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Professional authority, power and emerging forms of 'profession' in quantity surveying

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This paper presents an exploratory and theoretical analysis of professional authority and power and its impact on the future of quantity surveying as a profession. The paper argues that the professional knowledge base of quantity surveying and its relationship to the skills used by quantity surveyors in providing a service to clients forms one of the basic building blocks of professional power and authority. An analysis of the client practitioner relationship in quantity surveying is undertaken using two models of 'profession', one concerned with client evaluation and the second with the development of mystique, cruciality and consequently professional authority. The paper concludes that quantity surveying does not currently have a broad base for the continued development of professional authority and power. However, the potential is there and could stem from the expansion of the resource controller or resource gatekeeper roles. Finally, the paper discusses emerging forms of 'profession' in quantity surveying and highlights that this could be affected by: the changing nature of employment in different organizations, the distinction between the professional and technician function, the issue of sub-contracting in private practice and the development of large professional bureaucracies, through merger activity, that could offer multiple surveying services and exercise considerable influence over the future direction of the profession.

Keywords: Professional power and authority, professions, professionalism, quantity surveying, clients

Introduction

Quantity surveyors have been defined as either building economists, construction cost consultants or resource managers contributing to capital asset formation and evolution (RICS, 1972, 1986). Quantity surveying (QS)¹ owes its existence to architects divesting themselves of the measuring function (Thompson, 1968). As such, occupational development was, in the past, independent of the surveying profession and this has led to quantity surveying being recognized as virtually a separate profession from other surveying professions (Monopolies and Mergers Commission, 1977; RICS, 1972).

In terms of the occupational role, construction analysis and measurement underpins the whole of quantity surveying (IQS, 1970; RICS, 1982). Empirical evidence from the architectural profession (Hillier, 1979), one that operates within similar but not identical organizational settings as quantity surveying, reinforces evidence that there is the potential for a complex set of relationships between the profession and the client depending on size of practice, type of client and sector of employment (RICS, 1974, 1984).

This paper is exploratory and theoretical in nature. It addresses the issue that the potential for extending occupational/professional power, status and the continued evolution of quantity surveying is determined partially by the skills and knowledge base of the occupation

and their subsequent application through the provision of a service to the client. The development of authority and power relationships for quantity surveying occurs at the interface between the practitioner and the client. The concepts and models of 'profession', 'professionalism' and 'occupation', as related to quantity surveying, are not analysed within the present paper but are examined critically elsewhere by Male (1984).

The professional knowledge and skills base

A profession is a complex interplay between practitioners, the organizational practice setting, professional associations and society. Knowledge is an important power base for professions (Blau and Scott, 1963; Elliot, 1972). At the occupational level it is a source of power resting on expertise in areas of uncertainty. However, it is an unstable power base due to the inverse relationship that exists between knowledge and uncertainty. At the individual level the knowledge base of the profession confronts the practitioner with personal responsibility and, in the case of some professions, such as medicine, the consequent claim for social immunity (Etzioni, 1964). Carr-Saunders and Wilson (1933) argue that professional monopoly rests on specialized skills or techniques and legal sanctions are advantageous in maintaining the monopoly. Additionally, professional associations are an important factor in the development of a monopoly since they determine: entry standards; qualification requirements; the transmission of the consolidated skills and knowledge base of an occupation. Professional associations provide, therefore, a mechanism for occupational control (Johnson, 1972, 1981) and by exercising control over the skills and knowledge base required for entry to the profession, they also provide a potential mechanism for enhancing professional authority and status.

Since there is an inverse relationship between knowledge and uncertainty, Montagna (1968) has argued that as professional practice is formalized into rules and written procedures knowledge passes from an intellectual to mechanical technique. Montagna's research has indicated that as proceduralization progressed in the accountancy profession practitioners moved into new areas of uncertainty. As a consequence the individual and the professional firm gained new knowledge and techniques for exercising professional judgement but simultaneously suffered adverse consequences. Movement into new areas of practice, and hence uncertainty, necessitated that these organizations developed their own codes of ethics and procedures until the slower moving professional associations caught up with practice and incorporated these new innovative services into profession-wide norms.

