THE "PRESENT" OF THE PAST:
Persistence of Ethnicity in Built Form

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Submitted to the Department of Architecture
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ABSTRACT

The subject of this thesis was generated by the prevailing social situation in the city of Karachi, where many communities and ethnic groups co-exist in ethnically defined areas. At the beginning of the research it was clear that a study of the importance of kinship and communal living in the perpetuation of traditions and in the development of cultures would have to be included. The endurance of ethnicity in realized built form became the crux of the entire study. In tracing back the infiltration of the *muhajirs* into Pakistan's prime city of Karachi and its impact on domestic spatial planning, this inquiry attempts to explore the influencing factors in cross-ethnic differences and to a certain extent trans-class similarities.

A number of aspects make this entire exercise curiously stimulating and intellectually invigorating:
- Inadequate existing literature on the relationship between culture and built form in this context.
- The presence of a great variety of ethnic influences in Karachi that add many dimensions to the richness of diversity and similarities.
- Reflection of these in the every-day architecture which is constantly being created by the people and the professionals.

The thesis, while establishing its theoretical framework on cultural interpretations, uses structuralists' perspective to view the case studies in order to ascertain the many influencing aspects of ethnicity and cultural continuity in the context of Karachi. The case studies are based on first hand data compiled by the author through site visits, which involved surveys of houses built by the people, observations of uses of various spaces within the houses, and interviews with residents. These are supported by oral information obtained in discussion with people in the field, and by existing documented information wherever available. On analyzing these data many reflections surfaced which centered around the **cultural endurance and persistence of ethnicity in built form.**

Thesis Supervisor: Ronald B. Lewcock
Title: Professor of Architecture and Aga Khan Professor of Design for Islamic Societies.

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An unfavourable task; lest I forget a favour,
An unavoidable inscription, for all the consideration
An indebtedness, to all I owe.

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.... and all those residents whose privacy I invaded.

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THE THEME

A nation is born in the name of religion;
a city is impregnated with cultures;
a society of pluralistic values is sowed.
There is harmony in heterogeneity;
there is unity in diversity.

Persistence, endurance, continuity,
the past in the present, the present of the past!
Permanence? Nay constancy;
it is the dynamics of culture.

The unenigmatic, the esoteric;
the space, the essence;
the people, the lifestyle;
it is the spatial measure of culture.

Before embarking on the main text of this document, it seems appropriate
to introduce the motivation, the process and the outcome of this research.
All human beings require shelter, which has to be erected in accordance to
each person's needs and demands. Shelter can thus be seen as not merely a
response to physical but socio-cultural requirements as well, within eco-
nomic constraints. The range includes both the shelters built by people
themselves, which have been referred to as the vernacular, and architect-
designed dwellings, categorized here as "high" design.

The motive for selecting this subject is in a sense personal, as it emanates
from concern over the prevailing ethnic tensions in the city of Karachi,
which also is the author's city of residence. Since the state of Pakistan was
created for all the Muslims of the Indo-Pak sub-continent who held a
common ideology, one might perhaps expect that the question of major
differences among its people would not surface. Yet these differences are
evident. That the government refuses to recognize them is understandable,
as its interests lie in propagating nationalist patriotism and a generic
national identity. The point being overlooked is that the people constituting
the nation belong to varied cultural and ethnic communities. This does not
in any way harm or subvert the national interest; on the other hand, if the
differences are suppressed, the oppressed find some unhealthy outlets
which result in undue antipathy. Thus, this thesis germinates from an
appreciation of the divergences; and the bountiness that lies in variations.

A general interest in cultural influences on human beings' actions and
cultural manifestations in the physical expressions of human beings,
coupled with the belief that development has its roots in tradition, enhanced
the appeal of the subject. For all healthy growth nourishment is a pre-

requisite; in this instance it nurtures on the opulence and vibrancy of tradition. Every community has its own traditional values and cultural emphases which are peculiar to the group; and in respecting these, a major step would be taken in terms of awareness. This awareness will itself lead to tolerance and acceptance.

Having been trained as an architect, it was natural, for the author, to assume the theme of built form as a manner of expression for distinctive attributes of various groups in society. Since a community consists of people from both sexes and of all ages; with varying degrees of affluence, it was essential to look at that type of built form which best resonates the needs of them all. Hence the subject focussed on shelter, the domestic environment, which is very personalized, reflecting the family as part of a larger community which has certain shared beliefs and cultural norms, inevitably manifested, to a greater or lesser extent in the houses.

In the context of Karachi, this study seemed extremely relevant and necessary. This is especially true since to the many ethnic groups present in Karachi these differences are quite meaningful. Politically the strife is between the migrants from India, collectively known as the *muhajirs,* and the other ethnic groups from all over Pakistan. This does not mean that it is always muhajirs versus the rest, as there are distinctions between the indigenous ethnic groups of Pakistan, as well. The *muhajirs,* too, are divided into ethnic groups, as the migrants originate from different regions in India. Therefore this study does not dwell on the prevailing politics, nor does it distinguish *muhajirs* as one group different from others but looks at the variant groups within it in order to understand the subtle distinctions in their sub-groups in the context of domestic built form.

The best approach to this kind of study was felt by the author to be the examination of the spatial configuration of the houses of different ethnic groups. This meant a study which would look at the morphology and house types of the migrants. Setting out with the hypothesis that spaces in a house

and their uses manifest an immense amount of information about the inhabitants, and yet, since each community had shared values, common denominators would appear within the group, as well as dissimilarities across the groups. It was at the same time felt to be important, in this inquiry, to search for a theory which might serve in testing out the hypothesis of a direct relationship between ethnic origin and spatial arrangement. Thus a theoretical framework based on structuralists perspective was used for the interpretation of culture and to explain the need for the perpetuation of traditions. The two aspects of the work together lay the ground for a systematic investigation to be exercised for negation or acceptance of the hypothesis.

RESEARCH PROCESS & METHODOLOGY

As the migrants came from all across the sub-continent, it was essential to go through a process of selection to choose those on which to test the hypothesis, since it was beyond the scope of this venture to include all the migrant groups. The research commenced by quickly looking at the areas where various ethnic groups were concentrated in clusters. These were areas in which people typically built for themselves.Three of these areas were selected keeping in mind the time constraints and availability of data, however distantly related they might be to this study. Surveys of the houses in the selected areas (which form the case studies) were conducted to examine the consistency in the spatial configuration. These houses were selected at random i.e. one house in every alternate lane. In this way it was quickly seen that a certain pattern was emerging (elaborated in chapter 3) which supported a hypothesis, that the ethnic groups were building accord- ing to their origins. The house plans were sketched during the surveys in order to understand the usage and connection of spaces; for this purpose measured drawings were not necessary. The residents were interviewed at length regarding their use and visualization of these spaces, and any

associations these uses might have with those in the houses they had occupied or built before their migration.

In relating the interviews to physical surveys and photographic evidence, the major body of the thesis emerges. It is supported by a minor study, within the theme, on architect-designed houses. The overall analysis stems from the structuralist's perspective of tradition and the perpetuation of culture. From an application of this analysis conclusions are reached which are set out in the last chapter.

The chapters have been laid out so as to first give the readers a sense of the theoretical framework and then introduce them to the historical development of the the context. This in turn leads into the section concentrating on case studies. The conclusions are classified as reflections, in order to account for the various pointers which are not an end in themselves but have potential for further inquiry.

After introducing the subject quite succinctly, the opening chapter sets the theoretical base. It discusses some viewpoints and interpretations of traditions and culture and emphasizes the need for continuity. Illustrating human needs and the inherent desire of people for development, through various expressions, this chapter aids in producing a cultural spectacle through which to view the forthcoming case studies. In the second chapter, a brief background of the people, pertinent to the thesis, is presented. It's theme is the origin of context and its contribution to the resettlement patterns of people with particular reference to the Indo-Muslim migrants. It also etches the spatial structure of the city and serves as an initiation for types of housing in Karachi. Chapter three which discusses the actual case studies deals with particular migrant ethnic groups and their built form. The spatial configuration of houses as peculiar to each group is looked at in depth and cross-cultural differences and trans-class similarities in built form are drawn out. It contains all the information, through test and illustrations, on the selected migrant groups.

The concluding section reflects on the issues raised in the previous chapters and attempts to tie up the loose ends of preceding discussions. It also brings to light the factors influencing domestic built form in the context of ethnicity. ■■■■■■■■■

INTRODUCTION

About forty odd years ago a country of variegated cultures and bearer of two major religions, dominated by foreign sovereign power, saw the culmination of momentous political upheavals. Not only did it see the end of alien occupation, but itself divided into two states. Consequently Pakistan was born as an Islamic nation, as two wings, the east and the west. Being divided on the basis of religion, the areas with Muslim majority, ie. the northwestern and the northeastern wings of British India emerged as West and East Pakistan respectively with the state of India in between. The east wing of Pakistan exists no more, as twenty-four years after partition, it emerged as an independent state of Bangladesh. This time the main reason was not religion but ethnicity.

The then East Pakistanis, though Pakistani Muslims, were referred to as Bengalis, as ethnically ie. linguistically and culturally, and in their colouring, they were distinct from the people of West Pakistan. Their territories too were physically separate. There were many other political explanations for the breaking away of the east wing; but in keeping with the theme of this study the point being made is that ethnicity is an extremely crucial and influential factor.

To revert to 1947: all was not well in the days following partition, in fact the predicament of the new state and the plight of it's people had just begun. No other city but Karachi can trace the history of the innumerable migrants who chose the "free land" created in the name of Islam. As the then federal capital and the only port city it received and welcomed all that came; a Sunni, a Shia, a Memon, a Bohra; from Uttar Pradesh to Madras, from Bombay to Calcutta.

Creating from the past and building in the present, each group generated built forms pertinent and peculiar to it's lifestyle, culture and ethnic roots. Karachi, itself a "growing" city, pulsated with forces exuded by the many ethnic groups and strived to support all who stood on its soil.

Cities are understood or explained through their economies, and the progress or condition of any state is associated with the "type of economy" which is an outcome of physical and political decisions. In the development of a city, population shifts are usually referred to in the context of rural-urban migration. The city receives rural migrants who are lured by the availability of options for economic betterment in urban areas. But the type of migrant population and the related issues discussed in this endeavour, are the outcome of mass refugee migration which occurred due to the bifurcation of the Indian sub-continent.

It is estimated that more persons were dislocated due to the partition of British India than in any other event in history. Karachi was the city which inherited the most Muslim refugees, from every region of the sub-continent, entering Pakistan. The *muhajirs*, who completely changed the cityscape, became dominant over the indigenous population making Karachi an extremely cosmopolitan city. It is striking that the "city exists today as an urdu-speaking transplant in the midst of a Sindhi-speaking countryside."[1] With representations from all regions of the sub-continent, Karachi's built form has a flavour of all cultures and ethnic denominations.

An inquiry into the built form of the varied groups signal inherent cultural attributes peculiar to an ethnic community. On a broad plane, the geographical origins of the *muhajirs* serve as primary distinction separating sub-groups within the *muhajir* community. The ethnic groups basically conceive of their communities in regional terms. On a micro level, geographical expression of cultural differences is evident in the form of organization, grouping and communal affinity. The effects of which are very visible in the growth and development of Karachi.

Today's Karachi enwraps within its amoebic[2] boundaries, architecture "of sorts". The colonial heritage, bungalows, row houses, spanish villas, "modern" houses, apartment blocks along with reed huts, mud houses and other forms of structures mark the realm of domestic architecture. "Architecture is a social act and as such cannot be divorced from a culture's view of the grand scheme within which it exists."[3] The query then is to quest for those cultural views which are manifested in these social acts. The present picture is of confusion as the exterior expressions travel from Europe to the White House in United States, but the inside arrangement which is for the self, reflects self-needs. The exterior makes statements of power and wealth, that is not to say that the interior is treated as a neglected space; it is far from that. The interior layouts manifest the actual cultural values which may be enveloped by misleading facades; this contradiction expressing very clearly the duality and the practice of double standards in our existing Pakistani society.

Traditions and continuity of the past becomes essentially vital for the survival and perpetuation of culture. The many ethnic groups in Karachi in their style of living state the importance of such links in their dwelling units. For the migrants it was imperative to recreate their old "domains" for both physical and psychological reasons. Each group relying on its ethnicity and treating traditions as part of their development, expressed these values in their living patterns and their built forms. This by no means indicates stagnation of the mind or a sign of acute nostalgia, but it is a production of need both physical and mental and professes both reason and emotion. Living is not exclusively rooted in reason, "such a life would be biologically weak .... The true life reflects a balance between emotion and reason."[4] This balance creates an order which generates harmony. - "the essence of all true creativity."[5]

What we see in Karachi are both vernacular as well as architect-designed domestic environments or structures. The vernacular stimulates some extremely innovative and functional notions in dwellings; they build as they

live, they live as they are used to. They believe in the virtues of the past and what preceded is relied on for guidance in the present and potentials for the future. "Precedents can serve as a source of inspiration and innovation."[6] The precedents for them (the people) are the only things they know; what they know they apply and these applications are not by trial and error. For instance in Karachi's humid climate they appreciate the need for cross ventilation and they make provision for it; and on the other hand to preserve their privacy, the windows are carved out on the higher parts of the wall. An inquiry into their style of building and the raison d'être for the evolution of layouts peculiar to a certain ethnic group leads to some very interesting investigations.

As in architecture of the people, the "high" or professionally-schemed architecture too shows variation in plans and spatial structure from group to group. Whether it be a colonial bungalow or a modern or perhaps a post-modern facade, the schematic differences within, stipulate some curiosity. What enhances the curiosity is the evidence of trans-class similarities and cross-ethnic differences. This thesis in some sense, attempts to pick up the scattered jigsaw pieces and create an intelligible picture of what is happening to form an understanding of architecture.

The search for underlying meanings is the main concern of this study, germinating from a structuralist's perception, in understanding a social system which is beyond dispute a cultural creation. The espial power in comprehending the transformations is one of the strong basis of structure, which the thesis will go on to discuss. Its role in explaining the domestic built form of Karachi is a central one in this inquiry.

Karachi is not alone in bearing influences of the west, and there is a constant need to "hang on" to traditional values and cultural norms which are vital for stability. There are signs of progress and nostalgic reflections which together lead to development. Development comes in restoring a balance between whichever dimension is lacking in the relationship between

tradition and change. "If change were to uproot tradition, change would be rootless, if tradition were to inhibit change, tradition would decay."[7] Since the dwelling unit is a reflection of the self (which seeks this development), this study in all its endeavours is a modest inquiry in a large body of architectural and social knowledge.

NOTES & REFERENCES

1. Sipe, K.R., *Karachi's Refugee Crisis*........, p.v
2. The term is used to give a feel of the city's growth into the desert plains which were once considered as limitations; all its boundaries are therefore not rigid.
3. Haider, S.G., *Islam, Cosmology and Architecture* in "Theories and Principles of Design in the Architecture of Islamic Societies", Symposium proceedings, Nov.6-8, 1987.
4. Dr. Hans Schaefer, Hiedelberg University and Academy of Science, quoted by Jaffery, H., in A Cultural Theory of Development, in HP issue 10 & 11, p.113.
5. Jaffery, H., ibid.
6. Lewcock, R., *Working With the Past* in "Theories and Principles of Design in the Architecture of Islamic Societies", Symposium proceedings, Nov.6-8, 1987.
7. op.cit. Jaffery, H. p. 112.

DEVELOPING
A FRAMEWORK

SOCIO-CULTURAL SETTING

"Men make their own history but they do not know that they are making it." This famous statement by Marx comes to mind while deciphering the influence of social factors in the creation of physical setting of human beings, which also incorporates the unconscious elements of social life. Life itself is transitional and being in a state of transition human beings are in a state of flux, liable to undergo processual changes, as the time frame for these changes cannot be quantified or qualified. The process is on going as life itself and if at any instance it stagnates, the society decays. These changes are not necessarily a rejection or revision of social norms or values but because of varying "external" factors may be represented in a modified or mutated physical state. The material state can encapsulate the spiritual essence to reverberate the signals appropriately in order to make the underlying meaning comprehensible. One of the essential characteristics of human beings is their ability to discern and learn about, and explore the environment, additionally they have "the ability to structure and manipulate the environment in arbitrary ways so as to create culture."[1] The structures, hence created, provide mankind the possibility of learning more and interpreting better for their own future benefits. Fundamentally a good idea survives "and like a phoenix holds the possibility of resurrection."[2] The transformations that occur are systemized and therefore can be structured and read.

The cognition and explication of metamorphosis in the physical setting as interpretations of the metaphysical reveal the underlying meaning of the system and structure. In this thesis the attempt is to surface these underlying meanings in the domestic built form as perceived and used, by people or the user, depending on his cultural context.

Any social system is clearly a cultural creation; it is maintained by the on-going activities of the actors involved and is invested with meaning. It is not merely a "structure" in some external, imposed sense. Lévi-Strauss's struggle as a "structuralist" made him "realize that structure is derived from observations on transformations."[3] Kroeber says that "any organism, all societies and all cultures, crystals, machines - in fact everything that is not wholly amorphous has a structure". For any model, to have structural value, it must meet several requirements, when contemplated in social and other fields. The aim of social structural studies is to understand social relations with the aid of models. It is impossible to conceive social relations outside a common framework. "Social"[4] space and "social" time are the two frames of reference used to situate social relations, either alone or together. Lévi-Strauss identified four latent properties to be discovered by the model of the structure: "1) all the facts of the story; 2) its predictable features; 3) the model's potential for transformation into another model of the same type; and 4) the changing role of the elements in relation to one another"[5] To him "form" and "content" were not justifiably separable. He indicated that meaning cannot be found in either one or the other, and argued that "it is only the way in which the different elements of the content are combined together which gives a meaning." It is the interplay between structure and perception (meaning) which gains stimulative interests.

This study in observing built form from this vantage point has to understand social structure and social relations; and it becomes necessary to distinguish between the two. A distinction between the two can be constructed as: "Social relations consist of raw materials out of which the models making up the social structure are built, while social structure can, by no means, be reduced to the ensemble of the social relations to be described in a given society."[6] These models are dealt with at different levels of comparison where distinction is also made between the conscious and unconscious characters. The effect of the "unconscious" in the built form seems to be one

of the interesting aspects revealed in the case studies. Lévi-Strauss while recognizing Boas's contribution in introducing this distinction, explains that, "A structural model may be conscious or unconscious without this difference affecting its nature. It can only be said that when the structure of a certain type of phenomena does not lie at a great depth, it is more likely that some kind of model, standing as a screen to hide it, will exist in the collective consciousness." Boas made clear that informations "can easily yield to structural analysis when the social group in which it is manifested has not elaborated a conscious model to interpret or justify it."[7]

Even while considering the culturally produced models, distinction is created by the fact that "the cultural norms are not of themselves structures. Rather they furnish an important contribution to an understanding of the structures, either as factual documents or as theoretical contributions....."[8] The conscious models or norms are not intended to "explain the phenomena but to perpetuate them."[9] As in language, in structural analysis too the more obvious structural organization is, the more difficult it becomes to reach it because of the "inaccurate conscious models lying across the path which leads to it."[10] By comparing cultural phenomena to language from Boas's point of view, showed that the structure of a language remains unknown to the speaker till the use of scientific grammar. Still the language continues to shape discourse beyond the consciousness of the individual, imposing on his thought conceptual schemes which are accepted as objective orders. Boas added that "the essential difference between linguistic phenomena and other ethnological phenomena is, that the linguistic classifications never rise to consciousness, while in other ethnological phenomena, although the same unconscious origin prevails, these often rise into consciousness, and thus give rise to secondary reasoning and to re-interpretations."[11] This does not diminish their basic identity or the high value of linguistic method when it is used in ethnological research. It can be seen that like phonemes, kinship terms are elements of meaning and acquire meaning only if they are integrated into systems. "'Kinship systems' like 'phonemic systems', are built by the mind on the level of unconscious

thought." The recurrence of such patterns and rules and "similar prescribed attitudes between certain types of relatives, ... in scattered regions of the globe and in fundamentally different societies, leads us to believe that, in the case of kinship as well as linguistics, the observable phenomena result from the action of laws which are general but implicit."[12]

One other important distinction valid for this study is the comparison of mechanical and statistical models. Here the differences are of scale and quantity while the quality of the data stays the same. "This situation is well known in the exact and natural sciences; for instance, the theory of a small number of physical bodies belongs to classical mechanics, but if the number of bodies becomes greater, than one should rely on the laws of thermody-namics, that is, use a statistical model instead of a mechanical one, though the nature of the data remains the same in both cases."[13] The unconscious mode of being allows for comprehension of meaning and assimilation of data at a more generalized state as they are based on the laws which are universally accepted. The mechanical model stems from a "broad inductive basis" and is at a more generalized level, as this thesis also illustrates while describing the cases in a later section.

INFORMATION-KNOWLEDGE-UNDERSTANDING

Discussion of the accumulation and apprehension of information (within and through various models) brings us to the point of distinction between knowledge and understanding. "Understanding is of the soul, knowledge is of the body. Understanding never changes (but is constant)[14], only grows deeper and more aware; knowledge forever changes, corrects, falsifies and continuously updates itself."[15] It is the essence and the esoteric statement which is meaningful and requires understanding which is similar as the quest for clues in their manifestations. Change and constancy are the

functions of knowledge and tradition respectively; and comparing them to a "jugular vein" and the "heart", the dependency of one on the other is summarized as "A heart needs a jugular vein else will cease to flow; a jugular vein needs a heart, else will run dry."[16] In this light, if tradition (defined as the handing down of information, beliefs and customs from one generation to another through word of mouth or by example)[17], is annihilated by change, there would be no base for change to occur; and if tradition bridled change, it would degenerate. For the feelings of the heart are in rhythm with the awareness of the time. This is how it cleanses itself, renews its blood."[18] The problem arises because of nescience in the understanding of tradition which "is being consistently superseded by the awareness brought about in the light of growing knowledge, which change generates."[19] Similarly erecting detached houses with garden on the outside as opposed to introverted design around a courtyard is at times viewed as breaking away from tradition. But as seen in the later section, in effect it is not so. It is more the inner meaning or the essence which is vital which comes through understanding, and not the physical or the apparent which is literal or obvious knowledge.

