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THE URBAN DEVELOPMENT OF BUEA

AN ESSAY IN SOCIAL GEOGRAPHY



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Translator J. P. MAGOUE

Limits of the study

The aim of this geographical study is essentially a rapid description of the areas of BUEA. One will find neither a detailed analysis of the problems of developing the social and economic infrastructure, nor of the influence which the town has over the people of the area, nor of the prospected zoning, nor of its activities. It serves merely as an introduction to a more thorough study of the towns in Fako division and their environmental milieu. The information has been given mainly by the Divisional Office in Victoria, the BAKWERI AREA COUNCIL, the LANDS AND SURVEY DEPARTMENT and by field work inquiries made with the collaboration of J.L.DIBONDO. Our grateful thanks go to all those who have helped in this work.

Preliminary definitions

By "BUEA", we mean the administrative areas of BUEA or BUEA STATION, BUEA TOWN native quarters and BUEA TOWN strangers' quarter.

- Within the BUEA agglomeration, we comprise BUEA, GREAT SOPPO, SMALL SOPPO and BOKWANGQ (*) in their entirety.
- The meaning of the words "natives" and "strangers" is after the local usage. The "native" are the indigenous population of the region of BUEA - the BAKWERI - all other ethnic groups constitute the "strangers" irrespective of their date of arrival.

* The name of this village is also written BOKWAONGO

I. NATURE, HISTORY AND PEOPLE IN THE FORMATION OF THE TOWN

BUEA is a small town of 11,000 inhabitants situated at 55 kms (35 mls) from DOUALA, 20kms (12 mls) from VICTORIA as the crow flies, spreading at an altitude of between 800 ms (2,600 ft) and 1,100 ms (3,600 ft) on the slopes of the Cameroon Mountain. At present the capital of the Federated State of WEST CAMEROON, it attracted the Europeans very early owing to its temperate climate and the absence of malaria, this town being at a latitude of 4° 09' North. It was chosen for a short period between the years 1901 and 1909 as the capital of the German colony of CAMEROON. The volcanic activity of the mountain led them to transfer the capital from BUEA to DOUALA in 1909. Around 1900, the BAKWERI village of BUEA comprised approximately 1,500 inhs, 3,200 in 1953, and between 11,000 and 12,000 today.

The natural conditions which have favoured the development of the town are frankly few. First of all the climate : the temperature rarely exceeds a monthly average of 25° C (77° F), whereas TIKO 20kms (12 mls) from BUEA, on sea-level, reaches a temperature of 33° C (91° F); however, the humidity is very high, the rainy season is long and heavy and the sky rarely clears up-except towards the end and the beginning of the rainy season. Secondly, the almost total absence of malaria. Furthermore, it is there that the few springs to be found at such an altitude are situated on the slopes of the mountain in spite of the altitude. Actually, the town is built on mud flows separated by numerous ravines and the slopes are sometimes relatively steep. The town did not develop around the small BAKWERI village of BUEA but in opposition to it. The villagers fought the arrival of the Germans who only succeeded in subduing BUEA in 1894. The village was destroyed by reprisals and was rebuilt on the present site of BUEA TOWN native quarters. The Germans took the land between BUEA TOWN, SMALL SOPPO, GREAT SOPPO and BOKWANGO for the construction of the STATION and the creation of plantations. At the beginning of the XXth century, BUEA was on the German penetration road which went from VICTORIA to BUEA across the W.A.P.V. plantations. It was more than a village : its central position and its chiefs assured it of its leading position in the whole of the BAKWERI zone.

BUEA began to emerge from the lethargy into which it had fallen after the German departure when the first seeds of local government were created in 1958, and really to grow since independence. The choice of BUEA as a political capital made it an urban centre. Without that the town would probably have been no more important than MUEA. For neither the plantations nor the port or trading activities were there to give the town the decisive spark.

The agglomeration of BUEA shows well differentiated aspects despite its small size ; firstly by its scattered habitat which corresponds to the nature of the land and to the taste of the English coloniser ; by its buildings of various periods which give the STATION its particular character ; by the no man's land areas isolating the different quarters of the town ; by the ravines dividing the town along its longer dimension ; by the fences enclosing the native quarters and those of the strangers.

The wish of the inhabitants to delimit the sociologically different zones is reflected in its development. The Government's effort to control the development of the town by the creation of camps and lay-outs restricted to one type of construction contributes to reinforcing the impression of urban division more or less determined by the natural conditions but also sought after by the people.

The sociological profile of the town reflects its functions : over a thousand civil servants some 2,500 salaried employees of either the Federal or Federated Governments or public or quasi-public establishments.

Such a large number of salaried employees in a town comparatively small by Cameroonian standards has created a special sort of society as regards its wishes, its way of living, and its system of hierarchy which manifests itself in the way the land is occupied.

This population with higher incomes than the regional average poses numerous problems owing to its recent arrival. The demand for housing has been important and has led to the disorderly construction on the outskirts of plank-built accommodation without the basic collective equipment being provided ; it has also led to a fervour of residential construction partially controlled by the Government in the Station, and finally to an accumulation of people in the dilapidated houses of Buea Town strangers' quarter. This has resulted in an increase of the cost of living accelerated by the absence of modern shops, and the weakness of the traditional small trade.

Therefore Buea in 1970 is fast becoming an urban centre whose character has quickly changed and of which we are going to analyse the spatial and social components by the geographical study of its urban area.

II. THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE URBAN AREA

The area over which the agglomeration of Buea is developing is relatively extended (10 sqkms - 4 sqmls) and the urban texture is spasmodic. Areas with a nucleus of population have unpopulated or sparsely populated areas such as the Prison Farms, the former golf course, some land at present uncultivated or producing subsistence crops.

1 - The legacy of history : the historical centre, the present land tenure

From the German era, are the houses built on pillars, the Prime Minister's Lodge (the Schloss), the Bismarck fountain, the Presbyterian Mission church and bridge, these legacies give a good idea of the boundaries of the original Station if one excludes the four isolated houses : the two farm houses, the house of the Chief Conservator of forests, and the Sick bay house.

An estimate of the area covered by Buea Station during the German era gives an approximation of 85 hecs. (210 acres), of which 15 hecs (37 acres) belong to the Presbyterian Mission. A good part of this area was not built up. Furthermore the Catholic Mission at Small Soppo and the Baptist Mission at Great Soppo possessed respectively 19,5 hecs. (59 acres) and 14,4 hecs. (38 acres).

