"HOUSE AS A SYMBOL OF SELF"
EXAMINATION OF ITS IMPACT ON URBAN MASS HOUSING

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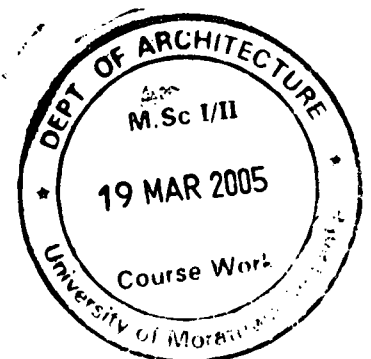
DECLARATION

I declare that this dissertation represents my own work, except where due acknowledgement is made, and that it has not been previously included in a thesis, dissertation or report submitted to this university or to any other institution for a degree, diploma or other qualification.

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ABSTRACT

Human is an identified individual living creature in the existing world. The mental notion of a man has about its physical, psychological and social attributes, as well as its attitudes, beliefs and ideas, express him or her self in an existing society.

The most socialist built-form is the house which entails the maintenance of balance between an individual's inner and outer self which he becomes a part of it. People have to satisfy their physical needs as well as their psychological needs for survival.

The macro context also is a factor that defines a habitable space. This situation generates an impact on "Self" and "House". The struggle to overcome the impact of self Vs house may create a chaotic condition of the man-made environment. Architecture has been developed out of the process of man's inner self to fulfill his or her psychological comfort.
Thus,

Architecture is the process and the product of human habitation.
Habraken.N.J. (1983)

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INTRODUCTION

i. Topic Explanation

Man is known as a social animal, That is because he cannot survive without any social interactions. But it is realistic to understand that a person is an individual to the way of his thinking process. There it creates a 'self'. One's self is important to make an effective communication among others.

A self is not static; it is learned, organized and dynamic according to their experiences, aspirations, intellectual capacity and his social accepted area.

The so called "self-expression" can be perceived through a person's physical body and his surrounding built environment fusion of his psychological aspects. This evolves his living environment or "Home".

A person's house or so-called "home" could be identified as the physical manifestation of the self. That implies the sense of privacy; sense of identity, sense of territoriality and sense of belongingness. These are the essences of a self expression.

While understanding the above facts, in to account a house can entail a multiplicity of social, cultural, political, economical, climatic and technological aspects.

But currently, with the changing economic scenario a host of commercialized development, yet urbanization and globalization could be seen in every nook of corner. So everything is commodification including the house too. Therefore house becomes a commodity, produce in mass scale like cars, etc.., with considering time, cost, value, etc...

This phenomena is discussed in detail titled as "house as a symbol of self" and intends to do an examination of the impact on mass housing with selected case studies in the urban context.

ii. Observation

Rapid urbanization is a process which has centralized a bulk of population in the urban context. Therefore the migration of rural population to the urban context took place in a short period of time. This aroused accommodation problem. Providing accommodation facilities was an essential need and the state involved to provide mass scale housing.

Basically design approaches were based on certain economic class or job functions so their attitude, beliefs and customs thoughts are common. The result is proto type housing units and in some situations these houses were built as high-rise apartments due to scarcity of land.

These design approaches of mass housing, however restricted the opportunities of a persons expression of self. So the forgot or understand the personal requirements and the individuals perception of a person, were forgotten and this persuaded people to personalise their housing unit by doing additions or alterations to their housing unit.

This situation has become a chaotic or a missing sense of unity of a housing scheme as well as in the urban character.

iii. Scope and Limitations

The intention of the study is to examine house as a symbol of self impact on mass housing. Its primary concern on this respect is to find the psychological needs of the family and how they are reflected in the physical form.

Senses of identity or personality, privacy & security, territoriality and belongingness have been considered as those needs which give rise to symbolise the self of a person. Their manifestation is related to the layout, external appearance, and internal arrangement of houses. The above facts would be mainly considered in the examination of the study.

Symbol of self as it implies roots down to the individual itself and even within a family, there can be significant variations of personal preferences which may reflect

physically within the house. The family will be taken as a singular entity and it will not analyze the individual temperaments of its members.

A single housing unit can be changed during different time periods, because a person's self is dynamic. This may symbolise the self as dynamic. This may symbolise the self in different ways accordingly. But the study has been limited to find the symbolising of self only in a particular time period.

The personals choices and the degree of psychological needs are bounded with factors such as socio-cultural, socio-economical, socio-political, geographical factors etc. but these factors are not deeply taken in to a detail study so as to limit the study area.

The study will discuss the need to express self in housing as a global phenomenon in establishing its theoretical framework. However, its major emphasis is given to the Sri Lankan situation in which the case studies will be selected for detailed examination of House as a symbol of self.

iv. Method of Study

The study will be an overview of the house as a symbol of self, with an examination of the impacts on urban mass housing. The study will be formulated on a sociological bias. How people had responded to express themselves in different housing situations with their social entities will be considered. The concept of self and the psychological aspects will be discussed in a theoretical base. A case study approach has been adopted as the methodology of the study. The entire study includes three chapters. The chapters are explained briefly as follows.

At the early stages the study will focus to housing, its related issues in global perspective, effect of changing such issues on housing and emerge the mass housing through that and its evolution in Sri Lankan context with certain problems.

At the next stage self, its realm and its innate needs. Then study the self –space relationship from primitive spaces to architectural spaces with attributes. So house becomes collection of architectural space with its symbolic connections and related psychological needs in visualising house as a symbol of self.

Finally through the selected case studies will be scrutinised as to examine how self is impact on mass housing in terms of psychological needs; Identity or personality , privacy, Territoriality and belongingness.

In order to do the study, direct observation, questionnaires are used to find practical data while literature and photography survey will justify the findings when the explanations are necessary areas.
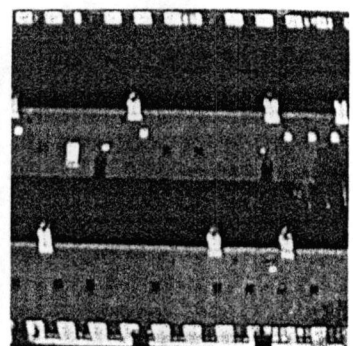
CHAPTER ONE
Housing and Related Issues

1.1 House, Dwelling and Home

The House, Dwelling and the Home are three things that are very closely connected to each other. It is not easy to separate one from the other since a house is a place created for dwelling in, and a house in which people dwell in usually becomes a home for them.

House, on the other hand can be more generalised to the extent where it can be described as merely a physical structure which purely functions as a habitable space. The embedding of necessary psychological attributes and much-needed virtual boundaries are not captivated in this definition. Therefore

Fig 1.1: "Our home is our corner of the world..." (Bachelard, 1964:4)

when the house becomes a home, it should become a place which is not just functional or physically comfortable, but also provide the psychological comfort giving the dwellers a sense of belonging and identity – making it a place they can relate to as their own.

Dwelling, itself is very close to home than the house because it has an element of personalisation which cab be compared to a soul in a physical body – as how the philosopher R.J. Lawrence has said,

> "...the dwelling place is more than the structure, as the soul is more than the body that contains it... All houses are dwellings; but all dwellings are not houses. To dwell is to make one's abode: to live in, or at, or on, or about a place. For some this implies a permanent structure, for others a temporary accommodation, for still others it is where they live, even if there is little evidence of building"
>
> (Lawrence, R, J., 1987:7).

Home is by its very simple meaning, a place that is irreplaceable by anything else which is oriented and directed to one's own self, own safety and well-being. Thus creates a sense of ownership in a civil community, and it is regarded as the most personalised unit of human habitation.

The importance of the home is stated and looked at in various different perspectives by different philosophers. But the uniqueness and the irreplaceable nature of it can be seen as a common idea that stands with nearly all of them.

> "Our home is our corner of the world... our first universe, a real cosmos in every sense of the word"
>
> (Bachelard, 1964:4).

Bachelard has stated that the home becomes the immediate world to a person. That it is where the world begins for him.

> "Home... as the foundation of our identity as individuals and as the members of a community"
>
> (Ralph, 1976)

Here it says how important the home is for a person's identity in the world as an individual when living in a community.

> "Home is an overwhelming, in-exchangeable something to which we are subordinate and from which our way of life is oriented and directed"
>
> (Vycinas, 1976)

While giving all the psychological attributes a person who having relied upon that privacy, identity, territoriality and sense of belonging, the home also gives a man much needed comfort of living as well as the security that he most deserves. Ranging from the parental home, the marital home and the ancestral home; man finds the home more secure and personalised.

Hence from here, when we talk about House, housing, dwellings, or homes it is the house in which people dwell in and make it into a home for themselves which will be discussed.

1.2   Macro Issues Affecting to House

1.2.1   Socio-Cultural Forces

Any man or woman belongs to a certain cultural and religious group where his larger portion of characteristics are represented by it and the house – rather, it's form express the real cultural and religious meaning behind it. Customs, beliefs, norms, rules and other elements of culture provide the context in which people perceive the built environment.

The people who migrated to a different region or a different country, like to keep the house as much as possible in his original cultural and religious way of perceiving it even though it is hard to achieve it perfectly.

Fig 1.2: The house-it expresses the real cultural and religious meaning behind it.

> " ...in the country like Fiji, Malaysia and Japan, not only did the Europeans often live in houses unsuited to the climate, but the relatively comfortable traditional houses are now being replaced with galvanised iron roofed (or even wrose, all metal) houses which are even less satisfactory."

(Rapoport, A. 1969)

Even in Sri Lanka, the houses built by the Dutch during the Dutch colonial period express the true Dutch architectural features and this shows the need of adapting to the cultural and religious context of themselves, even when living in a country outside their own which is completely different.

Fig 1.3: Dutch architecture incorporated with Sri Lankan vernacular architecture

But the houses of the elite Singhalese of the same period – even though they tried to express a Dutch architectural character from the outside, The traditional Sri Lankan vernacular architectural characters were clearly incorporated through the interior arrangements and the courtyard system which were part and parcel of the Singhalese way of living at the time.

1.2.2 Political and Economic Forces

Building forms of human settlements during the course of civilization process were largely influenced by political and economical forces prevailed in that period.

The house in the early part of medieval society system and later on the society based on agriculture oriented economy were greatly reflected the social structure and the hierarchical system of its components during the period concerned. Knox (1958) who was a prisoner in the Ceylon during the Kandyan kingdom describes the housing types, sizes and materials one can clearly visualise that the poor in the feudal society were sheltered in small, temporarily-like, wattle and daub, cladded and straw thatched houses while the noble servicemen who served the Sinhala king at that time were given very large and strong, courtyard typed houses.

During the medieval period in the context of western European and other Mediterranean countries the houses reflect the living pattern of the era that of economy based on trade related activities.

But with the migration, invasion to the Eastern European and Asian region by the western super powers the influences are directly determines not only the attitudes, value and beliefs of the society, but also the housing forms and construction methods as well.

A new chapter was begun with the dawn of some revolutionary thinking patterns and some innovative social changes that of industrial revolution and more holistic approaches of capitalism, socialism and liberalism and this made house form more individualistic with complex geometrical forms.

1.2.3 Physical Forces

1.2.3.1 Climate and Environmental Factors

In the broader perspective a house as a structure itself act as the main shield of protecting the human being from severe weather conditions that of wind, rain, storms and snow flows etc., as well as from predators as they create the threat for survival.

The considerations of these factors lead to differentiate the built form in a greater extend, that the form itself is wholly depends on the climate conditions of the locality thus giving the other determined factors the second chance.

"We build house to keep in a consistent climate and to keep out predators"

(Archer L. B., 1964)

Sri Lanka, being a hot tropical country near the equator, the climate seem to determine the form itself from the foundation to the roof ridge, where raising of the plinth, from the ground level, creating long eaves to prevent drizzle coming inside the house and thin walls to enable cooler temperature remain inside the house and most importantly courtyard which create the stack effect to circulate the air more freely and efficiently.
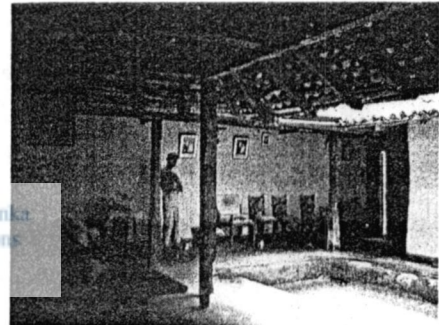
Fig 1.4: Raised plinth, long eaves, internal coutyard respond to the climate in Sri Lankan vernicular house

But in China, it is cooler and there is a winter season compared to Sri Lanka, but they also have incorporated the courtyards to their houses for a different purpose. This time to enable more light to penetrate inside the space.

Distinct forms for the homes are greatly determined by the Eskimos and Athabascans due to the severe weather and climatic pattern that of full snow winter in the Artic circle.

1.2.3.2 Topography

The important of the context of any given project is as important as the contents of the space as it will be the ultimate deciding factor of the shape, hierarchical pattern as well as the user pattern of the settlement or any dwelling.

> "I am not certain that any consistent theory of site as a form determinant has ever been proposed. However there have been attempts to explain the form of such settlement as Italian hill towns and town and villages in Greek islands hence also house form in term of terrain, lack of land and so on..."

(Rapoport, A. 1969)

The site condition have to be addressed clearing where the contour, location, vegetation, fauna and flora features water bodies and other man made structures which play a leading role of the formation of the form. The built structure must become a subtle encroachment in to the surrounding environment.
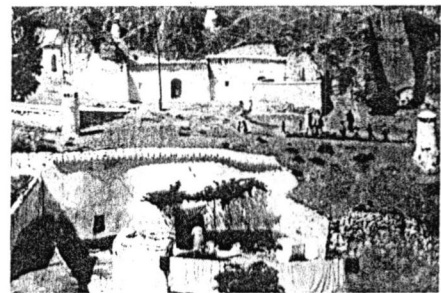
Fig 1.5: The house is of the hill

> "In the south-western United States, areas of similar site and climatic conditions have been a setting for both the highly individual Navajo house and the Pueblo cluster, which is basically a social unit the collective nature of which is essential."

