

House Types

Variations occur in dwellings according to the building materials, available and used, which are mostly determined by natural environment. Similarly, *genrede vie* determines the size, form and function, and both the factors (i.e., physical and cultural environment) combinedly, give a regional characteristic to the dwellings. House types are classified on the following basis.

- (1) Building material applied
- (2) Size and shape
- (3) Socio-culturo-economic status. Let us see one by one.

1. House Types Based on Building Materials

- (A) Walls: (i) mud (ii) stone (iii) brick (iv) timber (v) Wattle
- (i) Mud is the most common material, available from all type of soils, varying in texture and colour. It is also the widespread oldest material used in houses of old civilizations. The vernacular buildings, involving family labour and neighbours cooperation, are, everywhere, available with mud walls. Even, the ordinary dweller runs up wall out of his own labour. It is also convenient to repair and build, when required, without any extra payment to mason, by giving periodical coating, plastering and thatching. Mud walled houses also are cool during summer. But, the disadvantages are also many-effects of dampness, white ants, dirty nooks and corners, time and labour consuming, space consuming, less durability are negative aspects.
- (ii) Stone or basalt boulders or rock cut pieces are widely used in such areas, where proximity/ nearness, availability in greater amount and portability are favourable factors. Sandstone providing hilly zones, volcanic plateau zones exhibit examples of such houses in abundance.
- (iii) Brick walls are now covering the country side with the increased use of coal as baking material. It's role in construction cost, durability, space saving and maneuverability is obvious. The oldest evidences of houses are available in brickwalls of archaeological finds. It has other form of uses too (a) Mud mortar, as cementing material, is widely used in country side (b) various other cementing materials as mortar are used since ancient times. Now cement is covering the market in rural country side too. (c) Unbaked kachcha brick is also used for low height walls, but, popular in poor class owners.
- (iv) Timber or wooden wall houses were, and are, common in forest areas of the world. In many a hilly parts of the world, where rocks are available in abundance, the labour cost, required to cut them of precise size, and in transporting them, is outbalanced by the easily gathered wood just near the dwelling, to which the tribals are well accustomed. Examples abound in Bhil areas in Central India and rural country side in Sweden, North America (folk log houses of Mexico), Italy and Brazil etc.
- (v) Wattle wall is the product of terrain, forest cover, i.e., availability of material almost without cost and long earned skill among the owners, of mostly, aboriginal occupied areas, particularly, Vindhya and Satpuras in India. Gonds and Bhils, mostly, reside in such houses. Their small dwellings occupy even the slopes and summits of the hills. Almost scattered in home steads, such '*tapro*' may, easily, be run up with the forest wood logs, bamboo and reed, available in profusion, first near the site, wherever, they make clearing to settle.
- (B) Roofs may be of (i) tile (ii) thatch (iii) mud+other material (iv) Tin (v) Stone slab (vi) Wood

- (vii) brick+others.
- (i) Tiled roofs are common throughout the world. Two types of tiles, semi-cylindrical and flat are used for covering houses with varied sizes and forms. By and large, the size is larger in Northern India Plain and shorter in other plateau and hilly areas.
 - (ii) Thatching is original shelter making skill, still prevalent, in most of the poor class settlers. All sorts of walls are covered by thatch, be it stone walled houses of Portugal, or timber walled dwellings of Brazil, South East Asia and North America and mudwalled houses of India. Even conical houses of Africa, show a variety of thatching skills, particularly, in Abyssinian Highlands. Date palm leaves also serve thatching along with other grasses, leaves, twigs etc.
 - (iii) Mud thatching often mixed with cow dung, is common in Western part of India. In western part of Utter Pradesh, such houses mark the horizon in each settlement. Its occasional plastering is enough to provide safety from rains.
 - (iv) Tin roofed houses are increasing in number, according to innovation diffusion, in climatically suitable areas; countries lacking in storm or strong speedy winds, are using tins in rural as well as urban areas. Ethiopian market centres exemplify it well. Tin sheds are easy in construction, and slops in rural areas, are switching over to its use, everywhere.
 - (v) Stone slabs or flakes are being used since ancient times in mountain, hill and plateau areas. Sandstone, lime stone and slate-slabs make durable roofs after being cut and designed according to need. Temple, mosques and churches, invariably, show its *in toto* presence.
 - (vi) Wood as roof material is common in temperate forest zone, where wooden slabs, carefully superimposed and joined with rounded corners, protect house from snow water.³⁹ In tropical part too, wooden strips form roofs covered with tin or water proof materials.
 - (vii) Bricks make flat and smooth roof in the form of lingers mixed with iron rods and cement, a practice in vogue, in modern type rural houses, particularly, in rural market centres.