ANTHROPOLOGY & ARCHITECTURAL ARTEFACTS

Architecture, when conceived as a cultural artefact in the anthropological sense, presents itself as a complex phenomenon which can be viewed from varied perspectives. Since this discipline addresses questions of aesthetics, art and daily human activities, it is potentially a strong reference from which to see an integrated architectural theory. The application of these methods (of anthropology) to architectural inquiries stimulates interesting and productive directions. The concern of the anthropologist is to comprehend how ordinary people use and understand the architectural artefact and what cultural behaviours and attitudes are supported by the form of the built environment.
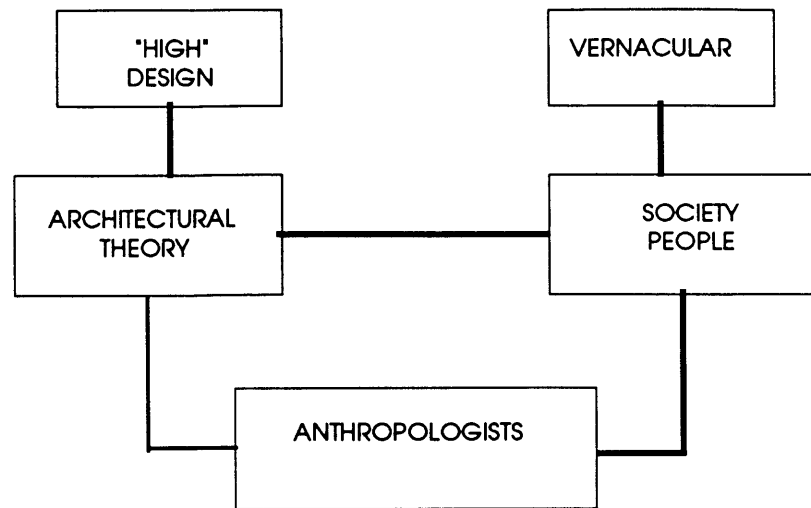
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DESIGN CONCEPTION & PERCEPTION
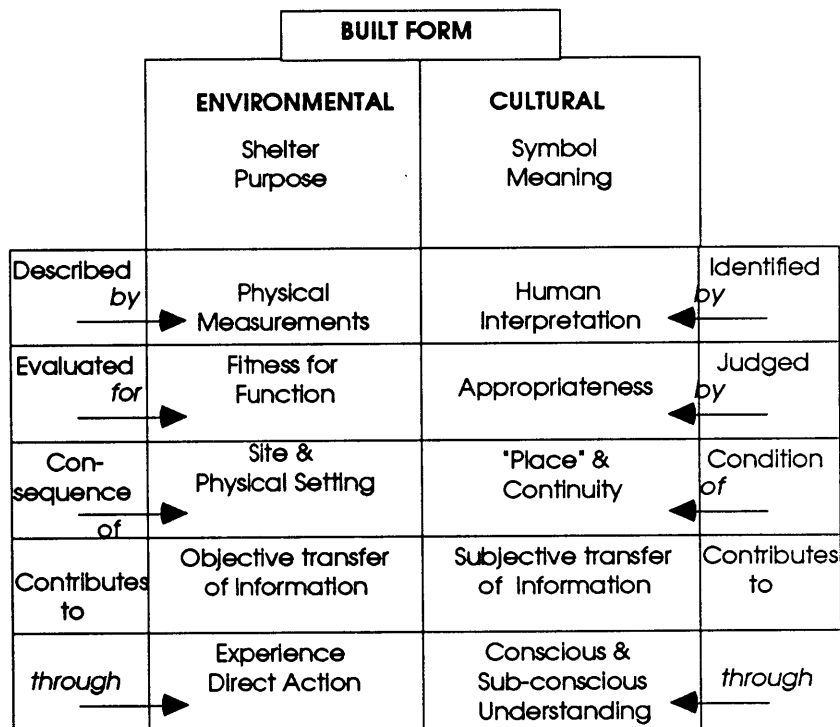**(PROFESSIONAL & LAY APPROACH)**

fig 1

Architecture is seen as encompassing built forms: vernacular[20] designs as well as "high"[21] architecture, i.e. non-architect and architect creations. The anthropologist looks at the architectural artefacts broadly, as phenomena which represent the ideology of culture and manifest social values. The architect and architectural theoreticians generally do not go beyond the intentions which created the artefacts and at times fail to see whether the same is communicated by the artefact. But in viewing architecture as both a cultural and a creative medium eventually produces an architecture which is meaningful not only to the professional but to the society as a whole.

The present study (this thesis) explores the facts, that is the social relationships of the migrant communities are observed to account for the features which are carried on (in their life-story) and manifests in their personal and social spaces in the confines of their houses. This also supports the fact of the transformation of the migrants' past model to the present environment. The brief study on the appearance of elements or spaces across classes of

same ethnic groups brings into light the transformation of type, through which the consistency and constancy of elemental or spatial relationship are tested. Examples and cases are drawn, both from the vernacular and "high" architecture in order to understand the cultural impressions on built form irrespective of economic diversity.

As cultural beings we (human beings) carry with us myriad levels of cultural ideas, which we may not be conscious of. These unconscious cultural ideas form the silhouette against which the frame of consciousness maneuvers. Thus the architectural artefacts embody many cultural values, of which only some we are conscious. The anthropological approach to the architectural

	BUILT FORM		
	ENVIRONMENTAL Shelter Purpose	**CULTURAL** Symbol Meaning	
Described *by*	Physical Measurements	Human Interpretation	Identified *by*
Evaluated *for*	Fitness for Function	Appropriateness	Judged *by*
Con-sequence *of*	Site & Physical Setting	"Place" & Continuity	Condition *of*
Contributes to	Objective transfer of Information	Subjective transfer of Information	Contributes to
through	Experience Direct Action	Conscious & Sub-conscious Understanding	*through*

Shelter & Symbol:
Pervasive & Profound Implications of the dualism
of "nature's rule" & "people's ru le"
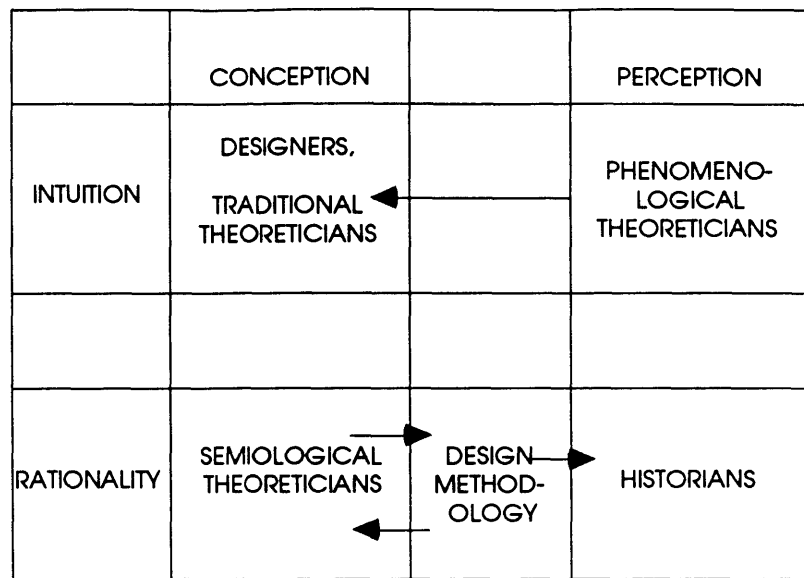(diagram created by the author with refernce to Rudd's paper on "Continuity & Change................)

fig 2

artefact discerns the built environment as a medium for the communication and propagation of cultural ideas. We are now on a discourse on the conception and perception, i.e. the cultural manifestations in built form and the communication or meaning of artefacts.

SYMBOLS & CUES

In these studies the importance of symbols cannot be underestimated as each culture has its own very strong symbols represented in various forms. These symbols and signs do not necessarily occur or read as conscious actions, as they are more profound than that manifested. Symbols are signs representing a deeper or wider meaning than it possesses in itself. This takes one into the realm of semiotics to seek the relationships of meanings of signs and expressions and their users. In talking about semantics, syntactics and pragmatics one is dealing within a certain totality, since it searches for cues and abstracts them from the actual structure and interprets its relationship with the user in a kind of non-verbal communication. This implies that the language used in the environment must be understood and the code read. The cues are drawn from the spatial usage in houses and the relationship with the users are observed and the cultural values embedded in that structure is abstracted, from which the underlying meaning of the system emerges. It is important that "before one can interpret cues in the environment they must be noticed"[22]. This understanding comes through shared knowledge; "Recognizing patterns is very much a matter of inventing and imposing them. Comprehension and creation go on together."[23]

In architectural theory the differences in the approaches of the semiologist and the phenomenologist lie in their mode of inquiry. While the former asks "How does architectural form communicate meaning?", the latter questions, "What does architecture mean?"[24] The semiological approach, is usually adopted (at present) by those interested in designing the artefact, and the phenomenological approach by those interested in looking at

	CONCEPTION		PERCEPTION
INTUITION	DESIGNERS, TRADITIONAL THEORETICIANS		PHENOMENO-LOGICAL THEORETICIANS
RATIONALITY	SEMIOLOGICAL THEORETICIANS	DESIGN METHOD-OLOGY	HISTORIANS

POSITIONS OF VARIOUS CONSTITUENCIES WITHIN THE FIELD OF ARCHITECTURAL THEORY CREATED BY POLARITIES CONCEPTION/PERCEPTION & INTUITION/RATIONALITY
(diagram from Robinson, J.W.'s paper
in "Built Form & Culture Research,
Conference Proceedings, 1986")

fig 3

artefacts. For a useful architectural theory, both perspectives are usually required. The two seem to continue to operate in discrete but complementary areas of intuitive and rational approaches. The "semiologists are moving toward ways to integrate the conceptual and the perceptual in creating design, and phenomenologists are seeking ways to design phenomenologically."[25] Both lead towards architectural design ie. either the evolution of design through identified symbols or the extraction of symbols from the built environment. Bachelard[26] who can be categorized as a phenomenological theorist interprets environment and spaces from a personal as well as interpersonal perspective based on cultural ideas, which direct his interests on the perceptual side. His interpretations seem more intuitive without any statistical or other material to substantiate his argument, instead each account is held valid in its own terms. In some ways the analysis in this thesis too becomes intuitive as it draws out some of the

inherent attributes of built form as reflection of cultural values which in a way perpetuates unconsciously.

INFORMATION-CULTURE-INTERPRETATION

The encoding and decoding of information comes about as a consequence of culture i.e. a group of people who share a set of values, beliefs, a world view and symbol system which are learned and transmitted. And the rules which guide the organization of space, time, meaning and communication are linked systematically to culture. Clifford Geertz believes that the cultural process of giving meaning to the world are rooted in the human capacity of symbolic thought. " The culture concept denotes a historically transmitted pattern of meanings embodied in symbols, a system of inherited conceptions expressed in symbolic forms by means of which man can communicate, perpetuate and develop their knowledge about and attitude towards life."[27] All men impose thought or meaning upon the objects of their experience which, when defined, become attached to symbols or the material vehicles of meaning. Elsewhere he adds, "In turn meaning arranges these objects in intelligible forms. This expressive capacity results in the creation of cultural systems understood as patterns of symbols which must possess a certain degree of coherence in order to establish for man the structure of his own existence." Culture does not refer to simply a set of institutions, traditions or customs, but also involves the conceptualization of life. For Geertz, symbols and meanings they carry are culturally defined and socially shared. An individual is born in an already meaningful world. He inherits cultural interpretations from his predecessors, shares them with his contemporaries and passes them on to the following generations.[28]

Human culture is cumulative, one idea building on another, one generation learning from its predecessors. Human culture is communicative and interactive; and serve as contacts between diverse groups stimulating new

solutions and innovations. "The process of clustering helps cultures survive, provides the appropriate settings for behaviour with cues which can be understood, appropriate organizations of meaning and communication, and sharing of symbols and unwritten rules and congruent activity systems and temporal organizations. Thus people, homogeneous along certain important dimensions, having similar values, behaviour patterns, non-verbal communication systems, the same domain definition ...... need to process less information."[29] Through the symbolic forms, human beings transmitted from generation to generation, human beings survived with an identity. The architectural artefact is then understood as a force which supports, either perpetuation of cultural norms, or of cultural change, or in developing a balance.

SPACE FORMATION - CULTURAL INFLUENCE

House does not simply serve the function of providing shelter and does not entail a purely utilitarian concept. It actually creates "an environment best suited to the way of life of a (group of)[30] people - in other words, a social unit of space."[31] Building forms manifest the complex interaction of many factors.which can broadly be taken as social, cultural, ritual, economic and physical. Shelter, no doubt, is a basic need but as soon as the shelter is erected it becomes private and owned which gives rise to privacy and territoriality, interpretation of which is cultural.

The interpretations and the shared world view of particular culture or ethnic group or community are what the built forms eventually reflect. "It is these influences that make it easy to identify a house ... as belonging to a given culture or sub-culture."[32] "Creation of the ideal environment is expressed through the specific organization of space, which is more fundamental than the architectural form and is closely related to the concept of the 'ethnic domain'."[33] Physical factors such as climate though important in the design

ing of buildings do not have a primary influence on the formation of shelters. This explains the "transportation" of house forms from rural setting to urban areas and also from one region to another. Migrants have their own mental images of what they are used to, which originally may have come about as responses to their social structure as well as physical constraints, which they bring with them. "If we accept that schemata represent the subjective knowledge structure of an individual - a sum of his knowledge, values and meanings organized according to certain rules and affecting behaviour, then mental maps are those specific spatial images which people have of the physical environment and which primarily affect spatial behaviour."[34] This happens as mnemonics come into play and the memory is reinforced in the case of reproduction of mental images. The images being personal are at the same time shared as it relates to a common frame and world view which is culturally achieved.

A study carried out in the pluralistic society of Singapore has been included here to give a fair idea of how people "carry" their images and find grounds within a common frame; that is, to illustrate how people of similar ethnicity cluster together.

ETHNICITY - INCLUSION & EXCLUSION

"Aside from vocabulary, there is no difference between ethnic groups and communities."[35] Briefly, a community consists of a group of people who follow a way of life, or have patterns of behaviour which mark them as different from people of another society and/or from the larger society[36]. Ethnicity, (an affiliation to large groups of people classed according to common racial, national, tribal, religious, linguistic or cultural origin or background),[37] is as much a matter of an individual's socialization and subjective interpretation as it is the result of global socio-economic forces. Members of ethnic groups are not seen as individuals acting in pursuit of

personal advantage - real or imagined; rather' ethnic groups as a whole are seen collectively pursuing tangible benefits such as jobs, land, power, etc.[38] Ethnic identities display their power in the dynamics of intergroup relationships; the strength and the unity of a group is best tested in its interaction with other groups. "During the course of daily life, an individual shifts his or her cognitive framework appropriately from one social situation to another such as the family, work place......, so that appropriate self-definitions are brought into play. While it is necessary to switch to appropriate role-related frameworks, it is equally necessary to maintain an organized unity of selves (which together account for one's social identity).... "[39]

In his essay entitled "Ethnicity and the Classification of Social Differences in Plural Societies: A Perspective from Singapore", John Clammer says that in this multi-ethnic set-up the state has made ethnicity the primary social identification and "the main form of socio-cultural classification in the country". It is a different matter that they have defined three (Chinese, Malay or Indian) plus "other" as the four official ethnic groups , into which classification system all the migrants do not naturally fit, ethnically. Yet they are forced to be enlisted in one of them. This has led to inter-ethnic grouping (at the broader level) i.e Muslims from different regions and of different ethnicity, in Singapore, have one official Muslim ethnic identity and that is as Malays, therefore one sees a cross-cultural but intra-religious (community) marriage.

Clammer[40] suggests that "in multi-ethnic societies undergoing rapid industrialization/urbanization ethnicity becomes a resource used, consciously or unconsciously, not only for the pursuit of political and economic ends, but as a device for the suppression of alienation." He supports it by exemplifying, "This is seen most clearly in the context of housing. Government policy has been to promote inter-ethnic harmony by ensuring a mix of ethnic groups in public housing estates. But it has become increasingly clear that people still continue to interact largely on an ethnic basis. An Indian family

for example, although it may know its mainly Chinese neighbours as, quite literally, nodding acquaintances, is unlikely to know them much better than this. Rather they may actually interact much more closely with another Indian family on a different floor of the same block of flats or even in another nearby block." The paradox here, is that the promotion of ethnicity at the national level tends to work against ethnic integration at the micro-level, and despite it being highly modernized, Singapore is still very traditional. At the level of personal relationships, specially, which is structured by ethnicity, very traditional mores still prevail. Ethnicity which is generated and produced, to a great extent at the "domestic" level, is not necessarily expressed at that level but rather at the public level. Clammer adds that the primary system (religious observances, speaking a specific dialect, eating habits etc, which is largely domestic, is also ethnic "in the sense that in observing certain cultural forms at home, one is signaling and reinforcing one's otherwise elusive 'racial' identity."

In a pluralistic society as the Singaporean one, ethnicity is not so much a "situational" as a "dialectical phenomenon; in a sense it is in a continuous state of tension between the influences of tradition and the demands for modernization. Cultural meaning is both self-generated and assigned, both inside and outside and it is this dialectic which makes the definition of ethnicity so elusive. The Singaporean government proudly proclaims a national culture which is like a "stew", that is it has a distinctive flavour and yet all ethnic groups (ingredients) are still visible.

1. R.E. Leaky & R. Ewin quoted by Jaffery, H., *A Cultural Theory of Development* in Habitat Pakistan issues 10 & 11.

2. Jaffery, H., *A Cultural Theory of Development* in Habitat Pakistan issue 10 & 11.

3. Champagne, R.A., *Claude Levi-Strauss*, p. 42.

4. "Social" space and "social" time means "that they have no properties outside those which derive from the properties of the social phenomena which 'furnish' them." Quoted from Levi-Strauss, op.cit., p. 289.

5. op. cit. Champagne, p. 30.

6. Levi-Strauss, *Structural Anthropology*, p.279

7. Boas, F., as quoted by Levi Strauss.

8. ibid. p.282.

9. ibid. 281

10. ibid.

11. ibid. p. 19.

12. ibid. p. 34.

13. ibid. p. 284

14. parentheses are mine

15. op.cit. Jaffery, H.

16. ibid.

17. Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary.

18. op.cit. Jaffery, H.

19. ibid.

20. Created by the people.

21. Designed by architects.

22. Rapoport, A., *On the Environment and the Definition of the Situation*, p. 5.

23. Goodman, N., *Ways of World Making*, p.22.

24. Robinson , J.W., "Architecture as Cultural Artifact: Conception, Perception, (Deception)" in *Built Form and Culture Research, Conference Proceedings, 1986*, pp. 98-102.

25. ibid. p. 99.

26. this analysis is based on his book "Poetics of Space".

27. Geertz, C. quoting in *The Interpretation of Cultures*, p. 89.

28. Siegel, B.J. ed., *Annual Review of Anthropology*, vol. 6, 1977, p. 228.

29. op.cit., Rapoport, A., p. 256.

30. paranthesis are mine

31. Rapoport, A., *House, Form and Culture*, p.46

32. ibid, p. 49

33. ibid.

34. Rapoport, A., *Human Aspects of Urban Form*, p. 119.

35. Sipe, R.K., *Karachi's Refugee Crisis*, p. 25.

36. Hillary, G.A., as referred by Sipe, pp. 24-25.

37. Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary.

38. Paranjpe, A.C., *Ethnic Identities and Prejudices: Perspectives From The Third World*, pp. 3-6.

39. ibid, p.4.

40. Clammer, J., *A Perspective from Singapore*, in Parnjpe, A.C., "Ethnic Identities and Prejudices......."

KARACHI
THROUGH TIME

AN OVERVIEW

Unlike other non-western cities which grew after World War II, Karachi's transplanted population emphatically transformed its spatial dimensions. The physical presence of the *muhajirs* (refugees) is reflected in the comparative sizes of the pre- and post-independence sections of the city. The former area is small and concentrated around the harbour, while the latter sprawls in all directions etching the housing pattern of the *muhajirs*.

The city of Karachi today, is the most advanced commercial and industrial center in Pakistan. The commercial basis evolved before partition and the industrial development is almost entirely a post-partition feat. This city has a few parallels to match its pace of growth; from an unpretentious beginning as a fishing village of a handful of hutments to an ever spreading haven for the post-independence Muslim migrants to one of south Asia's largest cosmopolitan centre. Its rise from a mere fishing village to a busy and sprawling metropolitan area makes one of the most "fascinating urban biographies of cities in the region."[1]

A city takes its form through evolution and growth, over a long period of time. Site and situation have considerable impact upon the nature of the urban area. Karachi owes its existence to its strategic location and its function as a major port and a center of trade. Before partition in 1947, it was the third port of British India. After partition it became the federal capital of the new state of Pakistan. Even with the change of capital to Islamabad, there was no slowing down of the growth of the city. Karachi is unique for having received refugees from every region of India, making it much more diverse, culturally, than any other region or city in Pakistan.

Embracing within its folds a population of various castes and creeds from

KARACHI 1838

POPULATION 14,000

Furlongs 8 4 2 0 1 2 Miles
Metres 1000 500 0 1 2 3 Kms

Ruins of English Factory

Fakeer's Tank

KURRACHEE

Mosque

Chinna creek Passage for large boats to the town

High water line

Low water line

HIGH water line

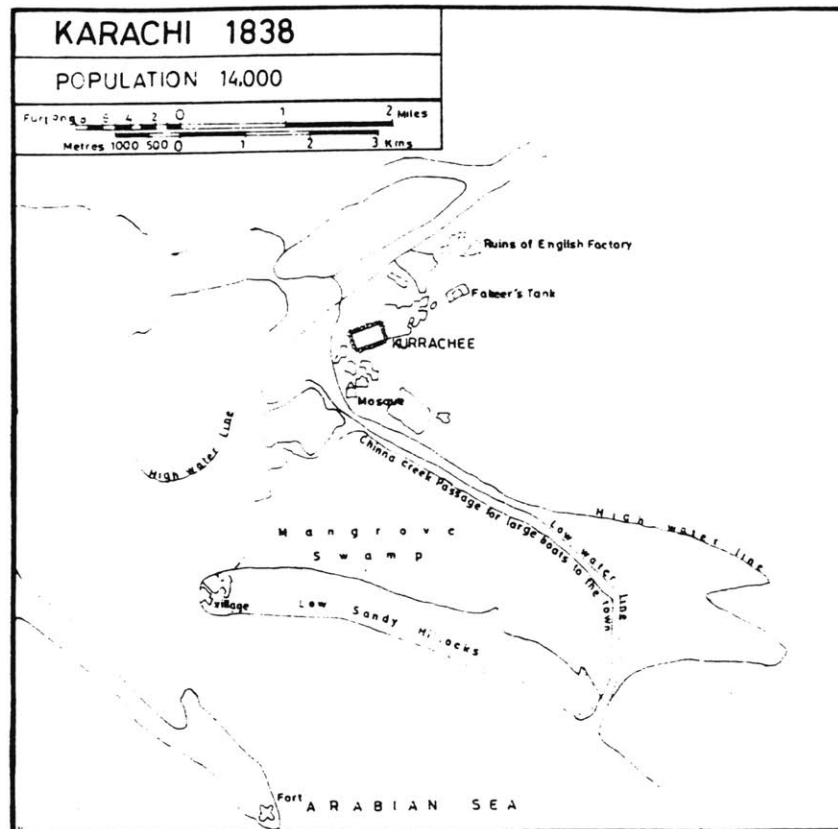Mangrove Swamp

Village

Low Sandy Hillocks

Fort ARABIAN SEA

fig 4

a range of economic classes, Karachi, the metropolis that links the nation to the outside world emerged with the seaport as its dominating element. Its boundaries are geographically clearly defined, with the ocean forming the southern boundary and the endless desert land in all other directions. The desert environment restricted the city's earlier growth. Physically there is not much evidence of Karachi's past before the British conquest, but some earlier sites have been identified such as the gates[2] of the walled city. About a century and a half ago Karachi was a walled township of 14,000 people on a thirty-five acre site, which grew to half a million only a few years before partition and within fifteen years of partition it rose up to 2,140,000[3] and now the unofficial figures show the population to be somewhere between 9.5 - 10 million.

