THE TRANSFORMATION OF SPACE
IN THE GALLE FORT (SRI LANKA) BY ITS INHABITANTS
A THESIS
SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE SCHOOL
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE
MASTER OF URBAN AND REGIONAL PLANNING
BY
HABARAKADA LIYANAGE GAYANI SANJEEWANI
CHAIRPERSON: DR. NIHAL PERERA
BALL STATE UNIVERSITY
MUNCIE, INDIANA
DECEMBER 2012
THE TRANSFORMATION OF SPACE
IN THE GALLE FORT (SRI LANKA)
BY ITS INHABITANTS
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This thesis would not have been possible without the support and guidance of my advisor, Dr. Nihal Perera. I thank him for his invaluable guidance, tireless commenting and endless encouragement.

Special thanks must be given to the other members of my committee, Professor Francis Parker and Professor Eric Kelly. I would also like to thank Professor Michael Burayidi (Chair of the Department of Urban Planning). In particular I am grateful to the Ball State University for the financial support for the past three years which made my education possible in the USA.

A special note of thanks should also go to Jeffrey Lauer and Sunil Thenabadu for their comments and proofreading the final thesis.

I am personally indebted to the residents and heritage administrators of Galle Fort, thank you for opening up your stories to me. My special thanks go out to Karu Ayya for being a guardian to me and to Shurafa for being a genuine friend.

I wish to thank to my parents, my sisters and brothers for being with me so generously in this journey. Finally I wish to thank to Samitha Senarath for the all our memories with this thesis.

My first encounter with Galle Fort was when I attended as a young student at Southlands College in 1990. I went to Sudharmala Temple for Sunday schooling. I played with friends and ran with my sisters on the rampart. Eventually, as an undergraduate student, I returned to the Galle Fort World Heritage Site with a deeper curiosity and the intention of studying its evolution. Then, the Fort exposed me to the
great illusion of the “reality.” My life has changed since I realized the world is not as I assumed. The reality began to disturb me, but it has motivated me to question my own personal journey and its intersection with Galle Fort. Thank you Galle Fort for being such a wise teacher.
CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Pg.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>List of Figures and Tables</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abbreviations and Symbols</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chapter I: Introduction</strong></td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The preservation of the Fort</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issues</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Project</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methodology</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Framework, premises, and scope</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Findings</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The relevance</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The organization</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chapter II: The history of Galle Fort</strong></td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Galle and the Fort</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Portuguese period (1505-1640)</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Dutch period [1640–1796]</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The British period (1796-1948)</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sri Lankan adaptation of the Fort</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Galle Fort preservation project</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chapter III: Contemporary fort: The World Heritage project and the inhabitants of Galle Fort</strong></td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The abstract space of World Heritage</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People’s spaces of World Heritage</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Following the abstract space</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In between spaces</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ideal lived spaces</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The winners</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chapter IV: The Analysis: People's adaptation to the regulatory environment and the creation of space for their modified daily practices 83

Chapter V: Conclusion 98

Bibliography 104

Appendix 108
# LIST OF FIGURES AND TABLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Figure 1.1</td>
<td>Location of Galle Fort (Galle Heritage Foundation 2009)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 1.2</td>
<td>The decision-making institutions for Galle Fort World Heritage site</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 2.1</td>
<td>The road network of Galle Fort (Galle Heritage Foundation 2009)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 3.1</td>
<td>Farred’s house’s limestone wall with Dutch and British type columns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 3.2</td>
<td>Farred’s house plan with new additions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 3.3</td>
<td>Farred’s abandoned horse house area and house’s front door</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 3.4</td>
<td>Existing condition of Weerasinghe’s house</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 3.5</td>
<td>Unchanged plan of Weerasinghe’s house on Hospital Street</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 3.6</td>
<td>Shoba Fashion house before removing the roof</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 3.7</td>
<td>Shoba Fashion house after removing the roof</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 3.8</td>
<td>Perera’s façade before the “60 Houses Renovation Project”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 3.9</td>
<td>Perera’s façade after the Project”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 3.10</td>
<td>Gamage’s house before repairing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 3.11</td>
<td>Gamage’s house after adding new walls to separate the house</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 3.12</td>
<td>Jayasekara’s house after adding new floors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 3.13</td>
<td>Original condition of Liyanapathirana’s house</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 3.14</td>
<td>Liyanapathirana’s house newly added façade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 3.15</td>
<td>Rathnayaka’s cultivated area on beach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 4.1</td>
<td>Newly added architecture after the independence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 4.2</td>
<td>Population composition by ethnic groups - 2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 4.3</td>
<td>Symbol of “Galle Night Club” on the front wall of Farred’s house.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 1.1  Population and building composition of Galle Fort – 2011  12
Table 2.1  Main objectives of Galle Heritage Foundation  37
Table 2.2  Major Tasks of Galle Heritage Foundation  38
**ABBREVIATIONS AND SYMBOLS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ICOMOS</td>
<td>International Council on Monuments and Sites</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UDA</td>
<td>Urban Development Authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNESCO</td>
<td>United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GHF</td>
<td>Galle Heritage Foundation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rs.</td>
<td>Sri Lankan Rupees</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

When you walk down Peddlar Street, opposite to the Peddler’s Inn, there is a house without the roof. They have been repairing the fallen roof, but the Department of Archeology stopped that. Though they have an approved plan, the Department wants to take them to courts [sue them]. Yet the department does not take any speedy action, either way. I assumed that it is because the officials want a bribe…

(Nazar, 2011)

I am totally against the idea of “freezing” the built environment. According to my opinion 40% of the Galle Fort World Heritage is about buildings; the other 60% is about people. So if we only focus on the built environment and not on these people and their culture, the fort will convert into a museum.

(Chairman, Galle Heritage Foundation, 2011)

I like [to think of] the history of this Fort as a living monument. There are many fortresses in Sri Lanka, but they are not living. The only living monument is Galle Fort. Most of the inhabitants are now my friends. I feel strongly about protecting this heritage, it is the duty of our generation to conserve it for both the people who live here now and for future generations.

(Project Planning Officer, Galle Heritage Foundation, 2011, in Coombe et al. 2009)

Galle Fort is central to my life. I attended school there for thirteen years and I conducted research there during college. Galle Fort is a very familiar place and has been for most of my life. Yet during my school days I did not see the Fort’s prestige;
I certainly did not see it as a site of world heritage. Even when I learned its part in Sri Lanka’s colonial history the fact that our school was located in a colonial fort was neither evident, nor important to me. To me it was an everyday space where I went to school and played with friends and family.

Later, for my undergraduate thesis, I began exploring the history of Galle Fort. Eventually I discovered it was recognized and preserved as a World Heritage site. With the intention of studying its evolution, I explored the fort and its environment through the lens of the World Heritage project—its ultimate culmination. I studied conservation regulations and, during my visits, I witnessed firsthand how the Planning Committee of the Galle Heritage Foundation made decisions about various issues. The turning point came when I attended a meeting of the Planning Committee. I was unable to fathom the connection between committee decisions and the idea of the World Heritage Project. I became aware of an enormous gap between what the inhabitants of the fort wanted and what the Galle Fort World Heritage Project hoped to create. As a young person who believed in a perfect world, I was baffled. This conflict drove me to undertake the present study.

UNESCO declared Galle Fort a world heritage site in 1988 (UNESCO 1988, p.5). It remains the most well preserved fortified city built during the colonial period in Asia. Others have claimed it to be the largest preserved, historic, walled living-settlement in Southeast Asia (Liyana Arachchi et al. 2009). The new preservation regulations that accompanied UNESCO’s designation focus on the physical environment. While preservation professionals attempt to create an environment conceived through the lens of these regulations, the same process has de-familiarized the fort for its inhabitants;
(cf Holston, 1989) and it has become a struggle for them to carry out their daily practices. This thesis concentrates on how the inhabitants re-familiarize the (social) space of the fort.

Galle Fort, located in southern Sri Lanka, (figure 1.1). It is located 40 feet above sea level and occupies 92 acres of land area. According to the 2001 census there are 449 buildings inside the fort with 2,128 inhabitants. (Table 1.1)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Buildings – 449</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Residential Units</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial Units</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious Buildings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government Institutions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private Institutions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1.1: Building composition of Galle Fort - 2011

Figure 1.1: Location of Galle Fort (Galle Heritage Foundation 2009)
Throughout its history the fort was occupied by three different European colonial powers: the Portuguese (1505-1640), the Dutch (1640-1796), and the British (1796-1949). The Portuguese first established the fort in the early-sixteenth century, but the Dutch constructed a new one in the mid-seventeenth century on the same location, incorporating parts of the old fort. The latter is called the Black Fort. Unlike the Portuguese who focused on local enemies who attacked them from the land side, the Dutch were more concerned about European enemies attacking on the sea side. Additionally, they were concerned about efficiency, both economically and defensively (Perera, 1998). Unlike the Dutch, who used more current European technology to build star-shaped forts in Batticaloa, the shape of Galle Fort follows the land, but the same approach to the design is evident in the pointed bastions from which the walls can be watched.

The British took over Ceylon, the coastal areas including Galle, in 1796. In this, the British effectively ruled the entire island from 1815 until 1948. During this time there were no substantive physical changes to the fort. By using the extant Dutch buildings in the fort, the British familiarized the space by incorporating their building elements as well as newer technology. Today local Muslim, Sinhala, Burgher, Tamil and international communities inhabit the historic fort. Its current population (2,318) comprises 50% Muslims, 45% Sinhalese, and 5% international (Edmundas, 2009).

The world heritage status bestowed on the fort has radically transformed it and placed it on a new trajectory. The preservation regulations are focused on restoring the physical environment to the Dutch colonial era, by both preserving existing physical elements that belong to that period and transforming select non-conforming elements to
represent that period. The question is: How well, or not, are the social contributions of its inhabitants, who have been primarily responsible for shaping that physical environment thus far, taken into account?

The Preservation of the Fort

The historic preservation of Galle Fort incorporates broad discourse(s) that involve legislation, government action, court orders, and an environment marked by houses with verandahs and columns that look European and others without roofs. The legislation developed in several steps. It began with a private member’s bill in the colonial State Council, in 1940 (Wijeratne, 2005). The passing of this bill enacted the protection of Galle Fort and conferred responsibility to the Department of Archaeology. In 1971 the Department assumed responsibility of the historic buildings in the fort. Moreover, in 1971, the Department of Archaeology declared the Fort a protected monument under the Antiquities Ordinance no. 9 of 1940. With this move, all structures within 400 yards of the fort were enfolded under this law’s purview and the Department of Archaeology (Antiquities Ordinance no. 9, 1940).

The major change came in 1988 when UNESCO declared Galle Fort a World Heritage site. The announcement was followed by new historic preservation regulations that transformed the fort into a radically different place. According to UNESCO, criteria number four under which the declaration was made, the fort is “to be an outstanding example of a type of building, architectural or technological ensemble or landscape which illustrates (a) significant stage(s) in human history” (UNESCO 1972, Introduction). The focus was the “universal” significance of town planning, architecture,
civil engineering and hydrology of the Dutch colonial era. The justification made by UNESCO (1988, p.6) highlights the ramparts, the street grid, the streetscapes, courtyard architecture of the houses, verandahs with columns, and the underground storm-water drainage system. Hence, the restoration (and preservation) of buildings to the Dutch era became a priority for project administrators. Unlike in previous occasions, this time the authorities took strong interest to implement the regulations and preserve the old Dutch environment.

The new regulatory framework that followed the declaration comprised the *Galle Heritage Foundation Act of 1994* and special regulations of the Urban Development Authority (UDA, 1998). This connected preservation with planning, hypothetically, the past with future, the bigger contribution of this act created a complex administration to look over the physical form and any changes to it, making the fort an unknown or alien place for its inhabitants.

The administrative organization is made up of the Department of Archeology, Galle Heritage Foundation, the UDA, and the Galle Municipal Council. In addition, the court is used in cases of litigation and the Police Department is employed to enforce.

Authorities and professionals who carried out the preservation regulations and the workers who carried out necessary enforcement in the field enacted the setup on the ground. The environment created through the above perceptions and practices of space was strange to the inhabitants of the fort. It defamiliarized the environment they lived in for generations and displaced them in their own homes and habitats. Gail Lee Dubrow highlights the difference between history and buildings, and questions the focus on the physical in determining which buildings to preserve (Dubrow and Goodman, 2003). Her
work on historic preservation in the USA exposes the politics of historic preservation. She argues that the places chosen for preservation, like heritage sites, landmarks, and historic monuments reflect the distorted and incomplete history of the elite and the powerful found in mainstream narratives. Furthermore, she argues that because women and minorities had little power throughout American history the selection of “beautiful” buildings from the past for preservation inadvertently constructs and reinforces a white-male history. Hence, Dubrow (2003) demonstrates that the hegemonic preservation narrative in the United States has erased the historical experiences and contributions of locals and, more importantly, the existence of people belonging to other ethnic and religious groups as well as women. We can also ask: In the World Heritage project, whose history is preserved at whose expense?

The standard historical narrative of Galle Fort prioritizes the Dutch era. It has led to the preservation of a physical environment directly identified with the Dutch colonial period, virtually ignoring ordinary people and their environments. In so doing, the heritage identification, nomination, justification and protection have totally ignored the inhabitants of the Fort. The preservations attempted in Galle Fort have also ignored race, class, ethnicity, gender, sexual identities. There is hardly any room to raise questions about social justice or power, except for the Dutch who originally built it and the British who shaped it.
Issues

My preliminary findings led me to ask: Whose heritage is being preserved, who is preserving it, for what purpose and at whose cost? Moreover, how do the inhabitants of Galle fort respond and what do they create for themselves? These issues can be elaborated in the following sets of questions:

What is a world heritage site? What defines the success of the world heritage project? How did the Galle Fort become a world heritage site? Whose heritage is it? Who were the people involved in making this decision? What was their criteria and justification? Why did they focus on the preservation of Galle Fort to the Dutch era? Why have they ignored other colonial influences? How did they ignore the existing (and still evolving) culture of the Muslims? Could a different set of building regulations be a conservation policy for a historical site? When there is an extant culture still evolving can we preserve the built environment they inhabit to a historical time and of one particular culture? What is UNESCO’s project? What is the Department of Archeology’s project? What is the Galle Heritage Foundation’s (GHF) Project? What happened when the preservation regulations and the professionals involved in the World Heritage project become private practitioners? How do the regulations, institutions, and actions developed in this conception affect the environment of the fort and the daily lives of the inhabitants?