(Jackson, J. B., Lanscape 1, Spring, 1951)

1.2.3.3 Material, Construction and Technology

Like the man's whole physical body is made up of skin, flesh and bones, the building is represented by the different materials which have being used for cladding, sheltering, flooring and partitioning etc, and nature in which it is used is determined by the method of construction and technology.

The contemporary vernacular architecture and any outside influence on it bring together two unparallel trends, and the application of it in the same locality can be seen as the same incorporations in term of materials, construction and technology.

The construction of the Igloo houses by Eskimos in the Arctic Circle is so vulnerable that it was completely constructed by the material, that of block of solid snow which is freely available in the vicinity that the summer time the erection is not taken place due to the scarcity of materials
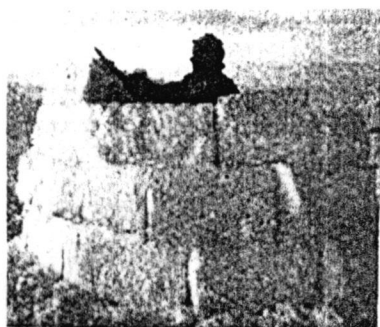
Fig 1.6, 1.7: Nature in which it is used is determined by the method of construction and technology.

But Brodrcick A. H. (1959) describes, thus the materials and construction is not a deciding factor, but they are considered as the modifying factors as they decide neither what is to be built nor its form. Therefore even if we consider the construction of mass housing the modifying factors are determined as secondary factors but due to the advancement of science and technology, the flexibility has expanded to higher levels as the use of glass, steel, concrete and other light weight materials and advancement of science and technology the construction technology was moved into new height.

1.3   House as Commodity

Most parts of the world history spanning from the existence of the human being up to the 17th, 18th century, the world seemed to grow continuously through an agriculture based society. But the period mentioned saw the dawning of a new era which is of goods and service related economies, which ultimately saw the world develop in every part of the society either be political, science and technology or socio-cultural aspect. This is called modernization.

During this period the major players are industrialization, rise of the nation status as well as a prosperous capitalism and the emergence of the Soviet based socialist

countries and parallel uprising of democratic representation, mass urbanization and literacy and technological advancement and the proliferation of the mass media.

Due to these reasons large scale integration of formally isolated and segregated communities and the migration from the traditional and conventional cultural and religious beliefs and creating the one's own individualism are the dramatically changes due to the above mentioned trend.

The dawn of the 20th century saw a new player on the stage that of post-modernism which more sensitively address the life conditions and social patters in a more holistic manner which is very prevalent in the most industrialised nations on the west as the mass production and generalised methods of distribution and production rise the new economic order in the entire world where the urban housing became a pray to the mass scale development trends which ultimately shifts the nature of urban, social and spatial structures more vibrant and fast moving.
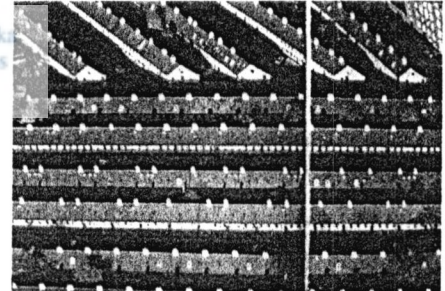
Fig 1.8, 1.9: "House is a machine for living in" Le Cobusier

In the event of the globalization in most recent history housing problems was multileveled in such away that the housing purely represents a social relationship between landlord and tenant, mortgagee and mortgagor or shelter dwellers and real estate providers but also the in balance of capital and labour flows.

So witnessing of housing becomes a commercially valued commodity which often deals with the cost, valuation, market oriented productions that compete with similar identical commodities.

1.4 Concept of Housing

Housing, regardless of if it takes the form of a noun or verb it is very essential and an utmost need of the man from the early part of his existence and in today's modern era, the issue of housing play a vital part in a human's life cycle essentials.

Fig 1.10: *"Housing"* describes as a commodity or product (Turner 1972:151)

It occupies the second position after the food in order of preference. But not like food, hosing in a durable good as well as a service. The meaning of housing differs according to the context in which it is used. The verb context of housing itself describes the planning, which means building for living.

> "The word of housing can be used as a noun or a verb, housing describes as a commodity or product. The verb 'to house' describes the process or activity of housing while the idea of housing as collective noun is obviously associated with housing activities, the word itself does not generally indicate this fact"
>
> (Turner 1972:151)

> "In the context of planning, housing means building habitation"
> (Whittick, 1974:496)

The housing, merely giving shelter for the homeless is not confined to Sri Lanka. It is a not confined to Asia either. It is now diverted in to a global catastrophe. Therefore the UN agency declared 1981 and thereafter decade from 1981 to 1991 as the year of shelter and the decade of shelter consequently.

> "The concept of housing is more than merely a physical shell. Housing encompasses all the auxiliary services and community facilities which are necessary to human well being"
> (UN, 1976: 1)

Housing issues are not isolated in the social context that is inter-connected or influenced by many social dimensions that of issues in social, cultural, economic and organizational dimensions.

The housing issues comes in various shapes and modes according to the diversification of social class, economic condition, cultural-religion bonds as well as human behaviour conditions and the way of grouping of society and individual human beings.

> "From a more complex point of view, housing is a product of various inter-related aspect having social, cultural, economic, political and organizational dimensions."
>
> (Angel, 1986)

1.4.1 Housing Need and Housing Demand

Basic human needs and the way they are fulfilled – largely determine the well being of the people in any country and do not matter where the locality is placed on earth. The need for better housing arises with dawn of the expansion of the number of members in a particular family and it directly express the extent to which housing conditions fall below the level or norms considered necessary for

Fig 1.11: Kawloon Wall City, Hong Kong; the densest housing area ever to have existed in the world.

health, privacy and the development of family conditions where as housing demand expresses a desire for housing supported by the economic ability to satisfy the balance development of the society and the individual man.

As far as the housing demand is consumed, it arises with the social, cultural and psychological need of the people and somehow generalised the requirements demanded by the people considering the fact that it have the common boundaries and goals in a given social class but most importantly distinguished social and economic demand is mostly addressed as it is often interrelated.

1.5 Mass Housing in Sri Lanka

1.5.1 Colonial Era

Even though there are big evidences in civilization and different mode of houses for many masses, the establishing of tank and the influence it created to the villages near by dry zone during the Ceylonese kingdom was vastly changed once the Portuguese arrived in this island in 1505 and the invasion by Dutch, there after in mid 17th century and largely by the Englishmen's colonial rule between 1815 up to 1948 where the mass population have settle down in the wet zones because its economy contrary to the traditional system was based on the plantations in the Wet Zone: first spice and later, coconut, rubber and tea. This change in the economic structure made a great impact on the attitudes and values of the people as well, by introducing a system of large scale buying and selling.

Perhaps the concept of mass housing was first introduced to the country by the British colonial rule along with their planters who accommodated a large number of South Indian Tamils as labourers in the tea and rubber states of the hill country. These accommodations comprised mostly of one room lines located in the tea or rubber estates themselves. There wasn't hardly any provision for the personalisation of such lodgings to express self, by the design and often the health and hygienic conditions too were quite inadequate.

Then emergence of middle class who mostly comprised of public servants served in various governments' bodies and doctors and nurse's quarters which ultimately lead the way to another form of mass housing in country.

1.5.2 Post-Independent Era

The era started off with the singing of new constitution in the free independent Ceylon in 1948, and by that time the economy had totally relied on the plantation sector and agriculture had quite been neglected. Therefore the government which was elected in newly formed nation paid much attention to the development of agriculture by introducing lot of irrigation schemes such as Gal-oya by then priminister D. S. Senanayake. But the mass housing got a new face lift in 1953 when the development of National Housing was established and later the National Housing Fund was formed. The housing commissioner was appointed and he was empowered to give

housing loans to building societies, co-operatives, housing bodies and individuals to acquire land to implement housing schemes. In the 1950s the Property Development too was introduced to the country by some local entrepreneurs and housing was also became one of their concerns. However it was launched at a very limited scale and the catchments was the urban upper middle income class.

This period of time housing schemes were mainly constructed by state sponsored institution such as Colombo Municipal Council, the Department of National Housing during 1950's and 1960's, and The State Engineering Corporation entered into the scene as the innovative builder.

Some noteworthy projects were the schemes as Bambalapitiya Flats and the Anderson Flats both for public servants in the middle and the lower-middle income strata. There was evidence, however for the inability to satisfy social needs by this type of housing as they were quite "complete in nature restricting the changes and modifications.
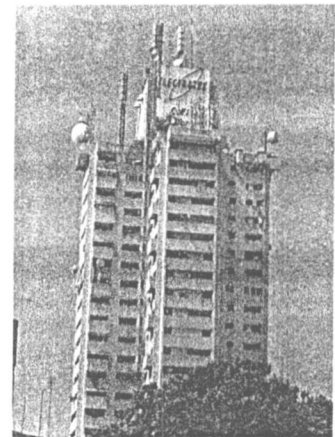
Fig 1.12: Bambalapitya Flats

> "People generally appeared to be unhappy living in flats and only accepted them because they were marginally better than their previous accommodation and there was no viable alternative"
> (Peoples' Bank, 1976:10),

The drastic changes were taken place after the 1970 period when the coalition power came into power where the rent act of 1972 and ceiling on housing property law of 1973 restricted individuals from owing more than one house per family. It further affected the forcible transfer with compensation of a large number of "excess" units from landlords to their tenants.

The other efforts of that Government were aimed at improving the housing stock. They considered it necessary and desirable for the public sector to directly produce and deliver the needed housing units. However their contribution to improve the existing housing stock was very low in number and as a result the rate of increase of

housing stock in the country was quite low during this period. As a result the urban housing problem became acute in the late 1970s.

1.5.3 Implementation of Open Economic Policies

The change of Government in 1977 marked a change in the policies on housing as well. The open economic policies were introduced and construction became a leading sector in national development. Housing was one of their primary concerns and a new governmental organisation, the National Housing Development Authority was established to govern and supervise its massive housing programmes. The Hundred Thousand Houses Programme was the first to be launched covering the entire Island.

Under this programme the government was directly involved in the house construction from the inception to the completion. The ready made houses built with a type plan were handed over to selected people in the lower income categories. The seriously lacking part in this concept was the marginal involvement of the users or the occupants of these houses throughout the design and the construction period. What was left for them was to accept the key of the completed house and settle down. Although this was seemingly a blessing for the poorest class of people who had no strength whatsoever to build a house of their own, the

Fig 1.13: The Hundred Thousand Housing Programme

Fig 1.14: Urban Flats

homogeneity and the lack of involvement in the house building often put them into "unvoiced" difficult situations. Personalisation to suit the specific requirements of the particular family was thus seriously neglected. The entire approach to mass housing at this stage lacked an in-depth analysis of the housing problem in the qualitative aspects that would have necessitated the user participation in the building of their own houses. What was mainly covered was the quantitative aspect that rest itself upon mainly the facts and figures.

However the direct cost of such a housing unit was beyond the means of the government and as such an alternative to overcome this problem without affecting the rate of house building had to be thoroughly envisaged. By this time the importance of the owner participation in the house building was gradually realised by the respective authorities and thus the concept of Aided Self Help Housing was introduced covering the needy families of the low income categories. Thus the subsequent housing programme, the Million Houses Programme (MHP) was launched having its motto as "minimum intervention and maximum support by the state and maximum participation by the people", It was covered by a number of sub programmes. This was succeeded by the 1.5 Million Houses Programme which is being implemented under a wider number of sub programmes covering the lower as well as middle income categories of people.

As the housing programmes evolved there was a significant change in the government policies too. Today, maximum encouragement has been given to the private sector to participate, in the field of housing along with the public sector. Housing is becoming a profit oriented industry today in the hand of many local as well as foreign entrepreneurs to come and invest in the BOI flagship projects and see the different trend of mass housing that of luxury type apartments and condominium especially in the district of Colombo.

1.6 Concluding Remarks

House, dwelling and home are bounded with psychological aspirations of human habitation. In addition to psychological needs or desires it has an intimate relationship with socio-cultural, political, economical and other physical forces such as climatic, environmental, topographical, material and construction technology.

The house was interpreted in a commercial perspective with the urbanization process. Thereby house became a commodity in mass scale in order to achieve the accommodation needs of rising population. Therefore the concept of mass housing was introduced to the urban context.

This concept was adapted to Sri Lanka with the colonization. The government sector was involved in the early period and the private sector also taking part in this event at present as a profit oriented industry.
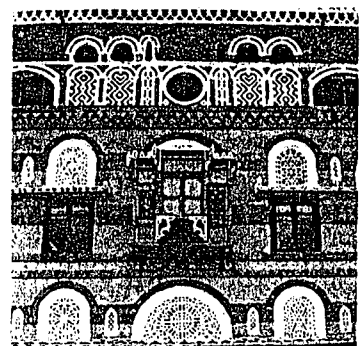
CHAPTER TWO
House as a Physical Manifestation of Self

2.1. Concept of Self

Identification of an individual leads to construct the concept of "self". The concept of self can be defined as; the mental notion that a living creature has – about its physical, psychological and social attributes; as well as its attitudes, beliefs and ideas.

According to the above definition the concept of self consists of self-image and self esteem. Self-image is basically a mental picture of a person or the conception that one has of one self, which includes an assessment of qualities and personal worth. Self –esteem could be identified as the pride in one self or the self-respect.

Fig 2.1: The Self: *"The total, essential, or particular being of a person; the individuals..."* (Joan Juliet Buck)

The father of psychology, Sigmund Freud was the person who developed the theory on self-concept. This development brought a new understanding of the internal mental processes. Further more the scientists who accepted Freudian theories made self-concept as a primary psychological unit in their theories.