As soon as they settled, the Germans appropriated the greater part of the land leaving to the Bakweri only narrow and mountainous zones. This originated the conflicts which caused friction between the Bakweri and the administration (cf. map 2 for the land requested from the Government by the Bakweri).

In 1896, after the Von Preuss report cited by E. ARDENER (1) the territory has been split in the following way :

- 50 hecs., (125 acres) to the German Government for the construction of the STATION ;
- 6 hecs., (15 acres) to the Basel Presbyterian Mission ;
- 1,154 hecs., (2,885 acres) to Governor Von Soden as personal property.

(1) Study on the history of Buea at the arrival of the Europeans (1844-1898) in due course of printing at the Government Printing Press, Buea.

The land belonging to Von Soden formed the zone at present occupied by the Prisons Farms, LOWER FARM and WEST FARM, encircling the STATION on all sides and separating it from the BAKWERI villages. These lands were ceded to the WEST AFRIKANISCHE PFLANZUNGSGESELLSCHAFT VICTORIA (W.A.P.V.) in 1897 ; the latter gave a portion of them for the extension of the STATION and gave back another portion to the natives. In 1946, the C.D.C. (CAMEROONS DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION) took these lands over where it created cattle-rearing farms and cultivated European vegetables. It gave these farms to the Government in 1957 who handed them over to the Prisons Department. One of them was used partly for the construction of the Ministerial Block and for the creation of lay-outs (LOWER FARM LAY-OUT, LOWER FARM HOUSE).

The first sharing out of these lands between the Government, the Missions and a private land owner is still the basis of the present division of the land despite later re-allotment.

From the English era, there remain the official buildings and a new style of building. However, they followed the German tradition for the construction of the workers' camps.

The situation towards 1960 is summarised in the map that we drew based on those drawn for the C.D.C. and the LANDS AND SURVEY DEPARTMENT in 1956 and 1960.

In the STATION, the large lay-outs for the Senior Service, G.R.A. (Government Residential Area), and LOWER FARM, the civil servants and boys quarters of the Mountain Hotel, a portion of the Clerks quarters, the offices of the various departments in the area of the House of Assembly, of the Agricultural Department and of the Public Service Commission, the Mountain Hotel were created.

The construction of the Ministerial Block was also practically finished.

The BUEA TOWN strangers quarters already had 300 buildings in the same dilapidated state as they are today. In BOKWANGO, GREAT SOPPO and SMALL SOPPO, the strangers quarters had little importance.

During the period of 60 years which saw the creation of BUEA, it seems quite clear that the 15 years of German colonisation strongly influenced its development in its initial organisation and that the 45 years of British Mandate managed in a flexible way the land patrimony reserved by the Germans, constructing some of the official buildings necessary to the instalment of the administration, and to accommodate some of the civil servants. As for the social and economic infrastructure, it was still more or less inexistant outside the STATION.

2 - The recent development and the present physiognomy of the agglomeration of BUEA

a. The rational urban development : the lay-outs

The lay-outs have been a means for the administration to control the development of the town. But this intervention of the LANDS AND SURVEY DEPARTMENT has only been exercised on the lands belonging to the Government. After being surveyed the plots are distributed amongst the applicants according to certain set-rules for an annual rent (2). The LANDS AND SURVEY DEPARTMENT delivers a certificate of occupancy of the land but does not sell it.

For the whole of the existing or planned lay-outs the LANDS AND SURVEY DEPARTMENT has 703 plots to distribute for housing construction. Out of these 703 plots, 247 are reserved for the construction of Senior Service type houses.

(2) The annual rent is 25,000 Fcfa per acre (1 acre = 40,46 ares) for the Cameroonians, 50,000 for persons of other nationalities and from 50 to 90,000 for service-stations.

Table I : The lay-outs of the agglomeration of BUEA

Type of housing	Name of the lay-out	Number of plots	Reserved plots	Built-up plots
Senior Service	G.R.A.	60	59	53
	Federal quarters	23	23	8
	Lower Farm lay-out	60	60	40 (?)
	Lower Farm house L.	22	21	5
Junior Service (stone built and plank-built)	Great Soppo new L.	345	264	127
	Likoko Signal hill	88	82	2
Junior Service (project)	Sick Bay house L.	23	23	-
Senior Service (project)	Escarpment L.	20	8	-
	Buea Town road L.	16	-	1
	G.R.A. extension	46	-	-
Total		703	540	236

Source : lay-outs register from LANDS AND SURVEY DEPARTMENT

The situation of the lay-outs shows the directions in which the town is developing :

- BOKWANGO road (G.R.A., G.R.A. extension, LIKOKO),
- on both sides of the old STATION (Federal quarters, Escarpment lay-out, BUEA Town road lay-out),
- on both sides of the VICTORIA road (Lower Farm lay-out, Sick Bay house lay-out, Lower Farm house lay-out, GREAT SOPPO new lay-out).

A rough study of the distribution of the plots amongst the lease-holders shows a fact well-known in many African towns : those who acquire the plots are mostly civil servants and salaried workers from the Public sector. Amongst those, the Federal and Federated Governments come first in the G.R.A. (25 plots) and the Federal quarters (15 plots). One also finds state societies such as the West Cameroon Electricity Corporation, the West Cameroon Development Agency.

Finally some local businessmen have acquired several plots. One of them has even created a lay-out in the BAKWERI land and has constructed there ten houses of different types that he lets. These are the Monangai quarters.

As for the facilities provided, excepted the G.R.A. which is the oldest lay-out, most of the lay-outs have no proper roads even in the Senior Service quarters. In the lay-outs of the outskirts, at GREAT SOPPO or at BOKWANGO, the water is distributed at the moment by few taps and the roads are in a deplorable state even during the dry season.

b. The haphazard development : the strangers' quarter

In BUEA TOWN, SMALL SOPPO, GREAT SOPPO and to a lesser extent in BOKWANGO, some quarters have developed very rapidly and at random with the least comfortable and salubrious conditions.