What was the fort for the inhabitants before it became a world heritage site? How do they react and respond to this new legal, institutional, and physical environment and their own displacement? How do they assert their own agency? What have they been able to produce? How successful are they?
The Project

Following these questions, this thesis examines the abstract space of the world heritage site as produced by the authorities and the inhabitants' responses to it, embodied in the lived spaces they created. The abstract space refers to the conception of a world heritage site by global, national, and local agencies and the production of Galle Fort through their decisions, guidelines and regulations, and through the enforcement of these that involves another set of agencies. The decision-making institutions include UNESCO, the Department of Archeology, ICOMOS Sri Lanka and the GHF. (Figure 1.2) The implementing agencies that developed guidelines and legal frameworks include UDA and Galle Municipal Council. The GHF is a consolidated body of UDA, Galle Urban Council, Archaeological Department, Central Cultural Fund (CCF), Government of Netherlands and few other institutions working towards conserving the city's heritage. The instruments are the guidelines and regulations. The enforcement of regulations are carried out by the police. For the Inhabitant’s responses, this thesis refers to how people adapt to a new regulatory environment, how they reproduce their daily practices, and the spaces through which they try to achieve this. The present study focuses on how people negotiate preservation regulations based on their worldviews and cultures; it maps out the resultant spaces and spatial structures that the inhabitants produced. It pays special attention to the numerous and layered social forces which continue to shape Galle Fort.
Figure 1.2: The decision-making institutions for Galle Fort World Heritage Site
Methodology

The research for this thesis is based on fieldwork while living in Galle Fort. A literature review helped develop a theoretical framework and methodology. This was followed by archival research in order to determine the historical context, background, preservation process, and regulations. Finally, interviews with selected officers and inhabitants were conducted to understand their perspectives and involvement in the shaping of the Galle Fort.

Data collection was based on qualitative methods, carried out through the following: review of documents, records, and reports; structured and informal conversations and interviews; and participant observations. Direct interviews with the officials from the Department of Archeology and the GHF were used to explore the perspectives of government agencies dealing with the preservation of Galle Fort. Interviews with business people, both residents and non-residents of the fort, were conducted to explore the multiple perspectives of tourism from the level of everyday tourist activity. Case studies of individual families were used to identify how people transform their places and how they use their agency to do so. They elaborate why and how people transform their dwellings and the environment in the Fort. In order to maintain strict confidentiality, I have used pseudonyms for all interviewees except those who asked me to use their names.
Framework, Premises, and Scope

For the analysis of case studies, I followed Henri Lefebvre’s (1991) triad: perceived, conceived, and lived spaces. In this, the plan for the World Heritage site is viewed as an abstract space that the government, with the support of UNESCO, attempts to establish; meanwhile inhabitants struggle to continue their lives. Following Nihal Perera’s (2010) analysis of the Mahaweli Project in Sri Lanka, I similarly separate the different projects that comprise the Galle Fort conservation project, instead of presenting it as a “single, unitary project.” Regardless of the government that is not present in Galle, local agents carry out its views and rules at the local and everyday level. Those who carry these out use their own imaginations and interpretations, all the while yielding power by becoming representatives of this framework. Also, the built environment viewed as a World Heritage site does not belong to one era or period of time. It is always evolving and transforming; Dutch in the ICOMOS and government’s perception is actually Dutch colonial, but was shaped by the British and later by postcolonial elite. Yet they all attempt to restore it to a “Dutch period” which is also not the same.

Moreover, the government’s and people’s perceptions (and/or their interpretations) of the fort and their smaller spaces are different and not compatible. These perceptions and interpretations have transformed the fort and its smaller spaces into contested spaces, (Yeoh 1996) i.e., between the authorities’ abstract space and the inhabitants’ lived spaces. In this thesis, I attempt to examine this World Heritage project and its contestations from a people’s perspective.

The project descriptions largely use the term conservation. This refers to people continuing to live in an environment that represents a particular historic period and the
maintenance of the physical environment or the buildings in good condition. Yet, as I argue, this project in not so much a conservation project, but focuses on the preservation of existing buildings and the restoration of others that are not compatible with the image of “historic” Galle Fort into a Dutch colonial period. Hence, I use the word preservation to describe the process.

Findings

The study reveals that the abstract historic space of World heritage that the government is producing with UNESCO is in conflict with the existing social space of the Fort’s residents and their social and cultural activities. The preservation regulations have a physical focus. In this, the authorities have ignored the fact that any physical environment is produced by people as part of their social interactions and relations. Furthermore that physical space restricts and conditions the inhabitant’s action. Galle Fort is thus a contested space in which the residents attempt to exercise their ability to create spaces for their own activities. Hence the space of the Fort is negotiated by both the authorities and its inhabitants, but the former hold institutional power.

The idea of a World heritage site is compromised by the project and the authorities themselves. On top of preservation, the project intends to increase tourism. With the tourism development in the 1990s, Galle Fort was identified by the Sri Lankan government as one of the country’s key cultural and heritage tourism destinations. In this sense, the conservation of Galle Fort can be understood as slow gentrification which marginalizes and transforms existing citizens. (cf. Neil Smith) On the other hand, over time the professionals involved in the world heritage project, especially the architects, are
now private practitioners and produce their own interpretation of Galle Fort's Dutch architecture. None of this, i.e., the Dutch colonial structures, the tourist environment, or the professional imposition of their ideas as “historic” acknowledges people’s extant living spaces. In this, Galle Fort has at least two different meanings; one for the authorities and another for its inhabitants. The authorities’ abstract space and the inhabitants’ lived spaces are in conflict with one another.

The decision-making framework does neither have the capacity, nor the decision makers the willingness to accommodate people’s interests and agendas. Though in the larger picture they imply that they practice "social conservation," it is merely a symbolic inclusion of residents into the project. At the ground level, people are excluded from substantive decision-making. The officials who implement these regulations, mainly archeology graduates, do not have a vocabulary or knowledge in order to understand people’s aspirations. The physical and archaeological interpretation of the Galle Fort has taken away most people’s dreams and aspirations and has led them to distress. Most people do not have any voice within this structure and have become mentally exhausted of dealing with these regulations and institutions. Despite the symbolic inclusion of the inhabitants in the World Heritage Project, they are materially excluded (cf. Miraftab, 2004)

In spite of this inhabitants are never passive recipients of this environment. Though people are virtually ignored in this setting, they find their own creative ways to negotiate with regulations. This study reveals that there are people who follow the government rules and transform themselves into subjects (“good” citizens) and there are others who break the rules and create the lived spaces they desire. The majority is in
between; they both become subjects of the space and also negotiate the rules to create their own (hybrid) living environments. Although the government has more power, the people with less power have been transforming the space to meet their own needs and to create a sense of place. Social capital, relationships with the officials and politicians, bribing, and other similar means enable them to achieve some of their wants. Bribing has become a popular way of “getting the work done” as the inhabitants commonly call this process.

**The Relevance**

This study highlights part of a larger issue, i.e., how development and planning projects of this nature inadvertently destroy both historic environments and the livelihoods of local people. Here the hegemonic discourse focuses on how to preserve historic buildings, increasing profits and land values, while marginalizing the inhabitants. Historic preservation focuses on the physical environment; meanwhile the social meanings of space and people’s contributions to them are largely ignored. These discourses also have a physical built-environment standpoint. This is a widespread issue in development and planning that needs to be understood, discussed and overcome. Even before the planners figure out how to intervene into such environments, it is important to understand evaluate the impact of their action from the people’s standpoint.
The Organization

This thesis is organized into five chapters. In the following pages, I will first provide the context of the present-day Galle Fort and map out the abstract space of the UNESCO World Heritage site. I shall then elaborate upon the analytical framework through a review of current and/or relevant literature. In so doing, I will locate this work in a larger context of existing knowledge. This will be followed by the documentation and analysis of people’s views gathered through interviews. In this, I will sort the responses into three categories highlighting the prominence of abstract spaces, lived spaces and in-between spaces. In the last chapter, I will conclude with an analysis and several conclusions.
CHAPTER II: THE HISTORY OF GALLE FORT

The World Heritage project attempts to restore and preserve Galle Fort to its Dutch era physical environment. The project is based on a particular understanding of the fort’s history and mechanisms to restore and maintain the environment. Providing the context to explain this move and to analyze it, this section maps out the fort’s history through the ancient, colonial, and national periods and the spaces of world heritage as perceived, conceived and practiced by the authorities in charge of the project.

Galle and the Fort

Contemporary city of Galle and the fort are colonial products. There is little information about Galle prior to the arrival of the Portuguese. There are no maps or paintings of pre-colonial Galle. The limited information, however, suggests that Galle had a significant shipping port since the 4th century AD (Wijeratne, 2005). The earliest recorded history of the town dates back to 545 AD when Cosmas Indicopleustes made reference to it in his travel journal. Iban Batuta, the famous Arab navigator who visited Galle in 1344 wrote it was the chief port of call for the island. According to some sources, Sugala Manabarana who fought against King Parakramabahu also had a camp
at a location believed to the fort. Galle however acquired its current significance after the Portuguese occupation in the 6th century.

The Portuguese Period (1505-1640)

The Portuguese first landed and discovered Lanka, used here to identify the island, through Galle in 1505. Although they eventually moved the capital of the territory to Colombo, the Portuguese believed that Galle offered the best harbor on the island. It not only supported needs for navigation but also provided better access to the interiors of the island (Perera 1999).

Galle’s colonial history began in 1505 when a fleet of ships under the command of Don Laurenco de Almeida reached the island by accident. When the Portuguese arrived, Galle was a Muslim trading settlement. So, the Portuguese reached an agreement with the king of Kotte to protect the port area from the Muslims. In 1517, the Portuguese constructed a fort close to the sea that they called the Black Fort. It was a basic fort to protect them from Muslim attacks. But, when the Portuguese captured more land across Lanka they built a more solid fort in Galle in 1588. The plans drawn for this fort by Mathiyas Albakar documented in 1589 may be considered the first clear evidence from this period and the plan was accompanied by another document that calculated the cost for its construction. In this plan, Galle is named Ponta de Gale and specifically mentioned Forta Leza which means the Black Fort. According to the plan, there was only one wall to the north with four “tops” and a wooden gate. The other areas were open but protected by the natural landscape.
There is evidence of further improvement to the fort in 1595 and minor repairs in 1610. This information is available on the plan drawn by Bento de Resende in 1640; it provides more details of the fort’s development during the Portuguese occupation.

According to the de Rasende’s map, there is a well-developed wall on the north side with three bastions named after saints: San Lago, Santa Antonio, and Conceycao. They overlooked a marsh that provided an additional layer of protection. Other areas were open but protected by natural barriers on the west side compared to Albakar’s plan. Also, the settlement was more spread out than during the late-sixteenth century, whereas according to the 1589 map, the fort was limited to the hilly area. The Portuguese constructed a moat, or canal, between the land and the fort as an extra layer of protection.

The Portuguese fortification can, therefore, be considered the origin of the present rampart. The Portuguese road system within the fort was not orderly. The roads were determined by existing buildings. According to de Rasende’s map, the roads were laid out in a jagged fashion providing access to buildings. Most buildings were monasteries or dwellings and the fort was not physically dense: The Master Attendant’s house, the Black Fort, the gun power factory and the ammunition storage were the main structures within the fort. The description of buildings highlights the existence of two-storied houses with balconies, canopies and verandahs. In short, when the Dutch arrived in Galle, there was an already well-developed fort with buildings and roads, but only a very small component of this physical environment remains today, the most significant component being the Black Fort.
The Dutch Period [1640–1796]

In 1640 the Dutch took control of the Portuguese Galle Fort and occupied it until 1796. The fierce conflicts that occurred between the Dutch and the Portuguese virtually destroyed all the Portuguese-built structures. The Dutch built a new fort. By this time, many Western nations were competing for supremacy of the sea and the rock barrier on the seaside did not provide sufficient protection. This prompted the Dutch to strengthen the fortifications from both sides, land and sea.

Inside the fortification was a well-planned administrative center with all the key elements necessary for a colonial city. It was organized symmetrically around Queen’s Street (then called King’s Street), which provided access to the fort and connected significant buildings and structures. The Dutch introduced well-defined gridded streets. Queens’s street severed as the main street. Most important buildings, i.e., the Captain’s House, the flagstaff, the court house and the City Assistant’s office were accessible via Queen’s Street. The street was an axis connecting a cluster of massive warehouses on the western edge with a cluster of public buildings on the eastern end. As the street connected these important places, reflecting its formal role, these structures defined the physical space of the street.

In addition, there were three types of streets organized hierarchically. All major streets began from the east-west Queen’s Street and continued to the southern end of the fort. The secondary streets were oriented east-west and connected these major streets. Lanes, beginning from secondary streets, provided service access to the backyards of dwellings.
The plot division pattern of the fort is also a significant element of the Dutch city plan with narrow and deeper lots in the residential quarter and wider lots for public buildings and other amenities. In short, the Dutch planned Galle Fort according to a street grid similar to their own country. (Figure 2.1)

Figure 2.1. The road network of Galle Fort (Galle Heritage Foundation 2009)
The British Period (1796-1948)

In 1796, the Dutch surrendered to the British. The British did not demolish the Dutch buildings in Galle Fort but developed the fort as their main administrative center in the south. They used all possible structures the Dutch had built, but replaced only those that they could not use. Due to this British policy, today’s Galle Fort comprises Portuguese, Dutch and British structures and built elements.

The British largely followed the physical organization of the Dutch fort, without much change. They introduced a zoning system that divided it into functional areas. They converted the fort into an administrative quarter and divided it into two zones: residential and institutional. The British creation of a new entrance made the original entrance secondary and undermined Queen’s Street as the main street in the Dutch hierarchical street layout. Moreover, they reshaped the built environment by constructing newly designed buildings and new formal urban spaces. These were added to display their civil grandeur and military strength. These changes have not erased the original street layout, but have substantially transformed the spatial organization of the fort and the meaning of its components.