The process outlined above suggests that the professional knowledge base is diffuse and comprises a number of interacting parts. First, there is knowledge and skills that have been consolidated via the professional associations. This is very much a function of the past and reflects the traditions of the profession. Second, there is the knowledge and skills possessed by individuals and firms arising through the offering of new services as they move into different areas of uncertainty. Uncertainty provides, therefore, an impetus for professional evolution and also the continued potential for occupational autonomy. Third, there is the knowledge base possessed and transmitted by the educational sector which is simultaneously of the traditional form and that which should stem from research activity and will contribute eventually to the knowledge base of the future.

This raises a number of important points for quantity surveying. It is stated as being a profession of generalists with considerable emphasis on experience and a practical base

(RICS, 1984). Additionally, it has been stated that quantity surveyors earn their 'bread and butter' from the production of bills of quantities and settlement of final accounts (RICS, 1984). These services are built upon standard methods of measurement which proceduralize and formalize the profession. Higgins and Jessop (1965) have argued that these are services of low discretion and therefore do not fall within the scope of a full professional role. The Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) in their submission to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission (1977) admitted as much when they indicated that measurement is of a largely routine and technical nature. Emerging standard methods of measurement, such as SMM7, and developments in computer technology and software are facilitating the computerization of bills of quantities. In line with the case outlined by Montagna, once codification has occurred a new impetus will be required for professional evolution. In the mid-1960s the evolutionary role for the quantity surveyor was seen to be cost planning (Higgins and Jessop, 1965), a service they saw as being of high discretion since it required the exercise of judgement. It therefore fell within the scope of a full professional role. Additionally, the role of the quantity surveyor has been reported as showing elements of expansion into areas such as the economic management of construction and heavy engineering projects, production and resource control, cost engineering, financial control of civil engineering projects, mechanical and electrical services, strategic planning, project management, value management and finally, the management of contracting organizations (IQS, 1976; Kelly and Male, 1987; RICS, 1983, 1984). In theory quantity surveying services are procured by the client throughout the building process and are provided in a variety of different organizational contexts. For example, direct to the client organization in the form of feasibility studies, to the design team with cost planning and in the case of a contracting company to an organizational framework detached from the 'procuring client'. The services provided by quantity surveyors and their frequency of provision are indicated in Table 1.

Table 1. Services provided currently by quantity surveyors in the UK

	Private practice % workload	Public service % workload	Contracting companies % workload
Feasibility studies	6.60	6.30	5.00
Cost planning	6.90	7.40	4.50
Tender documentation	35.30	39.20	16.60
Tender appraisal	5.00	4.50	6.70
Post contract service	36.00	36.70	51.80
Production services	3.60	5.90	NA
Miscellaneous	6.60	5.90	15.40

Source: Adapted from tables 13, 23 and 36 (RICS, 1984) with permission. Surveyors Publications, London.

Table 1 highlights a number of points concerning the services provided currently by quantity surveyors. First, in all three occupational sectors 'front end' skills (i.e. those used in the earlier stages of the building process) such as cost planning and feasibility studies are used to a relatively lesser extent than, for example, the skills required for the production of bills of quantities. This is reinforced by other data presented in the RICS practice survey which

indicates that up to 80% of practices may be involved in very little else in the future except bill of quantities production (RICS, 1984). Predominantly, therefore, the services provided by quantity surveyors are 'middle range' to 'end range' skills, i.e. occur in the middle to end of the building process. It is in these areas of the building process where the proceduralized measurement function is used to its greatest and routinization is at its highest.

Clients and quantity surveying

The 'professional' market-place is characterized by a client-practitioner relationship that has been suggested as having an idealized form (Elliot, 1972; Hall, 1969). Clients to the construction industry and to quantity surveying are complex organizational systems (Higgins and Jessop, 1965; Crichton, 1966). It has been noted that regular clients to the construction industry have become aware increasingly of their collective economic power and are using this to change attitudes and professional forms of engagement (RICS, 1984).