2. *Size and Shape as Basis for Classification*

The author here presents empirical study conducted in Malwa Region in India. (Houses are grouped in five categories having various size, shape and accommodation, ranging from one room to more than five rooms. (1) The predominant group of one room dwelling shares 66.1 per cent of the region's total, occupied by 69.4 per cent persons, per household occupation number being 4.4, slightly less than the regional average of 4.87. The tribals, *balai*, *chamar*, most of the service class and small cultivator-cum-agricultural labour class people have such dwellings, lying mostly in hilly parts and marginal areas of the villages elsewhere. (ii) The poor and slightly well off people occupy two room dwellings, which cover 23 per cent of the regional total and accommodate 25.9 per cent population, having 5.5 persons per household. Here again one meets the tribals, agricultural labours, small cultivators and a few artisans and business class people having one main room, a verandah or a side attachment for catalyzed or other sheds required by the occupant. (iii) The lower middle class people comprising the peasants, carpenters, potters, business class, and a few of higher castes, occupy such dwellings, mostly of L-shape, having 6.6 per cent of the regional total and providing shelter to 8.6 per cent persons, who form a household of 6.2. (iv) Such dwellings, which have four rooms, cover only 2.2 per cent of the total and have 3.1 per cent population, the average household being 6.9. The middle class cultivators of upper caste, a few institutions come under this group. The houses having five or more than five rooms belong

to rich persons, mostly being cultivators having *Garhi* or some institutions. This forms only 1.6 per cent of the total dwellings, occupied by 2.4 per cent persons with an average household of 7.3. This indicates several facts: (1) Most of the dwellings of the region are one roomed, where most of the people find shelter; (2) Very few dwellings have five or more than five rooms, and rich class people form very low percentage of the population; (3) There is positive correlation between accommodation and house hold strength throughout the region; (4) Number of occupants per dwelling has greater pressure in tribal areas, where more than 75 per cent live in one room dwellings; (s) Similarly, poor class people in other areas also have more than 5 persons per dwelling with only one room or two⁴⁰ (Fig. 8.6).

3. House Type Based Upon Socio-Economic Status

The study leads one to discuss about the part played by socio-economic conditions, which are best expressed in the size and shape of the houses in every region. It reveals that variation is visualized according to the cultural groups, including high caste people like *Brahmins*, *Rajputs*, *Kayasthas* and *Muslims*, particularly, *Shiyas* including *Bohras* and *Banias*, which have more spacious houses varying in vertical section also. Privacy, joint family relations, separate rooms required for cattle, store and guests, according to their cultural heritage, give various