The most striking example from any aspect is BUEA TOWN strangers' quarter. A high density of housing (more than 450 plank-buildings in about 17 hecs-42 acres), narrow uneven streets strewn with lava-blocks laid bare by the rain, a few water-fountains around which mud-

puddles have formed, no open spaces except for the ravines and the car-park, no vegetation ; along the main road, orange neon-street-lighting contrasting with the rest of the town ; badly put together plank-houses rotting with the rain and the humidity, roofs of corrugated iron which is rarely changed, one kitchen for 3 to 10 households (the same thing for the toilet) ; at one end, the market built in planks on the slopes coming down from the Customary Court towards the ravine separating Bonaberi from BUEA TOWN strangers'quarter ; at the other end, uncultivated bush invaded by elephant-grass with on one side the rubbish dump of the area, and on the other side the cemetery. The whole being built on an average one in ten slope.

The other strangers' quarter has not got this slum appearance. There is less concentration of people, they are more comfortable and more salubrious. The contact with the bush-life is not lost, the women cultivate the cocoyam and maize fields not far from their homes. In general these areas are stretched along the main streets and small traders and artisans have settled there.

The existence of these self-generated areas poses serious problems concerning their renovation and their sanitation. At first, it seems that with both the BAKWERI and the administration (in the case of Bonaberi), the strangers have been given a part of the territory to settle as they thought best. In fact a small number amongst them have built houses that they let to new arrivals. Therefore in these areas, the landlord is an important person.

c. The present structure of the agglomeration

A certain number of peculiar traits characterises the present structure of BUEA TOWN.

First of all, the absence of a real centre. Here one finds in the agglomeration of BUEA only small African shops and native industry. One finds neither a modern business quarter nor a commercial quarter.

Out of the 520 enterprises of this type, which make up the agglomeration of BUEA, 380 are located along the main road of BUEA TOWN strangers' quarter, 50 in Soppo Long Street, 50 in GREAT SOPPO, 20 in Soppo Wovilla strangers' quarter and 20 scattered in different parts of the STATION.

Then the scattered nature of the administrative centre along the two main roads going to GREAT SOPPO and SMALL SOPPO with three focal points around the Treasury, the House of Assembly, and the Ministerial Block.

Lastly, the residential areas.

In the STATION, we have two main types of areas layered and separated by the Ministerial Block. There are the lower quarters situated at an altitude less than 900 ms (3,000 ft), where all the constructions are identical ; the Clerks quarters, the Police barracks and those of the Warders. Then, there are the upper ones where there is a selection of buildings of all ages, where the houses are built in their own grounds, which are reminiscent of the British atmosphere in their general setting. There is only the Lower Farm lay-out to link these two areas.

The strangers' quarters present two different aspects. We have described BUEA TOWN strangers' quarter. In SMALL SOPPO, the habitat, to a certain extent reminiscent of BUEA TOWN, is more spaced out, small areas of bush interrupting the regular lines of houses along the Tole Tea Estate road. Lastly, in GREAT SOPPO, the strangers' quarter have a much more spacious physiognomy ; the houses are larger and placed along relatively straight roads. 90% of the land has been recently laid-out and the area has developed more smoothly than elsewhere.

The hibiscus hedges and the woods separate the natives from the strangers and keep in the cattle. The strangers have a more scattered habitat contrasting with the enclosures. The houses are built in two rows facing each other, perpendicularly to the mountain at Vasingi, Soppo Mokongo, Soppo Wonganga and Likoko-Membea. The traditional type of mat-house is

now rare. Planks, corrugated iron and painting are found everywhere. Nearly all the compounds are enclosed, with a large area used as the village square ; in BOKWANGO and Wondongo, the stone-church occupies a central position and serves as a polling station. All this is reminiscent of European villages.

So, in spite of its small size, the agglomeration of BUEA appears to be varied and contrasted as is confirmed by the table of densities.

Table II : some densities in the sectors of BUEA

Bonaberi	300 inhabitants/hecs
Buea Town St	200 " "
Clerks & Police Q	62 " "
Great Soppo St	55 " "
G.R.A.	23 " "

3 - Housing in the agglomeration of BUEA and cost of construction

Amongst the problems of the agglomeration, it seemed to us that that of accommodation was one of the most important. In BUEA, at least 2/3 of some 2,250 houses are rented, and in the rest of the agglomeration, 1/3 of the 900 houses were lived in by people paying a rent.

Table III : the renting of houses in BUEA

a. Description

Sector	Floor	Walls	Rooms	Water Elect.	Kitchen	Sanitation	Extras	Surface m ²
1	laid floor	stone built	4/6	water elect.	indoor stone built	toilets wash-basins bath	garage boys quarters	50/250
2	"	"	2/5	"	"	shower toilet wash-basin	nil	20/120
3	"	plank built	1/4	elect. only	outdoor plank built	communal toilets and wash-basins	wood verandah	20/80
4	" some-times	"	1/3	nil	communal outdoor plank-built	"	nil	10/30
5	"	"	1/3	elect. some-times	"	"	wood verandah often	10/40
6	nil	"	1/4	nil	outdoor mat kitchen	nil	nil	20/50

b. Monthly rent (Fcfa)

Sector 1 - G.R.A., Station, Lower Farm Layout	25 to 70,000
2 - Clerks Q., Police barracks, Prisons barracks (warders B.)	6% of the monthly wage
3 - Great Soppo new lay-out, Likoko layout	1,500 to 2,500 one room
4 - Buea Town strangers, Bonaberi	1,000 to 2,000 one room
5 - Small Soppo Long Street, Great Soppo St	800 to 2,000 one room
6 - S.S. Wovila St, Wonyalonga, Mokunda, G.S. Mokongo, Bokwango	300 to 1,500 one room

after an inquiry done in 50 houses

Much information can be taken from table III : the very great difference between the cost of renting Senior Service type houses and the others, the absence of rented houses in some quarters (Wonganga, Woteke, Wovila natives, Vasingi and Soppo Likoko) too far from the town ; the rather marked differences in the level of comfort and hygiene between the houses in the STATION area and the others.

All this is frankly not particular to BUEA, but is found in bigger towns where people with varied levels of income are found together.

The cost of the construction of a house in BUEA is also very variable and the scale of prices is completely open.

