

GHANA

Under favourable conditions of dry climate, availability of materials, and constant maintenance, and with appropriate design, earth buildings can serve a variety of uses including multi-storied structures with reasonably long lives. The Mission School in Novrongo (Fig.1) in the Upper Region of Ghana is a good example of intelligent design in sun-dried earth brick. This double storied structure, with massive walls and arched openings, has survived several decades in the dry Savana climate aided by regular maintenance

Traditional earth buildings include a variety of architectonic devices which are employed to reflect social significance and function. Extra height and minirates are easily recognisable forms in the landscape or townscape, which help identify an important community building such as a mosque. (Fig.2)

Functional elements are also exploited as an integral part of the design. Thus buttresses provide necessary strength to the tall structure and permanent scaffolding facilitates regular maintenance of mud plastered surfaces. They also become the distinctive features of mosque architecture in West Africa.

In a chiefs compound (Fig.3) a distinctive architectural treatment - decorative parapets, flat roof and whitewash - gives prominence to the central apartments of the chief, while simpler round houses provide iden-

FIG. 1
Mission School, Navrongo



FIG. 2
Mosque, Ghana

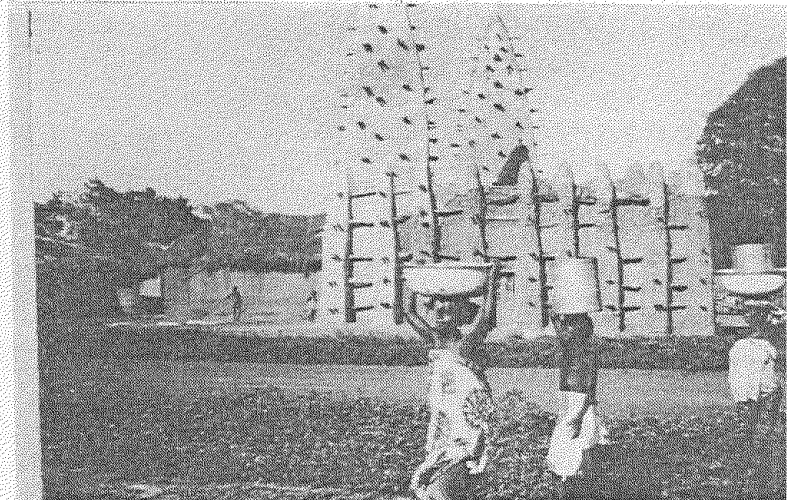


FIG. 2a
Mosque, Walewale