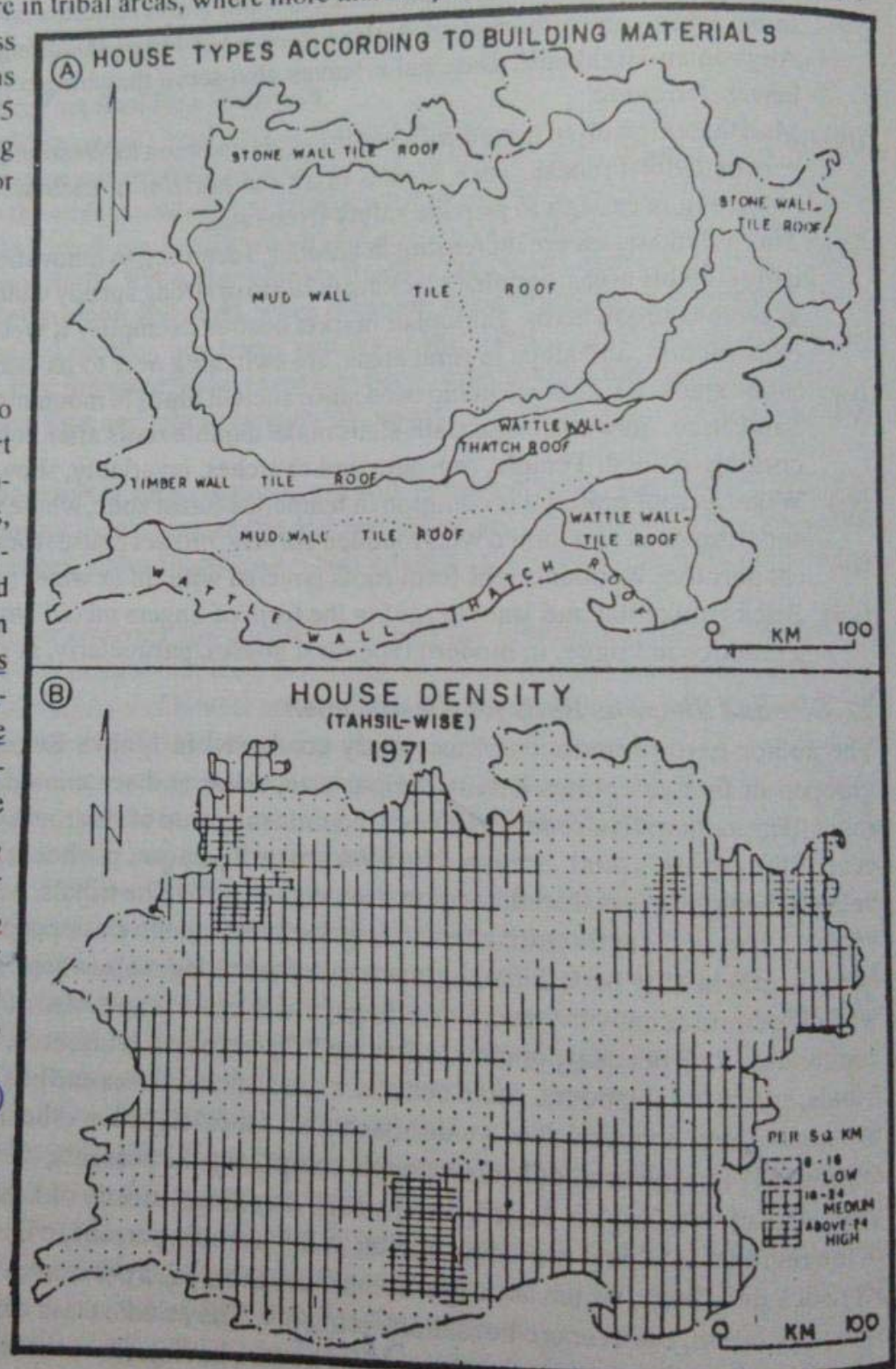


Figure 8.6

size, shape and plans, quite distinct from those of agricultural labour class, having almost no privacy or 'pardah' on the one hand, and also distinct from tribal dwellings on the other. Thus, there are two groups: (i) The first including the occupants of superior status, both socially and economically or economically only, and the other, (ii) Tribal's group having close medium and poor contact with the superior group. The superior cultural group, mostly, occupies Plateau, Narmada valley and Nimar Upland Region and lives in mud or stone walled tiled dwellings, and the tribals, shelter themselves in timber or wattle walled and tiled or thatched dwellings, though mud and tile are taking the place of other materials with the increase in contract, forest clearing and rising income through various welfare schemes. The sub groups include: (1) *Gonds*, *Bhils* and *Bhils* living outside hills; (ii) Medium group of *Bhils*, *Patlyas*, *Banjaras*, and *Bhilalas* of interior and, (iii) Poor or primitive group including *Bhils* of interior areas, *Korkus*, *Balers*, *Mankers* etc., living in the interior parts of the Vindhya and Satpuras.

