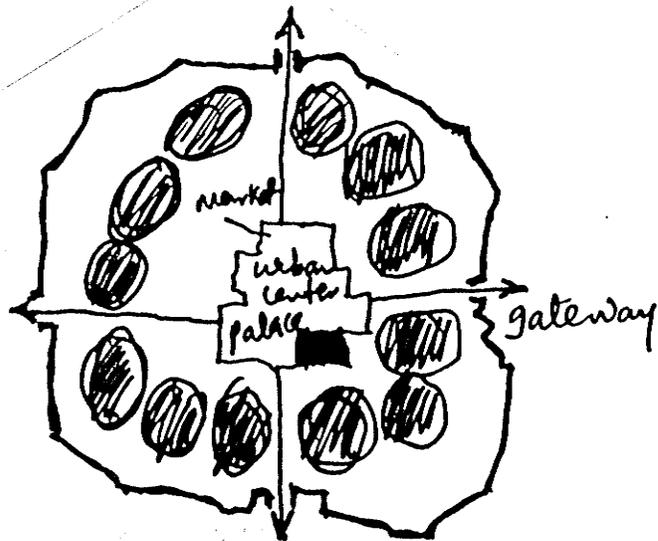


Figure 28.

Traditional Urban Schematic.

While the pavillions are related to one another by spatial treatment and plant massing, they formed a strong visual and geometrical linkage with the centralized plaza which acts as their point of origin and a focal point in a medieval sense. The location of the pavillions were based on their regional

location north to south of the country. Pavllions for the northern cultures were located on the northern section of the Festival complex while the pavillions for the southern cultures were located on the southern segment of the festival precinct. Here, buildings were meant to relate to each other arbitrarily and yet be able to transmit sequential spatial order of regional cultures and environments. The Administrative Center, Cultural Center, Library, Auditoriums, Concert Halls and two Observation Towers formed the periphery of the Central Plaza. Some of the buildings especially the large structures will be permanent but most of the small structures will be built on temporary basis and will be removed at the end of the annual festivals.

THE ARBORETUM

The transposition of regional ecology and ecosystems of the country on the site created the greatest challenge to the design. The supergrid which followed the natural axis north and south provided the underlying principle for the design of the Arboretum. By overlaying the supergrid, it became possible to construct ecological zones along the range of latitude in which they occur from south to north of Nigeria. Each ecosystem was delineated by the supergrid. Ecosystem associated with southern Mangrove Swamp and Topical Rain Forests were located along the river valleys where the habitats for the regeneration of their ecosystem requirement are plausible. The river valley here in its natural state has a sucesion of plant communities typical of Tropical Rain Forest and Riverine ecosystems. Therefore, it was possible to construct these ecosystems here since favourable conditions for the growth was already existing. It is possible to recreate Mangrove Swamp

ecosystems by flooding. The ecosystems of drier interior Savannah of Nigeria followed the zone of the Tropical Rain Forest of the Arboretum. These ecosystems were subdivided in their order of natural association and environment ranging from Southern Guinea Savannah to the drier semi-arid Sahel Savannah of the far north. The Ecological zones at the Arboretum consist of the Mangrove Swamp Forest, the Tropical Rain Forest, the Southern Guinea Savannah, Parkland Savannah, Wooded Savannah, Mountain vegetation, Tall grass Savannah, Sudan Savannah and Freshwater ecosystems. The abstraction of the natural ecosystems representing diverse regions of the country was not only to show the richness of the different ecologies at a micro-scale but as a postulation of the interdependence between man and environment. The supergrid provided the basic order to achieve this type of ecological abstraction.

The Arboretum also has a specialized area designated for Botanical Gardens. The botanical gardens contained a specialized gardens and large a collections of plant species typical to the various cultures and regions of Nigeria. The plan displayed a juxtaposition of series gardens with numerous cross axes which are used as premonades, fareways, walkways and in some places water elements. Some of the plants specimen which formed part of the exhibits here included tropical Fruit gardens, Herbal gardens, Palm plantation, Orange grove, Cocoa gardens and Agricultural Experimentation Gardens.

The Conservatory formed part of the International Garden. It contains temperate plants introduced into Nigeria by Britain as legacy of colonialism. Apart from the administrative buildings, the Botanical garden has large

supportive facilities such as Libraries and pavillions for plant information, their uses and ecological adaptations.

A plant Nursery developed for the purpose of regenerating plant species for the various ecosystems at the Arboretum and Botanical Gardens is located on the north-eastern quadrant of the site. The design for this particular area was based on square grid. Each was assigned for the regeneration of plant of a particular ecosystem. The meandering walkway system which ran through the site here was intended to take visitor through this the site in a procession highlighting scientific and research information. (Figure 29)

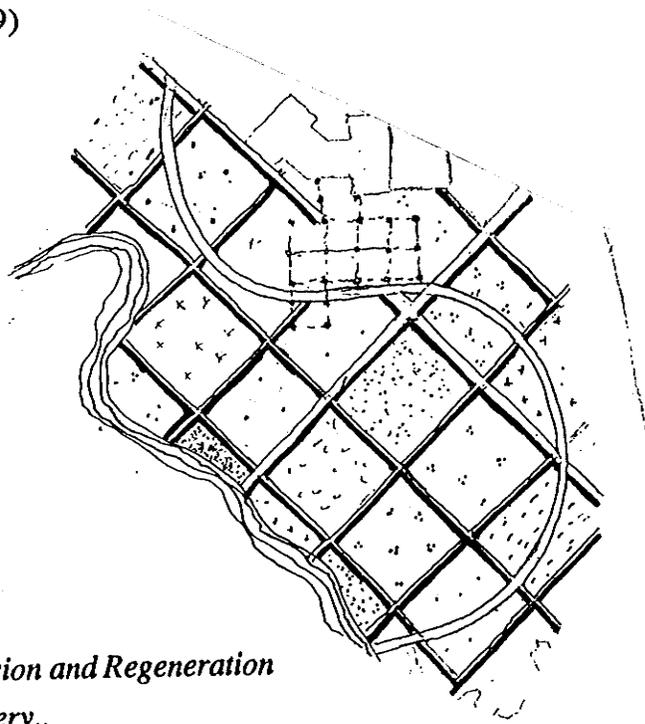


Figure 29.

*Cells of Plant Sucession and Regeneration
Program at the Nursery..*

To reinforce ecological conservation and protection of wildlife, the Arboretum and its gardens are equipped with interpretive facilities. In a number of places there are exhibits displaying plant uses, evolution and environmental adaptations.

THE WAR MEMORIAL GARDENS

The war memorial complex is located in the adjacent area next to the national assembly in visual alignment with the Aso hill. The organization of this complex represented the manifestation of order, geometry and symbolism. The supergrid, the Renaissance geometry and the grid from the city were combined to create a simple geometrical spatial order and monumentality. Symbolism provides a vocabulary for design aesthetic and spatial definition for interpretation. Where the grids cross each other, the points are designated by cut granite rock. These landmarks were meant to create the notion of tombstone insignias representing the burial sites of those Nigerians who died in the World wars and the Nigerian civil war. (Figure 30)

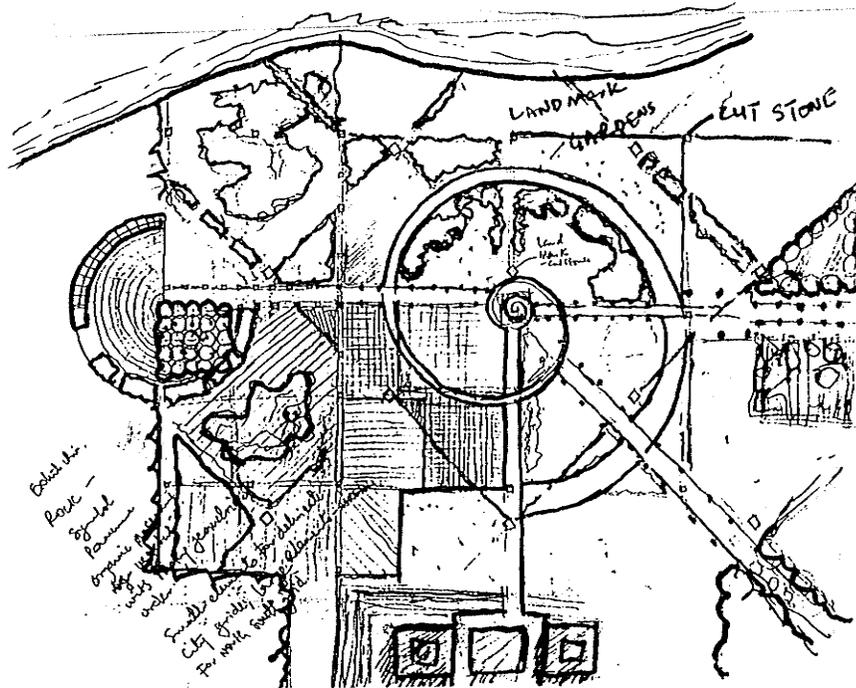


Figure 30. The War memorial ideograms

Interpreting panel describing war circumstances are attached to the stones. The imposition of a symbolic traditional element - the water spiral combined with the geometrical systems was meant to transfuse the intrinsic meaning of the place for the commemoration of those who lost their lives in the fight for justice and freedom. The symbolic structure of the spiral was meant to evoke a sense of infinity and eternity. The surrounding gardens are intended for the display of war momentos. Plaques and interpretive panels explaining the material used during the Nigerian civil War of 1967-1970 are on display here. Circulation through the gardens were carefully devised not only to attract visitors, but also to subconsciously guide them through the various exhibits. Minor axial relationships to relate different structures to one another formed part of the spatial order. The war Museum is located on one of these axes. Plant massing, tree line and ground level treatment were meticulously used to integrate the various spaces together.

CIRCULATION AND SERVICE ZONE

The circulation concept is highly classified into categories of vehicular routes, bus routes, pedestrian ways and the monorail system. Vehicular parking and traffic are relegated to the periphery of the site. The bus route goes through the core of the Festival Complex and all the thematic areas. A special bus depot is located on the south-eastern part of site adjacent to the monorail depot. Bus stops are in various locations of the site and the monorail is extended to cover all the thematic areas. Refer to conceptual overlay.

PLANTING STRATEGY

In general, the planting strategy was to effect spatial integration, visual accents and focal points, and shading devices. The application of different foliage, colours, texture and forms was intended to relate each thematic area to their cultural and environmental context. The vegetation used for the different pavillions, where possible, is planned to express the character of the plants in that cultural context. At the Festival Complex, tree massing is specialized to create focal points, to effect spatial transition and to extend each precinct theme across the spaces between pavillions.

DIPLOMATIC TREE GROVE

The diplomatic tree grove is a symbolic place for special tree planting ceremonies to honour and mark the visit of foreign dignitaries. It is located to land adjacent to the National Assembly. The organization of this sector of the Cultural Park is based on a 5 meter grid in alignment with the natural axes created by the "Supergrid". A tree will be planted at the center of each grid cell and will be marked with the name of the visitor and the date.

GATEWAYS AND RELIGIOUS ARTIFACTS.

Celebration of the entry into the park was an important facet of the design concept. Considerable thought was put into the design of the major entry ways using gateways, arches as symbols of arrival, expectations and spatial transition.

Provision for cultural and religious identity was also manifested in the design of the Park. Church, Mosque and religious Shrine are located in

strategic locations and orientations where they can best express their sense of power and spiritualism. The Mosque and the Church are located on the north and south of Festival complex in concert with their relative geographical dominance in the country.

THE NATIONAL ART COMPLEX

The design of the National art complex epitomized the sensible manipulation of land, site ecology and indigenous traditions. The sculptural Park was created by the abstraction of contours of the land, the vegetations and the grid systems. These three elements were manipulated to create a spatial order and definitions. The contours became vertical elements represented by sensous dwarf walls which followed the lay of the land. Exhibit nodes meticulously cut out of the vegetation where the grid intersected each other. Series of cut fareway systems provided connection between the exhibits nodes. The curvelinear form of the National Art Museum is meant to reflect on the meandering contour of the land. (Figure 31 below)

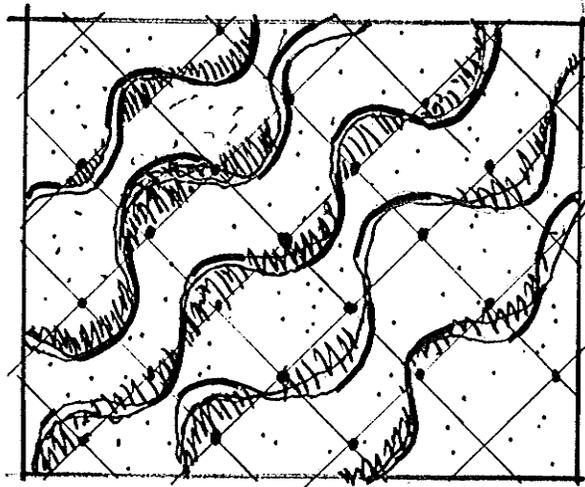


Figure 31. *Landscape Abstraction at the Sculpture Gardens*

RECREATION ZONE

Recreation corridors are concentrated along the River Digbe valley which run from east to west across the site. The recreation program for the Park is passive in nature. A number of camp grounds, rest areas, ampitheatres, biking and hiking trails are created for groups and family use. Many thematic areas throughout the site are also equiped with recreation facilities for adults and children use.