The walled town with two gates, *Shor* and *Shireen*, overlooking the salty

and sweet water respectively, came into being when the Kalhora dynasty came to Karachi to establish a trade centre in 1729.[4] The previous settlement has been described as "a miserable collection of wattle huts and mud houses, clustering around the ruined walls of a native fort".[5] In the late eighteenth century it came under the domain of the Talpurs or the Mirs of Sind and remained so until the annexation by the British. During the rule of the Mirs (who still exercise a fair amount of feudal and political power), the port of Karachi was a busy route for overseas trade and region to the north west. It was one of the largest open markets for slave trade brought from Africa, who were mostly women or children.[6] Grown in the hinterland in the north of Pakistan, opium was one of the most popular export item and its trade was encouraged, giving more reasons for a port to develop, other than Bombay,
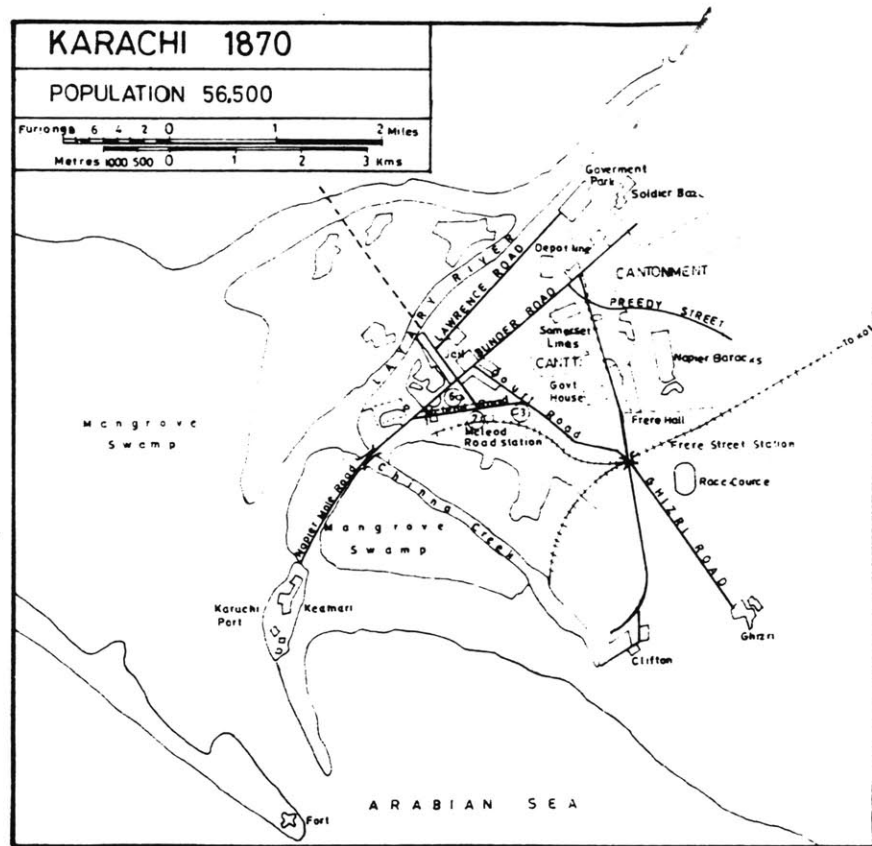
fig 5

on the same route. In fact Karachi enjoyed many advantages over the Bombay port, as by the time of British conquest, the shipping distances to Europe were shorter, port traffic was less congested and rail distances from major crop producing areas were also appreciably less.

The army stationed themselves about a mile and a half to the east of the town marking off about three square miles as cantonment area. After 1843 (the time up to when the old town was confined within the walls)[7], the city began to spread with the growth in population, as Karachi was given the honour of one of the major trade routes for and by the British. The city's growth can be traced by through the maps from 1838 (immediately prior to the British conquest of Karachi) to 1970 (a year preceding the birth of Bangladesh,

fig 6

KARACHI   1922

POPULATION 2,02,500

Furlong 9 6 4 2 0   1   2 Miles

Metres 1000 500 0   1   2   3 Kms.

Shershah Village   Sewage Farm

Grave Yard

New Lines   Parsi Colony

Baghdadi Lines   Khumbar warak   Native Infantry Lines

Gul Mohd Lines   Office   CANTONMENT

Khadda   Bunder Road

Old Town   Govt. House   Napier Barracks   Hospital

Mangrove Swamp   McLeod station   Frere street

Queens Road   Race course   Signal Corps Lines

Chinna Creek   Basra Lines

Mangrove Swamp   Bath Island

Karachi Port   Port trust lines   Port Trust Estate   Gheri

Clifton

Manora School

Officer Mess   Fort

Manora   A R A B I A N   S E A

LAYARI RIVER   LAWRENCE ROAD   New Jail   Jail Road

fig 7

from East Pakistan). Unfortunately the later maps are not available which would have illustrated the influx of later refugees, that is from Bangladesh and then much later the infiltration of the Afghan refugees into the city from the refugee camps in the north of Pakistan; and also the continuous growth of the rural migrants into this primary city. But the absence of these maps of the growth of Karachi does not affect this thesis as this study concentrates on the early post-independence migrants from the state of India.

Most of Karachi's architectural heritage is the legacy from the period of British administration. The distinction between pre- and post-partition architecture is easily recognizable, administrative buildings and recreational structures being dominant in the colonial era. In the following period

residential or domestic construction became significant as that was the "need of the hour". The new government, "confronted with the world's most overwhelming refugee problem, had to expend its energies in solving the housing shortage."[8] Morphologically the difference in the city form from pre- to post- independence is evident from the maps as well. The business district forms a triangular wedge, with its tip lying in the area where the old native quarter existed, directing towards the port; and its base at the eastern border of the city, ie. the old European quarter (as it existed before partition, map 1944). Broadly speaking, almost all housing tract lies beyond this wedge. Though now both are within the city's inner core (maps of 1953 and 1970), they remained separate until after the birth of the new nation.[9] The triangle which the commercial world appropriated as its quarter (similar to the way the military had claimed the cantonment) is bounded by three roads: Bunder[10] (M.A. Jinnah), Mcleod (I.I. Chundrigar)[11] and Kutchery. On the outer side along Bunder road, a length of continuous high walls enclose the Karachi Central Prison (once outside the city and now among the bustling traffic arteries). Beyond the the prison walls on the other side are the settlements (Usmania Muhajir Colony and Ghousia Colony), discussed as case studies in the later section.

The most impressive achievement of the city has been the resettlement of refugees. Even if each and every house of the evacuees had been occupied, there would still be an overwhelming housing shortage for the incoming muhajirs.[12] Since Karachi was Pakistan's most developed urban centre, it was inevitable that muhajirs from India sought to migrate to this city; the majority of which were from northern and western regions. It was possible for a Punjabi muhajir to relocate spatially and at the same time avoid a radical transformation in life-style. As among other factors linguistically and culturally, too there was little difference between the East and West Punjab "their psychological trauma of displacement was cushioned because new homes were available within a familiar environment."[13] They never had to experience the sense of alienation which confronted most of the other refugees; if there were any issues they were more of economic nature

rather than cultural.

On the other hand the north Indian *muhajirs* including those from Uttar Pradesh were the most widely dispersed group. Only a very small percentage relocated in the west Punjab, the part of the new state closest to their homes. They mostly moved down to Sind and it was Karachi where the highest percentage settled, "reflecting their urban predilection."[14] The migrants from Uttar Pradesh were better educated and belonged to the middle income group of society. They were "office oriented or service class" workers and therefore were more inclined to move into an urban centre to continue their former occupations. While the majority of refugees from Punjab were agriculturalists and simply had to walk over to the other territory as the two Punjabs existed side-by-side, the U.P. muhajirs traveled by train as they were farther from the border and the passage across was unsafe.

Many experiences have been narrated of the traumatic episodes that took place during the resettlement period. The journeys across the border for Hindus as well as Muslims are given a gory picture with slight heroic twists, depending on which side the story heralds from. This is the reason that the north Indians pride themselves as having offered the maximum sacrifices. In fighting for freedom as a community goal they did not realize or foresee the intensity of personal upheavals that were caused, which again they sought to solve collectively in the new environment, by re-settling and building their homes in ethnically homogeneous clusters. "They wanted Pakistan to be created as an Islamic state, but they wanted to remain in their ancestral homes. While these two goals appear contradictory, they are in reality only paradoxical, ... (these) illustrate the intense sense of pride South Asian Muslims felt in achieving a community goal, however self-defeating in personal terms."[15] Since no region of Pakistan was culturally similar to their former homes, the *muhajirs* from Uttar Pradesh had no singled destination and therefore the majority decided to move to a fairly (comparatively) new urban centre which showed much potential of growth;

KARACHI 1944
POPULATION 3,99,000

KARACHI 1953
POPULATION 13,50,000

figs 8 & 9
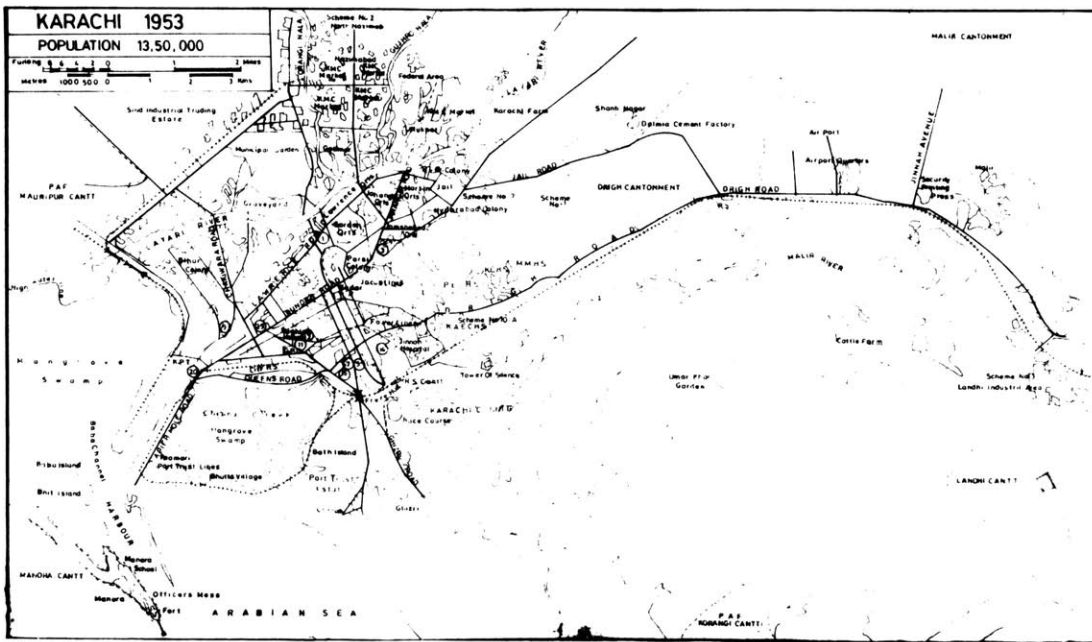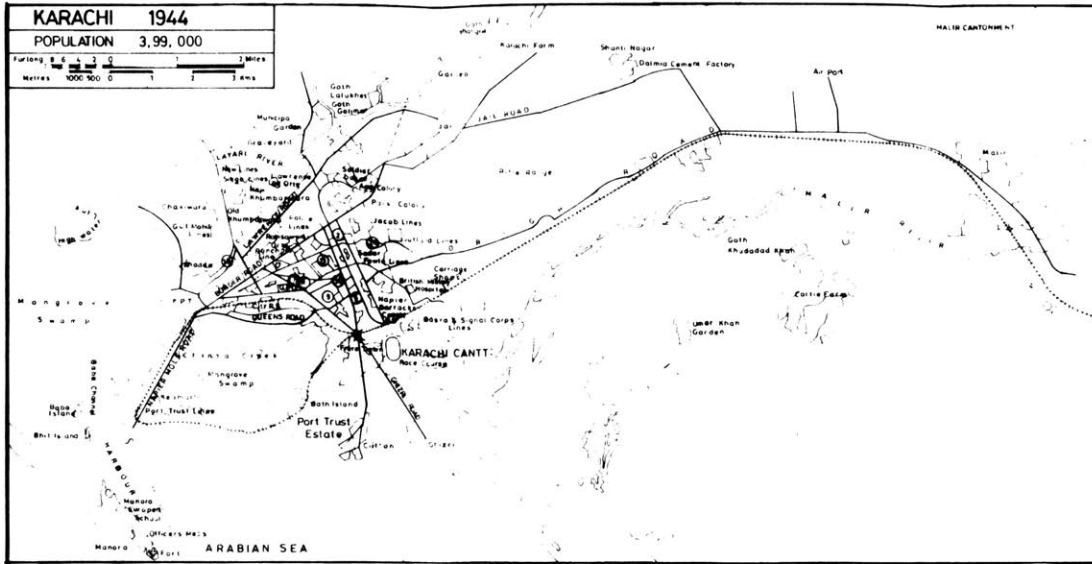
and which was declared the (then) federal capital of the new state.

Absence of relevant census data limits exploratory analysis of the migration patterns of the various sub-groups of *muhajirs* from north India, or for that matter of migrants from other regions of India. In terms of migration and resettlement patterns the (urdu-speaking) north Indians are discussed generally as one larger group, ie. the migrants from U.P. and Delhi etc; whereas the Punjabis (from north-west India) are considered as having undergone a different relocation experience. For the urdu-speaking migrants it was more of an urban-urban migration rather than rural-urban migration. In Karachi the various sub-groups were seen as spatially concentrated and culturally distinct, which completely altered "Sind's social landscape". The north Indians "present a classic example of an uprooted community."[16]

The western zone of India also contributed towards the refugee population of Pakistan; though less in number compared to the north, yet significant. Like the north Indians, they preferred to settle in Karachi (and a few areas in Sind), in homogeneous clusters as culturally the two groups differed greatly from one another. There is a linguistic distinction too, between the two; whereas Urdu is prevalent in the north, the western zone is dominated by the Gujerati language, spoken along the coast between Karachi and Bombay. Although many of the Muslim communities here, do not speak Gujerati as their mother tongue, it is the language of literary expression. Many of the western Indian communities residing in the deserts of Gujerat, Sind, Kutch and Kathiawar etc, migrated to the coastal cities which developed during the colonial period, to facilitate trading. Thus most of the western Indian Muslims who migrated to Karachi were traders who lived in coastal cities of British India and therefore still preferred to be in the coastal region. Karachi being the only port city was attractive to them as it offered similar setting and continuation of familiar business, as they specialized in types of commerce generated by a port city economy. Climatically too the new haven was not very different, and members of each
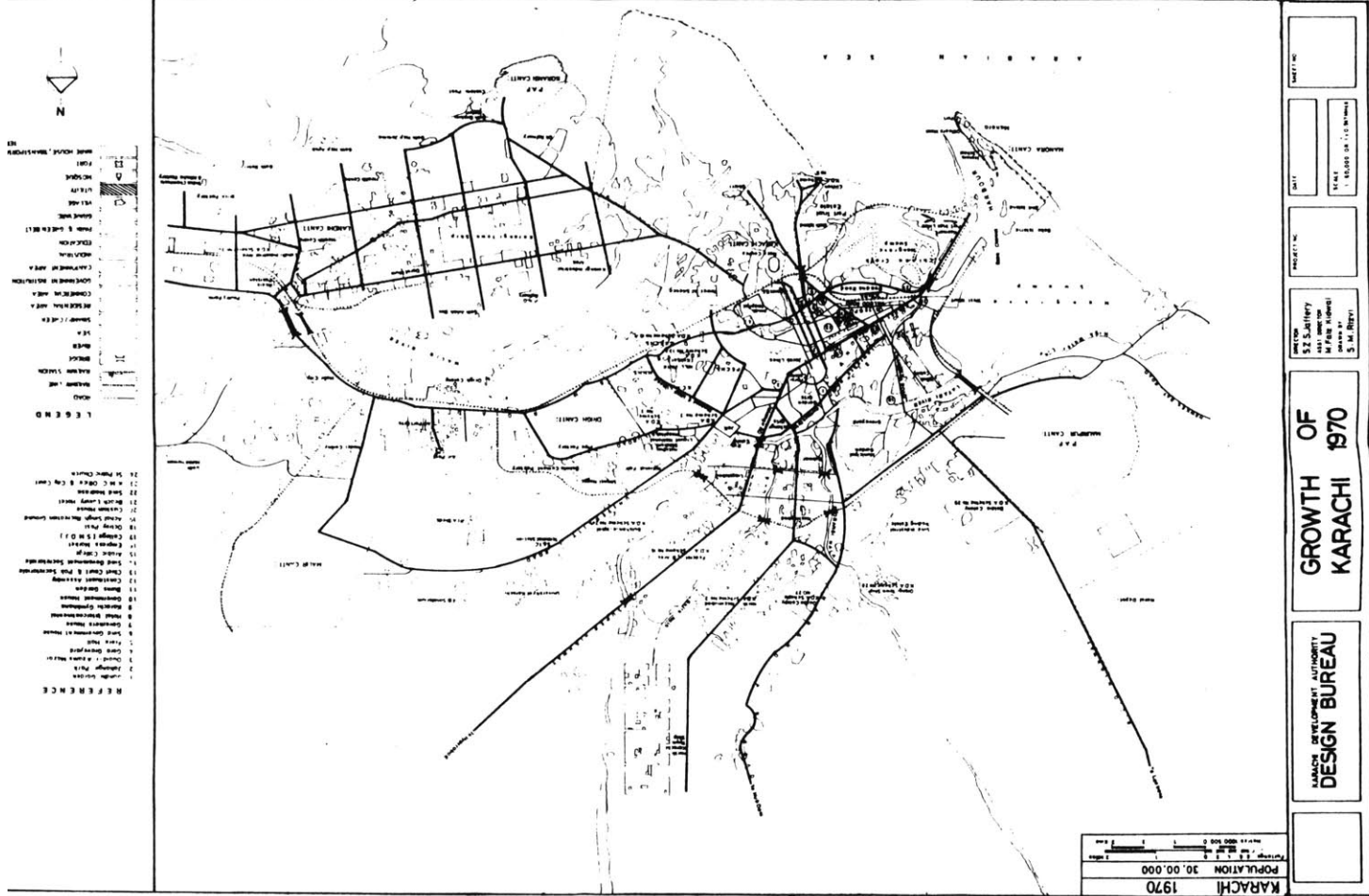
group were encouraged to live together in one city to allow for intra-community security and preservation of their cultures. Thus like the Punjabis, their resettlement too, was not as traumatic as the other north Indians.

The traders belonged to different communities having a common language, Gujerati; of which varied dialects exist. The three major trading communities are the Memons who are Sunni Muslims; and Bohras and Khojas (which include the Isna-Asharis and Ismailis), who belong to the Shia sect of Islam. Many north Indian muhajirs also belong to the Shia community, especially those from Lucknow in U.P., but are ethnically different from the western Indians. Not only linguistically but occupationally or professionally too they differed from the north Indian Muslims. These sub-groups too lived in homogeneous concentrations. Thus ethnicity which is based on more than just religion, but includes language, occupation, culture and some situational factors, is an important binding agent of a group.

The other regions from where Karachi received refugees were central and south India, though small but significant. Hyderabad (Deccan) being the main contributor of *muhajirs* from the Central Province whereas Madras played the same role from the south. Initially there was very little migrational movement from the princely (under the Nizam) state of Hyderabad to the newly created Islamic state. It was only after the Nizam's downfall did the Hyderabadi Muslims join the force of migrants, specially the young men who had fought against the Indian army. On the other hand the *muhajirs* from Madras were mostly from middle income group, who migrated more out of threat to their economic position, under the Hindu government, rather than any physical danger, and also their preference to breathe in an Islamic state.

While the western Indian Muslims dominated the commerce scene, the other groups were prevalent in government, education and administration. These migrants belonged to the urban-educated middle class.[17] They rose

KARACHI 1970

POPULATION 30,00,000

KARACHI DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
DESIGN BUREAU

GROWTH OF KARACHI 1970

fig 10

from a distinguishable minority alienated from the indigenous population by social and cultural boundaries to make a place for themselves but to date are considered as muhajirs (refugees or migrants).

The concept of Pakistan dates much further back than the early twentieth century when it actually emerged as an independent nation for the large Muslim population of the sub-continent. Muslim sailors reached the coast of Sind early in the seventh century and made a temporary conquest of the area in the eighth century. Between the eleventh and eighteenth centuries, successive Afghan and Turkish invaders gradually spread their authority across most of northern India, reaching as far as Bengal. Large number of Indians were converted to Islam during this period of Muslim rule. Toward the later part of eighteenth century, the British began to gain control and by the next century they reigned directly or indirectly over the entire sub-continent.

In the rule over the sub-continent by all the Muslim dynasties and the Moghuls and subsequently the British it was Lahore[18], the present second largest city of Pakistan, which was always the centre for development. In its history of alternating periods of devastation, decay and magnificence, Lahore reached its glory in the Moghul period. It boasts of enduring the most impressive historic monuments in the country and is also considered the cultural centre. It has a dominant Punjabi population, unlike Karachi which is said to have a "salad bowl" culture and a pluralistic society with the major inhabitants being the refugees and a smaller percentage of indigenous population.

Karachi, now, by almost any standard ranks as one of the most significant governmental, political, commercial and economic centres of the Asian sub-continent.[19] Like other urban areas of Latin America and the Far East, it exhibits in concentrated form, the poverty of the masses on the one hand and extreme wealth on the other. The boost to the economy through industries designated a massive area of land across the Lyari river, (as seen

in maps), cutting through a part of Karachi. It is the city's largest concentration of industrial activity and factory employment.[20] The migrants specially from western India played a pivotal role in the economic development of the country and almost all of the new industries were based in Karachi which was also the sole trade-link with the outer world; and again the trading community mainly constituted the western Indian *muhajirs*.

With an urban built-up area of 770+ square miles,[21] Karachi holds about ten percent of the total and twenty-two percent of total urban population of Pakistan. The phenomenal increase in area from about 90 square miles in 1947 shows over an eight and a half times of growth. The first master plan for Karachi (1950-51) was prepared "quickly" with insufficient information and unreliable data for correct population projection. In 1968, in an attempt at the second comprehensive Master Plan, polycentric pattern of development and a corridor form were being considered where the latter had an edge for economic reasons, as it incorporated the existing infrastructure which also decided the mode of future expansion of the metropolis. This was followed by the Development Plan of Karachi 1974-85, having a perspective for the year 2,000, which has already been invalidated. Yet another shot is being taken in creating a Master Plan afresh, for the past couple of years.[22] What more can one say but that Karachi is still growing and, as other cities in the developing world, accepting more migrant population. But now the Metropolis is being "fed by the process of urbanization."[23] As a result the squatter settlements are on the increase and spread over an area of about 25 square miles having a population of about 3.6 to 3.9 million people.[24]

Karachi, now, has representations from all ethnic groups in Pakistan and of-course the earlier migrants, the *muhajirs* from India. In minority or dominance they exist amidst political, social and ethnic tensions.

1. Jaffery, Z. *Does Anybody Love Karachi?*, in Landmark, a Karachi Development Authority Publication. (date n.a.)

2. These were known as the Shor (salt-water) and Shireen (sweet-water) gates, the areas around which are called Kharadar and Mithadar.