Vertical section in dwellings, mostly found in market villages or old villages of Plateau, Narmada Valley or Nimar, reflect the status of original *Jagirdars*, *Patels*, *Banias* or newly advanced business class. Such house types, sometimes, reflect lack of space, practice of privacy and 'Pardah' and also a compensation for cool air and sunshine, they provide to the dweller. It is remarkable that such double storeyed houses have no complete superstructure upon the whole base of ground floor, but only front side is provided with separate rooms for sleeping, store or a room for woman folk approachable through wooden, cemented or stone staircases from outside or inside.

Functions

Houses are also categorized according to the use to which they are put. The census organization⁴¹ gives 13 categories, in all, which have been grouped here into four: (i) Dwellings including vacant houses. (ii) Shop-cum-workshop and, administrative, financial and educational institutions, (iii) Community centres and medical institutions and (iv) Others. These functions vary according to the need of a dweller, e.g., (i) Cattle shed, (ii) Implement shed, (iii) Grain store, (iv) Enclosure for sheep and goats, (v) Piggery sheds, (vi) Poultry shed, (vii) Labour shed near Brick Kilns or building constructions, (viii) Project site sheds for labour, sometimes, labour colony, (ix) Truck farming including vegetable and fruit stores, (x) Fishery tents or houses, (xi) Enclosures for fodder, cart and miscellaneous articles, (xii) Fuel store for keeping cow dung cake or dry wood and grain stalks, (xiii) Hay store, (xiv) Shed for pumpset, diesel set, (xv) Watching tents or wooden constructions on higher grounds to save crops from wild animals, birds, thief etc., (xvi) Inn or Dharmshala for staying by travelers, pilgrims or even traders, (xvii) Sheds-cum-restaurant along Highways as halt shelters, (xviii) Temple, mosque or church attached priest houses, (xix) Deity abodes, (xx) Other religious shrine-sheds for priest, *Panda* and *Pujari*, (xxi) *Bhuta-Preta* apparition (ghost) temples and attached shelters, (xxii) Horse stables, (xxiii) Elephant hall, and (xxiv) Dog rooms etc.)

According to sample study the residential dwellings cover more than 62 per cent followed by others (about 30%); group two sharing 6.5 per cent and the rest coming under category No. 3. The percentage varies district wise, which reflects functional shift according to industrial and rural development. Similarly, the tenure status of sample houses⁴² reveals, that about 91 per cent house hold occupy own dwellings of various functional groups, the rest being sheltered in rented buildings. About 75,500 persons have been recorded as houseless. If one realizes the pressure on one

roomed dwellings this number would increase and cross the critical level.

A Gestalt View

In brief, house types are classified as follows: (1) Mudwalled tiled, (2) Mudwalled + mudroofed, (3) Mudwalled thatched, (4) Mudwalled with prototype wooden first floor, (5) Brick walled tiled, (6) Brick walled with concrete or brick slab roofed, (7) Brick walled thatched, (8) Kachcha brick walled tiled, (9) Kachcha brickwalled thatched, (10) Stonewalled tiled, (11) Stone walled tiled, (12) Stonewalled slab/flake roofed, (13) Timber walled tiled, (14) Timberwalled thatched, (15) Timber walled wooden roof, (16) Wattle walled tiled, (17) Wattle walled thatched, (18) Wattle-daut dwellings, (19) Cave Dwellings, i.e., at Carriers (near Paris), Spain, (20) Underground dwellings of Turkey and Spain, turfan (Gobi desert), (21) Loess houses in China, (22) Long houses of Sarawak, (23) Atoni houses,⁴⁴ (Fig. 8.7), (24) namely Fenghuo⁴³ settlement, (25) Pastoral tents, (26) Sod houses of Eskimo, Alaska, Pueblo Indian' houses in New Mexico, (27) Igloo of Eskimo, (28) Bamboo pile house of Cambodia, (29) Batak pile dwelling sumara,

