



Section C

301/C

Conservation of historical buildings in the Galle Fort

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Galle Fort contains a large number of old buildings constructed during the Dutch and British periods. These are undergoing modernizations but most still retain their old styles. Conservation is concerned with the preservation of old features that are still present in these buildings. This study involved the analysis of historic buildings. Old features of these were recorded and conservation actions needed were identified.

Three buildings in the Church Street were selected for this study. These buildings are the Dutch Church, Lawyer's office and the Gymnasium in the Galle Fort. The Dutch Church constructed in 1755 contains Dutch architectural features of the period. The building is on a stone foundation with an off white colored brick floor. Walls are of white brick work. The stairway, which opens to a small area, is a large wooden structure in the backyard area. White columns made up of limestone are genuinely old structures constructed in the past. The door which is of black wood provides access to an open area. The gable roof has half round tiles. This old building is in a reasonably preserved state and continuous attention is necessary to preserve it. The Lawyer's Office is an old building which contains the architectural features of the period in many places. It had not been subjected to extensive renovations. Large brick masses had been used to prepare the foundation. The old floor had been laid down using bricks. The old brick wall remains preserved at present. The column is of limestone. The wooden ceiling appears in many places. The old roof which had been modified many times remains at present. Although the building is old it has been preserved to some extent. It has two areas, the old area and the modernized area. Action must be taken to preserve the building while continuing to use it. The Gymnasium has been modified to a large extent but still contains some old features. The building is on a cemented structure. The cemented floor is painted red. Walls are of white brick. Damages are almost unnoticeable. Although the old wall has been painted to convert it into a new area, it still maintains its old features. Columns are old features that need preservation and their function is holding the roof. The roof is covered with tiles. There is an outer area with a sheet cover. There are some wooden doors colored white. Some doors have glass coverings above. Most of them are old doors while there are some replacements. Wooden windows are with glass panels. Most windows are also with railings with some having glass coverings above them. Most are old windows with modifications. The roof is covered with tiles. There is an outer area with a sheet cover. Action is necessary to prevent further modifications that will destroy the old architectural features.

These three buildings have some common features in their walls, doors and windows as well as differences in them and other places. Methods to conserve these old buildings in the World Heritage Sight of Galle have to be chosen with utmost care. The methods intended to



be used are replacement of parts, repair, cleaning, repainting and polishing of objects. Strict attention must be paid to old structures while newly placed areas too need to be conserved.

Acknowledgement: Financial assistance by the CHCS, University of Moratuwa