Here are some examples :

- 1 - BOKWANGO - 3 room house without a cement floor - wood-plank walls - thatched mat-roof - outside kitchen.
approximate cost : 16,000 Fcfa (labour charge 25%)
with corrugated iron roof : 30,000 Fcfa
- 2 - GREAT SOPPO - 7 room house intended for letting-cement floor - corrugated iron roof - electricity - four kitchens - two W.C. - two outside wash-basins.
approximate cost : 500,000 Fcfa (labour charge 15%)
- 3 - GREAT SOPPO - 7 room house (to house two families) cement floor - stone walls - water - electricity - corrugated iron roof - outside kitchen, W.C. and wash-basin.
approximate cost : 750,000 Fcfa (labour charge 50%)
- 4 - Federal quarters - 4 room Senior Service type house - boys quarters - garage
approximate cost : 6,000,000 Fcfa.

The comparison between the cost of the construction and the renting is interesting : it shows that a house of the second category can be paid off in four years, a house of the fourth category in eight years.

As we can see the accomodation of people in BUEA poses the same material and social problems as in many other towns of both large and average size in CAMEROON.

The study of the appearance and the urban development of the agglomeration enables us at this point to draft a table of the BUEA agglomeration in terms of their integration in the town.

They are arranged in interrupted circular zones around the STATION with the biggest concentration of people along the four main roads leading from the BUEA round-about. First of all, the STATION whose function is an administrative one. Secondly, in a radius of 4 kms. (2,5 miles) measured from the Ministerial Block (see map 2) there are semi-urban quarters and quarters barely touched by urbanisation. Beyond, the rural zones are already reached, as for instance in BOKWANGO or Soppo-Likoko.

III. THE DIFFERENT AREAS IN BUEA (see map 3)

Up to now, we have referred to the different areas by the names given by the inhabitants. The study of the urban development has shown us that a "comparative" geography could be made taking into consideration only the appearance, the position and the environment of the different parts of the agglomeration. It remains to be seen whether the notion of sector used in large towns is applicable to BUEA.

1 - The notion of sector

An urban sector is a portion of an agglomeration differentiated by its particular characteristics (aspect of the habitat and of the housing, density of population, functions, social and ethnic structure, etc.) ; by its position and its environment, its relations with the whole of the urban or extra-urban area—for example, the plantations for work or leisure, the interwoven relationship existing within the confines of the area which it occupies (use of educational, commercial, religious, political services, etc.).

The relative age of the sector contributes towards a more intensive collective life than in more recent sectors where the social network between neighbours is just beginning and where the meeting places are few. So, the rhythm of the life in a sector depends on its age, on its more or less functional or residential character and also on the homogeneity of the group which lives there as regards its economic and social level. Moreover, it seems that the mixing of ethnic groups generates life as in the case of BUEA TOWN strangers. Some ethnic groups specialise in a certain profession and this creates relations, at first economic, among the different groups. In BUEA, the traders and shop-keepers are IBO, IBIBIO and BAMILEKE, the tailors HAUSA, the butchers come from the Grasslands, the women who sell palm-wine ("white mimbo") or corn-beer ("quacher") are BAKWERI or come from BAMENDA.

Are there sectors in BUEA ? There exists a differentiation in the various parts of the urban whole, very developed working connections for a small centre between the quarters of the STATION where the administrative offices are found and the peripheral sectors, BUEA TOWN, GREAT SOPPO, SMALL SOPPO and BOKWANGO. At the office opening and closing times, it is surprising to see the large numbers of people making for the residential areas, either walking or in the Land-Rovers of the various departments. Moreover, the football field and the cinema are meeting-places for the whole of the population.

The life of each part of the agglomeration is more difficult to grasp. The children go to the various schools of the urban zone or outside of it without considering distance. This is owing to the small number of primary schools, to their positions on the edge of the inhabited zones, to their different religious denominations (6 out of 8 schools are private). The churches are more coherently placed according to the life of the sectors, the exception being the STATION where is only the church of the Presbyterian Mission. However, a distinction should be made between the important stone-built churches built in the mission compounds and the plank-built churches within the various quarters. Moreover, the people in BUEA TOWN and the peripheral quarters patronise the shops and bars, those of the STATION, the clubs and leisure centres.

The contrasts between the various sectors can be easily seen, if one examines the map of the agglomeration of BUEA as regards the habitat and the other map for the proportion of strangers and the socio-professional nature.

In a word, it can be said that there are sectors in BUEA which range from the primarily functional central sectors to the rural sectors sending a few people to work in BUEA. And this in spite of the small size of most of them. However, only one of them, BUEA TOWN strangers' quarter is animated by a real town atmosphere. The "town" with its market, its

shops, its bars, its five churches of all faiths, its dispensary, its two schools, the customary court, its permanent animation.

2 - The various sectors of BUEA

In view of all the information gathered for each sector, it is possible to classify them into four main groups : BUEA STATION, BUEA TOWN, GREAT SOPPO and BOKWANGO.

a. BUEA STATION : altitude and social stratification

The STATION lives to the rhythm of its civil servants installed according to their hierarchical position in the old STATION for the most important ones, in the lay-outs or the chalets of the Mountain Hotel for the African or expatriate Senior staff, in the Junior Service quarters for the office clerks with some seniority, in the camps for the policemen, the warders and the gendarmes.

The whole of these sectors stretches between the altitude of 1,020 ms (3,400 ft) and 830 ms (2,770 ft) and the distribution of the civil servants according to this altitude is roughly similar to the pyramid of the administrative functions. This social stratification is symbolised by the existence of three clubs, one for the Senior Service, the second for the Junior Service and the last for the policemen.

Finally, it is in these sectors that the highest population of strangers especially people from the Grasslands, is to be found. This illustrates the preponderant influence of the Northern part of WEST CAMEROON in the central departments of the Federated State.

This group of sectors finally appears as an enclave having its own social laws and way of life but giving to the whole of the urban zone the jobs which give it its life.

b. BUEA TOWN : natives and strangers

In BUEA TOWN more than elsewhere, natives and strangers' quarters differ in all ways. The first dominate the areas inhabited by the second and limit the settling of non-BAKWERI on their lands. In their areas neither shops nor bars exist, a life which they want to preserve in the village way by its style and the structure of its society. In contrast, BUEA TOWN strangers' quarter leads a noisy and animated life. The immigrants settled there pell-mell although they tried to group themselves according to ethnic affinities. But this was rarely achieved. There are only three sub-sectors that are relatively homogenous from this point of view : Bikom, Babute and Hausa, called after the predominating ethnic group. In Bonaberi, the most recent quarter, all ethnic groups are mixed. All the professions are represented there, but the difference between natives and strangers shows in the number of farmers. Nevertheless, the whole of this area, even if it assumes a rural character in the BAKWERI populated zones, participates wholly in the town life.

c. GREAT SOPPO : the village, the old strangers' quarters, the lay-out

There also, zones of natives and strangers can be delimited as well as zones of farmers and those with town type occupations. But the natives are only a thirtieth of the strangers and they keep themselves to themselves at some distance from the VICTORIA road.

