

SOUTH ASIA

Colonial architecture in Bombay and Karachi

Along with the end of World War II most colonial relations between the colonising and the colonised world ended as well. For the majority of former colonies the colonial heritage was considered as a burden, which, if avoidable, was not to be used anymore by the new sovereign states. All the more it must be praised that during the past decade decentralised activities by mostly private architects have taken place on the Indian subcontinent, aiming at the conservation of colonial cities and architecture. Especially in Bombay and Karachi individual architects and activity groups have started to document the colonial architecture which all over the sub-continent has been heavily neglected in the past 40 years. Only a few solitaires like the government centre in New Delhi with the Raj Path, the odd museum and some private prop-



Examples of colonial architecture in Bombay



Colonial architecture in Karachi

erties were taken care of during those years. Although even towns such as Galle in Sri Lanka are already on the World Heritage List, national legislations do not yet sufficiently protect this important part of cultural and social history.

At the end of February 2003 a workshop on the conservation of colonial architecture was held at the Max Mueller Bhavan, Bombay in which experts from Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, India, Germany, Australia and the Netherlands took part, including the chairman of the ICOMOS scientific committee on colonial architecture. It was observed that as an addition to the Charter of Washington a regional charter for the conservation of urban heritage in South Asia should be developed. The expert group has started working on it.

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