6.1

CONCLUSION

By providing a forum for cross cultural contacts and education, the national park for arts and culture will go a long way in fulfilling the endeavour for national unity and the realignment of nationalism. It is hoped that the park will also serve a useful example for the awareness of environmental education, conservation and protection of the rare ecosystems. The park as a national cultural forum will help to reaffirm the spirit and symbolism of Abjua as the New National Capital.

7.0

APPENDIX

NIGERIAN CULTURAL SYSTEMS

7.1. THE HAUSA/FULANI CULTURE OF THE NORTH.

The north constitute a region and culture dominated by Islam. Except in Bornu and the areas around the Lake Chad basin, the most dominant cultural groups in the whole Northern region, is the Hausa-Fulani. Hybridisation between the Hausa and Fulani through inter-marriage and cultural crystallization created a new group of people which today account for more than 60 per cent of the population in the North. The relationship between the Hausa and Fulani has become much blurred since both tribes now speak Hausa as their mother tongue. On the other hand the Kanuri and the Shuwa Arabs are the most notable groups in Bornu and in the Chad basin area. Other cultural groups in the region are the Dikwas, the Beddes, the Fika and the Gumel of Bornu state in the north - east. Within these groups, there are numerous subcultural groups which are differentiated by dialectic variations and features of cultural distinctiveness.

The culture and social systems of the Northern people are mirrored in accordance to the Islamic tradition. Islam formed the unit of social and cultural behaviour. The adoption of Islamic culture came as a result of the trans-Sahara trade link with North African Arabs. The adoption of Islam combined with the availability of large expanses of fertile grassland and stable economic conditions, encouraged migration of people to the area. The economic boom fostered a stable political system and provided a base for cultural enrichment. Historically, the region has always been administered under a political system of emirates enthrenched under the Islamic laws prior to colonialism. The political stability achieved under this system was due to Islam which provided not only religious but a social base for unity. As

one can observe today in the socia-cultural systems of the North, Islam and the elimination of linguistic barriers have helped to create a homogenous culture.

The concept of Islam features virtually in all forms of life including arts and Architecture. The influence of mohammedan world and of the relative dry climate of the savannah formed the basis of spatial organization; and typical of this region are the characteristic flat-roofed, box-liked houses. In most cases these houses and religious structures are highly decorated with Islamic scrolls and emblems. The historical City of Kano is the embodiment of the culture and social life of the Northern people. The city is the most illustrative example of a typical savanna walled citiy; of the influence of Islam and the traditional nucleated or centrally organized settlement. The old city of Kano is encircled by a massive mud wall about 19 miles in length. The most important cultural and religious institutions are located at the center - the Emir's palace, the Market square and the Mosque and the open spaces for cultural events. The market square presents an ever-entertaining picture of the Hausa-Fulani culture and the general perspective of a moslem life. '*Sabon gari*'-the foreigners' settlements are located outside the wall.

The Hausa-Fulani arts typifies that of a strong Islamic influence and a general characteristic way of life. The Fulani arts illustrates pastoralism and nomadism typical of their original life prior to their fusion with the Hausa culture. Apart from Religious arts, art work in leather, cloth dyeing and metal works are widespread.

The major economic mainstay are pastoral farming, animal husbandary,

grain farming and commercial trading. A typical Hausa baazar illustrates a very rich cultural varieties of the Islamic North totally different from the other regions of Nigeria. Some of the most important cultural events in the North apart from religious pilgrimage and feast, are the Arugugun fishing festival and the Durbar. The Durbar is a colourful ceremonial dance involving highly decorated horses and riders in large turban.

7.2. THE CULTURE OF THE MIDDLE BELT.

The Middle Belt formed the zone of transition between north and south. The area is relatively populated by people that have various cultural, sociological and religious backgrounds. These people occupied the belt of wooded and rocky Savannah lands along the Niger and Benue trough, which stretched across the country from the Republic of Benin in the west and the Adamawa mountain in the east. The most dominant tribes here are the Nupes who are occupying the west and central portions; the Tiv, Idoma and Igala on the eastern subregion. The other tribes such as the Gwari, Hausa-Fulani, Lopawa, Kamberi and Yorubas account for a very small proportion of the population. (*Geographical Regions of Nigeria, 1970, page 118*) In all, there are over twenty ethnic tribes in the region. The Middle Belt is one of the most ethnically diversified part of the country. Possibly the most important characteristics of these peoples are their ability to maintain individuality and linguistic distinctiveness amidst the bombardment of the Hausa-Fulani influence and Islamic culture.

As in the northern region, similar factors of history, climate, environment and religion are the modifying elements of the culture. The

cultures here are the result of northern and southern influences, however, it is important to say individuality in cultural traits can still be found among the peoples. Agriculture and religion are very much part of the peoples' life. These factors manifest in everyday life--from entertainment to play and the believing world. The synopsis of the culture here revealed four basic characteristics. These include: Religion, Agriculture, arts and commerce.

Historically, the Middle Belt was depopulated by frequent slave raids conducted by the larger empires to the north and south of its borders. The impact of the frequent slave raids and inter-tribal wars accounted for its relatively low population in comparison to the rest of the country. As inter-tribal wars and slavery subsided at the turn of the nineteenth century, people from different parts mostly Hausa-Fulanis and Yorubas migrated to the region and the population began to stabilize. As more people infiltrated into the region, a considerable mixture of culture occurred partly due to inter-tribal marriages and partly due to the adoption of foreign religions. The introduction of the Islamic religion created the greatest impact on the culture. The region was virtually transformed into more or less a homogeneous cultural unit with their northern counterparts by Islam. The other instrument that helped to reinforce cultural assimilation was the adoption of the Hausa language and mode of dress as a means of cultural expression. Being a region of cultural melting pot, the tendency towards cultural uniformity is intensified by cultural contacts. Despite the popularity of Islam, Christianity has made a slow progress especially among the Urban dwellers. In all, the traditional African religion is still the most

popular form of worship, more so in the remote areas and farming communities. To sum it up, the culture of the Middle Belt is anchored on four basic elements : Islam, Christianity, agriculture, and African traditional religion.

The intermingling of these four cultural modifier created a very rich artistic culture full of symbolisms and styles. Islamic patterns in architecture especially in the design of Mosque are found in most of the cities and towns. Architecture as a by-product of a culture and environment is well exemplified here. "The contrast between the closely nucleated Nupe urban settlements and the dispersed settlements of the Tiv, both formed from the same stretch of geographical location of no dissimilar environmental conditions, draws attention to the importance of culture and social factors in the evolution of the country's settlement patterns". (*Land and people in Nigeria, 1958, page 77*) The round and conical roofed tops of the Nupes are typical product of environmental adaptation.

Art symbolisms and geometrical expressions are very important in everyday life of the peoples; from farm implements to household utensils, and from religious rites to the celebration of new growing season or new harvesting season. Monarchial arts were once an important feature but since the decline of monarchy, commercial arts for sale has become a very lucrative means of livelihood. Artistic stylization in pottery and ceramics as well as glass are some of the products from this region. Geometric designs in textile features in all daily clothing and cultural ceremonies. Arts work in interracotta is also popular, a tradition which dates back many centuries Art representation is a very important. Its formed a medium of communication with ancestors. The Worship of the ancestral gods are the media of

maintaining a relationship with the ancestors.

It is noteworthy to mention that the cultural tradition here is a reflection of many years of history and the product of man relationship with his environment. However, it is also important to note that considerable pollution of the culture has taken place since the arrival of colonialism. The resonance effect of the Islam and Missionary expansionism have also created tremendous impact.

7.3. THE YORUBA CULTURE

The Yorubas Formed the nucleus of the cultural sythnsis of south-western region of the Rain forest in the southern Nigeria. The Cultural influence of this group of people covers an area of more than 30, 000 square miles, from Lagos on the Atlantic coast to the River Niger in the north and from Bendel State in the south central region to the Republic of Benin in the western frontiers. The Yorubas are homogenous people with a very sophiscated culture and a long period of recorded history.

Historically, the Yorubaland has been a well organized and well administered societies with a powerful political system headed by the Obas. The unit of political administration was based on a system equivalent to that of a City-State. Each City-State is headed by traditional King or Oba appointed by the Legendary King of the Yorubas-the Oni of Ile-Ife. Each City-state is a subset of the political regions of the huge empire. The Stability of the Yoruba Kingdom was due to their claim to common ancestry. Their strong allegiance to common ancestry imbued in customs, social and religious beliefs have helped to weld them together as a people.

Their cultural and religious association with the "ancestral Father of the Yoruba whom they claimed to have descended from the heavens formed the basis of their mythology. This notion is reinforced by the use of a common language. The Oduduwa as the Yoruba legend has claimed created the Yoruba people as a family at Ile-Ife - the cradle of the Yoruba culture and political civilization.

In many respects, the cosmology of the Yorubas are similar to the Greek mythology, they both have strong affiliation and reverence for the spirit of the natural world- the god of the sun, of the thunder and rain -"Shango", of the mountain.e.t.c.In Yoruba conception, social problems are associated with actions of the gods of divination. Religious activities are seen as rituals to appease and maintain harmonious relationship with the ancestors and the spiritual natural beings. Like the Greek, the homogenous nature of the Yoruba culture is derived from their stable democratic systems and their religious practices which have endured over many centuries. The assimilation of ideas from religion, government, politics and economics have helped to sustain the Yoruba culture.

The Yoruba arts in many ways embodies a collective expression of their society.They are products of religious and social way of life.In many ways arts and religion are intertwined to create a very rich cultural expression and symbolisms. Symbolisms in religion is expressed in form of arts. To the Yorubas art represents the tangible expressions and values of the society. The Yoruba arts encompasses a wide spectrum of social and religious activities, from monarchial arts to religious and ceremonial edifices. Prior to colonialism, the most popular arts were monarchial arts which were made

to celebrate the King-"Oba."

Apart from religious and monarchical work, wide varieties of geometrically based arts representing different gestures and symbolisms were produced. In most cases geometric repetition and bilateral symmetry were used to build up complex patterns. The simplest form of arts were religious and ceremonial masks. In general, the Yoruba arts represents everyday life activities including their occupations such as farming, fishing, religious, ceremonial arts or social and decorative arts. Oyo, Ile-Ife, Oshogbo, Ibadan, Owo and Abeokuta are the major cities where art culture are still flourishing. Ile-Ife the cradle of the Yoruba civilization have large collections of very elaborate monarchical or palace arts in bronze and terracotta which date back many centuries of artistic civilization. Other art Symbolisms include ceremonial mask and staff as well as ornamental stylization in textile and leather works.

The modern art expressionism which began in the early part of this century, reached its highest level in the Yoruba towns at Oyo and Oshogbo. Both cities today, have become the leading modern art schools in Nigeria.

The most prominent feature of the Yoruba culture are their distinctive traditional clothing and music. Yoruba towns are often fill with melodious sounds of the Juju and Apala music. Primarily, the Yorubas are farming people, but however, large number of the people are engaged in commercial trading and artisan work.

The Yorubaland is the most urbanized and most commercialized area in Nigeria. Urbanization brought upon by commercial interaction and western influences has transformed many of the traditional closed cities into

modern urban cosmopolitan and metropolis. Lagos is the hub of the economic, commercial and administrative capital of Nigeria. It is also the melting pot of the Nigerian cultures. Ibadan, the old Military headquarters of the Yoruba army has become one of the largest cities in Africa. The Yoruba traditional urban layout is typical of the rain forest Urban tradition. The concept of Centrality, orientation to natural element and to natural order formed the basic structures urban design. The Urban center of this type usually consist of the King's palace, the Market squares, Museums, courts and parks.

Of all the regions in southern Nigeria, the Yorubaland has the highest population of moslems. The acceptance of three different religions added a new layer to the cultural milieu. The existence of these religions also helped to reinforce the Yoruba cultural cohesion and homogeneity.

7.4. THE BINI PEOPLE AND THEIR CULTURE

The Binis formed an important cultural group that occupies the south central areas of southern Nigeria west of the River Niger. The inhabitants of this region formed a sandwich between the two largest ethnic groups in southern Nigeria. On the East, the region is bounded by the Ibos and on the the Western side, by the Yorubas. The limit of its southern frontier stretched into the Atlantic Ocean.. The Benin Kingdom at the height of its power covered an area of more than 40,000 square miles- including the entire area west of River Niger upto the republic of Benin formerly Dahomey. The only surviving parts of this huge Kingdom is the present day ancient city of Benin and the modern Bendel State.

The Bini Kingdom consist of the Edo-speaking people who shares

common cultural traits but dialectic variations. These peoples can be classified into two major divisions with some cultural overlap here and there at different points in linguistic and cultural variations.

- (1) The Edo proper, the Ishan, Etsako and Owan group. The Edo proper (Bini) is taken here to be broadly coterminous to the three local Government areas of: Oredo, Orhiomon and Ovia.
- (2) The Urhobo and Isoko of Northern Niger Delta. These are the main cultural groups south of the Edo proper with similar dialectic association.

Source: Interpreted from the Benin Kingdom by R.E. Bradbury, 1957.

The basic structure of this classification is linguistic intelligibility. Apart from linguistic affinities, each subgroup within each division exhibits individuality in terms of dress, occupation, cultural ceremonies, lineage and chieftaincy. However, the "Oba" an indigene of the Edo proper, is the supreme ruler of the whole region prior to colonialism.

The Bini cultural tradition constitutes the celebration and adoration of the Monarch- the "Oba" of Benin and his council of Chiefs. By tradition, the "Oba" is the supreme ruler almost comparable to God in his monarchical status. Everything including the land was owned by the Royal family until the adoption of Western democratic system of government at the turn of the

century. Loyalty to the "Oba" and his subordinate chiefs was a cultural norm. Specific segment of the population mostly specialized guild of artists and craftsmen were devoted to the production of implements for war and ceremonies. Palace arts and ornamentation reached its highest peak. New ideas in arts and ornamentation flourished. The system of occupational specialization especially with regard to artistic products produced a very rich artistic society, a legacy which still flourish in Benin tradition today.