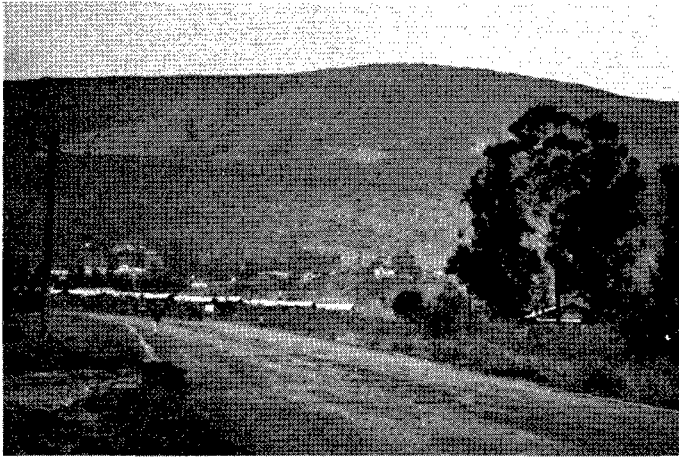
In the old strangers' quarter, shop-keepers and artisans have regrouped on both sides of the road ; in the lay-out that stretches beyond, there are civil servants and building and Public Works workers. It is a planned residential zone for workers and clerks which is due to develop if part of the infrastructure of the Council, as planned, settles there.

d. SMALL SOPPO, BOKWANGO : the roads, the interior

Along the roads urban life pushes its antennae. Nigerian shop-keepers, BAMILEKE or GRASSLANDERS, artisans and BAKWERI businessmen live there side by side. In the interior, and living a secluded agricultural life with subsistence crops, small BALWERI communities are found.

The social geography of the urban zone of BUEA does not lack variety : opposition between indigenous people and the immigrants, land disputes between the natives and the Government and usage of the altitude as a factor in the social stratification. This variety reflects the problems and the situations of the world of the coastal plantations, West of the Wouri delta, very early touched by colonisation and literally overthrown by the German colonisers and planters.

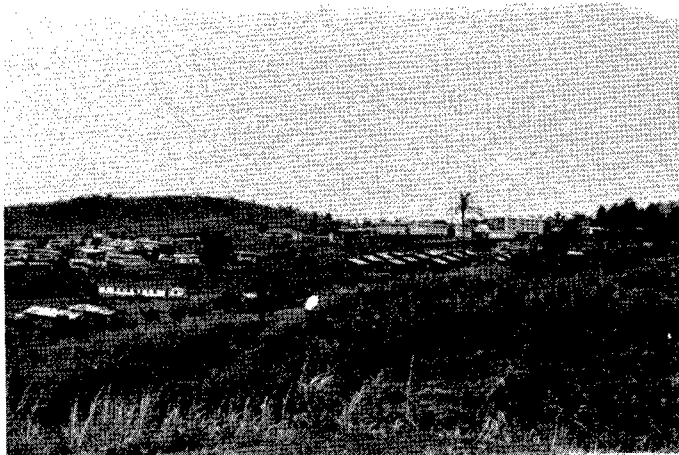
BUEA, april 1970



Ph.1 — STATION : General view - Mount Cameroon - Upper Farm - Old Government Station - Lower Farm, Warders Barracks.



Ph.2 — OLD GOVERNMENT STATION : mixture of administrative styles : German, English and modern.



Ph.3 — STATION : central area - three kinds of quarters : ministerial blocks ; Warders Barracks ; Lower Farm senior service layout.



Ph.4 — BUEA TOWN : strangers and natives, concentration and dispersion of living quarters. Behind what was once the golf course, the Station can be seen.



Ph.5 - View of BUEA TOWN STRANGERS'quarter.



Ph.6 - GREAT SOPPO : a junior service staff layout - spacious, well spread out houses - reasonably straight track - A beginning in urban planning.



Ph.7 - BUEA TOWN NATIVES'quarter : view of a Bakweri quarter - wooden houses with corrugated iron rooves.

Methodological note : method of using administrative census

The only document enabling us to make a precise analysis of BUEA happened to be the administrative census of 1968. In fact, the census of 1964 exhaustive for the town of BUEA and offering all the guarantees of valid information could not be consulted. All the original cards had been burnt. Having nothing better, we took as the basis of our study the administrative census which has many gaps and must be used with precautions.

1. How the census was conducted :

It has been made by 7 census agents and the census operations took place over a period of 6 months, from March to August 1968. That is to say on the one hand, we do not have an instantaneous picture of the demographic situation of the town, and on the other hand, the results are far from being homogenous. It should also be noted that this was the first census made by the administration since that of 1953.

2. The information asked for :

From each individual in each house :

- . serial order of members of the family
- . surname and first names
- . filiation : name of father and of mother
- . year of birth
- . production of birth or marriage certificate
- . subdivision where the person was born
- . occupation
- . tax category
- . registered or non-registered voter
- . demographic details
- . economic details giving an idea of the person's standard of living.

3. The information given :

None of the 7 census agents completely filled in his cards. The principle of one or more cards per family was not respected. The demographic and economic details were rarely made. The only information written on the cards concerned the traders (type of commerce and capital), pregnant women, the existence of twins, nationality, date of birth, parental relations, and this for only some of the cards.

The year of birth, the subdivision where the person was born and the occupation were recorded for almost everybody. However, a statistical study cannot be made with these figures without precautions.

The date of birth given is either the declaration of the person censused or the census agent's guess. One can imagine what the results are when one knows that the registration did not become obligatory for the Local Authorities until January 1970 in Fako division.

As for the subdivision where a person was born, only the subdivisions of West Cameroon have been recorded. And moreover, it seems that the confines of the subdivisions were not perfectly known by the census agents because of the numerous recent changes. For those originating from East Cameroon and Nigeria, the original town or region is sometimes indicated.