The lot division pattern is also responsible for making each sub quarter distinctive: residential quarter, administrative quarter, and commercial quarter. The grouping of activities is another important change. The grouping was carried out through an urban design policy that placed commercial functions around the entrance court, the administrative functions around Queen’s Street, and residential buildings on the south.

As its history reveals, Galle Fort is a colonial product. Physically, the contemporary fort is largely a product of the Dutch period. It has elements from all colonial periods:
parts of the Black Fort, the Dutch fort, and British additions. The physical structures of the fort largely belong to the Dutch period, but it was the British who last shaped the fort and gave it today’s meaning.

**Sri Lankan Adaptation of the Fort**

After independence, the fort began a different life. After Ceylon (Sri Lanka from 1972) gained independence in 1948, and the British left Galle Fort, the remaining Burger and Muslim communities began reestablishing their presence. According to the Sri Lankan classification of people, Burghers are descendants of Europeans and Eurasians, but due to Sri Lanka’s colonial history most are of Dutch descent. Hence Galle Fort (and other elements of Dutch colonial heritage) is strongly connected with the identity of the Burghers in Sri Lanka. In 1956, Ceylonese governments began demonstrating a greater nationalist orientation. Increasingly, the Burger families began to migrate to Australia, particularly in the end of 1970’s. Eventually, the Burghers were replaced by a sizable Sinhala community inside the fort.

The change central to this thesis came in 1988 when UNESCO bestowed World Heritage status on Galle Fort. From that day on, new construction and changes to physical structures were prohibited. Due to this, the British-period streetscapes are almost totally preserved. The exceptions are the alleyways “behind” private houses where much of the attempt to restore people’s spaces can be observed. Perhaps the Dutch were most excited about the World-Heritage designation of Galle Fort. The possibility of preserving Dutch heritage attracted substantial funding, especially from the Netherlands.
The different governments that came to power after independence had different interests in Galle Fort. For many the focus was tourism. Until 2005, all administrative buildings of Galle city, except for the municipal council, were inside the fort; these include the District Court complex (of Galle District) and the Kachcheri, the office of the District Secretary who is the government agent for the district. After 2005, all administrative buildings except the courts were moved outside the fort to a newly constructed administrative complex. This, however, left a number of colonial structures.

In regard to private interventions, in the late 1990s, foreigners—especially Caucasians—began buying property inside the fort. In order to reduce this, in 1998, the national government introduced a 100 percent tax on the sale of property to foreigners, anywhere in Sri Lanka. The foreigners’ response was to buy land in the name of locals. In fact, there was a sudden increase in the property sales inside the fort. Europeans purchased a majority of these properties.

Taking another turn, after the Indian-Ocean Tsunami of 2004, a substantial number of international NGO’s established their offices inside the fort. In addition to becoming the greatest foreign attraction in southern Sri Lanka, the fort was not damaged much by the tsunami; it was practical location for many aid agencies. According to available data, foreigners currently own 60 of the 300 homes, and all of these are by Europeans. This contributes to a significant foreign (European) presence inside the fort. This marks an enormous demographic shift. According to many residents, in the early-1990s there was only one European resident and this man was married to a local woman. For the fort’s residents, he was a local who lived in a local environment. Currently, the local people are adapting to a somewhat foreign environment.
Galle Fort Preservation Project

The British were the first to pay attention to the fort’s historic significance. In 1940, a private members bill in the colonial State Council transferred the protection of Galle Fort to the Department of Archaeology. This was the first attempt to conserve its physical environment. The second came with the Department of Archaeology’s attempt to take over the historic buildings in 1971. In 1976, in response to the damage caused during the insurgency of 1971, the Department declared the Fort a protected monument under the Antiquities Ordinance no. 9 of 1940. With this third step, all structures within 400 yards of the fort came under this law’s purview (Silva, 1992).

The fourth pivotal change came in 1988 when UNESCO declared Galle Fort a World Heritage site. It became so under UNESCO’s (1988) criteria number 4, which states: “to be an outstanding example of a type of building, architectural or technological ensemble or landscape which illustrates (a) significant stage(s) in human history.” The regulations and the level of their implementation that followed the UNESCO declaration transformed the fort into a radically different place.

The justification made by UNESCO highlights the ramparts, the street grid, the streetscapes, courtyard architecture of the houses, verandahs with columns, and the underground storm-water drainage system. The focus is on the “universal” significance of town planning, architecture, civil engineering and hydrology of the Dutch colonial era. In some sense, this has very little to do with Sri Lanka or the Burghers who live in it. Nevertheless, the preservation (and restoration) of buildings to the Dutch era became a priority for project administrators. Unlike in previous occasions, this time the authorities were keen in implementing the regulations and preserving the Dutch environment and
there is hardly any mention of the inhabitants of this "living-monument.” With this justification, the preservation of existing buildings and structures that display above structures and the restoration of the same that are damaged became the priority of the project.

UNESCO refers to the locality:

Galle provides an outstanding example of an urban ensemble which illustrates the interaction of European architecture and South Asian traditions from the 16th to the 19th centuries. Among the characteristics which make this an urban group of exceptional value is the original sewer system from the 17th century, flushed with sea water controlled by a pumping station formerly activated by a windmill on the Triton Bastion. However, the most salient fact is the use of European models adapted by local manpower to the geological, climatic, historic and cultural conditions of Sri Lanka. In the structure of the ramparts, coral is frequently used along with granite. In the ground layout all the measures of length, width and height conform to the regional metrology. The wide streets, planted with grass and shaded by suriyas, are lined with houses, each with its own garden and an open verandah supported by columns, another sign of the acculturation of an architecture which is European only in its basic design… (1988.p6).

Yet, reference to the local is on how the Dutch adapted to local conditions. This relates to what Anthony King (1976) calls the colonial third culture, the adaptation of the culture of the metropole to the local environmental and social conditions of the colony. In this, the
resulting built environment is one that developed along with the development of a colonial third culture. However, there is no mention of Lankans in any capacity.

After becoming a World Heritage site, which requires it to meet UNESCO standards, the Department of Archeology established an independent body to manage the “Galle Heritage City.” The Galle Heritage Foundation was enacted by Parliament under the *Galle Heritage Foundation Act. No. 7 of 1994*. Thus it became responsible for the preservation of the Fort. The objectives of the GHF represent the capacity of this body to practice conservation. As the Act spells out, the government’s vision for Galle Fort is to “make the World Heritage Living City of Galle Fort a cultural tourist center of excellence.” (*Galle Heritage Foundation Act. No. 7 of 1994, P.3*) The mission of the Foundation is “to conserve Galle Fort as a historic, cultural city center and a site of archaeological importance and develop it to be a cultural tourist location of excellence.” (*Galle Heritage Foundation Act. No. 7 of 1994, P.3*) The main objectives and the tasks for achieving those are as follows: (*Galle Heritage Foundation Act. No. 7 of 1994, P.3*)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Main objectives of Galle Heritage Foundation</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To promote the preservation, conservation and development of the Galle Fort, together with its historic hinterland, as a historic city center and as an area of archeological interest.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject to the provisions of written law, to acquire, hold, maintain and dispose of any immovable and movable property within the Galle Fort and its historic hinterland that has historical, cultural or aesthetic value.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To promote interest among the residents of Galle Fort in the preservation of houses, buildings and other property within the said fort and its historic hinterland, and to educate such residents on the conservation and preservation of the said fort and its historic hinterland and on the historical, cultural, archaeological and aesthetic aspects of the said fort and its historic hinterland and to re-construct, renovate, conserve, upgrade, restore and find new uses for the houses and buildings in the said fort and its historic hinterland.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To provide access to, and facilities for, the enjoyment of Galle Fort and its historic hinterland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To promote the general welfare of the residents of Galle Fort and of its historic hinterland.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To do all such other acts or things as may be necessary for the accomplishment of all or any of the above objects.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2.1: Main objectives of Galle Heritage Foundation
### Major Tasks of Galle Heritage Foundation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>To conduct research regarding Galle Fort and the history of the ground, and provide funds for publishing results of research.</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Maintenance of public facilities, improvement and development of Galle Fort and inside post-historic ground subject to instructions given by Department of Archaeology, Urban Development Authority, Galle Municipality, Coast conservation Department and Sri Lanka Tourist Board.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Establishment and maintenance of places of shelter, after observing educational Institutions, museums, laboratories and research centers, and to conduct workshops.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>To educate occupants of Galle Fort, the value of conserving houses, buildings and other items of archaeological value remaining inside the Galle Fort and to construct, repair and renovate the existing houses and buildings to present position.</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Table 2.2: Major Tasks of Galle Heritage Foundation</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

As evident here, the vision and missions of GHF focus on tourism development. Objectives and tasks follow second.

Besides the GHF, the UDA established special regulations applicable to new development, alteration and refurbishment of buildings, as well as the conservation of properties in Galle Fort. The objectives of these special regulations are as follows.

1. Create and reinforce a preservation development plan for the World Heritage City of Galle.
2. Protect, conserve and maintain the historic fabric and monuments within the preservation area and ensure the proper use of properties in an efficient and economically viable manner

3. Guide all development, provision of infrastructure, new construction work, any restoration work, change of use, renovation, replacement of any building element, or any type of excavation

4. Address the issues such as demolition of archeological monuments, unauthorized constructions, change of use, traffic problems ad vehicle parking etc.

(Gazette Extraordinary No. 987/12, 1997, p. IV)

As highlighted above, the mission of the Galle Heritage Foundation is to develop a tourist site and the UDA’s special regulations focus on the individual physical culture, but overlooks the functioning of the city as a whole entity and its processes. Neither of these shows the identity of the Galle Fort. They are very general statements that can apply to any cultural heritage anywhere. Furthermore, these goals contain no specific mention of the place.

Moreover, UNESCO’s justification discounts ordinary people in the identification of Galle Fort’s historical value and grants more significance to the physical environment. UNESCO first established the “World Heritage List” in 1972 for the world to identify and acknowledge the places with “universal/global significance.” Generally, nominations came from nation-states, which also lobbied, and the application for world heritage listing is a highly political process.
During my interviews, the inhabitants highlighted that, under these regulations, their properties have been transformed into someone else’s masterpieces over which they have no authority. In short, they have been dispossessed and disempowered. For example, the Gazette notification dated August 22, 2004, empowered the Director General of the Department of Archaeology to repair, renovate, alter or carry out any restoration of properties declared as 'Protected Monuments' within Galle Fort. The Minister too was empowered by the Antiquities Ordinance (Section 19, p. 166):

Where it appears to the Minister that any ancient monument situated on any land other than crown land is in danger of destruction or removal, or damage from neglect or injudicious treatment, and that it is in the public interest that such monument should be protected, he may, subject to the provision of Section 19, by order published in the Gazette, declare such monument to be a protected monument; and from the date of the publication of such order, the monument to which the order relates shall be a protected monument for the purposes of this ordinance.

Further, the Ordinance (Section 23 (2) subsection 1, p.168) compels the subjects to give into such decisions by an official:

A house owner is expected to permit the Archaeological Commissioner or any person acting under his directions to enter his land and to do anything that may be necessary for the purpose of carrying out such work, and such owner will not be entitled to claim compensation for any loss or damage suffered or alleged to have been suffered by him by reason of the execution of such work or any part of such work.
The preservation of the Galle Fort, therefore, changed the relationship between people and their spaces by freezing the physical fabric to a Dutch era.
CHAPTER III: CONTEMPORARY FORT: THE WORLD HERITAGE PROJECT AND PEOPLE OF GALLE FORT

The Abstract Space of World Heritage

The space of world heritage is abstract and constructed through an ideal of regulations and institutions. In a broader sense, it is discourse. Following Lefebvre (1991) we can classify the plan for the World Heritage site as an abstract space that the government attempts to produce. At its center is the ideal of Dutch colonial architecture. Despite constant references in literature about Dutch architecture, (Kuruppu and Wijesuriya, 1992) as highlighted above, today’s Galle Fort houses a combination of Portuguese, Dutch and British architecture and built elements, i.e., from all the colonial periods. It is a hybrid shaped by the British colonial community that lived in the fort. Moreover, UNESCO (1988, p.6) refers to it as “an outstanding example of an urban ensemble which illustrates the interaction of European architecture and South Asian traditions from the 16th to the 19th centuries.” In this sense, UNESCO’s idea of heritage also involves the locality.
Yet this hardly refers to the local people who built and their ideas, or local architectural influences. It refers to the Dutch adaptation to local conditions such as the climate that prompted the verandahs and the use of local building materials. This refers to colonial architecture produced as part of the colonial third culture, most significantly of the British who finally shaped it.

The abstract space of the Galle Fort is built around protecting this ideal of architecture. Buildings that fall into this category are preserved; many others are transformed into such architecture by adding verandahs and columns. Most importantly, no changes to existing buildings are allowed; they are frozen. While some modifications are possible, there are stringent procedures to get approvals. From this standpoint, the authorities are in full control.

Despite the above attempt to create a project through regulations and institutions, there is no univocal preservation project in Galle Fort. As discussed above, there are many institutions and actors involved in constructing and implementing the world heritage project. The presiding authority at Galle Fort is made up of a combination of the Department of Archeology, UDA, GHF, Galle Municipal Council and the police. All actors with varying degrees of formal power who employ their own agency and creativity and have thus far produced their own projects (cf. Perera, 2010). The different branches of government involved in the project also have different views about the fort and the project. They interpret regulations differently and they act and react differently. As Leonie Sandercock (2003) asserts in regard to culturally diverse communities, there
should be a “multicultural” literacy, acceptance of multiple histories and diverse backgrounds to understand these actions.
People’s Spaces of World Heritage

As discussed above, what the world heritage produced was an abstract space based on an idea of a universal human history. Yet, people lived in this fort. These people include those who lived in the area before the Dutch, especially the Muslims who created a settlement around trading activities, the Dutch who colonized, the British who transformed it for their needs, and those who lived after the British left. As there were inhabitants in the fort, the idea of a world heritage came into contact with them. This chapter analyses their spaces: how they lived before the declaration, their initial responses to the declaration, and what they have been producing since. The responses include resistance, adaptation, and a whole series of responses that combine these and fall in-between.