Psychologists have established various views on self concept as Prescott Lecky's (1945) view; The notion that self –consistency is a primary motivating force in human behaviour and Carl Roger's (1947) view; The self is the central ingredient in human personality and personal adjustment. Furthermore he explained the self as a social product develops out of interpersonal relationships and strives for consistency. Also he was able to maintain that there is a basic human need for positive regard both from others and from oneself. He also believed that in every person there is a tendency towards self-actualization and development so long as this is permitted and encouraged by an inviting environment.

A persons experience in many areas of life is closely related to the way he has learned to view himself and his relationships with others. This indicates that the self-concept has three major qualities;

01.   It is learned

02.   It is organized

03.   It is dynamic

A person is not born with a self-concept. It is learned by a person, during and throughout his lifetime. Once it is emerged in the early months of life, it is shaped and reshaped through repeated perceived experiences. Therefore self-concept has a relatively boundless potential for development and actualization.

People perceive different aspects of them selves at different times with varying degrees of clarity. Therefore it is important to get a mutual understanding of each other.

An inconsistent experience with a person's self-concept may be perceived as a threat. When there are more of these experiences, the self-concept rigidly organizes to maintain and protect itself.

The heart of the self concept is the self-as-doer, the "I" , which is distinct from the self-as-object, the various "me's". This allows a person to reflect on past events, analyze present perceptions and shape future experiences.

2.1.1. Innate Needs of Self

Each individual begins his life as a single celled organism known as zygote formed by the union of sperm and ovum. The innate need of self begins with the development of a zygote.

A person's basic genetic makeup determines the innate need of a self. An innate need of a self may take in two forms. Some time it may be conscious or unconscious. Whatever it is the basic structure of the so-called innate needs is expressed in a womb –enclosure.

The mother's womb enclosure becomes the territory of an inborn. The way he moves, the way he responds to the outer world, and the way he thinks becomes unique. Therefore it becomes his identity. Also he is attached to his mother. Thus the inborn has his sense of belongingness. And his privacy is conserved as the way he wants.

The above discussed basic structure of instinct motivation develops to psychological aspects when he is born to this world. There are two view points to explain how the inner world of man reacts with the outside world does.

01. People are basically programmed in a way that ensures their ability to live effectively in the world.

02. People are born with the potential for learning, and life experiences provide the learning process for survival and accomplishment.

According to Maslow's Need Theory; Human beings are born with the hierarchy of needs. According to this theory when the lower needs are satisfied the person wants to satisfy the other levels. Therefore most of the people stops some where in esteem needs. Only a few move to the top most level. If a person uses his all potentials in a particular area and becomes the master of that area, he can achieve the self-actualization need.
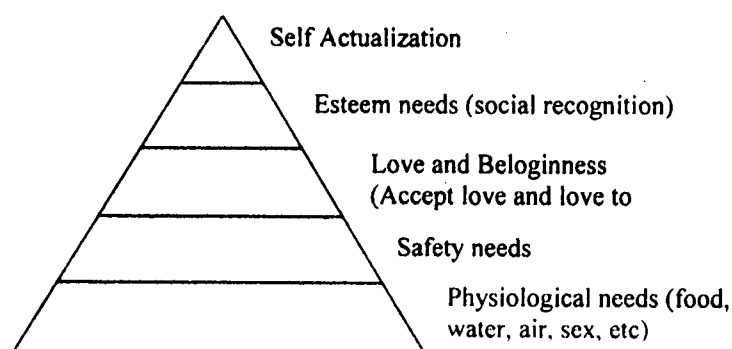
But Maslow later went back and added three more growth levels to his model (Huitt, 2003). These are:

- Cognitive Needs – the need to understand and to explore
- Aesthetic Need – the need for order, symmetry and beauty.
- Self-actualization – the reaching of one's full potential.
- Transcendence – the need and ability to help others reach their full potential.

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MORATUWA

"House as a Symbol of Self": Examination of Its Impact on Urban Mass Housing
Chapter Two: House as a Physical Manifestation of Self

2.2.   Space and Its relationship to the Self

The word "space" can be defined in various views. Space is intangible it can be found anywhere. Any action is taken place in space. Everyone lives in space. Space defines different location to living and nonliving things.

Space can create meanings. The meaningful orchestration of space can be considered as the attributes of space. It can be explained in three spatial meanings.

1. Centre
2. Enclosure
3. Continuity

Centre

Centre is considered as the centrality of a space which enhances more power and value. The centre can be observed in two ways.

- Perceptual Centre
- Geometric Centre

Geometric centre refers to the centre that locates within the space boundaries. But the perceptual centre is something that is different because it depends on an individual and how he perceives the centre of a particular space. It both centres are located in the same position it will be more powerful.

Enclosure

Enclosure is a meaningful entity. An enclosure is a space demarcation. Also it is a space container which facilitates movement of space. The enclosure can be observed in two ways;

- Tangibly
- Intangibly

Tangibility refers to the physical demarcations of a particular space. And intangibility refers to the sense of enclosure in a particular space.

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Enclosure can create a volume inside a space. Therefore a person can achieve certain spatial experiences within the entity. And it makes an integral part which brings a meaning in to a particular space.

Continuity

A space cannot be in isolation. The continuity is considered as weaved relationship of a particular space with other adjoin spaces. It can be observed as a path which brides the gaps between spaces. Therefore continuity is important to enhance a person's relationship with spaces and there by to gain spatial experience.

A meaningful space becomes a place when human action and intention is created. Place in a space is created according to a person's level of mind. The feeling of a particular place may vary according to an individual's, personal philosophy and life style. Therefore a space becomes a place when it is personalized.

This phenomenon originates a great relationship of space and an individual's self. Therefore this relationship of space and self generates several spatial experiences as discussed below.

2.2.1. Primitive/ Pragmatic Space

Pragmatic or primitives spaces can be referred to as the earliest spatial experiences of man. This is the space where a man's instinctive behaviour and un-self-conscious action takes place. People are in action without memories and thoughts in this particular space.

The womb-enclosure for an in born enhances this type of spatial experiences well.

Fig 2.2: Mother's womb enclosure is our first spatial experience

2.2.2. Perceptual Space

The perceptual space is referred to the space perceived by man. Perceived space is always not a descriptive space. It is filled with quality. Therefore it depends on personalization. This is a self-conscious experience which links a secure of awareness of sensitivity. Therefore it has a high emotional attachment.

This spatial experience brings more intimate relationship with man and space.

2.2.3. Existential Space

Certain spatial experiences in people evoke pleasant or unpleasant memories. And some of them are embodied in their minds differently according to their attitudes, way of approach etc. therefore human activities and intentions in a particular cultural group tend to create an existential space.

Fig 2.3: Space exists under a Nuga tree

The spatial experiences of this type of space depend on several factors such as socio-cultural, economical, political and environmental factors. Therefore its becomes meaningful to a particular group of people and that particular location becomes existential to its inhabitants.

2.2.4. Architectural Space

Architectural space is a space that is created by man for his living. A space has a potential of being an architectural space and these potential architectural spaces are created by people. Therefore it becomes a purposeful creation which is embedded with feelings and emotions of man.

Fig 2.4: A purposeful human creation

This spatial experience facilitates physical and psychological aspects. Therefore these aspects should be considered with an individual who tends to create the
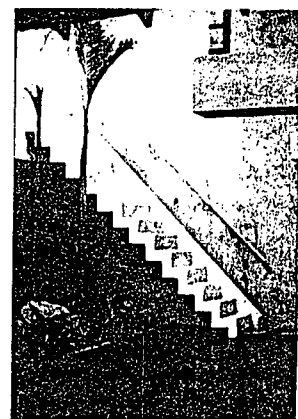
21

spaces. Therefore these aspects should be considered with an individual who create the spaces. An architectural space is shaped from socio-cultural, economical, political and environmental factor also.

Considering above facts an architectural space cannot be in isolation. Because it has to interact with the characteristics of the larger community to make a greater relationship with space and an individual.

2.3.   House as a Collection of Architectural Space

Humans create different relationships with different spaces to fulfil his basic needs. A person's behavioural pattern is not static during a day's period. For examples he may need to sleep during night time and may need to relax or entertain during day time or else need to have food at any time. Therefore there should be separate spaces to fulfil his need in the same entity.
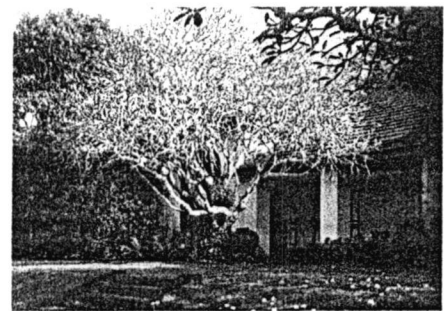
Fig 2.5: "Lunuganga"- The genius of Architecture

This phenomenon leads to create different spaces in one entity to satisfy a person's different spatial experience. This always depends on peoples past experiences and his cultural background.

This creation is considered as the built environment of a person. And it is a collection of architectural spaces. Finally it reveals individuals psychological and physiological make up to construct a "home" for himself.

2.4.   House as Spatial Expression of Self

The basic spatial expression of one's self is considered as the experience that is inborn within a womb enclosure.

The womb enclosure is the primordial space for an inborn where he could live with comfort and safety. This pragmatic and primitive space becomes first spatial experience floating in a fluid medium. There by he expresses himself with that limited space accordingly.

The next stage of man is infancy the mother's warmth is the next spatial experience of an infant. He prefers to live in a space where he can get his mother's warmth. As he grow up he perceives the space and the way the understand space is reflected in the space that he creates for himself.

Each person needs a shelter for survival. Therefore the primitive shelter of a man became the cave. The men were experiencing the space most of the time outside by hunting. And the women and children were experiencing the space most of the time inside the cave by gathering. The spatial expression of the hunter-gather society was in a communal manner. Because the cave it self created a communal space.

Considering the above facts for instance, man has various innate implications regarding his dwelling place. Therefore man is consulting sly driven, consciously or un-consciously to achieve in a substitute or in an original form to satisfy his innate spatial needs. Ultimately this becomes his spatial expression of his dwelling place.

Therefore the spatial implications are an innate knowledge of man and it facilities to express the space with of the surrounding environment.

This could be also taken in a deeper sense to read the psychological fulfilment of man.

2.4.1. Sense Identity

An observational perspective towards nature reveals an identity about an individual's psyche. The identification of a man or women in a society is so diverse. These self-expression and symbolic personalization can be seen in their respective households. It is very important to give a meaningful thought towards the position and level of livelihood in the society. Therefore it creates a fundamental right of their individuality.

Fig 2.6: Interpreting personal psyche

The concept of identity always comes with the concept of individuality. Individuality means the personalize process which visualize the identity.

One's house reveals his identity in the society. It depends on the form of the house, the spatial arrangement, the colour, texture and material. Also the entrance, the solid and void ratio in terms of built-unbuilt comparisons wills visualizes the overall identity of the family.

A particular person can be identified in the environment through his personalized house. Because it is a non-revisable bond with his self identity.

Self identity of a person enhances one's self esteem and confidence in the society. Therefore the "home" of one self, communicates meaningfully with another self. Thus a particular house offers a meaningful contribution to represent the practice of the personal life.

The absence of a sense of identity in the living environment brings about poor self-esteem and confidence. This phenomenon results to create a homelessness of a particular place or environment of a person.

Therefore identify is not a mere result of an individuals self-expression. It is a collective notion based on class, status, power and life style of a person. Ultimately this creates a "home" for the person himself.

2.4.2. <u>Sense of Privacy</u>

The nature it self has created "Hidden Spaces" for its living and nonliving species. Therefore the secrets of nature has embodies in the word called "privacy". Thus the sense of privacy has become a psychological aspect of all living beings.

The privacy in term of any given person is a prerequisite for their well being. It is a psychological and social attribute which ultimately represents a means of controlling unwanted inter personal interpretation and communication with the society.

Fig 2.7: The function of privacy as *"freedom of choice"* (Ittelson et al: 1974)

In the early part of Sri Lankan history the house form routinely formed to cater the privacy of its certain inhabitant. Adult male were sleeping out side the house on the plinth while giving security and sense of privacy to the women and children who reside inside the house during the night time. The plinth of the house also acts as a place of living area where the interaction with the outsides taken place, while the internal spatial arrangement fulfil the privacy of the individual dwellers in the house.

In regard to privacy in the housing it does not mean only the oral and visual privacy. It has stretches through a wide range of personal choice.

2.4.3. Sense of Territoriality

As one of the psychological attributes, the territoriality is important criteria of creating ones own demarcation, especially among the human as he is one of the most territorial animal and it is always instinctive but not behavioural. Therefore man always seeks for the territoriality by mean of personalisation of his own house enable man demarcate his territory and it becomes part of their life and express own personality and way of interaction with other inhabitants in the community.

Fig 2.8: 'Dandu Weta' demarcates the territory of 'Chena'

This own exclusive ownership of his property, its acquisition, maintenance law and order in terms of defence demarcating the territory is an utmost need in one's own personalised house. Man wishes to marks out a place as his territory and it can be done through symbols of different forms, providing him with a physical expression of its present status of his territory.

To secure the sense of territoriality, limiting of access of his property is important to the Sri Lankan idea of territoriality, and it did not mean lot in the past. The yeomen with the simple needs and behavioural patterns did not require much of territoriality outside his house. The spaces were plentiful in that period and people did not find any difficult to gain the territory he needed.

But in the present situation the scenario is difficult that of the changing the economy pattern and scarcity of land that of space, even a small plot of land caries a lot of importance and man some times struggle to keep his territory on he wished creating a mere evolution pattern of territorialism in a different mood among the man inner psychology structure.

2.4.4. Sense of Belongingness

Man finds more satisfaction when he can live in an environment in harmony. Man responses to natural world as any other natural organism.
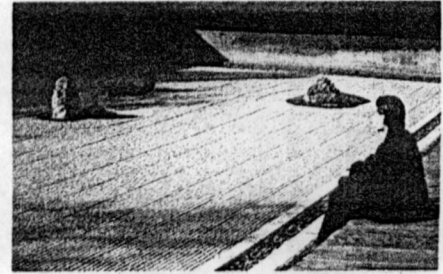

Fig 2.9: Creating the ever lasting memories of 'home'

The "attachment" or "bond" between others has become an instinctive behaviour. Therefore the sense of belongingness has been an important psychological factor among human beings.

