Dwelling on the Colonial Dichotomy:
Comparison of Elite Colonial Dwellings in Colombo, Sri Lanka and Brisbane, Australia
Pamudu Mayanthika Tennakoon
Bachelor of Arts

A thesis submitted for the degree of Master of Philosophy at The University of Queensland in 2018
School of Architecture
Abstract

This thesis compares fluctuating views of colonial dwellings in nineteenth and twentieth century Colombo (Sri Lanka), and Brisbane (Australia). It explores how dwellings built for elites of the colonial period have undergone changes over time; in response to changes in societies, and expectations of social status. Through the comparison of two distinct former colonies, a transient and a settler colony, this thesis will highlight how within colonial dwellings, colonial histories are viewed and reflected in contemporary society.

Elites of the countries monopolised associations with, set expectations for, and established standards in colonial dwellings: Sri Lanka experienced a drastic change in ruling class post-independence, while within Australia, the social hierarchy of the settlers evolved gradually. The domestic architecture reflects this continuous evolution of postcolonial society in relation to reminders of the colonial past. Colonial dwellings of Brisbane have played an integral role in the development of a regional architectural type; in Colombo colonial dwellings continued to influence postcolonial architecture and society.

How did colonial dwellings relate to the lifestyles of elites? How are colonial dwellings being occupied and used in (post) colonial as well as contemporary society? How do contemporary iterations of colonial dwellings view their (colonial) histories? The comparison of colonial dwellings, parallel to changes in societies, and the evaluation of the structure, people, use, and motivations, will answer these questions.

Secondary research supplemented by novels, memoirs, and photographs will create a comprehensive foundation regarding dwellings of the colonial era; while case studies support the arguments regarding contemporary perceptions and uses. The narratives presented through interviews will provide raw insights into the mindset of the users of the dwelling, allowing this thesis to view their actions with regards to the dwellings and the motivations behind them.

Thus, this thesis investigates how the structural and social differences present in Colombo and Brisbane are reflected in colonial dwellings as they evolved through the (post) colonial era to the present.
Declaration by author

This thesis is composed of my original work, and contains no material previously published or written by another person except where due reference has been made in the text. I have clearly stated the contribution by others to jointly-authored works that I have included in my thesis.

I have clearly stated the contribution of others to my thesis as a whole, including statistical assistance, survey design, data analysis, significant technical procedures, professional editorial advice, financial support and any other original research work used or reported in my thesis. The content of my thesis is the result of work I have carried out since the commencement of my higher degree by research candidature and does not include a substantial part of work that has been submitted to qualify for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution. I have clearly stated which parts of my thesis, if any, have been submitted to qualify for another award.

I acknowledge that an electronic copy of my thesis must be lodged with the University Library and, subject to the policy and procedures of The University of Queensland, the thesis be made available for research and study in accordance with the Copyright Act 1968 unless a period of embargo has been approved by the Dean of the Graduate School.

I acknowledge that copyright of all material contained in my thesis resides with the copyright holder(s) of that material. Where appropriate I have obtained copyright permission from the copyright holder to reproduce material in this thesis and have sought permission from co-authors for any jointly authored works included in the thesis.
Publications included in this thesis

No publications included.

Submitted manuscripts included in this thesis

No manuscripts submitted for publication.

Other publications during candidature

Conference Proceedings:

Contributions by others to the thesis

The architectural plans presented in this thesis were drafted by Chethani Gunawardena and Nirasha Fernando.

Statement of parts of the thesis submitted to qualify for the award of another degree

None.

Research Involving Human or Animal Subjects

Project Number: 20161001

Name of responsible committee: School of Architecture Research and Ethics Committee
Acknowledgements

I would like to thank:
My supervisors Dr Pedro Guedes, Dr Geoff Ginn, and Dr Deborah van der Plaat for their advice, criticism, time, and support through this process.

Professional editor, Aisha Nazim, provided copyediting services, according to the guidelines laid out in the university-endorsed national ‘Guidelines for editing research theses’.

Financial support

This research was supported by an Australian Government Research Training Program Scholarship.
Keywords

colonial architecture, Colombo, Brisbane, colonial, architecture, bungalow, queenslander

Australian and New Zealand Standard Research Classifications (ANZSRC)

ANZSRC code: 120199, Architecture not elsewhere classified, 100%

Fields of Research (FoR) Classification

FoR code: 1201, Architecture, 100%
Table of Contents

ABSTRACT 2

LIST OF FIGURES & TABLES 12

INTRODUCTION 17

BACKGROUND ON POSTCOLONIAL ARCHITECTURE 17
BASIS FOR COMPARISON 19
THE CURRENT LITERATURE 20
THE OWNERS – THE ELITES 22
THE DWELLING 23
METHODS 24
CHAPTER CONTENT 26
ARGUMENT 27

CHAPTER 1: THE HISTORY AMONG THE ELITES 29

INTRODUCTION 29
COLOMBO, SRI LANKA 29
THE EVOLUTION OF THE ELITES 32
THE IMPORTANCE OF BUILT FORM 36
INFLUENCES OF THE COLONIAL DWELLING IN POSTCOLONIAL STYLE 38

BRISBANE, AUSTRALIA 40
THE EVOLUTION OF THE ELITES 42
THE IMPORTANCE OF BUILT FORM 44
INFLUENCES OF THE COLONIAL DWELLING IN POSTCOLONIAL STYLE 47
CONCLUSION 48

CHAPTER 2: THE DWELLING 50

INTRODUCTION 50
LOCATION 50
ARCHITECTURAL TYPE 52
COLOMBO, SRI LANKA 52
BRISBANE, AUSTRALIA 54
FEATURES 56
THE SPACE IN BETWEEN 56
ENTERTAINING GUESTS 59
FURNISHINGS 62
SERVANTS 65
**INTRODUCTION**  
[I08]

**HANWORTH HOUSE**  
[108]
*History*  
109
*Decision to Change*  
110
*Recent Changes*  
114
*Current Structure*  
116
*Analysis*  
118

**MIEGUNYAH**  
[118]
*History*  
119
*Decision to Change*  
120
*Recent Changes*  
121
*Current Structure*  
123
*Analysis*  
125

**NEWSTEAD HOUSE**  
[126]
*History*  
127
*Decision to Change*  
128
*Recent Changes*  
132
*Current Structure*  
133
*Analysis*  
136

**ESKGROVE**  
[136]
*History*  
137
*Decision to Change*  
138
*Recent Changes*  
139
*Current Structure*  
143
*Analysis*  
144

**HUGHESVILLE**  
[144]
*History*  
145
*Decision to Change*  
146
*Recent Changes*  
146
*Current Structure*  
149
*Analysis*  
150

**CONCLUSION**  
[151]

**CHAPTER 5: ACROSS COLONIAL OCEANS**  
[153]

**INTRODUCTION**  
[153]

**Contemporary Understandings of the Colonial**  
[153]

**External Factors of Significance**  
[154]

**Colombo, Sri Lanka**  
[154]
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BRISBANE, AUSTRALIA</td>
<td>157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE HISTORIES</td>
<td>158</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE METHODS</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DWELLINGS TODAY</td>
<td>161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COLOMBO, SRI LANKA</td>
<td>161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BRISBANE, AUSTRALIA</td>
<td>163</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONCLUSION</td>
<td>165</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONCLUSION</td>
<td>167</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMPARATIVE STUDY</td>
<td>167</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONTEMPORARY ITERATIONS</td>
<td>168</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIEW OF THE COLONIAL PASTS</td>
<td>169</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
<td>171</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDICES</td>
<td>180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX 1 – ETHICAL CLEARANCE</td>
<td>180</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LIST OF FIGURES & TABLES

Figure 1 “Mr and Mrs Peiris and views of their Resident, ‘Rippleworth, 1905.’” Robin Jones, “Furnished in English Style: Anglicization of Local Elite Domestic Interiors in Ceylon (Sri Lanka) c. 1850 to 1910,” *South Asian Studies* 20:1 (2004): 52.................................34

Figure 2 “The Members of the Orient Club, Colombo.” *Twentieth Century Impressions of Ceylon*. Ed. Arnold Wright. 1907: 913....................................................................................35

Figure 3 “Alfred House, interior view.” Anoma Pieris, *Architecture and Nationalism in Sri Lanka: The Trouser Under the Cloth* (Hoboken: Taylor and Francis, 2012), 52.............................37

Figure 4 Hume Family "Lord Lamington's baby", c1898.Old Government House, Brisbane, State Library of Queensland.............................................................................................................41

Figure 5 “Family members stand on the verandah of a Queenslander house in Toowoomba, Queensland, ca. 1870.” State Library of Queensland.........................................................43

Figure 6 “Front view of Queenslander with family.” Ian Evans, *The Queensland House: History and Conservation* (Mullumbimby: Flannel Flower, 2001), 82.................................46

https://thuppahi.wordpress.com/2013/02/20/calverly-house-in-old-colombo/.......................57

Figure 8 “Dining room verandah, Government House, Brisbane, October 1907,” State Library of Queensland......................................................................................................................58

Figure 9 “Living Room of Calverly House - early 19th century.” de Soysa, "Calverly House.".................................................................................................................................59

Figure 10 “Dining Room, Alfred House c.1903.” Robin Jones, “Furnished in English Style: Anglicization of Local Elite Domestic Interiors in Ceylon (Sri Lanka) c. 1850 to 1910,” *South Asian Studies* 20:1 (2004): 48.........................................................60

Figure 11 “Drawing room at Stanley Hall during E. G. Blume's occupancy, ca. 1910,” State Library of Queensland.....................................................................................................................61

Figure 12 “Regina walavva, wedding pavilion.” Anoma Pieris, *Architecture and Nationalism in Sri Lanka: The Trouser Under the Cloth* (Hoboken: Taylor and Francis, 2012), 82........63

Figure 13 “Drawing room filled with cane and bamboo furniture, Bowen 1890s.” Rod Fisher and Brian Crozier, *The Queensland House – a roof over our heads* (Brisbane: Queensland Museum, 1994), 86........................................................................................................65

Figure 14 “Front view of porch, garden, and rebuilt bungalow, “Maniumpathy Boutique Hotel, Colombo, 2016. ..................................................................................................................73
Figure 15 “Ground Floor plan of Maniumpathy Boutique Hotel,” drawn by Chethani Gunawardena and Nirasha Fernando, (derived from the plan drawn by M.I.C.D. Associates in 2014, 2018).

Figure 16 “Interior view of Formal Dining Room containing the table bought by Adrian,” Maniumpathy Boutique Hotel, Colombo, 2016.

Figure 17 “Interior view of Courtyard and Dining Area,” Maniumpathy Boutique Hotel, Colombo, 2016.

Figure 18 “Interior view of Hotel Room,” Maniumpathy Boutique Hotel, Colombo, 2016.

Figure 19 “Front view of Tintagel Hotel and Entrance,” Tintagel Hotel, Colombo, 2016.

Figure 20 “Interior view of Living Room containing Contemporary Furniture,” Tintagel Hotel, Colombo, 2016.

Figure 21 “View of renovated first floor balcony where SWRD Bandaranaike was murdered,” Tintagel Hotel, Colombo, 2016.

Figure 22 “Interior view of Formal Dining Room and Restaurant,” Tintagel Hotel, Colombo, 2016.

Figure 23 “Front view of Boralugoda Maha Gedera 1991" unpublished photograph by Vijith Gunawardena, 1991.

Figure 24 "Family photograph in front of Boralugoda Maha Gedera circa. 1995," unpublished photograph by Vijith Gunawardena, circa 1995.

Figure 25 “Front view of Boralugoda Maha Gedera,” Boralugoda Maha Gedera, Colombo, 2016.

Figure 26 “View of side Verandah,” Boralugoda Maha Gedera, Colombo, 2016.

Figure 27 “Ground Floor plan of Boralugoda Maha Gedera,” drawn by Chethani Gunawardena, (derived from measurements by the owners, 2018).

Figure 28 “First Floor plan of Boralugoda Maha Gedera,” drawn by Chethani Gunawardena, (derived from measurements by the owners, 2018).

Figure 29 “View of Front porch and Verandah,” Boralugoda Maha Gedera, Colombo, 2016.

Figure 30 “Whist Bungalow,” Anoma Pieris, Architecture and Nationalism in Sri Lanka: The Trouser Under the Cloth (Hoboken: Taylor and Francis, 2012), 52.

Figure 31 “Front View of Pradeepa Hall from the entrance,” Pradeepa Hall, Colombo, 2016.

Figure 32 “Ground Floor plan of Pradeepa Hall,” drawn by Chethani Gunawardena, (derived from the visit to the property by Pamudu Tennakoon, 2018).
Figure 33 “Interior view of the event hall set up for an event,” Pradeepa Hall, Colombo, 2016. .................................................................................................................................................................................. 97
Figure 34 “Rear view,” Pradeepa Hall, Colombo, 2016. .................................................................................................................................................................................. 98
Figure 35 “Rear view of The Lighthouse Bungalow,” The Lighthouse, Colombo. 2016. .......................................................................................................................... 100
Figure 36 “Ground Floor plan of The Lighthouse,” drawn by Chethani Gunawardena and Nirasha Fernando (derived from the plan drawn by the 06th Engineering Services Regiment (V) in 2014, 2018). ........................................................................................................................................................................................................... 101
Figure 37 “First Floor plan of The Lighthouse,” drawn by Chethani Gunawardena and Nirasha Fernando (derived from the plan drawn by the 06th Engineering Services Regiment (V) in 2014, 2018). .................................................................................................................................................................................. 102
Figure 38 “View of later addition - event space,” The Lighthouse, Colombo. 2016. .......................................................................................................................... 103
Figure 39 “Interior view of office space,” The Lighthouse, Colombo. 2016. ........................................................................................................................................................................... 104
Figure 40 “Interior view of Reference Library,” The Lighthouse, Colombo. 2016. .................................................................................................................................................................................. 105
Figure 41 “Front view of Hanworth, in Lyntton Road, East Brisbane, 1930,” State Library of Queensland. ........................................................................................................................................................................................................................................... 109
Figure 42 “Front view from drive-way,” Hanworth House, Brisbane. 2017. ........................................................................................................................................................................... 110
Figure 43 “Ground Floor plan of Hanworth House,” drawn by Chethani Gunawardena and Nirasha Fernando (derived from the drawn done by Robin Spencer Architects PTY. LTD. in 2013, 2018). .................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................. 112
Figure 44 “First Floor plan of Hanworth House,” drawn by Chethani Gunawardena and Nirasha Fernando (derived from the plan drawn by Robin Spencer Architects PTY. LTD. in 2013, 2018). .................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................. 113
Figure 45 “View of side verandah,” Hanworth House, Brisbane. 2017. .................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................. 114
Figure 46 “View of interior courtyard being set up for an event,” Hanworth House, Brisbane. 2017. .................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................. 115
Figure 47 “Eskgrove Garden with Heath Family paver,” Hanworth House, Brisbane. 2017. .................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................. 116
Figure 48 “View of bedroom with Hospice furniture,” Hanworth House, Brisbane. 2017. .................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................. 117
Figure 49 “Miegunyah,” Janet Hogan, *Historic Homes of Brisbane* (Brisbane: National Trust of Queensland), 1979, 97. .................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................. 119
Figure 50 “Front view of Miegunyah from street,” Miegunyah, Brisbane. 2017. .................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................. 120
Figure 51 “Ground Floor plan of Miegunyah,” drawn by Chethani Gunawardena and Nirasha Fernando (derived from the plan drawn by Richard Allom Architects in 1979, 2017). .................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................. 122
Figure 52 “Interior view of Lecture set up in House Museum,” Miegunyah, Brisbane. 2017. ..........124
Figure 53 “Interior view of House Museum Drawing Room display,” Miegunyah, Brisbane. 2017.................................................124
Figure 54 “Interior view of QWHA exhibition in exhibition space at Miegunyah,” Miegunyah, Brisbane. 2017.................................................125
Figure 55 “Newstead House,” Janet Hogan, Historic Homes of Brisbane (Brisbane: National Trust of Queensland), 1979, 108 .................................................126
Figure 56 “Front view of Newstead House,” Newstead House, Brisbane. 2017.................128
Figure 57 “Ground Floor plan of Newstead House,” drawn by Chethani Gunawardena and Nirasha Fernando (derived from the plan drawn by Ballard & Roesller Conservation and Architects in 1993, 2017) ........................................................................130
Figure 58 “First Floor plan of Newstead House,” drawn by Chethani Gunawardena and Nirasha Fernando (derived from the plan drawn by Ballard & Roesller Conservation and Architects in 1993, 2017) ........................................................................131
Figure 59 “Interior view of House Museum Bedroom display,” Newstead House, Brisbane. 2017.................................................................132
Figure 60 “View of basement containing information boards,” Newstead House, Brisbane. 2017.................................................................134
Figure 61 “Verandah view,” Newstead House, Brisbane. 2017.................................135
Figure 62 "Renovation of Eskgrove," unpublished photograph by Arna Harris, 2013. ......138
Figure 63 “Addition plan of Eskgrove," drawn by Chethani Gunawardena and Nirasha Fernando (derived from the plan drawn by Residential Design/Drafting in 2013, 2017).140
Figure 64 “Lower Preserved plan of Eskgrove,” drawn by Chethani Gunawardena and Nirasha Fernando (derived from the plan drawn by Residential Design/Drafting in 2013, 2017).141
Figure 65 “Front view of Eskgrove from the Road,” Eskgrove, Brisbane. 2017...............142
Figure 66 “Interior detail – decorative roof," Eskgrove, Brisbane. 2017.......................143
Figure 67 “Hughesville,” Ray Sumner, More Historic Homes of Brisbane (Brisbane: National Trust of Queensland, 1982), 112..............................145
Figure 68 “Side view of Hughesville,” Hughesville, Brisbane. 2017..............................147
Figure 69 “First Floor plan of Hughesville,” drawn by Chethani Gunawardena (derived from the plan drawn by www.realestate.com.au in 2016, 2018).148
Figure 70 “Side view of Hughesville, Hughesville,” Brisbane. 2017..............................149
Figure 71 “Interior view of office space,” Hughesville, Brisbane. 2017..............................150
INTRODUCTION

This thesis compares fluctuating views on colonial era dwellings, focusing on dwellings erected in nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in Colombo (Sri Lanka) and Brisbane (Australia); prior to becoming independent nations. It explores how dwellings built for colonial-era elites and settler elites of Colombo and Brisbane, respectively, henceforth referred to as colonial dwellings, have undergone changes in response to different lifestyles and expectation of social status. Through the comparison of Sri Lanka, where colonisers left following independence, and Australia, a penal colony where colonisers settled, this thesis highlights values associated with the colonial era and how colonial dwellings are reused. This thesis, through colonial dwellings, symbols of the colonial past, strives to compare these two distinct colonial situations and look at the (post) colonial mentality. How do the residents of colonial dwellings of Colombo and Brisbane compare and contrast in their associations to their respective colonial dwellings?

In convergence with many postcolonial nations, within Colombo and Brisbane, multiple elites have set the standards for and hence dominated the associations with colonial architecture; these elites are colonisers, locals, or settlers and vary between Colombo and Brisbane. Through the analysis of dwellings, the primary architectural spaces held by elites, it is possible to evaluate how the lifestyles of the said elites manifested in the architecture; and furthermore, how that architecture is reflected back on by contemporary society.

This thesis not only looks at the colonial period, but also uses the understanding of the colonial periods of both Colombo and Brisbane to critically view the present day. It is through a historical understanding of the social structure, the role played by architecture in portraying status, continuities, and discontinuities, that this thesis evaluates colonial dwellings and their contemporary iterations. Not only are dwellings viewed in their physicality, design, and symbolism, the space within is observed socially. How have the lifestyles lead within colonial dwellings, of Colombo and Brisbane, been moulded by the said dwellings? How have the histories of colonial dwellings influenced the positions of these dwelling in present-day society?

BACKGROUND ON POSTCOLONIAL ARCHITECTURE

The colonial influences are not merely static factors in a nation’s history, but influential factors in present society, casting their weight on many economic, political, and
social spheres. Therefore, physical reminders of this bygone era play a significant role as artefacts: one of the most influential artefacts being colonial architecture. Thus, the weight carried by this architecture is significant and quite central, not merely when looking at the social climate of postcolonial countries but on a global scale as well.

When discussing colonialism in the context of Sri Lanka and Australia, the most prominent power recounted is the British. While governing the lands that they colonised, the British influenced the existing societies of those nations. This influence is evident, for example, in British forms\(^1\) of architecture and the English language, both common in many former British colonies. Due to the expansive nature of the British Empire, colonies varied during and after British colonial rule. There existed two prominent types of colonies, labelled within this thesis as ‘settler colonies' and ‘transient colonies'; Sri Lanka and Australia represent transient and settler colonies, respectively. They embody very different colonial experiences, based on the relationships with indigenous people and the departure of the colonisers.

In transient colonies, the colonial powers were removed either by the locals or by choice of the colonial powers themselves, often a combination of both. Through this process, a clear point of ‘postcolonial’ status is established with independence either being granted or achieved. In settler colonies, where the ‘colonisers’ maintain presence and settle on the new land, conversely, the point of postcolonial becomes less clear and achieved over time. Settler colonies, due to settlement, experience a continuity of the colonial regime, which is more tangible than that of transient colonies. Though settlers physically remained, as the identities of societies evolved, settler colonies detached themselves from their colonial origins in a multitude of ways: legally, culturally, socially and economically.

Sentiments of a national identity, separate from the colonial powers, formed in both types of colonies. Yet, the colonial regime and its influences continue in both transient and settler colonies. In transient colonies, the colonial influences come through the social facets along with physical and legislative remainders of the colonial. Within settler colonies, the presence is overt and clear due to the continuous occupation by descendants of who settled. However, there exists a lack of comparison between these diverse nations of colonial pasts. This gap in literature is not limited to one field but ranges from (post) colonial theory to architecture. Thus creating the foundation for this thesis: dichotomies between transient and settler colonies, through the lens of colonial architecture.

---

\(^1\) ‘Form’ in thesis refers to architectural forms.
Basis for Comparison

This research, through the study of architecture, people, use, and motivations allow for an in-depth comparison of colonial dwellings across two cultures – two diverse colonial circumstances. We thus need to explore the different paths taken by Colombo and Brisbane, through their colonial past to their current position.

The Portuguese, Dutch, and British colonised Sri Lanka for over 400 years with independence being achieved in 1948. Australia, on the other hand began as a penal colony. The British presence originated in 1788 and the formation of the federation of colonies occurred in 1901; it was only in 1931 constitutional connections between Britain and Australia were completely removed. Within Australia existed a group of colonies and Queensland, a point of secondary punishment, was once such colony; settlement in Queensland commenced in the 1820s and self-governing colony was formed in 1859.²

Colombo, the current commercial capital of Sri Lanka, is a coastal city located in the Western province. It has acted as a port and hence a point of global contact throughout its history. However, “Colombo did not evolve through “internal” or “organic” processes. Instead, it was constructed as an element of the British Empire from “outside.”³ Colombo was created as a location of central control that could house the Governor.⁴ Brisbane following initial settlement in Queensland, conversely, grew from its origin as secondary point of punishment for convicts from Sydney; free settlement commenced in 1838.

The diversity in the colonial histories of Colombo and Brisbane are evident, as demonstrated in this Introduction and expanded in the rest of the thesis. However, there lie similarities across the two locations that create the foundation for this specific comparison. The primary similarity is the climatic conditions. Both Colombo and Brisbane differ significantly from the climatic conditions of Britain, the origin of the colonisers. These warm spaces with seasonal rainfall thus resulted in the creation of architectural types that differed from those of Britain. However, many aspects of the British home were integrated into these new dwelling types (further discussed in Chapter 2).

Another similarity lies in the uprooting of any existing social hierarchies during the colonisation process. As outlined further in Chapter 1, in Colombo, the British

² W. Ross Johnston, Brisbane, the First Thirty Years (Bowen Hills: Boolarong, 1988).
⁴ Colombo was not constructed solely by the British regime. The Portuguese and the Dutch had defined Colombo as a colonial space during their occupations. However, as demonstrated in this thesis, the British influenced the expansion of Colombo as well as granted further social mobility to the people within. Furthermore, the British rule unified Sri Lanka.
superimposed the existing caste system with the class system. In Brisbane conversely, as the society consisted of convicts and later settlers, the social hierarchies were new; divergent from those existing in Britain though influenced by it. During the colonial period, both Colombo and Brisbane were spaces of high social mobility under these new social hierarchies.

Through comparison, this thesis questions how colonial dwellings, which are similar artefacts, are viewed in these two colonies. In turn, what do these dwellings represent and to what extent do their histories influence their present standing? Colonial dwellings, due to their history, become spaces in which the colonial histories of the nations are negotiated on a private and a personal level. This negotiation continued through each postcolonial journey, allowing for discerned approaches to postcolonial conceptions of the colonial in both nations.

This thesis, through its unique comparison of Colombo and Brisbane, attempts to showcase the differences present and how such differences must be accounted for in postcolonial dialogue; especially the view of colonial architecture and colonial history in contemporary societies.

The Current Literature

This particular research stems from the lack of comparative study between settler and transient colonies. The current discourse of colonial architecture primarily focuses on individual locations and specific scenarios. In his essay Postcolonial Shanghai, discussing the relocation of many municipal agencies of Shanghai to the Bund, Andrew Law states that “Colonial architecture and culture appeal to the Chinese government officials because it allows them to construct roots in history of authority and elite sophistication.”5 The many works of Peter Scriver, including India: Modern Architecture in History to Colonial Modernities: Building, Dwelling and Architecture in British India and Ceylon, which he edited with Vikramaditya Prakash, focus on Asian and Middle Eastern architecture.6 In his works focusing on Zanzibar, William Cunningham Bissell states that “Colonial nostalgia is clearly connected to its imperial counterpart, but it also points to rather more disturbing and difficult features of the contemporary global landscape.”7 The work of Janet L. Abu-

Lughod, focusing on Morocco, dictates how, even in the postcolonial era, the locals “were dependent in part upon maintaining the [colonial] system that had created them.” Though these works showcase importance of postcolonial study of colonial architecture and the influences of the colonial period, they occur in isolation.

In this thesis, the above-mentioned lack of comparative study is combined with the importance of domestic architecture. Many of these current academic works in colonial architecture focus on public buildings, neglecting domestic space. Domestic Architecture and the Use of Space edited by Susan Kent, in its compilation of essays, though not directly discussing the colonial period, emphasises the importance of domestic form, with a focus on the relationships present between the domestic space, its uses, and the culture surrounding it; “Scholars have traditionally analysed buildings and the use of space within buildings without analysing the interaction between the two or how the interaction articulates with specific aspects of culture.”

Law, Scriver, Prakash, Bissell, and Abu-Lughod explore portrayals of power and status, through public colonial structures. In this thesis, these arguments are extended to domestic architecture. This thesis navigates the influences of domestic colonial architecture on postcolonial uses; concentrating on extant associations with colonial dwellings and the histories they embody.

As mentioned by Anthony King, in his essay Actually Existing Postcolonialisms, many postcolonial theoretical works “developed in association with a postcolonial diasporic community of scholars and, for various reasons, was primarily directed to an audience in the one-time metropolitan society, rather than the postcolonial society itself.” Though this speaks to early works of the genre, it is upon these works that the field developed. Hence, applying such discourse to both Colombo and Brisbane, very different and distinct circumstances, is likely to cause dissonance. In addition, Brisbane is of settler origin, which a majority of postcolonial theory has not focused on. Thus, literature from the realm of postcolonial studies is used highly selectively in this thesis.

---

The Owners – The Elites

As mentioned, the bounds of this thesis lie in discussing dwellings owned and resided in by the ‘elites’: “[t]he elite, or leadership group, consists of those persons in any community who possess…power, respect, wealth, and skill in combination or singly.”11 In addition this definition by de Grazia, specific circumstances of Colombo and Brisbane, supplement the definitions of ‘elites’.

In Sri Lanka, the social hierarchy present prior to colonisation, the caste system, in addition to the class system introduced during colonial rule, defined the elites. Colonialism and its influence were not limited to social, political, and economic facets, but also to its spatial and cultural milieu a notion that is discussed in Chapter 1. The colonial era not only influenced the identity of elites of that period but also framed the mindset of the postcolonial nation by specifying lifestyles, mannerisms, and artefacts that defined these elites.12 Even as Sri Lanka felt a drastic change in the ruling class with the colonisers leaving, many colonial values remained.