Although the office of the "Oba" has been reduced to local ceremonies and local figurehead, his cultural influence in arts, social organization and local government is still being sustained by the Benin people. The achievement of this tradition can be seen in its elaborate art work filled with geometric patterns and symbolisms. Since the adoption of the western democratic system, a lot of changes have taken place in the ruling system and the people's way of life. First the specialized guild of guard has become autonomous. Artists and craftsmen have changed from their traditional roles and are now producing elaborate work that reflect their philosophy and social taste. They produce for commercial reasons rather as a duty to please the Royal family. The sustenance of the culture has been transformed in many different ways. New arts expressionism has become part of the tradition. Palace arts is less of a responsibility of the subjects. The ancient work of the Benin culture which spanned many centuries can still be seen in some Benin architecture and environments. The National Archive in Lagos and the Benin Museum have a large stock of Benin art collections. However, It must be mention here that the richest collection of the art work of this culture is not in Nigeria but in Britain.

Some of these included elaborate designs in bronze, Brass and wood.

As a final remark, the Binis are heterogenous group of people living a very simple subsistence live. The economic mainstay of the peoples is agriculture. However, the traditional occupation is being replaced by modern industries and commerce.

The form of religion practices varies from area to another. Ancestral, nature worship, christianity and Islam are the most popular. Christianity is dominant in urban areas while Islam is found in small clusters in the northern provinces around Auchi and Igara.

Urbanization is at small scale compare to that of the Yorubas. The Urban form of the historic city of Benin follows the traditional rain forest urban prototype of highly dense core of cultural institutions and peripheral functionally differentiated residential districts. Benin city is medieval city of a historical and cultural prominence. The present day Benin city exhibits legacies of both modern and ancient traditions It is the largest city and the capital of the modern Bendel state. The most prominent feature of the old City are the series of defensive moats that surround the City and the Oba's palace. The Oba's palace is situated at the center of the city. Like the other Forest cities, it has nucleated center which consist of cultural and market elements.

Majorities of the other cities in this region grew during the colonial era as administrative centers or from a combination of cultural and colonial influences. Warri is the second largest city and the chief modern sea port and industrial center for the whole region. The other cities are: Sapele, Uromi, Ubiaja, Auchi, Oleh, Igarra, Irrua and Expoma, These are mainly

administrative and commercial centers.

7.5. THE IBO CULTURE

The Ibos formed the second largest cultural group in southern Nigeria. With a population of over 12 million people, they occupy most of the eastern portion of southern Nigeria including the western fringes of the Niger River in Bendel State from Agbor to Asaba and also the northern parts of River State. Its eastern limit is bordered by two small cultural groups - the Ibibios and Efiks in Cross River State. Like the Yorubas, the Ibos are a very cohesive and homogenous cultural group of people. And like many other southern Nigerians, they live in rain forest zone of heavy rainfall and dense vegetation - Palm belt of Nigeria which in many ways determined the types of occupation available in the region. Although majority of the people are traditionally farmers, the Ibos are well known for their industrious and commercial trading abilities throughout Nigeria.

Unlike the Binis or Yorubas, the history and culture of the Ibos was neither based on common ancestor nor the monarch. In other words, the Ibos were never ruled by kings or "Obas". There were neither empires nor politically oriented city-states. Instead their political system evolved from their disperse settlement of small democratic villages. Their concept of political-culture was based on the "Oha" which Prof. Mazi Njaka called "community society" or "Ohacracy". (*Igbo Political Culture, 1974, page 13*) The "Oha" is a form of participatory democracy which require participation of all community members including the dead, the living, the unborn and the outsiders or foreigners. The "Oha" is fundamental to social behaviour, ethics, laws and orders and administration of day to day activities. The

Participation of the dead and the unborn is achieved through what the Ibos called the "Ofo" or "Ofoism". The "Ofo" formed the basis of the traditional religion which is hinged on the concept of the "world of men and spiritual deities". (*Igbo Political Culture, 1974, page 14*) The whole notion of the world and spirit is tied to the supreme God or "Chukwu". In the context of this religion, individuality reigns supreme. Every facet of life - occupation, personality, wars, e.t.c are assumed to be of divine actions. As member of the society, whatever you give is what you get back in return, if give little of yourself to the benefit of the society, the recipocatory benefit is also little. In other words, you are your own priest in the administration of Ofoism and Ohacracy.

Based on the notions of "Ofoism" and "Ohacracy," council of elders- the "Umunna" are formed in small village groups. (*Igbo Political Culture, 1974, page 85*) Each village is an entity or a unit of the whole - of the larger "Umunna". The localized patrilineage group of an extended family is the smallest social unit of Umunna. The "Umunna" is the regulatory institution where the checks and balances of the society are controlled. To the Ibos, the community is the "Umunna"- the basic building blocks of their culture and society.

Evangelization at turn of the century brought a new dimension to the culture not only for the Ibos in particular but to the whole people of southern Nigeria in general. The christian faiths added a new layer to the centuries old Ibo culture. Although the Christian religions have weakened some aspects of the culture, attempt are being made not only among the Ibos but throughout Nigeria to revive the past traditions to go in concert

with modern economic development.

It must be noted that neither the culture nor the socio-political system of the Ibos will be understood without reference to their religion - "Ofoism" and "Ohacracy". Many cultural works in arts and architecture including dances and music are devoted to the celebration of the ancestral spirits of the dead and the "Ofo". Unlike the Benin or Yoruba, Palace arts was practically uncommon but the major arts were devoted for religious symbolisms. Totemism and mask feature prominently in the Ibo art world. For example, the traditional textile -the "Akwete" with highly decorated and geometrical pattern revealed some of the cultural ingenuity prevailing in the region.

The structure of the Ibos urban form is based on disperse clustered settlement whose basic structure is essentially a system of homesteading. Each cluster consist of a central core area designated for communal meetings, cultural festivals and religious ceremonies. The center core area may also include specific features of religious or cultural prominence such as ceremonial staff or Totem. Cities of Onitsha and Aba are center of commerce, trade and industries. Most of the cultural and modern industries are located in these cities. Okwa and Unewi are noted for blacksmith and metal crafting industries.

In general, the Ibos are cohesive, adroit and industrious group of people whose culture and tradition revolves round democratic socio-political systems and religion.

7.6

THE MINORITIES.

The Fringe tribes include the Ibibio and Efik of the Cross River State, the Ijaws of the Niger delta and the Calabari at Eastern section of the Niger Delta. Except in the Ibibio subregion, the whole areas are sparsely populated. This is due to some factors of the environment- being more or less riverine and regions of mangrove swamp forest. It must be noted here that the social-cultural and economic life of these peoples are strongly determined by their environment. Environmental adaptation is transmitted in occupation, architecture and forms of socialization. For descriptive purposes, each group will be discussed separately.

7.6.1 THE CULTURE OF THE IBIBIO

The Ibibio are similar in many ways to their neighbour to the west- the Ibos. Their social organization involved a rudimentary democratic system comparable to the "Umunna" of the Ibo culture. The smallest social unit of this culture is the family household or the extended family structure. Each family lineage is divided into wards. The administration of the Village lies in the hands of the council of elders elected by the family members.

The primary occupation of the Ibibio people are farming and trading. Traditional crafts include elaborate art works which are either made for religious ceremonies or for commerce. The Ibibios like most southern Nigeria cultures, have strong affinity with the spirit of the ancestral gods and natural dieties. The celebration of the dieties is very important. Totemism provides the representation medium of worshipping the dead ancestors. Through archeological research, many religious monoliths of the

early civilization in this region have been discovered. There are also elaborate works in wood carving and murals. Masks for religious and ceremonial festivals are also common.

The traditional urban form of the Efik is that of a cluster settlement with a dominant central space surrounded by religious monuments dedicated to the dead. The function of the central core is that of communal meetings, cultural events and religious dances.

7.6.2. THE CULTURE OF THE EFIK PEOPLE

There is a considerable cultural homogeneity between the Ibibios and the Efiks. Although they both share the same religious and cultural identity, enough cultural differentiation can be made based on occupational differences and social organization. The Mainstay of the Efik's economy is fishing and trading.

Like the Ibibios, the Efik has strong reverence towards the dead ancestors. Settlement patterns reflects lineage and social structure of the community and the concept of centrality and orientation common to all Nigerian traditional cities.

7.6.3 THE CULTURE OF THE IJAW PEOPLE

The Ijaws are the most dominant group people in the Niger Delta. The other tribes in this region are: the Urhobos, the Itsekiris and the Calabaris on the Easter portion of the Delta. Apart from the Calabaris, the Urhobos and Itsekiris are transient people and are not permanently settled in the region. The Mangrove swamp and the water bodies are the main elements of the physical environment. The most important feature of the culture is the

peoples unique way of adaptation to the environment. Water is very important and is the lifeline of the people. Fishing is the major occupation and the day to day aspect of their life revolves around it. Boat building is another means of livelihood. The architecture is very regional and well adapted to the environment. Prior to the discovery of oilfields in the region, this area exhibited a showcase of man's relationship with his environment. But since the development of Petroleum industries in Nigeria in the last Twenty-five year, the rich varieties of the mangrove swamp forest and the surrounding water bodies have been exposed to environmental degradation and pollution.

