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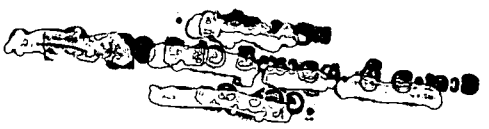
A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF TRADITIONAL AND CONTEMPORARY SETTLEMENT PATTERNS IN SRI LANKA WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO KURUNEGALA DISTRICT



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JULY 1998

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"The past is dead and it can't be revived. That which can't change becomes inert and dies. That which changes survive. The past survive in us because we have been changing. We can perpetuate the past only by changing ourselves and our heritage."

Martin Wickramasinghe

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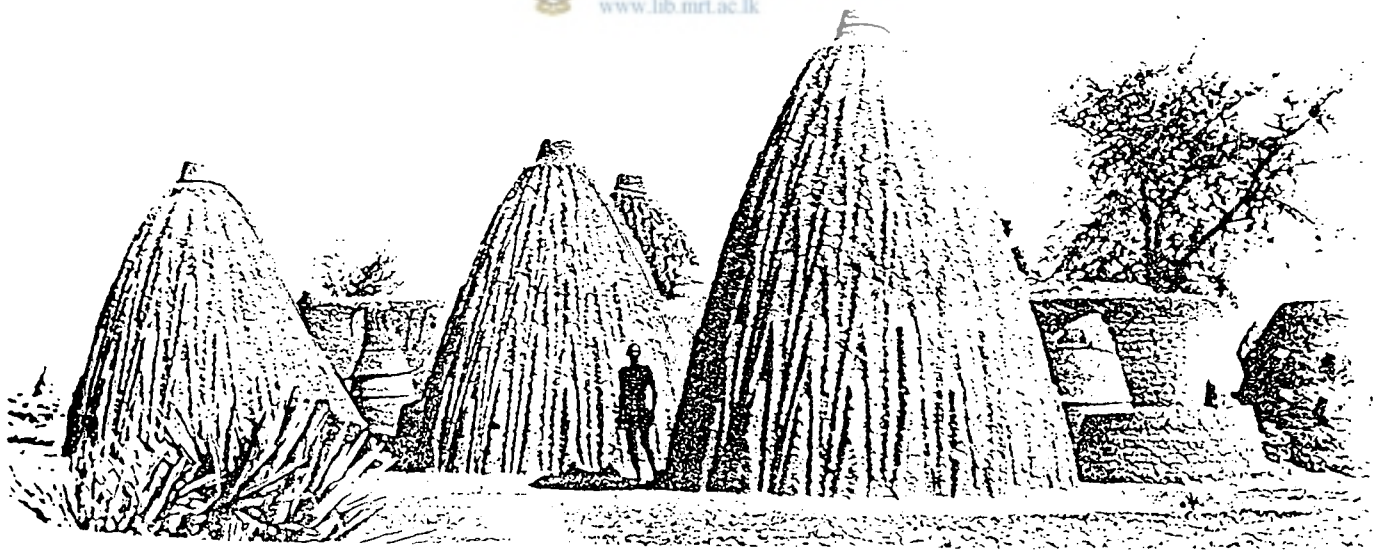

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ABSTRACT

The concept of a settlement is the place for living together as a group. Therefore the arrangement of the settlement can be identified as the altered environment to ensure the spread of development efforts and the quality of life in a more. complex manner for a large group of people. In Sri Lanka , traditional settlements were able to fulfilled these objectives as a community. They built their house on a trial and error basis to satisfy their requirements noted on their own imagination and their own calculations. Traditional house is an architectural solution without professional architects. Traditional house was an answer to the multi faceted social , environmental and technological forces of their own societies. Continuity of the form also have made a reasonable contribution evolving repetitions. Thus the whole settlement has a certain character according to their living pattern since , social , technological and environmental factors are localized. The house type varies from society to society, bringing in regional variations. The need for housing existed for ages but became a problem when it was unable to fulfill user needs and desires satisfactorily for the solution to the issue of housing in the resent past. As a result new form of housing have been forced into rural setting disregarding the continuity of tradition.

Because of the magnitude of the problem and its sympathetic nature , eventually forced housing projects introduced to solve that problem. In this case the government becomes the paying client to the architect and the actual user becomes the voiceless user group. They have no chance to sound their actual needs. Therefore forced house does not fulfill the social environmental and technological needs of the rural society. Therefore it is important to understand problems arisen in forced settlements specially in comparison with traditional settlements which was extremely compatible.

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