In Australia, the settler elites established themselves through economic means. Due to Australia’s origins as a penal colony, which evolved to accommodate free settlers, elites of the nation included those settlers who accumulated wealth, those who held bureaucratic positions, and those who contributed to the establishment of cities, states, and the country. Yet, it must be noted that many of these elites, though at the top of Australia’s social spectrum, did not originate from the high society of Britain.

Within this thesis, the focus is on larger, upper-class dwellings Colombo and Brisbane. The local elites of Colombo translates to national elites due to its position as the commercial capital of the nation and a main point of colonial settlement. Many high-powered colonial staff and local appointed officials resided in and around Colombo. The local elites of Brisbane however, in did not translate to the national elites of Australia. Brisbane was a secondary point of punishment, which was opened to free settlement later, in comparison to southern cities. Thus, the social hierarchy of Brisbane differed, with elites being lower in wealth in comparison to the southern cities of Sydney and Melbourne.13

---

12 Perera, *Society and Space*.
13 These differences are further addressed in Chapter 1
The Dwelling

The continuous evolution of postcolonial society in relation to the colonial past is directly expressed in the domestic sphere. Thus, colonial dwelling became and continues to be points of negotiation between the locals and their colonial past.

Dwellings built during the colonial periods in Colombo and Brisbane, as is across the colonial world are important due to a variety of factors. Firstly, colonial dwellings, especially those of elites, were spaces in which important members of society, especially those with ties to the colonial regime, resided; such spaces are thus a vital part of the colonial histories. With the end of colonial rule, these dwellings continued to be occupied by those of socio-political importance. Secondly, colonial dwellings, influenced regional styles as the nations and cities moved into the postcolonial era. Thirdly, due to cross-cultural influences through their colonisers, the type of colonial dwellings did not develop in isolation. The forms of colonial bungalows, mansions, and houses alike, have many common characteristics. For examples, commonalities between Colombo and Brisbane include but are not limited to, the presence of verandahs and similar rooflines.

Sri Lanka has many structures, which are colonial in style or influence, in addition to more indigenous forms of Buddhist and Hindu architecture. Similarly, many different colonial styles form the cityscape of Australian cities. The architectural type,14 compared in this thesis is not simply of one specific style or use but rather those created for a specific social context: the colonial context and domestic sphere.

Colonial dwellings of elites in Colombo take the form of colonial bungalows, mansions and dwellings of the local elites known as ‘walauwa,’ which were also influenced by colonial elements. Discussed in detail in Chapters 1 and 2, “late nineteenth century or early twentieth century British bungalows can be clearly differentiated from their predecessors despite bearing many of their attributes.”15 These dwellings were used to portray status and continued to affect the evolution of architecture following independence.

In regards to the colonial era dwellings of Brisbane, this thesis focuses on dwellings of early settlement belonging to elites of the region. Many of these dwellings, which are often found on the heritage register, were the residence of many high status officials and first settlers of the region making them important architecturally and historically; providing insight into the establishment of Brisbane. Colonial dwellings, allow for a comparison of

14 This thesis focuses on colonial dwellings of the elites as an architectural type.
artefacts, which have continued to influence domestic architecture of Colombo and Brisbane.

METHODS

The approach present in this thesis drew on the work conducted by Rodrick J. Lawrence, *Public collective and private space: a study of urban housing in Switzerland*. In viewing dwelling units in Geneva, Lawrence uses a dual method: comparative analysis of a select group of dwelling units and a historical analysis of that dwelling type in context. Building from this approach, this thesis took a threefold qualitative approach. Firstly, historical analysis was conducted through the analysis of secondary literature: (post) colonial history, the architectural history, and the social structures of Colombo and Brisbane. Works from many different fields, including but not limited to architecture, sociology, economics and history, helped ensure an all-encompassing reading of the subject.

Secondly, primary case study based research was conducted. Case studies, five located in Colombo and five located in Brisbane, were selected and evaluated. The definitions of Colombo and Brisbane are not strictly geographical in terms of historical or contemporary limits of the city. This thesis analyses spaces in and around Colombo and Brisbane to identify specific colonial circumstance and related dwellings. This distinction is evident primarily in the case study *Borolugoda Maha Gederai*, which is located outside the proper city limits of Colombo. However, this case study has strong ties to the evolution of the architecture and society of Colombo that originated during the colonial era and spanned the postcolonial periods.

The case studies are dwellings erected during the mid to late nineteenth century and early twentieth century. A case study approach allowed for the motivations of the users to be viewed while maintaining the perspective of the dwelling as a whole. Therefore, the information gathered across the dwellings, as they had varying backgrounds, was diverse. Changes in use, renovations, or amalgamations to colonial dwellings to facilitate postcolonial lifestyles were viewed in parallel to the users of the space. The contemporary uses of the dwellings along with the motivations behind the said uses were understood.

The case studies were evaluated through plans, photographs, interviews, and site visits by the author. Majority of the information concerning each case study was obtained

---

through interviews with the owners and users of the dwellings; ‘the users’ ranged depending on the current use of the dwelling. In addition, the references present in secondary literature, archival work and historical works that pertains to the scope of this thesis and each case study were used as supplementary material.

The interviews were qualitative and open-ended in structure to allow the participants to guide the conversation and define what they considered to be important. Furthermore, the interviews, which primarily took place within the dwellings allowed the participant and the researcher to interact with the space, heightening the information provided. Additional interviews with the dwellings’ architects, allowed the research questions regarding the physical changes to the space and the process behind them to be understood.

The choice of primary interviews to guide majority of the case studies, though supplemented by visual material, was made due to the focus of the case study portion of this thesis. This focus lies in how the colonial histories of the dwellings in question are negotiated and reflected in the postcolonial and contemporary understandings and usage of the space. Such understanding and usage is to primarily be gained from the users and stakeholders, who dictate the physical space, the aspects of the colonial pasts that are prioritized, and how the colonial history as a whole is viewed by the contemporary iteration of the dwelling. Many generations of owners, across the dwellings’ histories were consulted and government regulations as well as architect interviews supplement these views, in certain case studies.


The use of literature allowed for more perspectives, reactions, uses, relationships, and motivations regarding colonial dwellings to be analysed. Furthermore, the critical eye of the author provided a discerned gateway into the mindset and the lifestyles of postcolonial society; “literary descriptions the perceptions and emotions of the character

---

¹⁷ An earlier version of the analysis of the Sri Lankan novels parallel to two case studies, Maniumpathy Boutique Hotel and Boralugoda Maha Gedera was included in a paper published in the book of proceedings generated by the conference Quotation - SAHANZ 2017.
give meaning to an other-wise objective description of a place, landscape, or building.”

The literature provides descriptions of colonial dwellings and their usage that are both nuanced and underutilised in the study of colonial architecture. Thus allowing for experiences of colonial dwellings in postcolonial society to be dissected. This analysis is supplemented by historical and secondary literature, and certain archival sources such as photographs from the period.

The case study research and the interpretation of literature allowed the argument created within the historical foundation of this thesis to be analysed from both, a postcolonial and a contemporary perspective. However, as this particular research views colonial dwellings through the use of case studies, literature (written or translated into English), and secondary literature, it limits the scope of the information gathered; though diverse, the case studies are limited in number and do not speak for all colonial dwellings.

CHAPTER CONTENT

The first half of the thesis establishes a historical foundation regarding colonial dwellings; the social connotations of colonial dwellings and their owners, within (post) colonial countries are also established. The parallels between Colombo and Brisbane in how colonial dwellings have historically influenced identity formation and status portrayal are argued. The second half of the thesis builds upon the historical foundation to evaluate individual colonial dwellings as case studies.

Chapter 01, in order to portray the importance of colonial dwellings, evaluates the colonial and architectural histories of Colombo and Brisbane. How colonial dwellings continued to influence the formation on local/regional architectural identity is evaluated. Thus, the place held by colonial dwellings in the broader architectural and social histories establishes the differences between the cities.

Chapter 02 focuses on colonial dwellings of elites. The physical makeup of colonial dwellings are utilised to establish how they evolved through time, how they are viewed, and the users of colonial dwellings and their motivations. Chapter 2 also evaluates the lifestyles of those living in colonial dwellings and the division of space among them: especially the owners and the household staff.

Chapter 03 and 04 gauge the extant use of colonial dwellings of Colombo and Brisbane, respectively, through the case studies; each case study is evaluated individually. The history of the dwelling along with their present-day position is used to

---

build an overall picture of the case studies. The focus lies on the current uses, motivations, and how these uses refer back to the (colonial) histories of these dwellings. This allows for the analysis of how the colonial periods have influenced the dwellings’ contemporary iterations.

Chapter 05 brings forth the contemporary understandings of Colombo and Brisbane’s colonial pasts. These broader views are synthesised with the historical and present-day uses and the motivations of colonial dwellings. Chapter 05 draws upon the previous chapters and evaluates contemporary iterations of colonial dwellings to establish how the histories of dwellings are used and portrayed. This chapter brings forth the trends evident in the case studies along with the analysis of fictional works and secondary literature.

ARGUMENT

This thesis aims to understand the way in which dwellings of Colombo and Brisbane compare both physically and in use, through the colonial and postcolonial era, especially in their contemporary iterations. Through the view of the colonial values associated with these dwellings and the evolutions of Colombo and Brisbane, it is evident that there lie two different reflections of the colonial past. Colombo, in viewing its colonial history, returns to the extravagance of the era culminated with the ability to portray elite status through artefacts, such as architecture. Brisbane on the other hand reflects on the settler origins of the city and the role architecture, play in this history. However, each dwelling discussed in this thesis portrays individual aspects of its past, whether colonial, settler, or postcolonial. However, across the ten case studies and the historical analysis, it is clear that colonial dwellings are associated with high status, originating from the colonial era but continuing across the postcolonial times. Thus, despite the differences in the histories reflected by contemporary iterations of colonial dwellings, all the case studies discussed in this thesis, to varying degrees, reproduce one or more aspects of their pasts.

In the broader literature surrounding colonial architecture, the postcolonial period, and the methods of analysis, this thesis contributes through the understandings of the two different reflections of the colonial past as well as the individual histories reflected by each case study. Through this specific comparison, this thesis showcases the intricacies that lead to both similarities and differences in the treatment of colonial dwellings by two diverse colonial circumstances. Contemporary societies of Colombo and Brisbane, both view colonial dwellings to be engrained in their histories to a significant degree, thus continue to reflect aspects of their histories. Hence, this thesis showcases the importance
of the comparison of transient and settler colonies as their diversity in histories and approaches pertaining to reminiscing colonial dwellings result in similar uses of these dwellings - a lens to view the colonial pasts.
CHAPTER 1: THE HISTORY AMONG THE ELITES

INTRODUCTION

This chapter takes a historical overview of Colombo and Brisbane, as well as the histories of built form. These histories establish the role played by colonial architecture in the rendering of status and local (domestic) architectural identities and provide the foundation for the comparison of colonial dwellings.

Through the discussion of the social and architectural histories during and following the colonial periods of Colombo and Brisbane, this chapter establishes the relationship between social mobility and domestic architecture. During the colonial era, in both cities, those who were formerly at the lower end of the social spectrum were able to attain elite status. The colonial powers transformed the caste system of Colombo to a class system, allowing those placed lower on the social spectrum to rise in status. In Brisbane, the early settlers were able to define the social hierarchy and establish themselves through land ownership and occupation, giving them higher social standings compared to their pasts in Britain. Many cultural artefacts associated with the colonisers – the British upper class – were used by these elites to portray their newfound status. Architecture and more specifically, domestic architecture was one such artefact.

COLOMBO, SRI LANKA

Across Sri Lanka’s pre-colonial, colonial and postcolonial periods, elites have been defined by their past. Family histories, financial standing, media presence, social visibility and the private and public spaces, which individuals and families occupy, are factors in understanding the prominence of elites and reinforcing their social status.

As elites of Sri Lanka evolved through the colonial and postcolonial periods, built form acted as a platform through which elites were able to portray their status, especially changes in status. This relationship between built form and elites reached its epitome during the colonial period. This relationship in combination with the way in which elites evolved during the colonial era must be reviewed in order to understand the regard to which colonial architecture is held within Sri Lanka.

This evolving relationship present between the local elites and colonial culture has been analysed by a number of academics. Nihal Perera in his work Society and Space: Colonialism, Nationalism, and Postcolonial Identity in Sri Lanka (1998) discusses the transformation of society and space within Sri Lanka through colonialism and following independence. His work explores Sri Lanka from the Portuguese occupation through to the mid-twentieth century through the transformation of space. Through a spatial analysis,
he states that colonialism is not limited to social, political, and economic facets of the
nation, but also to its spatial and cultural milieu. Perera’s work discusses the use of both
physical and cultural elements of the colonial powers during and following their expulsion
stating:

The most important conclusion of this study is to recognize the absolute
centrality of the historical experience of European, an especially British colonialism in the economic, political, and cultural construction of Ceylon,
first, as a “modern,” though colonial state and subsequently, as the independent nation of Sri Lanka.\(^\text{19}\)

An example of such centrality is evident in how the local elites quite literally
appropriated the spaces abandoned by the British colonial regime, co-opting the aura of
power embodied in these buildings. The colonial era not only influenced the identity of
elites but also framed the mindset of the postcolonial nation.

by Kumari Jayawardena discusses the way in which the bourgeoisie, a western concept
that was superimposed onto Sri Lanka society, developed during the colonial period,
especially as the economic system of Sri Lanka advanced. She depicts how the caste
system of Sri Lanka, the pre-colonial occupation based social hierarchy with many
different levels and sub sections, narrowed itself to the class system. In this evolution,
ar
tecture became one of many mediums used by rising elites, primarily of ‘low caste’\(^\text{20}\)
origins, depicted their newfound statuses.\(^\text{21}\) While Bryce Ryan, in _Caste in Modern Ceylon; the Sinhalese System in Transition_, conversely focuses on the presence and the evolution
of caste while providing little focus to the way in which the Westernised class hierarchy
was superimposed on Sri Lanka. Ryan argues that the caste system continued to play an
important role as Sri Lanka transitioned into the postcolonial world, despite its
Westernised values.\(^\text{22}\)

Robin D. Jones in his essay _Furnished in English Style_ claims that despite the
study of colonial culture’s infiltration into the local society:

\(^{19}\) Perera, *Society and Space*, 185.

\(^{20}\) The use of the term/ classification of ‘low caste’ that appear in this thesis does not indicate any personal view of the author but rather the views prevalent in Sri Lankan society.


\(^{22}\) Bryce Ryan, _Caste in Modern Ceylon; the Sinhalese System in Transition_ (New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1953).
[N]on-documentary or material evidence for the cultural transformation of this elite — in the form of their houses, clothes and furnishings — has received only passing mention in the literature and such evidence has been used in a passive sense, to illustrate a point, rather than subjected to analysis.\(^\text{23}\)

Moving into the domestic space, Jones exhibits the ways in which both the colonisers and the locals amalgamated Western objects and Western aspects of spatial design into their lives during the British colonial period. Jones highlights that objects such as Western-style furniture, were sought by the local elites. Using specific households as examples – including that of Charles de Soysa, a local entrepreneur and his wife, a local heiress – he further elaborates on how households of the locals became a point of compromise between Western influences and local culture.\(^\text{24}\) However, it is noted that similar to the lack of analysis mentioned above, the Westernised domestic interiors were also not a large point of contention during the periods of nationalism that arose in the late nineteenth century.\(^\text{25}\)

Anoma Pieris, in her book *Architecture and Nationalism in Sri Lanka – The Trouser Under the Cloth* analyses the changes in Sri Lanka/Ceylon and its society, and the reflection of such changes in the architecture, with emphasis on the domestic realm. Within the text, through the concept of “the trouser under the cloth” she addresses the balance between Western and indigenous cultures. Pieris evaluates nationalism, depictions of such nationalism in architecture and the production of new architectural styles, which include derivations of colonial style. It is her analysis of the colonial dwelling, within the colonial era, that this particular thesis uses as a point of departure: “Colonial architectural vocabularies provided the only avenues for self-expression, and the domestic sphere was the sole arena for liberal experimentation by local aspirants to elite status.”\(^\text{26}\)

Similar to Jones, Pieris uses biographies of specific Sri Lankan families during the colonial era to highlight the appropriation and rejection of colonial elements by the local elites. One example used, again, is the de Soysas and their three mansions in Colombo 07. These three houses show the changes in nationalistic values. One mansion was given an Indian name, *Lakshmigiri*, as opposed to an Anglicised name. However, Pieris notes that “[t]he reference to Indian places and ideas by the Ceylonese elite at the turn of the century was still largely superficial. Within the residence, the organization of space and the


\(^{24}\) Ibid., 49.

\(^{25}\) Ibid., 54.

practice of daily life remained Westernized.\textsuperscript{27} Her work further encompasses the evolution of this nationalistic sentiment and the degrees of resistance present in the appropriation of Anglican culture because of strong indigenous pulls. The domestic space of elites such as the de Soysas began to incorporate more Sri Lankan and Indian artefacts by the early 20\textsuperscript{th} century, paralleling the embrace of Eastern attire and other cultural elements.\textsuperscript{28}

The works of Perera, Jayawardena, Ryan, Jones, and Pieris, further showcases that local elites used colonial dwellings and their features, architectural and social, in order to emulate high status. Building off these works, this chapter looks at the relationship held by contemporary societies with colonial dwellings and how these relationships have evolved.

This thesis focuses on Colombo, the commercial capital of Sri Lanka. Therefore concessions are made in discussing colonial and postcolonial Sri Lanka, in relation to Colombo. One such distinction between Sri Lanka and Colombo is its urban position. Thus the rest of this chapter and the thesis focus on the urban space, especially Colombo. Therefore, the discussion in this thesis that refers to Sri Lanka as a whole, unless specified, is applicable to Colombo.\textsuperscript{29}

**The Evolution of the Elites**

Sri Lankan society has continually been a space in which it was not possible to distance oneself from one's roots, both socially and geographically. The social significance of family history has been cultivated from the pre-colonial times. This society continued to be one, which idealised families that were historically based at the top of the social hierarchy; making it difficult for an individual to detach him or herself from their lineages. The caste system within Sri Lanka was based on occupation, ranking sectors such as Govigama, cultivators and land workers, at the top and marine-based occupations of the Karava, towards the lower end. As the Portuguese in 1505, the Dutch in 1656, and the British in 1796 occupied parts of Sri Lanka, the definitions of 'elites' evolved. It was, however, during British rule in particular that vital components of Sri Lankan history and culture were cultivated. One such component was transforming the caste system based on occupation and inherited social status to a class system based on wealth defined social status; creating social mobility. As depicted by Jayawardena, this uprooted the Ceylonese

\textsuperscript{27} Ibid., 79.
\textsuperscript{28} Pieris, *Architecture and Nationalism*.
\textsuperscript{29} Though the literature discussed above show the significant role played by the British in the evolution of Colombo, both socially and architecturally, it must be noted that the Portuguese and the Dutch colonial periods had already formed the dichotomy between colonial and indigenous values.
social hierarchy: “[i]n Sri Lanka, capitalism developed in a society whose traditional structures and values, including ethnic and caste loyalties, underwent change.”

British notions of elitism and social stratification played a large role in the present-day use of it. However, it must be recognised that during the colonial era, within Sri Lanka, “the elite sub-culture was not British, but an elite construction that adapted British colonial culture to Ceylonese cultural conditions in a way that would represent their power to the average Ceylonese, and their worthiness to the colonial community.”

For example, as the nation evolved past caste, through the colonial period, the caste system continued to maintain a degree of presence within the social fabric. It moved from the public sphere to the private, as “persons of all castes were part of a bourgeoisie that projected an image of urban sophistication and cosmopolitanism.” Caste, to this day, emerges when family lineage comes into question, especially surrounding marriages.

During the British regime, many locals rose to positions of power through appointment. Mudaliyars “emerged [as] an economic and social status group ‘mediating between the alien rulers and the bulk of the indigenous population,’ performing functions that the foreign rulers were ‘unable or unwilling to do.’” As the economy developed and exports grew, businessmen joined the ranks of the local administrators in moving up the social hierarchy. Thus, people born into lower castes managed to move up the hierarchy as “[o]wnership of wealth and a consumerist lifestyle were no longer fully co-incident with caste divisions.”

---

30 Jayawardena, Nobodies to Somebodies, xvii.
31 Perera, Society and Space, 101.
32 Jayawardena, Nobodies to Somebodies, 163.
33 Ryan, Caste in Modern Ceylon, 21.
34 Jayawardena, Nobodies to Somebodies, 23.
35 Ibid., xxii.
Individuals that rose up the social hierarchy used many physical, cultural, and social elements to bridge the gap between their low caste pasts and their high-class futures. First of these elements are features derived from the colonisers: language, religion, dress, eating habits, and living space, creating the ‘black Englishmen.’ Among the local elites certain British cultural elements, even took precedent to indigenous culture. English became the language used within the government, making fluency and education in the language compulsory for political appointment. The graduates of prestigious schools in Colombo were required to know British history while failing to know Sri Lankan

---

36 Jayawardena, Nobodies to Somebodies.
37 The social mobility among the locals in the colonised spaces located in the maritime areas was evident beginning from the Portuguese and Dutch colonial periods. However, it was with British colonisation that the transition from caste to class spread across the country and gained strength.
38 Jayawardena, Nobodies to Somebodies, 249.
history was acceptable. This desire to portray elite status even resulted in locals, who were not welcome into British clubs, creating their own exclusive “Oriental Club.”

![Image of Oriental Club members]

Figure 2 “The Members of the Orient Club, Colombo.” Twentieth Century Impressions of Ceylon. Ed. Arnold Wright. 1907: 913.

Second of these elements have a historical foundations in elite status in Sri Lanka: family histories. Therefore, among the local elites, marriage became a valuable element of social capital. Those who rose in status during the colonial era “having laboriously worked their way up in business, wanted the stamp of ‘class’ which the possession of material wealth by itself could not confer. Marriage allowed them to gain this desirable lineage.

Despite the nationalistic rhetoric that emerged later, including the embracing of the local language and dress, following the gaining of independence, aspects of the colonial lifestyle continued to dominate society when the situation demanded; Western culture was adapted, especially in forums where depiction of status was vital. One such colonial element that persevered was architecture.

42 Jayawardena, Nobodies to Somebodies, 155.
The Importance of Built Form

In pre-colonial times, the measure of a man’s wealth was the measure of his land – or more precisely the land he “he held with the king’s consent.” Furthermore, the highest caste among the Sinhalese is the Govigama (or cultivator) caste. Thus land has been traditionally the symbol of both wealth and status.\(^\text{43}\)

As Sri Lanka was colonised, land ownership continued to be associated with the elites: namely, colonial officials, appointed locals, and locals of high social standing. By the British rule, architectural styles of the colonisers penetrated the country, and its physical landscape evolved. The Portuguese, the Dutch, and the British also embraced many aspects of Sri Lankan vernacular architecture; more specifically, architecture of aristocratic homes known as \textit{walauwas}. Such features included “visually dominant roofs with wide overhangs – with modifications such as the introduction of half-round clay tiles.”\(^\text{44}\) In addition, as the British began moving past the established Dutch (previously Portuguese) quarters and manipulating the facade of Colombo, many indigenous buildings of lower classes and castes, were eradicated. The British made Colombo representative of “the political authority and economic prosperity of the period, and so-called Victorian taste.”\(^\text{45}\)

As Jayawardena has argued, the rising social elites,

…[H]aving made a considerable accumulation of capital, gave up their position as liquor merchants for the more ‘honourable’ designation of landowners. With a change in status came a change in residence. There was no better address than a \textit{walauwa} (manor house) which went with landownership.\(^\text{46}\)

The notion that accumulation of built form parallels the accumulation of wealth and status underpins the \textit{Uprooted} trilogy, a seminal literary work viewing the colonial and postcolonial periods of Sri Lanka. Written by Martin Wickramasinghe, one if Sri Lanka’s most noted literary figures, this trilogy portray four generations of a family originating from a rural village to Colombo; through colonialism, independence, and nationalism. As each generation ascends in status, they accumulate built form.\(^\text{47}\)

\(^\text{43}\) Singer, \textit{The Emerging Elite}, 83.
\(^\text{44}\) Perera, \textit{Society and Space}, 147.
\(^\text{45}\) Perera, \textit{Society and Space}, 87.
\(^\text{46}\) Jayawardena, \textit{Nobodies to Somebodies}, 140.
\(^\text{47}\) Wickramasinghe, \textit{Uprooted}. 

36
Not only did many aspects of local architectural forms, penetrate bungalows and mansions of the colonisers; many imported western influences also governed these dwellings. As the desire of the British to adapt a lifestyle reminiscent of Britain to the local conditions grew, more western objects, and western aspects of spatial design were imported into the island. These even penetrated the lives of local elites; households of the locals became a point of compromise between these western influences and local culture. 48 These dwellings were utilised to render outward appearances of westernisation.49

The anticolonial and nationalistic sentiment and critique did not transform uniformly across to the postcolonial era.50 “...[D]omestic interiors were not, as such, singled out for opprobrium by Buddhist nationalists in their attacks on the westernization of everyday things on the island during the last decades of the nineteenth century.”51 Architecture was regarded with a similar attitude; an attitude that continued through independence. The

48 Jones, “Furnished in English Style.”
49 Further elaborated in Chapter 2.
50 Perera, Society and Space, 129.
51 Ibid., 54.
decolonising process that began in 1948 and continued through the 1970s did not significantly change the physical landscape of Sri Lanka. As noted by Jones, the “Ceylonese leaders who continued to rule the country within the British-made constitution of 1947 were quite at home adopting the symbols of the colonial elite. Moving into former colonial spaces, they reinvented their own identity, and re-interpreted these spaces as those of their own nation.”

With independence, Kollupitiya and Cinnamon Gardens, once occupied predominantly by the British, became ideal sites through which the local elites could emulate the newfound status. Architecturally, these spaces remained unchanged. The buildings were simply repurposed and even renamed with independence; bungalows turned into administrative offices, westernised names into those more familiar to the native tongue. For example, the ‘Queen’s House,’ a colonial structure used by the Dutch and the British since its construction in the 1770s, was renamed as Janadhipathi Mandiraya (President’s House). New dwellings being erected in the postcolonial era were, as Pieris describes:

Variations of the colonial bungalow model, built on less than one acre of land, prevailed for many of the years spanning independence and very few clients – unlike Wendt or Pieris – departed from the norm. By this period, however, the excesses of the colonial mansion were no longer tolerated.

Influences of the Colonial Dwelling in Postcolonial Style

The development and training of architects in colonial Sri Lanka acted as the epicentre from which many generations of Ceylonese (Sri Lanka) architects, including those of the postcolonial times, originated, creating the foundation for the colonial landscape to persevere. Across the colonial period, the Public Works Department (PWD) governed the design and construction of both public and private British colonial structures. Yet, elites retained the ability to hire architects as they pleased – this is evident in the detailed description of the building process of Tintagel done by de Zilwa, discussed in Chapter 3. In the 1930s, the PWD began training locals, located within Colombo. The knowledge and the training received were, however, governed by the British and hence identical to what their British counterparts learnt. Therefore, as these Ceylonese architects began to practice, the colonial landscape of Sri Lanka was not altered.

---

52 Perera, Society and Space, 115.
53 Ibid., 142.
54 Ibid., 120.
55 Ibid., 116.
With the increase in Ceylonese architects and the establishment of the Ceylon Institute of Architects in 1957, architectural training diversified past the PWD. However, until the 1980s, the Royal Institute of British Architects played a role in the education process, especially the curriculum. In addition, advancement and modernisation was valued over the search for a national identity, and “Modern Architecture” took precedence.

The post-colonial architectural styles, according to scholarly studies, consisted of various styles ranging from the semi classical; colonial and stately used style to pseudo architectural styles commonly utilized for large-scale public projects and the neo-Sinhala style; illustrating elitism of the Walauwa-class.

It was only when the nationalist Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP) came to power in 1956, elites exuding features of the colonial period took a backseat. Sri Lanka was able to eradicate the British military presence and the process of decolonisation progressed further. In 1970, when the United Front government (an amalgamation of parties which included the SLFP, LSSP, and CP) came to power Sri Lanka became completely politically decolonised; the constitutional and judicial power retained by the British was eradicated. As nationalism grew the homogeneity present in architectural style also subsided. Then arose, what Perera dubbed the “critical-vernacular:” an architectural style, which evaluated Sri Lanka’s history, climate, and technological position. Critical-vernacular was the first point in postcolonial Sri Lanka, when architects re-experienced both pre-colonial and colonial forms of Sri Lanka along with the cultures of the nation. “Clearing away the colonist and modernist “mess” was accompanied by the re-introduction of “traditional elements and spaces, as found in dwellings and temples and historical remains, particularly the roof, veranda, and the internal courtyard.”

