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STRATEGIES FOR THE IN-SITU AND EX-SITU CONSERVATION OF TIMBER SHIPWRECKS AND ARTEFACTS WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE MARITIME ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATIONS AT GALLE HARBOUR

A Thesis submitted to
The Faculty of Architecture, University of Moratuwa
Sri Lanka
In fulfillment of the Final Year Examination of the requirements for
The Master of Science Degree in Architectural Conservation of Monuments and Sites (ACOMAS)

Kasthuri Arachchilage. AnushaKasturi

2008

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Declaration

I declare that this thesis represents my own work and that it has not been previously included in a report submitted to this university or to another institution for a degree, postgraduate diploma or other qualification.

UOM Verified Signature

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Signature

K.A.Anusha Kasturi

UOM Verified Signature

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Course Director (ACOMAS)

Archict. D.P. Chandrasekara

Department of Architecture

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Abstract

The implementation of the waterlogged wood conservation has important implication for Sri Lanka. Firstly, there is a diverse and significant cultural heritage (multi user environment) in the sea. Secondly, there is a rich underwater cultural heritage in Sri Lankan inland waters. This thesis outline procedures we have initiated to conserve the unique non renewable, invisible heritage that should be systematically recovered preserved and studied.

This research focuses not only on the ex-situ conservation of waterlogged wooden shipwreck and artefacts from Galle harbour projects, but also local and intemational legal frame work its secure for underwater cultural heritage, how to environmental factors affect to waterlogged wood and its deterioration and preservation, pre-disturbance conservation assessment and in-situ conservation, research aspects and environmental monitoring and control in museum. This is also discussing the issues involved such as climate, money, time, technology, unawareness and conflicts of interest.

Polyethylene Glycol (PEG) treatment for waterlogged archaeological wood is mainly discussed as ex -situ conservation.

It is also briefly described conservation process has gained essential experience in working on large waterlogged archaeological wood structures in the field which having been allowed to dry out and with few available funds and little equipment, the innovative techniques applied to the Lathpadura Paruwa.

Future opportunities for further detailed conservation and research on waterlogged wood, possibly in association with those interested in ancient vessels and maritime archaeology at the remains at sea and inland water as it rapidly replaces its many ancient traditions are flagged.