The inhabitants’ world, prior to the fort’s World Heritage designation, had been radically different. According to current Sri-Lankan inhabitants, they lived as ordinary residents but with a unique lifestyle supported by the unique environment of the fort. For them, Galle Fort was a place with clean air, safe roads, and loyal, respectable people with a high sense of community and esteem. The inhabitants knew each other very well and most women who spent the daytime at home coordinated their daily routines with others. They used to come out of the house in the morning and greet one another. From morning to night, women had constant dialogs with their neighbors and, in their minds the road was an extended part of their homes. Unlike in other areas of Galle town, in the fort, the street vendors with vegetable carts came to their doors. Instead of buying individually, women bought fruits, vegetables and fish together in small groups. Doing this allowed
them to enjoy each other’s company; they commented on prices and discussed what each person wanted to buy and cook. They had constant communication with each other throughout the day. While they did different things, they tried to coordinate as much as possible and planned their days together. In the evenings, they went to the rampart in small groups with their children. While the children played, they shared news and “gossiped;” they always had up-to-date knowledge about the neighborhood at the level of their interest. These interactions had developed a strong sense of community and there was not much room for strangers in the neighborhood.

Nevertheless, it was a diverse neighborhood where Muslim, Sinhala, Burgher and Tamil families lived together, sharing and celebrating their cultural differences, festivals, and food. This inclusiveness was evident in the physical environment: There is a Buddhist temple, a mosque and two churches inside the fort where people watch share and enjoy cultural practices of other religious groups. The Vesak of the Buddhists and the Ramadan of the Muslims were the most popular festivals. During Vesak, most of government and private institutions in the fort used to decorate their buildings and roads with Vesak lanterns and flags. The Buddhists enjoyed “Vesak dansal” (places of almsgiving where donated food and refreshments are served freely to anyone) with Muslims and other cultural groups voluntarily supported the activities. During Ramadan, Muslims share food with others. More than the communities outside of the fort, the fort residents celebrated cultural events together.

In this, the fort was a community where women were quite prominent. They had lived there for generations and familiarized it by becoming a part of the environment and by transforming it to support their lifestyles (cf. Perera 2009). While homes were private
and the roads were public, they flowed from one to the other; women walked into others’ houses and also got together on the road to buy vegetables in groups. The rampart was their recreation place, if recreation can be separated. Children grew up relating to this space, familiarizing it; they were of that space—among other things.

With the designation of World Heritage site, the environment of the fort began to change. As revealed in the interviews, the inhabitants of the Fort have different views about the idea of heritage and the World Heritage project. According to them, the nomination of Galle Fort as a site of World Heritage was a government idea and it proceeded without any public participation. The expert knowledge that was used to determine the universal heritage value at Galle Fort has ignored the presence of inhabitants and those who have actually built and shaped it in the past and in the present. People in Galle Fort initially protested against this insensitive, physically focused, top-down proposal.

World Heritage was not the community’s idea. Chairman of the GHF, Rienzie T. Wijetilleke pointed out that a large proportion of the general public has no interest in preserving “our” heritage, owing it to the lack of awareness in the value of safeguarding, conserving and developing Galle Fort together with its hinterland, as a historic city center and as an area of archaeological interest (Abeynayake and Guneratne et. al. 2001). This was a foreign idea. The Fort residents, in their turn, began to complain about the unlimited powers vested with the Commissioner cum Director General of the Department of Archaeology, the GHF and the UDA. People highlighted that government laws are taking away their rights to the land and buildings.
The people first learned about the proposal for designation through politicians of the opposition party in 1987. Sri Lanka is a highly politicized society where the government and the opposition are constantly at each other, drawing people into this duality. People strongly take sides and support one side on almost every issue. In Galle Fort, per the information provided by opposition-politicians, people suspected that this designation would take away their properties. People in Galle Fort protested in front of the Parliament against the designation of the Fort as a World Heritage site.

According a statement made in 2003 by Hemakumara Nanayakkara, a member of the Parliament belonging to the ruling party, rumors have speared that 400 families will be forced to leave their homes by this program. He expressed the necessity to launch an awareness campaign to convey the correct message across to the public in this regard. Despite their protests, UNESCO declared Galle Fort a site of world heritage. This was followed by a new regulatory setup and a new governing body charged with transforming it into a Dutch monument. This changed the fort forever. Regulation, officials from different departments, tourists and tourist related activities are the new elements of a “World Heritage Fort”.

For generations, families used to live together in one house. In the Muslim culture, when girls get married, they receive a house from the family as a dowry. People with a single property have one choice: subdivide the house, especially when they had more than one girl in the family. Once a girl got married, she and her husband separated a part of the house into an apartment, but many of them shared one kitchen. Some also subdivided the land and built a separate (smaller) house on it. With the inception of the
World Heritage project, the internal partitioning became illegal. While some families opted to “illegally” subdivide houses and land, many sold their properties and moved out of the fort.

Immediately after the designation, the community got together and formed organizations to fight for their rights. However, unpleasant, never-ending negotiations weakened the struggle. Many of them sold their properties and moved to a house built outside the Fort, or out of the city. The moving in of “outsiders” into these sold properties further weakened the community and the former inhabitants' struggle.

The Fort also became more attractive for investments and some residents opted to sell their own properties to outsiders, especially to foreigners. Earlier, the fort was a place with a high sense of community and family values. As they were able to sell their property at a substantially high price, many families sold their properties and moved to Colombo. The current trend is to sell the property in the fort to a foreigner through a local broker and buy one to two houses in Colombo. According to interviewees, many potential husbands for girls now work in Colombo. Hence they—the girls, boys, and families-- prefer to have a house in Colombo. This has created a mini-trend among fort’s Muslim inhabitants to move to Colombo.

Tourism is also infused into the Fort in different scales and introduced different forms of cultural practices. In this, the inhabitants gradually lost the sense of community and the neighborhood became quite a strange place. Rampart is no more their garden, “gossiping” at verandas’ is gradually disappearing from the community.

In regard to the physical environment, most of the houses became show pieces of Dutch architecture. The new UDA special regulations control new constructions and
alterations made to properties. Visits by officers from the Police, the Department of Archeology and the GHF who now have been empowered to inspect possible renovations and new construction which have now become a routine; this s a part of the daily life for the residents. In this environment, the people have lost their privacy.

Once the inhabitants became displaced in their own homes, reclaiming what they had before has become their major aspiration. The remaining inhabitants continue in their struggle to familiarize the space in new ways. Still there are some women who go to the rampart in the evening and who still visit their neighbors regularly. However, the environment of the Fort as a whole has changed drastically.

Galle Fort’s physical environment has many different meanings. It is a different place for the authorities and for the inhabitants; for the government it is a world heritage site, while for the people it is their home. Among inhabitants too there are many different meaning and memories of the fort. Also, there are many kinds of people in the fort, including the long-term residents who have lived in the fort for generations and those who have moved in recently, the formal and informal business communities, local and foreign tourists, and day-time migrants such as office workers and school children.

The abstract space of the World Heritage and the space of the people’s daily activities are not compatible. Although it is the same physical object, the space in the fort is contested between the authorities’ abstract space and the inhabitants’ lived spaces. People are not passive recipients of what they are given; they make their own responses. Some residents follow the government rules and transform themselves into subjects of the abstract space that the heritage discourse intends to produce. There are others who break government rules and create spaces that can support their activities, thus fulfilling their
aspirations. In-between are the majority who both become subjects of the space and also negotiate the government rules to create their own living environments.

**Following the Abstract Space**

The project’s designation of a historic value to the existing landscape of the fort froze it in time; while changes to it were not allowed, the authorities opted to restore selected structures and spaces to a Dutch colonial character. Those who follow the rules have not made substantive changes to their dwellings. Maintaining the abstract space defined by the project. They have become subjects of the World Heritage space. While the narrative made the idea of heritage real and valuable, the dialog between the project and the people made this abstract space quite solid. Some landlords began to see historical value in their own structures. The dialog has given more power to the abstract space, making those who live in it to aspire to own a masterpiece. The owners of these dwellings feel that they own a space with a historic value and experience living in a showpiece.

As the people who create lived spaces for their daily activities, the people who maintain pieces of the larger abstract space also have aspirations towards their own dwellings. The identity, popularity and their relationship with the World Heritage project made achieving these aspirations difficult and, for the most part, impossible. In the context of the project, the owners of these spaces have limited power regardless of their ownership. This relationship with project representatives has made the owners’
perceptions of the abstract space more solid and has compelled them not to make changes to it.

Fatin Farred’s [age 48] owns a house on Middle Street with well-preserved “Dutch character.” She voluntarily listed the house under the “Sixty Houses Renovation Project.”

Main goal of this project were the restoration of 60 private houses. Basically the intention of this project was to change the 20\textsuperscript{th} century outlook of these private houses. Funding for the project was received from Government of the Netherlands Cultural Grant and implemented by the Galle Heritage Foundation. Consultancy services were provided by the University of Moratuwa, Sri Lanka, and Centre for Heritage and Cultural Studies. (Manawadu 2011)

Faiza Farred’s house is located in front of the Southlands College, which is a girl’s school built in British architecture. She is the third generation of her family to live inside the fort. Around 50 years ago, her grandmother bought this house which was originally the Dutch Governor’s house. The house consists of four rooms, two bathrooms, a living area, a kitchen, a storage area, a unique roof, a closed veranda with Dutch pillars and Dutch trellis, and a small garden in the back yard. (Figure 3.1)

The World Heritage project staff has identified Farred’s house as unique, especially after the project representatives and experts found a symbol of the Dutch East India Company placed on the front door. Yet one of its pillars belongs to the Dutch period and the other is built in British architecture. A wall painting on the front wall indicates that it was Galle Night Club. (Figure 3.2)
All walls except for two are original Dutch; these are thick walls built in limestone which make the maintenance very difficult. The roof was with original half round tiles. The roof was leaking but, due to the size, she was unable to repair it.

Figure 3.1: Farred’s house’s limestone wall with Dutch and British type columns

Taking part in the World Heritage project did not make Farred passive, nor was preservation a simple exercise. As much as supporting the abstract space of heritage, by “giving” her house to the “Sixty Houses Renovation Project,” Farred expected genuine reconstruction or repair work from the GHF. Her house was the first house to be renovated by the project and being the first house she believes that she had got the best building material for her house. With this project, she developed a good relationship with project representatives like Tharanga Liyana Arachchi, Project Planning Officer of the GHF and with ICOMOS experts like Samitha Manawadu. These relationships led her sons and her to learn the historical value of the house.
Figure 3.2: Farred’s house plan with new additions
At the same time, the officials also use the house for their purposes. Currently the house is used an old model-house for television dramas. (Figure 3.3) In this context, the project representatives requested her to paint the walls of the house with “samara,” a yellow colored natural pigment. For years she painted her house with rubber a paint which is easy to maintain. Hence, she refused the request.

Figure 3.3: Farred’s abandoned horse house area and house’s front door

Her aspirations too come into play. Her dream is to keep this house “nice” by maintaining it well. She likes to paint the ceiling but is reluctant to do so due to the fear of breaching the regulations. Further she wants to convert her storage area into a room that could be rented out to tourists. Due to the present relationship with project representatives, she is not sure how to achieve without hurting the relationship. Hence,
she largely maintains the abstract space, suppressing her desires to change the house in the ways she wants.

Asoka Weerasinghe, a retired police officer, who lives on Hospital Street, is one of the followers of preservation regulations. Yet he believes that he is also displaced by the same regulations, especially because he has to welcome any visitor at any time.

The two-storied house is one of the oldest in the Fort. It consist of six rooms, a kitchen, front and back living areas, a courtyard, an open veranda in the front with Dutch pillars and short trellis and a closed pathway to the inside of the house from the front. (Figure 3.4) The Weerasinghe family has lived there for generations but Nimal does not legally own it. The ownership of the house has changed several times but, at present, there is a court case regarding the ownership.

Figure 3.4: Existing condition of Weerasinghe’s house
Presently the house is in a very poor condition where they cannot use the second level due to the instability of the wooden floor. The whole roof is in a very bad condition; it leaks for the slightest rain. (Figure 3.5) The whole family is in a tragedy due to this house which they cannot claim its ownership, although they have lived there for generations. At the same time, they cannot maintain or repair the house due to the regulations and preservation and it is also impossible due to the ownership issue.

Weerasinghe's house also has a long written history. It was the first guesthouse inside the fort. There were many films, television dramas and documentaries filmed in this house because of its unchanged ancient character and the popular historic narratives around it.

At the same time, many architecture and archeology students are interested in researching about his house and he has to let these student’s to film, photograph and do measured drawings of it. Although he is ambiguous about its implications, he feels very uncomfortable because these photographs, measured drawings and plans are published. According to Weerasinghe, his house is no more a private space. Other than the students, he has to welcome visitors, offices of the preservation project whenever they want to visit the house. According to him, most of these visits are unscheduled. Since he has two young daughters, the family feels very uncomfortable when strangers enter the house unannounced, but due to the relationship with the project and the larger situation he cannot take any action.

As many Fort residents, he is tired of living in a showpiece. He is increasingly critical about the injustice caused by this preservation project. According to Weerasinghe, the regulations are only for the fort residents not for the government. He was very critical
about the landscaping and other beautification projects done by the GHF which have defamiliarized the landscape of the Fort for the residents. He said there is an enormous power with the persons who work in these offices and they interpret the regulations which are not always fair from the standpoint of the people with much less power.

Figure 3.5: Unchanged plan of Weerasinghe’s House on Hospital Street
In these two stories, both houses are physically unchanged and their build fabric continues to be intact, but they also have unique historic stories. Within the changing surroundings, these buildings became model houses of the government’s abstract space. After its establishment, the GHF developed a list of properties and socio-economic profiles of the residents in the fort. This project led to the identification of houses with historic importance for its “Sixty House Renovation Project.” These are the core houses that were supposed to exhibit the Dutch colonial character. Out of all the houses, these two had maintained their real authenticity in the eyes of the project officials.

In regard to these two houses, there is also a conflict between homeowner’s values and that of the government. Enforcing an abstract space belonging to the Dutch colonial era could not stop people’s aspirations for a livable space. Though there is an abstract space on the government agenda, people have to live in their own spaces. The government’s abstract space, or the World Heritage project, and people’s aspirations go in two directions. In the case of Farred, with a house the structure of which is difficult to maintain the alternative she observed was to collaborate with the heritage project. In the case of Weerasinghe, the historic value and the narrative attached to the house had made any alternative impossible. The title issue, which is independent of the project, had made it even more difficult.
In between space

Yet the majority of fort-residents are in a half-way stage; they have attempted to achieve their dreams yet failed in the middle. These people had begun to negotiate the regulations and authority to meet their aspirations towards the dwelling of their choice, within the extant constraints, but somewhere in the process the government had intervened. This government intervention has produced unfinished spaces or a space which is not compatible with their aspirations. The results are not good, but they are hopeful and still struggling to go beyond the stalemate.