A number of different types of client to quantity surveying have been identified (RICS, 1983; RICS, 1984). These are presented within the following framework:

1. *Private Sector owner/occupiers* who require a facility and do not normally operate within the construction industry. They are generally *irregular procurers* and these clients will vary in size from those working in an international environment to those working locally.
2. *Private sector speculator/investor/developer clients* who regularly approach the industry, will be knowledgeable of its operations and provide facilities for others to rent or buy. They are *regular procurers*.
3. *Public sector clients* who provide facilities for the operation of government, both central and local, and public utilities. They will have an in-depth knowledge of the industry. They are *regular procurers*.
4. *Commercial 'clients'* who are, in the main, managers but not procurers of the construction process and require the services of quantity surveyors. Typical examples of this type of client would be contractors or sub-contractors.

Empirical evidence has indicated there is a strong correlation between the organizational size of practices and direct appointment by public sector clients (RICS, 1974). The more recent practice study (RICS, 1984) indicates that consultant quantity surveyors are receiving direct commissions from client bodies in approximately 70% of cases with the remainder occurring as a result of contact via other consultants. Quantity surveying is becoming an increasingly client influenced occupation.

The client types identified previously relate economically to private practice, government and contractors' quantity surveyors in fundamentally different ways. Regardless of the practice setting, from one vantage point it can be said that the quantity surveyor acts in an advisory capacity to the 'client', however defined. In addition, those quantity surveyors enmeshed within the workings of a 'procuring client' will often be in a position of supervising the work of other professionals, hired externally. The contractors' quantity surveyor is separated from the 'procuring client' by the gulf caused by the tendering procedure itself. It is only with the emergence of alternative procurement methods, such as management contracting and design and build, that the contractors quantity surveyor could have the opportunity of becoming a member of the client's design team. The following section analyses and discusses issues involved in the client/quantity surveyor relationship in more

detail using general models suggested by Gordon and Ross (1962) and Haga (1978). There is an interdependency between the models but each provides a different perspective for analysing this relationship. For a critique of each model see Male (1984).

The professional–client relationship

The quantity surveyor in private practice has been viewed as the cutting edge of the profession (MAC, 1985). The models of Gordon and Ross (1962) and Haga (1978) outlined below have been developed generally from a private practitioners viewpoint with little consideration given to other organizational settings. However, the analysis that follows will attempt to extrapolate themes within these models and take account of the diversity of quantity surveying practice within construction.

Gordon and Ross's (1962) client evaluative model is concerned with influence, power and professional authority. The model highlights the provision of a unique service and the duty to continued professional development. They couch their model in the form of three necessary but not mutually independent major characteristics. These characteristics are: *prerequisites* – the provision of a service that is superior to that which the client can perform and where professional authority and responsibility for the provision of that service passes to the professional; *continuing* – the professional uses the occupational knowledge and skill base to provide a unique, personal service with an obligation to search for and provide alternative solutions to a client's problem; *evaluative* – professional peers can judge a practitioner on a single service performance whereas a client can evaluate the service over time.

Applying the prerequisite characteristics of professional status to quantity surveying, the model suggests that in many instances the client may be in a position to supply and perform a service equal if not superior to that of the practitioner in private practice, if this choice is exercised and in-house quantity surveying staff are available. This is certainly the case in the public sector. Furthermore, NEDO (1983) has indicated that in successfully run projects the client organization, regardless of the knowledge level of the industry, has been prepared to input in-house managerial expertise into the project processes. Whilst the recent QS practice study (RICS, 1984) has indicated that clients are not interested necessarily in the means by which quantity surveyors achieve their ends, since they are employed as professionals to deliver a service, an analysis of client organizational arrangements would suggest that full authority and responsibility for performing a QS service may not pass to the private practice quantity surveyor in all cases. This point will be taken up later in the paper.