The above-mentioned architectural changes paralleled social changes yet only to a certain extent. As nationalistic and socialistic governments grew in prominence and the architectural styles evolved, the political elites reverted to local dress, traditional names,
and language to both connect with the people and to express their own values.\textsuperscript{63} Yet, colonial dwellings retained their importance and were developed and occupied by groups of political and private elites.

**BRISBANE, AUSTRALIA**

The settler history of Brisbane continues to be assessed by contemporary society; architecturally, politically, socially and economically. Despite the interest present and the presence of museums, archives, and academic works regarding the topic, the documentation of Brisbane’s history is fragmented. There lacks cohesive and broad study regarding the society of colonial and federation era Brisbane while the domestic architectural history of the region is thoroughly documented.

Brisbane is viewed by the likes of Ronald Lawson in his book *Brisbane in the 1890’s* and W. Ross Johnston, in *Brisbane the First 30 Years*, which focuses on the period ranging from 1820s to 1854. In combining these works, the class distinctions within Brisbane become clear, allowing for the identification of the elites. In addition, these works provide some insight into the role Brisbane played in Queensland.\textsuperscript{64} Despite not being the first point of settlement, it is Brisbane that grew as a port and a city. However, many of the works regarding Brisbane do not always make clear the distinctions between the histories and societies of Queensland and those of Brisbane; the only clear distinction present lie in urban rural specificities.

Another important fact pertaining to Brisbane that comes through in Lawson and Johnston’s works is its comparison to the southern cities such as Sydney and Melbourne. These cities were established earlier and were the sites where the richer and more noted settlers located. Therefore, Brisbane did not have the same level of wealth in relation to the south. Thus, the elites of Brisbane are not interchangeable with those of Australia; elites of Brisbane, both colonial and contemporary are specific to Brisbane.\textsuperscript{65}

The works of Rod Fisher, Donald Watson, Ian Evans, and Janet Hogan among others view domestic architecture of Queensland. Dwellings in Queensland, and more specifically Brisbane, are documented in order to map their evolution and the notion of a regional style underpins much of this research. These publications provide insight into classification and understanding of these dwellings. This information, targeted at the audiences of academics and non-academics alike, highlight individual buildings and

\textsuperscript{63} Perera, *Society and Space*.

\textsuperscript{64} Ronald Lawson, *Brisbane in the 1890s - A Study of an Australian Urban Society* (Brisbane: University of Queensland, 1973); Johnston, *Brisbane*.

\textsuperscript{65} Lawson, *Brisbane in the 1890*. 


specific features of Queensland houses, with a focus on the colonial and federation eras. In addition, dwelling, specifically those dwellings owned by elites, played an important role in how colonial history is recounted in postcolonial Queensland.66

The upcoming portion of this chapter, with regard to Brisbane, parallels the architectural and social histories and establishes the importance of architectural forms of the colonial era; not only due to form and style, but also due to those who resided within. This allows a lens through which to understand the view of elite colonial dwellings by both colonial and contemporary society. Through this focus on elite dwellings of the colonial era, in the upcoming pages it becomes evident that these dwellings, in particular, were monumentalised in the history of Brisbane.

---

*Figure 4 Hume Family "Lord Lamington's baby", c1898. Old Government House, Brisbane, State Library of Queensland.*

---

The Evolution of the Elites

Australia was first established as a penal colony with settlements occurring in the southern regions. It was only in the early nineteenth century, the area now known as Queensland, beginning with the Moreton Bay, was it habituated as a secondary point of punishment. Beginning as a convict settlement, it was only in 1838 that the region was opened up to free settlement; Queensland was established as its own state in 1859.

As Brisbane began as a penal settlement, followed by the arrival of settlers, there were interesting class distinctions; one such being high social mobility. Lawson states that Brisbane did not have clear class distinctions present in the 1890s due to the extensive upward mobility of the early settler period. However, such aspirations and mobility subsided. The nineteenth century colonial elites of Brisbane consisted were settlers of high government standing in addition to “… the men who occupied the positions of highest status in Brisbane society – graziers, leading businessmen, and widely respected professionals.” However, many who held these positions, though elites in the space of Brisbane did not hold the same standing in comparison to elites of more southern cities like Sydney or Melbourne, or in relation to Britain, their origins. Many of these free settlers, originating from lower socio-economic standing prior to arriving in Brisbane, gained status through government positions and land ownership. This newfound status was portrayed through a variety of mediums, including architecture, especially domestic forms.

In Brisbane, in addition to employment:

…[a]n individual’s status position was also related to the area of the city in which his home was located, the amount of leisure time he enjoys and the leisure activities he engaged in and even his religious affiliation, the level of his involvement in church activities, and his attitudes to certain social issues.

Lifestyle factors that were indicative of social status included clothing, ownership of vehicles, furnishings, diet and social lives. However, with regard to these factors, “…virtually no concessions were made to the climate. Society in all its facets was dictated

67 Johnston, Brisbane.
68 Ibid.
69 Lawson, Brisbane in the 1890, 61.
70 Lawson, Brisbane in the 1890.
71 Ibid., xxxii.
by the home (British) patterns and rules.” Clothing, for example, were either imported or locally tailored to British styles, which consisted of layers and heavy garments.

Another class signifier was education. The costs of secondary education were not accessible to the working class and below, unless they received scholarships. Even then individuals were unlikely to pursue education and more encouraged to seek employment.

The social standing of families and the public depictions of status were also highly dependent on the male figureheads and their occupation. Wives were responsible for domestic life and showcasing status through the domestic space. The events attended, invited for, and hosted were highly indicative of social class and reach. Many weddings, parties, and dinners of settler elites are even referred to today when describing lifestyles and dwellings of the era. The social events were also an extension of social clubs, many of which, such as the Queensland Club, were exclusive to those of elite standing.

Figure 5 “Family members stand on the verandah of a Queenslander house in Toowoomba, Queensland, ca. 1870.” State Library of Queensland.

---

72 Ray Sumner, “The Brisbane house in historical context,” in Housing, Health, the River and the Arts, edited by Rod Fisher and Ray Sumner, 32 (Brisbane: The Brisbane History Group, 1985).
73 Ibid., 133.
74 Lawson, Brisbane in the 1890s.
75 Ibid.
76 Ibid.
The Federation was formed in Australia in 1901. Unlike many of the settlements to the south, Brisbane opposed this change, as they feared the Federation would adversely affect its economic status. However, following establishment of the Federation, not much of the region evolved physically or socially.\textsuperscript{77} Despite the economic changes and the World Wars, during which Brisbane was heavily influenced by the presence of soldiers, Brisbane continued to be different in social standing from its southern counterparts. Prior to Federation, “[t]here is abundant evidence, then that the living conditions of the family varied considerably along the status continuum during the 1890s, with implications for all family members in many diverse areas of their lives.”\textsuperscript{78} These class distinctions, however, became less prevalent following the forming of the Federation due to economic downturns.

The Importance of Built Form

The architectural styles of Brisbane evolved, similar to those of Melbourne and Sydney, from rudimentary huts to Georgian-influenced cottages. However, unlike the architectural styles of these southern cities, those of Brisbane did not diverge following the Federation era; a strong regional architectural type was formed and continued to influence the dwellings erected.\textsuperscript{79} Numerous academic works delving into understanding the evolution of this regional type emerged. Many of these works focus largely on working class dwellings though the distinction between them and the dwellings of the elites are made evident.\textsuperscript{80}

Queensland dwellings are described by Fisher to not be of an architectural type per se, but as a continually evolving class of dwellings.\textsuperscript{81} Ranging from Aboriginal, Colonial, Federation, to the Interwar and Post-war periods, Fisher classifies the dwellings not only by period but also according to type; for example, whether the dwelling is upper or working class. The dwellings are further influenced by styles pertaining to each time period and significant to both the period of erection and the times following. This class of Queensland dwellings was regarded “vernacular because it was indigenous to this particular region, popular among the people and typified by timber as the local building material.”\textsuperscript{82}

\textsuperscript{77} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{78} Ibid., 137.
\textsuperscript{79} Fisher, \textit{Queenslanders}, 112.
\textsuperscript{80} Fisher, \textit{Queenslanders}.
\textsuperscript{81} Ibid. 4.
\textsuperscript{82} Ibid.
Though many of these dwellings are located in Brisbane, Fisher notes that there are gaps in the research of this subject as it focuses on dwellings of Queensland as a whole and not Brisbane specifically. To bridge the gap, houses that are in abundance, in Brisbane, such as the dwellings of the colonial elites must be evaluated. However, it must be noted that despite a regional type and common characteristics, especially among the working class:

The homes of the colonial elite bear little resemblance to each other, let alone to the Georgian-influenced residences of the early penal administrators. Nor should such continuity be expected, since the elite could afford to follow the prevailing fashion or their own fancy.

Lawson’s views were in agreement with Fisher, stating that “[t]he homes of the elites were usually radical departures from the design of the “typical” Brisbane dwelling. Many were fine residences; such as some elaborate essays in Carpenter’s Italianate, resulted in crude pomposity.” Fisher’s notions were also resonated by Hogan. However, she contributes that these elite dwellings did incorporate features which were “typical and common” to the region, yet on a larger scale. Elite dwellings also kept features distinct to the time. Yet, it is evident that during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, many of the dwellings being erected, despite class and size, influenced each other. For example, towards the 1880s, many elite dwellings were also constructed using timber, as opposed to brick, as the regional vernacular style was embraced.

Dwellings were used to depict status in the same manner to occupations, social gatherings, clothing, and owning cars. The type of dwelling, materials, furniture, and location played a role in the depiction of elite status. Depending “on the success of [the owners] various enterprises, the new homes varied in such things as size, style, ornamentation, position and size of grounds.” The upper classes consisted of the wealth required for grander, more ornate dwellings made of materials, which were considered permanent. Elite houses were also crowded with Victorian furniture. Those at the lower end of the social spectrum, conversely, had an abundance of empty space.

83 Ibid., 95.
84 Rod Fisher, “In search of the Brisbane House,” in Housing, Health, the River and the Arts, edited by Rod Fisher and Ray Sumner, 47 (Brisbane: The Brisbane History Group, 1985).
85 Lawson, Brisbane in the 1890s, 130-131.
87 Fisher, Queenslanders. 4.
89 These factors are discussed in detail in Chapter 2.
Through the Colonial and Federation eras of Brisbane, the elite dwellings of the region were not cohesive. Despite differences, all these dwellings are considered important due to their link to the evolution of the regional ‘class’ of dwellings. The dwellings are also remembered due to those who resided within and the contributions of these owners to Brisbane: many of who were important to the establishment of Brisbane. Therefore these dwellings, in addition to being of importance in architectural history, were formative in Brisbane’s cumulative history.

As described above, Brisbane was a “branch-office” and hence elites of the city were not comparable to those of Sydney or Melbourne and the social distinction across the classes was also less. Similarly, “Brisbane’s finest dwellings were inferior to those of the southern capitals.”  

However, as expressed above, this is not to say that Brisbane did not in fact have elite dwellings, which were drastically different to their working class counterparts. The maintenance of elite status, however, in Brisbane, especially during economic downturns was comparably difficult. Such downturns were visible in the domestic structures with larger elite dwellings no longer employing servants.

Figure 6 “Front view of Queenslander with family.” Ian Evans, *The Queensland House: History and Conservation* (Mullumbimby: Flannel Flower, 2001), 82.

---

90 Lawson, *Brisbane in the 1890s*, 130.
91 Hogan, “The Elite Brisbane House,” 27.
Influences of the Colonial Dwelling in Postcolonial Style

“In looking backwards we sometimes tend to think only of the better class homes with spacious grounds, but unfortunately these were comparatively few.” Despite influencing this, the retrospective view of the colonial period, the number of elite dwellings “even in the late nineteenth century they were too few, too scattered and too varied to impose their character on Brisbane as a whole.”

Though low in number, the Queensland Heritage Register lists many colonial dwellings that belonged to the settler elites. “Queensland houses are valued for their spatial qualities, such as high ceilings and verandahs, as well as for their appearance, workmanship and use of materials.” It is regarded important to protect structures, which highlight the regional style of Queensland and its evolution pay homage to regional materials such as timber and slate.

The survey work done by Donald Watson on the Queensland House unlike most other works, discusses the changes to these dwelling over time and their importance; “...[t]he significance of many Queensland houses is bound inseparably with the changes they have undergone. Widespread alterations and additions have always been undertaken and, although present elsewhere, they were deceptively easy with timber construction.”

Though his work does not pay special attention to the elite dwellings of the region, this notion stays true due to the role these dwellings played in the architectural history of the region.

The class of dwellings in Queensland “evolved continuously from the rudimentary hut of early settlement, if not prehistoric aboriginal time, to the multi-gabled bungalow of the 1930s and beyond.” This evolution even continued in the hands of architects. Yet, these dwellings are heritage-listed for reasons, which are primarily social in opposition to architectural. Such reasons include their position in the settlement and origin of Brisbane, past occupants and past uses. Important due to their social standing, these individuals are etched into the social history of Brisbane; the role they played in the development of the city.

92 Allan A. Morrison, “Brisbane One Hundred Years Age,” (speech, read at a meeting of the Royal Historical Society of Queensland, October 25, 1962).
94 Evans, The Queensland House, 122.
95 Watson, The Queensland House, 12.1.
96 Fisher, Queenslanders. 4.
A large number of elite dwellings, furthermore, withstood the tests of time due to their importance and elite ownership. Despite continuously exchanging hands, economic downturns, and even falling into disrepair over the last century or more, elite dwellings were well maintained in comparison to those of their working class counterparts. The combination of these factors the continuous existence, the prominence of their owners, and their style, have resulted in not only these dwellings being viewed as important by contemporary society but the existence of legislature dedicated to their continued preservation. This legislature is directly related to the Heritage register, mentioned above.98

Works such as *The Queensland House* by Ian Evans and The National Trust of Queensland and *The Queensland House a roof over our heads* edited by Rod Fisher and Brian Crozier, view the histories of Queensland dwellings and their evolution with a clear purpose. These works aim to educate owners in both the history of this class of dwelling and how to research the histories pertaining to individual dwellings. Therefore, recommendations are made for renovation as these works takes a stance that: “Fortunately, many value the historical features, individual history and the character of their house and are keen to protect them.”99

The evolution of colonial dwellings in Queensland paralleled the history of both the city of Brisbane and the state of Queensland. It is further reflective of the social status of the occupants, who, due to their wealth and status took liberties in the size, styles, materials and form of their residential dwellings. The dwellings did maintain a level of integrity in regards to regional identity. The elite dwellings were further important, socially. Thus the role-played in by elite colonial dwellings are twofold. Firstly, they were divergent from the norm in relation to structures to depict social status, and yet contributed to the regional style of Queensland. Secondly, they were important due to those who resided within and how they wished to portray their social status through their residence.

CONCLUSION

The colonial period was one of social mobility for the locals and settlers of Colombo and Brisbane, respectively. In moving up the social ladder, architecture, including colonial dwellings, was used to establish and portray elite status. In Colombo, those at the top of social hierarchy have maintained residence in colonial dwellings, through the latter period of the colonial era, decolonisation, nationalism, and socialism. Throughout the social and

98 Elaborated in Chapter 5.
architectural changes colonial architecture continued to influence the domestic forms including those that were introduced in postcolonial Colombo. This influence came in the shape of inspiration, replication, critique, and rejection. Colonial dwellings, in their original forms and influences, continued to portray elite status.

In Brisbane, on the other hand, colonial dwellings were an architectural type present in the continuous evolution of the regional style. However, colonial dwellings, particularly those of elites continue to be well regarded and looked back on as a point of reference by homeowners, historians, and education systems alike. Value systems and artefacts imported from Victorian Britain, combined with features such as scale, location, and the use, collectively allowed settler elites, to portray their status through dwellings. Many of the literature regarding these dwellings provide guidance and direction in how to care for those dwellings, which have survived. However, many of these dwellings have exchanged hands frequently and fell to disrepair and changes in use. Yet, the value of these dwellings has transcended time to contemporary society. Unlike those of Colombo, values associated with these dwellings reflect the origin of the city, its first settlers, and the role these dwellings played in the regional style. Thus, following the colonial era, similar to colonial dwellings of Colombo, colonial dwellings of Brisbane remain architecturally significant.
CHAPTER 2: THE DWELLING

INTRODUCTION

This chapter views spaces of elite colonial dwellings through a closer lens, evaluating form, lifestyle, users, and use. Within each individual nation, this chapter establishes the space of the colonial dwelling through its physical makeup. Thus, elements within and related to colonial dwellings, which are utilised to portray status are highlighted. Such features include location, architectural type, specific spaces within the dwelling, and specific uses. Through this comparison, this chapter demonstrates that in colonial dwellings belonging to rising and new local and settler elites of Colombo and Brisbane, respectively, British colonial values are optimised. This allows to portray elite status and to differentiate from lower classes.

In Colombo, the local elites incorporated elements related to the coloniser, especially the British, into their dwellings. Yet, this is a façade maintained to portray high status since local practices continue at the back of the house. With independence colonial dwellings of Colombo, remaining in the hands of the elite, persisted in portraying status – maintaining the association between elite status and colonial dwellings.

Brisbane’s settler elites, likewise, used aspects of British upper class life to portray their status. However, in contrast to Colombo, elites of Brisbane allowed their newfound statuses to govern the dwellings as Brisbane grew as a city and established a new social hierarchy. Over the twentieth century Brisbane, however, evolved in use and ownership as Brisbane grew. Though the histories associated with these dwellings withstood change and their structures were preserved, the relationship between elite status and colonial dwellings subsided.

LOCATION

Colonial dwellings belonging to elites do not exist in isolation but as a part of the colonial landscape. Hence, colonial dwellings of both Colombo and Brisbane depict specific trends regarding location.

As discussed above, in Colombo, the location of bungalows also contributed to the status attributed to the owners. Outside the Fort area, residentially, the British occupied Kollupitiya and Cinnamon Gardens (now Colombo 07). “The city of Colombo, and Cinnamon Gardens in particular, became one of the prime sites for symbolic display.”\(^{100}\) Cinnamon Gardens becoming an area occupied by the colonisers and desired by the

\(^{100}\) Perera, Society and Space, 115.
locals. This desire continued to the postcolonial period. With independence, local elites moved to Cinnamon Gardens in large numbers.\textsuperscript{101}

This importance of location is further emulated in literature. Karen Roberts’ novel \textit{The Lament of the Dhobi Woman} describes an elite family in postcolonial Colombo through the eyes of the youngest daughter in the family. The novel follows the changes and the challenges they navigate in regards to the nanny to the youngest, a girl from a rural village; thus portraying the nuanced relationship between household staff and their employers. In this novel, Cat, the narrator, describes how:

Most of my parents’ friends lived in Colombo 7, down avenues lined with enormous trees and stately homes with trellis work and sweeping terraces originally built by the British. Even the road names reeked of a colonial hangover – Reid Avenue, Barnes Place, Bullers Road, McCallum Drive – named after men with sweeping moustaches and stern eyes.

\ldots

but we lived in Bambalapitiya near the beach because that was where my great-grandfather had decided to build his house.\textsuperscript{102}

Despite the prestige and their connections in Colombo 07, Cat’s family is situated away from Colombo 07. This showcases the importance of their bungalow. This bungalow is riddled with many generations of family history; this association with a family history rich with power is prioritised over its location. Thus, the novel highlights the line between the importance of a colonial dwelling’s history and location, in showcasing status.

Unlike Colombo, the locations of elite colonial dwellings in Brisbane were not solely based according to neighbourhood. The main indicator of status was the topography of their location. The larger elite dwellings built in the mid-late nineteenth century were located on higher ground. Hence, unlike Colombo, they were not restricted by location: “[t]he homes were spread throughout Brisbane, largely due to the hilly terrain. The elevated positions reflected the prominence in the community of their owners and occupiers.”\textsuperscript{103} This setting gave elites protection from floods, while having the advantages of the breeze and the best views of the city.\textsuperscript{104} In addition, by building on elevated sites, combined with their wealth, elites had the resources, land, and ability to dictate who would

\textsuperscript{101} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{102} Karen Roberts, \textit{The Lament of the Dhobi Woman} (Colombo: Perera Hussein, 2010), 85.
\textsuperscript{103} Hogan, “The Elite Brisbane House,” 23.
design their houses, how they would look, and what materials would be used in construction.105

ARCHITECTURAL TYPE

Colombo, Sri Lanka

The elite colonial dwellings of Sri Lanka took multiple shapes. In addition to having multiple colonial powers that used different architectural styles, the vernacular styles and the site-specific requirements such as climate, influenced the forms taken. This thesis focuses on dwellings built during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, during the British colonial period. This focus is due to two reasons. The first is the proximity of this period to 1948, when Sri Lanka gained independence. Therefore these were the last colonial forms to be erected and hence imprinted significantly on Sri Lankan society.

Secondly, it was during this period that the domestic colonial architecture was found in abundance. Not only did the colonial powers develop residential neighbourhoods, colonial forms also infiltrated how locals portrayed their status; the style, type, and form, of dwellings played important roles in their perceived value.

Ours was a single-storied bungalow with deep eaves, lofty ceilings and long, straight corridors. It was rumoured that we had thirteen bedrooms and nine bathrooms, but I didn’t know for sure…106

The previous chapter referred to the elite colonial dwellings as bungalows. However, within the classification of the bungalow, there were two different specific types, as noted by Pieris. These were the suburban bungalows, located in the coastal regions, especially in the urban centres, and the planters bungalows located in the hilly areas of Sri Lanka.107 This thesis focuses on the former, more specifically on those dwellings located in and around Colombo.

The elite dwellings of the colonial era were also not limited to colonial bungalows. Towards the latter portion of the British colonial period, towards the beginning of the twentieth century, larger mansions replaced colonial bungalows. This shift in scale and type occurred, as bungalows were not truly representative of the suburban mansions of Britain. The lifestyles and the interiors of mansions were more extravagant and more representative of England.108 The decorations were far more detailed, architects often

106 Roberts, Dhobi Woman. 85-86.
107 Pieris, Architecture and Nationalism, 44.
108 Ibid., 57.
designed these mansions, and the presence of servants defined many aspects of the physical structure. "The bungalow and the mansion that replaced it were ultimately sites for borrowing and self-fashioning – for rewriting the script for the political mobilization of elites."\textsuperscript{109}

In addition to colonial bungalows and mansions, there are also dwellings of the local elites, known as walauwas, which, during the colonial era, became amalgamations of colonial and vernacular styles. Many of these dwellings, one of which is discussed in Chapter 3, are not found in the urban centres. Yet the walauwas of the semi-urban and rural areas saw many aspects of colonial architecture and lifestyle seeping in.\textsuperscript{110} These colonial features were also engaged to portray high status. Servants were employed; and clear distinctions were made between the space of the servants and that of the owners. This paralleled the growth of the local elites; gaining positions of high status under the colonial power, including positions such as that of the village headman. This growth was echoed by their domestic space. Furthermore, dwellings being erected during this period were governed by the younger generations of local elites. As they were educated in England; "[t]hey memorized the facades of vast houses they saw all over Europe, returned and built them on acres of land they or their fathers had owned in the city."\textsuperscript{111}

Pieris, through a survey of colonial mansions and walauwas, notes that mansions incorporated European elements while the walauwas negotiated the balance between colonial and indigenous.\textsuperscript{112} Similarly, the case studies presented by Jones depict how "[m]any of the local elite of the late nineteenth century 'bought into' the British colonial lifestyle and, at least publicly, chose not to be represented with local material culture."\textsuperscript{113} However, this is not to state that the identity of mansions laid completely in the western. Even within these dwellings, the local elites, despite the westernised facades, negotiated their identities with the front depicting a more western life while the back occupies the eastern.

This thesis looks at colonial bungalows, mansions, and walauwas, with a focus on the latter two in regards to case studies. All of these types of dwellings, despite the differences are spaces in which the colonial and the indigenous met, and in their colonial features, regardless of the extent, portrayed social status and aspirations.

\textsuperscript{109} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{110} Pieris, \textit{Architecture and Nationalism}.
\textsuperscript{112} Pieris, \textit{Architecture and Nationalism}.
\textsuperscript{113} Jones, "Furnished in English Style," 53.
Brisbane, Australia

This thesis, as discussed in earlier chapters, focuses on a single particular iteration of the Queensland house: the elite dwellings of the mid-late nineteenth century, the colonial period. The definition of the Queensland house changed overtime as there existed different versions. The Queensland house, as is it recognised today, “was born in the Colonial years, matured during the Victorian period, flowered in the Federation era and was infiltrated by foreign influences between the wars.”¹¹⁴ The description of a Queensland house provided by David Malouf in his novel, 12 Edmondstone Street has been referred to in many academic works to describe the quintessential Queensland house.

12 Edmondstone Street was a one-storeyed weatherboard, a style of house so common then as to be quite unremarkable; Brisbane was a one-storeyed weatherboard town. It stood on low stilts at the front, high stilts at the back, and was essentially a nest of open rooms surrounded on three sides by wide, cooling verandahs, ironwork to the rails, in a pattern of interlocking circles, and rolled venetians above, The ironwork was cream, the venetians ochre, the square wooden supports with their branches and volutes a spanking white, and the roof, which was of iron, that dull oxblood colour that is so peculiar to Brisbane that it seems more dominant even, in the long view, than the green of the enormous shade-trees – mangoes, hoop-pines, all the varieties of subtropical fig – that darken every backyard.¹¹⁵

Malouf’s novel is a portrayal of his own life combined with his literary flare. This novel begins at Malouf’s childhood home, described in the quotation above, through his recollections and then follows the journey his life took. Watson and Fisher state that Malouf’s description of the Queensland house lacks two factors, despite being accurate otherwise. First, that these features are not unique to Queensland; they are found in many different Australian states and also in South Africa, the West Indies, in the Southern United States, Canada, and in South and South East Asia.¹¹⁶ Features, such as verandahs, square plans, and hipped roofs, were brought by the British, and evolved as a way to adapt to the climate of Brisbane.

The second factor is that, these features are not specific to a single style of Queensland house but common across many styles of buildings in Queensland. Though Malouf refers to a working class dwelling, these features are common in dwellings across the social spectrum, including those owned by elites. The case studies discussed in Chapter 3 and 4, elite dwellings of the colonial era, despite not being identical to the description by Malouf, contains many features that are similar to their working class and elite dwelling counterparts. These elite dwellings, however, do not contain certain elements, which are common throughout the working class Queenslanders; these are discussed below.

Due to the social and economic statuses of the families, who built and occupied these elite dwellings, they were able to go against the grain. Their dwellings were described to be “more grandiose and flamboyant scale.”

The wealthier the household the greater the number of rooms – particularly reception rooms – and the more specialised their function. A grand house might include a drawing room, sitting room, living room, dinner room, morning room, library, billiard room, conservatory, smoking room, butler’s pantry, kitchen, and nursery, as well as bedrooms (for servants and family), bathroom and laundry. The kitchen and the servants might occupy a separate wing, and outbuildings were often provided for other purposes.

In addition to being extravagant in design they were also such in materials; built of more permanent materials such as brick and stone against the timber of the working class dwellings. Over time as a regional building tradition developed, even elites began to use timber in place of brick; “[t]his development might also suggest that some kind of local tradition was beginning to affect the perceptions and pockets of the colonial elite.”

Across time, within Brisbane, houses allowed for the upward social mobility and its portrayal as they spoke to the “success of the master of the house, of his respectability and that of his family. ‘The Victorian home’ was also an ideal representing the role of the mistress in both its moral and its practical functions...” The form of the house, not only in size but also in style, design, architect, material, and decoration, were utilised in portraying

---

118 Ibid.
elite status. A large house signified economic standing while the use of that house signified social standing, an aspect, which the middle class attempted to mimic. In looking back at the lifestyles of the colonial settler elites, it is through their dwellings that the lifestyles can be understood.