Suha Farid, a Muslim mother in her 40s, has two sons and her husband works abroad. Her house, located on Light House Street, was the dowry she received from her mother when she got married. It was a tea shop which Farid and her husband converted into a house. Her only dream was to modify the house into a comfortable place where her two sons could have individual rooms and for her to have an outdoor space to dry clothes. She added an additional floor to the house without disturbing its outer appearance. The Department of Archeology and the GHF then filed a case against her and the court ordered her to stop construction work. Since 1998, she is living in this unfinished house. The pressure of living in it led her to think of moving outside of the Fort. She is currently constructing her dream house outside the Fort. For Farid, the Fort is a major part of her life story. She was born and grew up in the Fort. As for most Fort residents, her freedom to have a nice lived space was destroyed by the preservation regulations.

As she is most familiar with the Fort, and that is her place, she is reluctant to move out of it. Farid has also seen the benefits of the tourist industry. She has therefore begun using the front area of her house as a store to sell small tourist items such as
chains, handicrafts, and cards. The time will tell whether her fortune will change and whether she will be able to achieve her dreams in the fort.

Mala Gunasekara and Sachini Gunasekara are famous as “Shoba Sisters” because they operate a locally-based business named Shoba Fashions. The business place cum house is located on Peddler Street. (Figure 3.6) Due to the instability of the structure they decided to repair the roof. The Department of Archaeology and the GHF ordered them to stop the repair work and now for nine months they have been living in a house without a roof. (Figure 3.7) This interruption affected the Shoba family seriously. It has stopped their business and also disturbed their daily living pattern. They told that their human rights are violated on a daily basis and the government departments and regulations make their life so difficult for them. They have prepared a petition and plans to submit it to the government at a higher level. Eventually they filed a case in the courts which asked them to pay of Rs. 50,000/ as penalty for destroying a historic monument and allowed them construct a new building which was designed by a chartered architect.
Figure 3.6: Shoba Fashion house before removing the roof

Figure 3.7: Shoba Fashion house after removing the roof
Gunathilaka Perera has a small shop in the Fort, on Sudharnalaya Street. His house and the business place are together and his main complaint is about the poor transparency of the governing authorities involved in the preservation project. His house was selected for the “Sixty Houses Renovation Project” and he had the opportunity to deal with the GHF. (Figure 3.8) Throughout the renovation, he was not given any opportunity to make any decision about his house, the style or the materials. Everything was decided by the GHF. The project team decided that the house has to be restored to a Dutch character and they have changed the front part of the house which was there for last fifty years, perhaps from the British period. The project officers’ decision to recreate a history out of his house did not mean anything to him. (Figure 3.9) He did not have any complain about the facade he had before. His need was for more rooms for his children and he wanted to make his house a comfortable lived space. But his aspirations were totally ignored by the project authorities and they have created a new space to which he does not have a feeling of belonging.
Figure 3.8: Perera’s house façade before “60 Houses renovation Project”

Figure 3.9: Perera’s house façade after “60 Houses renovation Project”
Nimal Jayawardhana, a 70 year-old retired government officer, lives on Church Street. His two-storied house has fifteen rooms and a veranda with Dutch pillars. This was a boarding place for used by Tamil people in the 1970s. Jayawardhana had bought this house in 1980. In 1998, he had begun to repair it: He had repaired the bedroom and replaced some windows and walls. When the work began, the Department of Archeology was the government authority and they had not complained. Later, the UDA, which got involved in the project later, had stopped Anil’s repair work in 2001. The UDA did not take him to court, but got the Police to stop the work.

He had then submitted a plan of the house to the UDA for approval, but the UDA found that the house is 32 feet in height, much taller than the legal height limit. According to the UDA, the structures within the fort cannot be taller than thirty feet. Hence Anil’s house was declared as illegal. But according to Anil, it is the original height of the house and they had not added any floors to it. For eleven long years the house remains untouched in the state of disrepair, and a UDA representative, somewhere in the discussion, asked Anil to demolish the illegal part of the house. Due to poor maintenance, the interior of the house is unusable. They now use only the front part of the house and wait in anticipation for some change.

Harsha Sooriyaarachchi who lives outside the fort has a business in the fort. He bought his current business premise on Peddler Street from a fort resident. The second floor of the two storied building has a balcony with a wooden trellis. The previous owner had used the building as a salon and a rental house. Sooriyaarachchi is in the process of turning it into a showroom for his jewelry and other antique products business. As he is getting into tourism he wishes to give a new look to the building while maintaining the
old character. He has therefore changed the front door and made some changes to the interior, converting it into a showroom. He also had a plan to change the balcony at the second floor level where he wanted to replace the wood trellis. But the government has stopped the repair work. So he could not change the balcony or the wooden trellis, but is happy that he was able to renovate the first floor before the government intervention.

People in this category have all initiated a process to achieve the dwelling which they desire. Yet they live in unfinished buildings and are dissatisfied with their dwellings which are incompatible with their aspirations. A characteristic common to the processes followed by the people belonging to this in-between category is that they did not inform the government when they began to change their dwellings. On top of the strange environment created by the project, the way the authorities responded to these what they saw as unauthorized building practices have now made their own dwellings strange. They have lost their sense of ownership and their sense of place. They have become strangers in their own homes.

**Ideal Lived Spaces**

The other extreme is made up of the households which have achieved what they wish in regard to their dwellings. I categorize them as those who have created the lived spaces they desire. Lived spaces are created through negotiations between the aspirations of the people and the regulations. All households that belong to this category have dealt with the government, regulations, and more powerful actors. The government, in regard to the World Heritage project, includes the GHF, Department of Archaeology, UDA, and the Police Department.
This group has largely bypassed the regulations with relative ease by bribing, using personal contacts, and/or just ignoring the regulations. Relative ease is significant as they do not think of the process as that difficult. This ease adds to the contentment of what they have achieved. Although the outcome is similar, the approach, process, and the tools used by each family to create such space are different. This was caused by different aspirations held by different households in regard to their dwellings. They are different people with different personalities, personal contacts and capacities. These differences have had a great impact on the different spaces the households have produced.

Somasiri Gamage, who lives on Leyn Baan Street, had bought his house thirty years ago. When he bought this house, it was in an abandoned condition. (Figure 3.10) The building was very dilapidated and even he remembers having small bushes inside the house and a large tree on the front wall. He was a clerk at that time and, as a young person with newly married wife, this place was suitable and affordable to suit for his budget.

Figure 3.10: Gamage’s house before repairing
The house comprised of an arched front door which was very tall; due to that the whole house got inundated after a rain. So he began to repair the house by replacing the tall front door with a shorter one. Gradually he repaired the whole house but did not do any new additions. With time he became a father of two sons and there was a need for an additional room. At that time, Galle Fort was not a World Heritage site, so he separated his house into three units with dividing walls. (Figure 3.11) He chose to live in the middle unit and he gave the other two to his sons. Today, his both sons rent their areas to offices and live outside the fort.

Figure3.11: Gamage’s house after adding new walls to separate the house
With the 2004 Tsunami, however, the house got flooded and the water level was 4 to 6 feet above ground level. He decided to write to the President of Sri Lanka with the intention of getting some funds to repair the tsunami damage. The President replied to him by granting some money to repair the house and, at the same time, in the President’s reply, he advised him to add a higher floor to the house as a safety measure for future Tsunamis. After a year, in 2006, he began to build a separate unit in the back yard of his house. His intention is to open up a tourist restaurant with the help of his younger son. As per the UDA Special Regulations, he spent Rs. 75,000 (573 USD) to draw the plan for new building through a chartered architect. Then he submitted his plan to the Planning Committee. The Planning Committee rejected his plan. He was not willing to spent another Rs. 75,000 (573 USD) to go to a charted architect to redraw his plan. Ignoring the Planning Committee decision, he began to construct the new building at his back yard. Department of Archeology with the help of GHF filed a court case for constructing without the Planning Committee approval. He continued construction, and finished construction before the court case ended. The court asked him to stop construction and the GHF and Department of Archeology officials visited his house regularly to stop construction. But he has used the letter from the President and whenever the officials came to his house he told them that he has the approval from the President to build a higher floor as a safety measure from future tsunamis.

By using the President’s letter as a tactic he still does repairs to his house and also finishing the construction of a restaurant. He is planning to construct a new kitchen to his house as well. He believes that the Galle Fort Planning Committee rejected his plan with the intention of getting bribes from him. After spending Rs. 75,000 (573 USD) for the
plan he was not willing to spend any other money on getting approval from the committee. Today he is very happy with his decisions and is also getting closer to the dream house for his family.

Firyal Majid, 26 years old, is a married Muslim woman having a son. She lives on Peddler Street at her husband’s house. She lives there with her son, husband and husband’s parents. As her husband’s income from the previous job was unsatisfactory, she and her husband started to think of another source of income. They saw the growing potential for tourism related businesses in the fort. Having a house on Peddler Street which is the main cross road of the fort used by a large majority of tourists and the husband’s cooking skills led them to convert half of their house into a restaurant. They have changed the facade of the house by removing the front door and two other windows and by adding a band of Dutch-type trellis work. By moving the wall further in (about 15 feet), they have created a restaurant on the verandah. Separating the sitting area of the restaurant from the house, they have added a wall with a door to enter the house. She is happy with the new look and the restaurant. Even in off season, they can earn something to cover their day to day expenses, she said.

According to Majid, the government did not cause any problems for this conversion. In her own words, they followed the “normal way” of doing construction and did not ask for permission from the government. According to her, though they have changed the facade, they still maintain the old look by adding a Dutch-type trellis. Further she said that they did all these changes within two days. It seems that they have done construction work at night.
Majid is aware of the problems that other people have faced when they made changes to their dwellings. She believes that her family did not have any problem because nobody complained about them. According to her, the government interferes only when someone complains about her/his neighbor’s construction.

According to Majid’s story, the family achieved their aspirations towards their dwellings without any direct negotiation with the government. According to her, they followed the “normal way” which I understood, based on other interviews, as making changes to the structure within a very short time, mostly at night, and adding old-style elements which camouflages the changes making these look not to be questionable. Further no close-by neighbors were inimical, and no one complained about their construction work. All of these made their construction work non-problematic.

Lalani Jayasekara, a Sinhala woman of 29 years of age, moved to the fort after her marriage to a Vimal Jayasekara, resident of the fort. This couple and their son also live on Peddler Street. They received this house from her husband’s parents. Her husband worked in a ship and, after the marriage, they converted the house into a hotel and restaurant and settled in it. They decided to get into tourism business in the fort and made some major changes to the house they received from the parents. Originally the house had two floors and a facade with Dutch pillars and a wall with Dutch type trellis. They did keep the façade intact but, inside the house, they added two more floors, totally repairing the house, and giving it a new look. (Figure 3.12) Now it is a four-storied house with 5 rooms, all of these have attached bathrooms. On the first floor, they have a veranda, the living room which is also the welcome area for the guests, and a kitchen. On second and thirds floors there are two air-conditioned rooms with attached bathrooms; the
floor is tiled with ceramic tiles. On the fourth floor, there is just one room with a bathroom and an open verandah. Presently the family uses the fourth floor room as their (private) living quarters but, in the tourist season, they rent out this room too and temporarily move out of the fort.

Figure 3.12: Jayasekara’s house after adding new floors

According to Jayasekara, they did not face any problem during construction. Like Majid and Jayasekara also believes that nobody complained about their construction. They did not change the facade so nobody knew that they were adding new floors to the house. The location of the house makes it difficult for anyone to see its four floors of house from outside. They have carried out the construction work very carefully not
letting anybody see or know that they were changing the house. Today they are very happy with their house cum business place from which they earn a decent income.

Sisil Liyanapathirana, 66 years old businessman, lives on Peddler Street. He moved to the fort in the 1940s when he was six years old and the he lived with his parents for about twenty years. He bought this house in 1980. (Figure 3.13) He moved into it with his wife and two sons. The house was in a very poor condition and he requested the Department of Archeology for permission to repair. For eight years he did not receive any reply from the Department and due to the dilapidated condition of the house, he did some repair work. As part of it, he has changed the facade where he added a new front door, two windows, and a front wall. (Figure 3.14) At this time, the UDA which became the governing authority for planning and construction within the fort filed a court case against Liyanapathirana. After three years of hearing, i.e., making his case, he got the approval for the changes he made.
Figure 3.13: Original condition of Liyanapathirana’s house
Figure 3.14: Liyanapathirana’s house with newly added façade
Later he gave two perches (160\textsuperscript{th} of an acre) of his six-perch-lot to his elder son; he now has four perches of land for his use. Seeing the potential for tourism related business in the fort, Liyanapathirana reconstructed his house. This time he hired an architect who works for the Department of Archeology and got approval for a two-storied house, but with Dutch pillars in front. The house is still under construction and he is happy with the design and the construction.

Liyanapathirana basically changed his house twice and the present house is a totally new structure, with very little to do with the old house. His early experience with government led him to be more careful with the construction process and he found a way to get a plan drawn and approved from the “government” itself, prior to beginning of construction.

The process of creating a lived space by its inhabitants changes the built environment of the fort as well as the people in it. People follow their aspirations and try to change their space, but in the process they also accept certain norms and regulations becoming a subject of the abstract space that authorities have produced; this is a process of changing their space while changing themselves. (cf. Perera 2009) The created lived space is not a total representation of their aspirations at the same time it is a closest possible representation of these. People thus simultaneously negotiate with the government and their aspirations to create their lived space.