In considering the continuing characteristics a number of points can be made with reference to quantity surveying and the service offered. First, the measurement service provided by the quantity surveyor is not unique to the individual since, as argued above, measurement is prescribed by a set of rules that can be applied by any practitioner. It is only with the newer services offered by quantity surveyors, such as the preparation of feasibility studies, advice on procurement and contractual methods, can it be argued that considerable individual discretion is involved. In this instance the service can then be said to be unique. Second and related to the first point, client in-house advisors, possibly architects, quantity surveyors, project managers or other industry professionals, may well determine, in part, the manner in which client needs will be catered for. In the case of the private practice quantity surveyor, this could mean that the service required from the practitioner could be determined in advance of engagement by client advisors and not by the practitioner. Third, Gordon and

Ross also indicate that the professional is duty bound to continue acquiring knowledge in order that the client can have all possible alternatives presented. Research within quantity surveying is practitioner dominated (RICS, 1983). Therefore, for quantity surveying unlike, for example, the medical profession that has a tradition of university based research, the generation of knowledge is predominantly locked into the practice setting. The development of an *occupation-wide* knowledge base remains bounded by the extent to which practitioners are willing to either;

1. participate in the tertiary education sector
2. allow outside researchers access to their knowledge for consolidation within the tertiary educational sector
3. generate open debate in journals on new methods and techniques used in the practice setting. However, this may affect a firm's competitive advantage or involve issues of confidentiality if developed for a particular client organization.

A bounded occupational knowledge base suggests that alternative solutions to a client problem could either remain undiscovered or remain within the organizational domain of single consultancy practices.

Finally, application of the evaluative characteristics to quantity surveying suggest that the form of the organizational practice setting will determine the degree and nature of evaluation undertaken by peers. The existence of an organizational hierarchy, even a notional one, nullifies or de-mythologizes the idea of a profession of 'peers' or 'equals'. This point has been explored in more detail elsewhere (Male, 1984) and is taken up in Table 2. Also, the degree of evaluation and the strategies used by the client, in a construction industry context, will depend on the level of client knowledge. Furthermore, clients may approach the construction industry once or on an intermittent basis. The regular procuring client is likely to have a programme of construction, reconstruction or maintenance and will be in a position to appraise critically the performance of professionals. The less knowledgeable client or naive client (after Higgins and Jessop, 1965) is likely to be in a weaker position to assess performance over time. The latter may approach other clients with more experience to gain an impression of the performance of professionals (Stocks and Male, 1983). However, in the case of the naive client many remain unaware of alternatives or choices available to them (NEDO, 1983).

There exists, therefore, a range of positions of choice for clients. From the regular 'procuring clients' who are in a position to have a considerable degree of choice over the type of quantity surveying practice that will be approached to those clients, termed 'naive', who either have some degree of choice, if they approach other clients for advice, or who exercise no choice when approaching the industry and adopt a 'first contact is best' method. Additionally, the emergence of new procurement systems such as design and build and project management, where either a contractor or another professional has the authority to act on the client's behalf, also allows evaluation of the professional service provided and the exercise of choice. The following analysis, using the model suggested by Haga (1978), examines these situations in more detail.

Haga's (1978) model is concerned with the causes of a profession and the model lays particular emphasis on the audience (Significant Other) to whom a particular occupation presents its notion of professionalism. The importance of Significant Others to a profession is related to the degree of cruciality and mystique possessed by an occupation. The former refers to how vital an occupation is to the survival or prosperity of Significant Other. Haga

considers cruciality to be almost at a level of life or death. *Mystique* arises from cruciality and is determined by the degree of knowledge on a subject possessed by the practitioner as opposed to the client. Haga considers *mystique* to be more than just the possession of specialized skills, expertise or knowledge. It stems from the aura created from a lack of comprehension by the client of the workings of a practitioner. *Mystique* creates authority relationships between Significant Other and the practitioner. By implication, uncertainty is a factor that lies behind these dimensions.