The profession of the censused individuals poses difficult problems of classification. The cards often show the job, sometimes the area of activity and the employer, rarely the employment conditions (for apprentices and domestic helps). So, for the bodies of workers such as wood-workers and painters and some others, one cannot know whether they are salaried or whether they are self-employed. As regards this, one frequently sees many salaried carpenters working for themselves outside their working-time for a private person. The census indications are often too vague. For the administrative jobs, the office employee is called a "clerk", the higher civil servants "civil servants" without any other detail. Finally, most of the working women are often classed under the rubric "house-wife" sometimes with an indication of the job they do. Those getting their income entirely from the letting of houses, the unemployed ("applicant, jobless, out of school") are categories which are difficult to define.

Also, concerning the number of inhabitants for each quarter, we are far from being exact. It is generally assumed that there is an under-estimation of 10 to 15% for the uncensables and those escaping the census for fiscal reasons.

For the agglomeration about 3,500 would not have been censused. This is explained by the fact that three sectors have not been censused (Mokunda, the Gendarmes Camp, the Bishop's quarters) together with the secondary schools where there are only boarders. For the heavily populated areas of BUEA, the under-estimation is at least 25%. For BUEA TOWN strangers' quarter, the administrative census gave 250 persons fewer than the work of the S.E.D.E.S. made four years earlier.

On the whole, after comparison with other nominative lists tabled at the same time (for example, for the elections) we have considered that the results were fairly faithful for the native quarters, under-estimated for the strangers quarters except for GREAT SOPPO. The retained corrective figure was 25% more for the strangers quarters of BUEA TOWN and SMALL SOPPO, 15% more for the areas of BUEA STATION. For the uncensused quarters, the secondary schools, we have used different sources to have an idea of the resident population (voting lists, inquiries at the secondary schools, data given in 1964 and corrected in 1968).

In a word, the document that we had could not be used to give accurate first-hand information, either for the number of inhabitants, or for the ethno-geographical origin, or for the analysis of the working population. We had to restrict ourselves to using it only for the purposes of a map as indications of tendencies.

At this level only, it allowed us to confirm what the qualitative analysis of the town suggested.

4. Use made of the census :

The concrete work on the date had to be thoroughly prepared so as to re-discover the order in which the census had been made : classification of cards by census agents, by the date of the agent's visit, finally by sector. This to help the fact that all the indications enabling the linking of a card to a sector had not been given.

Once having obtained the geographical order, we limited ourselves to a rough analysis of the data concerning the ethno-geographical origin by re-grouping the subdivisions in large geographical units, the professions in 6 socio-professional groups. The lack of mechanical methods did not permit us to cross-check all the data collected.

Also, to ameliorate the short-comings of the statistical data, the method of the geographer had to be very similar to that of the historian studying the first socio-statistical works done in Europe.

KEY TO MAPS

I. SITUATION OF BUEA

II. AGGLOMERATION OF BUEA

RESIDENTIAL ZONES

a. modern :

1. of the German era
2. prior to 1960 - Senior Service
3. prior to 1960 - Junior Service
4. after 1960
5. camps (army, police, Mountain Hotel staff, staff of the West Cameroon Development Agency).

b. traditional

6. zones of native residence
7. zones of strangers residence
8. zones of recent settlement

WORKING ZONES

- 9/10 zones occupied by the administration :
 9. before 1960
 10. after 1960
11. commercial and industrial zones and with modern facilities
12. zones of traditional commerce and native industry
13. zones occupied by schools, cultural and church activities
14. markets

 III. SECTORS OF BUEA : list of sectors and estimated population
 (administrative census-voting liste 1968-69)

A. BUEA STATION (3,620)

1. Old Government Station	180
2. Presbyterian Mission	100
3. Station	530
4. Government Residential Area (G.R.A.)	500
5. Federal Quarters	90
6. Mountain Hotel	120
7. Lower Farm Layout	250
8. Clerks Quarters	890
9. Police Barracks	470
10. Lower Farm (warders)	340
11. Upper Farm (warders)	150

B. BUEA TOWN (6,020)

12. Mokunda	370
13. Wondongo	490
14. Vasingi	440
15. Wonyaliona	470
16. Buea Town Strangers	1,550
17. Bonaberi	2,700

C. GREAT SOPPO (1,860)

18. Great Soppo Mokongo	50
19. Great Soppo Mokongo Layout	190
20. Great Soppo	280
21. Great Soppo new Layout	340

D. SMALL SOPPO (1,330)

22. S.S. Long Street	350
23. S.S. Wovila Strangers	450
24. S.S. Wonganga	150
25. S.S. Woteke	150
26. S.S. Wovila native	120
27. S.S. Likoko	110

E. BOKWANGO (1,350)

28. Monangai Quarters	80
29. Likoko-Membea	430
30. Membea-Nanga	840

In this estimation, two sectors which were not censused are not included : the Gendarmes Camp (700 to 800 people ?), the Bishop's Quarters (100 inhs ?), also the population generally counted separately, the prisoners (390), the secondary school boarders (380). The population of BUEA would then be about 10,800 inhs, that of the agglomeration such as it has been described above about 15,800 inhs (1).

(1) In the estimation that she has made for the plan of urban equipment of BUEA, A. Van Hilst puts the population of BUEA in 1970, between 10,640 and 11,230.

Translation of terms used in the maps

<p>Fig. 1 — Situation de Buea Arrondissement de naissance des habitants de Buea Ville importante</p>	<p>Situation of Buea Subdivision of birth of the inhabitants of Buea Main town</p>
<p>Fig. 2 — Agglomération urbaine de Buea Limite des terres du gouvernement Terres du gouvernement demandées par les natifs Altitude en mètres</p>	<p>Buea urban area Government lands boundary Government lands claimed by the natives Altitude in meters</p>
<p>Fig. 3 — Quartiers de Buea Lieu de naissance Répartition socio-professionnelle pourcentage de la population active Légende commune aux 12 figures % population totale ou active Arrondissement de Victoria Centre, sud et nord du Cameroun Cameroun Oriental Europe et divers Moyenne agglomération Agriculteurs Commerçants Métiers manuels Emplois administratifs Personnel de service Divers Forces de l'ordre Enseignement Culte Santé Recensement administratif corrigé Numéro du quartier correspondant au n° de l'annexe 2 Etrangers non-natifs de l'arrondis- sement de Victoria Tendance socio-professionnelle Cadres administratifs supérieurs Enseignants-religieux Cadres administratifs moyens Emplois de bureau métiers manuels Force de l'ordre Métiers manuels Métiers manuels agriculteurs</p>	<p>Sectors of Buea Place of birth Occupation structure per sector in percentage of the working population Key to symbole common to the 12 maps % of the total or working population Victoria subdivision Central, Southern and Northern part of West Cameroun East Cameroon Europe and others Average figure for the urban area Farmers Traders Manual occupations Administrative occupations Domestic workers Others Army police and gendarmes Education Missions Health Administrative census rectified Same number in the map and in the appendix 2 giving the sectors names Strangers-people not born in Victoria subdivision Main trends in the occupation structure Senior service staff Teachers-missionaries Junior service staff Office clerks and manual workers (see above) Manual occupations Manual workers and farmers</p>