3. Master Plan Department, KDA., *Karachi Development Plan 1974-1985*, p.17.

4. Zameer, S., *An Approach to Urban Renewal: Rejuvenation of Bohri Bazaar, Saddar, Karachi*, B.Arch. thesis Karachi, 1986.

5. Burton, R. *Sindh: And the races that inhabit the Valley of the Indus*.

6. Along the Mekran coast are found the descent of these slaves. The new generation have now penetrated into other parts of the country. Karachi has a high number of Mekranis, mostly concentrated in the Lyari area.

7. ibid., p.25.

8. Sipe, K.R., *Karachi's Refugee Crisis*.... pp.65-66.

9. ibid., p.66.

10. when translated to english it means port, and this road leads towards the port.

11. the names in parantheses are the ones currently used.

12. Sipe, K.R., quoting information obtained from the Land Records Department, p.67.

13. ibid., p.86.

14. ibid., p.87.

15. ibid., p.85.

16. ibid., p.89.

17. ibid., p.118.

18. no doubt there were other cities in the sub-continent which were significant during the Moghul period, but here the emphasis is on comparing the development of Lahore with that of Karachi, as both are now part of the same country.

19. Kagi, H.M., *Administrative Responses to Urban Growth, Karachi, Pakistan*, p.36.

20. Other than the SITE is the Korangi Industrial Area. Large acreages have now been allocated in the outskirts but they do not appear vividly in the periods covered by maps.

21. This is a 1981 figure.

22. Dr. J. v.d. Linden's opening comment in a preliminary (draft) report for the New Master Plan for Karachi is explicit to summarize the failure of all Master Plans: "A recurrent theme in Medieval sagas, eg. those about King Arthur, is the hero's task - and failure - to ask the right questions at the appropriate moment." He draws an analogy between this theme and the exercise in the creation of the Present Master Plan.

23. Ahmad, K.B., *Karachi in Chaos*, paper contributed in UIA XVI Congress.

24. op.cit. Dr. Linden.

KARACHI'S HOUSING SCENE

Karachi had already become the focal point of economic life, by the end of the colonial rule in the sub-continent. It was the only port city of the new state of Pakistan, and had the maximum concentration of commercial firms, banks and government institutions. By the time of independence, in 1947, the city was divided into a British and an indigenous part, and within the British part, there was a separation between "home" and "work" and the military encampments. For the newly arrived refugees from India, there was a quest for shelter. The rich could buy a house or get one allotted, where available. The middle-class being disproportionately large never could match their housing requirement quantitatively. The majority of the population, having no or very low paid jobs, squatted on open space close to the centre.

This intractable growth of popular neighbourhoods impeded the efficient functioning of the large-scale economic production process. The streets became narrower as more and more people put up their huts and more shops and workshops were set up, in the centre of the city. The regime at that time (1958-68) viewing the slums as an eyesore, launched an ambitious plan to create new townships, ten miles from the city centre to relocate the squatters. This plan envisaged both the provision of houses and services, and the creation of employment. The programme had to be discontinued halfway as it did not meet the aspiring goals. The major cause being the retarded rate of employment generation[1] and the majority of the new townships had to commute long distances to reach their place of employment. Many sold their houses to relocate themselves near their place of work.

One of the solutions that came forth to house the refugees was the provincial government's decision "that groups of individuals could collaborate to

purchase blocks of land for residential development by establishing cooperative housing societies."[2] The formation of societies gained benefit for groups possessing a community identity, for they already had intra-community organizations in existence. Many groups formed themselves in societies to apply for permits. But soon enough the central government took direct control of Karachi's administration, which led to policy changes. A Karachi Cooperative Housing Society Union was then formed to manage the affairs. The government of-course played its tune and things began to move very slowly. The Union was then asked to consolidate different price ranges of houses in separate zones within each cooperative housing society. To which the Union replied "the basic idea underlying the scheme of housing societies is to provide facilities to such units of people who agree to live together and shape their corporate life in a particular manner, and all societies have now been formed and had also been formed before under this basic underlying idea."[3] In these new residential areas, the future inhabitants had the responsibility to construct their houses. These residential extensions came about through pressures from middle and higher income groups who had formed the housing societies.[4]

COOPERATIVE HOUSING SOCIETIES

The internal organization of the societies varies according to their purpose. A society founded to perpetuate a subcultural group differs structurally from a society established for financial convenience. The communal based cooperative housing society is more than a land purchaser for minorities; it articulates a style of life. As a result of the role of the cooperative societies in developing housing for the refugees, Karachi's population resides in ethnically homogeneous units. The Karachi cooperative housing society serves as a visible expression of cultural differences by demarcating sections of Karachi into ethnic enclaves.[5] Most of these are named after the states or cities of India from where the refugee ethnic community

emigrated.Evidence suggests that the factors which determined residential patterns resulted more from the refugees' past than from contextual influences.[6] This illustrates that Karachi's communities are spatially segregated. Most upper and middle income groups resided in these homogeneous cooperative housing societies which exist as self-contained areas. These societies catered for housing only a certain income level of a particular ethnic group and did not expand as "trans-economic" areas for the whole spectrum of one ethnic group i.e. it did not house the rich and the poor together. Gradually, in many societies, many upper income inhabitants were displaced by more of middle income persons of the same background, where ethnicity was the formation of cooperative societies. These societies now house mostly the middle class people.

Individual families constructed houses on the plots that were obtained through the society. The majority of these houses are designed by architects, based on the bungalow pattern. Since the final design is the outcome of the dialogue between the client and the architect, the layout of the house is dominated by the living pattern of that household, which is part of a larger ethnic group having shared knowledge and common beliefs. Consequently, commonalties in the theme of the layouts are detected.This renders each society characteristically distinct not only in creating an exclusive housing society but in having a common morphology of space formation and linkage. The elements and the fashion adopted for the adornment of the façades do vary, which to a great extent sustain the designer's style. The reflection and persistence of social norms in the domestic built form in these upper and middle income groups validate the cultural and ethnic dominance of each group. The study of façades and their elements are beyond the scope of this inquiry in so far as to observe the commonalties and the dissimilarities that may or may not have existed or still persist. Perhaps a study of the features and details, and colours used in these façades would stimulate yet another debate on the endurance of ethnicity and pre-migration influences.

In the later section, while giving the architect's account and his interpreta

tion of clients' requirements, it is seen that the configuration of spaces indicate intra-group similarities and inter-group differences. This renders more support to the cohesiveness of society living which is reflected at the micro-level.

SPATIAL STRUCTURE OF THE CITY

An aerial view of Karachi divulge the spread and expansion of the city. A strong spatial segregation of residential areas of different income groups is noted and a strong concentration of large-scale industries and commercial establishments is observed. A network of wide roads between these centres of large scale enterprises exists along with well developed road connections between these centres and residential areas of middle and higher income groups. The majority of the low income people reside in the centre or on the periphery, but they are ubiquitous in all of Karachi.

To illustrate the reflection of socio-economic differences on the spatial structure at the city level, the following residential areas have been selected, which are not a part of the Karachi Cooperative Housing Societies Union. Most of the information penned here is based on Meyerink's chapter on Karachi's growth in "Between Basti Dwellers and Bureaucrats."

Defence Officers Cooperative Housing Society, a high income residential area, was constituted in 1952 as an independent organization with the aim of (re-) housing military officers during the chaotic period shortly after Partition. The society administers the whole organization and plan the development in the area under its jurisdiction.

A town planner of the society developed the master plan which was executed by private contractors. The developed plots were allotted to the officers of the armed forces, who had subscribed by ballot, and were leased

fig 11
layout of a small section of Defence Housing Society

on the payment of development costs. The development of plots was done phase-wise and each area that was developed came to be addressed through phase numbers. The society now consists of some seven phases spread over thousands of acres. Apartment buildings are also being built here. It is of little wonder that military officers apply for allocation of plots here, as in the free market, these plots actually fetch an incredible sum. Indirectly, this is a substantial subsidy to the military top ranks.

The houses in Defence have been designed by architects and executed by professional contractors. Most of the residents usually own at least two motor cars as wide roads connect Defence to the city centre. It appeared in 1977, that 90% of the residents and 70% of the owners are not from the army; the figures today do not differ much. The price of land, here, is very high and is on the increase, therefore vacant plots are held back by the owners for speculation.

Nazimabad was developed by the Karachi Development Authority (KDA) in the mid and late 50s, as a part of a belt of middle-income residential areas developed around the city. Once the plans were executed by private
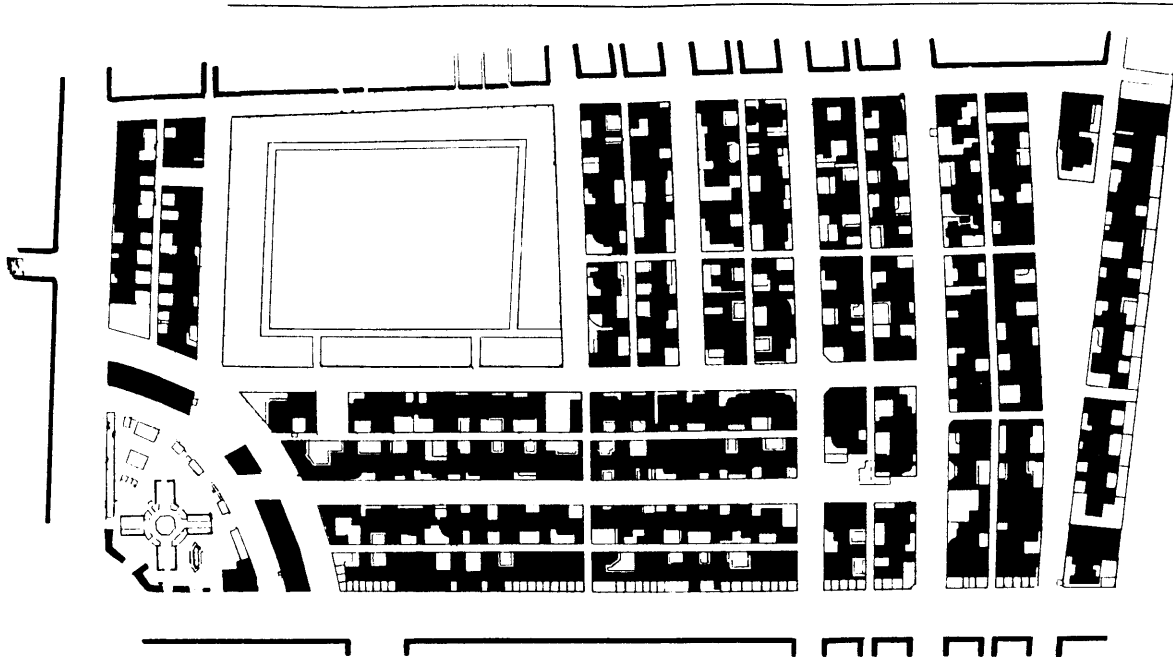
fig 12
layout of a section of Nazimzbad

contractors engaged by the KDA, private owners were given lease on payment of the development costs. Initially a piece of "developed desert" with little facilities of public transport, it is now one of the densest middle income areas with well developed busy roads and transport network for all parts of the city.

The houses in Nazimabad have been built by small contractors, and in many cases without the services of architects. The building blocks form closed units in which the houses are joined although different in shape, height and colour. Most houses have been built in phases where the upper storey is added as a separate unit to house a relative or for rental purposes.

Lyari, a low income area in the centre of the city, is one of the oldest and largest popular settlements of Karachi, situated in the delta of Lyari river. This marshy land was inhabited since pre-colonial days During British rule the population increased as a result of the growth of economic activities in the city. During the first years after Partition, many refugees settled in Lyari.

The number of inhabitants in the area grew and still continues to increase. Due to Karachi's growth, Lyari has become a part of its centre. This serves as an excellent location for labourers, especially those who do not have fixed jobs.

The larger Lyari area consists of many settlements and neighbourhoods. As a result of speculation, dwellings of erstwhile residents are pulled down to be replaced by four or five storied tenement buildings, mostly with shops and workshops on the ground floor. Some of the original settlements of Lyari were displaced and relocated in the peripheral areas of Karachi.

The neighbourhood layouts shown here to exemplify the spatial structure of the city, clearly distinguish between the income levels, specially in terms of density, plot demarcation and street patterns.

Karachi now has seen a burst of construction of multi-storied apartment and office blocks, and not one area is immune to them. The majority of these building structures are the conceptions of private developers whose intent is to channel more money into their account than to be of benefit to the public. Here I shall not go into the details of the numerous predicaments created by these projects.

Other than a handful of apartment buildings which house the upper class of the Pakistani society, the rest mainly cater to small or average size middle income families. Such apartment blocks have mushroomed in Gulshan-e-Iqbal area, especially since it has now become an alternate administrative centre for the city with the Civic Centre in its midst. In Clifton the apartment structures created are of two categories - for the rich and also for the middle income - with varying quality. The portion of Clifton which meets Defence Housing Society, on the Seafront, has an extra-ordinary length of (eyesore) apartment blocks called "Seaview apartments".

Apartment dwelling is not very new for a section of Karachiites. The old areas of Karachi before partition had three to four storied apartment buildings where again one block or at least   one floor housed people from the same community and the corridor became the shared space. One easily identifiable community which lives in a communal physical setting are the Ismailis - a sect of Shia Muslims. Their tendency is to concentrate in areas where their prayer house or "Jamatkhana" is located. Thus in Karachi wherever an Ismaili Jamatkhana is found one can be sure of discovering scores of dwelling belonging to Ismailis. Here again one may find the upper income families residing in bungalows, the middle and the lower income group tend to concentrate in apartments. The majority of these apartments are community projects to overcome the housing problem for its people. One cannot find any peculiarity in their house forms, in terms of spatial arrangements. The only thing common to all Ismaili households is the

portrait of their spiritual leader, which serves as the recognizable symbol. More than a common denominator in the spatial configuration of their houses, their commonalty lies in concentrating the community close to their house of prayer, as it is not simply a place of worship but a complex for most of their social activities.

It is thus apparent that Karachi popularly distinguishes between the housing of the entire range of its population. However, throughout the city there are *Katchi Abadis*, perhaps in small pockets. These sprout up in areas where the rural migrants can find work and labour is required. Thus they form small introverted *bastis*, bringing with them their rural style of life. With different status of people and inexhaustible cultural groups, Karachi is referred to as the "melting pot" of cultures. To what extent they melt and harmonize into one urban culture or, as a reaction favour segregated culturally bonded units remains to be tested. The city reflects its class and cultural distinctions in boasting palatial bungalows, multi-storied apartments and a high density horizontal spread of squatter and other informal settlements.`

NOTES & REFERENCES

1. Meyerink, H. *Karachi's Growth in Historical Perspective,* in "Between Basti Dwellers and Bureaucrats" pp. 7-15.
2. Sipe p. 208 as referred to *Karachi Cooperative Housing Society Union, Annual Report, 1949-50.*
3. ibid. p.210 as quoted from *KCHSU Annual Report,* p. 3.
4. Meyerink, H. op.cit. p.14.
5. Sipe, p.214.
6. ibid. p.211.

THREE

ILLUSTRATION THROUGH CASES

When Pakistan attained political independence in 1947, the colonial port town of Karachi, which was also the federal capital of the newly created state, became the focal point of migration, first for *muhajirs* - i.e. migrants from India, and later, of the many who could not survive through cultivation of lands only in the rural areas of Pakistan. The city was capable of absorbing 200,000 refugees, a number equal to the Hindu evacuees, but there were more than twice this many refugees in addition to the rural in-migrants. The geometric increase in Karachi's population created a severe housing shortage for all economic classes. Over 600,000 refugees lived in makeshift slums and another half million occupied sub-standard homes.[1]

Initially the refugees squatted on open lands in the city's centre, where they built their provisional huts. Here they grouped themselves in their own clans (belonging to the same family) or more widely the binding factor became the same place of origin. Soon however, the periphery became the area where many of the urban poor finally settled, again moving and resettling as entire communities. Some of these areas gradually became a part of the larger city as the boundaries of Karachi extended. In addition, the new migrants, coming from the rural areas of Pakistan move in with their kith and kin or else into areas where they have people from their own villages already residing who can serve as intermediaries; thus giving rise to many homogeneous settlements. A migrant does not enter a city in a vacuum and most likely, because of the lineal linkages will go to reside in a homogeneous cluster. Thus urban growth through migration tends to be neighbourhood selective.

As in the case of housing societies, cited in the earlier chapter, the slum dwellers or squatters in *Katchi Abadis* [2] also concentrated in ethnically

demarcated or defined areas which in some cases gained a more heterogeneous population when the more affluent residents, later moved out, to be replaced by families who were ethnically different. But more often than not, the new resident in the area would belong to the same ethnic origin, as is illustrated later. These settlements appear within the limits of the city and on the periphery as well. They are either in large concentrations or in small pockets within the larger squatter settlements. It is true, though, that most of the *Katchi Abadis* viewed on a larger scale indicate heterogeneity, (elaborated in end notes)[3] but within them are many defined concentrated groups or communities. For instance, in the larger township of Baldia are many localized sub-groups, each of these ethnic groups influenced by their place of origin or pre-migration environment. There is a striking continuity in their living patterns. Much against the argument that "migration undermines traditional values and culture and leaves the individual dangerously isolated", it was found that "traditional behaviour patterns and institutions of kinship and religion not only persisted, but in some instances were strengthened, by the move to the city."[4] Here the reference is to the rural migrants entering an anonymous city, whereas the cases to follow in this thesis are mostly, but not all, about persons migrating from one urban area to another. Yet the same argument holds true as the persistence of their previous behavioural and living patterns evidence. Especially in the case of housing, as also in the case of employment, the contacts and opportunities offered by their own kinsmen strengthen the bond of the extended family. Here again they make an attempt to replicate the environment which they are accustomed to, which is made possible by having a neighbourhood which consists of people of similar background. Even if the neighbourhood is not congenial, the environment within the house is created which is most acceptable to them, socially and culturally; and which could best facilitate their living habits.

The city of Karachi has several *Katchi Abadis* pre-dominantly inhabited by refugees from India, living in "closed" communities. The highest number originates from Uttar Pradesh and Delhi.[5] Among the immigrants from rural

areas of Pakistan the majority are from the North West Frontier Province while Punjab ranks second. Also present are migrants from villages in Sind and finally from the province of Baluchistan. The migrants coming to Karachi are used to a specific way of living which persists in the new city as well. They are used to particular materials with which to construct their houses and a lifestyle and culture which dictate the creation of their houses. The use of traditional materials of construction is usually abandoned due to their unavailability or because of expense, but the domination of social and cultural influence continue to be reflected on the forms of houses, specially in the demarcation and use of spaces within.

The following pages elaborate on many of the above points. They elucidate those characteristics of particular groups which are translated into their built form, as continuum from the past. The case studies focus on the use and configuration of spaces within the domestic environment and draws attention to the differences occurring due to cultural forces, which exemplify the peculiarities of varied communities.

NOTES & REFERENCES

1.Sipe pp. 206-7

2. The terms slum, squatter settlements and katchi abadis are used inter-changeably in this thesis. Slum is not being used here in its classical definition of deteriorated settlement, but more in describing the poor and impermanent settlements; and squatter and informal housing.

3. According to the JRP IV report titled *The slums of Karachi: A conspectus* "Slums which are basically homogeneous are totally outnumbered by those which are ethnically heterogeneous ... Such slums are scattered throughout the length and breadth of the urban expanse. The general trend seems to be for homogeneous slums to give way to heterogeneous (communities). Within a heterogeneous slum there is no set pattern governing the grouping of dwellings of various ethnic groups. In some cases the dwellings of various ethnic communities are clustered together, in other cases they are interspersed with others" This is not entirely correct as in Karachi there are many large settlements which constitute small ethnically concentrated clusters. In fact the report contradicts itself, when it later says "a positive feature (is that) they (the poor migrants) are near their relatives or with people belonging to the same place or province or of the same religion. Living in natural groups apparently give the slum dwellers a sense of security and satisfaction and in times of need

provides a sort of social security. Although Karachi's slums are mostly ethnically heterogeneous, small natural groups are to be found within the wider slum community. A sort of group cohesiveness exists in slums which provides a sense of security to its residents, who seem to face common economic, social and possibly socio-psychological problems." Within the paragraph too there seems to be discrepancy. It is a misfortune that the presence of different ethnic groups cannot be recognized, or if recognized not accepted. The healthy fact is that there are differences in the origin of the population in Karachi which make them characteristically variant which is reflected in their concentration in neighbourhoods and in their patterns of living.

4. quoted from various findings as cited in *Squatters and Oligarchs* pp. 31-34
5. this is also true for settlers other than squatters.

This section has been included to examine the characteristics and features which are transferred from rural to urban houses, and which are peculiar to the squatter settlements. It is a discussion of rural houses in Delhi region to comprehend the attributes of the present dwelling units of the migrants, not only in Delhi, but those who migrated across the border after coming to urban Delhi.

Houses in villages or rural settings are usually not completely built all at once, but over an appreciable period of time. Once the plot is earmarked, construction is phased, as rooms are built to meet the additional requirements of the growing family. This developmental process is thus an organic one; as the family grows so does the house.
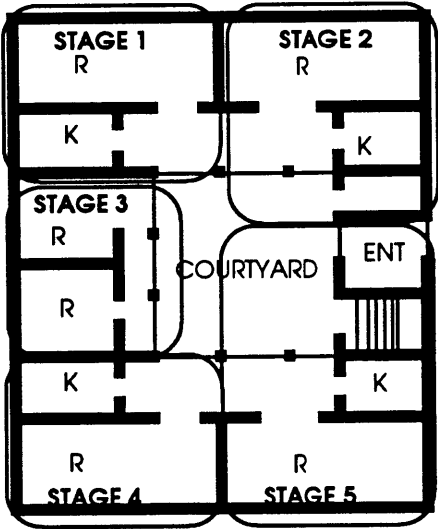
DEVELOPMENT OF A HOUSE
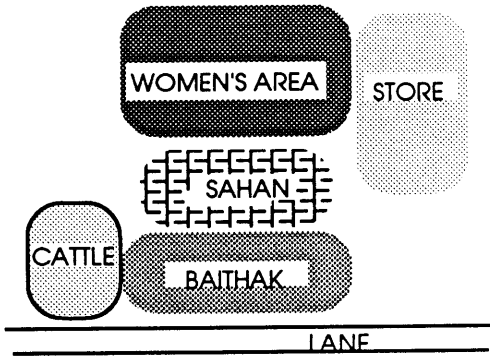
RELATIONSHIP OF SPACES

fig 14
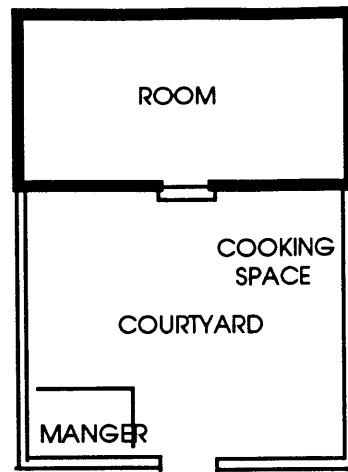
HOUSE OF A RURAL POOR **HOUSE OF A RURAL AFFLUENT**
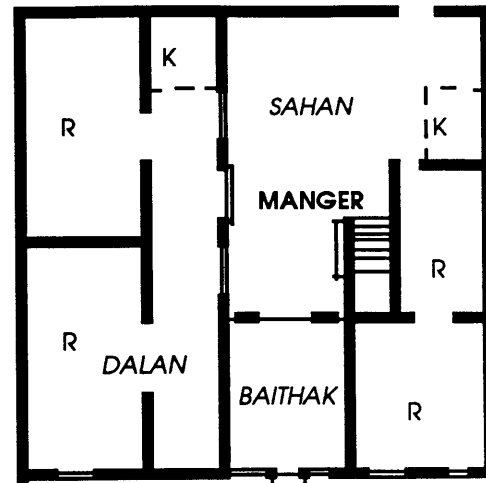
fig 15

More than one household may occupy one house, while retaining separate cooking spaces. The households are usually closely inter-related. In this case family units are arranged around a common courtyard or *sahan;* the *baithak* (men's and male visitors' living room) too is shared by the households. The size and form of the house varies according to affluency. A rich family's house would probably have specific rooms for the various activities. As can be seen in the illustrations a poor family may survive with just one room and a *sahan* which are of multi-purpose use while the house of the more affluent has a more elaborate layout; in both cases the essentials are the same.