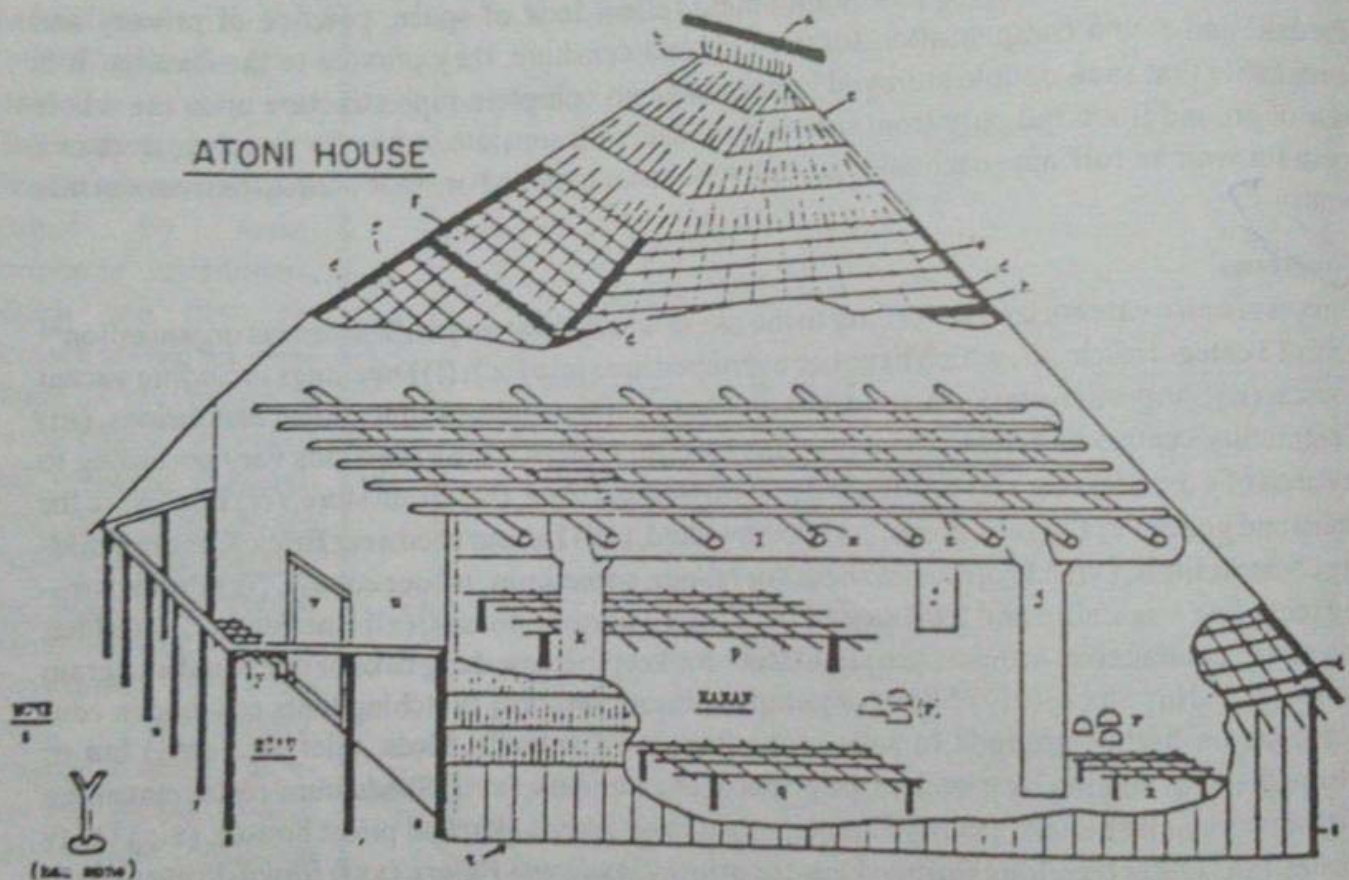


Figure 8.7. a. *fuf manas*, 'sun cranium'; b. *fuf ai*, 'fire cranium'; c. *hun*, 'grass' (thatch roof); d. *suaf bidjaekase*, 'horse spar'; e. *suaf benaf*, 'benaf spar'; f. *suaf susuf*, 'susuf spar'; g. *aka'nunu*, 'pillow'; h. *tak pani*, cross-spar; i. *tnat oe*, 'hold water' cross spars; j. *ni ainaf*, 'mother post'; k. *ni ainaf (nakan)*, 'mother post' ('head'); l. *atbat*, beam; m. *kranit*, cross-beam; n. *nesa*, rafter; o. *otol*, 'entrance' (attic); p. *harak ko'u*, 'great platform'; q. *harak tupa*, 'sleeping platform'; r. *tunaf*, 'hearth'; s. *ni manu*, 'chicken post'; t. *haef*, 'foot'; u. *piku*, 'wall'; v. *eno*, 'door'; w. *tol*, 'entrance' (outer section); x. *harak manba'at*, 'agreement platform' (serving platform); y. *harak*, 'platform'; z. *mone*, 'outside; male' (yard).