SITUATION DE BUEA

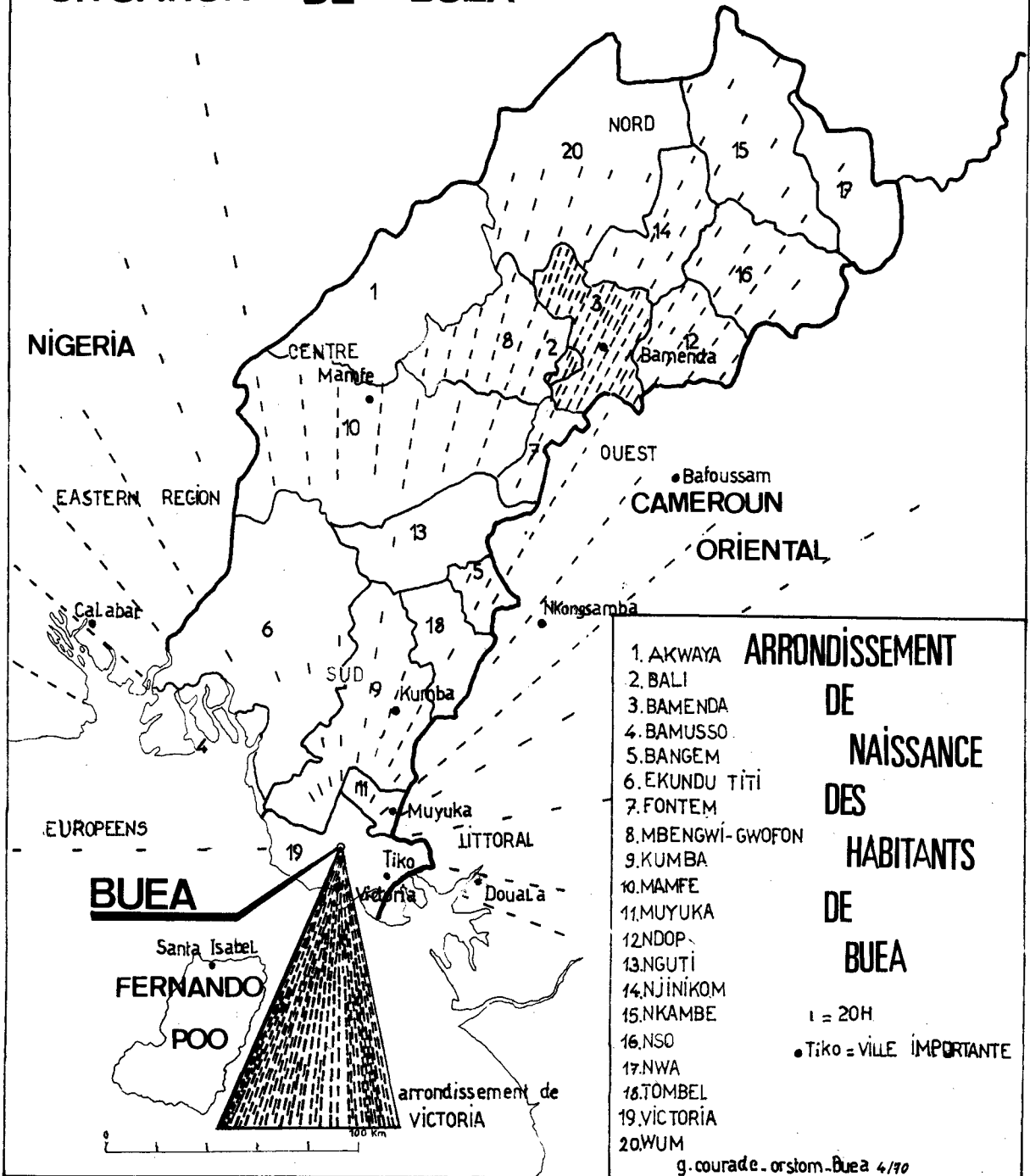


Figure 1

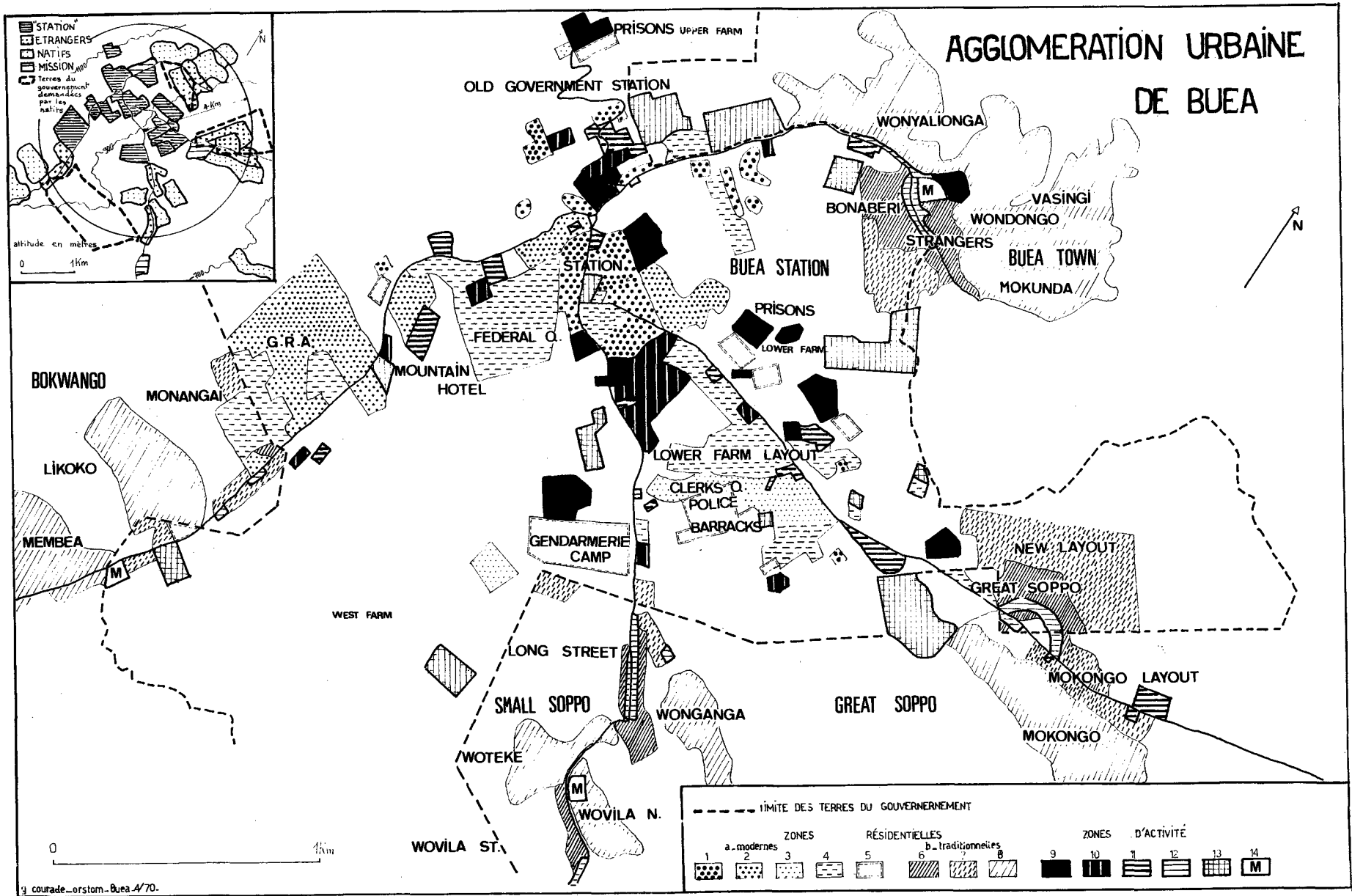