SPATIAL IDENTIFICATION

The elements of a house are either parts of a unified structure or may be structurally independent units grouped together. The spatial qualities of each of these elements may be described and illustrated as follows:

The *baithak* may be a regular room or a roofed area enclosed on a couple of sides by walls and is reserved for men. The male members of the family use it for their own relaxation and naps; and for receiving male friends,
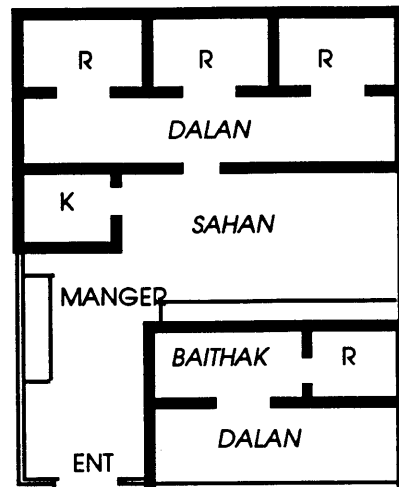
BAITHAK INSIDE THE HOUSE　　　**DETACHED BAITHAK**
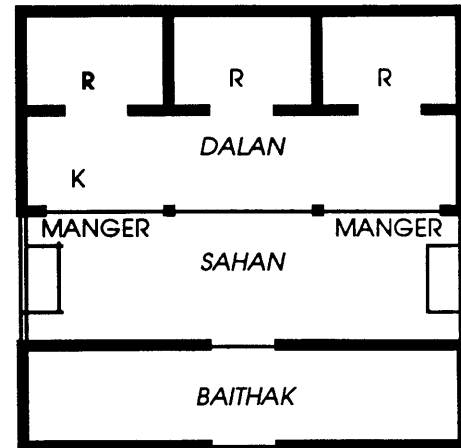
fig 16

relatives and guests. When it is part of the house it is located in such a manner so as to preserve the privacy of the women of the house and when it is detached, the *baithak* is separated from the main domestic area by the *sahan*. The *baithak* also qualifies the status symbol of the household and the more well to do prefer to have a detached *baithak*. The outer area along with the *baithak* have storage spaces for agricultural implements and animal fodder. *Sanchis* (platform-like benches) are found on both sides of the main entrance to the *baithak* which serve as waiting benches for the visitors when the baithak is yet to be opened, and for men and children of the household to relax and chat with passer-bys.

Cattle are the investments and assets for the villagers and they take all measures for protection. It is not very common to have a separate structure for the cattle and are kept outside. The wealthier residents do manage to have a separate structure for their cattle which as mentioned earlier is combined with the baithak. *Baithak-cum- gher* (a separate cattleshed) is mostly associated with the wealthier farmers; and in many instances non-agricultural families (black-smith, potters etc.) combine their *baithak* with workshops.

An area surrounded by high or low walls, enclosed by other spaces of the house, the *sahan* may be in front of the house or between the baithak and the domestic areas of the house. All kinds of activities occur here (depending on the weather), i.e. cooking, sleeping, washing and drying of clothes and also for storage and for keeping the cattle. The women in villages prefer to cook in the open but as an alternative, in inclement weather conditions, covered areas are also provided to serve as kitchen. This may be a corner of the verandah or an exclusive enclosure. Any place sufficient for a couple of persons to squat and carry on the cooking activity is enough. The *sahan* as well as the verandah are also used for eating meals, either siting on the floor or on the *charpai* (roped cot). Hot *chappatis* (pan cakes usually eaten with curry) are served at mealtimes and more often the members of the household sit near cooking area to relish the hot *chappatis*.

The *sahan*, verandah or the terrace are used as sleeping areas. In winter the *baithak* is used by men while the women use the interior room or the *dalan* (verandah) for sleeping. Married couples usually use one of the rooms in the night or may have a screened secluded corner in the verandah for themselves. The interior rooms are mostly used for storing grains and family belongings, as the houses are back to back and the absence of windows make it even more purposeful. The same rooms are used for sleeping in winter and rainy seasons.

Open spaces exclusively noted for recreation do not exist in the village. Again it is the *sahan,* the courtyard, which is used by the children to play. The narrow "alleys" or open spaces in the vicinity of the dwellings serve the purpose. Once the agricultural season is over the vacant fields are also used.

Bathrooms and toilets are missing in the rural houses. Men bathe at the village well or the village tank while the women use some corner of the house or the courtyard. The women usually bathe when the men are away at the fields and do not feel the need for bathrooms. In the absence of toilets

the villagers use the fields among the growth of shrubs to defecate. Even among the affluent toilets are not frequently found in the houses.

COMMUNITY AFFINITY

Generally, one's neighbours are either close relatives or are of the same caste and ethnicity. Some aspects of communal socialization cannot be removed from residential activities. The courtyards are venues for women get-togethers and gossip sessions over tea or lassi (butter milk drink, usually, freshly prepared), while the men retire in the baithak for the same. Men also gather in open spaces or the local "community hall" to socialize.

Just as one cannot categorize the spaces of a rural house in strict terminologies of living, dining and bedrooms etc., it is difficult to categorize the spaces in the houses of the migrants coming from these areas. In the urban centres the houses, are however, equipped with bathrooms and toilets, even if they exist only in the form of small cubicles. The *gher* or, the cattle shed, generally disappears (but not in all cases) in the urban areas, but in spaces such as the *sahan* and rooms the functions remain the same. Hence when the inhabitants migrate to some other city they carry the same concept of house with them since it is ethnically stimulated and perpetuates the same environment.

A HOUSE IN TRADITIONAL DELHI

In the traditional urban environment of Delhi the same conceptual layout is found. The following illustration is of a Muslim businessman's house in Delhi. The house plan is an outcome of the economic, climatic and most emphatically of the social characteristics of the family which is of course a part of a larger ethnic group bearing these characteristics.

The layout of the house is organized into three well-defined and linked sections, which are the *mardan khana* (male section), *zanan khana* (female
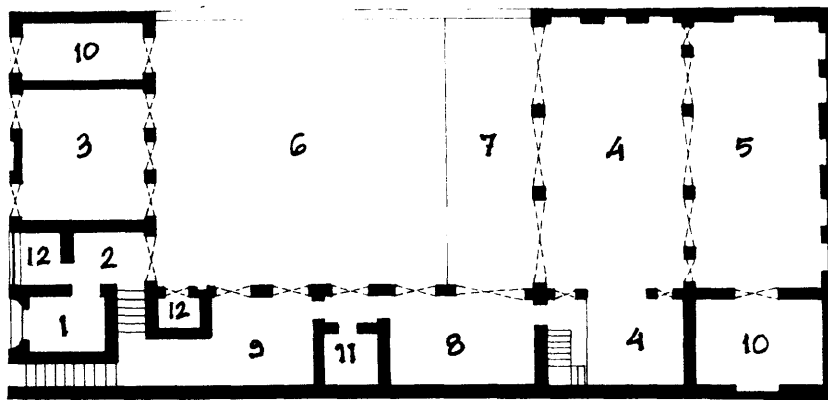
1. entrance lobby
2. inner lobby
3. drawing/living room
4. verandah
5. bedroom
6. open courtyard
7. open raised terraced
8. dining room
9. kitchen
10. store
11. bathroom
12. w.c.

house of a Muslim businessman in Delhi
fig 17

section) and service areas. All the three sections are arranged around the spacious *sahan* or the courtyard. *Mardan khana* meant to be used by the visitors and the male family members consists the baithak, while the *zanan khana* comprising a room and a *dalan* are used by the women of the house. The *dalan*, located between the room for the women and the *sahan*, aids achieve privacy from the *mardan khana* which is essential as strict *purdah* has to be observed by the women of the house. The *deorhi* (entrance lobby) too is oriented so as not to overlook the *sahan* directly. The materials used reflect the status of the family.

The stairs directly lead to the terrace which, depending on the season, can be used during the day or in the night. Service facilities comprising of kitchen bath, toilet and the dining room linking the mardan and the zanan khanas, and being directly accessible from outside, make it convenient to

be used by the guests, female members of the house and the servants.

Located in dense residential area, this inward-looking house facilitates activities appropriate to all the members of the household without any hindrance. The privacy and purdah of the women have been respected and at the same time there is no restriction on their movement within the house or any pressure on the male members in not receiving their guests in the house. The layout expresses the socio-cultural needs of the family.

These features are common in the rural and urban areas; in the house of a rich landlord and of a peasant; in the house of a low-income worker and of a businessman. Essentially it denotes the need for these spaces which satisfy the living pattern of the people. The houses do get transformed in moving from rural to urban area or from a poor to a rich locale, but the essence and the meaning of the space remain the same and therefore persist.
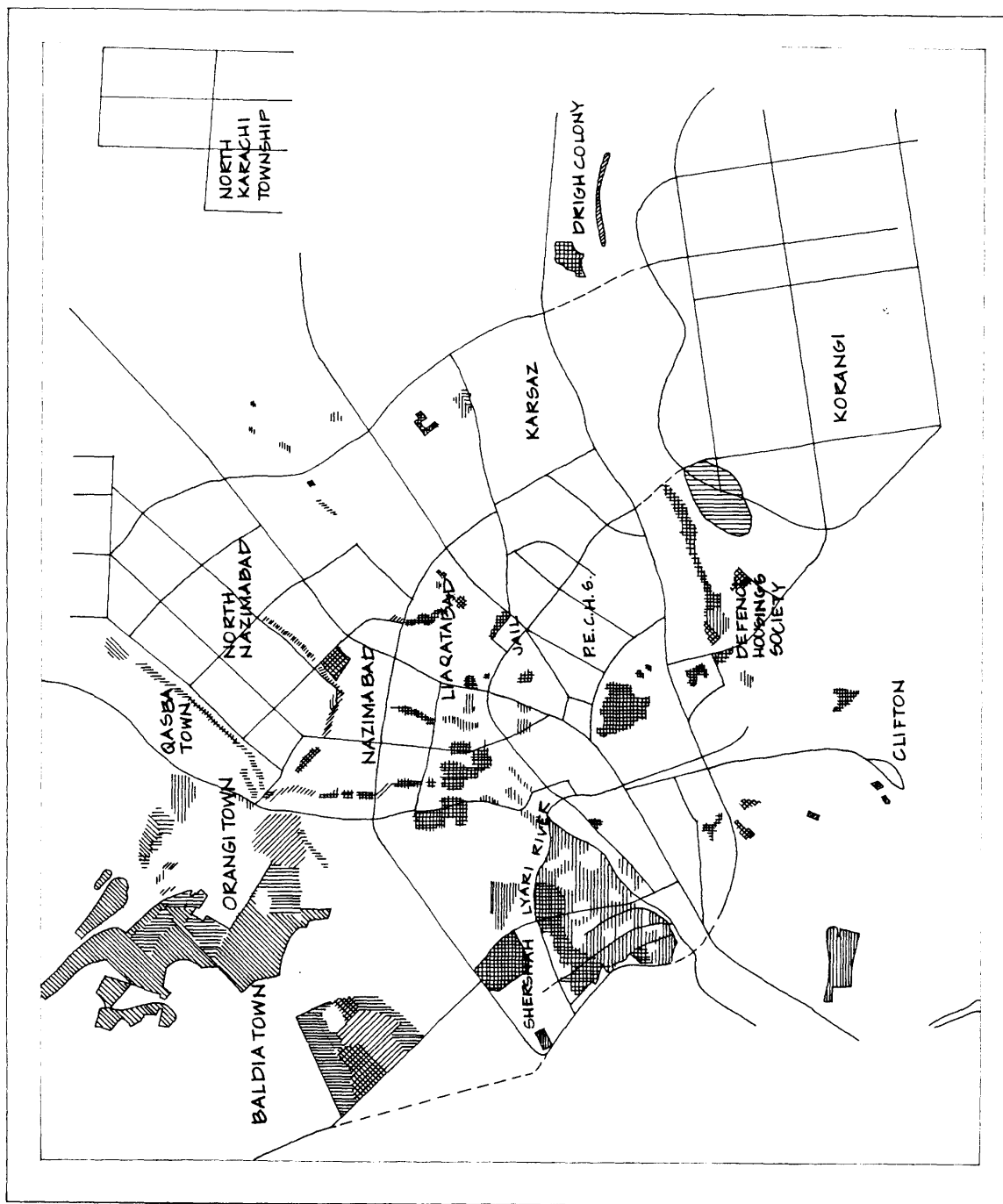
Bastis of Karachi
(a 1978 layout)

fig 18

USMANIA MUHAJIR COLONY

Located on Karachi's southeastern side, Usmania Muhajir Colony was a squatter[1] community inhabited by refugees from India, at its inception, shortly after 1947. Even after living there for thirty years or more, the inhabitants are considered to be squatters. Usually when there is no security of tenure the residents are apprehensive because of the danger of eviction and therefore refrain from improving their houses. But since the 1978 ordinance[2] and the ordinances that followed regarding the regularization of *Katchi Abadis,* in UMC[3], as in other settlements too, houses have been upgraded from *katcha* to *semi-pakka* or in some instances *pakka.* UMC illustrates how a housing area which began as illegal refugee dwellings, through community efforts, gradually transformed into a permanent settlement.

As the inhabitants of UMC are ethnically homogeneous they had, to a much larger extent, improved the physical environment as opposed to another area close by, Ghousia Colony, where the population has become fairly inter-mixed. Though the majority of the residents there too are *muhajirs,* their houses are interspersed with that of other ethnic groups and there is little fusion between the groups. It is seen that the lanes though are wider than in UMC, are unpaved and piles of garbage tend to accumulate. At present, Ghousia Colony was one of the areas taken up by the Directorate of Katchi Abadi (DAK) for upgrading. It was recorded from the DAK that there has been a great deal of cooperation from the residents of the colony to carry out the work, even though some of the residents had to sacrifice a part of their house. Since December 1982, when the decision was taken to regularize and improve the colony, the residents have also improved their houses. This shows that even though the settlers differ in ethnicity they do tend to unite on specific grounds, but only for a short period of time. Social
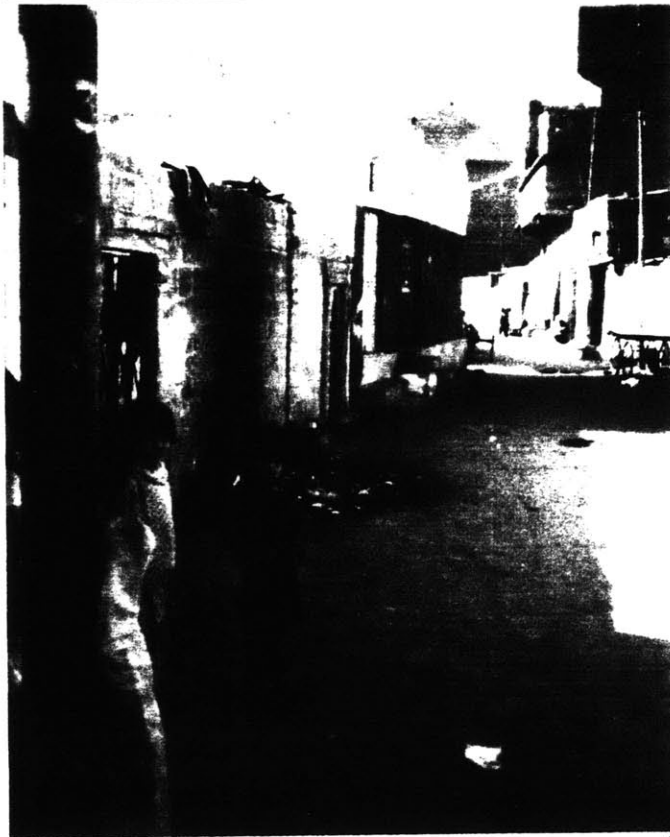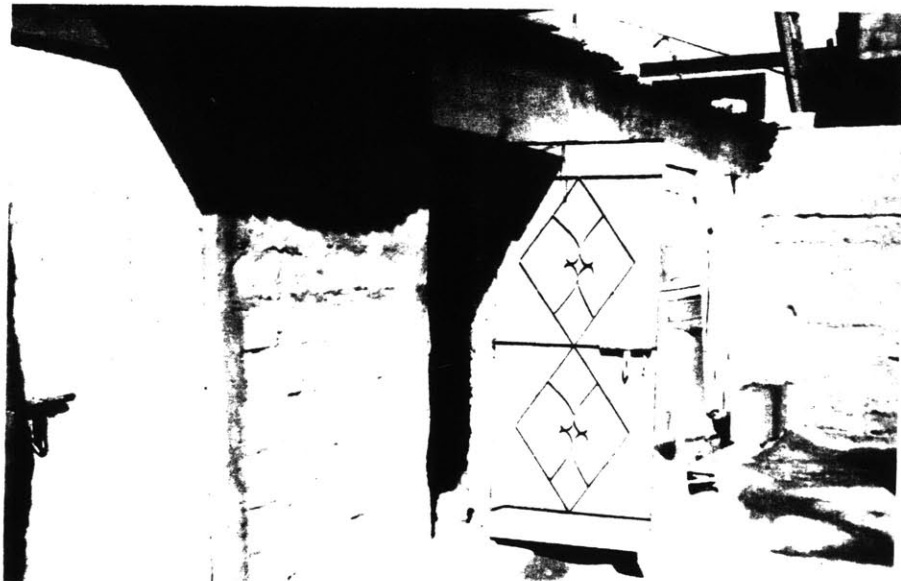
Layout of Usmania Muhajir Colony

fig 19

fig 20
**a narrow lane of UMC
opening into a left over
space justbeyond the main street.**

fig 21
**the iron door separatingthe
lane (public) from the courtyard (semi-private)**

bonding or communal sentiments, are not very strong, nor do they visit their neighbour's house very frequently. When interviewed, it was found that the households of different groups did not socialize on a daily basis but nevertheless had cordial relationship with each other. Residents who were not *muhajirs* were recent inhabitants who had migrated from Punjab or the North West Frontier Province ten or fifteen years back, replacing the *muhajirs* who have relocated themselves in other areas of Karachi.

RESIDENTS OF UMC

For six years after partition UMC was largely inhabited by muhajirs from Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh[4] in India. Only two heads of households · came from Western India, thus linguistically the colony was Urdu speaking.[5] In 1953 however, Punjabi Christians began to locate themselves in the colony in the last two vacant pockets.[6] They were landless labourers working for Sikh landlords.[7] At partition when the Sikhs emigrated to India their lands were distributed among self cultivators, making these labourers redundant, which resulted in their migration to urban areas to start afresh.

The initial settlers chose to settle in UMC for its location and economic inputs. Residents arriving after 1953 indicated that they selected the area because of the presence of relatives within the colony.[8] The presence of relatives accounts for 70% of the migrants who entered the colony after 1953 - the year when partition ceased to be the most significant factor influencing the colony's growth.[9] Familial ties have played an increasingly significant role as UMC's population has become more stable over the years. Kinship ties were of extreme importance and are reflected in the number of residents or households being inter-related. *Braderis* played an imperative role in providing structural organization. It helped its members to get a house in the area. In the case of a house being vacated, it is mandatory for a prospective buyer to seek the approval of the neighbours before the purchase, consequently procuring more power and homogeneity. As a

result family groups now reside in spatially demarcated areas. The muhajirs give the colony a permanence as the refugee families are distinguished from later arrivals by the presence of their entire families as opposed to single migrants. Ethnicity became a factor in UMC's development after the initial phase of settlement. After 1953, the tendency has been for the residents to consolidate and to expand their respective sections by adding persons who reinforce their cultural preferences.[10] While economically successful persons have migrated out they have been replaced by people of similar background. It has been suggested that if an ethnographic map was to be constructed now and compared to the one of 1947, very little change would be observed for areas like UMC which have been integrated gradually into Karachi's urban hierarchy. The early inhabitants, it has been observed, now own larger plots of land, since they had lands available to expand on rather than leave the area. This has given the UMC additional demographic stability.[11]

The minority groups which have managed to situate themselves in UMC are territorially isolated. A small group of sweepers who are the only source for sewage removal (from the area) are segregated and occupy the southwest corner while Punjabi Christians settled in the extreme northeast of the UMC do not come into contact with the muhajirs in UMC. This clearly indicates that for a comfortable life with neighbours and also to maintain a sense of security, common culture spatial concentration is preferred. The three communities in UMC reside within their clusters and do not communicate with each other. Each group draws strength and security from within and is comfortable in being in an aura which they can relate to i.e. have shared views and values.

At present most of the houses in UMC are considered to be *semi-pakka*;[12] there are many which are plastered and a handful which are *pakka* or has concrete roofs. Hence the houses in UMC are commonly of cemented blocks, unplastered and plastered (both categories are found). Corrugated iron or asbestos sheets are used as roofing material. The houses are all single storied with rare exceptions, in pakka houses, where rooms are added as required ie. when a son gets married, or when it is affordable. The residents of Pakka houses are obviously economically better off and can afford to live in a joint family. Since they usually marry within the *braderi*, it has been observed that some girls are married outside UMC where suitors from the same *braderi* are found. This further reinforces the *braderi* ties across settlements.

The houses here are built on very small plots. Usmania Muhajir Colony covers almost nine acres of land; of which eight acres are built upon (houses, shops and the UMC mosque). The remaining one acre is distributed in lanes and open spaces. The lanes are no wider than four to five feet and no open spaces exist within the colony but are found on the periphery. The residents are used to the crowded situation and do not find this to be a problem. In fact many of these tiny lanes are used as social meeting places or as extension of houses. The children of the area love to run around and play hide and seek in these winding lanes. All the tiny lanes are paved and are kept absolutely clean.

Iron double doors serve as entrances to almost all the houses in the colony. As the doors are opened one enters a small paved courtyard. The open courtyard serves as the focal area for the entire house, since it is the body of all domestic activities. It is the most vibrant section, which each of the resident can identify as his or her own space. All the rooms are off-shoots of the courtyard, thus all doors, whether of the private quarter, the kitchen or the toilet open into the courtyard.