FEATURES

The verandah, the drawing room, the dining room, and the furnishing of the colonial dwellings are important to the architectural type and the representations of status. These features have been the focus of many existing research. The following portion of this chapter evaluates the origination of these features, their uses, and users. As evident from the first portion of this chapter, these are not the only features important in these types of dwellings. However, the spaces discussed below are those most mentioned and researched across the two cities.

The space in between

The verandah, in Colombo and Brisbane, takes a multitude of shapes. Firstly, it is decorative, the face of the dwelling and attributes to their architectural types. Secondly, the presence of the verandah in both cities derives from an amalgamation of building histories. Thirdly, the verandah is a climatic device allowing airflow and creating a space that is cooler than the interior.

Pieris describes a select few colonial mansions, all of which have lavish verandahs, decorated in ornamental natures, to create the setting for the dwelling. As the verandah was the first space encountered by any visitor, it was elaborate. In Colombo, the verandah was common in vernacular designs, which the Dutch and the British adopted. It now attributes to colonial bungalows and mansions. The tradition of having a back verandah was further adapted, towards the end of the colonial era, to separate the space of the servants and that of the owners and minimise the interaction between the two parties: “those who had embraced Western culture and those who were excluded from it.”

Portrayed in a variety of lights across a variety of novels, the verandah holds one consistent role: deviation. In The Lament of the Dhobi Woman, the verandah is used to frame the beginning and consummation of the seven-year affair between the nanny and a relative of the owners. Through this portrayal, Roberts implies that the verandah is, in fact, a space where the line between the servants and owners are blurred; the verandah disregards social rules and occupies behaviour condemned within the bungalow.

123 Pieris, Architecture and Nationalism.
124 Ibid., 74.
In addition to separating the owners and servants, the space of the verandah allowed for activities that stray from those taking space within the bungalow; a notion that is exaggerated in the novel by Roberts. It was a space used to interact with individuals who would not be entertained within the house, a space that was occupied for sleeping, by the servants, a space in which transactions of goods occur, and even entertainment. As described in Wickramasinghe’s *Destiny*, the third book in the *Uprooted* series, the men occupy the verandah during social gatherings in order to consume alcohol and smoke. Women are excluded from this context and these activities are kept out of their sight.125 This depicts how colonial dwellings are gendered; the interiors are for women while the verandah is male dominated. Hence, *Destiny* the further contributes to the notion that the verandah is exterior to the house, a space for men, where more informal and less ‘socially/culturally accepted’ activities occur.

One of the important features of elite dwellings in Brisbane was the verandah.\textsuperscript{126} It was not native to Brisbane but rather an amalgamation of building traditions from the British and their other colonies: “the more palatial verandahs or piazzas were largely modelled on European styles, and re-created upper class life in India or the sophisticated lifestyle of the planter in Malays or the West Indies.”\textsuperscript{127}

Figure 8 “Dining room verandah, Government House, Brisbane, October 1907,” State Library of Queensland

The verandah provided a cooler space during the summer months. Thus, in addition to portraying upper class life, the interior verandah space was used for dining, entertaining, sleeping, and also contained enclosed areas such as bathrooms.\textsuperscript{128} Verandahs were used for polite entertainment by elites and the middle/working classes, alike. Similar to their use in Colombo, verandahs were used entertain guests who were not

\textsuperscript{126} Hogan, “The Elite Brisbane House,” 24.
\textsuperscript{127} Fisher, “Identity,” 5-6.
\textsuperscript{128} Ibid., 7.
welcomed into the house; a space caught in between the outside and the inside. Malouf’s description of a verandah, though it refers to a working class dwelling, is congruent with the elites; the verandah is depicted as not being a part of the house:

[The Verandah] is what allows travelling salesmen, with one foot on the step to heave their cases over the threshold and show their wares with no embarrassment on either side, no sense of privacy violated. It has allowed my mother, with her strict notion of the forms, to bring a perfect stranger in off the street and settler her (for ever as it happens) in one of our squatter’s chairs.¹²⁹

Entertaining Guests

Figure 9 “Living Room of Calverly House - early 19th century.” de Soysa, "Calverley House."

The drawing room of the elite colonial dwellings of Colombo and Brisbane, both focus on the act of hosting and the façade it portrayed. In his evaluation of domestic interiors of Sri Lanka, Jones refers to the images present in Twentieth Century Impressions of Ceylon by Arnold Wright. Through that reference, it is evident that the “drawing rooms that were used for formal occasions and entertainments and which

¹²⁹ Malouf, 12 Edmondstone Street, 22.
presented a public front to the world.\textsuperscript{130} In late twentieth century colonial bungalows, the drawing room and/or the Victorian parlour was referred to as the \textit{issaraha kamaraya}, literal translation being “Front Room”.\textsuperscript{131} The drawing rooms were façades, which was far removed from the Eastern practices of the house. Westernised (specifically British) cultural artefacts were present in the front room. Indigenous customs were entertained in more private rooms.\textsuperscript{132} This separation of the front from the back “catered to the migration of British wives and children during the late colonial period. The gendered racial divisions that once separated the colonial family and the ‘native’ servants were later inscribed in post-colonial domestic space.”\textsuperscript{133}

Within dwellings of Colombo, the above-mentioned notions of façade, performance and separation, further encompassed the dining space. The dining room, occupied by the owners had set expectations. A notion even visible during the postcolonial era; \textit{The Lament of the Dhobi Woman}, through the eyes of the narrator describes the dining room as a space where the use was fixed, almost rehearsed:

\textsuperscript{130} Jones, “Furnished in English Style,” 53.
\textsuperscript{131} Pieris, \textit{Architecture and Nationalism}, 122.
\textsuperscript{132} Jones, “Furnished in English Style,” 53.
\textsuperscript{133} Pieris, \textit{Architecture and Nationalism}. 122.
When we had company...the dining room became a sort of ceremonial eating room, where people chatted casually and laughed and forks and knives clinked commonly on the uncommonly beautiful china. When we had informal buffet dinners, it was even better. People wandered to the table, helped themselves and wandered off to sit or stand anywhere they liked.¹³⁴

Figure 11 “Drawing room at Stanley Hall during E. G. Blume’s occupancy, ca. 1910,” State Library of Queensland.

The drawing rooms of the elites, in the colonial Brisbane were not significantly different:

Our Front Room is a warning, richly put, against easy pleasures and the dangers of ‘the social life’. The instruments of smoking and drinking are made visible, displayed and kept in a state of awful glitter; but only to demonstrate their attractiveness, and to show how firmly, in this house, they are resisted.

¹³⁴ Roberts, Dhobi Woman. 220.
I don’t believe I ever saw my parents take into that room anyone they valued as a friend or genuinely respected. Business acquaintances who expected to be offered liquor might be sat there for a time, as in the lounge of a theatre.\textsuperscript{135}

These rooms were noted by Faye Schutt, in similar manner to the description by Malouf. It was this room that welcomed guests and “[t]here the guests formed an opinion of the quality of the house and its inhabitants, especially of the mistress. It had to be the prettiest and nicest room, but useable as well.”\textsuperscript{136}

As the woman of the house, her worth and by extension her family’s status are measured by her ability to run her house and host. Therefore, the drawing room was used to display status to those who visit. This is evident in nineteenth century drawing rooms. During the 1880s in particular, the drawing room, a space, which was furnished in a strict arrangement, was decorative and grand; for example, a piano was considered to be essential among the elite at the time.\textsuperscript{137}

\textbf{Furnishings}

Furniture played an important role in showcasing status both in Colombo and Brisbane. Jones uses the example of three households to portray how westernised lifestyles penetrated the domestic sphere of local elites of Colombo. Many of these households were described as being western to the point that the tropical setting of Sri Lanka was not evident in the interior.\textsuperscript{138} Thus, the westernised nature of the furniture becomes clear. Yet, the furniture and their styles did not completely parallel those of Britain. “The furniture in the room was entirely European in form and style, although perhaps slightly old-fashioned when compared to the contents of contemporary interiors of a similar status in Britain.”\textsuperscript{139}

The consumption of western-style furniture is comparative to the use of western dress, the language, and education. Through the use of furniture and other interior decoration, the rising elites were able to further solidify their status. It aided the local elites in showcasing their status through their assimilation with the British colonial elites residing in Sri Lanka; “[f]urnishing in "English style" allowed the local social elite to demonstrate their civility, taste (judged by British standards) as well as their modernity; in addition, it

\begin{footnotes}
\item[135] Malouf, \textit{12 Edmondstone Street}, 56-57.
\item[136] Schutt, “Management,” 16.
\item[138] Jones, “Furnished in English Style,” 50.
\item[139] Ibid.
\end{footnotes}
established common ground or mediating material between them and the colonial power.\textsuperscript{140}

Figure 12 “Regina walavva, wedding pavilion.” Anoma Pieris, \textit{Architecture and Nationalism in Sri Lanka: The Trouser Under the Cloth} (Hoboken: Taylor and Francis, 2012), 82.

Westernised lifestyles were not only adapted to meet the cultural expectations of the British. The validation of both the British and fellow local elites, alike, was important. Within the domestic space, however, existed a dichotomy. Many of the western furniture were concentrated to the front of the house, the public spaces used to host. While areas such as the kitchen exhibit more indigenous characteristics. The local elites negotiated the local and colonial lifestyles through objects in addition to other intangible cultural products. Local practice continued but was enhanced through the acquisition of European-style goods; local traditions of hospitality were maintained but the apparatus of hospitality — the interior decoration of rooms, the form and

\textsuperscript{140} Ibid., 54.
style of tables, chairs, crockery and cutlery – demonstrated a knowledge and understanding of western taste.\textsuperscript{141}

Within Brisbane’s history, the furnishings of residences, across the social spectrum, have been studied in depth. The furnishings present in the Queensland home were regarded to be the “outcome of practical necessity, fashion and sentiment. It has reflected the lifestyles and aspirations of the people who made their lives and raised their families in Queensland.”\textsuperscript{142}

As homes were vital in portraying status and allowed upward social mobility, so was furniture. The standards for furnishing were governed by publications geared towards women and even exhibitions held on the topic. Such publications included the \textit{Mrs Beeton’s Book of Household Management} and \textit{The Australian Home: A Handbook of Domestic Economy}.\textsuperscript{143} According to the standards set within these pages, many items were imported from England, while others were made using local high quality materials. Many of these events and publication also provided lower class women tips on how to achieve the desired effects at a lower cost.\textsuperscript{144}

Late nineteenth century was a “time when the decoration and furnishing of the whole house was planned very carefully, room by room.”\textsuperscript{145} The elite dwellings were unique in comparison to each other and lower class dwellings. This freedom in design held by elites was also present in the furniture. The elite residences of Queensland were able to furnish according to the latest styles with high quality furniture. This was not limited to furniture but included patterns, colours, ornaments, wallpapers, fabrics, and tiles, to name a few.\textsuperscript{146} “The house was decorated and furnished in keeping with the prevailing fashion as a demonstration of respectability and success. While experimentation and variety were the province of the wealthy…”\textsuperscript{147} However, it is important to note that similar to the evolution of the style of Queensland dwelling, the furnishing and the interior decoration also evolved. For example, “[b]y the mid-1880s the great changes in taste that had swept across England arrived in Brisbane. All the curved shapes of the previous years were stylistically rejected.”\textsuperscript{148}

\textsuperscript{141} Ibid., 46.
\textsuperscript{142} Slaughter, “Furniture,” 71.
\textsuperscript{143} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{144} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{145} Schutt, “Management,” 14.
\textsuperscript{146} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{147} Ibid., 13.
\textsuperscript{148} Slaughter, “Furniture,” 75.
Servants

One of the main features of an elite dwelling, both of Colombo and Brisbane that differentiates it from a middle or working class dwelling is the presence of and the number of servants. Though middle or working class households might occasionally have servants, particularly in Brisbane, the number and the treatment of servants differed across the classes. The space of the kitchen is also discussed in the upcoming pages due to its strong connection to servants.

The presence of servants was a common theme within colonial dwellings located in and around Colombo. The number of servants present at a late nineteenth century mansion was around 30-40, including gardeners, cooks, nannies, and groundskeepers.\textsuperscript{149} The owners occupied the front of the house and the servants occupied the back; a notion that continued past the colonial era and was prevalent among the local and colonial elites, alike.\textsuperscript{150}

\textsuperscript{149} Pieris, \textit{Architecture and Nationalism}, 62.
\textsuperscript{150} Ibid., 63.
The presence of servants is not only evident in academic literature but also in novels such as those by Roberts, Wijenaike, and Wickramasinghe. Across these novels, the servants resided in colonial dwellings, alongside the owners, each playing a specific role. Though residing in the dwelling, the servants had their own wing — out of sight. The kitchen was also located separate to the main residence. This served a dual purpose of avoiding both the servants and the heat and soot of the stove.\(^{151}\)

Elite households showed loyalty to their servants through colonialism, decolonisation and the postcolonial period. Though they were not regarded to be a part of the family. Many servants were employed for their entire working life. As the times changes, the number of servants reduced, but was not eradicated; the colonial mansions maintained sufficient funding, in the hands of elites. As fashions changes, pantries were introduced into the dwelling. But the pantry was for the ‘lady of the house;’ to bake confectionaries and make western dishes. The eastern dishes continued to be prepared in the kitchen, located out of sight.\(^{152}\)

These practices followed through to the postcolonial era. The novel *Amulet*, by Punyakante Wijenaike, follows the journey of Shayamali and her husband following their marriage and her arrival at his family home. This home, damaged by a complicated past, is the backdrop of a novel that describes an abusive Sri Lankan upper-class marriage and family. Upon arriving at the residence of her husband, Shayamali discovers that her husband has made a separate kitchenette for her to operate, cook small meals, make tea; the existing kitchen was for the cook and was not considered of the quality needed for a wife.\(^{153}\)

Lawson, in his book discussing Brisbane in the 1890s states that, from the families that participated in his research and identified as being elite, all of them retained servants. In addition, the average number of servants per household exceeded four; middle class dwelling were noted to have one or two servants.\(^{154}\) Outside the number of servants, two other factors differentiated the elite dwellings from the middle class.

First were the living situations of the servants. Similar to Colombo, many of the servants of elite dwellings occupied a separate wing that combined with the kitchen.\(^{155}\) The servants to the middle class, on the other hand, did not reside in the dwellings.

---

\(^{151}\) Ibid.  
\(^{152}\) Ibid.  
\(^{154}\) Lawson, *Brisbane in the 1890s*, 135.  
Second was the treatment of the servants. Unlike the middle class families, none of the elite families reported that their servants were treated as “members of the family.”

As the economic situation of Brisbane changed, “[b]y the early twentieth century, the grand sprawling mansions requiring readily available cheap domestic labour and reminiscent of a different social era were almost a thing of the past.” As the number of servants employed reduced, in consequence so did the composition of the house. The service areas, once located as a separate wing, were moved to the interior of the dwelling. This resulted in elites, more specifically the lady of the house, having to engage in household activities.

**EVOLUTION**

Sri Lanka achieved independence in 1948. “This led to the re-use of existing spaces and the transformation of building functions; spacious private bungalows were increasingly adapted as offices, and state institutions intruded into the fashionable colonial suburbs of Cinnamon Gardens.” Many of bungalows and mansions owned by the colonial elites were repurposed, yet those owned by the local elites did not succumb to the same fate.

These colonial bungalows, mansions, and *walauwas* remained consistent in their portrayal. Despite the additions due to technological advances, such as electricity, cars, internal bathrooms, and the reduction of the number of servants, many of the dwellings were maintained in their original state following independence.

This continuity is explained by how colonial dwellings owned by the local elites remained in private hands. Some properties remained in the same family while others were sold; yet continued to be private residences. However, the political climate did influence how these dwellings were experienced. As the socialist government of Sri Lanka took to power in the 1970s, limitations were imposed on the amount of land that could be owned by any given individual. Therefore, the large plots of land surrounding mansions were subdivided and sold. Only the dwelling and the property immediately surrounding it remained.

All three books of the *Uprooted* series depict bungalows as being unchanged across generations. Beginning with the original village house of high status, moving

---

156 Lawson, *Brisbane in the 1890s*, 135.
159 Perera, *Society and Space*, 143.
forward to the newer house built in the village, followed by multiple British-style bungalows located in Colombo; each generation occupies a different dwelling.\textsuperscript{160} In \textit{Amulet}, the bungalow sees very little change, except the addition of a bedroom. Due to the prominence of the family and the duty to the future generations, Senani, the husband, does not implement his plan to destroy the bungalow until he is able to build his children houses of value. However, once the bungalow has served its purpose of masking his past along with maintaining his social status and outward appearance, it is torn down to make way for modern high-rise housing.\textsuperscript{161}

This dedication to the continuation of bungalows is clearly paralleled in \textit{The Lament of the Dhobi Woman}:

I climbed the steps into the veranda and looked around. Nothing had changed. I almost wished it had. That might have indicated that some time had passed …

The walls had been freshly painted and the furniture was polished to a dull shine. My great-grandmother’s tall hat stand stood in the same place. Underneath its four sturdy legs, there would be four pale squares; nobody moved it when the floor was polished.\textsuperscript{162}

Conversely, Queensland dwellings depicted in \textit{12 Edmondstone Street} and \textit{Tirra Lirra by the River}, by Jessica Anderson, despite living among the memories of the narrators, have undergone many physical changes. Though these are middle class dwellings, elite dwellings also saw similar changes in form, use, and ownership. The novel by Malouf begins with a declaration that the home of the narrator’s childhood is no longer in existence despite vivid memories.\textsuperscript{163} Similarly, in \textit{Tirra Lirra by the River}, a novel describing Nora’s return to the Queenslander of her youth paralleled with her memories of her life away from Queensland, Nora realises, upon her return, that her sister has made many changes to her childhood home. Yet, the house remains familiar. As she occupies the Queenslander, she too chooses to embrace these changes, limit the rooms that she frequents, and makes changes of her own.\textsuperscript{164}

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{161} Wijenaike, \textit{Amulet}, 149. \\
\textsuperscript{162} Roberts, \textit{Dhobi Woman}. 85-86, 264-265. \\
\textsuperscript{163} Malouf, \textit{12 Edmondstone Street}. \\
\textsuperscript{164} Jessica Anderson, \textit{Tirra Lirra by the River} (Sydney: Macmillan Australia Pty Limited, 2003).
\end{flushleft}
The elite colonial dwellings of Queensland, though lower in number and high in variety, differed in to the middleclass dwellings described above in one notion – preservation. This is due to the histories bound within these dwellings:

The historic homes of the nineteenth century still surviving in Brisbane are built evidence of its history and of the people who helped shape that history in many ways. The homes are an expression of the people themselves - the designers, the original owners for whom they were built, and the subsequent owners and occupiers.\(^{165}\)

The historic homes, as stated above, refer to the dwellings, which have contributed to the history of Brisbane: not specifically to the architectural history, but the larger understanding of Brisbane’s past. The lifestyles led within and the owners of the dwellings contribute to this understanding. It is in order to extract the histories that occurred within elite dwellings of the nineteenth century that many of them have been preserved.

At the beginning of the conservation movement, in the 1970s, interest stemmed from the owners of the dwellings.\(^{166}\) As time passed, many private and public funds were directed to the cause. As the movement to preserve evolved, many of the old elite dwellings were altered in purpose. The changes in purpose that occurred in the twentieth century included, but were not limited to museums, restaurants, museums, homes, and care facilities for the elderly. Despite these changes and modernisation many of the dwellings have been preserved in their original form.

CONCLUSION

Building forth from the social histories presented in Chapter 01, through the secondary literature and the novels, this chapter gives insight into the values attached to colonial dwelling and their features: by society and popular culture. Through this discussion, it becomes clear that majority of the features belonging to elite colonial dwellings are used to denote status. Hitherto, there lie differences between Colombo and Brisbane in how status was portrayed.

Within Colombo, the local elites incorporated elements related to the coloniser, especially the British, into their lives through architecture, dress, and language in order to portray their status. In Brisbane, alternatively, the status of the owners governed the form and the use of colonial dwellings. Elites of Brisbane, due to their newfound wealth and social standing were able to build extravagant and unique houses. They further defined

\(^{165}\) Hogan, “The Elite Brisbane House,” 27.

elements and their relation to status. Though many such elements were British in origin, it was elites of Brisbane who set the standard for their use. While in Colombo, the British colonisers set the standards, which were mimicked by the local elites.

Following independence, colonial dwellings of Colombo maintained associations with elites who utilised it to portray their status. The family histories, intrinsically linked to these dwellings and their usage continued into the postcolonial. Where as in Brisbane, though the structures were preserved, the users and the uses changed as society evolved. Thus, colonial dwellings, especially those belonging to elites, continued to be indicative the origins of Brisbane and the histories surrounding it, but lost their personal relationships to high status.
CHAPTER 3: COLOMBO

INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses postcolonial uses of colonial dwelling located in and around Colombo; the personal relationships held with the dwellings and the histories reflected on by the dwelling. These dwellings range in historical background and current use. Within the five case studies are two boutique hotels: one is a testament to the past histories within (Maniumpathy Boutique Hotel) and the other, a colonial shell to a luxurious modern interior (Tintagel Colombo). The third case study, Boralugoda Maha Gedera continues to be a residential dwelling in the hands of the descendants of the original owners. The fourth, Pradeepa Hall is a reception hall owned and operated by the National Housing Department. The Lighthouse, the final case study, is an office space owned and run by the Foreign Ministry of Sri Lanka.

Colonial dwellings of Colombo are used as a medium to portray colonial nostalgia. Across the five dwellings, the physical structures, especially the façades and other outward portrayals of the dwellings, are highly representative of the original colonial forms. Albeit, the reflections of the colonial period, past the mere physical structures, vary across the dwellings. Thus, through these five case studies, this chapter moves on to argue that in Colombo, the relationship between the owners and colonial dwellings are directly echoed in the histories reflected by the dwellings. Nonetheless, the elite statuses associated with these dwellings continue to be represented.

MANIUMPATHY BOUTIQUE HOTEL\textsuperscript{167,168}

Maniumpathy is a stately house, which has been home to five generations of a family originating in Jaffna. During its history spanning over a century, it has evolved at the hands of the different members of the family who have lived there.\textsuperscript{169}

History

Built in 1868 and located in Cinnamon Gardens, this colonial bungalow was purchased towards the end of the century by a Sri Lankan family from its original Dutch owners. Servants were employed, across generations, to clean the dwelling, do the

\textsuperscript{167} An earlier version of this case study, ‘Maniumpathy Boutique’ was included in a paper published in the book of proceedings generated by the conference REHAB 2017..

\textsuperscript{168} Referred to as ‘Maniumpathy’ in this thesis.


71
washing, maintain the garden, and prepare food. A few servants commuted while many lived on the property; there existed servants’ quarters at the back of the property accompanied by two servants’ toilets.

Despite continuously being a residential dwelling, Maniumpathy has undergone physical changes in order to accommodate the changing needs of the family. In 1906, a grand porch was added. In 1920, an annex was added for the private practice for the owner, a retired doctor. A new parapet wall with two gates and a driveway leading up to the house and toilets attached to the bedrooms were built in the 1950s and 1960s, respectively. In the 1970s, as required by the socialist government, the land was segmented and sold.\textsuperscript{170}

Across time, many members of the family brought western influences into the household. Majority of the time, this was following their tertiary education abroad. In 1965, especially, western influences were brought by the new generation of owners who relocated from England. The current owner, Chrysanthie Basnayake moved back into her childhood room with her husband, following her marriage in 1990. They raised their children in the annexe and she took over the property, following the death of her father.\textsuperscript{171} During this period, aided by a friend who was an apprentice architect, plumbing and new electric fixtures were introduced, the outhouse and the annex were converted into office and storage space, and the rear verandah, once closed, was reopened.

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item[\textsuperscript{170}] Adrian Basnayake (owner of Maniumpathy) in email discussion with the author, June 2017, transcript.
\item[\textsuperscript{171}] Chrysanthie Basnayake (owner of Maniumpathy) in discussion with the author, October 2016, transcript.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
Decision to Change

Over time, many had expressed interest in purchasing the dwelling for development. However, due to the sentimental value attached to their family home and the architecture, the owners retained Maniumpathy.172

Its most recent owners have renovated it and transformed it into a boutique hotel, with the intention of immersing its guests in an atmosphere reminiscent of the moods and pursuits of the people who have lived within its walls in those times past.173

The initial intention of the renovation that occurred during 2010 to 2016 was to combat annual flooding caused by the raised road, which led to evacuation. It was only towards the end of this renovation process, that the Basnayakes made the decision to convert the bungalow into a boutique hotel.174 “[H]ad it remained as a family residence, would have required five or six servants — a burden that Adrian [Basnayake] was not prepared to pass on to his family in an era removed from the days of privilege.”175

172 Ibid.
174 Chamika De Alwis (Architect) in discussion with the author, December 2016, transcript.
Figure 15 “Ground Floor plan of Maniumpathy Boutique Hotel,” drawn by Chethani Gunawardena and Nirasha Fernando, (derived from the plan drawn by M.I.C.D. Associates in 2014, 2018).
Recent Changes

In the initial renovation, Maniumpathy’s foundations were raised and the house was rebuilt. In order to change the use of the space to a boutique hotel, the design was altered physically and conceptually. First was editing the vision for the initial renovation – recreating the past – to fit a boutique hotel. Second was the creation of a sufficient number and sufficiently sized rooms for a boutique hotel. Third was accommodating certain pieces of furniture, namely a staircase and a large dining table, purchased by Adrian.

The owners continued to be heavily involved in the design process. Both the owners and the architect wished to maintain the bungalow’s history and the essence derived from that history. Influenced by Basnayakes’ stories and photographs, the space was envisioned to transport the user to the past; a past that encapsulates the dwelling across many generations. However, in doing so, the bungalow was also taken back to the glory and elite standing of the colonial era.

![Figure 16 “Interior view of Formal Dining Room containing the table bought by Adrian,” Maniumpathy Boutique Hotel, Colombo, 2016.](image)

The initial design for the boutique hotel containing ten rooms, a billiards room, a library, and a gym was rejected as the “look and feel of old Maniumpathy had been

---

176 De Alwis.
177 Chrysanthie Basnayake.
lost.” The amended design maintained the plan of the original property while the outhouse was expanded to accommodate more rooms; in this design, “Maniumpathy looked and felt like Maniumpathy externally.”

The dimensions of the extended outhouse were designed according to the above-mentioned staircase. This new building used square columns, instead of the circular that is both, present within the bungalow and authentic to the time period. This detail highlighted that it was a modern addition to an otherwise authentically renovated bungalow.

Architectural details were also manipulated in the original bungalow. In order to replicate the original dwelling, plaster was applied with imperfect edges, the cement floors were replaced with marble, which was aesthetically similar to the original floor, and the furniture used was a mixture of original pieces and unique findings, painted and adjusted to mimic timber of the early twentieth century. All these factors culminated towards an aesthetic that was true to the original bungalow but also matched the grandeur intended of the boutique hotel.

Figure 17 “Interior view of Courtyard and Dining Area,” Maniumpathy Boutique Hotel, Colombo, 2016

178 Adrian Basnayake.
179 Ibid.
180 De Alwis.
181 Ibid.
Current Structure

Maniumpathy Boutique Hotel provides “an opportunity for the curious visitor to relive these experiences, enjoying a unique perspective of past Sri Lankan culture.” A room is priced upwards of 250 USD per night.

The Maniumpathy family’s history is emphasised throughout the experience. The website lists the family lineage while the dwelling is decorated with family photographs. Additionally, the rooms of boutique hotel are named after women of the family; to honour the matriarchal presence in the dwelling, across generations. Upon Maniumpathy’s opening, “[Adrian’s] daughter, three years into a medical degree in Australia, chose to come home and take over the running of a grand dwelling.”

In 2017, however, the management and operations of Maniumpathy was given over to Manor House Concepts, a company, which manages various properties across Sri Lanka; majority of which are historical properties with contemporary renovations. This change in management has affected the operations of Maniumpathy, specifically as partnerships were made with travel agents; yet, the boutique hotel continues to be a space that the owners operate in with a degree of freedom, as an extension of their home, personal guests are entertained and parties are hosted.

Through the physical and operational changes, the boutique hotel continues to be a testament to the past bungalow and the lives led within. It is this family home in combination with the history of the family that is advertised to the public.