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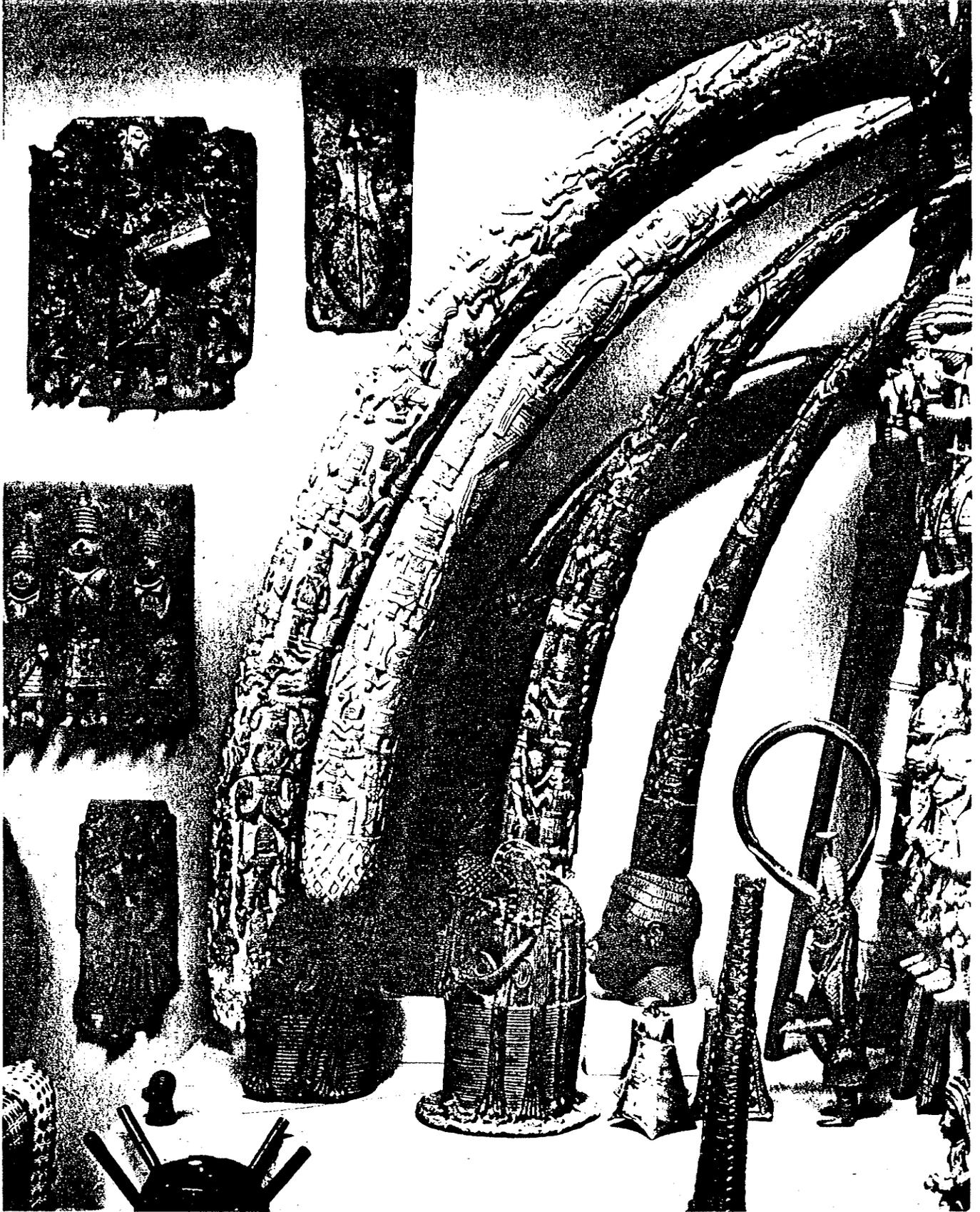
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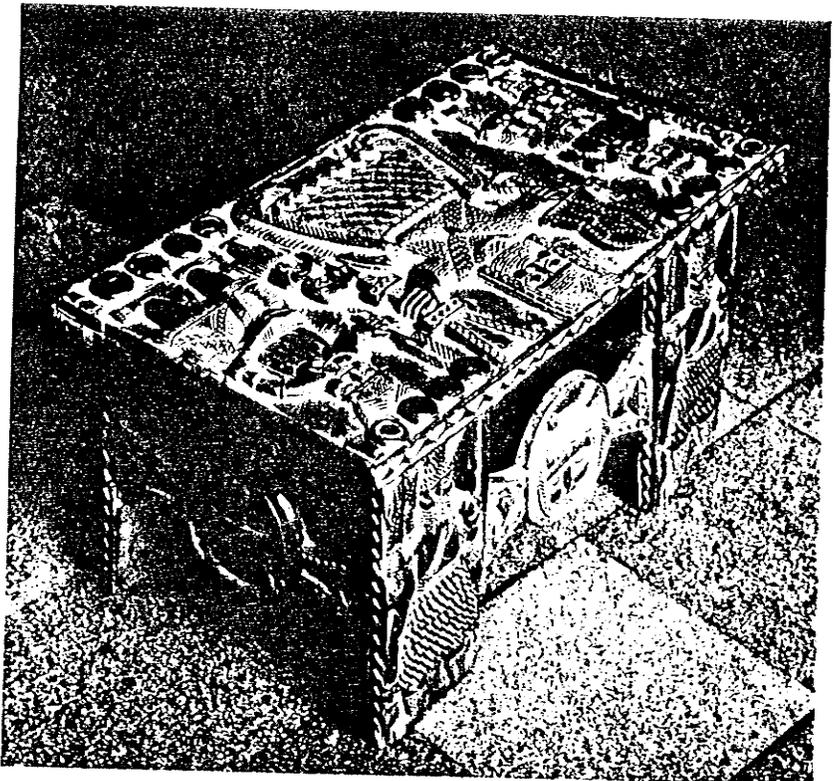
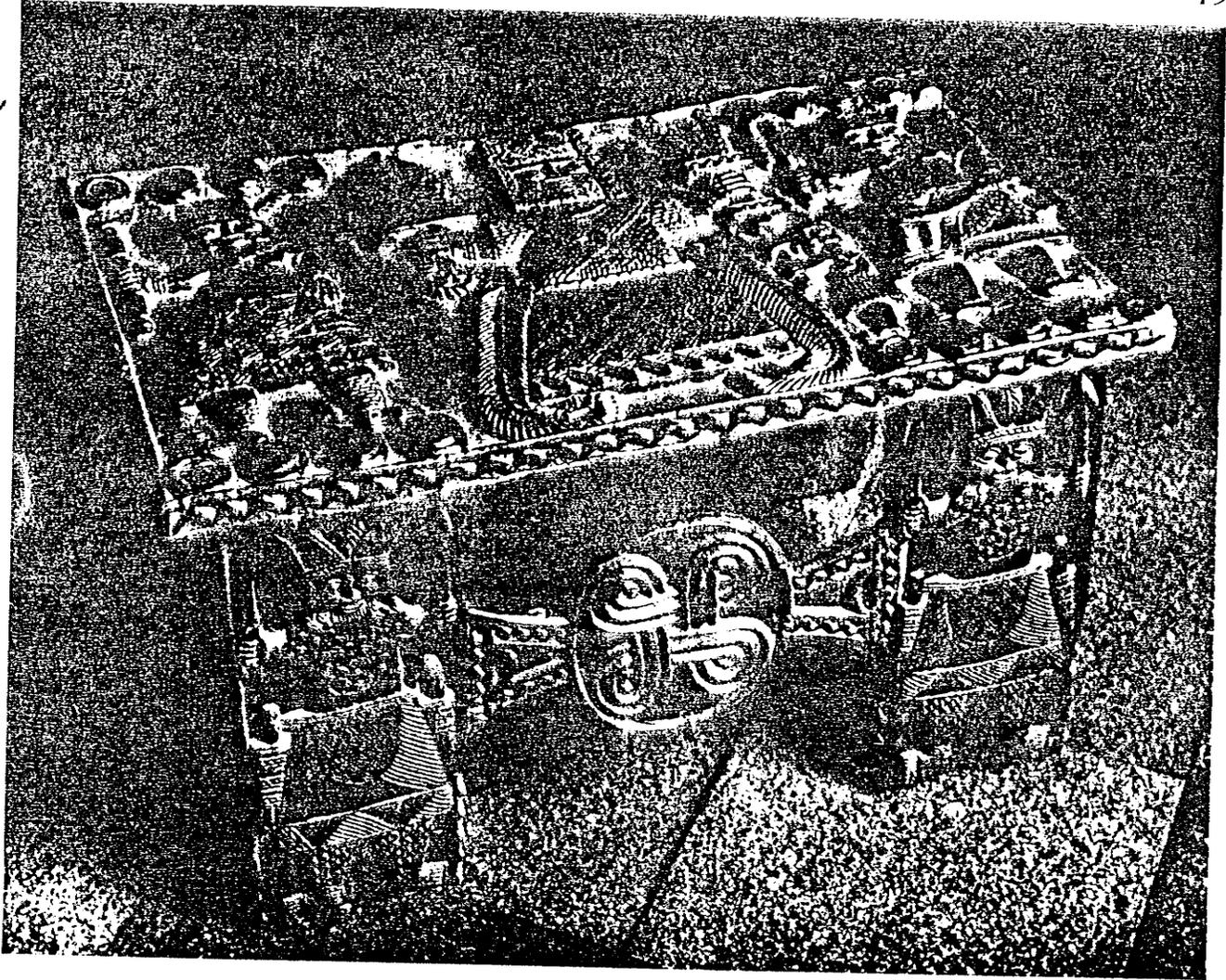
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1. Ivory pedestal cup (Edo-Portuguese). Ht. 18.5. Royal Scottish Museum, Edinburgh.



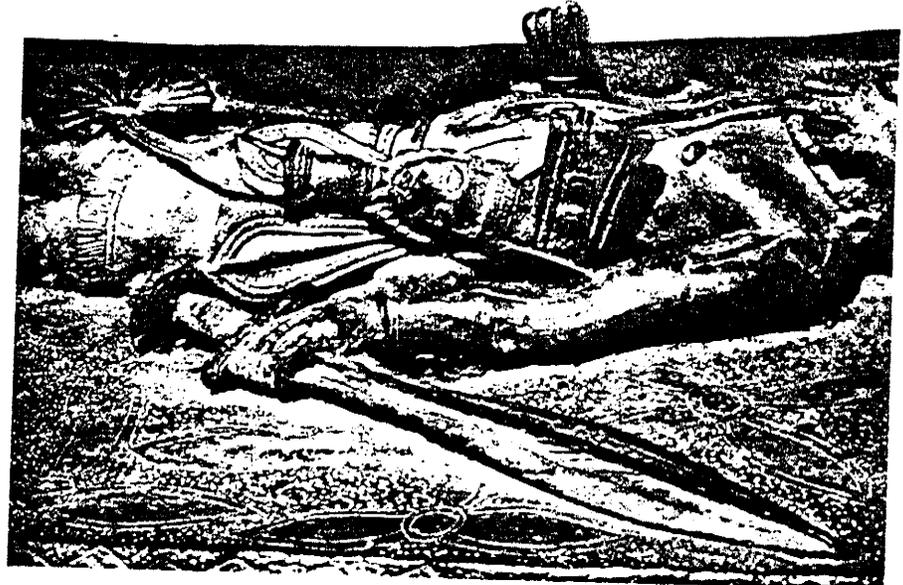
22. Part of Benin Exhibit, 1954, in British Museum, London.



37-8. Wooden seat. Graham Gallery, New York.



63. Bronze ornamental mask. Ht. 15 (2) City of Liverpool Museums.



64. Detail of bronze plaque. Ht. 52.4. British Museum, London.



65. Detail of bronze plaque. Ht. 38.2. British Museum, London.



4. Two ivory horns (left: Sherbro; right: ?). L. 58; 47.9. British Museum, London.

21 PEAR-SHAPED BOWL

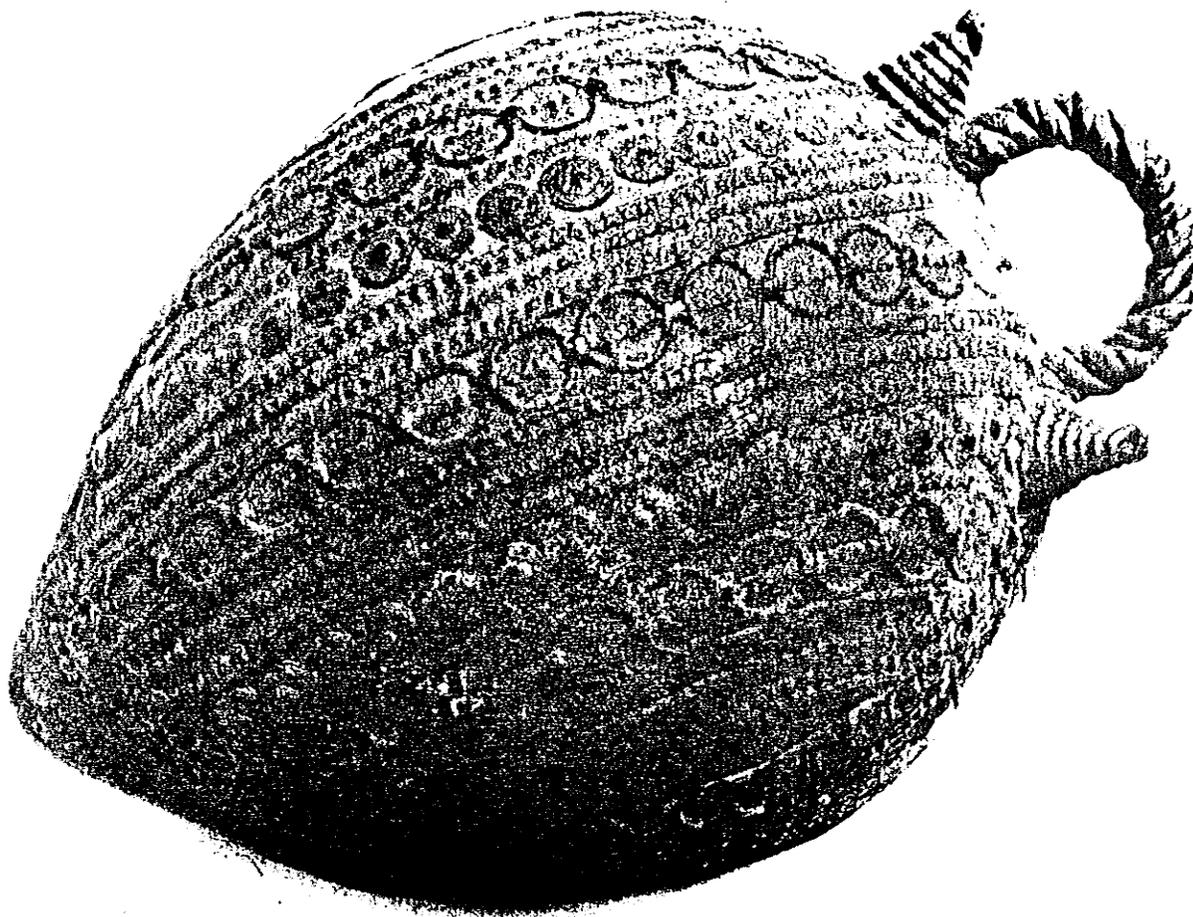
9th/10th century

Leaded bronze; l. 10.2 cm. (4 in.)

Presumed from Igbo Isaiah, Igbo-Ukwu

National Museum, Lagos. 39.1.11

This small pear-shaped bowl has a pouring lip, which suggests that it was a dipper. The raised decorations are spirals with dots in the centers and circles strung through the middle with dots, all alternating with bands of dots. A small conical boss is placed on either side of the handle.