UMC residents are mostly from Uttar Pradesh. The women who migrated here, came from a section of society which were from the lower-middle or low income group, which did not observe strict *purdah*. In their houses, here, the main court also serve as the domestic court. All visitors enter into this court which is also used by the family members. The visitors are ushered into the inner room which opens into the court making the court a passageway for the visitors to cross over to the visitors' area. As such the domestic activities are carried on without much hindrance. This signifies the respect for privacy but avoids total segregation. The court is used by the family for all activities, preparation for cooking, washing relaxing and at times in the night for sleeping. The rooms, usually two in number are used for sleeping. One of these rooms is also used as living room during the day and also houses the television. At night, this space is also used for sleeping.
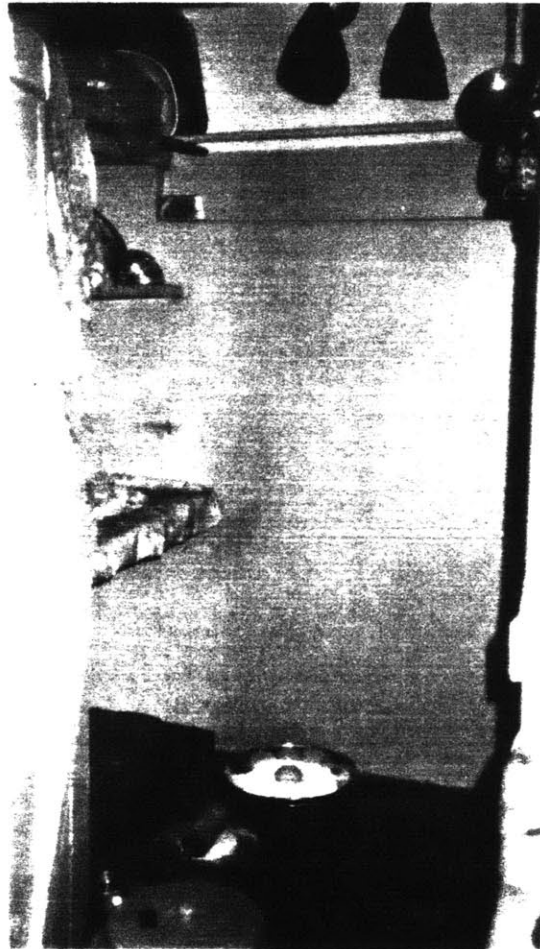
fig 22
the kitchen of the house in fig 26. The dough and the rolling board for making *chappati* canbe seen. The young girl, the eldest daughter of the house, cooking the afternoon meal shied away from the camera.

As can be seen from the house plans, the two storied house in UMC too follows the same concept. The entrance door opens into a large lounge (as it would be if the court was completely enclosed), and all other doors open into this lounge. This space is then used for all activities i.e. pre-cooking, eating etc. On one side of the lounge is the multi-purpose room while on the opposite side is the usual string of toilet, bath and kitchen. The upper floor has a living and a bedroom, while the space above the lounge is used as an open terrace and again for hanging-up the wash and for sleeping. These layouts amplify the usage and linkage and meaning of the spaces in the houses, irrespective of the size of the plot or materials used for construction.
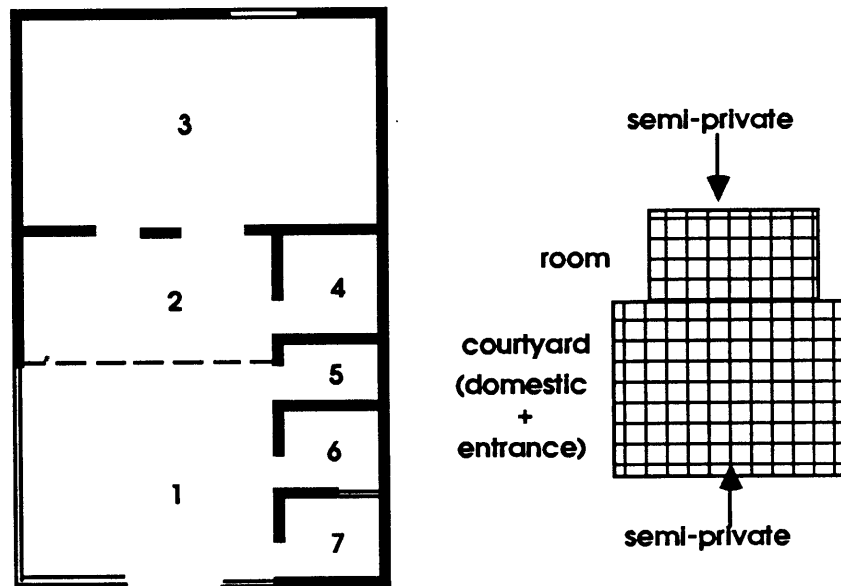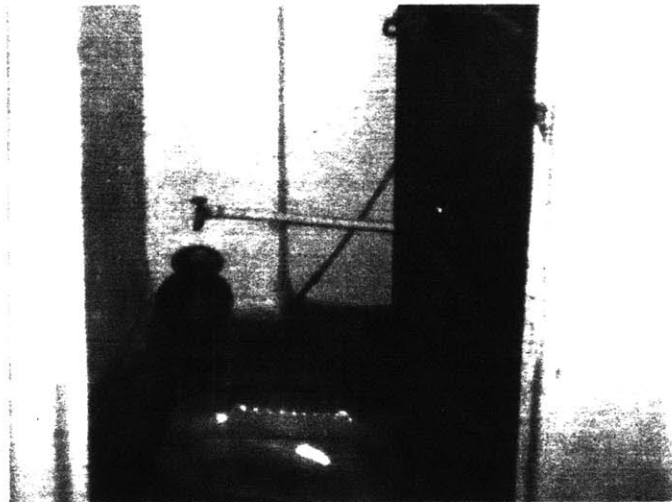

1. courtyard
2. covered court
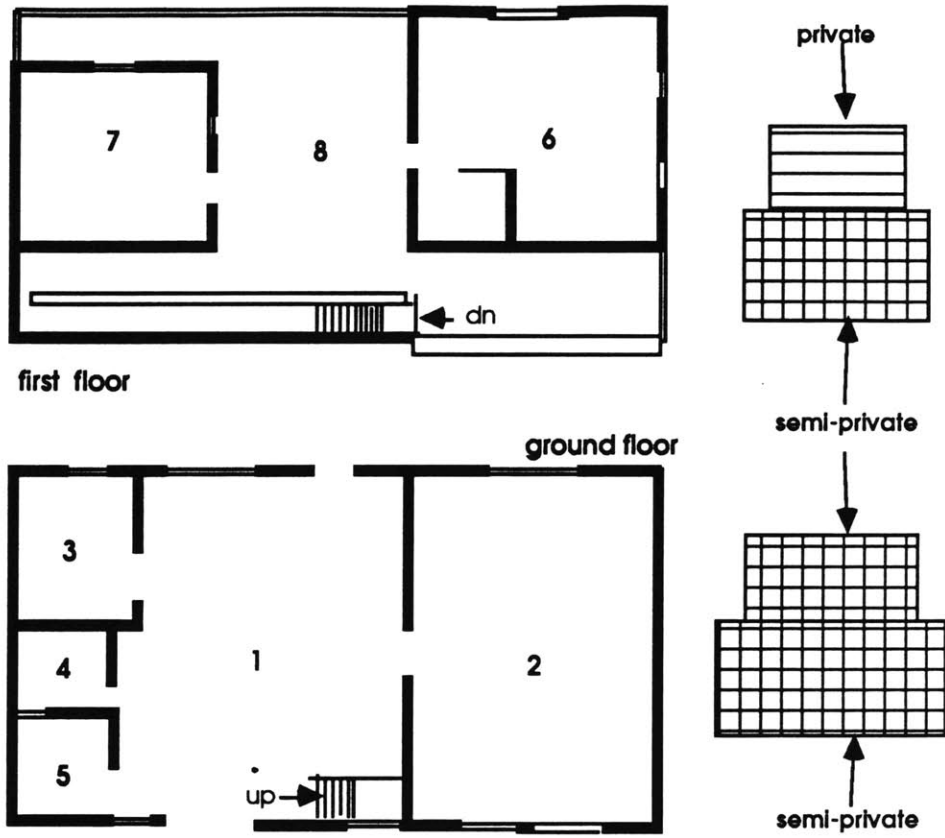3. room
4. kitchen
5. store
6. bath
7. w.c.

fig 23

Schematic Plan of a house in UMC - 1
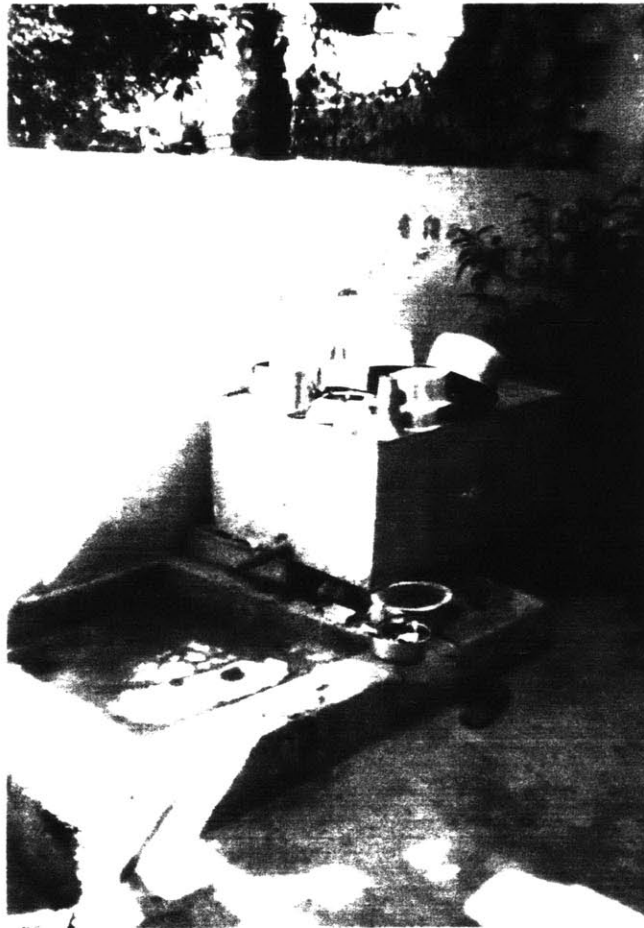
fig 24
a dishwashing area in
one side of the
court; used for
doing laundry as well.

fig 25
a squatting type w.c., found in every
house which is separate from
the bathing area

first floor

ground floor

private

semi-private

semi-private

1. lounge/lobby (enclosed court)
2. room (used for entertaining, specially by
   men, for eating and for sleeping)
3. kitchen
4. w.c.
5. bathroom
6. bedroom

fig 26
schematic plan
of a house in UMC - 2

fig 27
patterned holes created in
cc blockwall for ventilation;
also seen in the picture
is the asbestos cement
sheetused for roofing.
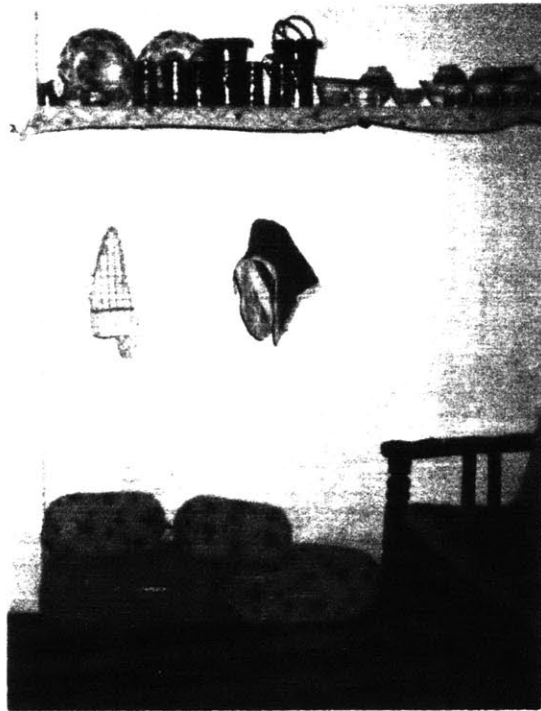
fig 28

views of drawing rooms with
sofas and floor seating;
these spaces are also used for
eating meals specially with visitors;
used mostly by men; an ostentacious
display of crockery adorns, at least,
one wall; ledges are specially
created for the purpose.

fig 29

Situated behind the rear wall of the Karachi Central Prison, the colony is spread over 18.5 acres. It's location is quite favourable as it has wholesale fruit and vegetable market close-by and is adjacent to main traffic arteries with transport facilities readily available. This settlement dates back to the partition of the sub-continent and is one of the oldest *Katchi Abadis* taken up for regularization.[13] The population of the colony is composed of different ethnic groups of which the majority are the refugees from India. *Pathans* tend to concentrate in North Eastern part, while Punjabi Christians live in a cluster , west of the centre of the colony. People of Indian origin predominate in the rest of the area. Many families have resided there for the past thirty years; the majority have been there for at least fifteen years. Most of the migrants as in the UMC are from UP and their houses seem to reflect the concept of the UMC residents. The plan included here can be rea accordingly.

NOTES & REFERENCES

1. The term squatter is used here as the refugees came and occupied these lands without official rights.
2. The Katchi Abadi Ordinance which first applied to all Katchi Abadis before 1978 and later was updated was "to make provision for the development and improvement of the areas of the *Katchi Abadis* and regularization of such Katchi Abadis......"
3. UMC is being used in most parts of this thesis as an abbreviation for Usmania *Muhajir* Colony.
4. Uttar and Madhya Pradesh are also referred as UP and CP or United Province and Central Province.
5. Sipe p. 234
6. Nientied on Usmania Muhajir Colony p. 6
7. JRP IV on Usmania Muhajir Colony p. 2
8. Sipe p. 234
9. JRP IV on UMC p. 78
10. Sipe pp. 236 - 7
11. ibid p. 238
12. The typology of houses has been based on van der Linden's analysis and categories. *Pakka* is any structure having an RCC roof; *semi-pakka* then refers to structures with walls of concrete blocks and roofs of any other material but RCC; *katcha* houses are those of mud, stones, reed matting, tin sheets, jute, etc. This also includes the popular jhuggi.
13. Socio-Economic Survey Report no. 2

BALDIA TOWNSHIP

Baldia was almost completely an empty part of the desert in the fringe of Karachi along the road which leads to Baluchistan.[1] Since it is near the industrial area of SITE (Sind Industrial and Trading Estate), it became inhabited fairly quickly by varied communities.[2] Baldia literally means municipal, and since the land initially belonged to Karachi Metropolitan Corporation, this area attained the name of Baldia Township.[3] Not all the settlements here began as squatters, in fact many of the present communities evolved as a consequence of resettlement at some time or the other. Alternate land was given to them in lieu of their eviction from different parts of Karachi. Each colony or community within Baldia is of a different age (Table). The oldest settlement called Deh Moach is believed to have come into existence, through encroachment, before the creation of Pakistan, whereas Kumbharwara is regarded to be the first "organized" settlement in Baldia.

At present there is a mixed population widely drawn from the Indo-Pak sub-continent, representing different ethnic and linguistic groups. Each of these groups has formed its own settlement within the larger Baldia area, of which two are discussed here.

As one neighbourhood leads to the other in baldia there are no physical boundaries or structural demarcation, to separate one from the other. Thus each community is introverted but lives harmoniously within the larger settlement. In spite of the absence of any concrete division, the differences in the communities are visible. Each community, in Baldia, has its own distinct style of living which is echoed in their respective communities. Therefore as one visits the houses from community to community, the divergences emerge.

NEW KUMBHARWARA

Kumbharwara, the first organized settlement in Baldia township area, came into being when habitants of old Kumbharwara in Lyari were shifted to the present location, as the previous site was to give way to the construction of police quarters. Plots were given to the Kumbhars free of cost to construct their own huts and houses.[4] Originally from the Run of Cutch in India, the cutchi Kumbhars were living in Lyari even before partition. Those families whose houses did not affect the construction of police quarters were allowed to remain in the area. Therefore the settlements in Lyari and Baldia are referred to as the Old and the New Kumbharwara, respectively.

At present New Kumbharwara has a population of about 250 families. Initially when the families were forced to move, the area was so sparsely populated that out of fear they did not risk staying overnight in their huts in an alien location.[5] Their routine was therefore to come to Baldia at dawn, perform their tasks and go back to their relatives in the city, at sunset. They earn their living through pottery making, which is an ancestral occupation. The children start playing with clay at a very young age, while watching their parents at work. Men and women, both, are involved in this skilled work. It is a communal skill passed down for many generations and seasoned through time. The movements of their hands which sculpts and molds the clay is such a blessed faculty that it is believed to relieve people suffering from acute or chronic pain. The movements of their fingers and palms which perform the expert strokes are therapy for people suffering from all sorts of orthopedic ailments. Yet they are not looked upon with any degree of respect. They are to referred to as "people who handle mud (dirt)"[5] The clay comes from an area which is more than an hour's drive from their place of residence, which adds to the transport cost, increasing the price of the raw material. They get their material in bulk and store it in large earthen

fig 30
Layout of Kumbharwara, Baldia
(shows some regularization plan)

pots and then cover them with plastic.

From morning to evening the entire family is involved in making earthen products, unless the temperature gets exceedingly high. The children do go to school but in their free time end up playing with mud. The younger generation feels that it is not a rewarding occupation at all and would rather earn their livelihood through other means. But no sudden extinction of the art is visible in the very near future. Now instead of the entire family being involved in the same occupation the ancestral art will probably be pursued by some in the present generation or in the future. Unless they are compensated adequately for their labour, the future generation, it seems, will shift from their traditional mode of income generation. At present the children who are being educated do not go beyond the secondary level, in fact it is not often that they aspire to obtain more than primary level schooling. Therefore the continuation or extinction of this occupation by the Kumbhars in the future cannot be easily predicted. One thing that can be safely stated is that if their mode of earning changes and if the new occupation is "individualistic" it will affect their living pattern which in turn will alter their physical setting. The communal compound living will probably disintegrate, as this kind of form is being dictated by their present craft.

fig 31
**an old Kumbhar checking
some of the baked pots**

Occupying a small pocket of land in Baldia township, the Kumbhars speak "cutchi"[6], which makes them linguistically different from their neighbours. Located near them are other "cutchis" who consider themselves superior as they do not mess around with mud, but are involved in more a "honourable" jobs. Thus the Kumbhars themselves form a very close-knit and cohesive community. A special bonding is found in this ethnic group because of their skill and shared occupation, and is also forced on them by their neighbours. This in turn is reflected in their living pattern and their physical setting.

The configuration of the Kumbhars' compounds is extremely fascinating. A house does not stand alone neither does it form a continuous pattern of row houses as seen in other communities but three or four houses together form a compound. The compound is owned by one family which employs at least two other families to collate a work force, who all live together. The

fig 32
an old Kumbhar working on his potter's wheel and training his grandsons at the same time.
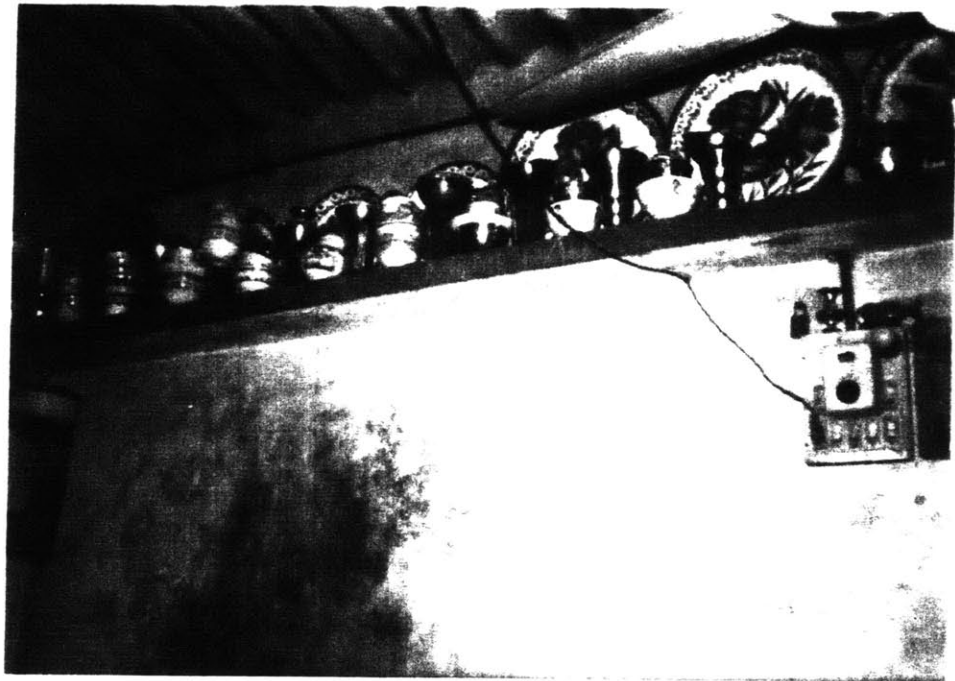
semi-private

rooms

court

semi-public
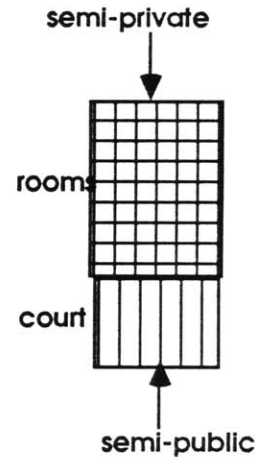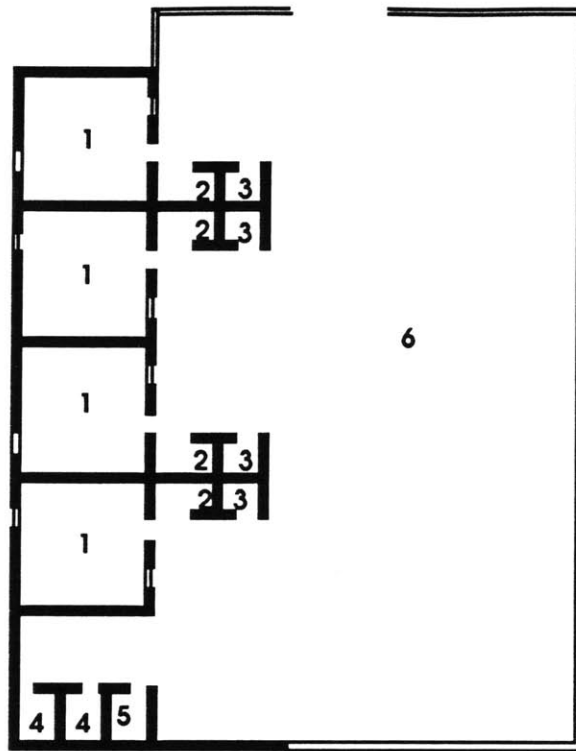
1. room
2. kitchen
3. store
4. w.c.
5. bathroom
6. court & working space

fig 33
**schematic plan of a
house in Kumbharwara**

fig 34
**The huge pots are used for storing clay in the
courtyard which actually is the workspace**

fig 35
**here again the ledge is used for displaying
whatever crockery they have.**

fig 36
the compound being used as work space.

fig 37
a Kumbhar woman working
side by side with men

fig 38
a Kumbhar woman making
chappati faces the
camera confidently

families are not necessarily inter-related but usually belong to the same place of origin. Small houses are erected wall to wall along one side of the compound wall. Each house (usually) is not more than a room (in rare cases one would find two rooms), with a small kitchen and a tiny store. The toilet and bath are common to the entire habitants of the compound. The rest of the compound is divided into spaces for storage of raw material and finished products, work arena and drying spread. Huge earthen containers with plastic covers are used for storing the clay in order to prevent it from drying and cracking. These storage bins cover a fair area of ground space as does the drying stretch. Their work space consists of the potters wheel, piles of clay and buckets of water. Thus their entire work routine dominates their living pattern which echoes in the setting of their houses. The kumbhars, therefore, have security and a sense of belonging to the place and within their community which they cannot receive from outside.