Analysis

The notion of a boutique hotel lent itself to the desire of the owners to preserve and renovate the dwelling as they decided to move out of their personal residence. Thus, Maniumpathy, the boutique hotel, represents many histories of the bungalow and hence encompasses the version which was a family home of elite status; highlighting the family, the history, and the home. The boutique hotel also incorporates the later additions to the dwelling, though it primarily reflects the colonial era. Despite the structure being new, due to the reconstruction and the conversion into a boutique hotel, the architectural type, of the colonial mansion, is a part of that representation.

The entire bungalow reflects the Victorian architecture, and British influence on Ceylon decades ago, with a hint of Jaffna culture seeping through, a

183 Chrysanthie Basnayake.
184 Baker, "Tea & Tourism."
185 De Alwis.
reminder of the Northern roots of the Hallock family. Though elegance and extravagance is at the core of Maniumpathy, it has not lost its charm of being a family home, where guests are taken back in time to the old aristocratic lifestyles of Sri Lankans, with rich cultural values, charm and heritage.  

The future of the bungalow, as seen by the owners, is in being a “living working monument to a bygone era welcoming members of the family both here and abroad, and discerning global travellers as a true hallmark of heritage, elegance and pampering hospitality.” Though Maniumpathy is a boutique hotel, it is an extension of the family’s space. The sentimental connection felt to the bungalow remains, though the elite standing is highlighted; a testament to the past and the future of the family.

**TINTAGEL HOTEL**  

Once known as the Rosmead Walauwa located in Colombo 07 (Cinnamon Gardens):

Paradise Road Tintagel Colombo is a unique and private hotel, situated in the heart of Colombo’s most elite neighborhood. Offering 10 individually

---

186 Adrian Basnayake.  
187 Ibid.  
188 An earlier version of this case study, ‘Tintagel Hotel’ was included in a paper published in the book of proceedings generated by the conference REHAB 2017, Braga, Portugal, June 2017.  
189 Referred to as ‘Tintagel’ in this thesis.
designed suites with all modern amenities and services, our hotel is housed in a stunning heritage residence that was previously home to three of Sri Lanka’s political leaders.\textsuperscript{190}

**History**

Dr. Lucian de Zilwa originally built Tintagel in 1929 with the aid of the architect Homi Billimoria. In Dr. de Zilwa’s autobiography, the mansion’s extravagance, influences and materials were attributed to a variety of international sources:

This contrivance was copied from the Hope de Paris, Seville. Unlike most big buildings in Colombo which were dark in the centre, this house was flooded with light. For the front verandah and the steps I procured marble from North India, like that used by the Moguls in Agra…\textsuperscript{191}

During WWII, the British Military occupied the mansion. Following WWII, coming under difficult financial times, the de Zilwas decided to sell Tintagel.\textsuperscript{192} Sir Solomon Dias Bandaranaike purchased Tintagel for his son Solomon West Ridgeway (SWRD) and his wife, Sirimavo.\textsuperscript{193} Both Bandaranaike and his wife went on to become Prime Ministers of Sri Lanka in 1956 and 1970, respectively. Their daughter Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunge, who grew up at Tintagel, was the first female President of Sri Lanka. Furthermore, the only son of the family, Anura Bandaranaike became the Leader of the Opposition and the Speaker of the House. Tintagel was also the location for SWRD Bandaranaike’s murder in 1959. Hence, throughout the years, Tintagel has always been a highly politicised space.\textsuperscript{194}

The mansion was leased out to the Burmese Ambassador and the Egyptian Ambassador in the 1960s. Despite these two incidences, and the military occupation, until 2005, Tintagel was a solely private residence.

\textsuperscript{190} “Paradise Road The Tintagel Colombo,” *Paradise Road*, http://www.paradiseroadhotels.com/tintagel/
\textsuperscript{192} Kumudini Hettiarchchi, "Paradise Comes to Tintagel," *Sunday Times Plus*, N.d., http://www.sundaytimes.lk/050313/plus/1.html
\textsuperscript{194} Ibid.
Decision to Change

In 2005, Tintagel was leased out by its last occupant, Sunethra Bandaranaike, with the support of her siblings, to become Paradise Road Tintagel Colombo: a unique private hotel. Following her mother’s death, Bandaranaike, who believed the space to be too evocative of their past and too large for her sole occupation, searched for alternatives that allowed the mansion to be preserved: “This house has had drama more than any other in the country. A majority of people in Sri Lanka consider this to be a treasure that should be preserved for posterity.”

Ideas for the use of Tintagel included the donation of the space to an embassy but following discussions with the owner of Paradise Road, Bandaranaike leased the home and supported its conversion.

Having been a part of the hospitality industry and having converted other spaces important to the nation’s history into commercial enterprises, such as eateries, the owner of Paradise Road had been in search of a mansion, to be converted into a boutique hotel. The desire to lease this particular mansion was rooted both in its history and form. Unlike many colonial mansions Tintagel was neither in a dilapidated state nor on a

---

195 Ibid.
196 Ibid.
197 Ibid.
198 Anonymous (owner of Paradise Road) in email discussion with the author, October 2016, transcript.
small plot of land. The size of the property, its upkeep, and its history played a role in its selection: “the history of the house also had the influence to make it important enough and interesting enough for me to invest my money in it and convert it to what it is.” 199

Recent Changes

![Image](image_url)

**Figure 20** “Interior view of Living Room containing Contemporary Furniture,” Tintagel Hotel, Colombo, 2016.

When converting this residential property into a boutique hotel, the owner of Paradise Road dictated design ideas while the architect translated these ideas onto paper. 200 The original façade of Tintagel was maintained due to its relation to the British renaissance and the history of this specific mansion; the façade depicted the status of the family who established the house, and those who occupied the house subsequently.

However, an additional storey was created at the back of the mansion to accommodate additional rooms. The interior was also reorganised and spaces distributed among the old and the new structures. 201 Much of the reorganising occurred in the process of creating the necessary number of rooms for guests. Within the original house, the upper floor consisted of three bedrooms. This was converted to include eight bedrooms with bathrooms, while the original kitchen was relocated, across the lower floor, to create space for another suite.

---

199 Ibid.
200 Ibid.
201 Ibid.
All new additions were made to seamlessly blend into the existing colonial architecture. The owner of Paradise Road wished to create cohesion between the new and the old through detail.\textsuperscript{202} The façade was emphasised, the internal courtyard utilised, and the high ceiling accentuated. The mansion was decorated to enhance the British colonial features. This was achieved through the use of furniture ranging from a piano to four-poster beds, along with artwork from the colonial era.\textsuperscript{203}

However, there existed criticism of the conversion. This was vocalised by then Minister Maithripala Sirisena, who commented:

As the General Secretary of the SLFP I am so ashamed. It would be better to commit suicide than witness such things […] The Rosemead Walawwa, a place which has a historical value to the SLFP is today a tavern. […] In other countries such places are conserved as museums.\textsuperscript{204}

Though these opposing views were vocalised publically, they were not addressed in the conversion of Tintagel, which was spearheaded by the owner of Paradise Road and supported by Sunethra Bandaranaike.

**Current Structure**

Having opened in 2007, Tintagel Colombo includes a reception area, a bar, a pool, a dining room, and a private dining room. Though evocative of the mansion’s colonial past, it contains a modern finish.

Though the 1920s exterior has been preserved the interior is an interesting mix of ancient and modern, which encompasses objet d'art from all over the world. The attention given to each and every detail is apparent through the hand picked furniture, upholstery, carpets, black lacquer tabletops, lamps, chandeliers and colours used […]\textsuperscript{205}

\textsuperscript{202} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{203} Hettiarachchi, "Paradise Comes to Tintagel."


Both the website of Tintagel and its staff are fully informed of the history of the mansion; the past residents, the past ownerships, the importance of the Bandaranaikes and their political legacy. Labelled as a ‘heritage residence,’ the history depicted on the website dates back to the de Zilwa occupation. Visits of notable guests such as Price of Charles are advertised. All these features culminate to extenuate the elite nature of Tintagel, the rooms of which cost over 250 USD a night.

**Analysis**

The role played by the owners of Tintagel in the process of renovation was limited to the decision made to lease the property to Paradise Road. For the owner of Paradise Road, Tintagel lent itself to the vision of a businessperson who wished to convert a prominent colonial mansion into a boutique hotel.

The intent of the renovations was also to showcase Sri Lanka’s ability to create an internationally recognised hotel. Thus, the historical features highlighted are those that brand Tintagel as an elite space. The history of the mansion, both political and colonial, is celebrated. Though many external and grand features of the colonial mansion were preserved, the era evoked was forgone for a more modern and grand interior, which is reminiscent of romanticised expectations of a colonial mansion than the past realities.

---

206 Hettiarachchi, "Paradise Comes to Tintagel,"
White finishes and furnishings, though western and elegant in essence, also exude a contemporary nature deviating from how the colonial mansion was occupied in the past.

In public portrayal, postcolonial political affiliations overshadow the colonial features. However, they are not paralleled in the dwelling. In reimagining the dwelling and its history, the personal journeys and lifestyles within the mansion, both during and following the colonial period, are neglected. Physically, Tintagel evokes the broad, generic, societal expectations of a colonial mansion, of glamour, elitism, and luxury. It is a colonial shell to an eclectic interior, which grasps the grandeur of the past.

Figure 22 “Interior view of Formal Dining Room and Restaurant,” Tintagel Hotel, Colombo, 2016.
Located in Kosgama, Sri Lanka, an hour outside the capital of Colombo, Boralugoda Maha Gedera has remained in the hands of the Gunawardenas family since its construction; inherited by the youngest of each generation. The current owner, Vijith Rupasinghe Gunawardena, is the fourth generation of the family to own the dwelling. His ancestors purchased the surrounding estates and constructed the dwelling around the 1880s. Therefore, the family, not only owns the dwelling but also the surrounding coconut and rubber estates.

History
The original owner of Boralugoda Maha Gedera, followed by his son, were the village headmen of multiple villages; the family name was given to them by the British Raj. The third generation owner was a Member of Parliament who pioneered the anti-British movement in Sri Lanka. Therefore many young politicians began their work within this dwelling. Initially referred to as Boralugoda Walauwa, the name of the property was
changed to Boralugoda Maha Gedera following the family’s transition into politics; the term *walauwa* was rejected due to its connection to the Kandyan elite.  

Across the years, certain alterations, additions, and reductions were made both to parallel advances in technology and the social standing of the owners. The owners, however, regard these changes to be minimal.  

![Figure 24](image)


In the 1960s, when the then owner of the house was stationed in China, furniture was brought back and incorporated into the dwellings. In the 1970s the dwelling gained electricity; later than more urban dwellings. The house also did not have running, pipe-borne water until the 1970s. Towards the end of the twentieth century, two bathrooms were added to replace the external latrines; one was located at the end of the internal verandah and the other was attached to a room. A collapsing section from the back of the house, containing a kitchen and outhouses, was also removed.

---

207 Vijith Rupasinghe Gunawardena (owner of Boralugoda Maha Gedera) in discussion with the author, December 2016, transcript.

208 Ibid.

209 Ibid.
Subsequent changes included the introduction of modern fixtures such as a television, oven, fridge, and other kitchen utilities. These new kitchen utilities are located in the dining room, closer to the owners; creating distance between the appliances and the kitchen, which continues to be operated by servants.

Decision to Change

Despite the changes outlined above, the owners have actively shied away from the possibilities of modernising the dwelling and its surroundings. Thus, these changes were executed with the idea of maintaining the dwelling. Despite this intention, many of these recent changes, show signs of being superimposed on the existing structure instead of being designed cohesively into the dwelling.

Gunawardena, who works in the private sector, wishes to renovate the property in order to bring modern amenities onto the premises while repairing aspects of Boralugoda Maha Gedera which have become derelict and fallen to despair; this is considered to be the first major renovation since the dwelling’s establishment 130 years ago. Despite these renovations, the owner intends to maintain the character of the dwelling.\(^\text{210}\)

---

\(^{210}\) Ibid.
Recent Changes

The first aspect of the proposed renovation is the roof and ceiling; wood identical to the original will be used to repair the ceiling and to maintain both, the structural and the aesthetic integrity. Over the last five years, during times of rain, the roof leaks into the interior. As the walls are constructed purely of clay, the owners fear that if the roof and ceiling aren’t renovated with haste, the entire structure will suffer long lasting damage.  

Second, the kitchen; the current kitchen of Boralugoda Maha Gedera has remained quite consistent across the past generations except the small changes made to accommodate for the addition of running water, a sink, and a workbench. Referred to as a dum-kussiya, the kitchen to this day uses firewood to prepare food. Over the future years, the owner wishes to integrate more modern kitchen appliances to the household while maintaining the current kitchen. Therefore, a more modern pantry will be added to the space located between the dining room and the kitchen. This will reduce the requirement of the owners to enter the original kitchen, leaving that to be the domain of the servants.

Figure 26 “View of side Verandah,” Boralugoda Maha Gedera, Colombo, 2016.

---

211 Ibid.
212 Ibid.
Figure 27 “Ground Floor plan of Boralugoda Maha Gedera,” drawn by Chethani Gunawardena, (derived from measurements by the owners, 2018).
Figure 28 “First Floor plan of Boralugoda Maha Gedera,” drawn by Chethani Gunawardena, (derived from measurements by the owners, 2018).
Third, the garden and surrounding land. The neighbourhood surrounding Boralugoda Maha Gedera has begun to develop. Currently, there is a wall framing the front entrance to the immediate property. The family wishes to extend the garden to incorporate more of the estate and then create a clear boundary wall surrounding the dwelling to increase the prominence of Boralugoda Maha Gedera in the neighbourhood.\textsuperscript{213}

**Current Structure**

Currently, the primary resident of the dwelling is the mother of the owner. The owner and his family spends weekends and vacations at the Boralugoda Maha Gedera, while residing in Colombo during the remainder of the year.

The dwelling, which has seen very little change since its erection, currently consists of four bedrooms, two bathrooms, a study, living area, dining room, kitchen, a guest bedroom that is no longer in use, and a derelict space that was ones servants’ residences.

The furniture, which currently occupies the dwelling, has been in the same location from as early as 1919; as can be observed through photographs from the era. This serves to emphasise new additions made to the interior over the last few decades.

Across the generations, Boralugoda Maha Gedera was a communal space. Not only would extended family visit, but they would stay at the dwelling for multiple days. Presently, the owners host one or two large events a year, either a lunch, party, or an alms giving (a Buddhist religious event). Following these events, many of the extended family would stay at Boralugoda Maha Gedera and be entertained for an entire weekend.\textsuperscript{214}

Household servants have been employed since the establishment’s inception, with eight servants being employed at the height of the estate’s prosperity. The servants were provided food and lodging in the servants’ quarters, along with a small allowance. Maintaining a large and old house, along with cooking in a kitchen that has seen minimal change, are not tasks the owners consider to be feasible without domestic help. However, as the times evolved the number of servants have reduced with only one servant being employed currently.

\textsuperscript{213} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{214} Ibid.
Analysis

Boralugoda Maha Gedera, through five generations, has remained in the hands of the original family. This dwelling has continued to be used as home. Through the years, the changes, introduction of new technology, new amenities and renovations to the dwelling have been minimal. Furthermore, as the dwelling undergoes renovations, the family intends to continue maintaining the existing physical features of the space, including the architectural type, style, and interior.

This maintenance ranges from the upkeep of the original kitchen to the furniture. However, new features have been added to the space. These features are technological advances or artefacts that reflect significant moments to the family: the furnishing originating from China is an example. Due to the large families and the strong emotional connections held by the owners to the dwelling, Boralugoda Maha Gedera in its current portrayal reflects moments that are historically important to the family, from the dwelling’s origin, through the politicisation of the space, through to the present.

PRADEEPA HALL MODARA

Pradeepa Hall (Modara) is a reception hall located in Modara (also known as Mutwal), operated by the National Housing Department Authority (NHDA). Constructed in
the early nineteenth century by an English officer and known as the Whist Bungalow, it has been depicted in many writings across the colonial period. Mutwal, during the Dutch and British colonial periods, was a wealthy area for those who chose to live outside the city limits. Through the years, however, many of the elite residents relocated. Modara is currently congested and occupied by people from lower and lower-middle income levels.

Figure 30 “Whist Bungalow,” Anoma Pieris, Architecture and Nationalism in Sri Lanka: The Trouser Under the Cloth (Hoboken: Taylor and Francis, 2012), 52.

History

Gaining its name from the card game that was frequently played at the bungalow during parties, the Whist Bungalow, through time has been the residence of many well-known members of colonial society. At the time of the original owner, “’Whist Bungalow’ was a small plain house, buried in its shrubbery.”215 The second owner, Sir Richard Morgan, a Supreme Court Judge, renovated and elevated the dwelling and the property; it is this iteration of the bungalow, which is considered to be present to this day. Following Sir Morgan’s demise, the house was neglected, due to rumours of ghosts, until Herr Stipperger, a representative of the Austrian Lloyd Shipping Company in Colombo, revived

215 Ernst Haeckel and Clara Bell, A Visit to Ceylon (New Delhi: Asian Educational Services, 1995), 94.
the bungalow to its former glory.\textsuperscript{216} Visiting in 1883, during this ownership, Ernest Haeckel, describe the property as follows:

The special charm of "Whist Bungalow," above others near Colombo, consists partly in its delightful situation, and partly in its really magnificent garden. The out-buildings, servants' rooms, and stables lie behind it, hidden among shrubberies, while the house itself stands in front on the shore of the fine expanse of water that stretches away westwards. The airy verandah commands a view of the sea, the mouth of the river, and of a pretty, thickly wooded island that crowns its delta.\textsuperscript{217}

The subsequent owners of the Whist bungalow were Louis Henricus Susen Pieris, Barrister-at-law and Advocate of the Supreme Court of Ceylon, and Chevalier C.S. Antony. The Anthony family, the last private owners of the Whist Bungalow, lived there for three generations. Minister V.A Sugathadasa acquired the bungalow in 1973 for the government; and the Anthony family left the property in 1976, when it was converted into a warehouse.\textsuperscript{218}

Across the history of the Whist Bungalow, it was famed for entertaining guests and hosting parties. In the 1880s: “For many a year dinners and wine-parties were given here, more luxurious and splendid if not noisier and more riotous - than formerly at the whist-playing officer's less pretentious drinking-bouts.”\textsuperscript{219} Furthermore, the oldest account of the Whist bungalow, described parties where “[t]he company repairs to the villa about one o'clock in the afternoon, and play cards, read, or otherwise enjoy the country until four, when dinner is announced.”\textsuperscript{220} An account from the early twentieth century describes the bungalow as being “designed on a large scale, and the spacious reception-rooms speak of the days when our ancestors knew how to entertain generously and the motto with regard to guests was “the more the merrier.””\textsuperscript{221} Furthermore, during the times of the Anthony family, “[t]he Bungalow was full of visitors all the time, who were well entertained with a

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{216} Ibid., 96.
\item \textsuperscript{217} Ibid., 97.
\item \textsuperscript{218} Kumudini Hettiarachchi and Renuka Sadanandan, "Wine, Ghosts and Whist," \textit{Sunday Times Plus}, N.d., http://www.sundaytimes.lk/030105/plus/1.html
\item \textsuperscript{219} Haeckel and Bell, \textit{A Visit to Ceylon}. 95.
\item \textsuperscript{220} James Cordiner, \textit{A Description of Ceylon} (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, and Orme, 1807), 77.
\item \textsuperscript{221} Arnold Wright, \textit{Twentieth Century Impressions of Ceylon: Its History, People, Commerce, Industries, and Resources} (New Delhi: Asian Educational Services, 2004), 554.
\end{itemize}
battery of servants living in-house. There were also relatives, staying over as guests whenever they needed to be in Colombo.  

**Decision to Change**

It was in 1982, following many years of abandonment and being unlawfully occupied by drug addicts, the government obtained and renovated the Whist Bungalow under the Urban Development Authority. At its opening, in 1987, a plaque was erected detailing the history of the bungalow. In 2002, the NHDA renovated the now Pradeepa Hall to bring back certain elements of its past splendour.

**Recent Changes**

![Pradeepa Hall](image)

Figure 31 “Front View of Pradeepa Hall from the entrance,” Pradeepa Hall, Colombo, 2016.

Through the years, the property has become smaller. As described by members of the Anthony family, the “Whist Bungalow which during its grandest days had an appurtenant land of 18 Acres had dwindled down to a surrounding land of 03 Acres, 03 roots and 29 perches when it came to our family.” Much of the older property is now speculated to be occupied up by the adjoining Kovil, Government housing, and other low-income houses.

---

223 Ibid.
225 Perera, "Whist Bungaiow."
226 Ibid.
Figure 32 “Ground Floor plan of Pradeepa Hall,” drawn by Chethani Gunawardena, (derived from the visit to the property by Pamudu Tennakoon, 2018).
However, members of the Anthony family believe that the bungalow itself to be currently maintained by the NHDA, to a certain extent, at a level which is evocative of the past. The past, which is remembered as “... a sprawling mansion with spacious banqueting halls, large bedrooms, several verandas, long store rooms (earlier used as wine and provision cellars), drivers and servants quarters etc. etc.”

**Current Structure**

Pradeepa Hall (Modara) can be rented out for events from weddings, to parties, to concerts; at a cost of around USD 100 for a lot spanning four hours.228

![Figure 33 “Interior view of the event hall set up for an event,” Pradeepa Hall, Colombo, 2016.](image)

Despite the presence of a plaque commemorating the history of the bungalow and maintaining the use of the dwelling as a space for entertainment, its current use diverges from that of the past. Primarily, it is no longer a private residence of elites. It is instead maintained by the NHDA as a reception hall of very high demand and requires booking months in advance. The Pradeepa Hall primarily caters to the people of Modara and its surroundings, which have lost their elite residents, following independence. Therefore, those catered to in the events held at Pradeepa Hall have drastically changed from its

---

227 Ibid.
days as the Whist Bungalow. Moreover, the hall does not allow for the consumption of liquor, which played a lead role while the bungalow was in private hands.

The interactions had by the author with the NHDA, the operators of Pradeepa Hall, as well as the author’s exploration of the NHDA website makes it evident that Pradeepa Hall is not of a priority, architecturally. Listed under ‘leisure’ on the NDHA website, no description of the space, its architecture, or its history is provided – this is similar to the experiences in visiting the Hall, where only references to the dwelling’s past laid in a plaque and the mention of the Whist Bungalow being donated to the government.

Physically, the dwelling contains one large room, spanning majority of the interior followed by three private rooms, a kitchen office space, and bathrooms. The latter two kinds of spaces were created, by converting the dwelling, to bring the hall to the contemporary era and allow for public use. Furthermore, additional fixtures such as sinks, for washing hands, were added to cater to the crowds. These fixtures are superimposed on the dwelling, and do not show cohesion with the colonial forms of the original structure.

![Figure 34 “Rear view,” Pradeepa Hall, Colombo, 2016.](image)

**Analysis**

The Whist Bungalow is evidently one of the most documented residential dwellings during the colonial era. However, at present, due to its location, changes in the demographics of Modara, and the changes in use, the residents of Colombo do not know of Pradeepa Hall to the same extent. The choice of this case study for analysis lies in this significant shift from its privileged position to its current state. Used predominantly by the
residents of the surrounding area, Pradeepa Hall, in its complete appearance, users, and essence diverges drastically from what it used to be during the colonial era. Though the colonial history and the heritage of the bungalow were acknowledged, the revival and repurposing process undertaken the NHDA did not intend to preserve the past.

However, certain features of the colonial era have been maintained. Such features include the structure of the bungalow and its façade. Thus an aura of colonial elite status is maintained in its form, which is utilised by events such as Colomboscope, discussed in detail in Chapter 5. The features maintained, however, do not showcase deliberate architectural choices based on type but choices made out of respect to the past owners in addition to cost considerations. It is in the use the utilities introduced, and the furnishings provided for functions that Pradeepa Hall diverge from the past; plastic furniture is provided with the new fixtures, bathrooms, and the office being modern vernacular in style. Though the façade of the building, itself remains to be comparable to historical photographs, there exists a large dichotomy when comparing the interior of the Pradeepa Hall to the colonial exterior. The Whist Bungalow remains to be a shell to the event space that is Pradeepa Hall with significant changes to use, users, and status of the users; the colonial dwelling is reimagined to embrace the extant use.

THE LIGHTHOUSE

The mansion, known as The Lighthouse, having a history both in the hands of the government and private owners, has now been converted into office space. Accompanied by recent additions to the surrounding property, this dwelling is currently the location of the Lakshman Kadirgamar Institute (LKI), under the Foreign Ministry.

History

Mr. D. D. Peiris, an entrepreneur, built The Lighthouse in the neighbourhood of Cinnamon Gardens, in the early nineteenth century. It was used as a private residence for the span of a few decades. In 1933, the British Board acquired it and it was given the name “The Lighthouse”. The dwelling was then made the site for the Imperial Lighthouse service until the Sri Lankan Navy took ownership in 1976. The Navy was under the Ministry of External Affairs and Defence, which split in 1977, leaving The Lighthouse in the ownership of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.229 While under the ownership of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the dwelling has served as the residence of the Minister of Foreign Affairs.

229 “About,” The Lakshman Kadirgamar Institute, http://www.lki.lk/about/
Decision to Change

LKI, named after Lakshman Kadirgamar, the three-time Foreign Minister of Sri Lanka, was originally initiated as a think tank for International Relations and Economics; originally named the Sri Lanka Institute of Strategic Study.\textsuperscript{230} The housing of LKI within The Lighthouse is due to its affiliation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as “a statutory institution that receives financial and other support from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.”\textsuperscript{231} The Lighthouse has been a part of the LKI since 2004.

In regards to upkeep, renovations to The Lighthouse do not occur on a regular basis due the lack of capital available for maintenance. However, LKI, having saved up capital, along with assistance from the government, is currently (since 2016) in the process of reviving the dwelling and its surroundings; a project which is thought to take a few years.\textsuperscript{232}

\textsuperscript{230} “About,” The Lakshman Kadirgamar Institute.

\textsuperscript{231} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{232} Anonymous (Research Fellow) in discussion with the author, November 2016, transcript.
Figure 36 “Ground Floor plan of The Lighthouse,” drawn by Chethani Gunawardena and Nirasha Fernando (derived from the plan drawn by the 06th Engineering Services Regiment (V) in 2014, 2018).
Figure 37 “First Floor plan of The Lighthouse,” drawn by Chethani Gunawardena and Nirasha Fernando (derived from the plan drawn by the 06th Engineering Services Regiment (V) in 2014, 2018).
Recent Changes

Two additions were made to the grounds of The Lighthouse over the last two decades. These took the shapes of a new auditorium and an additional research unit located behind the original bungalow. The Lighthouse was surrounded by a large garden, which has reduced in size following these additions. The new auditorium was built in the early 2000s, on the space once occupied by the garden. Designed to replicate the style and details of the colonial mansion, the new auditorium contains Doric columns and a white façade. However, this auditorium of one-storey stands similar in height to the two storey original mansion hence diverging in proportion. The second addition, the research unit built in the recent years, resembles the contemporary vernacular architecture of Colombo as opposed to colonial architecture.

Figure 38 “View of later addition - event space,” The Lighthouse, Colombo. 2016.

The Lighthouse was under renovations in late 2016, as this case study was researched for this thesis, and the renovations were to encompass majority of the mansion. These renovations and the future renovations and changes anticipated by the management of LKI, to The Lighthouse, are twofold. The first is the renovation of the original bungalow bringing it to the desired standard. This is the process that is currently in

233 Ibid.
progress. The second is an addition of a second storey to the auditorium to accommodate a cultural space; a museum as planned by the current Foreign Minister.234

The contract for the current renovation was given to the Sri Lankan Navy and was initiated by the government. The renovation process primarily focuses on the roof of the dwelling as the original wood had begun to rot. In addition, many past maintenance has resulted in poor patch up work, with wood putty, as opposed to structural renovations. These factors contributed to the derelict state of the roof. Therefore the current renovation attempts to both revive the ceiling structure and the roof. However, costs govern the renovation; for example, the common flat tiles are being used as opposed to the original circular tiles.235

**Current Structure**

The original division of The Lighthouse bungalow remains to be intact, according to the employees of LKI, while the interiors have been changed to accommodate commercial use. Despite a few multipurpose spaces and spaces available for rent by the public, many parts of the building have been converted into office space: a front office, a communications office, an archival space, and a space for telecommunication research.236

![Figure 39 “Interior view of office space,” The Lighthouse, Colombo. 2016.](image)

---

234 Ibid.  
235 Ibid.  
236 Ibid.
One of the most elaborate spaces is the boardroom, the internal conversion of which does not pay attention to the colonial style of The Lighthouse. It merely appropriates the space. The library located on the ground floor parallels the boardroom. Strictly a reference library containing books, government publications, and foreign texts, it is currently used for meetings by the staff of the LKI. With large cushion sofas, a long table, and large bookshelves, this space emulates an intersection between the colonial era and the contemporary. The third elaborate feature is the statue of Lakshman Kadirgamar located in the garden. It is positioned prominently at the entrance as a focal point of the property. The garden as a whole is currently used for public events, and similar to many spaces within The Lighthouse, can be hired by external parties.