In an interview with Wimal Dissanayake, also a retired government officer offered a different perspective. He has a nicely preserved middle-class house. He is engaged in the tourist business; he rents out rooms for tourists and has a close
Engaging in a totally different activity, Wasantha Rathnayaka, is a 45 year-old fisherman, has cultivated a plot of land lot on the beach, along the Hospital Street. He had received this land from his Father, Jinadasa Rathnayaka who lives on Hospital Street, near to the lighthouse. Responding to a food shortage in 1970-71, the Sirima Bandaranayaka-led government engaged in a *waga sangramaya* (war of cultivation). The government appealed to the people to cultivate any uncultivated land, and empowered the people to use uncultivated land through a gazette notification. People all over the country began to cultivate on bare lands. Gall Fort was no different; according to Sugatahpala, some people even cultivated the land in front of the entrance to the fort. He also began to cultivate on a 6 perches plot of land on the beach. (Figure 3.15) With the time, the father handed over the land to Rathnayaka.

![Figure 3.15: Rathnayaka’s cultivated area on beach](image)
At present, the land consists of a lot of trees including coconut, fruits and vegetables. There is a wooden fence around the cultivated area with a lockable wooden gate at the entrance. Currently, this is the only cultivated land of this size within the fort, in fact, outside of the fort but between the rampart and sea which is under the heritage authorities.

According to Rathnayaka, tourists began to visit the fort in the early-1980s and, at that time, he was a full-time fisherman. With the tourists’ inflow, he built a cabana close to the cultivated land and served the tourists. He continued this until 1995 when the Coastal Conservation Department of Sri Lanka filed a case against him for illegal construction. Along with it, there were also petitions against Rathnayaka’s cultivated land. These petitions mainly requested that the land be returned (restored) to the beach. During the court case, Sugathapla mentioned that he and his father cultivated this under the waga sangramaya, a government program supported by a gazette notification. With this justification, the court asked him to remove the cabana, but gave him the right to cultivate and enjoy the yield from the land. But the court did not grant him the ownership of the land.

Since then he enjoys the yield from this land; this fulfills most of his fruit and vegetable requirement. Though it is not a very visible to the outside, it is a quite big plot of land and no one can enter it other than Rathnayaka and his family. Presently he also receives cultivation subsidies from the government for this land. According to him, no one in the fort complains about him cultivating on this land. He thinks it is because his family had cultivated on this land for forty years. Also the government authorities do not interfere with his cultivation. He believes that this is due to the present government’s
interest in promoting and protecting trees and cultivating coconut trees, expressed through new laws.

Rathnayaka was very reluctant to talk about the issues with government more particularly with the GHF. He believes that “things happen” at very personal level and if the officers get to know that he criticized their work or decisions, they can create trouble for him. Based on what he had heard from his friends, he is very critical of the way the government deals with the foreigners. He said, if an ordinary person requested approval for a new dwelling, it takes about six months for the GHF to give a decision. For foreigners, the process takes very little time.

Both sides of his father’s house belong to foreigners and these, according to him, were built within very short periods of time. He has seen new house come up within a few days of the beginning of construction. According to him, foreigners have money and they also bribe government officers. While the approval process is under way, they begin construction with the support of government officials. This is not a substantiated claim, but a feeling common among fort-residents.

Nevertheless, the foreigners are far more influential than the locals. Three of Rathnayaka’s friends who have foreign neighbors had to face lot of difficulties when they tried to add a second floor to their houses. Rathnayaka thinks that there is no justice for the local people. In one case, the foreigner had complained that if his neighbor had constructed adds a second floor, he won’t have his privacy is all lost. The point is that the neighbor has a high point of view from which s/he can look into his courtyard. In this particular case government took the foreigner side and rejected the plan of that person.
As demonstrated in the above examples, there are people who have achieved their own desires in regard to the house and the environment with relative ease. In many ways, they were not able to ignore the government and the authority, but by colluding and colliding with it they have continued their lives and achieved their goals relatively smoothly. Yet this is a small group and not everyone is that strong, smart, or lucky.

**The Winners**

Taken together, all this sounds like a dilemma. The government projects like the “Sixty Houses Renovation Project” also created spaces where people do not feel they “belong” or “useful” to them. This project aimed to create an abstract space imagined in the World Heritage project. People like Perera who had a house which was in very poor condition attempted to repair it and produced a space which a totally unfamiliar and unnecessary.

In contrast, foreigners have been able to familiarize the space and fulfill their aspirations. In this, they are able to compromise with the law and regulations. They have two- and three-storied houses. Some of these houses have big swimming pools inside them. The foreigners can make most changes they want, but the inhabitants cannot, this is especially the case with poor and powerless ones with no connections to project officials and with not enough resources to bribe authorities. This is largely because they are not considered important, especially compared to the objectives of the top-down project. Their role is to become subjects of the project. Yet the Europeans enhance the whole idea of the World Heritage. An inhabitant sums up the situation:
If the structure of the house is old and about to collapse, then it should be repaired, but we cannot do that. We have to ask for permission. Then they will send the request to the committee. By the time it gets passed [if it does], the roof will fall and people will be dead. This is a big problem here. For example, my mother-in-law’s roof was very old and it was almost falling down. So she wanted to repair the roof, but the authorities said you cannot do this, you have to get permission. They didn’t even give a temporary solution. The Department of Archaeology said that this is their rule. Even if the roof is leaking or something similar is happening, you cannot do anything by yourself. You still have to follow the rules.

Installing windows on either side of the building is prohibited, but a lot of houses now have windows on either side of the house. An example is the building next to my house. It is a totally new construction. The people from either side of the house protested against them putting windows to their sides, they even complained to the Department of Archaeology that these people are doing something against the rule. The owner is a foreigner; everything was covered and there were no transparency. People assume that this foreigner may have bribed the officers and that is why they did not take any action against him. Anything can be done, if you bribe the officers. When he constructed the windows on both sides of the house, then there is no privacy for the people who live in either side of the house.
Chairman of the GHF and JVP Parliamentarian, Ajith Kumara told *The Sunday Leader* that a special permission from a subcommittee of the UDA is required to undertake any constructions within the Galle Fort. “We are currently losing some of the oldest and picturesque houses inside the Fort because they had been purchased by foreigners. These historical buildings are being completely modernized by them, destroying the antique value. They do not heed our regulations,” he added. (Handunnetti et al. 2008)

According to Kumara, foreigners have changed around 50 houses and UDA had filed cases against them for illegal modernization. However, apart from taking legal action against those who change buildings, GHF has initiated a program in collaboration with the Netherlands government to protect the old buildings in their original form. “We provide financial assistance to owners of old houses who wish to refurbish them in the same old style,” Ajith Kumara, former Chairman, Galle Heritage Foundation, said. (Handunnetti et al. 2006) The Netherlands is providing funds because they too want to preserve the buildings that have been built by their ancestors, he explained. The Dutch built the Galle Fort during their rule. Instead of focusing on the issue internal to the fort he raised, Kumara complained that the Galle International Cricket Stadium was being reconstructed without the required special UDA permission.

Ordinary inhabitants too can change their dwellings if they can bribe. This is a strong view that the people hold. As they cannot afford such bribes, “all the regulations are for the power less” is a widespread feeling among the people. In the meantime, a substantial number of powerful locals have built their houses on government lands. Ninety percent of government land has been taken by these people who have mainly
extended their houses and shops onto government land. They do this by using various strategies such as bribing. In the words of an inhabitant: “Some people have made the rampart their own gardens. They plant their own trees and now the road is narrow because of these trees.” The road has become narrow and two buses cannot pass. They are cementing place and taking the place. Now the road is cemented. If you are rich, you can bribe and can get anything done. All the rich people have two storied buildings, three storied buildings with a big pool inside. The rules are only for the poor man and the poor men are harassed all the time. (Handunnetti et al. 2006)

When I asked, Liyana Arachchi explained it in the following way: “there are ways to do that. When people ask for a pool, we ask to call it, or they call it, a landscape item, not a pool.” In this way, those who can extend favors to the officials can change almost anything with their help, whether financial or otherwise.
The current status of preservation of Galle Fort is shaped by a combination of politics, political parties, different views, bureaucracy, aristocracy and modern business. In early history, even before the Portuguese, the Dutch and the British had their fortifications, there was a Muslim community involved in businesses near the Galle natural harbor. While the Portuguese and the Dutch expelled the Muslim community from the city, the British pushed the Dutch out of the Fort. After the British left in 1948, the fort was reclaimed by the remaining Dutch community called within the Sri Lankan classification as Burgers, which also include others with European descent, and the local Muslim, Tamil and Sinhala people; they developed it into their neighborhood. (Figure 4.1) The diverse physical environment consisted of houses, schools, hospitals, churches, a mosque, a Buddhist temple, offices and commercial buildings.
Most Burghers felt unable to live in Sri Lanka, especially with the rise of Sinhala nationalism, and a large proportion of them immigrated to Australia. As a result, the Muslims became the majority in the fort. (Figure 4.2)

Figure 4.1: Newly added architecture after the independence

Figure 4.2: Population composition by ethnic groups - 2011
In adapting to the fort’s colonial environment, the residents gradually incorporated their spatial needs and architectural wants to their houses and to the fort’s built environment at large. The people in the fort also developed a sense of community both in terms of society and the landscape. They made changes to their individual houses based on their own understandings of the fort and their houses. Conforming to their privacy needs, most Muslim households have closed the open verandahs of their houses with a front wall. Some fort-residents also constructed new buildings and houses in new architecture which was clearly not colonial architecture. Most new houses consist of a front garden, closed walls and a parapet wall in the road-front. The fort therefore became diverse, but still held the sense of the old Dutch fort in the background.

When the fort became a World Heritage, this living environment became a problem for the residents. The UNESCO’s declaration making the Galle Fort a World Heritage made it a strange place for the inhabitants; it did not support living as it used to. The fort became a World Heritage and their houses became monuments under the Archaeological Act. The UNESCO’s decision mainly focused in on the Dutch and British hybrid architectural remains. The regulations that followed the declaration also focused on preserving the above hybrid architectural character, but with more bias towards a Dutch colonial architecture that the authorities defined in terms of verandas and columns. As the meaning of the fort changed for the authorities, the residents became displaced in their own homes and the environment.

The inhabitants were hardly a part of this decision making process. The interest in conserving the fort’s environment began with a group of Burghers becoming interested in
protecting this particular representation of their Dutch roots; with the support of architects such as Ashley de Vos, the Burgher community developed a discourse on preserving the remaining “Dutch architecture” of the Galle Fort. Through various appropriations and adaptations of this architectural idea, the government in 1987 nominated the Galle Fort as a World Heritage to the UNESCO.

However, the Muslim, Sinhala, Tamil, and other communities in the fort were not a part of this decision making process. Perhaps not all Burghers were involved either. Most people learnt about this proposal much later. There were a lot of rumors about a government’s proposal to make the Galle Fort a World Heritage, but the residents learned about it from opposition political leaders. In the kind of political society that Sri Lanka is, the opposition could well highlight this issue purely for political gain. Yet neither the government, nor the movement to conserve the fort was transparent. In this context, among others, some people believed that if the Galle Fort becomes a World Heritage site, they will then lose the ownership of their house.

With the declaration, the fort began to change in many ways. The government introduced new rules and regulations and established a new implementing body. The regulations which focused on the built environment applied a lot of pressure on the home owners of the fort when they wanted to change or redevelop their properties. The people who implement these regulations have focused on the built environment and totally ignored the people. While some people largely ignore the regulations, some others follow them. The majority of people are, however, in between these two groups.
According to Farred, it is very clear that the fort residents have to live in a history and a historic monument introduced by the World Heritage project. For example, a project officer of Galle Heritage Foundation who is very interested in the archeological history of Galle Fort found a symbol of “Galle Night Club” on the front wall of Farred’s house. (Figure 4.3) Then the officer decided to exhibit this logo on the front wall of her house. This is a hollow idea as there is no indication of where the night club was and/or what it was like. And the owner did not seem to have a say in this act of exhibiting the logo. In addition, a consultant, a professor of architecture, found the Dutch East India Company logo on the front door of the same house. There is no indication of what this is about; it is a vague representation of the Dutch presence. Yet the owner is bound to protect this old logo too. The children of this house have memorized the historic narrative introduced by the local officers of the World Heritage Project. The officers are highly attached to this constructed historic narrative and their identity depends on it; they are bound to protect it.

Figure 4.3: Symbol of “Galle Night Club” on the front wall of Farred’s house.
As many other women, Farred also has lot of dreams about her house. Basically, she likes to keep this house neat and clean. But it is a challenge to keep this historic house neat and clean when she hardly owns this World Heritage and not allowed to touch the structure. For example, Farred is in a need to paint the ceiling but within the existing regulations she is not allowed. When she made a request to the GHF, it advised her to keep the old look, highlighting the historic value of her house.

The GHF began with a project to preserve sixty private houses under a Netherland government fund of Rupees 7 million. When the GHF introduced this project, most residents were reluctant to give their properties to the project. Farred was the first to give her property to the project. According to her, she trusted the project and the GHF. When the project officials came with university professors and archeologists she was convinced; she expected genuine work from them. Through this project the GHF repaired the whole roof, but the project directors did not consider her requirements regarding to her house. Due to existing regulation, she still maintains a Dutch period horse-house without making any use of it.

Presently Farred is in need of two rooms to rent out to foreigners. Though she has a big house, it has only three rooms. The horse-house area can accommodate her requirement, but the GHF does not allow her to make the changes. This type of requirements is not considered by the GHF. The request made by the GHF to paint her house in brown color shows the authority of this bureaucratic system and the extent to which they impose their agenda on the inhabitants, and ignore their needs and aspirations.
Weerasinghe's experience shows another side of the World Heritage project. He does not legally own his house, but he has lived in it for over fifty years, for three generations and no one has questioned his tenure. As property values in the Galle fort are increasing after the World Heritage project, Weerasinghe's property ownership has become a serious issue. At the same time, the World Heritage Project has identified Weerasinghe's house as one of the oldest houses of unchanged Dutch type. The project officers treat this house as some common property over which they have rights and lend for a fee to film and documentary makers who need a Colonial era setting and to students of architecture and history. This demonstrates the extent to which these owners have become subjected of the World Heritage Project.

One of my own experiences with an officer of Galle Heritage Foundation –during my field work—further illustrates this authority. One day a program officer took me to Weerasinghe's house to show me an old Dutch house, but he just entered the house as if his own property without any permission, prior appointment, nor notification. When we entered there was only Weerasinghe's young daughter; she was very uncomfortable. For this young girl, this is her home and this is where she lives, but for the project officer this is a monument and a part of a World Heritage Project. The officer never even bothered to acknowledge her.