The co-habitation behavioural pattern and association with other family members create the sense of belongings to each individual in his or her personalised dwelling as it create strong family bond thus wiping out the 'stranger' to its place.

> "we feel calm and quit and more confident when in old home in house we were born in where we belong than we do in the house in street where we have only lived as transit"
>
> (Bachelard 1969: 32)

The inner psychological attributes of sense of belongings started off with the very early stage of the man's life and it will remain thought the whole cycle of his life and this creating the ever lasting memories of 'home' and his behavioural pattern in his living place, even though he may live thousands of miles away from his home. The word 'homesick' is due to from this concept as it fulfils the aspiration and life goals. Warmth and intimacy one gets from this is a depending factor on the sense of belongingness he feels.

2.5   Concluding Remarks

An individual construct his or her self on physical, psychological and social attributes. The self is derived from three qualities such as learned, dynamic and organized. Several theories on the concept of self which was explained by psychologist have been indicated as a theoretical background of the study. Self has intimate relationship with space. Spaces can be created according to individual self needs. Therefore architectural space is a purposeful creation of self needs. Thus the house becomes as a collection of architectural space through psychological aspects such as sense of identity, sense of privacy, sense of territoriality and sense of belongingness. The above aspects are considered to identify uniqueness of one's self.
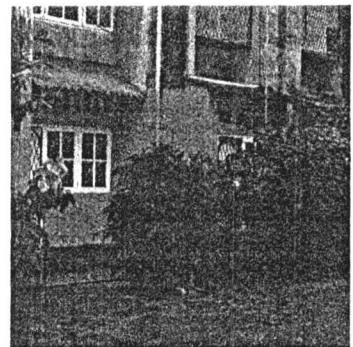
CHAPTER THREE
Case Studies

CASE STUDIES

3.1 Selection of Urban Mass Housing to Study

An urban character is survived with main social groups called urban low income and urban middle income. When considering the inner and outer self of the above stated social groups, they rapidly motivate themselves according to the income level, experience and aspirations and education etc. It is important to provide accommodation to the above considered social groups in order to maintain an effective urban character. Several design approaches were brought by the state to maintain the urban character by introducing accommodation needs such as neighbourhoods, urban flats and high-rise condominium. Therefore the following examples were selected as the case studies;

1. Rukmalgama housing scheme - Neighbourhood concept for middle income people

2. Soyzapura housing scheme - Urban Flat for middle income

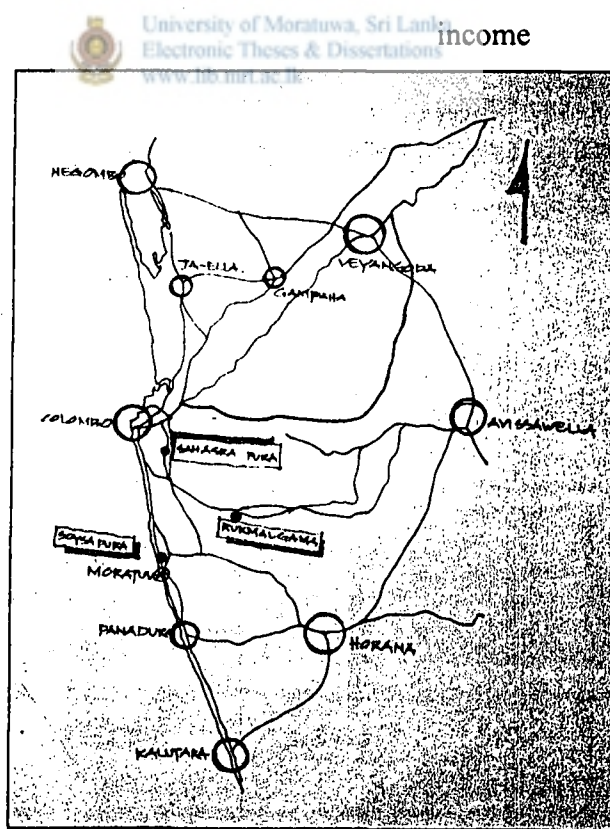3. Sahasapura housing scheme - High-rise Condominium for low income

Fig 3.1: Map of Colombo Metropolitan region showing location of study area and selected housing scheme

3.2   Case Study One: Rukmalgama Housing Scheme

3.2.1. Background

Rukmalgama is one of the very first large scale sub-urban housing schemes implemented by the government in 1981, under the one hundred thousand houses programme, The main strategy of initiating housing schemes of this nature was to provide housing to suit needs and desires of middle income earners who are employed in urban areas

Fig 3.2: Panoramic view of *Rukmalgama* Housing Scheme

The housing scheme is situated along Kottawa - Athurugiriya road, at Rukmale, Pannipitiya. It is about 25 km away from the city of Colombo. This housing scheme is built on a previously under utilised land which is situated at a higher elevation than its surroundings. The Rukmalgama housing scheme is surrounded by paddy fields towards the North, A play ground is located towards the south, villages on the East and the Kottawa - Athurugiriya main road lies towards the West.

3.2.2   Layout

The Rukmalgama housing scheme has been categorized in to four house types namely 'A', 'B', 'C' and 'F' comprising 264, 142, 69 and 26 units conforming a total of 501 units and having ground coverage of 400 sqft, 400 sqft, 800 sqft, and 1200 sqft respectively and the plot size of a housing unit is about 8-10 perches. All these houses are single storied detached units, except the house type 'B' which is constructed as an attached twin unit. The mixture of house types tries to break the monotonous environment of the housing scheme.

The Rukmalgama housing scheme also includes common facilities such as library, community centre, shops. Apart from that a few number of open areas is also provided in between housing clusters, which are meant for common activities. All these activity areas are linked by automobile pathways and footpaths.
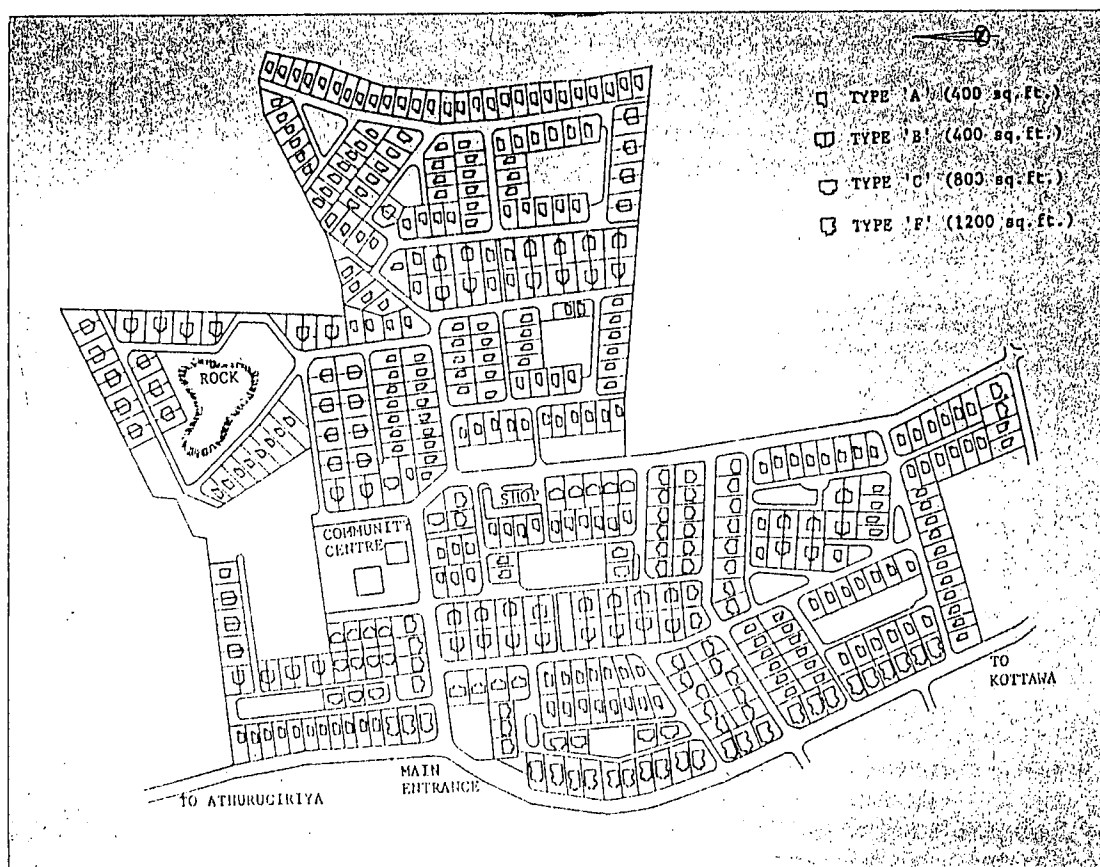
Fig 3.3: Layout Plan – *Rukmalgama* Housing Scheme (Not to a Scale)

3.2.3 Individual Units

House Type 'A'

The majority of houses in the scheme belong to type A. These houses are located in plots where the land allocation is 8 - 9 perches with an open area right round. According to the original design, accommodation provided in this type includes a living cum dining area of 150 sqft. Kitchen of about 50 sqft, one bed room of 80 sqft, toilet and front veranda. The floor area has been utilised in a way providing more space for the visitor's realm than the family realm. It is also noticeable that, special care has been taken in arranging the utility areas to provide high degree of privacy for the family realm, Utilitarian facilities provided in this type seems to be a adequate for 2 - 3 member family, (Fig 3.4)

House Type 'B'

This is the only type of house in the scheme which is built in twin form. The extent of land allocated to 'B' type houses is the same as that allocated to 'A' type houses, Accommodation provided in these houses consists of living cum dining area of about 120 sq.ft, two bed rooms of about 120 sqft, and 90 sqft ,, Kitchen of about 35 sqft, and a toilet and front veranda. Through the total floor area in these houses is equal to that of type 'A' houses; a high percentage of the area is allocated for the family realm. However, it could be noticed that much care has not been taken in arranging activity areas to provide privacy for the family realm. All bed rooms, Kitchen and even the toilet which could be considered as major components of the family realm, directly open to the living cum dining area. The front veranda is a common feature of house type 'A' as well as in type 'B' where an equal area has been allocated. (Fig 3.5)

House Type 'C'

The extent of land provided in 'C' type houses is approximately 9 - 10 perches, Accommodation provided in this house type includes separate living and dining areas of about 250 sqft, and 100 sqft, three bed rooms of 120 sqft, 90 sqft, and 75 sqft,, Kitchen of about 75 sqft,, a toilet and front veranda.

It can be seen that care has been taken to separate family realm and visitors realm in arranging the activity areas of these houses, Except only one bed room, all other bed rooms, dining area, kitchen and toilet are completely isolated from the spacious living area, it could be observed that, when utilising the total floor area of 800 sqft,, much emphasis has not been given to the front verandah where the allocation is the same as in house type 'A' & 'B' as discussed previously.

Accommodation provided in this type seems to be adequate for 5 - 6 member family, (Fig 3.6)

House Type 'F'

This is the largest type of house in terms of floor area and the lowest in terms of number of units, compared with other three types. The extent of land allocated to this type of house is approximately 10 perches.

Type 'F' houses includes partially separated living and dining area of about 170 sqft, and 130 sqft, three bed rooms one of 170 sqft, and two of 120 sqft, each, kitchen of 100 sqft, car port of 120 sqft, toilet, front veranda and a terrace attached to the living and dining area. The front veranda is a common feature in this house type too, but terrace attached to the living and dining area provided here is not seen in other three types discussed already. (Fig 3.7)

TYPICAL PLAN

KITCHEN

DINING

BED ROOM

LIVING

VARANDHA

FRONT ELEVATION

DISPLAYED SYMBOLS &
ORNAMENTATION
- CAN GIVE VIEWERS VISUAL
  CUES TO THE RESIDENT
- TO EXPRESS THE SELF-PRESTIGE

EXTENT TO
OUTSIDE DUE TO
LACK OF SPACE

FAMILY/VISITORS
GATHERING.

ADDITIONAL ROOMS
DUE TO LACK OF
SPACE

KITCHEN

DINING

LIVING

BED ROOM

VARANDHA

CHANGE THE
FRONT WALL'S
COLOUR OR MATERIAL
WINDOW TYPE
- SEPERATE IDENTITY
  FROM NEIGHBOURHOOD

ADD
COLUMNS

GLASS LOUVERS
CHANGE OR ADD TO
WINDOW GRILL WORK
- INCREASE THE
  PERCEPTION OF
  PRIVACY

GARDINING

GIVE SEPERATE
IDENTITY FROM
NEIGHBOURHOOD

8 GARDINING
- DECREASE THE MONOTONE
  ENVIRONMENT
- INCREASE THE ATTACHMENT
  TO THE PLACE
- CAN SHIELD UNWATCHED
  VIEWS & CREATE PRIVACY
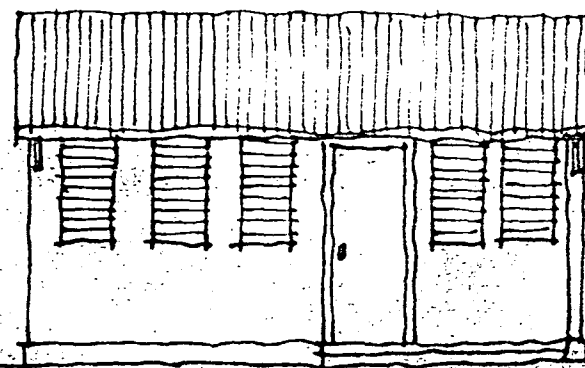
PHYSICAL
ACCESS

- ADD GATE AND GATE
  POST TO STRENGTH
  PHYSICAL ACCESS
- SEPERATE IDENTITY
  INCREASE PERCEPTION OF
  SECURITY, PRIVACY.