Figure 40 “Interior view of Reference Library,” The Lighthouse, Colombo. 2016.

Analysis

“Housed at 'The Lighthouse', LKI occupies a building steeped in contemporary Sri Lankan history…” The space and the treatment of The Lighthouse are not thoroughly documented due to its continuous changes in ownership and use: from a residential bungalow, to military ownership, to the residential bungalow of the Foreign Minister, to its current use as office space. In viewing its current use, it becomes clear that the history of the bungalow and its ownership by the Foreign Ministry have influenced the use of The

---

237 The Lakshman Kadirgamar Institute, “About.”
Lighthouse by the LKI. In addition, its prominent location in Colombo 07, adds to the prestige of the mansion. However, as changes have been made over time, the features of the architectural type have only been regarded in relation to changes to the facades.

However, in evaluating the evolution of the interior, such as the boardroom, the library and the multiple additional buildings, it is clear that the colonial nature of the bungalow has not been paid attention to in the conversion and the use of the interior space as an office. Despite certain colonial elements, such as the furnishings of the library and the façade of the auditorium, majority of the colonial reflection lie in the original structure and its details that make up the shell of the dwelling.

This new attention paid to the renovation of the space by government authorities and LKI appear to have been prompted by the form of the dwelling. Prominently featured on the website of LKI, in addition to being rented out for events, the form of the dwelling and its architectural type are vital to the outward appearance of the organisations that lie within.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has viewed five colonial bungalows located in and around Colombo, individually, to understand not only the present-day uses but also the journey taken to arrive at these current uses. Elite colonial dwellings symbolise a bygone era where a family’s status in society was evident by their homes. The roles played in society, the wealth held, and the portrayal of status were linked to dwellings even following the colonial period, as they continued to be homes to people of prominence. The events that transpired within the dwellings, from the colonial period, following independence also play a prominent role in how the histories of the dwellings are viewed at present. However, in contemporary society, a wide range of other factors also influences the perception of status. Yet, the identities of users are not independent of these dwellings.

The five case studies show varied approaches towards how they represent their histories, as well as which histories are represented. They also demonstrate diverse relationships between the different parties owning and intervening in the space of colonial dwellings. The owners of Maniumpathy and Boralugoda Maha Gedera continue to be personally involved, while Pradeepa Hall and The Lighthouse are owned and funded by the government. Tintagel diverges from the other four case studies, as it is leased by a businessman, who is motivated by corporate prospects. These motivations, governed by these relationships, influence the factors viewed as important in each dwelling; the histories that are reflected upon and revived.
Notwithstanding these differences, all five case studies depict elements of their past, colonial and postcolonial, that are connected to status. For example, though assorted histories have influenced the interiors and the uses of the dwellings, the facades of all five dwellings have been maintained. During the colonial period and following independence, the facades of colonial dwellings were symbols of wealth, status, and westernisation. However, in contemporary society, the preservation these facades are reflective of a range of historical associations, not limited to the colonial period. These reasons vary from the importance of the façade in remembering the family history, in depicting status and power of the colonial era, in reflecting Sri Lanka’s history and aesthetics.
CHAPTER 4: BRISBANE

INTRODUCTION

This chapter focuses on colonial dwellings located in and around Brisbane. The first of the five case studies is Hanworth House, which provides accommodation and acts as the space for events. The next two are house museums: Miegunyah and Newstead House. The fourth, Eskgrove, has two uses: a residential dwelling, whilst, a portion of the dwelling is available through Airbnb for short-term accommodation. The fifth, Hughesville, is an office space owned and run privately.

With histories dating back to the establishment of Brisbane as a city and a number of figures who have contributed to the history of the city, all five case studies discussed below are state heritage-listed dwellings. Despite the heritage-listings, the decisions to reflect upon the dwellings’ pasts are determined by their current uses. Similarly, which pasts to reflect from the early settlers to the twentieth century, and how these reflections manifest in the dwellings are also determined by these uses.

However, the physical structures of the five dwellings have been preserved with respect to their origins, as these case studies are heritage-listed. Though there is a range of other motivations, which influenced these preservations, their heritage-listed statuses dictated, to a large degree, how the structures were maintained. Therefore, this chapter argues that, though there is variation in how the dwellings reflect the past in the use of the dwelling, the structures are maintained as testaments to the origins of Brisbane.

HANWORTH HOUSE

Named after the English hometown of the Capitan Heath, the first owner, Hanworth House was erected in 1864. Hanworth is cited by the Heritage Register to be important due to its role in Queensland and East Brisbane’s history and heritage, the architecture of that era, the elites of the era, the specific individuals who lived within, the different uses, and the architect James Cowlishaw.

A 150 years since its completion, the dwelling was renovated and opened in 2014, offering space for short and long term accommodation and events.

---

238 Referred to as ‘Hanworth’ across this thesis.
History

The first Portmaster of Queensland, George Poynter Heath, and his family moved into Hanworth in mid-1865 and occupied the dwelling for nearly 25 years. During this period, many of Brisbane’s high society were entertained within the premises. As the Heaths returned to England in 1890, Hanworth was leased to Alexander Henry Hudson and his family who lived there for 22 years. Following which the land, which Hanworth was situated in, was subdivided and sold.

Mary Wienholt bought Hanworth in 1913 in honour of her mother and converted the space into “a home for elderly, impoverished gentlewomen, and re-named the place The Hospice.” Wienholt had a hundred year vision for the property to remain as a space which served women. In 1918, Wienholt added a timber wing containing seven bedrooms and two bathrooms to the dwelling.

242 Ibid.
243 Ibid.
244 Marisa Vecchio (owner of Hanworth House) in discussion with the author, April 2017, transcript.
In 1927, however, she handed over the Hospice to the Brisbane Theosophical Society, who continued the Hospice for 70 years according to Wienholt’s wishes. During this ownership a two-storey wing, constructed of brick, was added to the property.

The Hospice was then sold to the Anglican Church in 1995, who renamed it ‘Hanworth Home for the Aged’ and continued to uphold Wienholt’s wishes. However, in 2000, after failing multiple inspections and authorisations, and due to the high costs of bringing a Heritage listed dwelling to standard, the aged care facility was closed. The property was assigned a caretaker, and some of the rooms put up for rent.

![Figure 42 “Front view from drive-way,” Hanworth House, Brisbane. 2017.](image)

**Decision to Change**

Marisa Vecchio, purchased Hanworth in 2012, on the hundredth year anniversary of Mary Wienholt's wishes. Vecchio, a businesswoman, had renovated both residential and commercial properties in East Brisbane before. Her prior renovation experience, along with

---

245 Vecchio.
248 Vecchio.
with the desire to commemorate her mother, motivated Vecchio to purchase Hanworth, her first heritage listed property.\textsuperscript{250}

Despite living in close proximity to Hanworth, Vecchio was unaware of the house’s history.\textsuperscript{251} Therefore, she initially intended to convert the large, nineteen bedroom property into four different units of four to five bedrooms each. However, as the renovation was under way and a portion house was complete, the dwelling was set on fire by an arsonist, destroying 80\% of the structure.\textsuperscript{252}

In the aftermath of the fire, the community congregated in aid. Furthermore, Hanworth received a large amount of press coverage; listed as a “premier house in Brisbane.”\textsuperscript{253} Thus, a friend of Vecchio’s began investigating the history of Hanworth through secondary sources, a ‘house detective,’ historians, historical societies and round table discussions. Those familiar with Hanworth were invited to share photographs, letters, and stories.\textsuperscript{254}

The uncovered history resonated with Vecchio. Vecchio who was involved with many organisations that supported women was especially drawn to Wienholt’s legacy.\textsuperscript{255} Furthermore, Wienholt’s dedication of the Hospice to her mother paralleled Vecchio’s desire to dedicate the dwelling to her own mother. Therefore, the trajectory of the house changed. The new objective was to restore the dwelling back to its original state and commemorate the history of the property and its service to women.
Figure 43 “Ground Floor plan of Hanworth House,” drawn by Chethani Gunawardena and Nirasha Fernando (derived from the drawn done by Robin Spencer Architects PTY. LTD. in 2013, 2018).
Figure 44 “First Floor plan of Hanworth House,” drawn by Chethani Gunawardena and Nirasha Fernando (derived from the plan drawn by Robin Spencer Architects PTY. LTD. in 2013, 2018).
Recent Changes

The complete renovation took eighteen months; twelve of which followed the arson attack. As a heritage-listed building, this renovation was required to comply with certain regulations informed by the heritage board and a heritage architect.

In returning the dwelling to its original state, many of the fire damaged rooms and features were reconstructed. Following this revival, changes were made to accommodate its new use; addition of kitchens and bathrooms, making the space handicap accessible, opening up the internal verandah, and including firewalls. Galvanised steel was placed on the roofs of the two twentieth-century wings to match the original nineteenth century

---

256 Vecchio.
The fire also uncovered a once hidden widow’s peak from the Heath era, which was reinstated. Two large additions were also made to the property. First was a new wing. The second was a multiuse space located outside named the Phoenix Pavilion, to symbolise the rising of Hanworth from the ashes of the fire.

There were points of contention between the owners and the heritage council in regards to the interior. As the property lies on the heritage registry due to its initial, 1860 form:

The heritage council really wanted us to put the ornate cornices back … but majority of the life of the house, 125 of its 150 years it had been a hospice so we thought putting in ornate cornices was the wrong thing to do.

Hanworth was awarded the *Everyday Community Grant*, by the state, which provides partial funding and requires the property to engage with the community. Hanworth took four steps towards community engagement. First, they created a space called the ‘Eskgrove garden’ consisting of a set of pavers outlining the history of the house from the days of the Heath family to the present; space was left for future additions.

---

257 Ibid.
258 Ibid.
259 Ibid.
260 Ibid.
261 Ibid.
Second, the front steps of the house were replaced as the original was destroyed prior to purchase. Third, a photo wall showcasing the Heath family, the Wienholts, and the house were created in the hallway that leads from the main entrance. Fourth, citrus plants were planted in the internal courtyard and titled the 'Citrus Grove' to commemorate the original citrus grove of Hanworth. Hanworth is also open to the public on Brisbane Open House Day and many of the above features are emphasised in tours of the house. These features were also highlighted in a documentary made in collaboration with Queensland University of Technology.  

![Image of a stone marker with information about Hanworth House.

Figure 47 “Eskgrove Garden with Heath Family paver,” Hanworth House, Brisbane. 2017.

**Current Structure**

Hanworth continues to be owned and operated by Vecchio. With rooms starting at $280 per week, the property predominantly caters to women in transitional periods in their lives. In addition to online advertisements, on websites such as Airbnb, Gumtree, and Flatmates, Hanworth also has partnerships with the University of Queensland, Queensland University of Technology, and the Queensland ballet regarding accommodation. Though short stays are welcomed, longer stay are preferred,

[Vecchio] sees its main role as offering more than a place to stay. Hanworth offers an instant community as guests meet and mix with others. Regular

262 Ibid.
resident social gatherings and events are held to enhance living at Hanworth and enrich this sense of togetherness and belonging.\textsuperscript{263}

Hanworth also acts as a space for a variety of events ranging from corporate to philanthropic, as it partners with charities to run four events each year. All events are scheduled to ensure minimal disturbance, as Hanworth’s primary role is accommodation.\textsuperscript{264}

Those residing in Hanworth are provided a brief overview of its history on a handout upon their arrival. They are able to further their knowledge through the extensive reading library located in the drawing room, which contains materials referring to its 150-year history.

![Figure 48 “View of bedroom with Hospice furniture,” Hanworth House, Brisbane. 2017.](image)

Each bedroom of Hanworth is named after a woman who was important to its history: from female members of the Heath and Wienholt families, to residents of the Hospice, and to the members of the Preston (Vecchio’s maiden name) family. The decorations and furnishings within are an eclectic yet modern mixture, as they are donations, finds, second-hand purchases, and existing furniture curated to Vecchio’s tastes. The space also includes many items of furniture from the Vecchio household including paintings done by her late mother. The furnishings when concerning the


\textsuperscript{264} Vecchio.
bedrooms are especially intentional with a minimalistic design and metal beds; the rooms refer back to the Hospice era.\textsuperscript{265}

**Analysis**

Over the past few years, Hanworth has won many awards, including the Queensland Heritage Council Gold Award.\textsuperscript{266} Vecchio describes Hanworth as a project motivated by passion and she wishes to bequeath the property back to the city of Brisbane in the future. In Vecchio’s eyes, Hanworth is an example of “public good being benefitted by private enterprise.”\textsuperscript{267} The community of Brisbane has benefited from the funding and dedication of the Vecchio family, which has brought Hanworth back from a state of disrepair.

From the settler period, across the twentieth century, Hanworth has contributed to the society of Brisbane in a variety of ways. The family home of the first Portmaster of Brisbane, the Hospice and Hanworth Home for the Aged – Hanworth was heritage listed. The dwelling, in its present use - the events to which it caters, the people who it targets, the use of the heritage funding, the decoration, and the tours provided – commemorates the 150 years of Hanworth to varying degrees. The complete history of the dwelling has been researched and made available to visitors through plaques, paving stones, tours, the website, newspaper articles, the current use of the dwelling, and the reading library. The physical form of the dwelling also maintains the original structure and later additions.

However, it was Wienholt’s connection to the property, which resonated the most with Vecchio. Hence, this particular history is highlighted in the contemporary dwelling’s use; Hanworth continues to cater primarily to women, contains simple hospice like furniture, and lacks the ornate detail of the original dwelling.

**MIEGUNYAH**

Built in the 1880’s when local tradition was at its most opulent, Miegunyah is one of Brisbane's most accessible Heritage Homes. Richly decorated with iron-lace balustrades, filigree columns and friezes, and furnished in the style of the late nineteenth century, Miegunyah is a living example of Victorian elegance and charm.\textsuperscript{268}

\[\textsuperscript{265}\text{Ibid.}\]
\[\textsuperscript{266}\text{Easton, "Hanworth Heart."}\]
\[\textsuperscript{267}\text{Ibid.}\]
Added to the Queensland Heritage Register in 1992, Miegunyah is considered to represent the principal characteristics of an 1880’s elite Queenslander and commemorate its various owners: the Perry family and the Queensland Women’s Historical Association.269

Figure 49 “Miegunyah,” Janet Hogan, Historic Homes of Brisbane (Brisbane: National Trust of Queensland), 1979, 97.

History

William Perry, a very respected business man and ironmonger, who went on to become a Member of the Queensland Legislative Council, built Miegunyah located in Bowen Hills in 1885 for his son Herbert.270 Herbert and his new bride Leila, moved into the house shortly after their marriage. Miegunyah was considered a higher-class timber house in comparison to the more common worker’s cottages.271 The high quality of the materials and the workmanship present showcased its elite standing. The honeycomb brickwork, considered unique for buildings of that era and style, act as an example such workmanship. Unlike many of the houses of that era, Miegunyah also had a bathroom with an overhead water tank located in the dwelling.

Miegunyah remained in the Perry family until the death of Herbert Perry in 1922. Subsequently, this dwelling was owned by a number of people; Edwin Walter Hayes bought the property in 1946. In 1947, Hayes’ son, Edwin (Eddie) James Hayes, an architect, converted the house into three flats, with the main flat being occupied by his mother.\textsuperscript{272}

The property was sold to the Enright Brothers of Beaudesert, in the late 1960s, and renamed “Beverly Woods.” At the end of 1966, the property was listed for sale for either demolition or removal.\textsuperscript{273}

**Decision to Change**

The Queensland Women’s Historical Association (QWHA) was established in 1950 and until the late 1960s, the QWHA operated out of Newstead House.\textsuperscript{274} In 1966, as Newstead was being converted into a house museum, Martha Young, the President of the QWHA, searched for a new location for the association and came across the property named Beverly Hills.\textsuperscript{275} “The Association with the aim of maintaining the property as a Memorial to the Pioneer Women of Queensland led an appeal throughout the State to

\textsuperscript{272} Hogan, *Historic Homes*, 97.

\textsuperscript{273} Ibid.


\textsuperscript{275} Anonymous (President QWHA) in discussion with the author, April 2017, transcript.
save this colonial gem from demolition to be replaced by a block of flats.”

The property was purchased in 1968, renamed Miegunyah, and became a house museum and the site for the QWHA.

Recent Changes

At the point of purchase, “the house, stables and grounds were in a sound condition. Although the house interior had been substantially altered, there was sufficient evidence remaining to determine its original structure and later significant changes”.

Over the next few decades, a conservation plan was made and carried out with funding from Commonwealth and State Governments, the Brisbane City Council, personal donors, and the QWHA itself.

During this process, in 1979, Richard Allom Architects of Brisbane was commissioned to provide direction. A member of the firm, Peter Marquis-Kyle, first created a report regarding Miegunyah. During this process he spoke to multiple parties associated with Miegunyah to gain insight. This included a descendant of the Perry family, Eddie Hayes, and the President of the QWHA at the time.

Through the descendant of the Perry family, information was gathered regarding the use of each room. It was understood that the back room, which is now enclosed, was in fact a large semi-open verandah. Instead of the weatherproofed back wall, there existed latticework. First converted into a flat by Hayes, then used as a caretaker’ room, and now an exhibition space, the back verandah has not been reverted back to its original form and use. Discussions with Eddie Hayes revealed that a backdoor, identical to the front door, was removed and placed in a different house he designed; this door was tracked down, replicated and added back to Miegunyah.

The QWHA was made up of high society women. Thus the conversation had by Peter Marquis-Kyle with the President of the QWHA revealed that Miegunyah, a better quality Queenslander, was similar to the houses of many late twentieth century QWHA members.

---

276 “QWHA,” Miegunyah House Museum.
277 QWHA, “History.”
278 Ibid.
279 Marquis-Kyle.
280 Ibid.
Figure 51 “Ground Floor plan of Miegunyah,” drawn by Chethani Gunawardena and Nirasha Fernando (derived from the plan drawn by Richard Allom Architects in 1979, 2017).
Following this report, changes were made to Miegunyah. One significant change was repainting the house in its original colours. The original colour was discovered to be similar to stone. When Miegunyah was purchased by QWHA, however, it was white with a dark green trim. Though it was finally reverted to its original colour, there was initial resistance from members of the QWHA; as, at the time white was associated with high society colonial houses.\textsuperscript{281}

As Miegunyah grew as a house museum, further changes were made to the property. Such changes included, reverting the front hall from the era of the flats.\textsuperscript{282} Removing the later fabric of the house unearthed a laundry room; it was reconstructed with late nineteenth century laundry equipment. Another change was creating a space for Miegunyah’s artefact collection. Underneath the dwelling, enclosed by the honeycomb brickwork, a storage area with a cold room and insulated airtight space was created; this has now been enlarged to accommodate the growing collection.

The renovation process of Miegunyah and its conversion into a house museum took place over the span of many decades. The last restoration recalled by members of the QWHA took place in 2008, when the blocked off side verandah was restored.

**Current Structure**

Miegunyah, operated by volunteers, is currently open to the public three days a week. Financially, funding is obtained from the state and federal governments, visitors (charged $8 for admission), through the sale of Devonshire tea, and events that occur in the space.\textsuperscript{283} In addition, the space also hosts school visits, organises tour groups, and opens on *Brisbane Open House Days*. However, the money received through these varied sources is insufficient for the required upkeep and operational costs.\textsuperscript{284}

Miegunyah, as it stands today has three main parallel uses. Firstly, the dwelling operates as the home for the QWHA and its members. In addition, the dwelling holds their general meetings along with lectures organised by the QWHA regarding Queensland’s history with a focus on the history of either women or Miegunyah.

\textsuperscript{281} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{282} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{283} Anonymous (President QWHA).
\textsuperscript{284} Ibid.
Secondly, the house is a house museum depicting the era of the Perry family, the late nineteenth century. The rooms resemble the Perry era through furnishings, decorations, and textiles – primarily acquired through donations. Volunteers provide tours of the house, which establishes the history of Miegunyah, its past users, uses, and lifestyle of elite Queensland houses in the Victorian era, with a focus on domesticity and women.
Thirdly, within Miegunyah, there is an exhibition space dedicated to special exhibitions held by the QWHA. These exhibitions change regularly and showcase the archival collections of Miegunyah. The collections and archival material have been donated and have relationships to Queensland and its women.

![Figure 54 “Interior view of QWHA exhibition in exhibition space at Miegunyah,” Miegunyah, Brisbane. 2017.](image)

**Analysis**

Miegunyah’s significance originates from early settler history and continues to its present. The house museum focuses on the settler origins. However, Miegunyah is not only a premier house important to Brisbane’s settler history but also space in which the QWHA developed; and therefore speaks of QWHA’s past and present contributions to Brisbane.

It is also the space in which the above mentioned three uses compete with each other, thus none of them are experienced to their fullest extent. For example, as the back room is designated for exhibitions, it is no longer depicted in its original use within the house museum. In addition, using the dwelling for events and lectures disrupts to the existing organisation of the house museum.

However, there are also overlaps where the different uses showcase a cohesive theme. The most prominent example is the focus on lifestyles of early settlers. This makes visible the domesticity of the space and by extension, the roles played by women.

---

285 Marquis-Kyle.
286 Ibid.
Miegunyah, in its arrangement, use, tours, exhibitions, and lectures pay tribute to Queensland women. Thus, all three uses feed into each other holistically; Miegunyah, in its reflection of the past – the settler period and the QWHA – pay tribute to the women of Brisbane.

NEWSTEAD HOUSE

Located in Breakfast Creek, overlooking the Brisbane River, Newstead House was established as a home in 1846 by Patrick Leslie, a pioneer and grazier.287 Added to the state heritage register in 1992. Newstead House was regarded one oldest surviving residence in Brisbane, thus showcasing early free settlement in Queensland.288 Located within Newstead Park and operated by the Department of Environment and Heritage, Newstead House is a house museum depicting the nineteenth century, providing insight into the domestic sphere of an elite class of people.

Figure 55 “Newstead House,” Janet Hogan, Historic Homes of Brisbane (Brisbane: National Trust of Queensland), 1979, 108


History

The original structure was described as follows: “constructed from brick, stone and timber, the original house was two storeyed, with living rooms and bedrooms on the upper floor and servants’ rooms, cellars and kitchen on the lower floor.” Between its construction and 1918, when the City of Brisbane acquired Newstead House, many elite members of Brisbane occupied the dwelling. As the Leslies departed, Newstead was sold to Captain John Clements Wickham, who was the Police Magistrate for Moreton Bay from 1843 and was appointed the Government Resident for Moreton Bay in 1853, making Newstead House an unofficial government house. Newstead House was then occupied by Attorney General, Ratcliffe Pring, followed by George Harris, a member of the Legislative Council of Queensland.

Wickham and Harris both made changes to Newstead House. The Wickham ownership re-rendered the house: the verandahs and the bedrooms were extended and a servants’ wing was added. Harris employed the architect James Cowlishaw, and added of four new rooms, extended the verandah, reoriented and changed the entrance to the house, made the original first floor a basement, and built another kitchen and servants’ wing. Cosmetic changes were also made to the roof and floors to make the dwelling grander.

The City of Brisbane acquired Newstead House in 1918 and in 1931, the Royal Historical Society proposed that Newstead should be used as a historical library and technological museum. Following this proposal, the Society was provided with three rooms in the house and a committee was established to produce a plan for the museum.

289 Ibid.
292 Ibid.
293 Ibid.
Following many changes and renovations to the structure, Newstead House was opened to the public as a house museum in 1971. Yet the structure continued to be renovated. David Gibson, a Brisbane Historian, was the curator of Newstead House starting in 1974 and remained in that position until 2011.\textsuperscript{295} During that time, he started the ‘Friends of Newstead’ committee, volunteers who ran the museum. Royal Historical Society left Newstead House in 1981 and a change in management occurred in 1990, when the administration of the space was moved to the Department of Environment and Heritage.\textsuperscript{296}

**Decision to Change**

Though there was a Board of Trustees and staff members, for many years, Newstead House was operated on a day-to-day basis by volunteers, the Friends of Newstead.

\textsuperscript{295} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{296} Ibid.
By the early 2000s, Newstead House’s collection contained many ephemera of donated artefacts. Despite the house museum depicting a house of the early settlers, the furniture, decorations, and other items present within were not accurate to this era or related to this specific dwelling. This created a disconnected between the history of the house and the items within.

Furthermore, in 2012, it was revealed that the state of the house had not changed since 1993, when a Conservation Management Plan was prepared. Past problems persisted through time. In 2014, a new Board was appointed to the Newstead House Trust and changes were made; “In 2015 we commenced a program of revitalisation of the House, the collection, and our operations.”

---

297 Ruth Woods (Heritage Architect) in discussion with the author, July 2017, transcript.
Figure 57 “Ground Floor plan of Newstead House,” drawn by Chethani Gunawardena and Nirasha Fernando (derived from the plan drawn by Ballard & Roesler Conservation and Architects in 1993, 2017).
Figure 58 “First Floor plan of Newstead House,” drawn by Chethani Gunawardena and Nirasha Fernando (derived from the plan drawn by Ballard & Roesler Conservation and Architects in 1993, 2017).
Recent Changes

As a part of this program to revitalise Newstead House, multiple steps were taken. Firstly, an expert on interiors of early colonial buildings, Dr James Broadbent, was consulted to “present the house in a more authentic manner.” He was invited to visit Newstead House and engage the secondary literature on the house; amongst which was the list of goods for auction by the Harris family in the nineteenth century. Dr Broadbent recommended that Newstead House should be converted to represent, with accuracy, a house of the nineteenth century. It was discovered that in addition to having ephemera unrelated to the era and dwelling, some of the rooms were organised inaccurately – the dining room was set up as a library while the drawing room was set up as the dining room. Therefore, artefacts were removed, the rooms were rearranged and the portrayal of certain rooms was drastically altered.

Figure 59 “Interior view of House Museum Bedroom display,” Newstead House, Brisbane. 2017.

299 Anonymous (Communications Manager) in discussion with the author, July 2017, transcript.
300 Ibid.
302 Ibid., 6.
These changes were not free of tension. Though the Board of Trustees made the decision to follow Dr Broadbent’s recommendations, many volunteers wished to maintain Newstead House leading to a conflict of opinion.\textsuperscript{303} This difference in opinion was based on competing values associated with Newstead House. The volunteers saw importance in continuing Newstead House, due to their attachment to the house museum and the artefact collection they had developed. The Board of Trustees, on the other hand, saw importance in the history of Newstead House. Conveying this history to the public was the priority of the Board of Trustees.

Secondly, Newstead House heightened community engagement. In doing so, the house was no longer open seven days a week but rather just three. This ensured that volunteers were not left idle nor were visitors left without sufficient volunteers.\textsuperscript{304} In addition, the information boards were updated to provide more information regarding the first people, first contact, and occupants across history and WWII.\textsuperscript{305} An elevator and accessible toilets, funded by the Queensland Government, were also incorporated in 2013.

Thirdly, in 2012, Newstead House employed Ruth Woods, a heritage architect as an advisor. Woods consulted on conservation of the house, renovation needs that would arise during regular operations, and guidelines for using Newstead House for events. One of the more recent renovations, funded by a grant, under Wood’s supervision was the replacement of gutters and downpipes.\textsuperscript{306}

**Current Structure**

“Newstead House is an established house museum, decorated and furnished to reflect the late Victorian period and is a significant part of Brisbane history. We welcome you to embrace and experience this premier heritage property!”\textsuperscript{307} The Board of Trustees, which governs Newstead House consists of one member each from the Queensland Government, the Brisbane City Council, and the Royal Historical Society of Queensland. In addition, there are two full-time members of staff who take on the roles of the Communications and Programming Manager and the House Manager.

Newstead House currently is open to the public on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday – and by prior appointment at other times. There further operates education programs

\textsuperscript{303} Woods.
\textsuperscript{304} Anonymous (Communications Manager).
\textsuperscript{305} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{306} Woods.
catering to students of primary and secondary schools. Volunteers not only facilitate the open days but to also provide guided tours. Despite the focus to portray the nineteenth century, information boards present throughout the house and tours narrate the entire history of the dwelling.