In an analysis of quantity surveying, Haga's model has as its starting point the fact that *Significant Others* for the occupation are, in the main, complex organizational systems. As indicated above, the level of client sophistication will play an important part in the extent to which the client organization will (i) be advised by in-house professionals with knowledge of the construction industry (ii) be advised by an appointed external architect and (iii) approach and appoint an external quantity surveyor. A cruciality/*mystique* analysis is indicated in Table 2 using the client typology identified earlier.

Haga suggests that occupational power, authority and status stem from the interplay between cruciality and *mystique*. Table 3 presents an analysis using this model to suggest the possible effects on the potential for occupational authority in the various work settings within which quantity surveyors practice, covering both current and potential future professional services. In interpreting the table attention is drawn to the issue surrounding the relationship between profession, occupational function and membership of a professional association. In the case of quantity surveyors, there are at least two major institutions offering membership, the RICS and the Chartered Institute of Building (CIOB). Only those quantity surveyors who are members of the RICS can call themselves 'Chartered Quantity Surveyor' whilst membership of the CIOB would provide the designation 'Chartered Builder'. However, notwithstanding this distinction, there are many who practice the skills and use the knowledge base of quantity surveying without being a member of the former institution. Interpretation of the table should reflect the provision of the functional service and not necessarily reflect a viewpoint consistent with membership of a particular professional association.

The outline analysis presented in Table 3 brings into play or relaxes different assumptions about the setting of quantity surveying practice. By way of explanation, in the *high cruciality/high mystique* quadrant, the private practice QS faces a mixed set of authority relationship depending on service offered. First, the client may well lack comprehension of the QS's service. However, the architect, as design team leader, whilst not knowing necessarily the processes involved within the provision of the QS service will appreciate the output and advise the client accordingly. The pull is towards high cruciality/low *mystique*. Maintaining an authority position within this quadrant is very much dependent on the level of knowledge of QS services by the other participants involved. Second, for the client in-house QS providing a value management service there is an assumption that the QS is the sole profession to take this on board. However, there is an acknowledgement in the *high mystique/low cruciality* quadrant that the commercial reality is different since contractor's are known to have the potential for offering this service in the UK (Kelly and Male, 1987).

In the *high cruciality/low mystique* quadrant there is a wide range of potential authority relationships. First, in the case of the private practice QS the assumption is that no other profession provides a billing and final account service. The existence of the architect to advise on the type of service required from the QS removes the aura of *mystique*. In the case of the client in-house QS the output from the service provision should be capable of being well

Table 2. Client types and QS cruciality/mystique

Client type	Client characteristics	Level of QS cruciality/mystique
Private sector owner/occupiers	<p>Will be advised by externally appointed architect.</p> <p>Organizational size and regularity of procurement will determine level of industry knowledge.</p> <p>In-house construction industry staff may be present with large, regular owner/occupier procurers.</p>	<p>Private Practice QS (PPQS) could be in high cruciality/low mystique range for irregular procurers. Also, depending on service provided by PPQS's and level of client knowledge this could move to high cruciality/high mystique.</p>
Private sector regular procurers (developers, etc.)	<p>May be advised by externally appointed architects.</p> <p>Client in-house staff of architects, quantity surveyors, project managers probable.</p> <p>In-depth knowledge of industry.</p>	<p>PPQS could be in a position of low cruciality/low mystique depending on retained in-house services.</p> <p>Client QS in-house staff, depending on service performed, could be in position of high cruciality/low mystique with presence of other design professionals.</p>
Public sector regular procurers	<p>External architects may be appointed.</p> <p>Client in-house staff of architects, quantity surveyors, engineers will perform regular professional duties.</p> <p>In-depth knowledge of industry.</p>	<p>PPQS could be in a position of low cruciality/low mystique depending on retained in-house services.</p> <p>Public Sector QS (PSQS) in-house staff known to be at a status disadvantage with reference to other design team professionals. Therefore, depending on service performed, could be in position of high cruciality/low mystique but most probably in a position of low cruciality/low mystique with presence of other client design professionals and possibility of skill substitution.</p>
Commercial clients	<p>In the case of contractors, line managers will have an in-depth knowledge of QS functions.</p>	<p>Contractors' QS staff will be in a situation of high cruciality/low mystique or low cruciality/low mystique depending on skill substitutability within contracting organizations.</p>