22 VESSEL IN THE FORM OF A SHELL

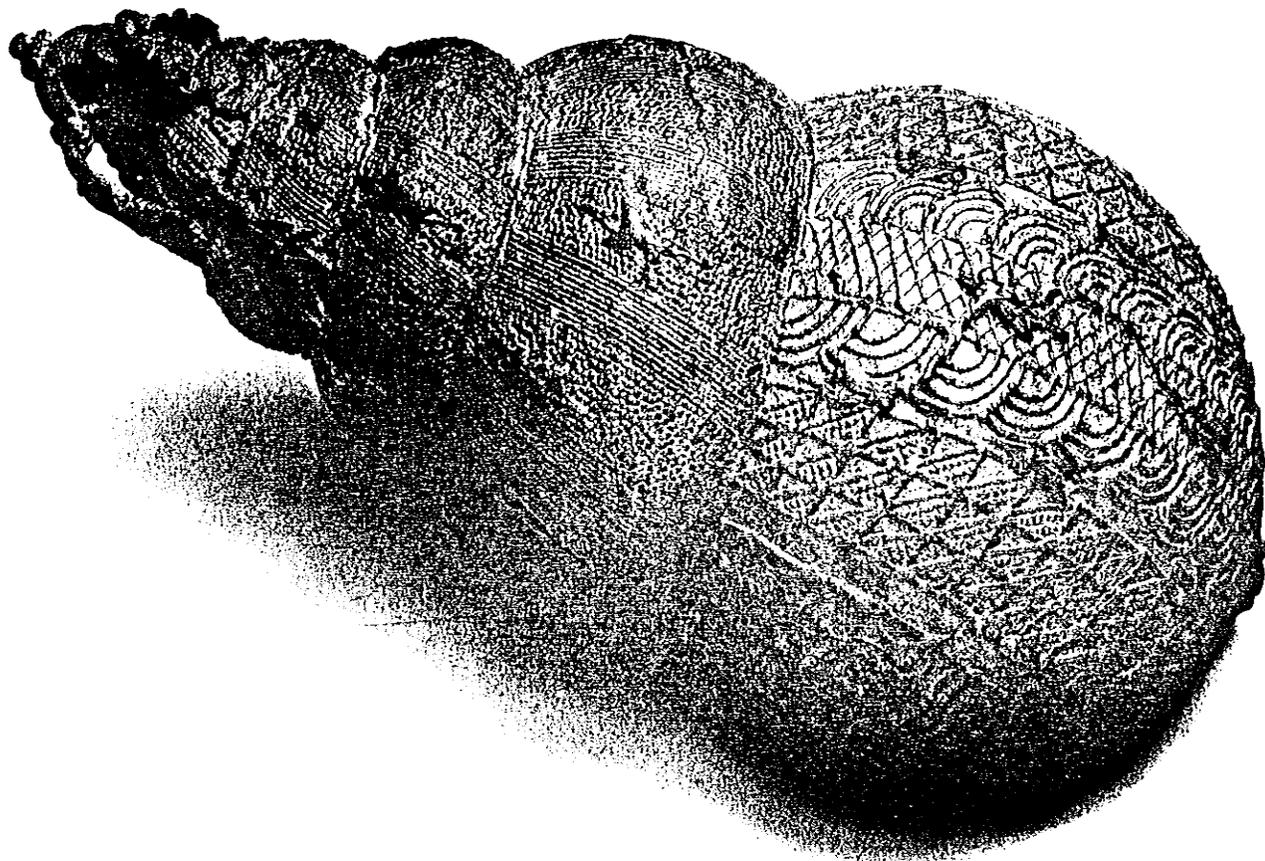
9th/10th century

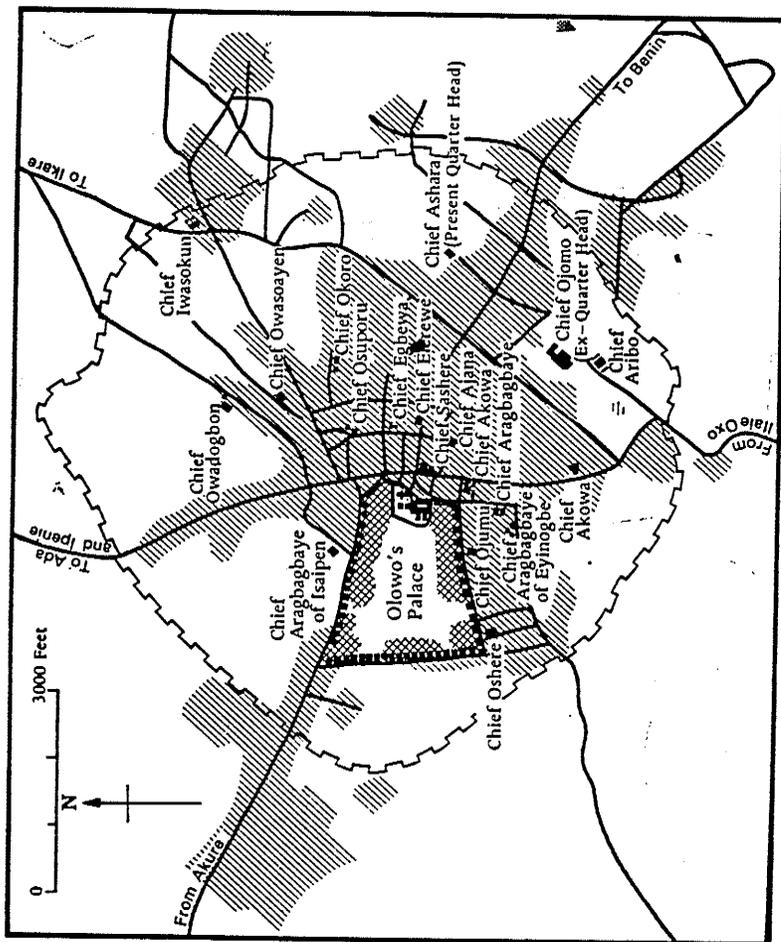
Leaded bronze; l. 30.5 cm. (12 in.)

Presumed from Igbo Isaiah, Igbo-Ukwu

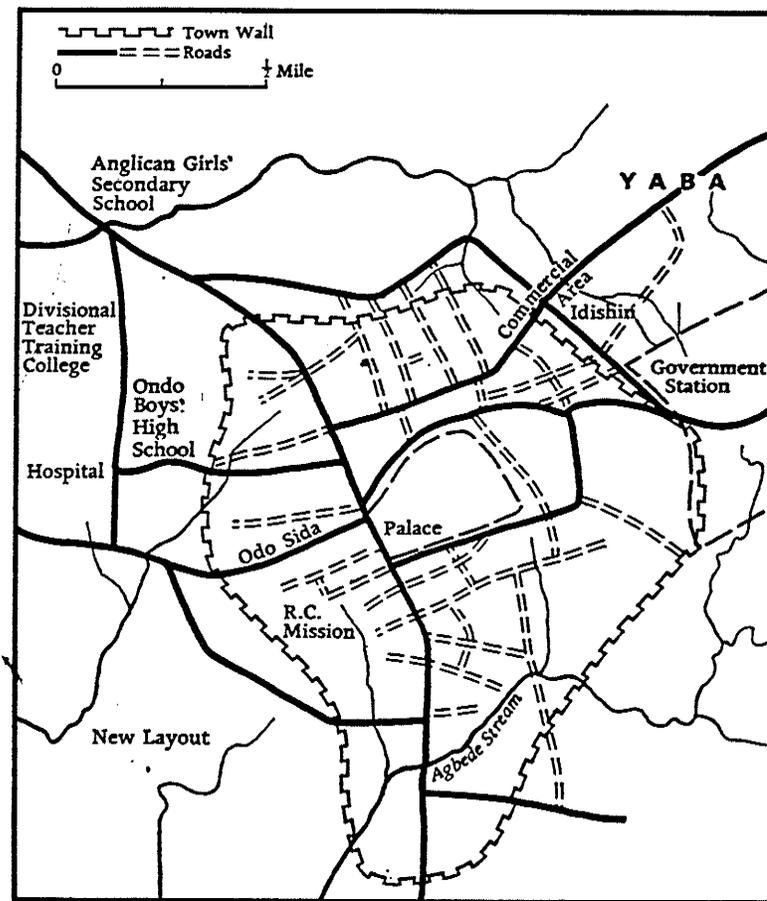
National Museum, Lagos, 39.1.12

This beautifully conceived small ceremonial vessel is in the form of a shell, probably a Triton. Scattered over the delicate network of raised and incised patterns that connect each of the vessel's whorls are crickets and flies. The pointed end is animated by a group of four frogs, whose heads are inside the mouths of snakes that spring from raised rings.

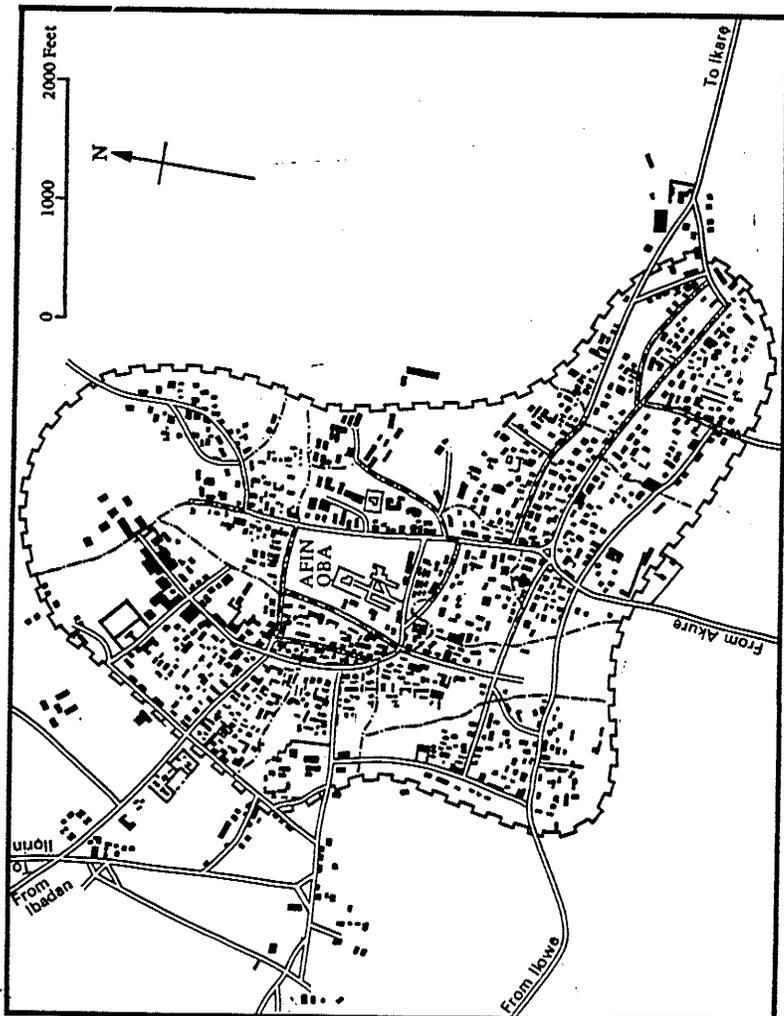




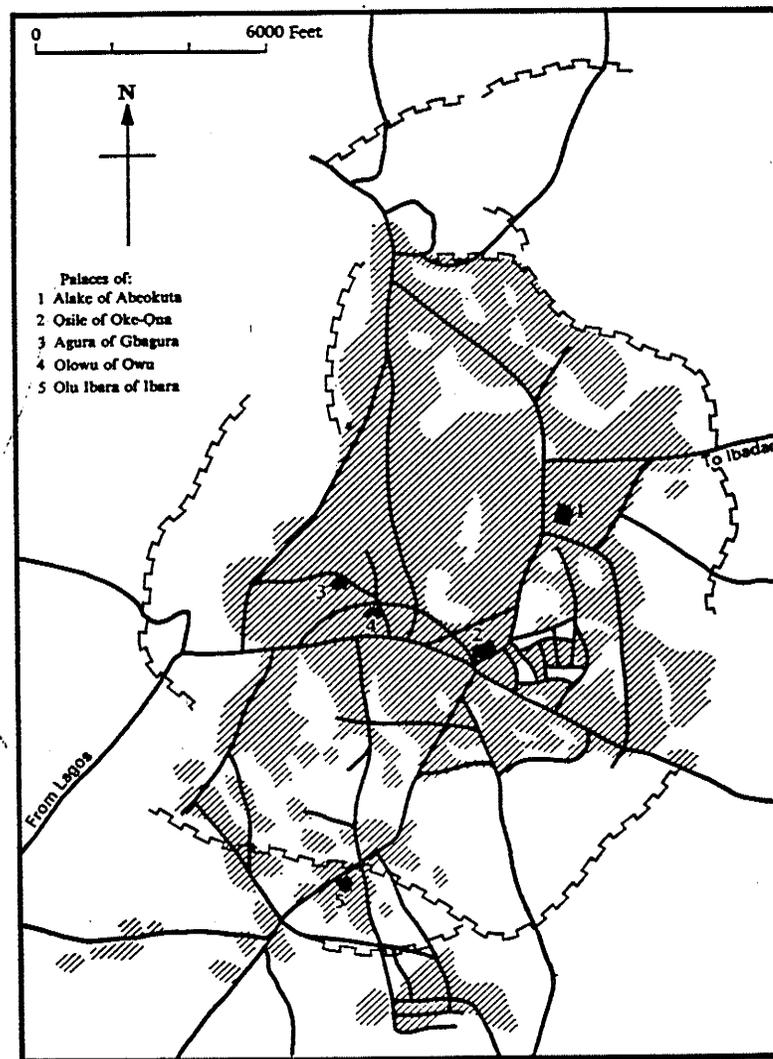
TOWN PLAN 5. Location of the Palace in Owo in relation to the town and compounds of the Inner Council Chiefs (from Ojo: *Yoruba Palaces*)



TOWN PLAN 6. Town plan of Ondo (from LLOYD: *Yoruba Land Law*)



TOWN PLAN 3. Arrangement of quarters and compounds in relation to the palace in Ado Ekiti (from Ojo: Yoruba Palaces)



TOWN PLAN 4. The Palaces of Abeokuta (from Ojo: Yoruba Palaces)