NOTES & REFERENCES

1. One of the four provinces of Pakistan. The other three are Sind, Punjab and the North West Frontier Province.
2. KSSU p. 40
3. Yap, K.S., Leases, Land and Local Leaders.
4. Baldia Evaluation Report p. 19
5. ibid.
6. translated from urdu, (as was said in interviews) "mitti ke kam karne wale log".
7. language spoken by the people of cutch region.

DELHI COLONY, BALDIA

Situated close to Kumbharwara, Delhi colony came into existence in Baldia in 1956. Migrating from Delhi to Karachi, the present residents of Delhi colony, initially took shelter in old Haji camp. Not finding it to be the right place to live they were in constant search for more free land which they could claim as their own i.e. to house their community. Representatives of the group having a dialogue with the government were asked to visit the open land around Kumbharwara in Baldia. They recognized it to be a suitable area for their community to settle, upon which the Karachi Municipal Corporation allotted plots free of charge. to these migrants from Delhi.[1]

Since the plots were officially allotted, there was no illegal occupation of land.[2] At that time very few people could build houses on the plots that were allotted, as they did not have enough resources to do so. It was only gradually that the plots were built upon and by 1971 the area became quite dense. Since the plots were not squatted on but dispensed legally, it is more or less expected that basic infra structure would be provided. That is not necessarily the case. Whereas Delhi colony has some basic amenities, Kumbharwara does not. In this case too the people were relocated from another area of Karachi. The facilities enjoyed vary from community to community as each has its own leaders representing the group in the "outside world". The leaders inevitably strive for the interests of that particular ethnic group. - strengthening the fact that demands of each ethnic group is peculiar to that community. In Baldia leadership is a mixture of traditional and modern patterns and is very much person-oriented. It depends on the leadership as to who or which community would be the beneficiary, and as such it becomes crucial as to where the leadership stems from. Even more so because in some areas the residents come from different
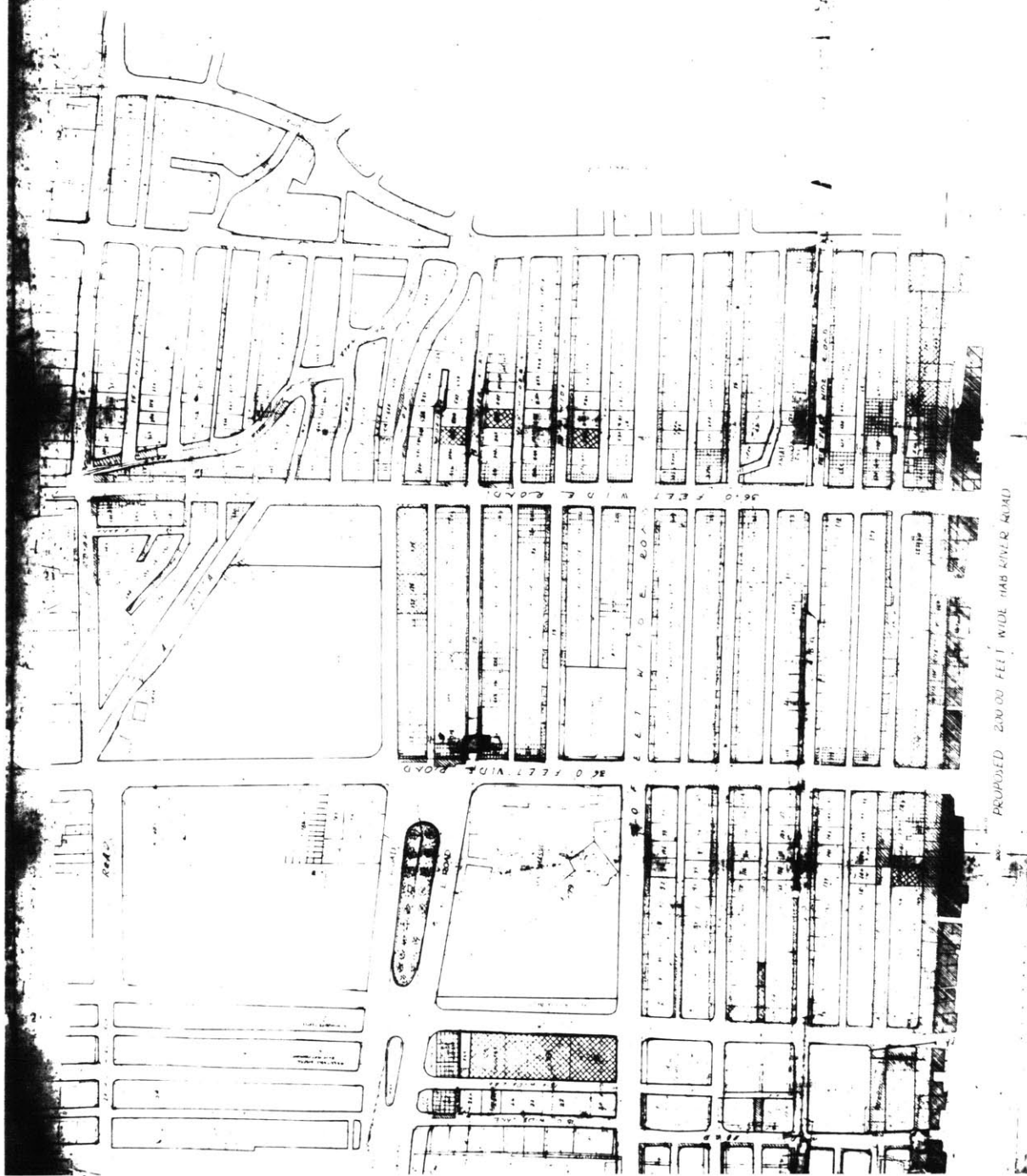
fig 39
Layout of Delhi Colony Baldia
(with some regularization plan)

ethnic backgrounds resulting in factions along ethnic lines.[3] Persons belonging to the same ethnic group residing outside Baldia, also are a source of support for the people in Delhi colony. Their ethnic affiliation stirs them to sustain the less privileged.

A few of the original residents of Delhi colony have moved out upon having financially improved their situation. In most cases they have moved to the cooperative society which the people from Delhi have formed, in middle class localities of Karachi. Consequently they have rented out their houses in the colony either to their relatives or people from the common place of origin i.e. Delhi. Thus the people found in Delhi colony today are from Delhi but are not necessarily the original . It was found that the renters were comfortable in the houses as the configuration of spaces was the one that they were used to.


fig 40
older women only can have the libery of sitting outside; the bench is more for male visitors who might have to wait outside at times

The plans of houses as seen, observed and read in the entire Delhi colony show two courtyards. One is the entrance court while the other is the domestic court. The two courts are separated by a transition zone which is usually treated as visitors' area. Even if a definite area or a room does not segregate the two courts, a wall is erected to serve as a separating screen. Thus the transit area becomes a fundamental section of the house. Acting as a sieve, it "dictates" as to who would go beyond its screening unit. The male visitors are normally not admitted beyond this point. The domestic court is surrounded by the different rooms of the house. On one side are the rooms (for sleeping, eating etc.) and on the other side is the kitchen, the toilet and the bath, while one side or a corner is left free for for washing and drying

fig 41
a multpurpose room with the *charpai* covered with fancy bed sheets
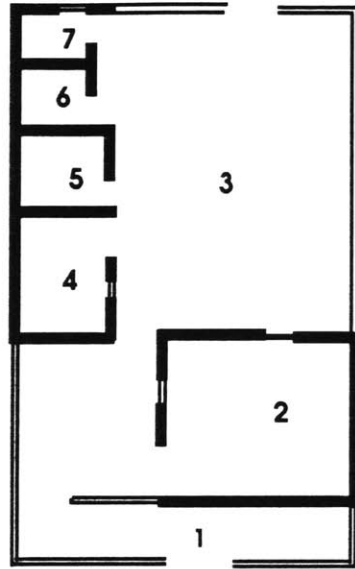
1. entrance court
2. room (used by men to entertain
      male guests also used as
      bedroom)
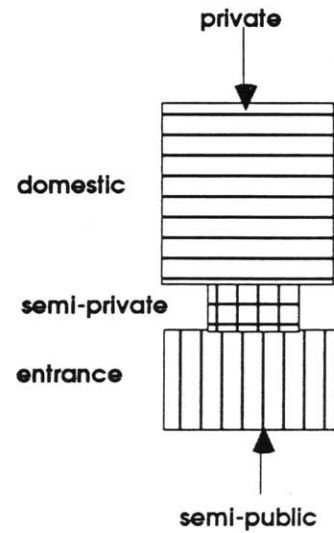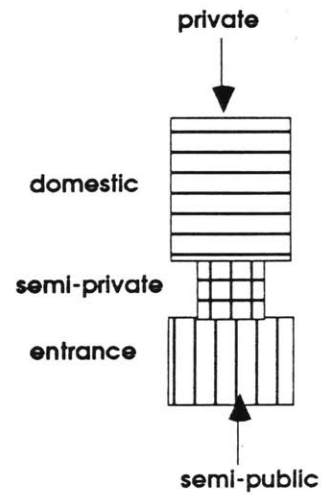3. domestic court
4. kitchen
5. store
6. bath
7. w.c.

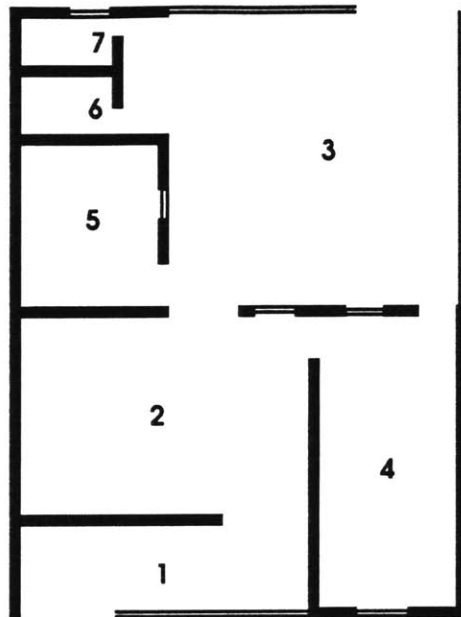fig 42
schematic plan of a
house in Delhi Colony - 1

fig 43
"high tech" in a "low tech " house;
washing machine does not alter the
role of women and their limitations

1. entrance court
2. room (used mostly by men)
3. domestic court
4. room (mainly used for sleeping)
5. kitchen
6. bath
7. w.c.

fig 44
**schematic plan of a
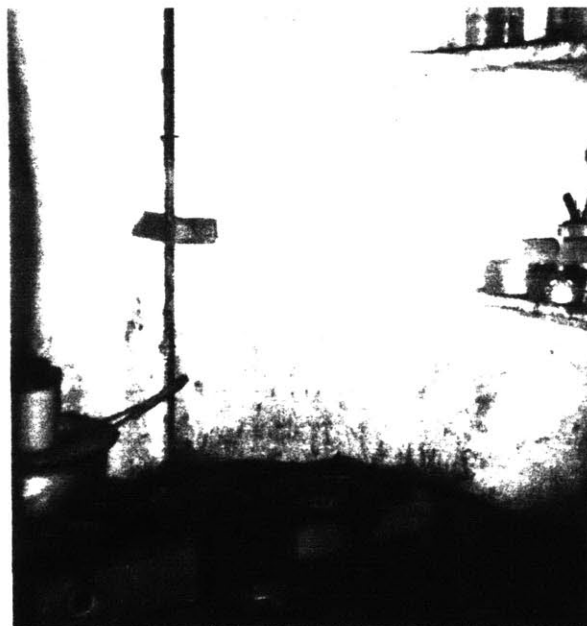house in Delhi Colony - 2**

fig 45
kitchen with floor stoves

of clothes. Rooms are added on the sides or on the upper floor as and when financially possible or under dire need, which is usually when a son weds.

These layouts show that the main characteristic of houses in Delhi colony are the courtyards which have dissimilar functions. Spatially too they are distinctive. The entrance court is usually narrow and long, with a specific function of an entrance lobby, while the inner court is spacious and advocate multifarious activities. Domestic chores can therefore be carried on undisturbed, as the inner court is considered a totally private domain, where male non-family members are not permitted.

NOTES & REFERENCES

1. initially the land was under the jurisdiction of the KMC, which was handed over to the District Council in 1958 and eventually in 1964 to the Baldia town committee.
2. Baldia Evaluation Report p. 20
3. Schuringa, M. in *Between Basti Dwellers and Bureaucrats*.

ETHNICITY IN "HIGH" ARCHITECTURE

This study has looked at cases of squatter settlements and of that population which has erected houses by themselves for themselves. This section of the community unable to afford any expert advice and for other reasons, build shelters that best suit their needs and requirements. Other sections of the people who procure professional counsel and architectural services also aspire to build their houses which conform to their lifestyle and living habits.

Architects, at times, in their creativity, relegate the requirements of their clients to a secondary position and impose their knowledge and expertise in evolving "the best design solution". Unfortunately, we (architects and planners) are often inclined to regard other peoples' cultural patterns as capricious or meaningless. This is not always the case, as the client knows that their domain has to accommodate their field of daily activities. A sensitive architect, therefore reads more than lines on paper and materials on ground. In integrating his "style" with his client's "style", he recognizes the importance of his client's input. The client's input comes forth as a product of many factors, specially his socio-cultural environment. "Evidence suggests that people will put up with all manner of discomfort to maintain the pattern of culture that gives meaning to their lives, even as it functions to adapt them to their habitat. By paying more attention to the organizational structures that underlie the culture and consequently influence housing patterns, the planner ...... increases his chance of success."[1] Cultural and subcultural rules, preferences and values prescribe the relationship between inhabitant and environment and the interpretations of a culturally naive architect may vary from that of his client. It therefore becomes more crucial for the architect to understand his client's cultural make-up.

An architect, practicing in Karachi for the last forty years, realized that there was a set of common denominators found in many of the houses that he had designed which differed from another set of house plans which themselves shared similarities. Perturbed by this fact, as he is a strong proponent of national identity, he sought to document the intra-group similarities in the layouts of the houses that he had designed. Though he is inconsistent in his views expressed in the paper, (as he begins to talk of the role of the architect), it contains very interesting descriptions of the lifestyle of different ethnic groups and their concept of spaces.

"The (majority of the) houses ...... in Karachi, though, belonging to the same religious (Islamic) community, clearly express differences (culturally)....... The provincial cultures, life patterns, climatic and local customs of undivided India were brought to Pakistan."[2] House designs in the sub-continent steered towards the concept of bungalow[3] under the colonial rule. Evolved from the early influences that occured in the Bengali countryside, through the modification of the makeshift Bengali peasant hut - the *banggolo*,[4] the bungalow spread profound roots in the sub-continent soil. Starting from the nobility in the cities, it appears to have filtered down to the more affluent urban middle class population who still resided in the traditional physical environment.[5] In adopting this concept many traditional settings were modified to retain its spatial qualities within the envelope of the bungalow, where courtyards gave way to lounges. The underlying concept was basically of a house set in a garden. "Thus, the bungalow was in direct contrast to the courtyard house in the 'native city'; here, a central courtyard allowed the penetration of light and air; as the houses were three or four stories high, and there were closely clustered, cellular-structured buildings all around, the lower rooms were dark and cool. Activity in this courtyard house was centripetal: movement was inwards, towards the courtyard. In the bungalow it was centrifugal, outward, on the verandah and further into the compound."[6] The introverted and the extroverted concept was the other distinctive factor; where as traditionally all activities were focussed to wards the "core" which happened to be the courtyard, the Europeans

preferred to have their "tea-parties" in the outer garden. On the cultural level, colonial settlements in the city were instrumental in dividing the society ino two spheres. The upper classes aspiring to move into the new colonial areas associated with the aura of prestige and status, while the rest continued to hold on to their traditional lifestyles. The income groups which can afford to acquire the services of architects aspire to own "banglas". Thus, where the lower income group do not own *"banglas"*,[7] their use of equivalent spaces are more or less the same as their richer counter-part within the same ethnic group.

The architect further comments that apart from the class divisions that exists in the Pakistani society which is distinguished on the basis of income, "the population of Karachi is based on caste and regional customs......" His descriptions are quite valuable as they explore the peculiarities of each ethnic group. Some of his study is quoted below:[8]

BIHARIS: Urdu speaking with a very strong accent.
"Strict "purdah" is observed even among relatives; bedrooms are used for all activities; both the drawing and the dining rooms are simple and functional; cooking mostly is done by women of the house in the kitchen which is efficient; bathroom usually has a separate ablution space; study is present and used for offering prayers; usually an enclosed room is used as a family lounge."

MEMONS: Speaking a dialect of the gujerati language, they come from western part of India. "Privacy is necessary and mild *purdah* is observed. Bedrooms are used only for sleeping; drawing room is usually large with simple furniture and is mostly used by men; lounge or the family room is used mainly by the members of the family and is also used as a living room for women on occasions; the kitchen is small and most of the work is done on the kitchen floor or the corridor outside. They prefer to perform their chores while sitting on the floor as they like to chat and make the tasks more enjoyable; the bathrooms are kept absolutely clean."
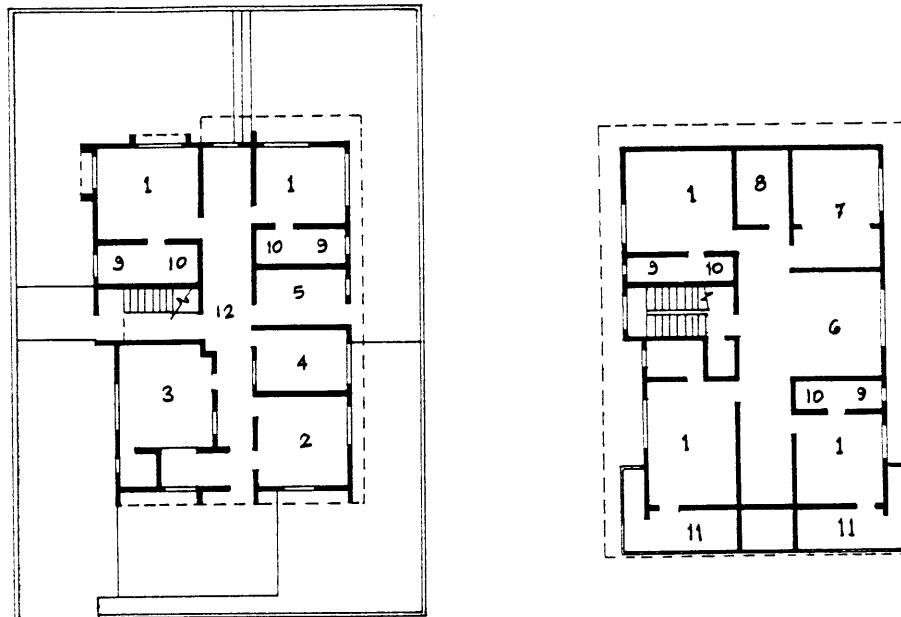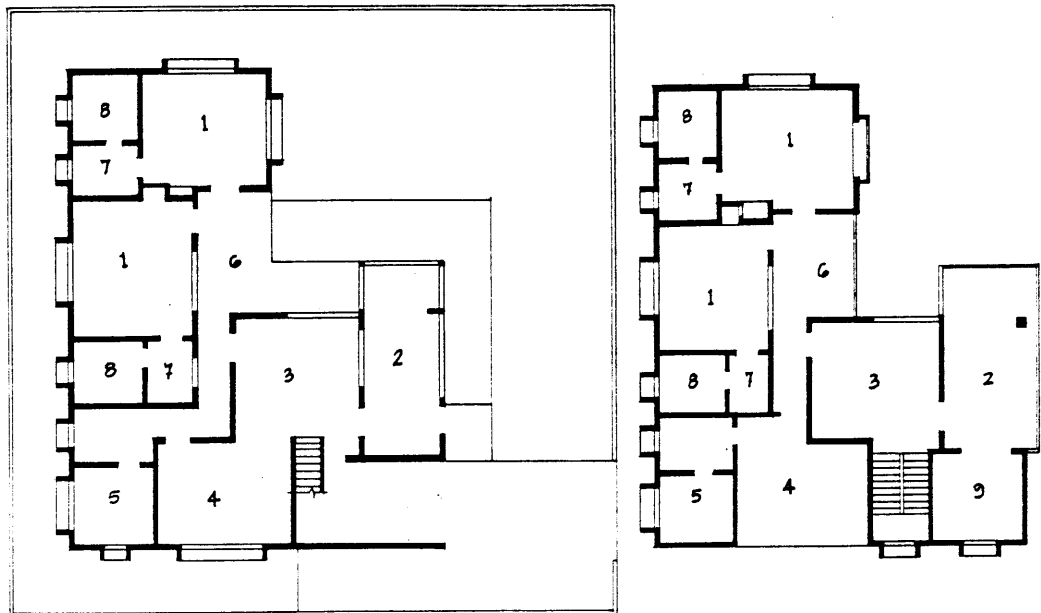

1. bedroom
2. drawing/living room
3. dining room
4. family dining (meals taken on the floor here)
5. kitchen
6. family lounge
7. multipurpose room (usually used by ladies)
8. store
9. bathroom
10. dressing room
11. balcony
12. corridor (treated as work space by women)

house of a Memon family

fig 46

BOHRAS: Like Memons the Bohras speak gujerati and come from the state of Gujerat.