Table 3. Matrix of possible QS cruciality/mystique characteristics depending on practice setting, service offered and additional professions considered

	High cruciality	Low cruciality
High mystique	<p><i>Private Practice QS</i> providing feasibility study for irregular procuring client advised by external architect.</p> <p><i>Client in-house QS</i> providing value management service to private sector regular procuring client with no other design professionals present.</p>	<p><i>Private Practice QS</i> providing value management service for irregular procuring private sector client, advised by external architect where value management service can be provided by another occupation, e.g. a contractor's management.</p>
Low mystique	<p><i>Private Practice QS</i> providing BOQ & F Acc service for private sector irregular procuring client with external architect.</p> <p><i>Client in-house QS</i> providing feasibility and cost planning service to private sector regular procuring client with/without other design professionals present.</p> <p><i>Public Sector QS</i> providing cost planning service with other design professionals present.</p> <p><i>Contractor's in-house QS</i>, providing feasibility and cost planning service, design and build procurement method.</p>	<p><i>Private Practice QS</i> where public sector regular procuring client has in-house QS's providing full range of services.</p> <p><i>Private Practice QS</i> where a larger QS practice has sub-contracted BOQ work out to it due to fluctuations in workload.</p> <p><i>Contractor's quantity surveyor</i> where there is direct functional substitution by building/civil engineers trained in surveying techniques.</p> <p><i>Private Practice QS</i> providing cost consultancy on civil or mechanical/electrical engineering contracts where these professions can offer a similar service.</p> <p><i>Private Practice QS</i> providing project management service to private sector regular procuring client with other professionals offering such a service in the market place.</p>

Notes: BOQ bill of quantities service
F Acc final account service.

understood by client organizations. Again the aura of mystique is removed. Much the same argument applies to the public sector QS and the contractor's QS under the design and build option.

In the *low cruciality/low mystique* quadrant the private practice QS could face direct substitutability by public sector QSs for any service. This is very much dependent on the degree of 'contracting out' within the public sector. The second example, that of sub-contracting QS services within private practice, creates a potential minefield for the

profession. Where larger practices sub-contract out to other practices (MAC, 1985) the professional/technician debate is brought clearly into focus. This revolves around the creation and evolution of a layered profession of 'professionally oriented' versus 'technically oriented' practices, as opposed to practitioners. The status of the sub-contracted practices, *vis-à-vis* 'procuring clients', could be very much dependent on their ability to obtain work in the higher profile service areas such as the provision of feasibility studies. Additionally, two other factors emerge. First, where sub-contracting to particular practices occurs on a regular basis, economic dependency relationships are created. Second and following on from the first point, if a larger practice exercises choice as to which firm to sub-contract out to 'control' of the profession also becomes an issue. Finally, the remaining three examples within this quadrant explore the issue of competition between professions offering similar services.

The themes highlighted in the preceding analysis are drawn together in the following discussion.

Discussion

This paper has analysed professional authority and occupational power from the vantage point of the knowledge and skill base of a profession and its relationship to service offered. The knowledge base of a profession provides it with a source of power, even if it is unstable. The crucial point is that professional power and authority are derived from expertise in an area of uncertainty. For quantity surveying much of the knowledge base, founded on principles of measurement, has become a routinized set of procedures that lend it to computerization. As a consequence, a significant proportion of the quantity surveyors' role, potentially between 65% to 75%, has become one of low discretion. As a consequence, in order to continue evolving as a profession quantity surveying, either at the individual level or at the level of the firm, has moved into areas of greater uncertainty where expertise and judgement can be exercised within a high discretion role. Front-end services such as feasibility studies and cost planning are prime examples of this. However, empirical evidence quoted from the RICS practice report has suggested that the problem for quantity surveying is that this only accounts for between 10% and 14% of professional workload and tends to be undertaken by the 'leading edge' of the profession, some 20% of practices (RICS, 1984). Additionally, taking a broader view of a professional service that includes skills throughout the building process, even the larger practices tend to offer a narrow service range (MAC, 1985).