This attitude has three dimensions: western science, gender relations, and sheer ignorance. The officer believes in his notion of the Galle Fort and considers his knowledge scientific and derived from some global knowledge. In this context his knowledge is superior to the girl’s comfort. Secondly, this is sexism; treating girls and
women as inferior. Thirdly, sheer ignorance called in Sinhala as *nehedichchakama*, a person without a culture. This may be a personal attribute of his, but it affects the whole project and how it is managed. Due to this historic designation of their dwelling, the Weerasinghe family continuously faces such intrusions into their house by officials and the use of their authority over the use of the house.

Weerasinghe is also helpless. At this moment, largely due to the lack of legal ownership, the Weerasinghes cannot assert their rights to their house. They are also treated like squatters. Though the house is in a very poor condition, they cannot do any maintenance work. Unlike other fort residents, they cannot make use their property to make any income to support their difficult economic situation. The situation is getting worse due to the rise of property values.

It is clear that the lives of Farred and Weerasinghe are constrained by the World Heritage project, although in different ways. The project officers who are interested in these houses only see the values of Dutch architecture and Dutch symbols. The aspirations, wants and dreams of the inhabitants of these houses are external to the objectives of the World Heritage project. The officers are so limited to the World Heritage project and they are own gains, they cannot see the people’s lives. Weerasinghe is in a complex legal situation and Farred has to live in a house which is difficult to maintain. At the same time, the officers of the World Heritage project are using these two houses for their benefit, in multiple ways.

Moreover, residents of these houses did not get any chance to negotiate their needs or aspirations with the project because the emphasis of the project is on preserving
buildings and the built environment. The project does not have any intention of retaining the local people, especially the Muslim community who have a long history related to the Galle Fort, before and after the Dutch. The project is limited to a Dutch era and tourism. In this, the project gentrifies the fort. It both squeezes out those who have no value for more expensive Dutch-looking houses and invites more affluent people, especially foreigners.

Yet the officers have improved their own livelihoods. The officers who worked in this project for a decade have built their own power within the project and the fort. Moreover, this has enabled them to produce their own projects within their desires, interests and needs.

Nevertheless, the stories of Farred and Weerasinghe also show us that, though the project has affected them very much, they still try to see the gaps in the structure of the World Heritage project and try to accommodate their daily practices and fulfill their aspirations. For example, Farred always tries to maintain a good relationship with all the officials related to this project and, as she mentioned, she does this with the belief that in the future she can get some help from this project if she needs. At the same time, she also tries to keep some control in her hand in regard to some decisions related to her house. One such examples is when the project officials asked her to paint her house with samara --a natural yellow pigment commonly used in Sri Lanka-- she was able to object to that decision by giving some valid reasons. In this, she has found room for negotiation.

According to my own experience with fort residents, the project has enormous power in relation to their lives, dreams and aspirations. In a way this project is also
constructing a history for these people and for their dwellings. At the same time, these people are also trying to construct a history that is more favorable to fulfilling their own goals. The majority of dwellings in the fort have changed over time but most of them are now trying to add a Dutch look to their buildings to get the benefit of the growing tourist industry. Although these two houses have the original authentic Dutch look, up to now Farred and Weerasinghe have not been able to use their houses to gain any benefit from a tourism business.

The officials, external resource persons who are part of this project, and the project objectives as defined by them have developed into a barrier in between people and the project. The project has converted their houses into showpieces and people like Farred are becoming highly dependent on the project. After the '55 houses renovation project' repaired her roof it is still leaking. She, however, justifies the project by saying that "even the king's-palace roof is also leaking, so it is okay for my roof to leak a little". This shows that although people like Farred and Weerasinghe are not satisfied the way the project handle their lives and properties, they have no way to separate from the project. This structure of the project has disempowered them and they are even bound to talk in favor of the project. In result, Farred is bound to protect a house which she cannot even maintain and Weerasinghe is in a very problematic state where he cannot solve the issue concerning the ownership of his property.

In general, it is very difficult to control people in relation to their dreams and aspirations. Human beings have their own agency (Giddens, 1986). People see this project in many different ways and they interpret it in many different ways, depending on
their personal capacities, economic backgrounds, political and personal views. By doing so, there are some people who try to go beyond the limits of the project and try to achieve their dreams. Yet not everyone is able to achieve their goals smoothly and, at times, they have to compromise. The larger group that I was able to identify tried to change their houses but had to stop or change their plans due to the interruptions made by the World Heritage project. Shurafa, Chamanthi and Mala Gunasekara, and Mangala ignored government rules and tried to achieve a house that can help fulfill their needs. They could not achieve their targets. [their targets, needs and aspirations also evolve/change with the time and the experience]

The resultant spaces of this interruption are half-finished, destroyed, and/or deteriorating structures. A common characteristic of this group is that they did not ask for permission from the government for new construction or alterations. All of them believed that the system in the fort is highly corrupted and it is very difficult to get permission to carry out the changes they want. After the government stopped their construction they also took different approaches. Some people decided to totally stop construction work, while others decided to go to courts; the latter were able to complete the construction by paying some penalty. People like Shurafa, started to build a new house outside the fort. The recent most famous court case involves "Shoba Fashion." The court fined them of Rs. 50,000/ as penalty for destroying a historic monument and let them construct a new building which was designed by a chartered architect. This was approved by the Galle fort Planning Committee.
There is another side to this story. The majority of locals inside the fort believe that the regulations and the officials treat differently the foreigners who come to their offices to request for permission to change their house. Up to the time of writing, there are about 105 houses and properties owned by foreigners; this is out of a total of Liyana Arachchi et al. (2009). According to the locals, when a foreigner buys a house he immediately begins construction. But according to the normal procedure, it takes nearly six months to get the approval for a local person. The majority of the locals are very unhappy about how these officials discriminate between the requests made by the foreigners and the locals.

The evidence suggests that the offices who are supposed to protect the Galle Fort World Heritage have established a highly corrupt and uncontrolled bureaucratic system. Some officials have built a monopolistic personality towards the local people and the people who are not willing to listen to them or who do not have any close relationship with them face a lot of difficulties when they need their services. Moreover, most of these officials are males and there are lots of rumors inside the fort that it is not very easy for women to approach these officers.

There is another side to this bureaucratic system. Most of the top officials of these officers are political appointees and due to their aristocratic family background some of them do not like to consult the general public. They always try to maintain a gap, assumed privilege, and this too place the ordinary people in a disadvantaged position. This attitude of the higher ranking feudal-like officers enables officials with low qualification to obtain higher powers, making this system unfair to the majority.
This provides a great opportunity to corruption and bribe. For the local people, the officers are cashing in on this opportunity creating their own systems; corruption is a major complain against these officials. According to community leaders, some of these officials use the resources of the Galle Fort for their personal needs and make money. In sum, this corrupted bureaucratic system and the larger World Heritage project help these officials to achieve their goals but do not do much good for the majority of ordinary people at the Galle Fort. Under these circumstances many residents live with houses with no roofs, deteriorating buildings, and half built houses, but hope for a change in the structure.

Nevertheless, there are still people who have been very successful in achieving the built environment they wanted. The successes stories include those of Majid, Jayasekara, Liyanapathirana, Nimal Rathnayaka and Gamage. They have used different tactics to reach their dreams. The most common characteristic to all these successful residents is that they have evaded government regulations, but benefit from the tourist development of the Galle Fort. They avoid the government rules, but build for the purpose of reaching the tourism industry which is also the government’s goal.

When Peddler Street began to change with tourism related activities Majid’s family was having some financial difficulties. Majid and her husband changed their house by adding some Dutch architectural features and opened a restaurant for foreigners. In the case Dilrukshi, her family invested their saving into the growing tourism industry in the fort by adding two new floors to their house and converted the house into a guest house for foreigners.
These creative people find ways to overcome the roadblocks imposed by the institutional structure, especially the Department of Archaeology, the UDA, and the GHF and their regulations. When Liyanapathirana began to repair his house which was in poor condition, his project was blocked by the Department of Archaeology and the UDA. Through his own forms of negotiations, he managed to construct a new house with three additional rooms for tourists. Majid and Jayasekara were well aware of the issues they may face with the Department of Archaeology and GHF if they got caught while making changes to existing structures. So they were very careful about the way they renovated their houses and they learnt how to construct without getting caught from the surroundings. Most crucially, according to them, they do not have any enemies around them.

In the case of Sisil Liyanapathirana, after his court experience with the Department of Archaeology and the UDA, he consulted a charted architect connected to the Department and constructed a new house designed by him without much problems. Gamage uses another tactic; he uses a letter from the President of Sri Lanka which he received after the tsunami and uses it to blunt the powers of the project officers. He uses this letter whenever an officer questions him. At the moment of writing, he was finishing the construction of a new house behind his old resident. His plan is to conduct tourist business in it.

When I compare the experience of this group with Farred and Weerasinghe, it shows how one project has provided different experiences for different people. Both these groups live inside the fort and they have to deal with same officers. But the way
they have approached the issues, their experiences and the outcomes of their attempts to upgrade the houses are very different. The first group is limited and bound to the values of the World Heritage, the history introduced by the project and the authority of project officials. The outcome was that their environment and them, directly and indirectly became subjected to the project. The second group was able to see options, i.e., has used their agency better. They have achieved part of their aspirations within the project in different ways. They have also benefitted from the tourism industry. They targeted the benefits of tourism development which came with the World Heritage project and transformed their built environment into a place where they can satisfy their own economic, social, and cultural needs.

Moreover, those who belong to this group do not have a close relationship with the project or the project officials. That was not the path they chose, or fell into. Hence, they had the freedom to change their built environment and fulfill their needs and dreams; not only that of the project. At the same time, people like Dissanayake, who is also a part of this group, has a very close relationship with the project and project representatives, and use these relationships to meet his needs. A project officer told me that the project office was able to make some decisions about his house very easily, without following the normal route of going through the planning committee of Galle Fort.
CHAPTER V: CONCLUSION

The study revealed a number of important findings. Firstly, the idea of the World Heritage is confusing and incomplete. The declaration of Galle Fort as a World Heritage site refers to the involvement of people in shaping the fort’s built environment. Yet the discourse which includes the legislation and implementation focuses on the Dutch colonial architecture and ignores the other inputs, especially that of the locals. Two centuries after the Dutch had left, the original Dutch environment and buildings have been transformed by many others. It is therefore hard to separate a Dutch heritage. Moreover, the idea of preservation was British. The British had already introduced regulations before independence. The idea of preserving a Dutch heritage by preserving Dutch buildings and restoring others to such period is, therefore, inherently flawed.

Conserving the Dutch (and also the British) history has made the project remove the Muslim heritage connected to periods before and after colonialism. Back in history, the colonial powers displaced the Muslim traders who resided near the natural port before the advent of the Europeans. There is hardly a mention of them in the project.
The current World Heritage project has thereby repeated colonialism by once again marginalizing the Muslims. After independence a large proportion of Burghers resided in the fort and the directions taken by post-colonial governments led them to immigrate to other countries. But with the time those who had Burgher roots began to search for their heritage and as a result Galle Fort became a World Heritage site. These Burgers are not the colonial-Dutch; they are legitimate Sri Lankan citizens who have contributed to the great diversity of the country. Their idea of heritage is nostalgic, something that is being lost in the fort. Yet the project has taken this far back to a Dutch period of its own construction which displaces these (Sri Lankan) Burghers too. Along with that, it has displaced all other people groups, especially the Muslims who had found their way back after over centuries of colonialism.

My investigation reveals that there is no one World Heritage project in Galle Fort. If we consider it to be a single project, it is made up of various components and/or layers which are not well connected, certainly not joined to make one project. The agencies involved in the project have their own perceptions of it. The UNESCO, which is a global organization, believes it to be a monument with universal significant and the Department of Archaeology, which operates at national level, thinks it as national heritage. The government sees a different opportunity in it. With the open economy, there was a boom in the tourist industry and the Sri Lankan government started to promote Galle Fort as one of tourist destinations. The other main objective of the government was to develop Galle Fort as a tourist destination within its larger goal of promoting the tourist industry. The project has thus caused the gentrification of the Galle Fort.
The GHF is the local-level institution which carries it out as the project. It is the organization behind the Heritage project for the people. Instead of an agency linked to the UNESCO and the government, it largely operates as a private business with little concern for the local population. According to the *Galle Heritage Foundation Act*, the chairman of its board is a political appointee. Due to this reason, when the governments changed, the chairman of the GHF also changed. At the same time, therefore, the approach and, sometimes, the staff also changed. Throughout the past the major government changes have seriously affected to the way the GHF implements the written objectives and the way it promote tourism. Due to this political backing, the bureaucracy attached to this foundation is very complex; today there are some officials who have built a monopolistic attitude towards the fort, especially in regard to their decision about people and their properties. With the time, they are very familiar with the fort’s environment and they have built a different relationship with people in the fort. They are very friendly with some fort residents and they try to maintain a gap with others. According to most fort residents, the system is so corrupt and some officials try to make money through using their decision making power; due to that most of fort resident are not satisfied with the project, the way it is progressing.

The most significant component for this thesis project, the ordinary people are marginalized at best and the project is largely one of gentrification. Firstly, though the regulations were formulated at a higher level in the hierarchy their implementation is carried out at the people’s level. This aspect is totally neglected in the Galle Fort project. Rules or regulations have opted to freeze the spaces and people in time, in a Dutch era.
Though the Galle Fort is a place with a historical value it is also a living settlement. Due to the World Heritage project there is a huge demand for land of the Galle Fort. There is a growing tendency that people sell their properties for higher price and buy two houses from Colombo for that money. This was reinforced by the building regulations inside the fort. Especially Muslim families cannot continue their regular practices like having privacy and subdividing their houses into more units.

Secondly, after the 2004-tsunami there was a lot of NGOs inside the fort and that opened the Galle Fort to more foreigners. This trend is still continuing and there is very high land price inside the fort. Thirdly, today the Galle Fort is under tremendous modernization, mainly due to the influx of foreigners and the growth of the tourist industry. People are changing their houses to fulfill the need of the tourists and the local buyers. This trend has caused the emergence of an artificial environment inside the fort and the World Heritage project. Although a part of the project, these contradict the original idea of the World Heritage. The people involved in the preservation of the fort are also responsible for this newly developing environment.

