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CHANGING EXPRESSIONS OF MIDDLE INCOME HOUSES IN RELATION TO OWNERS STATUS

: A STUDY ON THE POST COLONIAL PERIOD MIDDLE INCOME
HOUSES IN COLOMBO.

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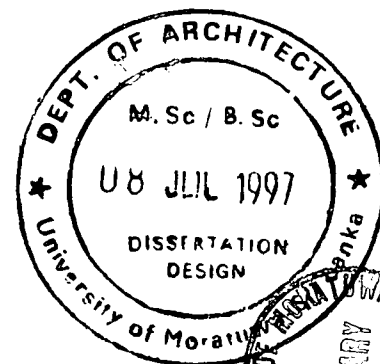
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ABSTRACT.

Ways of life had been the basis of house forms created by people through the ages. House had become the important physical object to express the status in addition to the behavioural pattern of a particular society. The ways of life had changed or is been changing with the Socio-Economic changes in a particular culture, also creating a considerable influence on house designs. By analysing the post independence period in Sri -Lanka, it reveals that the application of different political concepts over the society in different eras had influenced severely on Social & economic patterns of people which ultimately effected the house design which is considered as the mirror of their life pattern.

To demonstrate the changes in house design in relation to the different political concepts , the study has been divided into four historical phases in Sri -Lanka, which commenced after the independence period upto 1983. Each phase has been analysed in terms of ways of life in relation to the prevailing political conditions in relation to the socio -economic changes & the housing concepts. The entire study has been confined to the middle income housing of the Colombo city limits & its immediate sub-urbs, which is considered as the densely populated administrative area of Sri-Lanka. To develop the conceptual analysis of the study, the housing concepts in colonial period is also considered as a basis.

The data used are published material pertaining to all fields of housing. Certain unpublished studies also have been used. In instances where such is referred to the thesis, personal surveys & observations were carried out for the authenticity of the unpublished material.

The study continues by identifying certain patterns or styles of housing developments in Sri-Lanka, in accordance with the policy changes. In the earlier period there was less unselfconscious translation of culture to house form while a selfconscious manipulation of form occurred in the latter periods. A poor synthesis of tradition with contemporary living was portrayed in the post independence period. The personalisation of house design weakened the link between culture & house form. The gradual disappearance of tradition in relation to the different political eras had contributed to the alien features in housing in recent past. With the political , social & economic changes within the country, the "ways of life" almost remained constant while the others changed. Hence these changes in "pattern of housing" are utmost important to the designers in understanding the reasons behind the advantages & the disadvantages of the political influence on housing in Sri -Lanka.