In addition to the foregoing, role expansion has been happening in areas closely allied with other professions such as architecture and some of the engineering professions. The fact that some of these disciplines also lay claim to the measurement function together with its follow through into cost consultancy (Monopolies and Mergers Commission, 1977) and the fact that in the UK quantity surveying does not have a legal sanction in the provision of these services makes it difficult to carve out a distinctive boundary of expertise in areas of high discretion. Consequently, and with increasing competition in the market place, without the ability to create a domain of occupational autonomy, professional authority and occupational power will be adversely affected. Furthermore, the high discretionary roles, using 'front end' skills, tend to be located more significantly in private practice and the public sector with a greater incidence of post contract measurement in contracting.

The routinization of much of quantity surveying into a technical function raises an

unresolved issue that has a bedevilled quantity surveying debate for nearly a quarter of a century, namely, the status of 'technician'. It was raised again in the practice report of 1984 (RICS, 1984). Architecture already operates under a system where the status of 'technician' is well established (Hillier, 1979; Johnson, 1972, 1981). In contrast, the Brett-Jones report (RICS, 1978) indicated the concept of a two-tier surveying profession, first mooted in 1967, had failed to materialize. The report presented a possible three-tier structure comprising technicians, technician/professionals and professionals. Quantity surveying, as mentioned earlier, developed from the architectural role and, in terms of evolving under an institutional banner, lagged some 30 years behind that of the architects. It can be posited that the architectural profession has structured itself into a form which quantity surveying has yet to do. The increased use of sub-contracting for bills of quantities preparation may well hasten occupational re-structuring.

The analysis using the models of Gordon and Ross (1962) and Haga (1978), which focus on the client practitioner relationship, indicates a number of apparent pressures working on the professional authority and power of quantity surveying. These models highlight the fact that the practice setting and service offered form a crucial element in the development of authority relationships and subsequent potential for occupational power. The analysis using the model of Gordon and Ross (1962) indicates that in a number of instances, as with the regular 'procuring clients', the service provided by the private practice quantity surveyor can be evaluated and choice exercised. The exercise of client choice and therefore, client control, is critical in determining the degree of professional authority.

Where client knowledge of the industry is great the ability of the private practice professional to choose the service delivered is pre-empted or removed. This becomes important especially where in-house professionals, many of whom may well be quantity surveyors, are well aware of the capabilities of the service to be offered and the proficiency of practitioners and professional firms to deliver that service. As a consequence, clients, especially the knowledgeable ones, are in a strong position to determine the further evolution of the profession.

The analysis using the model developed by Haga (1978) centres around the fact that professional authority stems from the interplay between mystique and cruciality. The analysis of quantity surveying using this model raises a number of issues. First, the majority of quantity surveying skills have an output which is commercially oriented, i.e. deals with or assesses the movements of money, prices or market information and could be easily understood by commercially aware clients, by far the majority purchasing quantity surveying skills. This acts against mystique. However, stemming from the preceding argument, quantity surveyors are acting increasingly as gatekeepers to movements of capital flows. Occupational power can be derived through the development and expansion of a resource allocator role. This reinforces cruciality. Third, in those areas of QS practice where a client organization may not have an understanding, for example, the wording of or court judgements about standard forms of contract, where the language may have a mystifying quality to the laymen, there is always redress to the legal profession. This acts against mystique.