The World Heritage project does not have a single meaning or a fixed meaning. Moreover, the ordinary people see the incompleteness in the World Heritage project that reaches the ground level. Ordinary people see this incompleteness and use their agency to make use of it to fulfill their needs and aspirations. According to my experience with the fort people, it is obvious that the majority of the people do not want to be the passive recipients of any decision made by the UNESCO or the government, certainly not the GHF. This is evident in all the meetings and protests they made and how they attend to
their spatial needs. Though the regulations were formulated in the higher level, the implementation is carried out at the people's level. In relation to the Galle Fort, this aspect has totally neglected. Though the Galle Fort is a place with a historical value it is also a living settlement. With the World Heritage project there is a huge demand for the lands of the Galle Fort. There is a growing tendency for people to sell their properties for higher price and buy two houses from Colombo for that money. This happen also due to the building regulations inside the fort. Especially Muslim families cannot continue their early practices like dividing their houses in to more units.

Finally, the people’s responses fall into three categories: One group attempts to follow the government plan for a World Heritage, as defined by GHF officials, but with the hope that they will get some benefit. This is yet to happen. These residents largely live in monuments over which they have little control. Moreover, they are also frequented by GHF officials without any notice, and breaching their privacy.

The others have attempted to carry out the changes they need on their own, using tactics that they have developed such as constructing at night. Many of them have been intercepted by the officials, but some like the Shoba Sisters have managed to get the courts to approve their requests. However, most of them live with no roofs, in half or deteriorating houses.

A smaller group has managed to get all of their needs fulfilled. Some though bribery and others through courts; some have totally by passed the authority of the GHF. When taken with the struggles to maintain the sense of place and neighborhood by
activists such as Nazar, the people seems to be well on their way to create their own space in Galle Fort.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


**Government Publications:**

Democratic Social Republic of Sri Lanka. (1940). *Antiquities Ordinance no. 9, 1940*.


Appendix 1: Special Regulations for World Heritage City of Galle Fort

PART IV

70. Special Regulations for World Heritage City of Galle Fort

70.1 These Regulations may be cited as the Special Regulations (Planning & Building) of “Galle Fort” World Heritage City - 2009.

(b) The provisions of these Regulations shall be applicable to the “Galle Special Regulatory Area” declared under Gazette Extraordinary No. 987/12 of 7th August, 1997.

70.2 The Planning and Building Regulations prepared for Galle Municipal Council Area under section 8J of the Urban Development Authority Act. No. 4 of 1982 shall be applicable in addition to the said special regulations within Galle Special regulatory area.

70.3 Conservation Zone

In this zone shall –

(a) Maintain and conserve the architecture of the buildings and the monuments and ensure that such properties be used economically feasible; effective and in an efficient manner.

(b) Any new constructions, improvements or renovation work of buildings that changes the internal or external appearance of a building, be in harmony with the Conservation Development Plan.

(c) Regulation of any un-authorized constructions and/or any un-authorized change of use be in harmony with the provisions made in the Conservation Development Plan.

(d) The parking of vehicles be in conformity with the Traffic Management Plan prepared by the Galle Heritage Planning Committee.

70.4 Preliminary Planning Clearance

Every development activity within Galle Special Regulatory Area shall be carried out in conformity with the following:
1. Planning clearance for all development activity shall be obtained from “Galle Heritage Planning Sub - Committee” appointed by the Urban Development Authority herein after referred as the Sub - Committee”.

2. Every developer shall submit duly completed applications with the building plan to the UDA along with the processing fees.

3. All Building Plan shall be prepared and signed by a Registered Architect of the Sri Lanka Institute of Architects.

4. The developer shall also furnish the following documents:
   
   (a) A photograph of the frontage of the existing buildings together with the buildings on either sides of the existing building.
   
   (b) If the site is vacant, a photograph showing the frontage of the site together with the abutting sites or buildings.
   
   (c) A copy of the Survey Plan of the specific site.

70.5 The preliminary planning clearance shall be issued within one month from the date of receiving the application. Provided, all the requirements are fulfilled, based on the recommendations of the sub - committee.

70.6 The preliminary planning clearance will not constitute a permit and shall not entitle the applicant/owner or any person authorized by the owner to commence or carry out any development activity what so ever.

70.7 Development Permit

(a) Building application shall be submitted by the applicant/owner to the Engineering Section of the Galle Municipal Council for development permit, with 05 copies of building plans together with the preliminary planning clearance for approval. Planning Committee of the Galle Municipal Council shall approve the development plan and issue a development permit to the owner/applicant to carry out the development if the plans are in conformity with the regulations.

(b) A copy of the preliminary planning clearance approval and a copy of the development permit issued by the Galle Municipal Council shall be displayed at a prominent place in the proposed site. This development permit shall be displayed and protected throughout the entire period of construction. The original of the development permit shall be made available in any time for inspection. The Galle Municipal Council may, on application and payment of prescribed fees extend the validity of the permit for a further period of not exceeding two years, if it is satisfied that the development activity referred to in the permit has been commenced but not been completed due to unforeseen circumstances.
70.8 Conservation of places of historical value

(a) No excavation within this site be carried out without a clearance from the Archeological Department.

(b) Under Section 6 of the Antiquities Ordinance (Chapter 188), the developer shall inform his intention on site preparation for development to the Archeological Office at Galle. All excavation shall be carried out under the supervision of Archeological Department and be completed within 30 days of granting the approval. If not, sub-committee may extend the validity of the permit considering the appeal for further period of not exceeding 14 days. Thereafter, Department of Archeology should complete the supervision and submit a report to the Sub Committee.

(c) Developer/owner shall pay the supervision charges to the Department of Archeology.

(d) Approval shall not be granted to demolish any buildings which has archeological value.

70.9 Change of Use

(a) All land owners of the Galle Fort Special Regulatory Area shall develop their lands as per the zoning plan of Galle Municipal Council area.

(b) No activities that are considered not compatible to the Zone such as; Government Institutions, production Industries, Stores, Offices shall be allowed within the Galle Fort area.

(c) Buildings shall be demolished, only on the recommendations of the Authorized Officers.

70.10 Permitted uses within the Galle Fort Special Regulatory Area shall be;

i) Tourism industry related handicrafts show rooms,

ii) Museums,

iii) Small Scale Hotels without swimming pool or pond

iv) Tourist gift centers,

v) Ticket issuing centers,

vi) Guest houses
vii) Small scale restaurants,

viii) Appropriate recreational activities,

ix) Bookshops,

x) Small professional offices,

xi) Art galleries,

xii) Small shops,

xiii) Gems & jewellery shops, and related cottage industry

Change of use of residential buildings for the above purposes shall maintain 35% of the building areas for residential purposes.

70.11 Following activities shall not be permitted within the “Galle Special Regulatory Area”:

i. Garage Buildings (for parking)

ii. Motor Vehicle Repairing Garages

iii. Motor/Auto Service Stations

iv. Fuel Filling Stations

v. Stores not exceeding 200.0 sq.m.

vi. Industrial Buildings & Industries


viii. Quarters for a high security persons

ix. Hotels exceeding 20 rooms

x. New schools or extensions to the existing buildings

xi. Super Markets

xii. Warehouses or other similar buildings

70.12 Development of Existing buildings

Archeological and architectural interest features of the colonial period buildings within the Fort Area shall be conserved and maintained. All changes that are made without approval to the existing buildings which affects the archeological and former architectural features of the buildings shall be restored to the original design within one year from the date of direction of the UDA.

70.13 Any garage, parking or similar use for vehicle, shall not be conducted in front of the building mentioned in the above Section 70.12.

70.14 (a) No existing front verandahs of the buildings be covered or changed, to effect its appearance. Any streets with specific features given for the front of the building as verandahs or row of columns shall be maintained and continued accordingly.

(b) Any new accessories fixed instead of old handrails, carved wooden columns, doors, windows, windows slats, fan lights, or any other special
features, such features shall be in conformity with the original plan and it shall be carried out subject to the UDA approval.

**70.15** Any renovation to an existing building shall be carried out in conformity with the archaeological or architectural features of that particular building.

**70.16** All lands located within Galle Special Regulatory Area shall be used in an appropriate manner to protect all historical structural features of the area.

**70.17** Roof scapes and building height

(a) Height of any building within Galle Special Regulatory Area shall not exceed ten metres and only two floors are allowed with only Calicut tiles, half round tiles or clay tiles for roofs, and roof gardens shall be allowed.

(b) Physical changes to any building shall not be carried out without a clearance from the Planning Sub Committee.

(c) No radio television antennas and water tanks shall mar the characters of the roof of the buildings.

**70.18** Building Colours

All colour scheme of the buildings shall be in accordance with the stipulated colours for the Galle Special Regulatory Area.

(a) Accepted colours are white, grey and yellow and no any other colours are allowed.

(b) Two storeyed building shall be painted with a single colour. Light tonal differences are permitted.

(c) Facades of the building shall be painted with a single colour.

(d) Colour of the two visible streets facades of a building shall be in harmony with each other.

**70.19** Finishes of the Building

All internal and external appearance of the buildings shall be in harmony with the existing historical building within the Galle Fort area.
(a) No reflecting or mirrored glass shall be used in the front elevation of the buildings.

(b) No approval is granted to cover the front arcade with ceramic tiles, mosaic tiles, and any tiles with colour patches or tiles of any type and inappropriate plaster textures.

(c) Facade finishes of the buildings shall be compatible with the environmental characteristics.

(d) The facades and the roof materials of the buildings of any street shall be in uniformity with other buildings.

70.20 The floor finishes shall be in harmony with the archeological features of the existing buildings. Permission may be granted for rendering of cement, terra cotta tiles, rough and polished granite and pressed cement tiles for floors. Painting of the floors are not permitted.

**Floor Area Ratio**

\[
gross \, floor \, area \, of \, all \, floors \, of \, the \, building \div site \, extent \times 100
\]

(Percentage of coverage should not exceed 1:1.5)

**Plot coverage**

\[
floor \, area \, at \, ground \, level \times 100 \div site \, extent \times 100
\]

(Should not exceed 75%)

70.21 **Boundary walls**

(a) No boundary walls are permitted in front of the buildings facing the roads; only boundary walls, fence or live fence are permitted (on either sides of the buildings) not exceeding one meter in height.

(b) Boundary walls which are allowed shall be plastered and painted using approved colour scheme (White, Ash, Grey). No mosaic tiles, ceramic tiles and coloured bricks are allowed.

70.22 **Swimming pools and ponds**
No swimming pools or ponds shall be permitted within the special zone.

70.23 Hoarding structures and Advertisements

(a) All types of advertisements with dynamic and continuously changeable devisers, using neon lights or more dominantly and contrasting characters are prohibited.

(b) Each building is permitted to install one name board. Horizontal name boards shall be installed at the space available between the top edge of the ground floor windows and the first floor level or the upper floor window sill level. Advertisements shall not be permitted to install at the railings of the building of the upper floor. Vertical name boards may be installed at the front side within the permitted height and the space given by the Planning Sub Committee.

(c) The total area covered with advertisement should not exceed 1/3 of the allowed facades area of the building. Preliminary approval shall be obtained from the Galle Municipal Council prior to the installation of any hoarding.

(d) Galle Municipal Council shall provide appropriate places to install hoarding structures within Galle Special Regulatory Area.

(e) Any, hoarding structure/name board/notice shall not be installed / sticked on to the electricity posts, telecom posts, fortress, boundary walls, open areas, on trees, roads or on roofs and cover any historical monument or any carvings of such monuments. Size and type of the letters of the name boards and other hoardings shall be determined by the Galle Heritage Planning Sub-Committee.

(f) All Installation of hoarding structures/notice boards within any private or public property are prohibited other than the area marked by the Galle Municipal Council.

(g) Notice boards shall not be kept covering windows and doors.

70.24 Landscaping

Landscape plan shall be provided by the Urban Development Authority for the identified special locations within the Galle Special Regulatory area.
(a) All internal surface drains shall be covered with concrete slabs and fed into the main drainage maintained by the Galle Municipal Council.

(b) Erection, re-erection or renovation of boundary walls which are not facing a road/roads should be constructed with round shape stones.

(c) The existing sewer system built during the Dutch period should be repaired and the under ground sewer lines should be cleaned and maintained by the Galle Municipal Council.

(d) Urban Development Authority shall provide detail plans for parking areas, public open areas, restaurants, toilet facilities and for any other public uses.

70.25 Streetscape

A street lighting system should be approved by the Galle Heritage Planning Sub Committee. The design of the lamp posts should be in accordance with the approval granted by the Galle Heritage Planning Sub Committee. The main roads side of the Rampart facing Galle City to be illuminated at night.

70.26 A common design shall be introduced by the sub-committee for street name boards and name boards for the Galle Special Regulatory Area.

70.27 Existing building line shall be maintained as it is in the Galle Special Regulatory Area.

70.28 Traffic Planning and Parking

No heavy vehicles and other vehicles including buses which are more than five tones in weight shall enter into the Galle Special Regulatory Area.

70.29 All delivery vehicles enter or exist Galle Special Regulatory Area shall be limited from 9.00 a.m. to 11.00 a.m. and 5.00 p.m. to 7.00 p.m only.

70.30 Appropriate measures to the taken strategies could be used on streets to prevent vehicles entering the Galle fort area.

70.31
(a) Speed of all vehicles in the Galle Special Regulatory Area shall not exceed 25 Km. per hour.

(b) All vehicles shall be parked only in the areas allocated for vehicle parking during specified period of time.

70.32 Infrastructure facilities

All existing and proposed buildings, electricity, antennas, telecom, water, drainage systems that can be covered within service facilities shall be in consistence with the development within the Fort area.

70.33 All service lines, systems should be laid under ground in order to conserve and maintain world heritage character of the Galle Special Regulatory area.

DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES IN ZONE II

70.34 No construction work, minor alteration to existing buildings, excavation, construction of semi permanent or temporary buildings shall be permitted within Galle Special Regulatory Area.

70.35 No archeological features that exist in the old harbour area shall be removed, while using the area for activities that are specially approved by the Galle Municipal Council.

70.36 The physical features of the building in the International Cricket Complex should be maintained in conformity with the environmental features and the appearance of the Fort area.

70.37 All buildings which are not compatible with the characters of the Galle Special Regulatory Area shall be either removed or relocated in an appropriate manner.