ANALYSING SHEET OF INDIVIDUAL HOUSING UNIT
HOUSE TYPE B @ RUKMALGAMA HOUSING SCHEME

[Fig 35]

TYPICAL PLAN

BED ROOM
DINING
BED ROOM
BED ROOM
LIVING
LIVING
DINING
BED ROOM
VARANDA
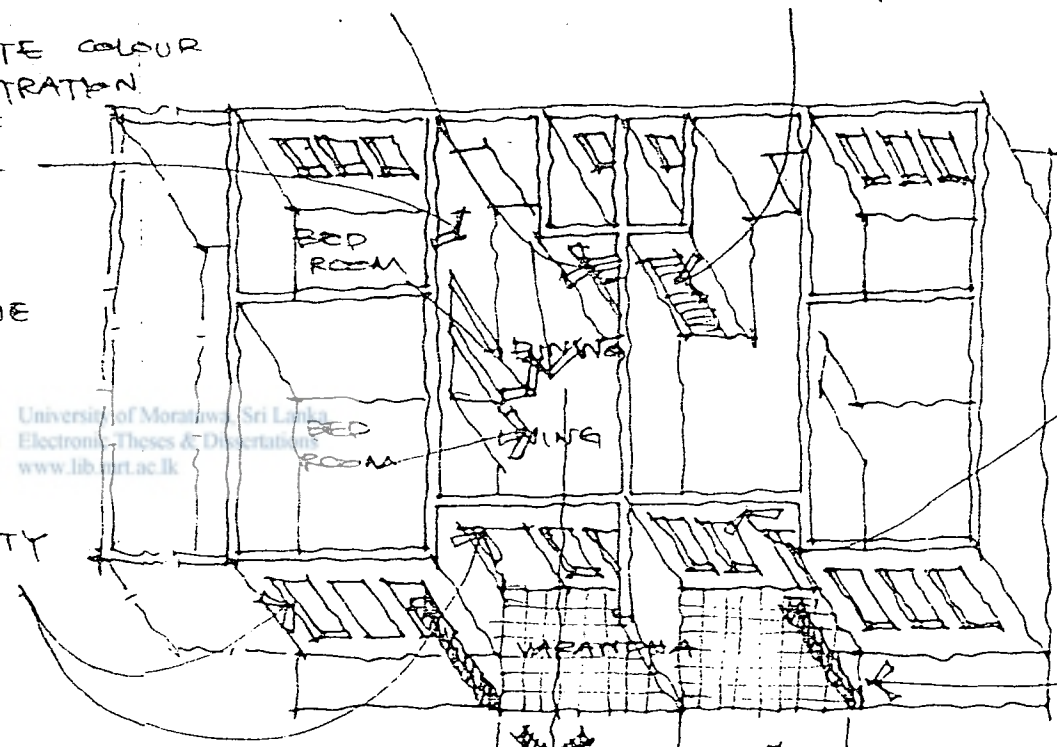VARANDHA
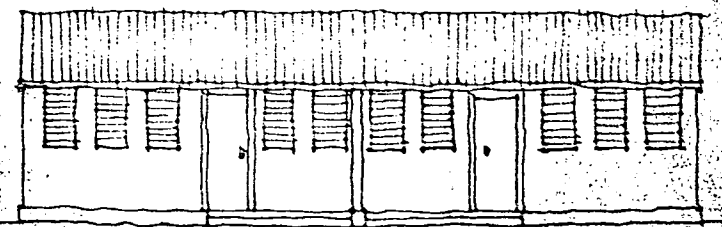
FRONT ELEVATION

DISPLAYED SYMBOLS
ORNAMENTATION
CREATE PLEASENT
FOCAL POINT
CREATE INTERESTING
LIVING SPACE

CHANGE THE DIRECTION OF
TOILET DOOR
AVOID PRIVATE SPACES FROM
MAIN AXIS
MAKE A FOCAL CORNER TO
DECORATE

GIVE SEPERATE COLOUR
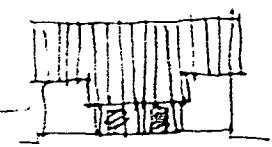REDUCE PENITRATION
ENLARGE THE
SPACE
EXPRESS SELF
TO PUBLIC

EXTENT TO
GIVEN SPACES DUE
TO LACK OF SPACE

CHANGE THE WINDOW
TYPE ADD GRILLWORK
CURTAIN
KEEP PRIVACY
CONSERN ABOUT BEAUTY
INTRESTING SPACE

CHANGE FRONT WALL
COLOUR & DECORATION
ACHIVE UNIQUENESS
CREATE DUALITY TO
ACHIVE SEPARETNESS
CONTREST TO SHOW
SELF WEIGHT

BED ROOM
DINING
LIVING
BED ROOM
VARANDHA

ADD COLUMNS

GARDNING
INCREACE RESIDENCE
SATISFACTION
SHIELD UNWANTED
TREES PASSER
CREATE INTRESTING
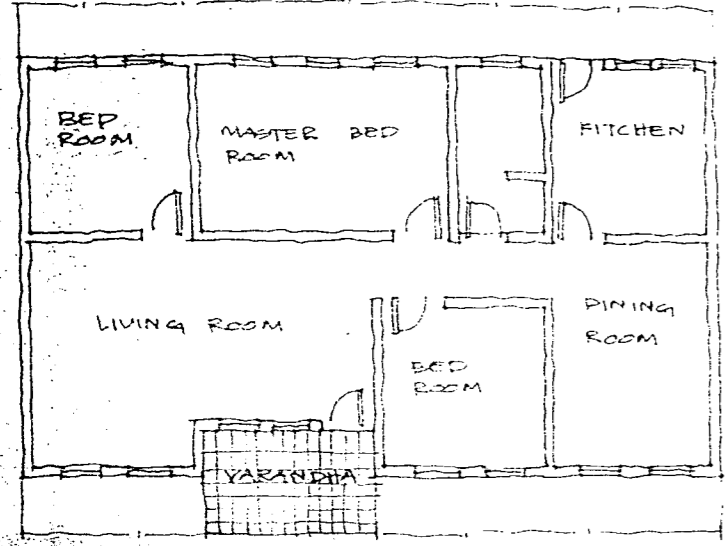ATTACHMENT TO THE
PLACE

PHYSICAL ACCESS
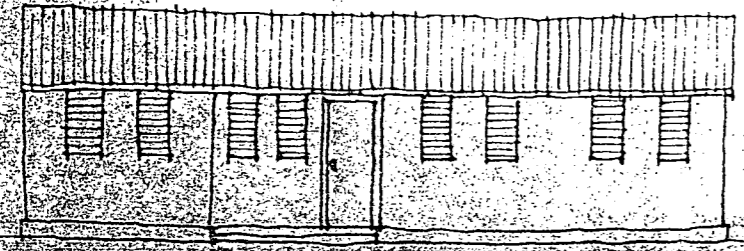PHYSICAL ACCESS
FENCING
CREATE TERITGRALITY
MAKE PRIVACY

ANALYSING SHEET OF INDIVIDUAL HOUSING UNIT HOUSE TYPE C @ RUKMALGAMA HOUSING SCHEME

[FIG 3.6]

BED ROOM | MASTER BED ROOM | KITCHEN

LIVING ROOM | BED ROOM | DINING ROOM
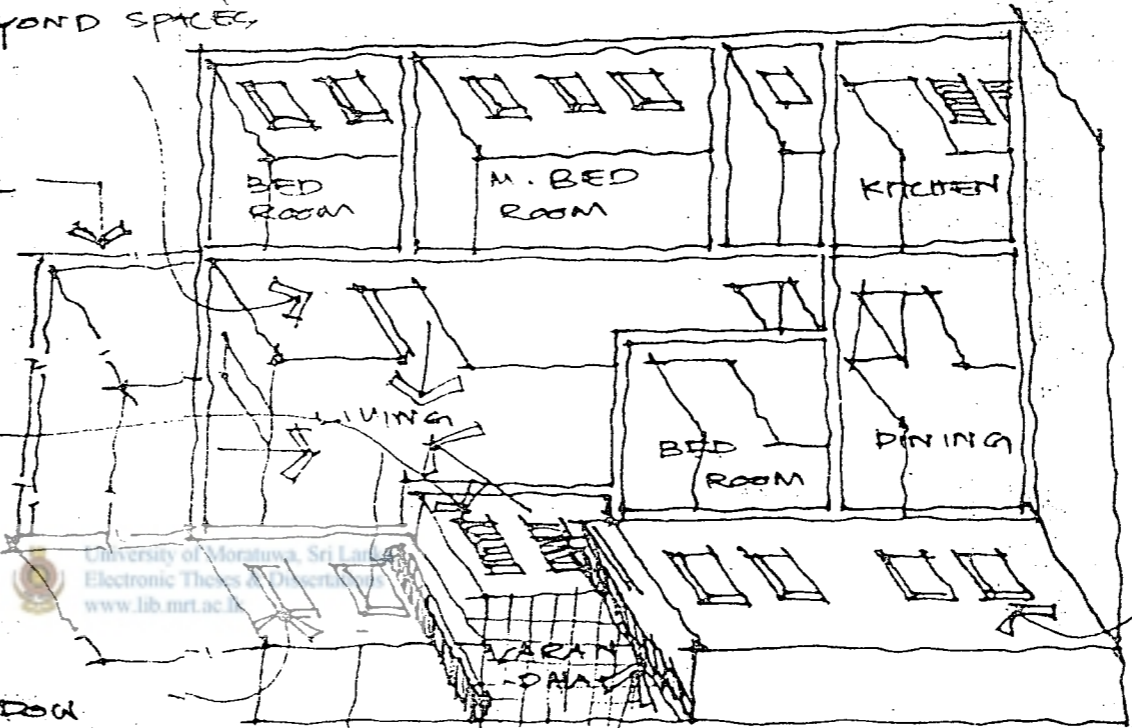
VARANDHA

TYPICAL PLAN

FRONT ELEVATION

SEPERATE WALL COLOUR
CREATE INTERESTFING LOBBY
KEEP PRIVACY IN
BEYOND SPACES

ADDITIONAL ROOM

CHANG THE FRONT WALLS COLOUR AND DECERATION
EXPRESS SELF PRESTIGE
ACHIVE IDENTICAL APPEARANCE

CHANGE WINDOW TYPE ADD GRILLWORK
OR CURTAINS TO CREATE MORE PRIVACY
MORE INTERESTING VISUAL AXES

FENCING
CREATE TERITORY
ENHANCE BELONGINESS

BED ROOM | M. BED ROOM | KITCHEN

LIVING

BED ROOM | DINING

VARAN -DHA

VISUAL ACCESS

PHYSICAL ACCESS

CHANGE THE WINDOW TYPES GRILL WORE & CURTAIN
SHIELD UNWANTED VIEWS TO PRIVACY

ADD COLUMNS

TYPICAL PLAN

Labels in plan: BED ROOM, BED ROOM, VARANDAH, DINING ROOM, MASTER BED ROOM, VARANDAH, LIVING ROOM, PANTRY, GARAGE, VARANDAH

FRONT ELEVATION

ADD SEPERATE COLOUR TO PREVENT PUBLIC ACCESS

CONVERT TO UTILITY SPACE

DISPLAYED SYMBOLS ORNAMANTATION GIVE VIEWS VISUAL CUES TO THE RESIDENT TO EXPRESS SELF

CHANGE THE WINDOW TYPE OR ADD GRILL WORK OR CURTAINS

SHIELD UNWANTED VIEWS & CREATE PRIVACY GIVE SEPERATE IDENTITY FROM NEIGHBOURHOOD

BEDROOM, BEDROOM, DINING, M. BED ROOM, PANTRY, LIVING, GARAGE, VARANDAH

EXTEND THE WALL

CHANGE THE FRONT WALLS COLOUR DECORATION TO SEPERATE IDENTITY EXPRESS SELF TO PUBLIC

ADD CAR PORCH

ADD COLUMNS

GARDINING DECRESE THE MONOTONUS ENVIRONMENT INCRESE THE ATTACHMENT TO THE PLACE

PHYSICAL ACCESS

FENCING CREATE TERITORY ENHANCE BELONGINESS

3.2.3 Changing from Typical Arrangement for Express Self

The users of these housing units had different views of their houses with the changing period of time. Therefore most of them wanted to personalise the housing unit according to their personal needs which was both qualitative and quantitative.
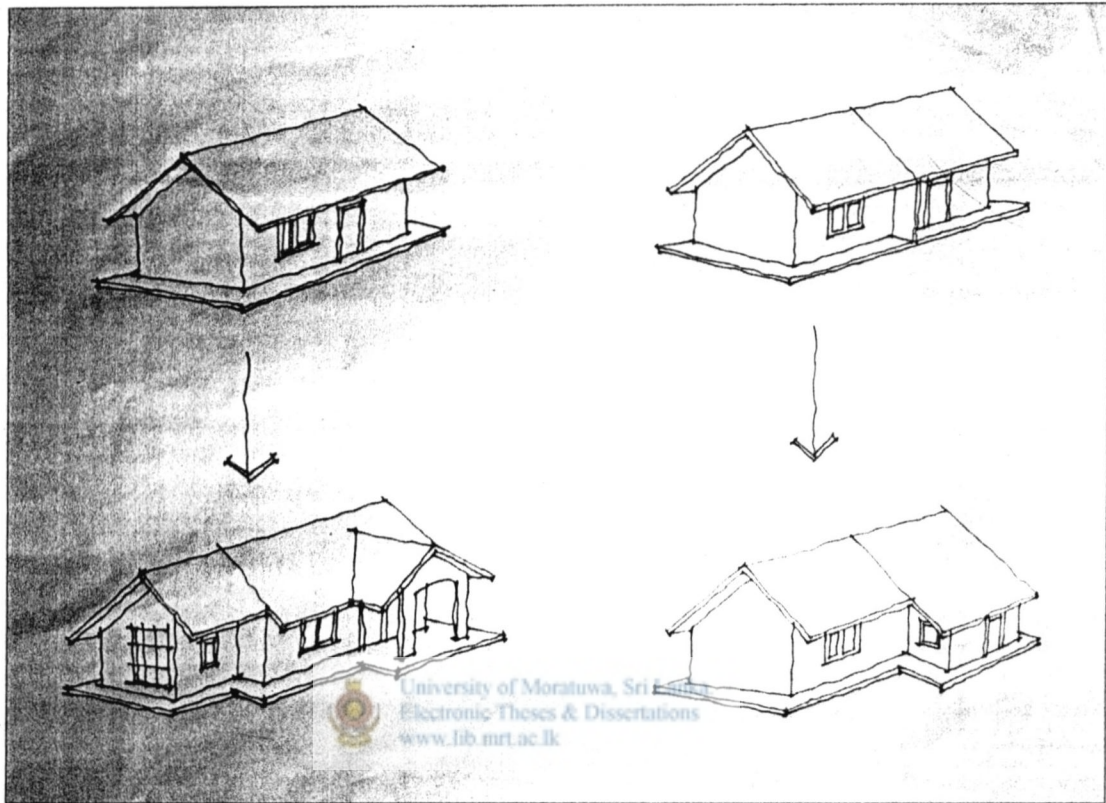

Fig 3.8, 3.9: Typical modification of detached single house single story and attached twin house single story

In addition to the above fact they changed the spaces in order to achieve socio-economical needs such as communication centres, food outlets, etc..,

Fig 3.10: Garage converted to communication centre in house type 'F'

Fig 3.11: Front garden extended to food outlets in house type 'F'

While fulfilling the qualitative needs in this manner they also need to do some modifications to express themselves by breaking the monotonous surrounding.