"Privacy is very essential but not much care is given for *purdah*. Bedrooms are used only for sleeping; living room is of moderate size and is used mainly by visitors but may be used by the family members as well; dining room is again simple and traditionally floor seating is preferred since all persons present during mealtime eat out of one huge platter. Many families now have a small dining table and the platter is laid on the floor on special occasions; kitchen is simple and efficient; functional bathrooms preferably with no bath tubs; a small guest room, if possible; a small study, if possible; a large family room with extensive floor seating is always in use."
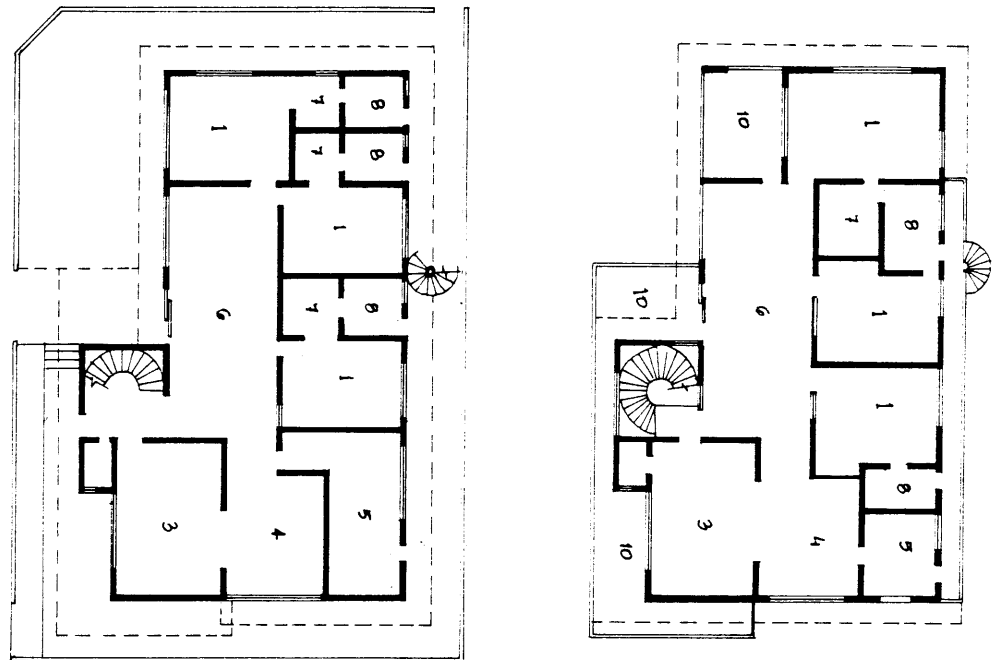

1. bedroom
2. lounge (floor seating arrangement)
3. drawing/living room
4. dining room
5. kitchen cum store
6. family lounge
7. dressing room
8. bathroom
9. lounge (used for offering prayers)

house of a Bohra family   *fig 47*

MIGRANTS FROM DELHI: Mostly urdu speaking but speak a fair bit of punjabi as well.

"Strict *purdah* is observed; along with its use as a sleeping space bedrooms are used for entertaining female relatives; drawing room is of medium size and used only when guests are around and is out of bounds for family members and is kept locked; dining room is used both by guests and the family, but to a lesser extent; kitchen is big enough to be used by the family for eating meals; small bathrooms; small study is rarely present but does exist as some people are deeply involved in literature; a large family room is extensively used for practically all activities."

1. bedroom
2. entrance lobby
3. drawing/living room
4. dining room
5. kitchen
6. family room
7. dressing room
8. bathroom
9. w.c.
10. balcony.

house of a family from Delhi   *fig 48*

MIGRANTS FROM UTTAR PRADESH (U.P.): speak the urdu language "Privacy is essential but *purdah* is not observed; small and functional bedrooms; drawing room is large and sophisticatedly decorated; dining room is for everyday use; kitchen is spacious and efficient; large study with stacks of books, more of a library; large family room extensively used for entertaining as well."
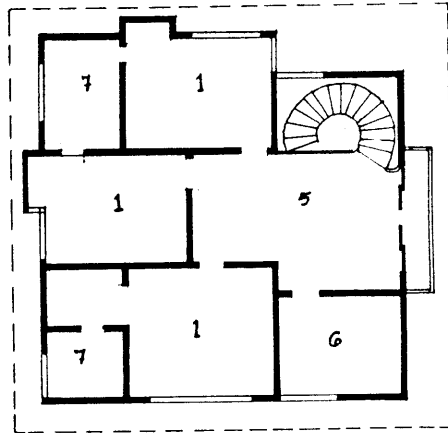
1. bedroom
2. drawing/living room
3. dining room
4. kitchen
5. lounge
6. study
7. bathroom
8. servant's room

house of a UP family
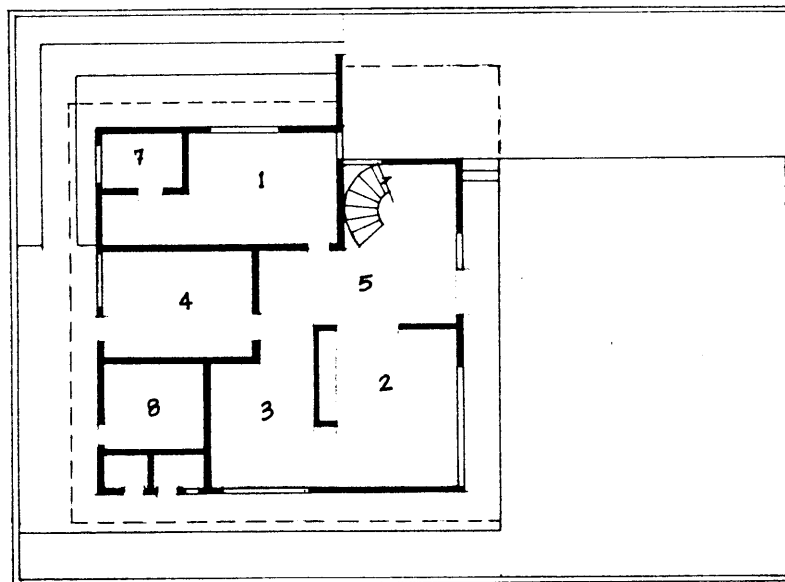
fig 49

PUNJABIS: speak the punjabi language.

"Very mild *purdah;* bedrooms are large and used for various activities; large drawing and dining rooms are profusely decorated and kept locked, is opened only for formal guests; large kitchen; bathroom also is large, often the master bed has two attached baths; small study; family room, large and ostentatious."
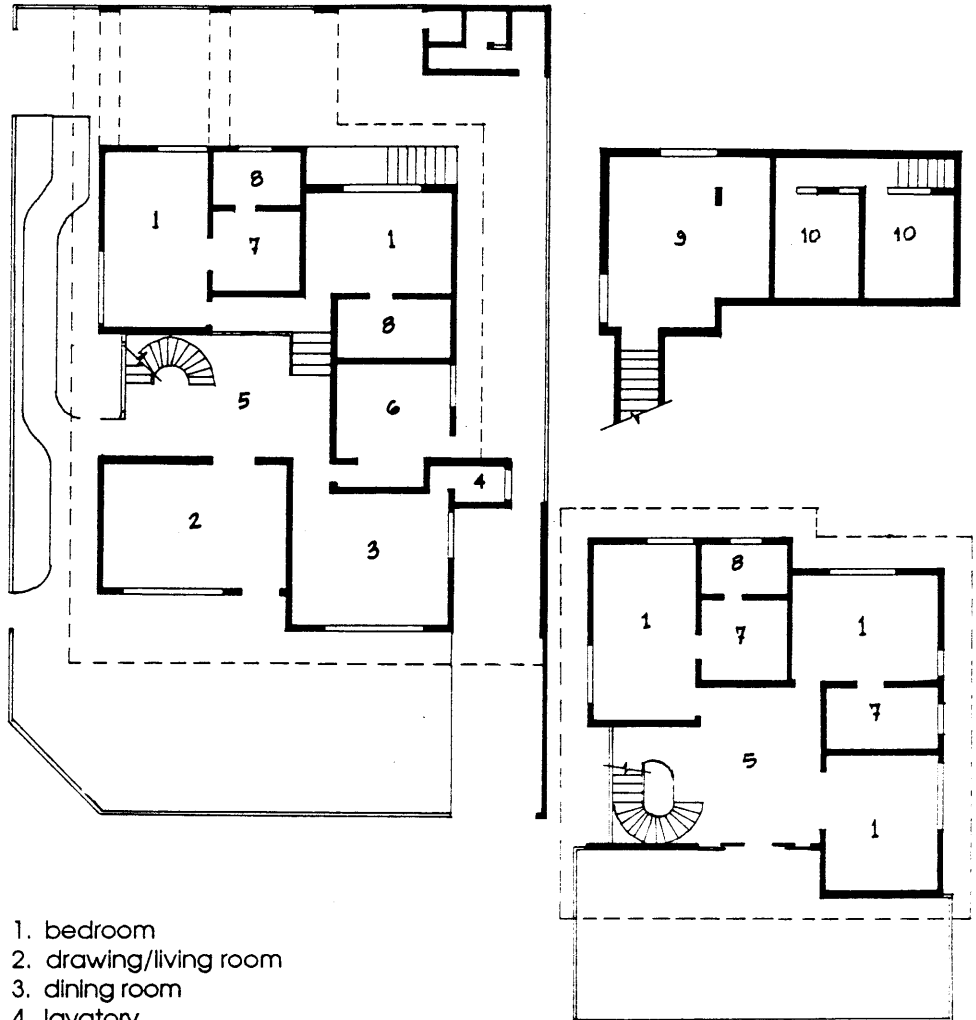
1. bedroom
2. drawing/living room
3. dining room
4. lavatory
5. family lounge
6. kitchen
7. dressing room
8. bathroom
9. store
10. servants' area

house of a Punjabi family

fig 50

These findings when applied to the study of settlements in this thesis bring forth the similarities of space configuration and usage within the same ethnic group with variation in spatial (material) quality. This indicates that the class differences result in the variation of spatial quality and not changes of functions, from upper to lower or lower to upper class. Consequently, the space is the same, across the classes of one ethnic group; it has a corresponding purpose of existence, and the function too is comparable; it is only the material quality including the "envelope" which spins a hazy web of distinction.

Preceding terse descriptions tend to be a little myopic as it gives a totally physical account of spaces and does not spell out the probe into the *raison d' être* of these particular realizations. The implications present and the understanding of the cultural manifestations in the houses of migrants have to be "read between lines". While the informations expanded are in expressibly valuable, a lack of pronounced and orderly inquiry is detected. The inclusion of the above exploration brings clarity and meaning by alluding to the plans and layouts, designed for his various clients. The presence of differences in houses between communities and the similarities within the community are made quite visible. The inferences then become beneficial for the inquiry in this thesis.

NOTES & REFERENCES

1.Levitas in *On Streets* p.227
2. Rizki, Zameer Mirza, *Society and Architects*. Words in parentheses are mine.
3. King, *The Bungalow - the Production of a Global Culture*.
4. ibid. p. 1
5. Khan, Masood, *Informal Architecture: An Examination of Some Adaptive Processes in Architectural Traditions*, p. 66.
6. King, A op. cit. pp. 35.
 bangla is a popular contemporary word for bungalow. For details on the evolution of the term see King, *The Bungalow* .....
7. Rizki's has penned his study in Urdu and the way it appears here is an attempted translation by Amir Choudhry (student of Architecture, D.C.E.T., Karachi) and the author.
8. also living room

COMMENTS

Communal-based housing implies the translation of social boundaries into spatial configurations.[1] Ethnicity is a strong factor in the organization of Karachi's *Katchi Abadis* and it can be deducted that social boundaries have been translated to spatial boundaries at the level of unplanned housing. It has created areas in which a minority exists as a majority maintaining sub-cultural identity, and a pattern of life based upon pre-migration social norms. More so it has created a replica of the refugees' former homes. The concentration and segregation of groups in homogeneous clusters did not establish ethnic divisions but perpetuated the natural tendencies of sub-groups to assimilate in a common place.

As is evident from the discussion the socio-cultural traits continued to be visible in their physical environment. It is also clear that the issues of privacy and *purdah* were vital governing facets in the actual situation and application of the courtyard(s) in the UP and Delhi houses. As a response to the strong *purdah* system enforced upon the women from Delhi, by their society, the conception of two courtyards emerged. Whereas in the other case, as the imposition of *purdah* is not strict but privacy is essential, only one courtyard serving as the main body of the house exists. As such, architecturally, *purdah* is treated as total segregation and privacy as an ability to "shut off" certain areas as and when required. The degree of privacy required by different communities varies and this variation is also reflected architecturally in houses by the amount of flexibility in the utilization, function and context of spaces.

In the case of the Kumbhars, it is their profession which is the guiding factor in the evolution of their kind of communal living; and of course, their profession stems from their ethnic base. The advantage of having a common

place for work and home supports both the parties - the employer and the employees. The occupation of the Kumbhars more than any other social factor has influenced their pattern of life.

The architect's account and his layouts, whenever these could be found, highlight similar principles in the location of spaces in relation to their purposes. Spatial quality varies but the common denominator of function remains. As the income group changes across the status ladder the quality and size of the area modifies but its rationale and meaning remain undeviated.

NOTES & REFERENCES

1. Southall, A. Urban Anthropology: Cross-Cultural Studies of Urbanization, pp. 251-286

ethnicity
THE PERSISTENT THEME
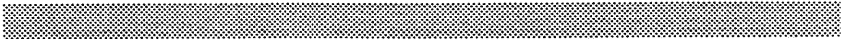
REFLECTIVE IMPRESSIONS

Spatial definition, spatial order, or spatial configuration, (whichever term one prefers) is the most striking means by which the existence of cultural differences between social formations or groups can be recognized. Spatial configuration appears as a part of culture, as it presents itself to be based on "generic principles of some kind."[1] Similarity in characteristics of spatial themes that are reproduced appear throughout the social grouping as repetition, in what is recognized as ethnicity in space. Ethnicity then is an "enlarged sense of kin, a feeling of belonging beyond purposive striving or fleeting attachments"[2], and in addition each ethnic group has its own identity in spatial themes.

Human beings put up with all types of discomfort to maintain the pattern of culture that gives meaning to their lives, even if they have to adapt the pattern to their habitat. By heeding the organizational structures that underlie the culture that influence house patterns, designers may be more successful in their creations. "The view of cultures as adaptive systems directs one's attention away from relatively trivial surface phenomena and toward the continuous interaction among technological, political and religious, etc. structures in creating social and spatial forms."[3] Thus it does not direct towards an approach of "determinate relationship" but impresses the focus upon processes of interaction.

Form and use of environment or physical spaces occur within a cultural context which is attributed to the relationship between physical environment and human behaviour. Discerning the influence of the past on the existing which perpetuates or continues, is a two dimensional process involving both the physical and the cultural (or psychological). It is this process that constitutes the duality of change and continuity, which is the

force behind dynamic stability. The evidence of which is the occurrence of modifications in the built form, but these modifications may be due to other reasons (eg. economic, climatic, unavailability of materials, etc.), and not necessarily cultural. It is only when physical change is accompanied by change in attitude and values that a permanent change is etched. Actions and events occur in the present, even when directed by future intentions or informed by awareness of the past, which also means that one thinks in the present but in response to the past and in reference to the future.

The principle dimensions of change are through the relationships of nature and society, experience and knowledge and function and meaning. "The most significant in their influence on architecture are environmental and cultural which define shelter and symbol respectively. The former does so through purpose and the latter through meaning."[4] This happens as a result of the dependence on the forces of nature and culture's dependence on the forces of society. The former is dictated by rules of nature while the latter is established by the preferences of the people. This duality does not imply a hierarchical relationship, but an interactive one. The resultant built form is a synthesis of the function and the meaning or shelter and symbol, of the physical and the spiritual. The physical aspects of comfort and security are measures for assessing the environmental forces. But more important the symbol's presence and success is adjudged by how significantly the values, the traditions, and the recognizable characteristics are honoured which reflect cultural meaning.

The underlying values and meanings retain their importance through time; their resistance to change establishes their continued validity. The traditions of a society, which may not be consciously safeguarded can never be deliberately replaced as they are internalized by and invaluable to the people. To replace is to uproot and lose all attachments and stability but to modify is to spurt a stem from the embedded roots. In which case the underlying meanings are reflected through the various stems whose "sizes and twigs" may differ.

For anthropologists like Lévi-Strauss spatial organization is in some sense a product of social structure. This has been a major concern for many researchers in varied fields which has evoked a new interdisciplinary interest in the study of space and culture. Structuralism propogates a philosophic aim as well as methodology. The aim is to project the concept of structure in such a way as to show that the sources of social behaviour lie in the social or the ethnic group itself and the particular form it takes. The anthropological evidence helps formulate certain requirements of a theory of space. Firstly, spatial patterns must be described and analyzed; secondly, they must account for broad and fundamental variations in morphological types (eg. very closed to open, hierarchical to non-hierarchical etc.); thirdly, they must account for basic differences in the ways in which space fits into the rest of the social system, ie. a concern for social meaning invested in space. The base established, thus, is that which within its descriptive realm is able to narrate systems with fundamental morphological divergences and systems which vary in order and meaning.[5]

Concepts of privacy are cultural principles with physical expressions that can be identified and made explicit. Communities reflect culturally distinctive styles of restricting the entrance to a private place. By comparing the cross-cultural expressions of public and private places, important cultural markers and corresponding cultural rules emerge. The houses in Karachi as based on evolution from different regions of the Indo Pak sub-continent delineate a common concept of "seclusion" and "segregation". This abstraction is an outcome of the conviction of *purdah*. The degree of segregation vary according to the family's ethnic belonging and identity.

The case studies have looked at spontaneous communities which generally exhibit a more traditional kind of settlement pattern. An intimate relationship between the social structure and the physical structure of the communities is quite apparent. Their social structure is reflected in their settlement pattern; they are not random assortment of houses, but strong groupings made up of relatives and fellow ethnics. They maintain a well knit and

cohesive social structure of their own based on kinship and ethnic identity.

In a large metropolis like Karachi, which exhibits trans-cultural represen-
tation in all classes of society, similarities exist in the upholding of social
norms and values. These shared values, under the wider umbrella of Islam,
are re-interpreted according to the beliefs of various communities and
ethnic groups. Under the influence of the region and being "impressed" by
other religious communities, the ethnic groups consequently reflect modi-
fied versions of the broader religiously-embedded values. The manifesta-
tions of these values in the life-style of the different communities are echoed
in their physical settings which makes the dissimilarities, though subtle,
visible.

The differences in the appearance of houses of the rich and the poor
obviously exist as the resultant physical and architectural features are an
outcome of economic, political, technological and of course socio-cultural
processes. But it is the interiors of the houses which tend to define more
clearly ideological spaces, ie. the order and relations that are continually re-
affirmed by use. The exteriors on the other hand tend to define transactional
or "treated" spaces. That is to say the interior spaces show a continuum,
whereas on the exterior by contrast, stylistic changes are seen. A variation
in the plan of the house does not, however, always imply a change in the
basic structure of the house or the household. Traditional courtyard houses
did give way to outward-looking bungalows as a sign of colonization and
westernization, but it did not deter the locals or the natives from perpetuat-
ing their cultural inclinations. These houses of course stood "on their own"
where as traditional houses are seen as a continuous organically mush-
roomed spaces, where the physical proximity also breeds kinship affinity,
or vice-versa. As has been discussed and illustrated, the present bungalows
and middle-income houses through their very spatial configuration con-
tinue to signify the persistence of the importance of their traditionally-
embedded values.

Adoption of westernized eating and dressing habits and technology does not mean eradicating one's values and norms, as the former are mere temporal modifications. When the "banglas" have separate dining rooms equipped with dining table and silverware, this does not mean that people change their diet. *Chappati* which can only be eaten by hand is still the main component of the meals. Having a washing machine does not indicate a revolution in the lifestyle but serves as a tool, because the role of women does not change and they are required to carry out the same duties, and their domain too remains the same - limited or restricted. Thus the dictates of privacy are unlikely to become redundant, with time or the so-called "westernization" or "modernization". According to modern concepts, where dining and living rooms are combined, the normal routine of the household has to be altered in the presence of visitors. If privacy is not sufficiently catered for in an already built apartment or house, physical alterations are undertaken to fulfil that requirement of the resident. This is most likely to result in a permanent division of the drawing and dining rooms. These kinds of adaptations of prevailing requirements serve to under score for the consistent underlying traditional values.

As the thesis has illustrated, there is a correspondence between ethnic groups and spatial domains; and the dynamics of spatial behaviour is concerned with maintaining this relationship. Space has and develops social meaning only when identified with a particular group, or else one cannot explain the varying spatial quality in moving from one neighbourhood to the other of the same economic order.

This study does not stand as a complete and finished piece of work, rather it suggests a wide number of themes which can be grasped for further exploration, specially within the geographical area which it considered. The paucity of information and lack of precedent of this genre of investigation renders this initiation, salient and significant. It is hoped that this contribution will illuminate the course for future congeneric inquiries and serve as

a resource for a splendrous vista in the field of the study of cultural and ethnic influences on built form.

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1. Hillier, B. *The Social Logic of Space*, p. 27.
2. Saran, P. & Eames, E., The New Ethnics, p. 7
3. Levitas, G., "Anthropology and Sociology of Streets", in Anderson, S. ed., *on Streets*, p. 227.
4. Rudd, J.W., Continuity and Change in Built Form and Culture Research, Conference proceedings, 1986. p.108.
5. op.cit. Hillier, B., p. 5.

■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ After completing the exercise and viewing the entire product in retrospect, it is realized that although the information, data, observations, analyses and reflections put forth embody fruitful material and efforts, the study is not formally conclusive. In such a brief study this was not possible. Further exhaustive investigations would be necessary to reach certain results, but not an end. This study will serve its purpose if it has suggested the validity of its approach and generated directions for future research.

Although firm conclusions cannot be reached, certain important influencing factors can be extracted from the section on "Reflections". By using anthropological approaches to analyze built form, issues which architects tend to overlook, specially in connection with people, assume new significance. When one creates for them it is but logical to incorporate the users' requirements. Architects do take into account these requirements, but they are dealt with more in the physical sense rather than perceiving human beings as cultural beings. Many housing projects today run into high risks of unoccupancy, not only because of economic reasons, but due to cultural incompatibility. Thus designers should not work in isolation, rather the domestic environment has to be a "product" of "interactions". The social implications of their work are extremely vital.

This study has tried to step back and look at these issues from a cultural perspective on the grounds that it is relevant to built form. For the author this subject is an essential one. It becomes more challenging in the modern world of today not to be uprooted by material well being, but to be incessantly aware of the roots from which one can draw strength, and which makes one what one is. Some might feel that this thesis has laid more than the required emphasis on culture and ignored some of the architectural issues, but this accent is partly deliberate, so as to drive home its relevance. Inquiry consists of knowing what one wishes to ask - but the answers in the end are not always very clear. Nevertheless, in this case they have brought an awareness that the physical, the built form; and the spiritual, the culture, cannot thrive in isolation.

GLOSSARY

abadi   a settlement

baithak   a room or place for public male gathering; entertaining
                     room for males in a traditional house

bangla   indigenous term for bungalow

braderi   group of families having a common ancestor; clan

chappati   round wheat bread or pancake usually eaten with curry

charpai   wood-frame bed interwoven with jute rope

dalan   verandah with colonnaded on one longitudinal side which
                     faces the courtyard

jhuggi   makeshift huts

katcha   constructed from mud, stones, reed matting, tin sheets, jute,

katchi abadi   impermanent or squatter settlement

pakka   structure with reinforced cement concrete roofs

purdah   curtain or veil

sehan   an open courtyard

semi-pakka   structures with concrete block walls and roofs of any
                     material but RCC

muhajir   migrants (here migrants from India who came to Pakistan,
                     following partition)

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SOURCES OF ILLUSTRATIONS

figs 04-10	Design Bureau, Karachi Development Authority
figs 11-13	**Linden et al.** *Between Basti Dwellers and Bureaucrats*
figs 14-16	Rural and Urban Planning thoughts vol viii nos. 1 and 2
fig 17	Rural and Urban Planning thoughts
fig 18	**Linden**, *The Bastis of Karachi: Types and Dynamics*
figs 19, 30 & 39	Katchi Abadi Directorate, Karachi
figs 40-45	Rizki & Co.

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