![Figure 60 “View of basement containing information boards,” Newstead House, Brisbane. 2017.](image)

In order to engage the community of Brisbane, Newstead House also hosts a number of events throughout the year, with varied target audiences and varied focuses. Examples of such events include the ‘Little Historian’s Festival’ for children and ‘Sunday by the River,’ which is located in the Newstead Park with Jazz ensembles and food trucks.

Newstead House is further used as the venue for events. The courtyard, the verandah, and other external spaces are available to the public for events ranging from wedding receptions, to cocktail parties, and luncheons; allowing visitors to engage with the house as much as possible without causing damage to the dwelling and collection.

Newstead House sits under the department of Environment and Heritage Protection and therefore receives 150,000 AUD budget each year. Additionally events and payments

---

308 Ibid.
309 Ibid.
310 Ibid.
by visitors supplement this income. However, this amount of money is found to be insufficient to ensure complete maintenance of the house.\textsuperscript{311}

There continues to exist spaces in Newstead House that detract from the late nineteenth century. Some such features are deliberate, while the staff aims to rectify the others. A deliberately inauthentic space is the bathroom. Newstead House depicts an interior bathroom furnished with a bath and a toilet. This mixture of facilities allows the visitors to gain insight into the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries.\textsuperscript{312} Another deliberate divergence is the contemporary facilities added to make Newstead House a fully functional house museum and event space: an elevator, bathrooms, storage spaces, a gift shop, and a modern kitchen.

![Figure 61 “Verandah view,” Newstead House, Brisbane. 2017.](image)

The first of the features, which the staff aims to rectify, is the depiction of the verandah. The verandahs of nineteenth century houses would contain more furnishings than currently present at Newstead House.\textsuperscript{313} The second is the suspended lighting fixtures, which are also not original to the nineteenth century. As the house requires

\textsuperscript{311} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{312} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{313} Broadbent, \textit{Report on Newstead House}
lighting to display the collection, contemporary up lighting from standard lamps, found in many museums, was recommended – a change that is yet to be enacted.\textsuperscript{314} The third is incorporating the histories of indigenous communities.\textsuperscript{315} The vision of Newstead House is to, by 2020, “be recognised as a leading cultural & heritage precinct in South East Queensland, loved by locals and visitors”.\textsuperscript{316}

**Analysis**

Newstead House, having functioned as a house museum for the better part of a century, has seen very little change since it opened. In 2014, the house museum contained a large quantity of unrelated ephemera. Each artefact, despite its relationship or lack thereof to the history of Newstead House, was vital to the volunteers who operated the space. Conversely, the recent Board of Trustees and employees valued the historic importance of the dwelling: past owners, their lifestyle, and the original form. As Newstead House is a property of the state, authenticity of the house museum and community engagement were prioritised.

Therefore, the recent changes to the collections and curating, streamlined the portrayal of the property to a house museum that represents one specific era: the mid to late nineteenth century; and the lifestyle of early free settlers. However, as it is heritage-listed for its past social and architectural significance – importance of many past owners – Newstead House does continue to portray its entire history through tours and information boards, though not through artefacts.

**ESKGROVE**

Overtime, Eskgrove has been known as the Eskgrove Cottage, the Scanlan Estate and Grey Eagles. Despite being a smaller, more modest residence, in comparison to the residences of elites, Eskgrove was rented by many elite members of society. The first Portmaster of Queensland, George Heath, resided at Eskgrove during construction of Hanworth, followed by Thomas Scanlan, who went on to become the Mayor of South Brisbane. In addition to its past occupants, Eskgrove was heritage listed as it shows important physical elements such as “evidence of 1850s stone construction techniques in Queensland, and of the early adaptation of Georgian design to Brisbane lifestyle and

\textsuperscript{314} Woods.

\textsuperscript{315} Anonymous (Communications Manager).

climate.” Following a few decades of neglect, Eskgrove was renovated during 2014-2015 and is current being used as a private residence.

**History**

Eskgrove was constructed for the former Sydney Bank Manager Archibald Hepburn Hutchinson in 1853. At the point of construction, there were only two other river estates – Shaftson (formerly Ravenscot) and Riversdale – in the area, making Eskgrove a premier house. Eskgrove, which has no recorded architect, is considered to be representative of the era, style, materials, form, and culture of early Brisbane, according to its heritage listing. The plan of the property, a square containing four rooms, a detached kitchen, and service wing were also considered to be characteristic of that era. However, it is the influences had on Eskgrove by the Indian bungalow, made this dwelling a unique in Queensland. This influence governed features of Eskgrove: “[t]he roof, crippled over the existing verandahs, the central chimney rising through the apex of the pyramidal roof, the absence of a central hall or corridor and the projecting bay at the front elevation…”

Between its construction and the 21st century, the dwelling underwent a variety of uses and owners. The Hutchinson family resided in Eskgrove until the death of Archibald Hepburn upon which the house was rented. The last thoroughly documented owner of Eskgrove was Joseph Walter Tritton; occupying in Eskgrove until 1966. Since then, the information regarding Eskgrove has been scarce. It is stated that Eskgrove was used as flats, then a nursing home called Grey Eagle, and then a private residence and renamed Eskgrove in 1975. Eskgrove was up for sale in 2010 and again in 2012 with a listing of $1.2 million. The buyers of the property in 2010, conducted an assessment of the structure in 2011, and gained approval for development of the property. However, those plans were not realised.

The assessment conducted in 2011 uncovered many changes made to the property since its construction. First, the estate was subdivided and the property was brought down

318 Ibid.
319 Ibid.
to about four acres. Second, outhouses and garages were added to the property. Third, a kitchen and service wing was added to the dwelling. Fourth, in the 1930s, pebbledash rendering added to the walls of the original sandstone house. Fifth, concrete was poured over the original wooden verandah and concrete pillars replaced the original wood. Sixth, the back verandah was extended to accommodate additional bathrooms and laundry rooms for the nursing home. Lastly, many of the decorative elements were found to be attributed to later alterations: the pressed metal ceilings, the floors consisting of light and dark hardwood, and the wallpaper.\textsuperscript{323}

![Renovation of Eskgrove](image)

**Figure 62** “Renovation of Eskgrove,” unpublished photograph by Arna Harris, 2013.

### Decision to Change

Arna Harris and David Ringholt purchased Eskgrove in 2012. Their intention was to convert Eskgrove into a family home for themselves and their two young children. Purchased due to the Harris’s fondness for the structure, it was only following the purchase that they researched its history. As the property has been state heritage listed

\textsuperscript{323} Allom Lovell Pty Ltd, *Eskgrove.*
and the previous owners conducted a heritage assessment, Harris and Ringholt gained easy access to a detailed history of the property.

Harris and Ringholt, following collaboration with a Heritage Architect, commenced the development process in 2014 and moved in to Eskgrove in 2015. Harris expressed the approach taken through the renovation process as follows: “[w]e had a really great appreciation for the history of it and we wanted to keep as much as we could from what was original or to bring it back to what it would have been.”

**Recent Changes**

Despite the many evident and documented changes, the original structure and materials of Eskgrove have survived the last 160 years. However, many of its features were in various states of disrepair. The 2014 renovation proposed both additions and renovations to Eskgrove, with the consultation of a heritage architect and the heritage department and the aid of heritage grants.

The original structure of Eskgrove consisted of four rooms. Therefore, to convert the dwelling into a family home, a two-storey extension was introduced. Designed to be minimal and modern, the extension showed the differences between original 1850’s structure and the 2014 addition. Through the use of a draftsman, the extension was designed so not be visible from the front of the dwelling – hidden by the roofline of the original structure. The only part of the new addition, visible from the front of the house is the garage.

---

324 Arna Harris (owner of Eskgrove) in discussion with the author, July 2017, transcript.
326 Harris.
Figure 63 “Addition plan of Eskgrove,” drawn by Chethani Gunawardena and Nirasha Fernando (derived from the plan drawn by Residential Design/Drafting in 2013, 2017).
Figure 64 “Lower Preserved plan of Eskgrove,” drawn by Chethani Gunawardena and Nirasha Fernando (derived from the plan drawn by Residential Design/Drafting in 2013, 2017).
The original rooms located at the front of the property were reverted back to their 1850’s form; the walls, floors, and ceilings were repaired, the wallpaper added in the twentieth century was removed. Some early wallpaper was discovered and a portion of it was preserved behind a glass panel. In addition, the damaged sections of the roof were repaired.\textsuperscript{327} Small changes made included renovating the bathroom to present day standards, the use of white ant resistant wood on the flooring, in combination with the existing floor, reinstating a dado rail across the rooms, and the use of decorative wallpaper to mask some irreversible wall damage. The former kitchen wing, added in the twentieth century, was converted into the master bedroom with a bathroom and a walk in wardrobe. The concrete verandah posts were reverted back to timber, which are more authentic to Eskgrove. However, the concrete floor was maintained due to the logistical difficulties surrounding its removal.\textsuperscript{328} The rear verandahs enclosed by the nursing home were also reopened.

Figure 65 “Front view of Eskgrove from the Road,” Eskgrove, Brisbane. 2017.

Finally the pebbledash rendering was removed from the external walls; initially, the council who feared damage to the stonework underneath did not approve this removal. However, as construction commenced, large sheets of the pebbledash render fell off the

\textsuperscript{327} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{328} Ibid.
walls displaying the stonework underneath, intact. Thus, approval was granted to remove the render and display the original stone façade.\textsuperscript{329}

**Current Structure**

Eskgrove is currently a family home. Through the process of renovation, the needs of a family, with young children, were catered to. The extension accommodates the entire family while the original space of Eskgrove was converted into guestrooms and a study.

Though Eskgrove was structurally restored, neither history nor past lifestyles led within Eskgrove were evaluated in the furnishing process. The interior decoration and furnishing of the space is described, by Harris, as “a sort of mix of Asian fusion, I work in furniture, so just pieces that I like, all thrown together.”\textsuperscript{330}

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{image.png}
\caption{“Interior detail – decorative roof,” Eskgrove, Brisbane. 2017.}
\end{figure}

Beginning from 2016, this original space has been placed on Airbnb for short-term stays. Though this was not the initial intention for the space, the owners realised that this space was not utilised optimally as their lives were primarily led in the 2014 addition.\textsuperscript{331} Airbnb lists Eskgrove with the brief history of the space dating back to its original construction. The space is also advertised as being located conveniently and that:

\textsuperscript{329} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{330} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{331} Ibid.
Guests will have exclusive use of the original Eskgrove residence. This comprises two bedrooms … There is a comfortable lounge room with television that opens to another room currently set up as the study area. A private bathroom services the house.332

Analysis

Eskgrove is a modest house in comparison to the others that are depicted in this thesis. However, the style of the dwelling, influence of the Indian bungalow, the role it played in Brisbane’s history, those who resided within, and its position as one of the first dwellings of East Brisbane, placed this dwelling on the Heritage Register.

The renovation by the Ringholts served to reinstate Eskgrove to its historic form of the nineteenth century. Though many features were reverted to their original forms, restoration and structural emulation of the nineteenth century were limited to the original bungalow. The newer structure, furnishing, and use were independently visualised by the owners. Thus, the 1850s form acts as a façade to the contemporary family. In addition to the physical façade, Eskgrove further reflects its history in advertising the front, original dwelling on Airbnb. The listing portrays both social and settler histories related to Eskgrove.

HUGHESVILLE

‘Hughesville’ is a timber bungalow set on low stumps. The house consists of a main section – a central hall with three bedrooms on one side, living and dining rooms on the other, all entirely surrounded by verandahs – and a detached wing of kitchen, servant’s room and verandah. The iron roof over the main house slopes steeply to a small hip, finished with a square of cast iron lace.333

Hughesville was added to the Heritage Register in 1992 due to a multitude of reasons. Firstly, it depicts the evolution of Queensland’s history. As a surviving house of the late colonial period it depicts not only the architectural style but commemorates past lives. Secondly, Hughesville, in its location in Eight Mile Plains, its original owners and its form are described to be, “[t]he house has a strong community association, being for many years a principal landmark along the old Pacific Highway [Logan Road] to the Gold Coast,

333 Ray Sumner, More Historic Homes of Brisbane (Brisbane: National Trust of Queensland, 1982), 112.
demarking the outskirts of Brisbane.” Currently Hughesville operates as the office space for a real estate firm.

Figure 67 “Hughesville,” Ray Sumner, More Historic Homes of Brisbane (Brisbane: National Trust of Queensland, 1982), 112.

History

The large single-storey timber dwelling, Hughesville, was designed by architect George Thornhill Campbell-Wilson in 1892-93. Alfred Hughes commissioned the house as a wedding present for his son, Richard. The Hughes family, both Alfred and Richard, were horse-dealers; Alfred had many residences within Brisbane over the latter half of the nineteenth century.

Located in Eight Mile Plains, Hughesville was described as being “arguably the finest house in the district.” Despite being categorised as a Queenslander in type, Hughesville is larger in size than the traditional worker’s cottage. Moreover, the details present, such as the cast-iron Corinthian columns, the cast iron balustrading, and the double beaded tongue and groove boards, marked the wealth of the owners.

Hughesville was in the hands of the Hughes family until 1994. Over that time, there were some documented changes to the dwelling and the surrounding property. Such

---

335 Sumner, More Historic Homes, 112.
336 Ibid.
337 Ibid.
changes included, but were not limited to the removal of the timber balustrading of the rear verandah and reduction of the property surrounding it. The original property was of 250 acres of land, and consisted of multiple outbuildings for both personal and commercial use: stables, sheds, and other spaces required for keeping horses.338

**Decision to Change**

Following 1994, Hughesville was unoccupied and fell into a state of deterioration. In 2004, the dwelling was restored to its original state by Rothcote Pty Ltd. In 2005, the dwelling was placed on the market and was sold in 2007 as a detached residence; thereafter it was converted into office space for Bennett Carroll Solicitors.

However, it was stated by Lynda Roberts, the real estate agent that selling Hughesville, following its revival in 2005, proved difficult. Though many showed interest in using the property, not many wished to own it because of the restrictions placed on it due to its heritage listing.339

Hughesville was sold to I-Sale Property for $1.7 million in February 2012 and continues to be used as their office.340 However, though the present owners are aware of its heritage listing, the property's history and cultural significance were not factors in the decision to purchase. It was, in fact, the location of the property, in close proximity to a very busy motorway that enticed I-Sale property.

**Recent Changes**

The most recent changes to Hughesville occurred in 2004, when Rothcote Pty Ltd restored Hughesville as a part of a grander scheme to build fifteen townhouses on the surrounding property. The development application lodged with the Queensland Heritage Council proposed to restore Hughesville fully to its original state while “[p]articular attention was given to the exterior to ensure that decorative features were reflective of the original building.”341 The position of Hughesville on the heritage register was honoured during this restoration process, though this process was not thoroughly documented.

338 Sumner, More Historic Homes, 112.
340 Ibid.
However, as the townhouses were established on the surrounding property, the land encompassing Hughesville was reduced significantly. This reduction of the property detracted from the prominence of Hughesville.

As Bennett Carroll Solicitors bought Hughesville, following its renovation, the dwelling was converted into office space. The current owners, I-Sale Property maintain the same structure. In viewing the structure, it is evident that changes were made to the interior as the space was appropriated into an office. The building retains its original structure, though majority of the space has been altered in use; for example a modern kitchen has been added to the interior while the original kitchen and servants wing is used as a private office space. In addition, bedrooms and living rooms are repurposed as offices. The rear verandah has been closed off and an internal courtyard created. Despite the changes to the interior, the façade of Hughesville has been maintained. In comparing original images of Hughesville to more contemporary photographs, the accuracy of the restoration is evident.

Figure 68 “Side view of Hughesville,” Hughesville, Brisbane. 2017.
Figure 69 “First Floor plan of Hughesville,” drawn by Chethani Gunawardena (derived from the plan drawn by www.realestate.com.au in 2016, 2018).
Current Structure

The current property in its use as an office space has converted the rooms into office and conference areas. The rooms located on either side of the hallway were converted into offices with accompanying washrooms. The original drawing room has been converted into a meeting room. The furnishings and decorations of the space include items expected of a modern office space. Considerations made regarding the history and the architecture of the building during this conversion process into an office appears minute. Both Hughesville’s exterior and interior show signs of regular maintenance, which was lacking in the decade prior to its restoration.
The historical importance of Hughesville is based in its position as a premier house in Eight Mile Plain, its role in the surrounding community, and its location between Brisbane and the Gold Coast. In addition to this social importance, the timber structure,
the size, and the style of the property resulted in its position on the State Heritage Register; though the importance of its past owners is documented, they are not cited as a reason for its heritage listing.

Unlike many of the other dwellings discussed in this chapter, Hughesville saw very little change in ownership until 1994. The current iteration of Hughesville, following many years of disrepair, relates to its past exclusively in structures. It has been preserved to represent the original form governed by its heritage listing. The initial renovation of the structure done in 2004 was based on the conversion of the land surrounding/occupying Hughesville to include detached housing. Similarly, the current owners occupy the space due to its location while the interior fully embraces its present use as an office. Therefore the preservation of the structure is merely conducted due to the regulations surrounding heritage-listed structures; neither the history nor the origins of the structure are known or prioritised by the current occupants.

**CONCLUSION**

This chapter viewed colonial dwellings built in the mid to late nineteenth century Brisbane. They were also associated with early settlers, people in positions of power. The roles played by these dwellings in the development of Brisbane include the time at which they were erected, their continued existence and their original and subsequent owners. In addition, as discussed in Chapter 02, these dwellings have particular aesthetical features and past lifestyles associated with them. Thus, these dwelling have rich histories that are reflected on their contemporary forms and uses.

Hanworth, following the above-described fire, draws from its 150-year history of different periods, but with a focus on two; the Heath era for the physical dwelling and façade, and the Wienholt era for the essence in use. Miegunyah is considered to be important due to its architectural type; large timber houses of the nineteenth century play a role in the development of the region style of architecture. Miegunyah is a testament not only to the colonial era but also to the time since, with a special focus on the role of the QWHA. The QWHA and its focus of women further emphasises the lifestyle of the dwelling in the nineteenth century, especially as a domestic space. Unlike Miegunyah, which has a multitude of uses in addition to being a house museum, Newstead House’s primary focus is its role as a house museum and by extension, an educational space. The late nineteenth century, the Victorian era lifestyle and the people who lived within, are used as tools to depict the history of Brisbane. Though Newstead House, also highlights domesticity, it is overshadowed by the extravagance of the dwelling and the importance of
the owners. The heritage-listings of Eskgrove and Hughesville led to the properties being left derelict. Both these dwellings now depict the original structure and façade encapsulating a modern interior.

Brisbane was established in the nineteenth century, and despite Brisbane’s histories prior to the point of first settlement, it is colonial histories, histories of the settlers that are regarded as important; establishing the city, neighbourhoods, and prominent members of society. The contribution by these dwelling to this history has contributed to their position on the State Heritage Register. The presence on this register imposes regulations surrounding the renovation of these structures. Thus, these structures are maintained to illustrate their original forms. The expression of the settler and subsequent histories, in respects other than structure such as use is determined by their extant uses.
CHAPTER 5: ACROSS COLONIAL OCEANS

INTRODUCTION

There lie certain similarities across colonial dwellings of Colombo and Brisbane. This chapter analyses present day social climates, histories, and methods occupied in understanding and portraying these histories. Thus, it establishes the fundamental differences between how the colonial histories are reflected, preserved and reimagined in Colombo and Brisbane. This chapter draws from previous arguments and highlights differences between Colombo and Brisbane based on their colonial and more recent histories; how have these impacted perceptions of attributes and values embodied in the legacies of colonial dwellings? In Colombo, it is evident that colonial dwellings, in their understanding and portrayals of their colonial histories, reflect elite status. The case studies in Chapter 03 depict changes in use and target demographics undergone by colonial dwellings. Despite these changes, colonial dwellings, historically associated with elites, continue to showcase high social standing. Colonial dwellings of Brisbane on the other hand are reflective of the origins of the city, its history, people, and lifestyle; reflective of early settlement. Thus, contemporary iterations of colonial dwellings preserve their forms and engage the community, in a variety of ways, to commemorate this history of the city.

CONTEMPORARY UNDERSTANDINGS OF THE COLONIAL

The comparison between Colombo and Brisbane is rooted in the differences between colonial and postcolonial histories of the two cities. However, a similarity between the colonial periods of Colombo and Brisbane is their social mobility. The respective colonial periods of both cities allowed those at the lower end of the social spectrum to rise up the social hierarchy. Those who rose up in status, in Colombo, belonged to local populations. The colonisers paved the way for this mobility as they disrupted the caste system. Locals of low castes moved up the new class-based hierarchy through economic gains and appointment. In Brisbane, many of the free settlers and convicts were of low status in Britain. However, as Brisbane was established, it allowed many of these low status settlers to rise in social standing – to become elites. These new elites were a part of the settler (coloniser) populations originating from Britain who permanently settled in the region.

As these elites, of Colombo and Brisbane became financially, socially, and politically successful, they expressed their newfound position through material and social acquisitions. Many elements of culture, primarily those associated with colonial rule, were
used to denote elite status in these newfound social hierarchies. Despite this common ground in social mobility, the colonial era and its artefacts are perceived contrarily by present-day Colombo and Brisbane. The colonial eras are viewed, reflected upon, and appropriated differently, through two distinct vocabularies.

The colonial period of Colombo, the social mobility of the colonial period and the social values associated with artefacts of that period, prevailed. As the families who rose in status during British colonial rule continued to hold power through independence, elements from this era maintained their association with elite status. In contemporary society, the colonial era continues to be viewed for its extravagance, the status it brought to families, and the portrayal of this status. Consequently, colonial architecture, especially domestic forms, denotes status, even in contemporary society. In addition to owners and their families, the relationship between colonial architecture and status is asserted by external figures; those who frequent boutique hotels and entertainment hubs located in revived colonial buildings. This association also allows people without foundations in elite families to manipulate this architecture to depict a higher status.

Following the early settler period, Brisbane continued to be highly socially mobile; the elites, the social hierarchy, and the elements associated with elite status, evolved continuously. This constant evolution of society resulted in changes to the social values associated with the colonial period and its artefacts, including architecture. In contemporary Brisbane, the period of early settlement is described as “settler” in opposition to “colonial.” With no drastic change between the colonial and the postcolonial periods the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in Brisbane are perceived as settlement and establishment of the city. In contemporary Brisbane, thus, colonial dwellings are considered reminders of the city’s origins, as opposed to indicators of social status.

EXTERNAL FACTORS OF SIGNIFICANCE

**Colombo, Sri Lanka**

Due to the three decade long ruthless battle the Colombo development had been ignored, but in the post war scenario the present government realized the necessity of its rapid development … authorities have created plentiful places in the city where people could be able to spend their leisure time in

---

342 Lawson, *Brisbane in the 1890s.*

343 It must be noted that Brisbane, along with Australia as a whole, continues to negotiate their relationships with indigenous populations and settlers’ treatment of indigenous populations.

Following the end of the civil war in 2009, the Sri Lankan government, through the Urban Development Authority (UDA), mobilised the ‘Colombo Beautification Project.’ This project combined with a few other smaller projects also facilitated by the UDA, refurbished the façade of Colombo. This process included the revival of many public colonial buildings.\footnote{Colonial architecture in addition to surviving through the postcolonial and civil war periods influenced many architectural styles.} In addition to UDA’s revivals many private owners in targeted areas were encouraged to revive the facades of their colonial buildings to match the efforts of the government.

The Colombo Beautification Project, thus, increased the visibility of colonial architecture and influenced how colonial architecture is viewed in the 21st century. “The Old Dutch hospital, the Race Course and the colonial era asylum have been converted into high end shopping and dining precincts and an international rugby ground.”\footnote{Gotabaya Rajapaksa, “Colombo Will Be the Centerpiece of a Rejuvenated Sri Lanka,” (speech, World Cities Summit 2014, Singapore, 2014), https://www.news.lk/news/world/item/1046-colombo-will-be-the-centerpiece-of-a-rejuvenated-sri-lanka} Operating for a high-end target market, these colonial buildings excluded the lower classes to a great extent; these structures were revived by the elites for the elites. In order to implement many projects, not limited to those involving colonial architecture, the UDA also displaced or relocated many lower income families.\footnote{“Colombo beautification at a cost of 135,000 families : CPA,” Business Times, April 20, 2014, http://www.sundaytimes.lk/140420/business-times/colombo-beautification-at-a-cost-of-135000-families-cpa-92800.html}

Over the subsequent years, many independent media outlets have focussed on the colonial history of Sri Lanka and colonial architecture. This is evident in the works such as \textit{In Pictures: Colombo’s Colonial Heritage}, which portrays curated photographs of Colombo’s colonial architecture.\footnote{Dilina Amaruwan and Thiva Arunagirinathan, “In Pictures: Colombo’s Colonial Heritage,” Roar Media, August 20, 2017, https://roar.media/english/life/srilanka-life/in-pictures-colombos-colonial-heritage}
Another example of renewed attention is Cinnamon Colomboscope, “a multidisciplinary contemporary arts festival.”\textsuperscript{349} Colomboscope combines a multitude of events including talks, exhibitions, tours, workshops, and screenings. Since its inception in 2012, Colomboscope paid close attention to colonial spaces in their programs from content to location. Topics of the recent editions, with interest in colonial architecture, were \textit{Re/Evolution} (2017) and \textit{Explore the Spirit of a Changing City} (2015). Recent locations for these events included the Former General Post Office, the Whist Bungalow (now Pradeepa Hall), the Grand Oriental Hotel, the Rio Cinema, and the former Colombo Terminus Railway Station, all of which are colonial in origin. Entrance tickets for events of Colomboscope are either low cost or free. Yet, majority of the marketing and advertising for Colomboscope takes place in English. Similarly, a majority of the program is conducted in English. Therefore, the advertising, planning, and those involved, makes this an event for elites and intellectuals, further limiting access these colonial spaces.

The Colombo Beautification Project became the starting point of the revival of colonial structures and, therefore, governed the audience for these revivals. Elites of present-day Colombo became this audience, due to the intentions of the government, privately hosted events, and media content. Colonial dwellings of Colombo, discussed in this thesis, despite their independent timelines, like their contemporaries, have been influenced by this trend in colonial architecture being revived and targeted at elites. This revival renewed interest in colonial architecture influenced how the colonial era is viewed by contemporary society through architecture.

It must, however, be noted that despite the attention by the Colombo Beautification Project, unlike some of the public structures that were renovated by the Project, the colonial dwellings discussed in this thesis were not influenced by Heritage listings or preservation guidelines. This allowed for these dwellings to be changed, altered, and preserved according to the will of the owners or other interested parties. Thus, when the form and architectural type are prioritised in the current iterations of the colonial dwellings, it is purposeful. If such regulations were to affect the case studies of Colombo, it is unlikely that many would have been renovated or maintained to this extent, architecturally. As the regulations would have required renovations of higher costs, with historic accuracy, without the ability to rebuild, and with minimal modern amenities, many of the spaces discussed in this thesis would not hold their current uses.

Brisbane, Australia

The dwellings discussed in this thesis, along with many other settler dwellings in Brisbane, are listed in the Queensland Heritage Register. Therefore, this state Heritage Register is highly regarded when discussing how colonial dwellings are placed in contemporary society.

“Established under the Queensland Heritage Act 1992 the Queensland Heritage Council is required to act independently, impartially and in the public interest to identify and protect places that have special heritage value to the community and future generation.”350 Though the Heritage Register was established over two decades ago, it continues to influence how colonial architecture is approached, viewed, and addressed. Registering a variety of places, the decisions for listing are made with the advice of Council architects, historians, and the Heritage Advisory Committee, following nominations. These cumulatively include public spaces and domestic architecture.351

The Queensland Heritage Register lists places of cultural heritage significance to Queensland the state. In regards to colonial dwellings, this cultural significance lies in settlement and establishment of Brisbane as:

They illustrate the key human endeavours that have determined our economic development, as well as the fundamental political, social and cultural forces that have shaped our society.352

The Heritage Register not only dictates the importance of historic buildings but also enforces stipulations surrounding their preservation. In preserving colonial dwellings, the physical forms re-highlighted; permission of the heritage council is required for any structural changes. As it is the physical forms of the dwellings that are preserved, the architectural significance of heritage-listed dwellings are made visible; the features to be preserved, the specific eras, and how they contribute to the architecture of the state. In addition, the relationship between built form and social histories is reinforced.