It seems that some prefer to do vertical extension to emphasize their social status within the community.

Fig 3.12: Vertical expansion to express the status i.e. the 'Self' in house type 'C'

In some housing units, the main entrances are visualized in a different manner. These entrances are assisted by decorative facades to make an identity to a particular housing unit.

Using of different colour scheme was also visible in the neighbourhood. The elements and façade treatments which differ from the adjoining houses help to identity the houses in certain manner while fulfilling the qualitative needs of the user.
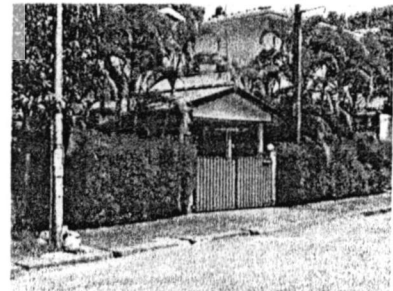
Fig 3.13, 3.14: Different variety of façade treatments in type 'C' houses

When the houses were given to the residents, the plots were not provided with any boundary wall and landscaping. Therefore the residents were able to create different environments to express themselves to achieve a certain degree of privacy and territoriality.
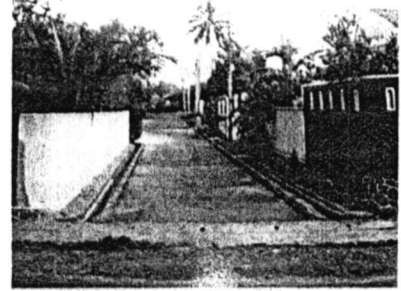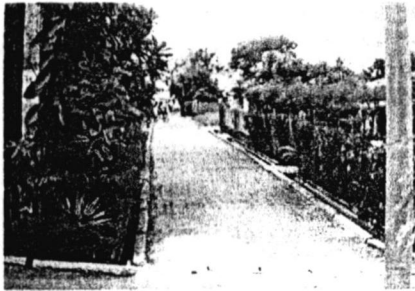

Fig 3.15, 3.16: Variety of fences creates unique identity, privacy, territoriality and sense of belongingness to particular dwelling units in *Rukmalgama* housing scheme

Also they have obtained the sense of identity of their demarcations by using different colours and materials for the boundary walls.
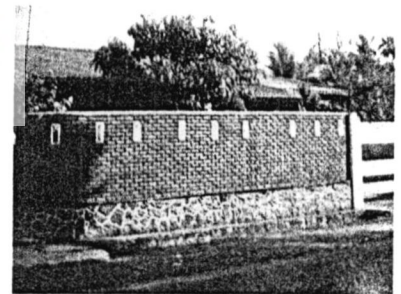
Fig 3.17, 3.18: Colours and materials gives unique identity to a residence.

Using of pre-cast concrete panels and frames creates a monotonous environment. There by it becomes contrast in attachment to its place. Therefore people have personalised that particular environment according to the personal choice to achieve sense of belongingness.
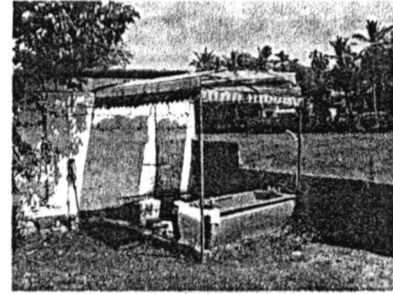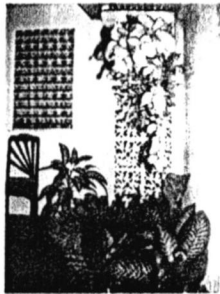

Fig . 3.19, 3.20: Landscaping is used to achieve belongingness

Fig 3.21: The bath tub is used as an early memory of *'Nana Lida'* at rear space

When considering the above situations, it is evident that people have done many alterations and additions to their original housing units, when their need arises in order to personalise their spaces. These are more personalized when comparing with other building approaches such as apartments, condominiums, etc..,

3.3 Case Study One: Soyzapura Housing Scheme

3.3.1 Background

Soyzapura housing complex is situated in Angulana in the city limits of Moratuwa municipal council. This scheme is very close to the Galle Road and is just separated by a commercial strip running along the main road. This was constructed by the government in the second half of the 1970's to fulfill the housing accommodation needs of the government servants. Basically this scheme provided accommodation facilities to high ranking officers as well as the other staff officers in the government service who were from that particular region.

Fig 3.22: Soyzapura Housing Scheme at Agulana

This scheme which has an enormous impact over the relationships of the inhabitants with their surroundings has proved that had the maximum demand for housing in the country from its inception. Even though the occupants have been restricted by certain bye - laws, they have already sold some of the apartments to the private users. This is being continued up to now. As a result, at present this scheme is not exclusively meant for the government servants.

3.3.2. Layout

When considering the layout of the scheme is a combination of different cluster types. The entrance to the scheme from Soyzapura Road which is off Galle Road.

The Soyzapura Road has many off roads and the housing blocks are located on either side of these off roads.

In some places these off roads or lanes are sub divided to form clusters around a central courtyard and other blocks are parallel to the road which are mixing with the commercial activities.

Two different types of housing blocks were constructed at the initial stage. Later variety types of housing blocks were added to the layout. Due to the Socio - Economic changes during the past it has resulted in linear development along the Galle Road, with various activities such as commercial industrial and residential etc in an uncontrolled manner. This has created highly crowded situation and tolerable densities of buildings at various locations where space was available.
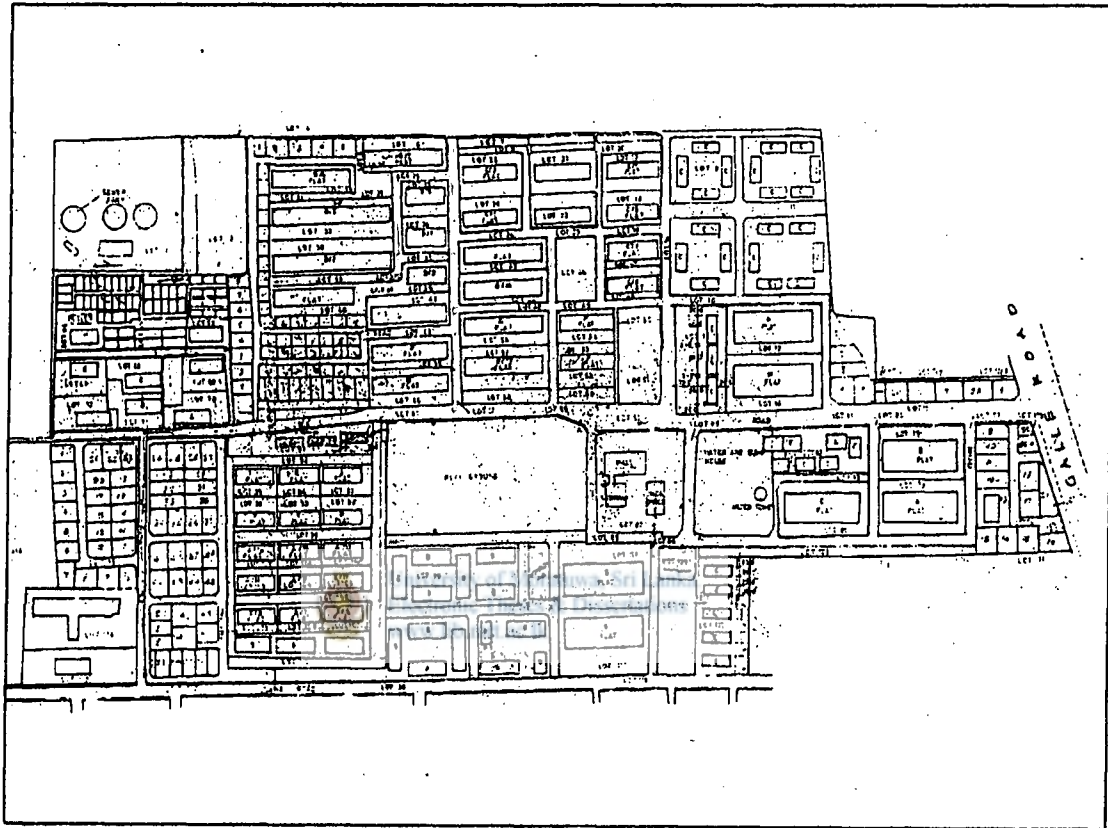

Fig 3.23: Layout Plan – *Soyzapura* Housing Scheme (Not to Scale)

☐ - SELECTED APARTMENT BLOCKS

▣ - ACCESS ROAD

3.3.3   Individual Unit/Apartment Type B

The four storied apartment overlooks the off road. The dwelling units are served by a single stairway and the each unit directly opens to the stair way's landing except the ground floor. At the ground floor they have direct access from the off road.
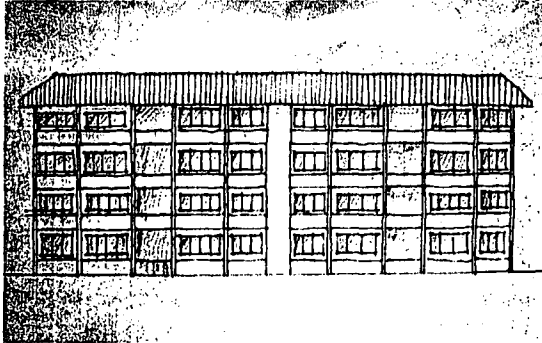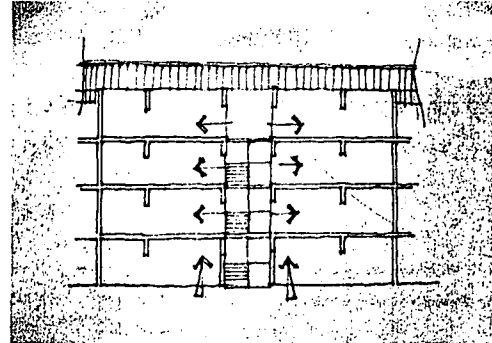

Fig 3.24: Front Elevation

Fig 3.25: Section of an individual housing block

The dwelling unit consists of a common Living area and Dining area, two Bedrooms, Kitchen with Utility room and a Toilet. (Fig 3.26)
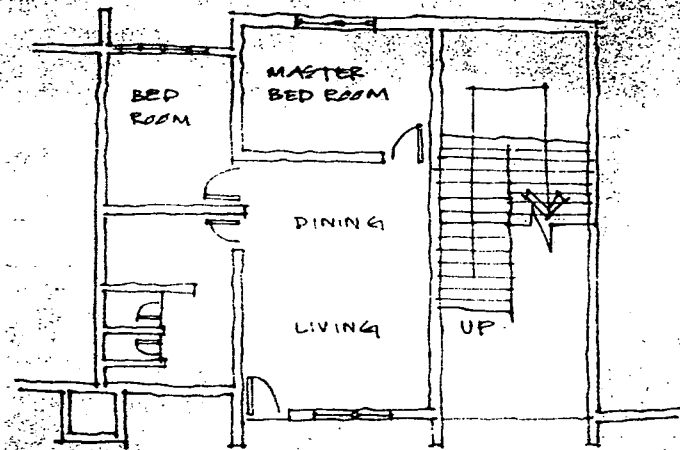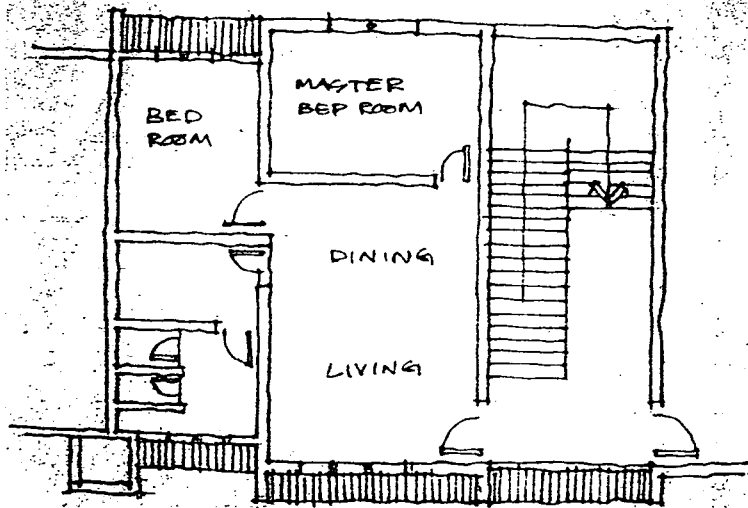
APPLY SEPERATE COLOUR
ATTRACT & KEEP PEOPLE
FRONT OF IT