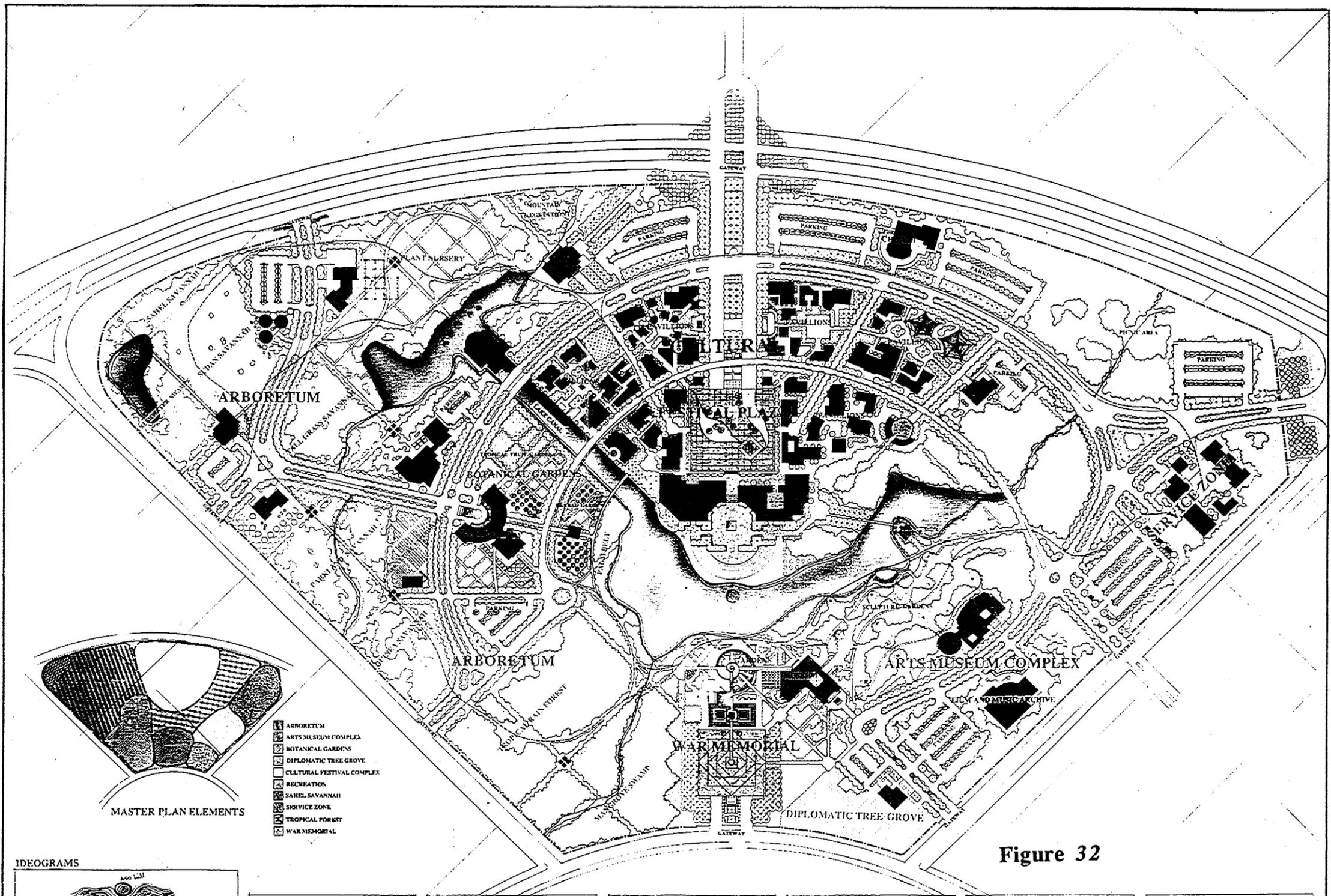
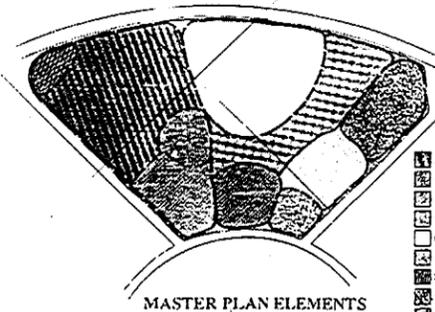
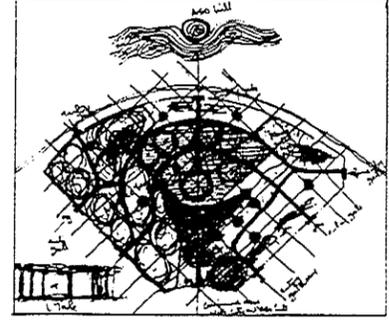


Figure 32



- ARBORETUM
- ARTS MUSEUM COMPLEX
- BOTANICAL GARDENS
- DIPLOMATIC TREE GROVE
- CULTURAL FESTIVAL COMPLEX
- RECREATION
- SAHEL SAVANNAH
- SERVICE ZONE
- TROPICAL FOREST
- WAR MEMORIAL

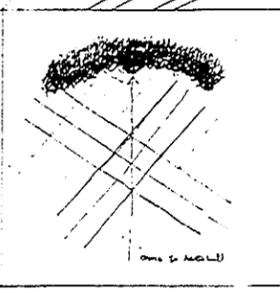
IDEOGRAMS



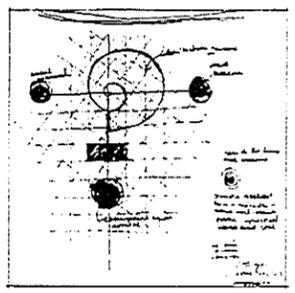
CONCEPTUAL DIAGRAM



COSMIC ORDER OF RELATIONSHIPS



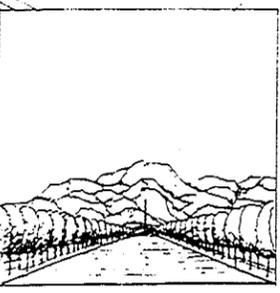
THE SUPER GRID - ORDER OF ORIENTATION



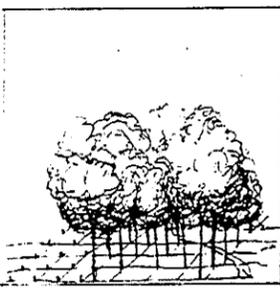
IMPOSITION OF ORDER AND SYMBOLISM



SPATIAL ABSTRACTION



AXIS HIGHLIGHTS, FOCAL POINTS



TREE GRID AT THE DIPLOMATIC GROVE

MASTER PLAN FOR THE NATIONAL PARK OF ARTS AND CULTURE, ABUJA.



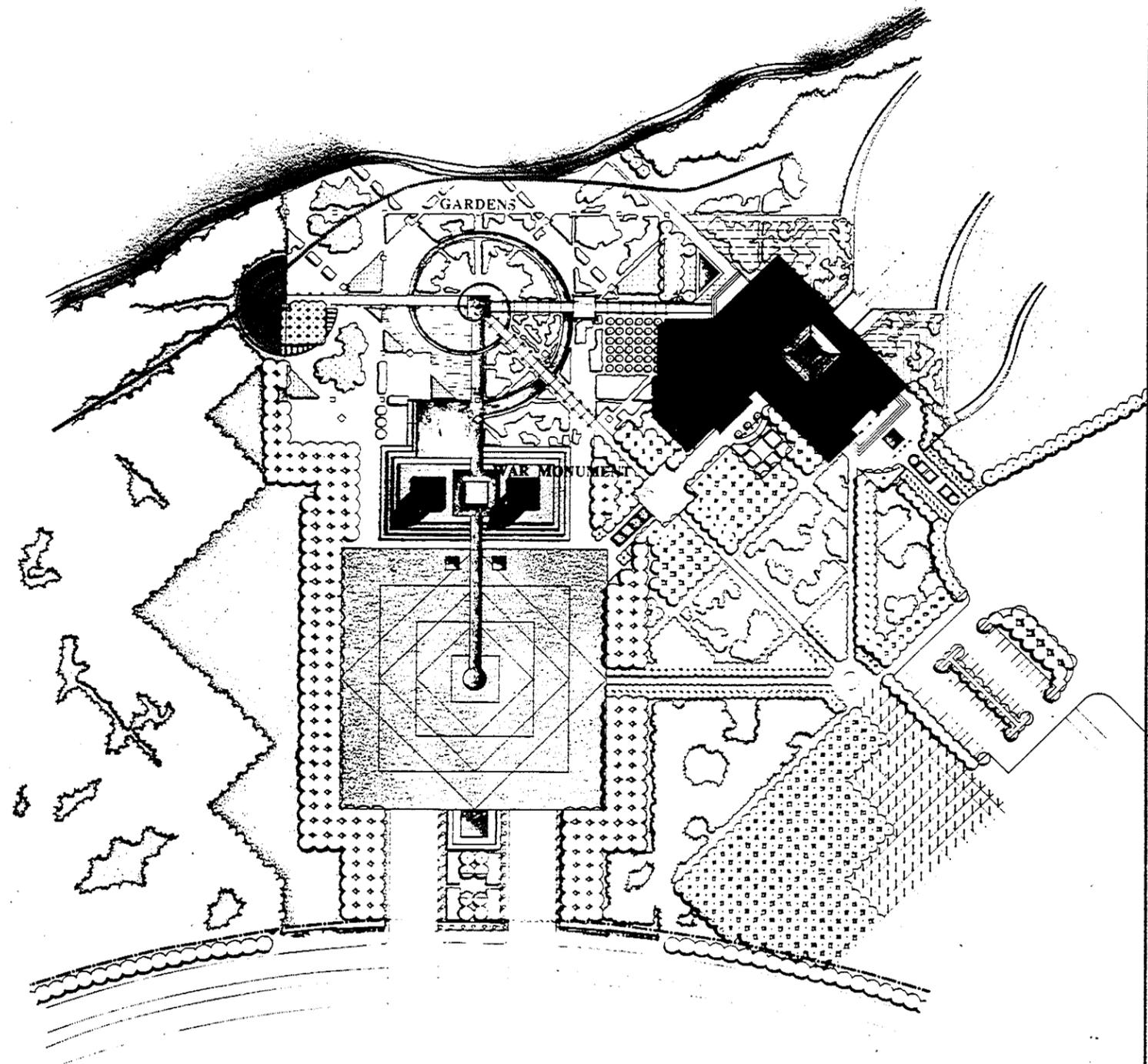
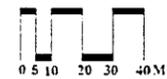