Haga's (1978) schema suggests, therefore, that on balance, quantity surveying is currently at best a high cruciality/low mystique occupation or at worst one of low cruciality/low mystique where it comes into direct competitive contact with other professions offering similar services. The outcome of this is that whilst, in certain instances, quantity surveying can have a high degree of cruciality for clients depending on the service offered, it lacks

mystique and the ability to create an aura of occupational authority. The repercussions of the foregoing analysis are for weakened occupational power and authority together with a lower occupational status in the market place. The key focus for developing the profession further would appear to be in the area of cruciality. The problem for developing cruciality lies in the extent to which quantity surveying offers services sufficiently distinct from other professions. For example, where the quantity surveyor can act in a position of resource gatekeeper, cruciality can be strengthened considerably.

Emerging forms of 'profession' in quantity surveying

The preceding analysis has suggested a 'dynamic' operating within quantity surveying. First, over time the main thrust of quantity surveying, its measurement function, has increasingly lead to proceduralization and formalization within the profession. To maintain professional momentum, this has necessitated moves into other practice areas. Evidence of this is reflected in the debate over the restructuring of the RICS, where evolving practice has produced a blurring between many of the skills and services offered by different types of surveyors. The debate has revolved around the establishment of an institutional structure based on practice groups or different models of divisionalization (RICS, 1986, 1987). Second, the general nature of the predominant occupational role, that of measurement, stressing both experience and practicality has led to a knowledge base evolving essentially in the practice setting. The developmental thrust of quantity surveying has been practice led with research rooted in firms as opposed to educational establishments. This may have resulted in a bounded profession wide knowledge base. Third, the momentum for continuing development of the profession, stemming from the newer areas of practice, such as cost planning, contract administration, project management and financial advice could provide the future power base of quantity surveying but, at the margins, will evolve within the context of competition between professions. This has already been acknowledged in architecture (PRS, 1987).

Depending on the organizational framework prevailing and service offered the analysis presented in this paper suggests quantity surveying does not have complete occupational authority and subsequent power over the client. In the case of those quantity surveyors working in contracting organizations the client – practitioner relationship is more complex. For the contractor's QS it is the organizational framework of the company that is served. The quantity surveyor working in this setting is one stage removed from the 'procuring client' that the private practice QS serves or those working direct for a procuring client. In the case of the contractors' QS, it is the organizational framework within which the QS operates that provides the service to the client and not the occupational function per se. It can be argued therefore that the quantity surveyor working in contracting could have a fundamentally different notion of 'profession', 'professionalism' and 'client' than those in other work settings. These issues have been investigated empirically by Male (1984). Whilst the analysis in this paper suggests, in general, that quantity surveying does not have currently a broad base of occupational power and authority, the potential is there. It can stem from three directions. First, it is likely that as competition within the market place mounts, there will be an increasing incidence of mergers between practices, over and above that which is already taking place. This could lead to the emergence subsequently of large, well-developed professional bureaucracies offering multiple surveying services. Accountancy has seen the

growth of the 'Big Seven' that control much of corporate business, either through auditing or management consultancy, and who are already offering services that are in direct competition with many surveying practices. The large multiple service surveying practices could have the potential for becoming the 'power houses' of the profession in terms of occupational status and subsequent training grounds for recruits.

Second, occupational power and status could be raised through expansion of employment opportunities in 'procuring client' organizations. Third, the development of professional authority and occupational power has as its focal point the client/practitioner relationship. Professional authority can be increased by concentrating efforts into developing and using 'front end' services and skills such as those of feasibility studies and cost planning to a greater extent than is practiced currently. These services offer the potential for greater involvement in client decision making processes. This would expand the occupational power base and subsequently raise occupational status. Finally, quantity surveying, as a profession, still has to solve the vexatious question of the role of the 'technician'. The demands of the professional market place, that are now creating a layered emerging profession of sub-contracted surveying firms providing technical services to other practices may well force the issue. If nothing else it should focus practitioners minds on the meaning of 'profession', 'professionalism' and the acceptability of intra-occupational control through the market place.

Note

1. Please note: the short version QS may be used to denote quantity surveying or quantity surveyor depending on the context of the wording in the sentence.

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