

STUDY ON REFUGEE HOUSES
(analysis on the
architectural form spaces
and human conditions
of the Limassol District)

Major 2

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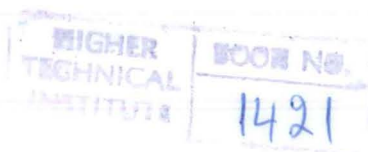
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INTRODUCTION

Through the centuries, Cyprus was a really tortured island. Because of its geographical position mainly, hardly ever did it was free. The different conquerors, Venicians, Franks, Turks - who stepped in the land of Cyprus, tried to use it for their own purposes ignoring the needs of the population of the island.

After a long way of strifes and fights, in 1960 Cyprus became an independent island since it belonged to England since 1878.

Soon after 1960, Cyprus started recovering. It might had not been a rich country and the development since then, had been analogous to that. Architecture had been rather poor and housing conditions could not be considered as perfect. But at least the opportunity for development was being offered to the island.

Gradually, after the Cyprus independence, things were being changed. The living standards were increased and housing conditions were improved. But still there were persons who could not afford to have a house - not only to buy but to rent as well. They were forced to live in bad conditioned huts and not only there. Some persons were sheltered in caves like the animals. The government decided to do something for these persons. So the construction of the houses for the low income persons started. It is true that these houses had been a life-saver for all those persons.

The plans had not been all realized when cyprus accepted a hard rap. Due to internal disputes and since the defence of the island had been minimised, the Turks stepped in the island and occupied the 40% of the land of Cyprus. Right on the time when Cyprus seemed to forget the old hardship it had gone through and was in the right way to be developed in every section of life.

The turkish invasion has as a result the decrease in the living standards of Cypriots. the housing problem that

Cyprus was facing, was enormous, Hundreds of thousands of Cypriots were refugees in their own country. Hundreds of thousands of people had nowhere to live.

The first week, some of the homeless people, found shelter under the non-completed structures. Some others had been living temporarily in friends' and relatives' houses. The situation was really awful.

After the first shock, the government realised how huge the problem had been. And since the houses could not be built in a few weeks time, the refugee camps were created in an area out of each town - not far away from it - in the free part of Cyprus. The refugees were sheltered under the tents. But that was certainly not the solution. The refugees has lacks in the elementary facilities. They were sleeping in camp-beds. Not question about private sanitary fittings of-course. In each camp, some toilets and showers for public use could be found. For cooking their meals, they were using camp-fires. In the meantime, many refugees had been houses in the turkish-cypriot houses since the turkish had been moved to the north part of Cyprus.

The conditions of living of the refugees were unacceptable. The construction of the refugee housing estates should have began. the financial means of the Cypriot government had been shabby. By the financial aid of other countries, the construction of the refugee houses, finally began. Nobody could expect great things. The number of the refugees was great and it was impossible for the government to build an adequate number of houses at once. The first housing estates were hasty built. The construction was no good at all. But it was the first step in a long run that started in 1974 and still goes on ...

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