REDUCE PENETRATION

DISPLAYED SYMBOLS ORNAMENTATIONS
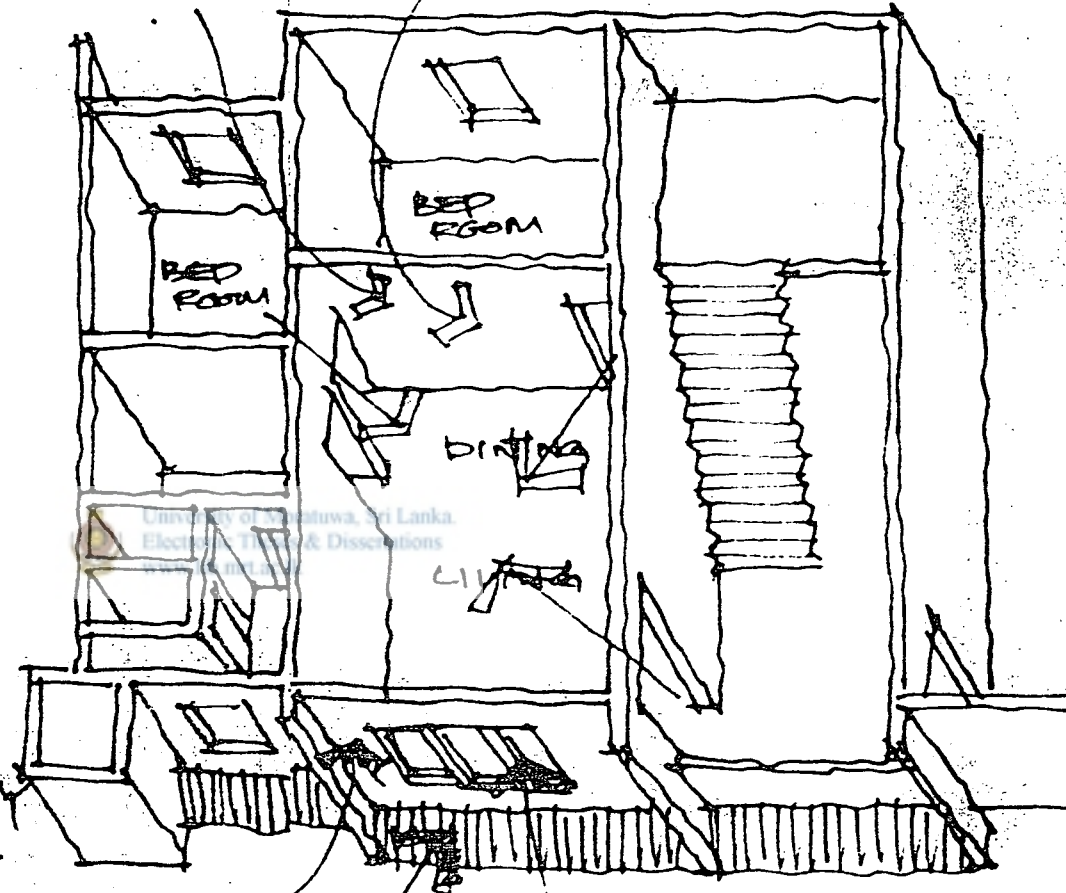CREATE PLEASENT FOCAL POINT
TRY TO EXPRESS WELTH

CHANGE OR DECORATE THE MAIN DOOR
GIVE UNIQUE IDENTITY TO PERTICULAR DWELLING UNIT

BED ROOM

BED ROOM

DINING

LIVING

MASTER BED ROOM

DINING

LIVING

UP

TYPICAL PLAN @ GROUND LEVEL

APPLY SEPERATE COLOUR
TO ACHIVE IDENTITY
GAIN LEGIBILITY
FROM MONOTONOES NEIGHBOURS

PROJECT TO OUTSIDE & MAKE FLOWER TROUGH
UNIQUNESS IDENTITY
ATTACHMENT TO THE GIVEN PLACE
RESIDENCE SATISFACTION

CHANGE THE WINDOW TYPE
ADD BRN WORKS OR CURTAIN
- CREATE ORNATE ELEMENT
EXPRESS SELF TO POBLIC
- VIEW THROUGH SELF WELTH

BED ROOM

MASTER BED ROOM

DINING

LIVING

TYPICAL PLAN @ UPPER LEVEL

3.3.4 Changing from Typical Arrangement for Express Self

Problems encountered by the users are the strict geometry of proto type unit and its inadaptability to their personal requirements. Two bedrooms are insufficient for a family with two children. There is no possibility to do any changes for the given space. But the inhabitants have done some additions and alterations to the rear and front side at the ground level. Even if it has been illegal to do such a thing they have succeeded in fulfilling their needs.

These stereo type units have become an obstacle to identity a persons own housing unit. If has become a threat to one's personality. The endless repetition of "look like" apartments has submerged the individuality of a person in a severed manner.

Fig 3.27: Extensions at ground floor levels

Fig 3.28: Colours as the representation of 'Self'

People have tried to emphasise their identity even under restricted situations by painting the walls.

Some try to express themselves through religious perceptions. Although all the front doors open to a common stair lobby. They express different perceptions as revealed in the following picture.
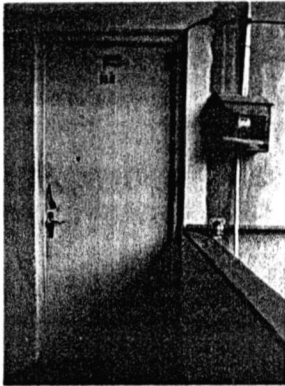

Fig 3.29, 3.30, 3.31: Buddhist, Tamil & Christian's perceptions on main doorways, which are open to a lobby at common stair way

People in the ground floors are more flexible to express themselves by extending the building towards the front or rear side. For instance most of the extensions have been done to the front by giving different façade treatments.
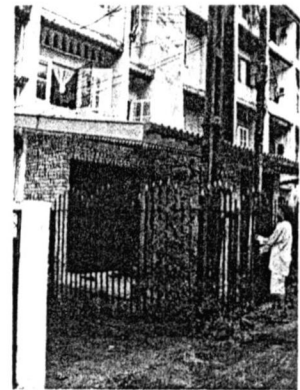
Fig 3.32, 3.33, 3.34, 3.35: Different variety of façade treatments at ground levels

The sense of privacy and territoriality is limited in the upper floors. But in the ground floors the privacy and territoriality of a person is achieved in a different manner. If has been achieved by a boundary wall, grill work, landscape etc. whatever it is depends on the degree of enclosure to the exterior environment or introverted or extroverted personality.
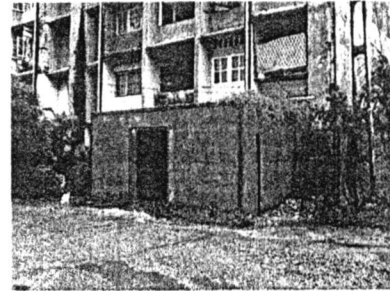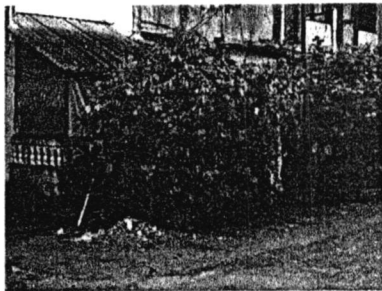

Fig 3.36, 3.37: Different personality in several ways...

They also need to achieve the concept of "Home" in this given monotonous environment. They achieved this by using various colours, furniture and equipment, ornaments, landscaping, etc.., (Fig: 006, 030)

Fig 3.38, 3.39: Makes the 'home' using various colours, furniture and equipment, ornaments, landscaping, etc..,

They also need a pleasing environment. This has been achieved by arranging the exterior with plants. Even the stair lobby has been used for horticulture, decorations in order to gain the sense of belongingness.

So each unit reflects how people struggle to make their housing unit personalize. They have tried to re-arrange the strict geometry of the given housing unit. And to make their own house prominent from the outside.

3.4 Case Study Three: Sahasrapura Housing Scheme

3.3.1. Background

Sahasrapura was one of the solutions to over come the slum and shanty dwellers in Wanathamulla and Borella areas, under the "Sustainable Township Program" in 1999, which was implemented by Ministry of Housing, Plantation and Infrastructure with the management arm of Real Estate Exchange Ltd (REEL)., that is the first high-density multi-storey condominium for urban poor in Colombo.

Fig 3.40: Sahasrapura Housing Scheme

3.3.2 Layout

Fourteen-storey condominium, ground floor is concerned it comprised of a whole range of commercial areas and different kind of communal facilities such as pre-school, community hall and recreational spaces etc., and rest of the thirteen storeys accommodate 680 dwelling units and secondary commercial, community spaces.

The layout of typical upper floors where the incorporation of the 'Main road', 'Junction' and 'Street', which are linked to each others.

The vertical circulation is carried out by in terms of lifts, staircases and Shafts directly open to the 'Main road', which is a wide corridor with views towards the exterior and where shops and boutiques for commercial activity are located.

'Main road' and streets are associated by junctions. The dwelling units are planned along both side of the 'Street'. This is ended up with balcony and fire exit and communal bath are arranged on either side.

PLAN -TYPICAL UPPER FLOOR - PROJECT (I)

LEGEND

■ COMMERCIAL   ■ SERVICES
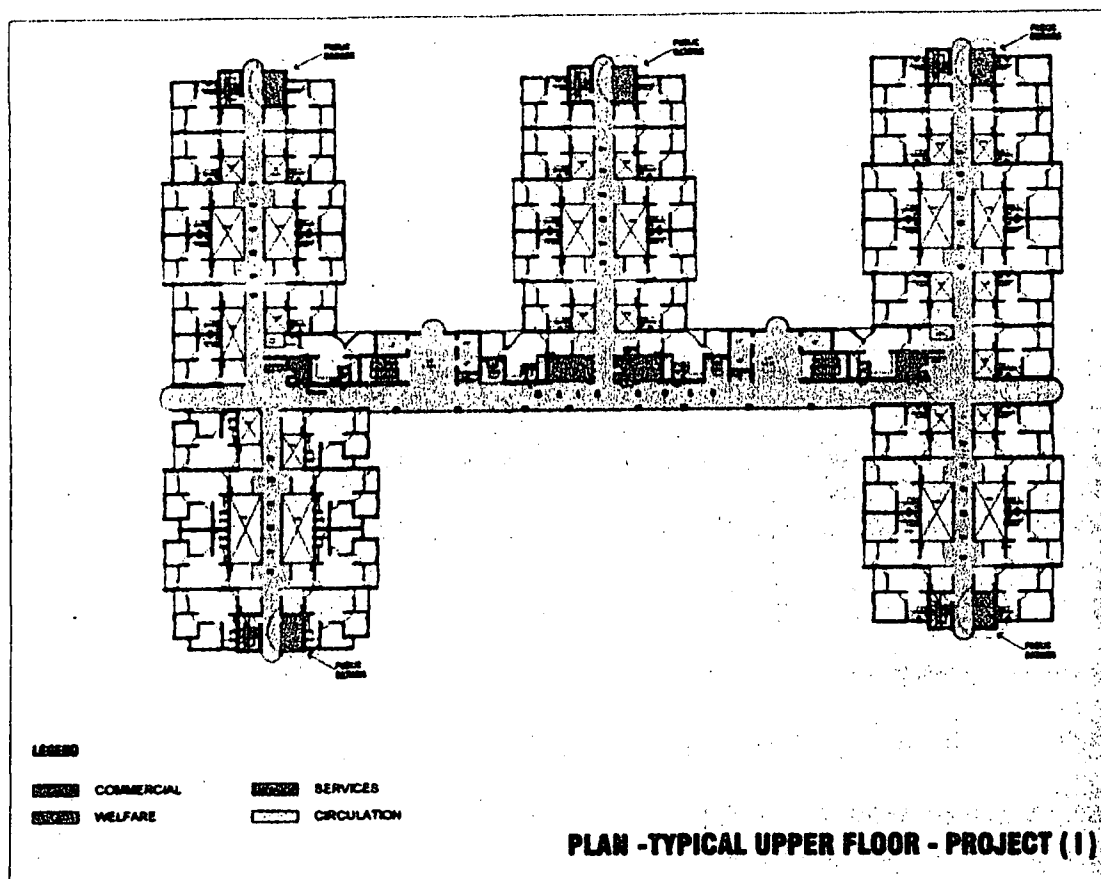
■ WELFARE   ▢ CIRCULATION

Fig 3.41: Layout Plan – *Sahasrapura* Housing Scheme (Not to a Scale)
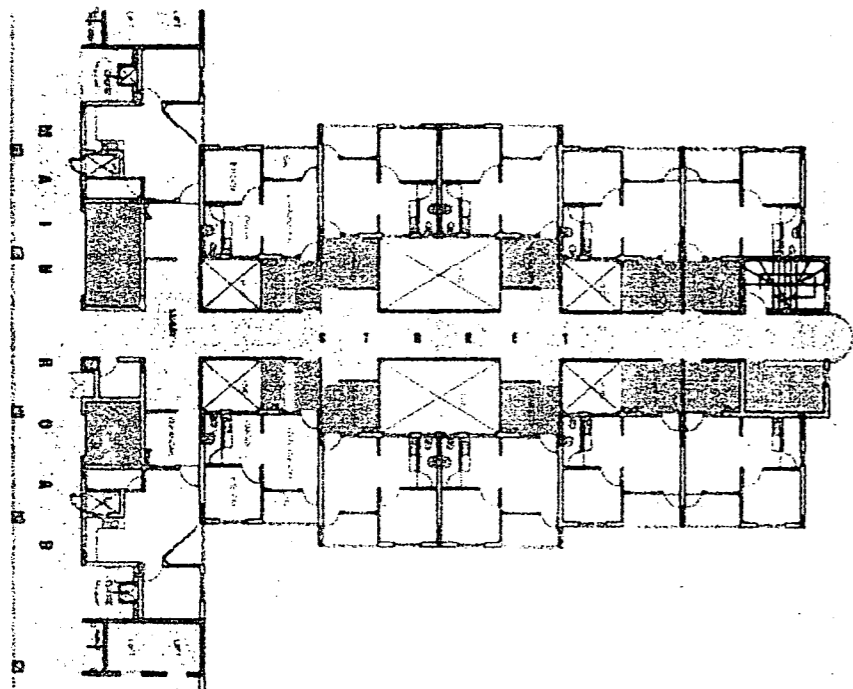
3.3.3 Individual Unit

One dwelling unit covers floor areas from 400-600 sqft, with has a verandah as a frontage with steel grill work and the interior it self has a living-dining, bed room, kitchen and toilet for working and other housing activities. All the living-dining units are ventilated and ample of light penetrate through the rear balconies which gives different glimpse of the city. (Fig 3.42)

### 3.3.4 Changing from Typical Arrangement for Express Self

The Design approach tries to create the existing realm within layout than uplifting their psych. So the dwellers are restricted in to a street geometrical unit which cannot develop further according to their self-development.