Community engagement through a variety of methods from open days to newspaper articles is encouraged for heritage-listed dwellings. Such engagement draws attention to social and architectural histories of dwellings. One of the primary and most public ways to engage the public is participating in Brisbane Open House Day, which commenced in 2010: “Brisbane Open House is a free public festival that celebrates Brisbane’s architecture and offers behind-the-scenes access to buildings across the

351 Ibid.
352 Ibid.
city.” Funded by the Queensland Government, other public and private organisations, and volunteers, in 2017, over 90 buildings participated including over 40 heritage-listed structures seven of which were dwellings.

This legislation focusing on the cultural importance for heritage listing, physical form for preservation, and community engagement influences how colonial dwellings are viewed in contemporary society. The state Heritage Register is able to govern these views; how the histories of these dwellings are approached and by extension, how Brisbane’s history is viewed through these dwellings. The focus of the state Heritage Register when listing and preserving colonial dwellings lies in settler histories; creating an identity for Brisbane’s colonial dwellings, an identity focusing on settlement.

**THE HISTORIES**

Across the ten case studies presented in this thesis, there are a variety of factors represented in their contemporary iterations. This thesis, however, specifically focuses on the histories represented: social, historical, economical, and architectural. These representations can be divided into two categories.

The first are the histories of origin: period of origin, owners, form, status, use, dwelling’s relationship to the public, and its position in colonial society, as it was constructed. The histories of origin are represented by each case study to varying degrees. In physical form, all ten case studies relate back to their origins, despite certain changes. Moving past the physical, only a handful of the ten dwellings reflect their original uses directly.

The second are the continuing histories of dwellings following their creation; histories that are both colonial and postcolonial. This includes changes in form, ownership, social histories, and relationships to Colombo and Brisbane.

These two categories of histories play different roles in the pasts of colonial dwellings. The historical origins refer back to the colonial era; an era significant to both Colombo and Brisbane and relates to particular events and lifestyles of that era. The continuing histories include the journeys taken following this original form and use; thus encompassing a variety of histories that are important to individual dwellings and the community, city, and country at large. The ten case studies presented in this thesis showcase both the historical origins and continuing histories at varying ratios. In these dwellings, a combination of historical origins and continuing histories culminate to build a

---

narrative. A range of factors influences the composition of this combination. Such factors include to whom these histories pertain - the occupants, the community, the city, the state, or the country, and extant uses of the dwellings.

Hanworth, for example, though its focus in regards to use lies in its past as a hospice, the physical form refers back to the original dwelling, to a great degree, while later additions are also maintained. When Hanworth is portrayed to the public, a narrative that encompasses these many iterations of the dwelling is employed.

Another further example is Boralugoda Maha Gedera. This dwelling has maintained both its physical form, and its use as a home. However, additions to the dwelling, in the shape of furniture and technological advances are embraced. These advances parallel the important moments in the dwelling and owners’ histories. For example, the furniture imported from China reflects the then owner’s diplomatic role. Conversely, the basic necessities are maintained in the kitchen to continue its original use. The dwelling as it is now and in the expected future renovations, portray specific moments in its journey – moments that are important and pertinent to the family.

Even the likes of Newstead House, a house museum depicting its original use as a dwelling of an early settler, as described above, integrates its continuing history. Firstly, posters, plaques, and the tours depict the history of Newstead House from its construction through its evolution into a house museum. Secondly, in the recent years, the staff and the Board of Trustees have made moves to integrate histories pertaining to indigenous populations and their use of the area to how Newstead House is showcased. Though this particular dwelling's amalgamation of historical origin and continuing histories favours the former, the latter is not completely excluded.

Maniumpathy Boutique Hotel and Tintagel Hotel, both refer back to the owners across their histories while maintaining the original structures. Maniumpathy also incorporates later additions to the dwelling in its use as a boutique hotel. While Tintagel portrays the house to the media and guests, with an emphasis on postcolonial political associations; postcolonial histories overshadow those of the colonial period.

Through the reflection of these two categories, the historical origin and the continuing histories, it becomes evident that some dwellings have become colonial shells to modern interiors catering to their current uses, while others advertise and maintain elements from varying points in their pasts.
THE METHODS

The two categories discussed above are reflected in contemporary iterations of colonial dwellings; the histories represented span from social to architectural. Thus, these histories are also reflected in contemporary iterations of colonial dwellings through a range of mediums. These mediums, across the case studies in this thesis, can be divided into three categories.

The first is through the structure of colonial dwellings. When referring to the ‘structure,’ in this argument, it refers to the physical/architectural form of the dwelling. This ranges from plans, architectural features unique to the dwelling and the era, with a significant attention on the façade. All ten case studies have maintained their original physical structures, to a certain degree. In Colombo, the features that are maintained, are done due to their reference to the colonial era; the façade of a dwelling is one such feature. The facades are maintained across colonial bungalows and mansions of Colombo, despite the evolving interiors and the lack of regulation protecting privately owned dwellings. In Brisbane, how and the extent to which structures are maintained are governed by the regulations imposed by the Queensland Heritage Register. Hughesville is a clear example of a dwelling in which the structure is the primary reference to the past. Despite changes to the interior and the dwelling completely encompassing its use as an office, the contemporary iteration of Hughesville stays true to the original nineteenth century structure.

The second method is through use; colonial dwellings refer back to the colonial era as well as continuing histories through their current uses. Boralugoda Maha Gedera, in addition to remaining a private residence, maintains many specificities of past use. Ranging from maintaining the original kitchen to delayed addition of new amenities, Boralugoda Maha Gedera, in its present use continues to refer back to the past. Maniumopathy, on the other hand, refers back to the past by incorporating family photographs as decoration, naming rooms after matriarchs of the family, and maintaining the dwelling, despite the change in use to a boutique hotel, as an extension of the family home. The reimagining of the past through use is evident in Hanworth, where the current use mimics the use of the dwelling as a hospice for women. The contemporary iteration of Hanworth also targets women, specifically women in transition. Newstead House and Miegunyah, as house museums, refer back to the colonial era in their use; the dwellings are set up as they were in the nineteenth century.

The third method lies in public portrayal of colonial dwellings. Public portrayal takes a multitude of shapes. The public portrayal of some dwellings directly parallels their use,
while in others the public portrayal is tangential to their use. Another difference across the public portrayal of these colonial dwelling is the ‘public.’ The publics for boutique hotels and other dwellings providing accommodation, for example, includes their customers and others who come in contact with the dwellings. Boutique hotels, house museums and dwellings involved in events such as Open House Days have a wider audience: the community of the city, the state, and country. The more private dwellings and office spaces, conversely, have publics limited to those who come in contact with the dwellings directly. Heritage listing of these dwellings, in the case of Brisbane, however, expand their publics. To portray each dwelling to their respective publics, especially in portraying their histories, a variety of methods are used. These include, but are not limited to, the presence of plaques, pavers (in the case of Hanworth), tours, websites, blogs, newspaper articles, and media interviews.

Dwellings refer back to their histories through a combination of these three methods. However, the two external factors discussed above, the Colombo Beautification Project, its focus on colonial architecture of Colombo, and the Queensland Heritage Register, the legislation surrounding architecture of Brisbane must also be regarded. There exist relationships between the methods, discussed above, and the two external factors. The Colombo Beautification Project defined the target audience of colonial architecture and paved the way for the public portrayal of this architecture. The legislature surrounding heritage-listed forms, correspondingly, ensures preservation of dwellings, physically. Hence, contributing to the reflection of history through the structure of colonial dwellings.

**DWELLINGS TODAY**

**Colombo, Sri Lanka**

In the case of Colombo, individual dwellings reflect past uses according to their current needs. In reflecting the colonial era, whether in use or form, it is done in order to portray extravagance and status. The colonial period was an era when many families rose in status, which was then maintained.

Maniumpathy reflects upon the family history and past lifestyles through a reconstructed colonial bungalow. In doing so, it purposefully refers back to the colonial era of extravagance.

Tintagel is a colonial shell to a modern interior that is highly luxurious. The colonial bungalow, its façade, architectural form, style, and colonial origin, supplement the luxury
that is provided by the boutique hotel; the postcolonial political affiliations are further used to intensify the significance of the dwelling.

Boralugoda Maha Gedera, a family home, is maintained as a reflection of its origins while new artefacts, especially those that reflect significant moments to the family are integrated.

Pradeepa Hall, maintains the Whist Bungalow as a colonial shell while the use, the users, and the status of the users have changed significantly.

The Lighthouse emulates the colonial period both in its form and location. As the dwelling’s use is defined by its ownership by the Foreign Ministry, the façade is maintained to portray status, yet the interior is adapted to the needs of an office.

Unlike Brisbane, in Sri Lanka, there exists no strong legislature demanding the preservation and careful renovation of colonial dwellings. However, across the case studies located in Colombo, the facades of the dwellings are maintained. The facades act as important features both in their histories and their present uses. Thus, despite the possibilities for change, and despite the differences in current uses, the façades are maintained across all dwellings. Through these maintained façades, the dwelling relate back to their colonial roots; portraying origins of the dwelling and its historical elite ownership.

The colonial era in Colombo, in addition to being one of foreign rule, was when the social hierarchy and its portrayal changed. The current portrayals of this era, in addition to being reflective, exude a notion of continuity. This continuity connects to how colonial architectural forms, and their era of origin, lie in elite status and its portrayal. How this elite nature is exuded by contemporary iterations of dwellings lie individually in each dwelling; ranging from façade, to interior, to use, and to location. However, the Colombo Beautification Project, and the focus on colonial architecture that followed have affected these revivals of colonial dwellings. Though individual motivations primarily dictate contemporary iterations of colonial dwellings, the interest and revival of (public) colonial architecture reinforced the elite nature of colonial architecture and power held by and associated with it. Though this association is not newfound, the large-scale revival of public colonial structures reintroduced this notion on a grander scale to the contemporary public. The public consumed certain colonial forms such as Galle Face Hotel, the Mount Lavinia Hotel, and even the Tintagel Boutique Hotel, prior to the Colombo beautification project. However these revivals drew attention to colonial forms and made them the forefront of architectural revival.
The dwellings, discussed in this thesis, with the exception of Maniumpathy, remained consistent in use prior to and following the Colombo Beautification Project. However, the new spotlight on colonial architecture, following the revival of colonial structures, brought these dwellings to the public’s attention. Many of these colonial spaces were then used for different events and were covered in publications, many of which are cited in this thesis. Thus, over the last few years, these dwellings responded to changes occurring in relation to colonial architecture. Maniumpathy was converted into a boutique hotel while the Dutch Hospital and the Colombo Racecourse, mentioned above, were being targeted at tourists.

Pradeepa Hall Modara, an event space for the lower-income classes, was used as a space for an event that was a part of Colomboscope; paralleling how colonial architecture was given facelifts by the government. Despite this event, Pradeepa Hall Modara has attracted limited attention related to its current position or history. A combination of factors, as demonstrated above, has influenced this dichotomy between this dwelling’s colonial past and present status. This same combination of changes in ownership, the government ownership, and the shift in the surrounding neighbourhood have also led to this low interest in Pradeepa Hall by the public at large, in comparison to the other case studies discussed in this chapter.

Colonial dwellings of Colombo, unlike Brisbane, in reflecting the colonial era, through use, essence, or form, with a strong emphasis on form, continue the aura of elite status associated with the architecture and the dwellings across the (post) colonial landscape. Across the dwellings, from the extravagance of the boutique hotels of Tintagel and Maniumpathy, to the office space of The Lighthouse, to the beloved home of the Boralugoda Maha Gedera, and the event space of Pradeepa Hall, the architecture is used to show status. Throughout the case studies, it is demonstrated that two factors - the location of the colonial dwelling and personal interest in the space - are vital in highlighting these colonial elements. Maniumpathy and Boralugoda Maha Gedera benefitted from personal relationships while Maniumpathy, Tintagel, and The Lighthouse benefited from location. Pradeepa Hall’s architecture, as the dwelling lacks both factors, in comparison, has not been used to demonstrate status to the same extent. However, it is clear that even with the above-mentioned factors this portrayal of elite status through architecture holds these dwellings at a higher regard than their more modern contemporaries.

**Brisbane, Australia**

Both cities look back to an era when these dwellings portrayed elite standing. For Brisbane, this is the period of early settlement. This era is looked back on due to its...
historical significance as the origin of the city. Unlike Colombo, where colonial histories are reference point for elite status, in Brisbane, these dwellings are monuments remembering early settlement, the lifestyles of that period, the structures, and the people.

Hanworth reflects the broad history of the dwelling but with a focus on the role women played in the space; thus focussing in the early twentieth century use of the dwelling as a hospice and its relationship to the current use, accommodation.

Miegunyah, a house museum, portrays the settler origins but with a significant focus on the domestic space and the role of women in Queensland, in a similar manner to Hanworth.

While Newstead House, which is similar to Miegunyah in use as a house museum, attempts to be authentic in its representation of the lifestyle early free settlers through period furniture and ornaments.

Eskgrove promotes its history through its façade and when advertising the space on Airbnb; referring to the social histories and its settler origins.

Hughesville limits its historical references to the structure of the dwelling. The physical portrayal of colonial dwellings, authentic to the past is governed by the Queensland Heritage Register in combination with the motivations of owners.

The colonial era, with the free settlement of the area, was when the social hierarchy of Brisbane was established. Governed by landownership, wealth, and political standing, it was those arriving in Brisbane that set the standards for the social hierarchy of the city. The dwellings they occupied paralleled this standing.

Hanworth is significant to the history of Brisbane for a variety of reasons. Though these reasons originate in the settler period, they span the course of the twentieth century as well. Firstly, having been built by the first Portmaster of Brisbane, it is an example of elite dwellings of the nineteenth century; many of Hanworth’s physical characteristics resembling those of that type and era. However, the significance of Hanworth is also attributed to its subsequent ownership of Mary Wienholt and its use as a hospice.

Miegunyah is similar to Hanworth as it too has a history of significance that originates from the settler period but spans through the twentieth century to the present. Beginning from those who built the dwelling, their high economic and social standings, Miegunyah is respected for its settler history. However, it also acts as a living monument to the significance of the Queensland Women’s Historical Association. QWHA focusing on women, especially women from the settler eras, further reflects the colonial period. The dwelling of Miegunyah becomes a vessel that both contained these histories and emulates them.
Newstead House, the oldest remaining house in Brisbane, was the home to both businessmen and to political figureheads of the city. Thus, making both those who lived within the dwelling and the dwelling itself, monumental in the history and establishment of Brisbane.

Eskgrove was one of the first dwellings to be established along the river. Despite being smaller in size, compared to many elite dwellings of Brisbane during that era, it was the home for many significant figures in Brisbane, including the first Portmaster of the city. Eskgrove’s architectural history further adds to the settler narrative through its Indian influences, such as its plan and roofline, and therefore the flow of colonial power across the world.

Hughesville, as described above, is significant to the era as one of the premier houses. Its role in the community and the area surrounding define its historical significance.

The Queensland Heritage Register, when listing these dwellings, gives some of the above justifications for heritage value. Though the physical structures of the dwellings are also cited and regarded important, it is the social histories that are emphasised. Many of these social histories are from the origins of the dwellings, the period of early settlers. Thus, it is clear that these dwellings are seen as important to and evocative of this period. As stated earlier in this chapter, the social significance of dwellings trumps that of the physical when concerning the reasons for heritage listing. This social history, the origin of Brisbane and the early settlers is also reflected when viewing the past. Thus, in Brisbane, when the colonial era is reflected by contemporary iterations of colonial dwellings, it is due to the importance of that era to the history of Brisbane, as the origin of the city and state. Yet, the owners of each dwelling portray specific histories which they regard important; in certain instances, these histories are in fact the colonial or “settler” histories while in others, they are more recent, twentieth century histories of use and ownership.

**CONCLUSION**

Aspects ranging from the influences of external factors, the contemporary understanding of the colonial pasts, the array of histories, and methods for depicting these histories were reviewed in this chapter. Thus it is evident that across the ten case studies lie similarities in the portrayal of histories. Though the methods utilised to depict histories are show commonalities, regardless of location and specific use, the colonial histories that are reflected upon show clear differences.
Contemporary iterations of colonial dwellings in Colombo, view their colonial origins for the social status associated with this architectural type. Built during a period when the dwellings were used to emulate the status of elites, combined with the wave of colonial architecture being revived and targeted at elites of Colombo, these dwellings reflect their elite nature. This is achieved through the maintenance of the façade, the histories narrated to the public, and certain extant uses. Colonial dwellings of Colombo, parallel the contemporary understanding of the colonial era, thus, reflect features of the colonial period including the social mobility, high social standing gained by local elites, and the use of colonial architecture to portray status.

The colonial era in Brisbane is considered to be the origin of the city. Unlike Colombo, the origins of these dwellings are not viewed for status but rather for historical value. Thus, when revisiting the colonial past, it is this narrative of settlers and the development of the city that is revered. Contemporary iterations of colonial dwellings also reflect the origins of the city, its history, people, and lifestyles. Its historical values, primarily social values, are what resulted in colonial dwellings being placed on the State Heritage Register. Though listed for social values, the physical form is preserved; thus, making the physical form, the dwelling, a monument of the settler past of Brisbane.
CONCLUSION

This thesis was prompted by the lack of comparative study of colonial architecture, specifically in the postcolonial world. This lacuna was reviewed and explored alongside the importance of domestic space to shape the focus of this thesis; colonial dwellings are not only a reminder of the colonial era but also a space with intimate relationships to the owners. This thesis contributes to the existing research in three facets. First is the comparative study of Colombo and Brisbane: a transient and a settler colony. Second is the discussion of contemporary iterations of colonial dwellings. Third is the understanding how the colonial pasts are viewed by contemporary society; colonial dwellings act as a lens for this understanding. Through these three specific contributions, this thesis highlights the importance of comparative study across the postcolonial nations pertaining to their histories, their forms, and the negotiation between these two elements.

COMPARATIVE STUDY

The comparative study between Colombo and Brisbane – a transient and a settler colony – in their treatment of colonial dwellings, provided insight into different relationships and histories to colonial dwellings. In addition, the diverse approaches, the motivations behind these approaches, and their outcomes with regard to colonial dwellings, are examined. The comparison of a transient and a settler colony, also allowed for the concept of ‘postcolonial’ to be questioned.

Transient colonies had a definite end to their colonial era; when independence was either granted or achieved. Yet, in the case of Sri Lanka, an administration reminiscent of the colonial regime continued to govern the country following independence. Therefore, the dwellings in which they resided, colonial dwellings, continued to hold power to their name, type, and style. Colombo as society evolved past caste to class and as new elites emerged, the locals appropriated colonial lifestyles to portray status. The local elites wished to portray their newfound status to colonial elites and fellow local elites alike. The elements of colonial lifestyles used included, but were not limited to, dress, language, and also architecture. Architecture, having historically been associated with elites of Sri Lanka – both colonial and indigenous – allowed the rising elites to show both the extent to which they had westernised and the land they had acquired, and therefore, status. The act of portraying status through colonial architecture, both public and private, continued past independence.

In Australia, as a settler colony, the differentiation between colonial and postcolonial occurred over time, socio-politically; as the composition of the nation changed
and time passed. The social hierarchy of Brisbane has evolved significantly following colonial era and so it no longer plays a role in present day society. The dwellings originating from the colonial era have also changed hands significantly, making the associations between ownerships and colonial origins, indirect. In Brisbane, architecture was similarly used to portray status across the pre-federation era. However, as a recently established settler colony, the long tradition of architecture being connected to status originated from Britain. Therefore, among the settlers, social standing was displayed through dwellings. The ability to construct dwellings, which were both permanent and unique, allowed elites to stand out; high quality materials and architects were only accessible to the wealthy. In the post-colonial times, the importance of elites, who once used colonial dwellings to portray status, was established; the role they played in the establishment of Brisbane was made clear; their residences were memorialised.

**CONTEMPORARY ITERATIONS**

Unlike many of the existing literature, this work focuses on contemporary iterations of colonial architecture, highlighting how the relationship between postcolonial nations and colonial pasts endures through time and continues to be reflected in colonial dwellings. The approaches taken by present-day societies in maintaining, destroying, altering, and preserving colonial dwellings is reflective of their view of colonial memorabilia; by extension, the colonial era. From this thesis, it is evident that in Colombo, contemporary society uses colonial dwellings to refer back to an era of power, a past of extravagance and high status. Those who lived within colonial dwellings are portrayed in power and high standing. In Brisbane, however, when referring back to the past through colonial dwellings, it is done so in relation to the settler origins of the city. In viewing the physical reminders of the colonial era, priority is given to the view of Brisbane’s establishment and those who played a role in that process.

Despite their differences, all the colonial dwellings studied have histories, which are regarded as important and worthy of being reflected upon. These histories range across personal narratives, chronicles of use, architectural histories as well as historical contributions to the city at large. Reflections upon these histories, motivated by social, historical, and personal relationships, are actualised through maintenance, renovation and development and embodied selectively in the way these buildings are brought into the present.

The historical uses, historical importance, and the historical intentions of the colonial dwellings have directly and indirectly influenced their contemporary iterations.
Though all ten colonial dwellings reflect upon their pasts, the specific histories reflected upon are based on the current usage of the dwellings. Maniumpathy, Tintagel, Eskgrove and Hanworth alike reflect upon the histories which would accentuate their current status as boutique hotels and spaces of residence; carrying forward the aspects which resonate the most with their target audiences. Physically, the structures of these four dwellings, especially the facades, have been returned to their colonial elite extravagance. However, it is in the depictions of their interiors that they all diverge; they focus on elements that further articulate specific histories that they reflect upon and their present uses. Many of the other dwellings, such as Pradeepa Hall, The Lighthouse and Hughesville, maintain their façades while the interior is co-opted to their present use, making the colonial exterior a shell to a more modern and purpose oriented interior. The three dwellings, which show the most historical resemblance, are the house museums, Newstead House and Miegoynyah, and the private residence, Boralugoda Maha Gedera. Though they reflect significantly upon past uses, with the spaces being very indicative of the past, modern elements were also included across time to accommodate current needs. The two house museums use the dwellings as examples of past lifestyles by depicting a particular ownership and the use during that ownership. Boralugoda Maha Gedera conversely is preserved due to the personal connections to the dwelling and the value provided to that particular past.

VIEW OF THE COLONIAL PASTS

The culmination of the above discussed points of the comparative study and contemporary iterations of dwellings, this thesis has shown how the colonial pasts are viewed by contemporary society and that colonial dwellings act as a lens for this understanding. Therefore, this thesis discussed how the postcolonial society plays out in the domestic sphere within colonial dwellings; the dwellings, which are a standing reminder of the colonial past. By using the relationship, colonial dwellings had to the postcolonial landscape as a window, this thesis contributes to how the colonial eras are viewed and addressed, at present. The dwellings belonging to elites, further riddled with colonial power, are more symbolic of the colonial past; thus a more suitable lens through which to view the relationships with the colonial pasts.

In contemporary Colombo, the colonial era is viewed for its extravagance, class, and the high status held by the families. This crosses over to how dwellings of that era exuded such status. This depiction of status by the dwellings carried forward, past independence. The elite nature of the dwellings is not limited to the colonial era, but also
includes the subsequent times that built upon the colonial. In Brisbane, when reflecting upon the past, especially the colonial period, the dwellings are not viewed as being ‘colonial’ as such, but as being from the time when Brisbane originated. These dwellings were the residences of the settler elites; those who played significant roles in the establishment and growth of Brisbane, either through private industry or government involvement. Thus, it is the histories of these individuals, their lifestyles, and the lifestyles of others like them that colonial era elite dwellings reflect, in contemporary society.

More so than the colonial histories, it is the contemporary understanding of such histories that provides substance to how colonial dwellings are viewed. In Sri Lanka and more specifically in Colombo, the colonial era continues to influence not only the social but also the political and the economic climates. Westernised elites continued to rule the country even during periods of nationalism. Though the political elites reverted to traditional dress and the native tongue, those with wealth retained their colonial mansions; colonial influences were never thoroughly erased from the domestic sphere. Colonial dwellings of Colombo present a level of continuity in how they are used. Portrayal of family status continues to be important with architecture carrying much of the load. This is especially prevalent in regards to occupants, with many dwellings staying in the same family for many generations; until the late twentieth century and even further. This is further governed by the locations with areas such as Colombo 07, continuing to be for elites.

As Brisbane evolved through the twentieth century, unlike Colombo, it underwent a gradual transition to postcolonial. However, with the continued shift of wealth combined with the dialogue surrounding the indigenous populations, Brisbane’s relationship to their colonial past altered. Though the colonial dwellings discussed originated from elites, they no longer play a large role in the depicting status. As seen through the colonial dwellings discussed in this thesis, the past is viewed as one of origin; and of settlement in Brisbane. The lifestyle of the settlers, the settlers themselves, and their contributions to Brisbane are remembered and memorialised, especially through government legislature. Heritage listings have governed how these dwellings are viewed and maintained in contemporary society. The social importance of the dwelling at the time of settlement contribute to these heritage listings. This emphasis on settlement and settler history is prioritized when viewing colonial dwellings and the colonial era; thus they are reflected in contemporary iterations of the dwellings. With regards to continuity of colonial dwellings in Brisbane, prevalence lies in dwellings of importance to the history of Queensland; monumentalising the settlement of Brisbane.
http://www.cinnamoncolomboscope.com/

http://www.maniumpathy.com/


“About.” *Newstead House | Brisbane's Oldest Surviving Residence Built In 1846.* 

“About.” *The Lakshman Kadirgamar Institute.* http://www.lki.lk/about/


“Hiring of Reception Halls.” *Government Information Centre.* 

“History.” *Miegunyah House Museum.* 
http://www.miegunyah.org/index.php?location=History

“Hughesville House.” *Dickinson Construction.* 


“Paradise Road The Tintagel Colombo.” *Paradise Road.* 
http://www.paradiseroadhotels.com/tintagel/

“Queensland Heritage Register.” *The Queensland Government.* 

“QWHA.” *Miegunyah House Museum.* 

“Welcome | Brisbane Open House | Unlock your city.” Brisbane Open House.
   http://www.businesstoday.lk/cover_page.php?article=924&issue=219
Anonymous (Communications Manager) in discussion with the author. July 2017, transcript.
Anonymous (owner of Paradise Road) in email discussion with the author. October 2016, transcript.
Anonymous (President QWHA) in discussion with the author. April 2017, transcript.
Anonymous (Research Fellow) in discussion with the author. November 2016, transcript.
Basnayake, Adrian (owner of Maniumpathy) in email discussion with the author. June 2017, transcript.
Basnayake, Chrysanthie (owner of Maniumpathy) in discussion with the author. October 2016, transcript.


Fitzgibbons, Shelley (Retired) in discussion with the author, July 2017, transcript.


Gunawardena, Vijith Rupasinghe (owner of Boralugoda Maha Gedera) in discussion with the author. December 2016, transcript.


Harris, Arna (owner of Eskgrove) in discussion with the author, July 2017, transcript.


Morrison, Allan A. “Brisbane One Hundred Years Age.” Speech, read at a meeting of the Royal Historical Society of Queensland, October 25, 1962.


http://content.time.com/time/specials/2007/article/0,28804,1717144_1822005_1821627,00.html

Vecchio, Marisa (owner of Hanworth House) in discussion with the author. April 2017, transcript.


APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 – ETHICAL CLEARANCE

School of Architecture
Approval Form for Experiments on Humans
Including Behavioural Research

Chief Investigator: Pamudu Tennakoon

Project Title: Dwelling on the Colonial Dichotomy - Comparison of British Colonial Bungalows in Colombo and Queenslanders in Brisbane.

Supervisor/s: Pedro Guedes (Primary Supervisor)
Geoff Ginn (Associate Supervisor)
Deborah van der Plaat (Associate Supervisor)

Co-investigators: N/A

Project Number: 20161001

Degree: MPhil

End date of project: 20/07/2017
Comments: Low-risk MPhil project able to be approved by School Committee.

Name of responsible committee:
School of Architecture Research and Ethics Committee
This project complies with the provisions in the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research and complies with the regulations governing experimentation on humans.

Name of committee representative:
Paola Leardini
School of Architecture Ethics Officer

Signature
Date 12/10/2016