example, there is no conceivable possibility that the magnificent mud architecture of northern Nigeria should or could be reproduced in the modern metropolis. In Nigeria itself, such reproductions from the past are lovingly and faithfully copied at full scale in the museum at Jos. Pastiche is not advocated in this or any of these volumes. Where such pastiche exists, its effect on the environment and any quality the development may have are examined as objectively as possible. There is a long and distinguished practice of creative designers turning to the past or to the work of people with quite a different cultural background for ideas and inspiration. Here in this series the legitimacy of that process is asserted.

A source of ideas, early in this century, for some creative designers in the modern movements of art and architecture was the artistic endeavour of peoples wrongly described as 'primitive'. African sculpture, for example, was much admired by Picasso, while the primitive hut or basic shelter is of recurring interest for the architect. Le Corbusier is said to have been greatly influenced by such wonderfully sculptural buildings as the churches of Mykonos. With this long tradition of deriving inspiration from the artistic work of peoples whose cultures are so different from our own, it may be apposite to examine the urban architecture of one such group.

The following part of this chapter devoted to Hausa cities is also included in its own right, as a fine example of city decoration and for the obvious photogenic qualities of traditional Hausa urban architecture, in addition to any lessons which may be learned about the use of decoration in the city. There is a close relationship between Hausa decoration and the building technology which underpins the form of such decoration and gives meaning to its use. It is this strong relationship between decoration and structure which is the chief reason for the inclusion of this material in the Epilogue. Although it is safe to assume that neither Pugin nor the Hausa builders were aware of the other's architectural tenets, nevertheless, it is remarkable that the work of the Hausa builder appears to conform closely to the strictures of Pugin, quoted in Chapter 1: 'First, that there should be no features about a building which are not necessary for convenience, construction, or propriety; second, that all ornament should consist of enrichment of the essential construction of the building ... in pure architecture the smallest detail should have a meaning or serve a purpose.' (Pugin, 1841b). This is the first level of analogy explored in this chapter, that is, the bond between Hausa building construction and decoration; the second level of analogy explored transposes this relationship between decoration and building structure into the wider field of urban design. Decoration, at the larger scale of the Hausa city, is related to urban structure with a regularity which reflects the discipline imposed on its use by the constructional process. Urban structure, in the sense used in this text, is the perceptual structure of the city based on the concepts defined by Lynch (1960).

There is an obvious difficulty in attempting to transfer ideas and concepts from one culture to another. Clearly the Hausa have developed very different ideas from our own about the type of decoration which is appropriate in city building and the meanings assigned to that decoration. Hausa culture, like that of any other people, is not static: it changes and evolves, coming to terms with new ideas, reacting to pressures from within its own society and to those foreign pressures exerted from beyond its boundaries. As a physical expression of Hausa culture, city decoration evolves with these changing pressures and tastes. Hausa decoration, therefore, has to be seen developmentally within the context of history. The main focus of this book is the study of urban design as an art form. This is not meant to undervalue social, economic and political perspectives of city form and structure. It is, however, maintained here that the city as an art form has its own validity as an area of investigation. But it is a question of focus, for without considerations of

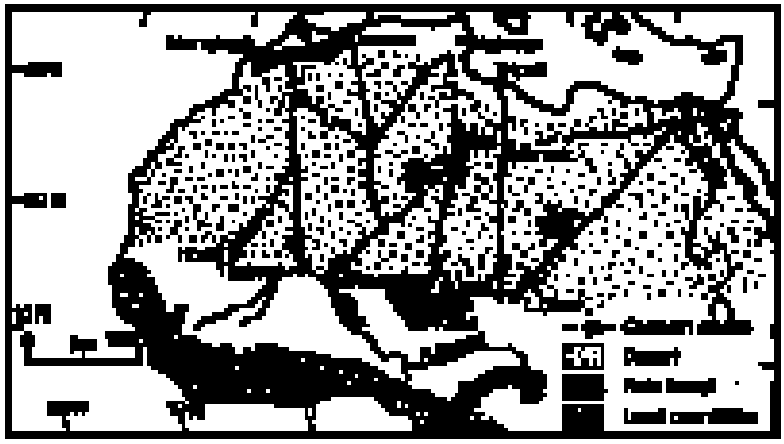
socio-economic factors a purely aesthetic study would, indeed, be arid. Despite the inherent difficulties of interpretation of norms and values in foreign cultures there is a long tradition in the world of art and architecture for exploring analogies which cross cultural boundaries. In the next few paragraphs Hausa decoration will be set within an environmental, historical and cultural context so that the reader may determine how far the analogies have relevance.

THE HAUSA CITY AND ITS DECORATION

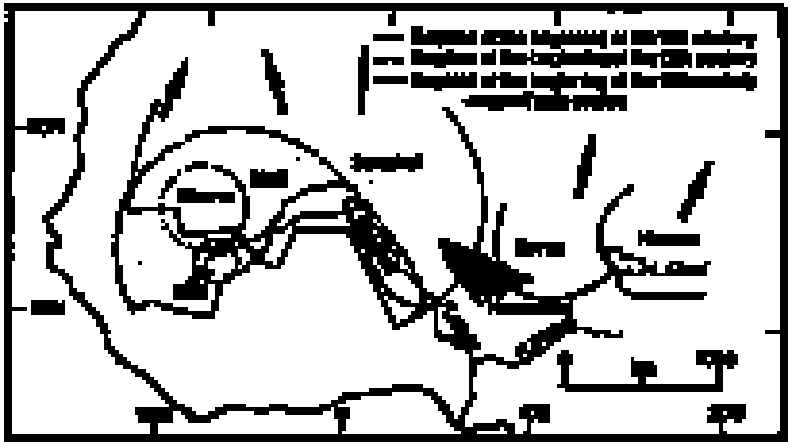
'Deep in darkest Africa...' Phrases such as this, used in the West with derogatory overtones, lend support to the illusion that little of importance occurred on this vast continent until the coming of the European. According to this view of the world, it was the colonial activities of countries such as Britain, France and Portugal, which lifted the shadow of ignorance and illuminated the lives of African peoples. This Euro-centred view of Africa could not be further from the truth, particularly in relation to the development of the highly decorative and sculpted mud cities of West Africa (Moughtin, 1998).

The ecological structure of West Africa takes the form of zones running largely east-west, parallel to the coast and the Sahara. Broadly speaking, the rainy season decreases from south to north and the length of the dry season increases. The vegetation follows this broad climatic pattern. There is a band of forest near the coast followed by bands of savanna which become progressively drier northwards until the desert is reached. Nigeria forms a vertical slice through this natural horizontal or east-west environmental grain of West Africa.

The tropical rainforest, until the arrival of the Europeans, largely in the nineteenth century, inhibited movement of peoples into West Africa from the coast. The Sahara, to the north, did not prove to be such a barrier to movement and contact. Figure 9.1 shows the great trade routes which crossed the



9.1



9.2

Sahara, linking West Africa with the Mediterranean coast. Ideas and commerce flowed freely across the Sahara: first, via the bullock trains and later by camel caravans. After the fall of Rome, the light of civilization was kept alive, in parts of the former Western Empire, by Islam: first, along the southern shores of the Mediterranean, then extending northwards into the Iberian peninsular and south across

Figure 9.1 Trans-Saharan trade routes

Figure 9.2 Empires in West Africa: eleventh to sixteenth centuries