



Plate vi – Ceremonial Road of Parliament in 1984

CONCLUSIONS

CONCLUSION

The civilization of Sri Lanka up to 1500 A.D. was influenced by India. The early Sinhalese and Tamils came from India. Buddhism and Hinduism were brought from that country and the people who came to Sri Lanka lived more or less the type of life had been living in India.

When it is considered the fortress (kingdom of Sri Jayawardenepura) landscape and architecture of Sri Lanka before 15th century, Sri Lankans were shrewd and practical and they had their own methods and styles of constructing fortresses. They were influenced by the knowledge concerning Indian fortresses, fortifications and theories of the early period. They gained this knowledge through Indian silpa shastra and from their ancestors who were well versed in the Indian art of constructing fortresses. The Sri Lankans utilized such knowledge to develop their own styles and method and Therefore, the main features of their fortresses were similar to those of the fortresses designed in India.

During the time of prosperity of Polonnaruwa, enough resources were available to design fortresses and citadels for defense. The kings of that period gave the first place to the agricultural stability as well as the administration.

After shifting the capitals to the Sri Jayawardenapura due to the foreign invasions, the resources of the kings were limited and they built fortresses utilizing the natural barriers (Diyawanna Oya, Marsh area) available at the sites and the materials (Kabok to built rampart) obtained from the surroundings.

These fortresses were designed at the "macro- level" as centres of "Fall back" for the army rather than as launching pads for attacks. The interiors of these fortresses reflect the importance attached to the king's personal safety first and to the safety of the Tooth Relic. Their less attention went with the agriculture, hence it began to deteriorate.

With the arrival of the Portuguese in 1505 A.D. a new influence is brought to bear on our civilization. The Portuguese being European people naturally brought a European civilization to Sri Lanka and from 1500 A.D. onward our island came under European influence.

So the colonial fortresses were built over Sri Lanka with the influence of European fortresses landscape architecture. The site selection, and usage of materials were same as the Medieval Sinhalese fortresses, but were designed at their native countries. Sometimes they brought materials from their native



countries to built fortresses. These fortresses were mainly built for the safety of their were houses because Europeans were the traders of the world.

As a results of European invasions the agricultural based civilization had transferred in to a trade based civilization. Hence every thing of the country depend on the Europeans. The Catholicism and the Christianity deep rooted among the citizens of Sri Lanka as a result of the benefits which Christians and catholists had been given. The Portuguese influence to the fortresses landscape architecture rarely can be seen today but the Dutch influence is prominent. However the occupation of the maritime provinces of Sri Lanka by the Dutch from 1658 to 1796 and the consequent Portuguese influence on Sri lankan's economy, culture, and in all aspects, were transferred into Dutch. There is no doubt that the Dutch influence of nearly 150 years in this country has left its impression not only in the Dutch monuments, buildings, architecture, landscape, canals, furniture, low, religion and language but also in the daily lives of our people even today.

It is apparent by this study of re-establishment and growth of Kotte in the British period some important factors contributing to the development of a city could be understood. Purely because of the closeness to the commercial capital Colombo, Kotte become a accessible sub- urban area. With the presence of beautiful Diyawanna Oya, and other water bodies and lush green habitations give ideal conditions for a residential city. As a result, where ones stood the ancient structures of a Sinhalese monarchy were vantly destroyed to take possession. There is no doubt that who found interesting artifacts in private land they occupy did not inform the relevant authorities, fearing of confiscation of their land bought with hard earned money. Lack if regulation to acquire historically important plots of land on the part of the archaeology department also resulted in Kotte's glorious past being buried underneath its soil.

In 1909 archaeology commissioner sums up in his report,

"Unless the government is prepared to acquire much land, now planted and occupied, at prohibitive cost, the archaeological commissioner is powerless. To take action further than that prescribed by treasure trove ordinance (no 17 1887 for securing isolated antiquities, which Privet owners may from time to time dig up in their properties; no one is likely to offer his land freely for such excavations, as the government might consider desirable in the interest of Archaeology".¹ As the inability of the government at that time remaining ruins of Kotte would not be saved. This could be attributed to that at that tine the rulers were foreigners and not locals. Because the government allowed –reoccupation of Kotte the new town began to grew. In the process components of old ruins were to built these new structures.