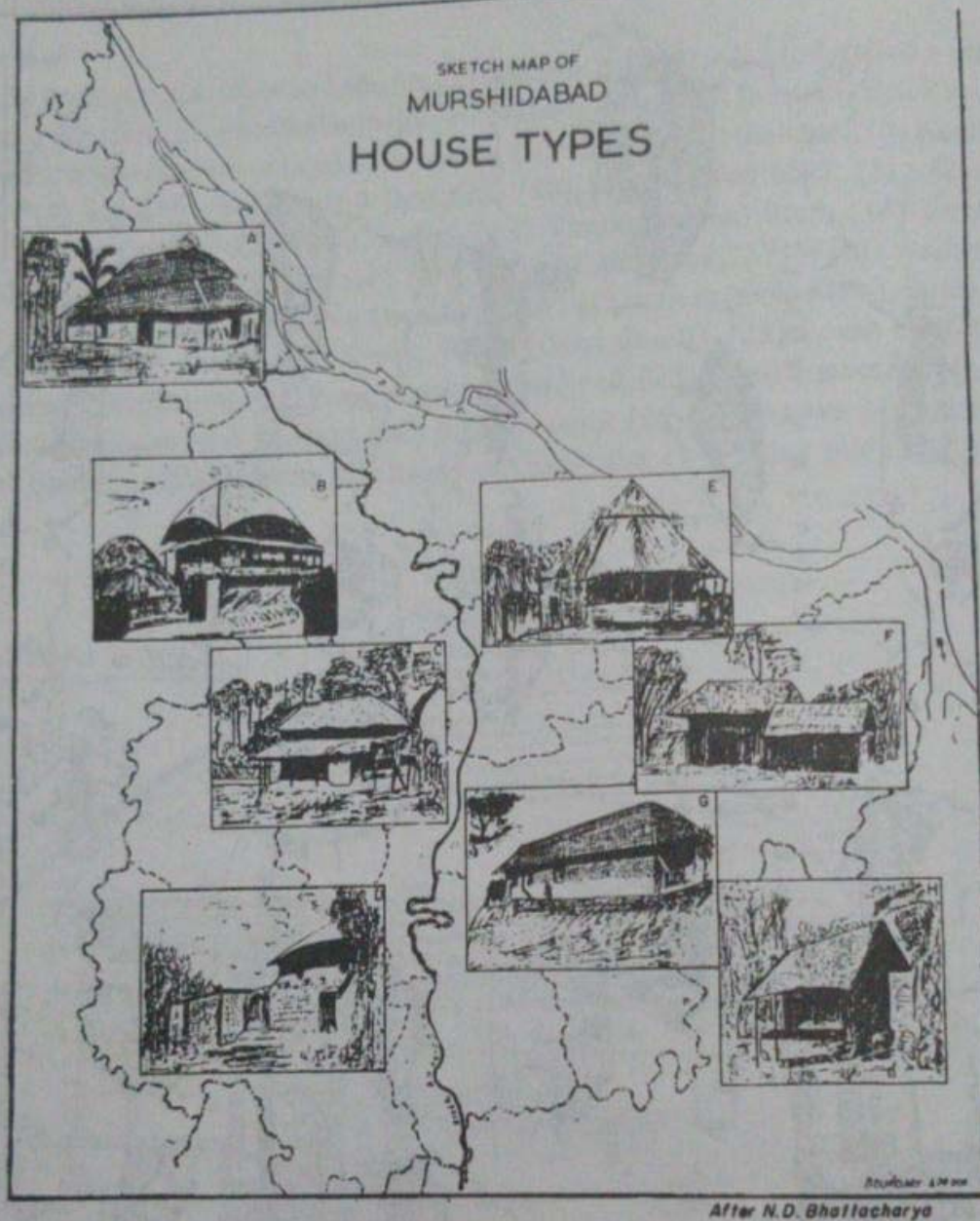