Figure 33. THE WAR MEMORIAL



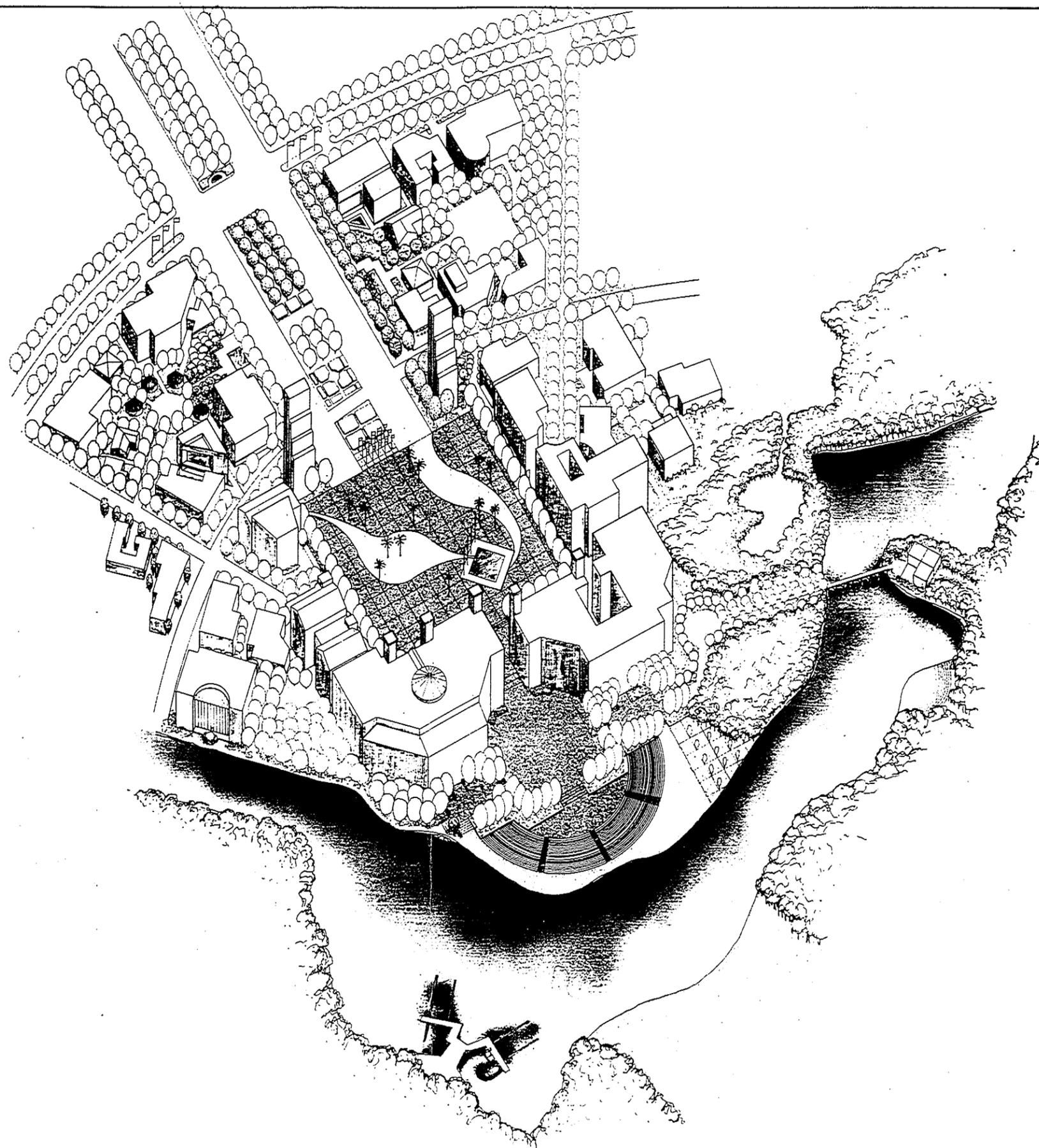


Figure 34. AXONOMETRIC VIEW OF THE FESTIVAL GROUNDS

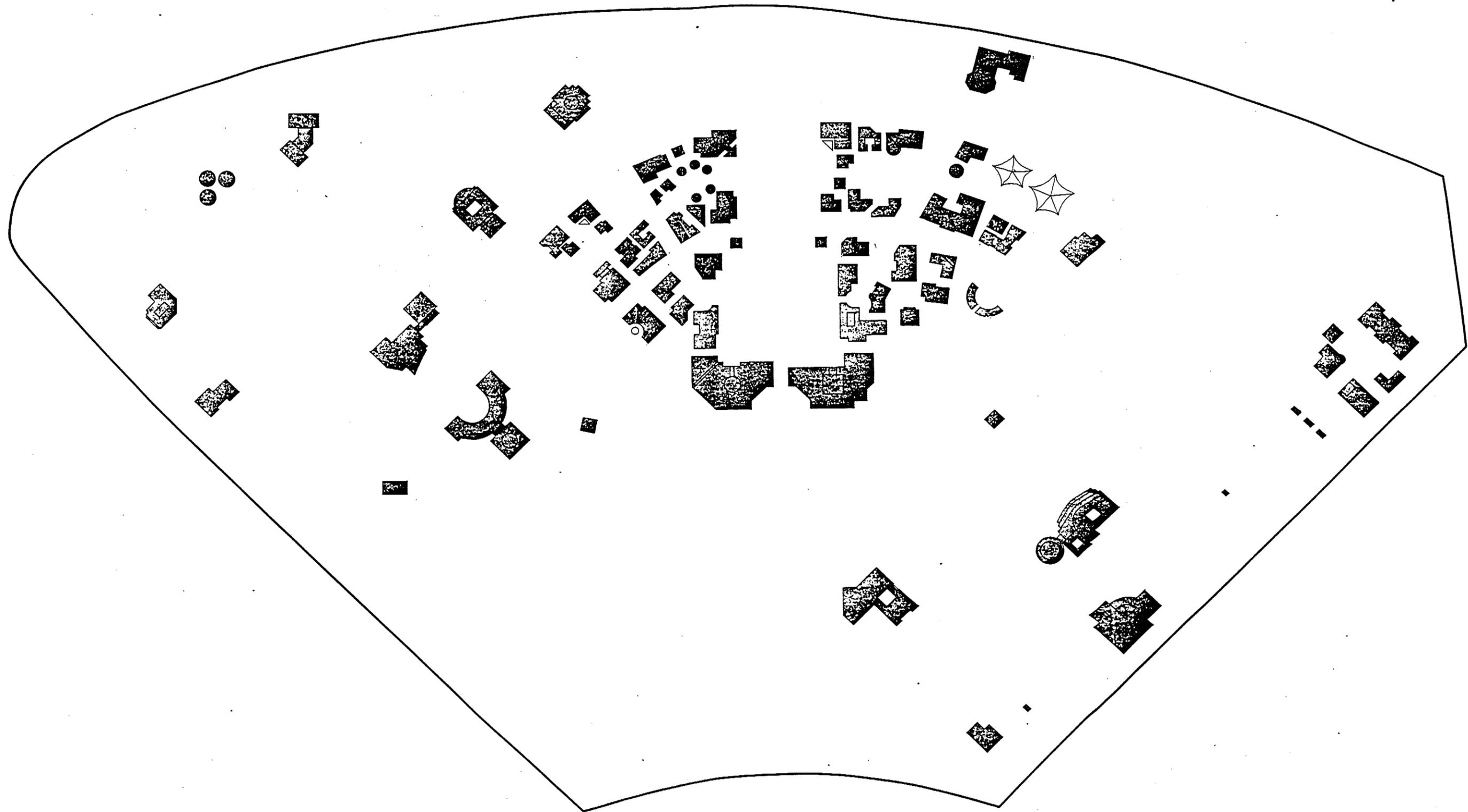


Figure 35. BUILDING ELEMENTS



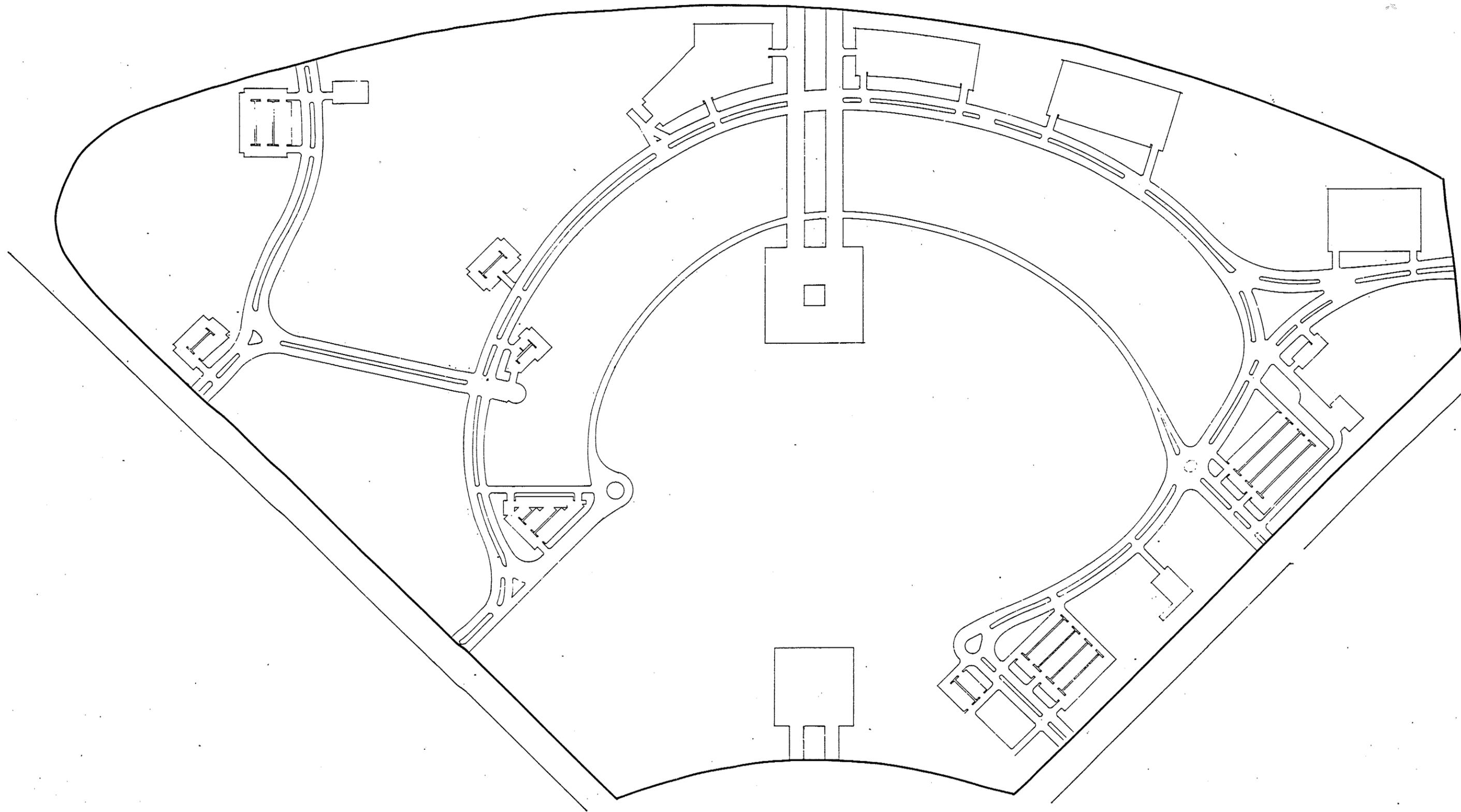
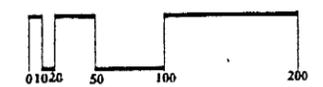
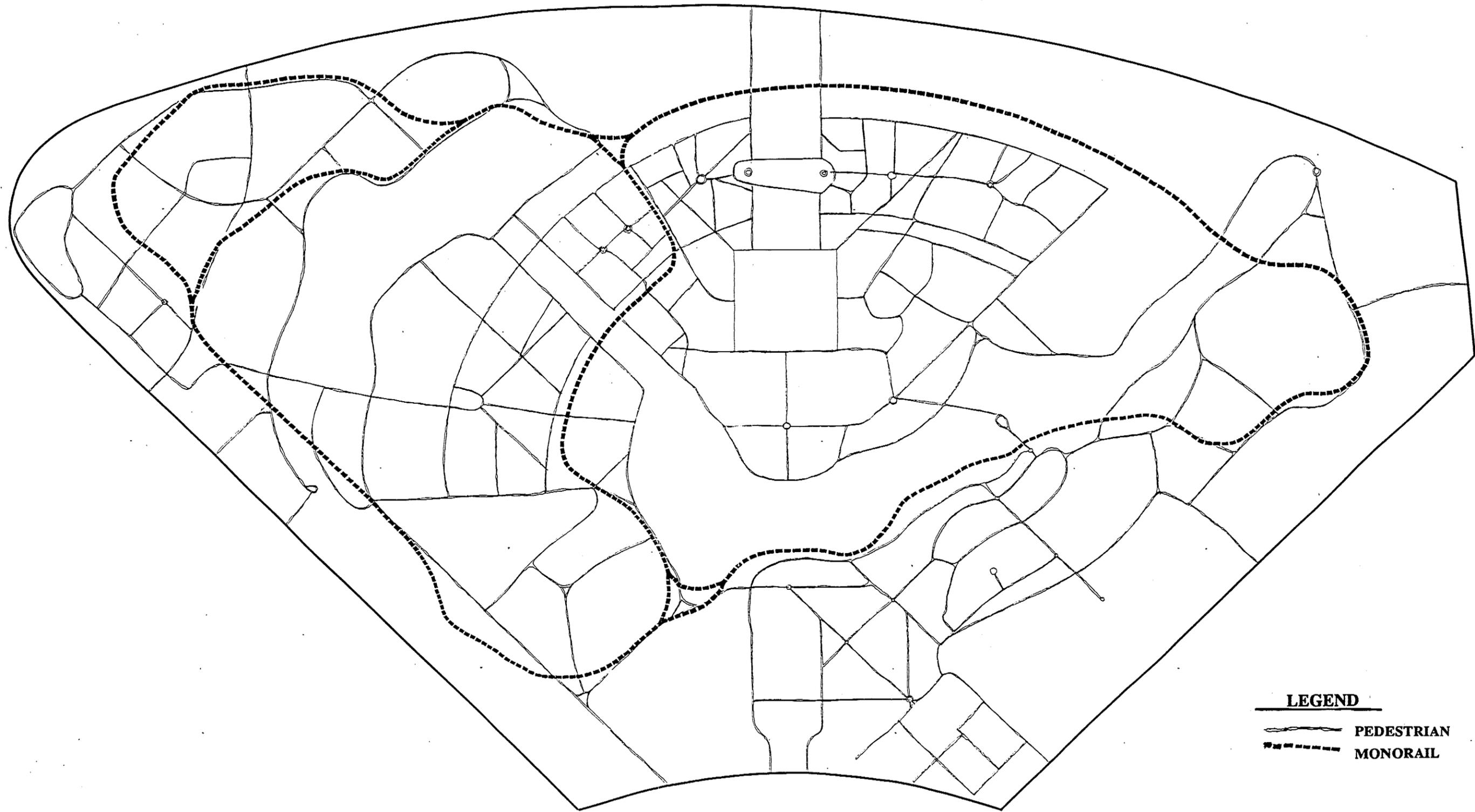


Figure 36.

VEHICULAR SCHEMATICS





LEGEND
 — PEDESTRIAN
 - - - MONORAIL

Figure 37. MONORAIL SCHEMATICS



3

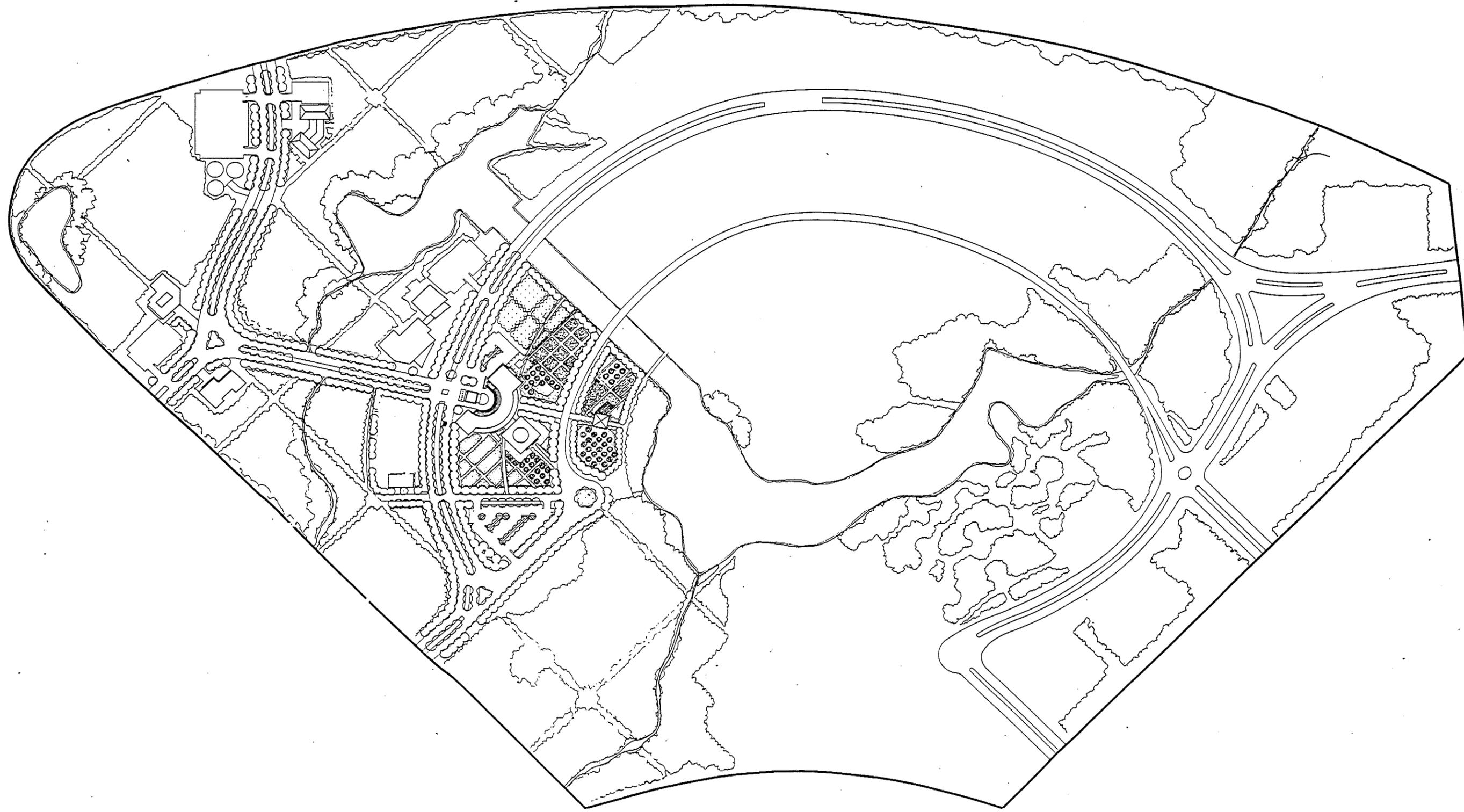
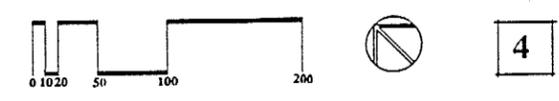