There is no separate sleeping areas for male and female or parents and children. Therefore the living and dining become a bed room and they have transferred the veranda in to a living room.

TYPICAL STREET LAYOUT
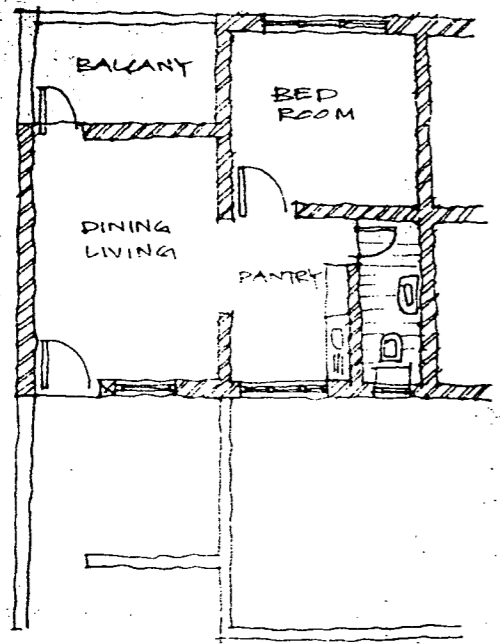
TYPICAL PLAN OF INDIVIDUAL UNIT

DISPLAYED SYMBOLS
ORNAMENTATION
EXPRESS SELF PRESTIGE
INCREASE ATTACHMENT TO THE
PLACE
BOOST LIKENESS TO THE
PLACE

CHANGE THE WINDOW TYPE
ADD GRILL WORK OR CURTAIN
INCREASE PRIVACY
CONSERN ABOUR AESTHETIC

APPLY SEPERATE
COLOURS
GIVE SEPERATE
IDENTITY
CREATE PROGRESSION

CONVERT TO
UTILITY SPACE DUE TO
LACK OF SPACE

AT NIGHT TIME
CONVERT TO BED ROOM
DUE TO LACK OF BEDROOM
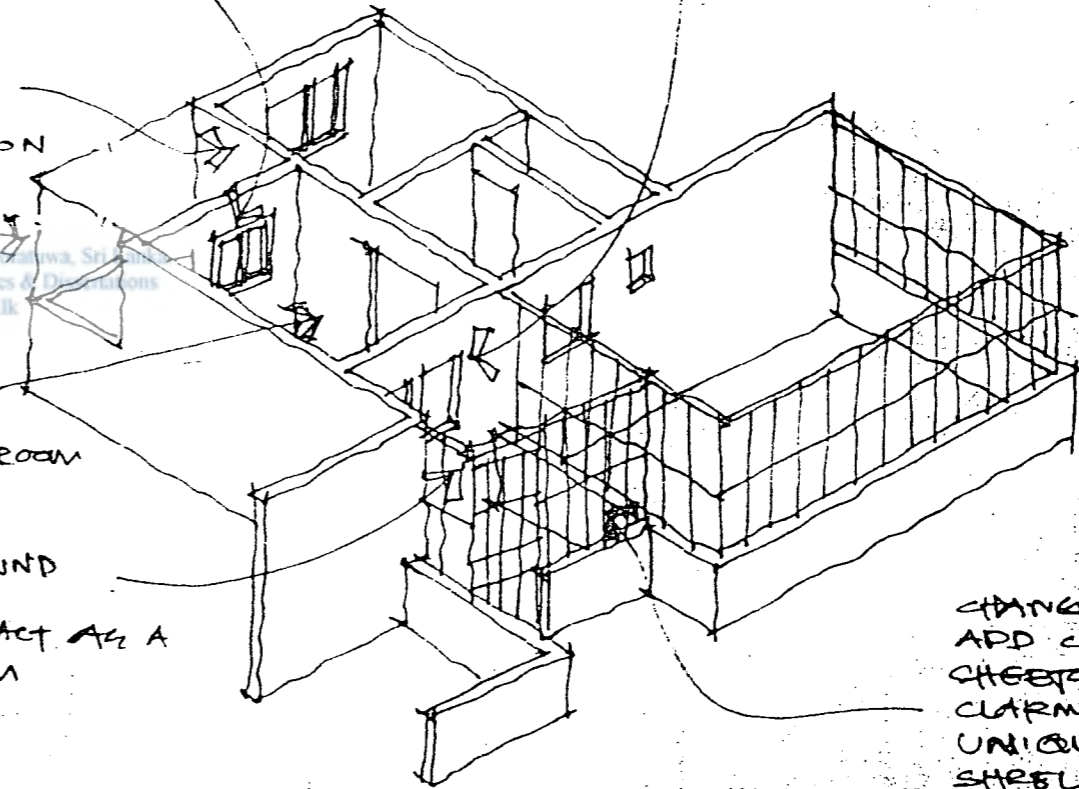
LIVING AROUND
CHARACTOR
VARANDAH ACT AS A
LIVING ROOM

CHANGE THE GRILL WORK
ADD CURTAINS, COVERING
SHEETS
CLARMED TERRITORY
UNIQUE IDENTITY
SHEELD UNWANTED
AREAS & CREATE
PRIVACY.

The front verandah has become a robust space where the dwellers can convert it to various activities according to their socio-economic needs, such as small boutiques, clothes shops etc.
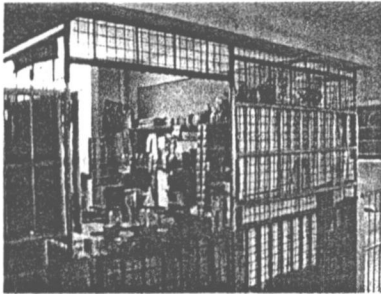

Fig 3.43, 3.44: The front verandah has become a robust space to their socio-economic needs

The rear balcony of these dwelling units has become a utility space such as storing spaces; children study rooms, etc.., instead of getting views or light and ventilation. They also have done modifications to satisfy their psychological needs to express themselves while fulfilling the quantitative needs.

Fig 3.45: Children's study rooms at rear balcony

Fig 3.46: Projected store room at rear balcony

These dwellers have tried to create a particular identity to their adjoining street while giving an identity to their individual unit.

Fig 3.47, 3.48: Painted floors given particular identity to the Entire Street

Also each unit tries to become prominent by using different colours, materials, grill works for the front verandah. There by the sense of identity of these dwellers are well conserved.
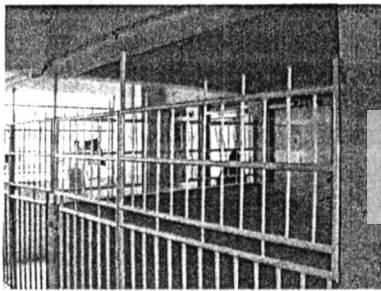
Fig 3.49: Use of different colours in front verandah to generate different identity
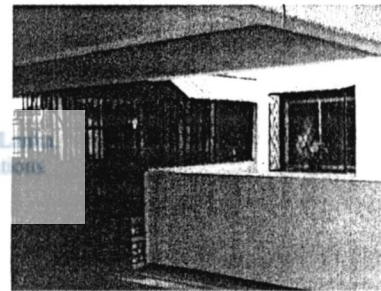
Fig 3.50: Different façade treatment given to front verandah

The projection of rear balcony also creates and identify towards the outer world. They have gained identity by using different colours and decorations for their rear balcony
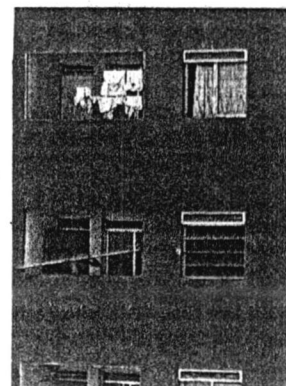
Fig 3.51: Different colours and decorations on rear balcony

47

The living room acts as their show room with much more furniture and equipment.

Fig 3.52, 3.53: The living room acts as their show room

The sense of privacy and territoriality is depends on how a persons respond to the outer world. This will decide his or her introverted or extroverted personalities.

Fig 3.54, 3.55: Sense of privacy and territoriality depict in his or her introverted or extroverted personalities

The sense of belongingness is emphasised in these dwelling by generating the attached with the attachment with the given spaces with the memories of earlier activities.
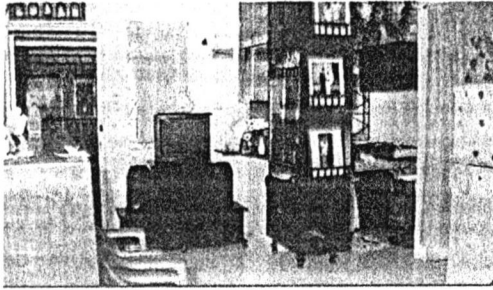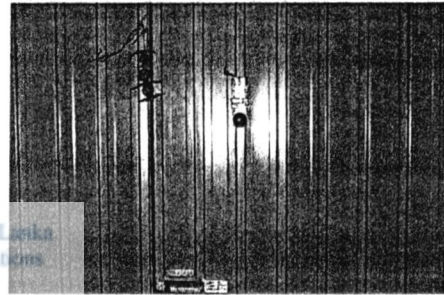

Fig 3.56: Children play on upper floors
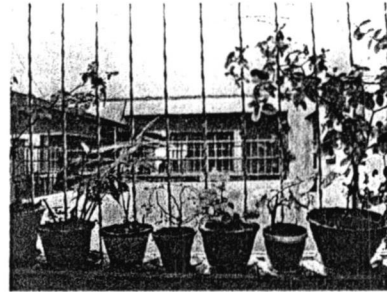
Fig 3.57: Horticulture decoration in limited space

When considering the design approaches, the building layout has been designed according to their earlier realms. And forgotten about the development of an individual's self and there by the development of his dwelling unit. But some how the dwellers struggle to make their housing unit personalised according to their needs and desires.

3.5 Concluding Remarks

The above case studies analyses about the psychological needs of a person to personalize their house and the parameters to express themselves. Thereby it identifies the flexibility of changing the given spaces according to their personal desires and aspirations.

CONCLUSION

A "symbol" is significant to a person with his attitudes, thoughts and feelings. Human is a unique living creature. His thoughts, feelings, attitudes etc varies from each other. And it represent him self in a degree of expression. Therefore self expression of a person becomes unique.

The uniqueness can be manifested in many ways , in different degrees in many depths. And it becomes to generate a person's living environment or which is considered as a house. Therefore the house becomes an intimate place for living . It is the place where a person feels utterly relaxed , comfortable and secured. Thus it becomes the best means of expressing him self.

When considering the above fact in detail , the story of house has a similar length of that of the human civilization. Therefore the concept of self and it's relationship to a personal dwelling became an evolutionary process throughout history. This evolution depended with attitudes, values, behaviour , social and cultural relations.

But today the situation could be seen in a different perspective. The rapid urbanization process was an influencing factor to change above discussed phenomena . And economy has become a major factor that modifies and determines the type of housing that one chooses. Therefore the house has become a commodity at present. More popularity is given to mass housing instead of individual house with the busy life style and easy living.

However it is , what is to be considered in both situations is that man changes and modifies his environment constantly and continuously in any situations , irrespective of the inherent limitations.

When considering the above situations in selected case studies of Rukmalgama , Soyzapura and Sahaspura reveals that people struggle to personalize their housing unit to express themselves in a psychological perspective.

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Rukmalgama Housing scheme

This particular housing scheme has more opportunities to personalize due to individual plots with free spaces .Therefore they have a possibility to do any alterations or additions according to their needs. But the pre cast panels has become an obstacle during any erection.

Soyzapura Housing scheme

This particular housing scheme has a limited opportunity to personalize their dwellings. However it is the psychological aspects leads to create an identity within a limited given space. Therefore they tend to do any alterations or additions to the limited spaces in an unauthorized manner. It seems the unity of the total housing scheme is neglected due to the above restrictions and poor maintenance.

Sahasapura Housing scheme

The spatial organization of this housing scheme is done according to a concept of their early life style and it is appropriate at present .But it will become a failure in future because the spaces are insufficient to grow with the personal desires of the dwellers according to their changing needs.

Creating the relationship of "self " to architecture is not an easy task to be achieved. Therefore personalization in architecture is an ultimate self-realization.

Today's "Architecture" has become more profit oriented than being a practical solution for the housing need and demand in Sri Lanka. Therefore architecture should be created through a person's inner self .

Each person has a significance in their personal dwelling. Therefore architecture should be created with awareness in this respect. Thereby to achieve and fulfill the "House as a symbol of self"

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