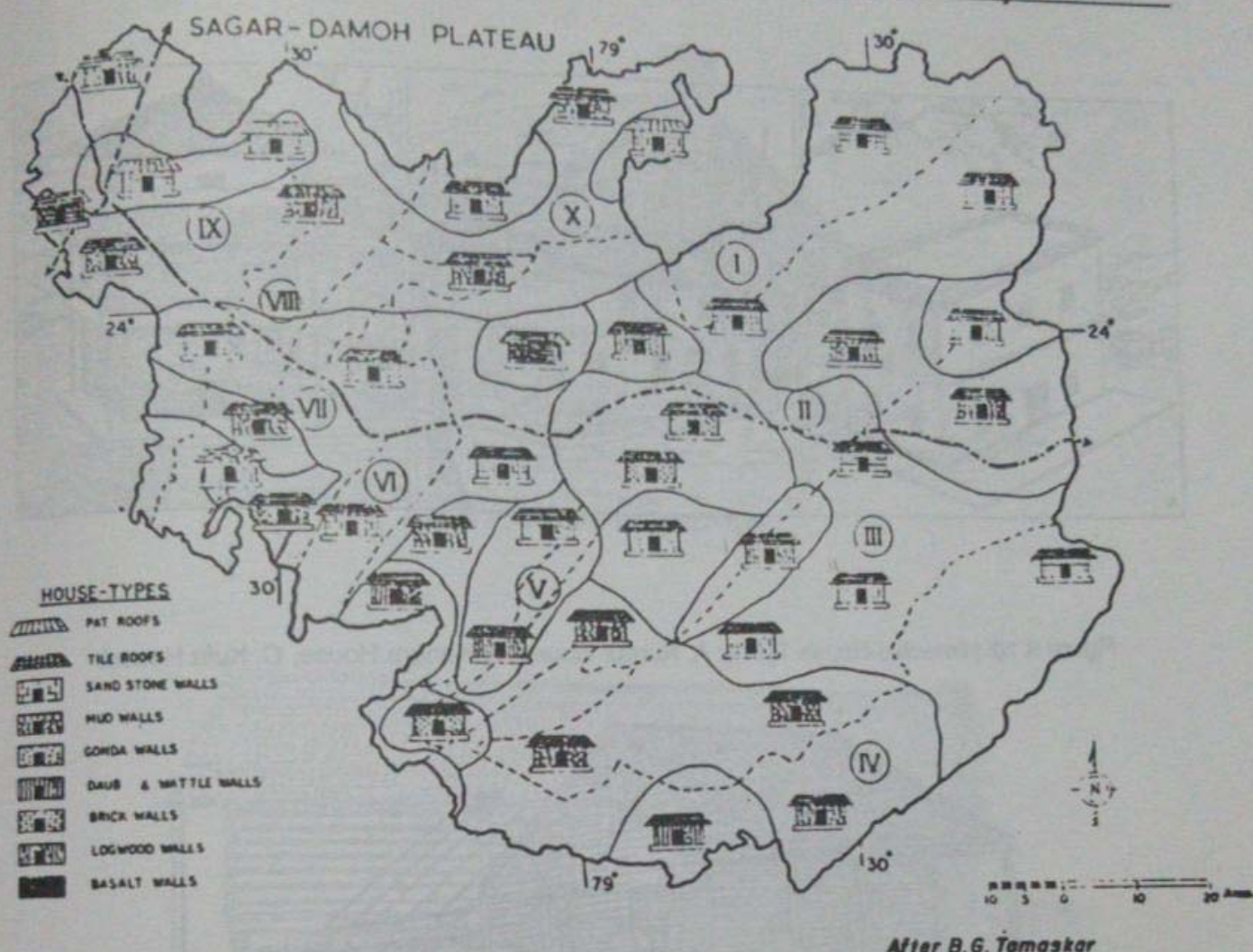