As Kotte was built amongst water and marshes their were swamps and marshes in and around most part of the outer city area; but they could not found to the

fact that most of the lands were filled and reclaimed due to high land price. This in turn has resulted in Colombo being vulnerable to floods as there is no place for water to seep through. Another significant factor unearthed in this study is the rapid development of Nugegoda in comparison to Kotte. "The Borella Kotte road linked the throbbing and busy city of Colombo to Mirihana long before the Kelani-valley line was conceived, or the High Level road was planned. In fact when gauge rail is subsequently taken up for serious consideration, following the vehement and vociferous demand of the K-V planters, Mirihana was to be the site for the railway station. But however following the results of bitter dialogue, Nugegoda was subsequently chosen for new railway extension. The blocking of the old Dutch canal in the vicinity of Gangodawila and the reclaiming of the Dutch-era swamps, made Nugegoda a very attractive residential area, which was further heightened with the laying of High Level road. Soon there was migration of retired government servants and other people to this new suburb".² Thus it is clear how Nugegoda outgrew Kotte to come to the present state of things are.

It is heartening to see when the administrative capital is found an old concept on which was Kotte founded is utilized. That is having a continuous water body or a marsh around the fortress. In the new parliament this concept is activated although the weight is more for the aesthetic side of having a water body around. But the protective aspect of the concept could also be used so an attacker could reach through water to parliament without being identified. Because of clearing and cleaning up of maeshes around the Kotte area as a result parliament complex have eased the inland waterway and flood protection situation in Colombo. But still recently it showed it is also vulnerable by even getting parliament building flooded during a heavy shower. This could also be said the Gal Ambalama at the Pita Kotte junction. The scholars assert that it has been wrongly conserved probably during the colonial period, as structure with two rows of pillars suggest a two slope roof. Original building was square in plan and had a Kutagara roof.

The sad truth today is that much of the colonial landscape has been wiped out by the super of Colombo. Under this situation conservation must take control. Conservation brings protection and little or no change to the historic areas and leaves the concerned areas alone, except for those activities needed to counterbalance the unavoidable influence of man. But at the broader level a historical landscape initiative can be used to enlist the historical imagination both by preserving actual cultural landscapes and by raising the level of our discourse about the history of the land change and continuity, interpretation, management and maintenance, and significance in history. These are the broader questions that we should ask ourselves about any landscape preservation project. It also emphasizes the point that the organization and land patterns are the most important considerations, followed by the character defining features: topography, vegetation, circulation, water features, and structures, site furnishing and objects within the capital of Sri Jayawardanapura-Kotte.

But the field of landscape needs to begin this at the other end at which the areas of natural elements have been destroyed. It is here that the capital needs a proper landscape master plan to confront all the destructive effects and bring what is pleasing to the eye and possibly to the ear, that fits the soil and surface structure and helps to conserve and stimulate the natural processes.

The present capital of Sri J ajawardenepura- Kotte has claimed that the entire marshy lands within the capital should be treated as open spaces and thus will protect them from getting filled except the reservation, parks, playgrounds and forests. Its other concerns are limited to the cemeteries, which seems insufficient to cope with the new pressures. Ian MC Harg points out that Nature performs a number of valuable functions for man, and does it free. The forests of the "upland sponge", for example helps moderate floods.

The ground water table stores water for us to drink. Prime soils produce food for us to eat. Marshes provide spawning grounds for fish and wildlife. But when men make their development plans, unfortunately, they pay little attention to these functions and they obliterate what they should protect.... "Marshes seem made to be filled, streams to be culverted, rivers to be dammed, farms subdivided, forests felled, flood plains occupied, and wildlife eradicated".

To weave together a host of seemingly disparate elements the forest reserves, the local parks, the spaces of cluster subdivision, the edges of linear right of ways and the sum of there can make a very effective whole. All natural links, forests, rivers, velleys exist as natural elements and man- made links, the rights of way of rail roads, waste lands, empty lots, dumps, all kinds of derelict lands that may be reclaimed to be used in making the links.

Maximum effects could be drawn from the edges of the open spaces for they have more perimeters cherished by people most often and intensively: and from the visual aspects of open spaces adding aesthetics. A final measure is to look on the landscape as basic infrastructure, as basic to the town as main drainage and roads. All these measures collaboratively used to tie the Nature in and around the urban area on a generous scale.

Even in our sophisticated cities, with transport, technology and modernism, we are still in need of contact with Nature. Therefore all these acquisitions should be tied together with the landscape approach to achieve a better balance of the man made within Nature.

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