Figure 2

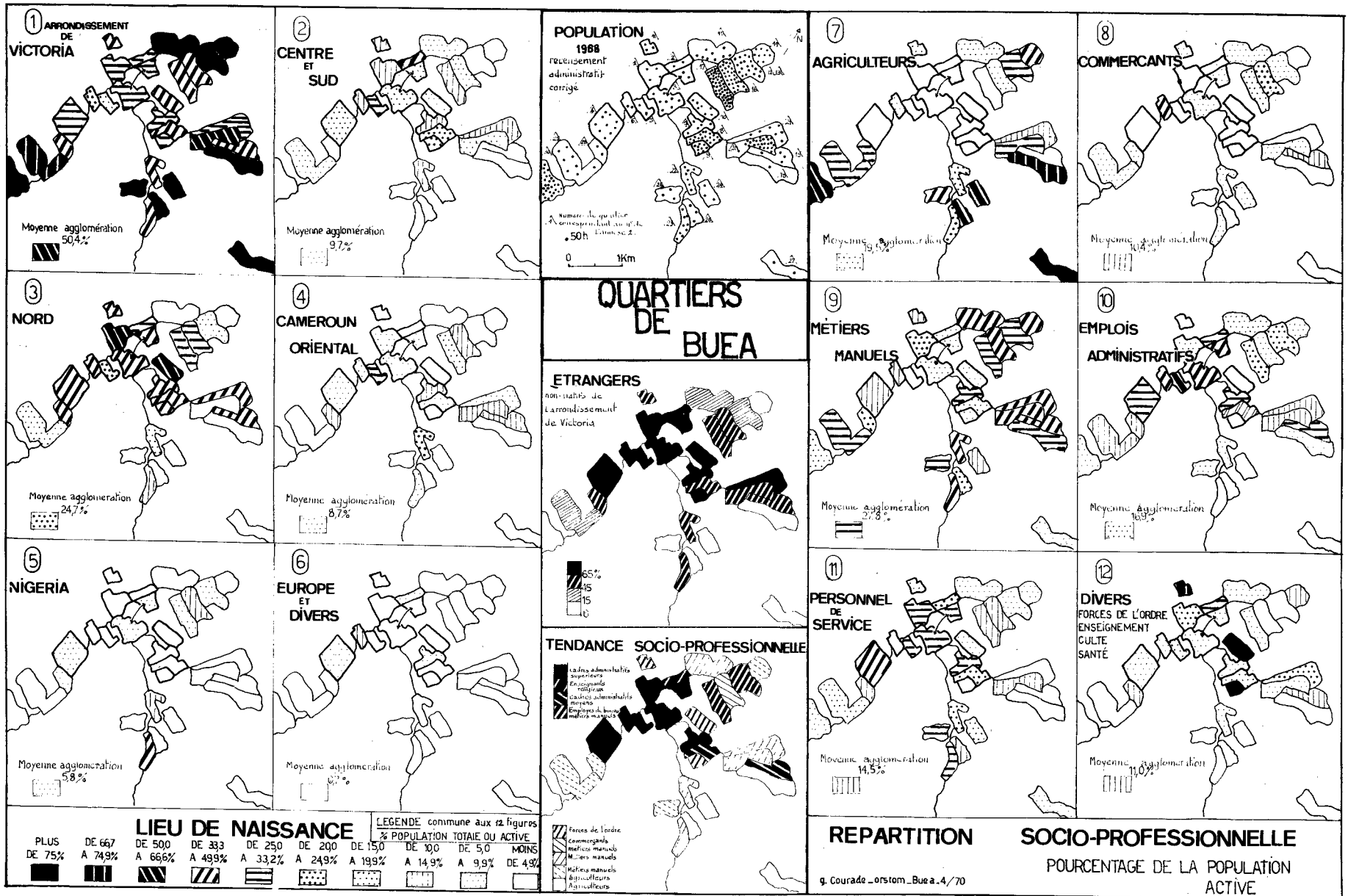


Figure 3

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