Figure 8.8

(30) Yurt, Mongolia, (31) Clay house, Syria, (32) Conical huts, Africa, (Togo) and in Ethiopia, (33) Cart tent of Gadia *Luhars* (Ironsmiths), (34) Boat house on (Figs. 8.7a-8.20).

House Versus Home

A general statement is that rented building is house for the occupant and home for owner or builder. But, such building, if built, for rental purposes are not homes. Home attaches greater significance to attachment of owner to it, as builder as well as owner, who builds, for not only his lifelong stay but also for progeny to come. Home symbolizes our ancestors. It is a part of ours, while house is to live, a home is to be married as well as to live. It also has specific allotted rooms or space for specific purposes, i.e., for worship, marriage, rituals, kitchen etc. The whole settlement becomes a setting for the life of home. But in other case, the house is regarded as the total



[--- Physiographic Boundaries]
[— Limits of House types.]

Figure 8.9: (I) The Rajpura Plateau, (II) The Haveli, (III) The Bearma Basin, (IV) The Selwara-Jamunia-Chikhali Highlands, (V) The Abchand-Naharmau Highlands, (VI) The Sagar-Jaisinagar Highlands, (VII) The Dhasan Basin, (VIII) The Rahatgarh-Malthon Highlands, (IX) The Badar-Bina Doab, and (X) The Dhamoni-Shahgarh Highlands.

setting for life, and the settlement only as "Connective tissue,"⁴⁵ almost 'waste' space, to be traversed and secondary in nature. Home is a dwelling place, a fixed residence of family or household, a native land, where one feels at home, knowing and being familiar with every thing there; hence, home coming, home sickness, home made, home rule, home work, home like-tlement, where he and his kins, were and are born, and will born.

It is only homes in country side, which show, impact of family structure, kinship and caste and find full expression of *genre de vie*. It is here that we can talk about basic needs, family life, position of women, privacy and social intercourse—all well adapted to owner's attitudes. Here only, one can expect the economic, protective, religious, adductive, social, affectional and status giving services available to a group life or family life. The shared occupancy of a home by a num-

ber of family members allows each member the use of several rooms. It is commonly accepted, that the home life of an individual, affords him quite different satisfactions, from those gained or sought in his activities, elsewhere. To sum up 'The marketable man is never the complete man in his uniqueness, and conversely, the whole man is never marketable.'⁴⁶

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