Figure38. VEGETATION SCHEMATICS



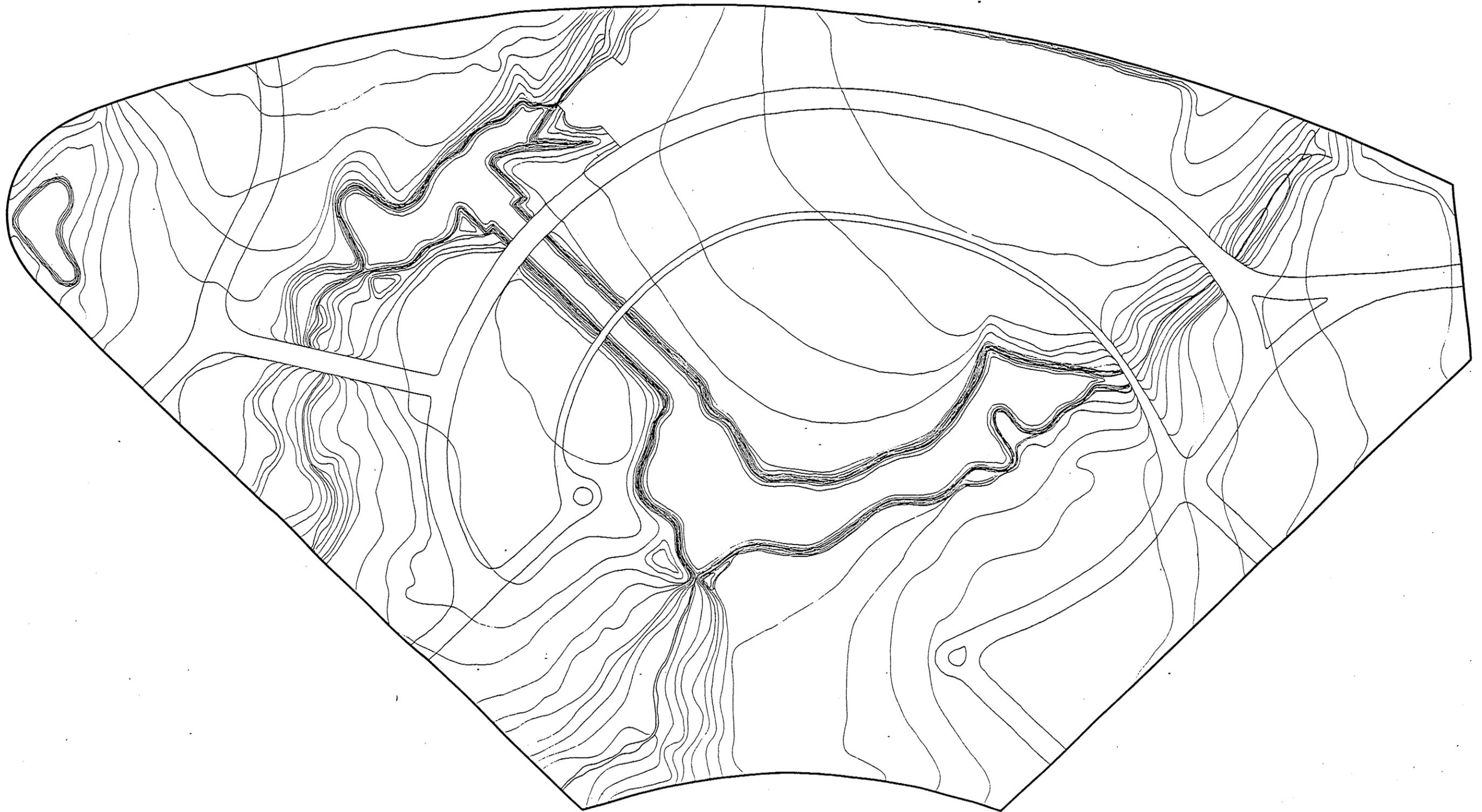


Figure 39. LANDSCAPE SCHEMATICS



5

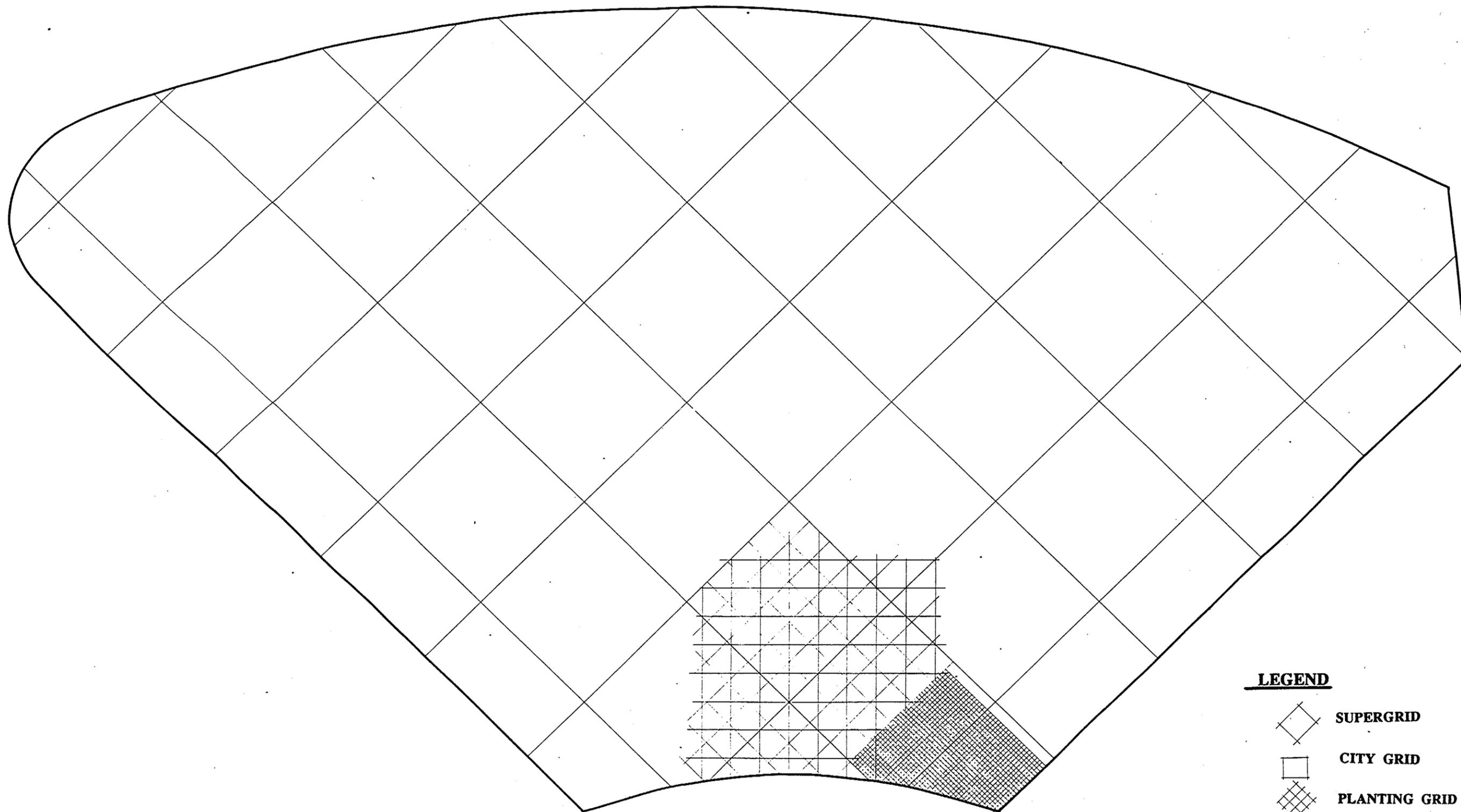


Figure 40. GRID ELEMENTS



- LEGEND**
-  SUPERGRID
 -  CITY GRID
 -  PLANTING GRID



6

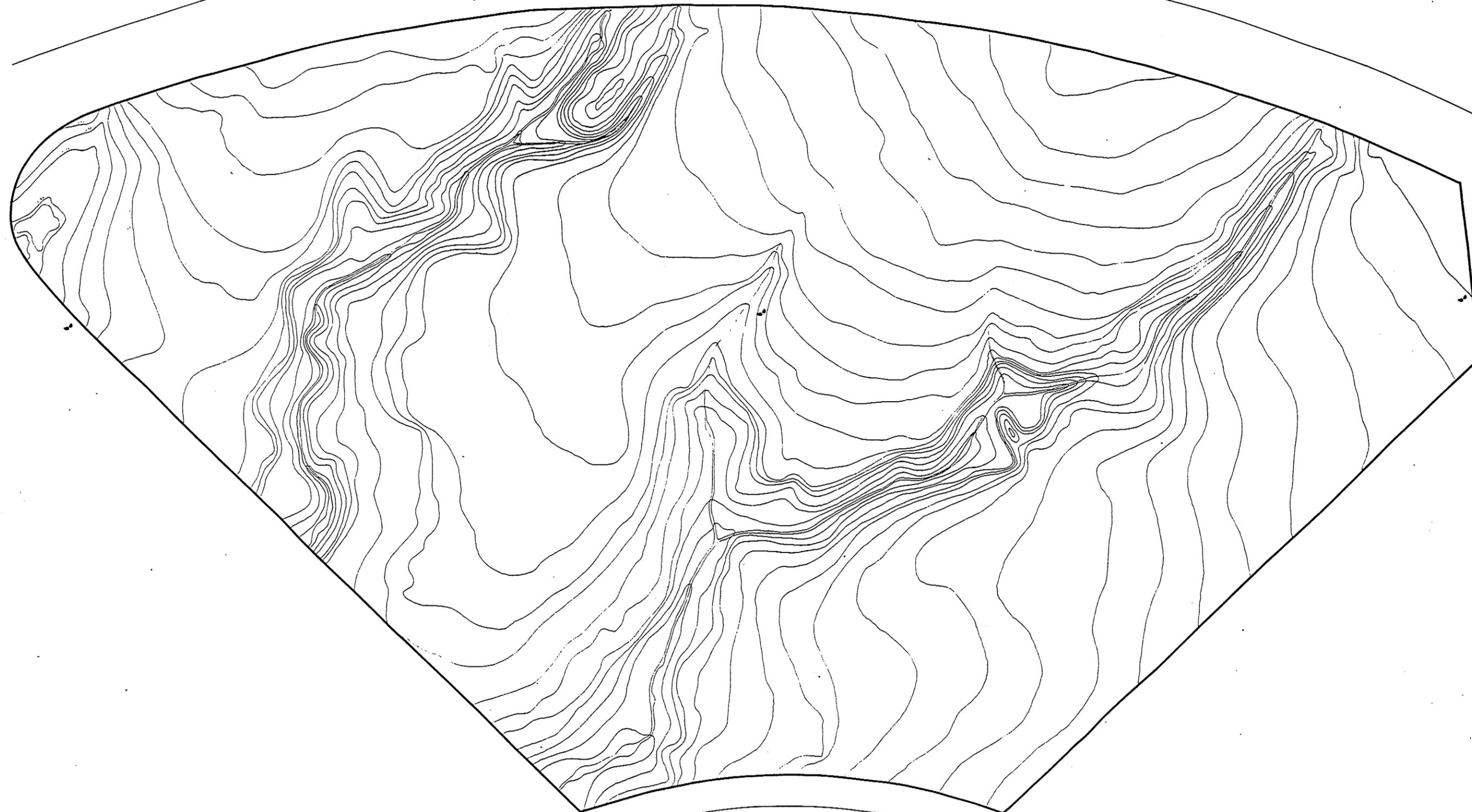


Figure 41. CONTOUR SCHEMATICS

