

**BRITISH INFILTRATION OF CEYLON (SRI LANKA)
IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY
A STUDY OF THE D'OYLY PAPERS BETWEEN 1805
AND 1818**

PART I - 1805 - 1815

Stage one of infiltration: The takeover of the Kandyan Kingdom.

PART II - 1815 - 1818

Stage two of infiltration: Consolidation of the process of infiltration.

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CANDIDATE DECLARATION

I certify that the thesis entitled:

*“British Infiltration of Ceylon (Sri Lanka) in the Nineteenth Century: A Study of
the D’Oyly Papers Between 1805 and 1818”*

*is the result of my own work and that where reference is made to the work of others,
due acknowledgement is given.*

*I also certify that any material in this thesis, which has been accepted, for a degree or
diploma by any other University or Institution is identified in the text.*

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5 June 2008

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Dr Robyn Taylor assisted in the proof reading and editing of this thesis. The assistance was in the area of language, pertaining to grammar and syntax.

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Contents

List of Maps/Diagrams/Illustrations

List of Appendices

Glossary

Abbreviations

<u>Part I:</u>		1
Abstract		3
Chapter I	Introduction	8
Chapter II	John D'Oyly follows a Positive Policy of Infiltration to takeover the Kandyan Kingdom: A Decisive Turn in Diplomacy	98
Chapter III	The Takeover of the Kandyan Kingdom in 1815: A Positive Outcome Resulting from the Policy of Infiltration followed by D'Oyly	149
<u>Part II:</u>		184
Chapter IV	The Kandyan Convention of March 1815: The Act of Settlement by John D'Oyly that made the Kandyan Kingdom a Ceded Territory of the British Empire	186
Chapter V	The Rebellion of 1817: A Challenge to D'Oyly and the British within the Kandyan Provinces where Force had to be Used	239

Chapter VI	The Proclamation of 1818 and its Consequences: D'Oyly's Policy of Consolidating British Rule after the First Phase of Infiltration	281
Conclusions		314
Appendices		322
Bibliography		393

Maps/Diagrams/Illustrations

Map: The British Expansion in India 1775-1858	57
Illustration: D'Oyly and the Kandyan Chiefs	133
Map: The Country around Kandy	141
Diagram: The System of Governance under the King	201
Diagram: The Kandyan Kingdom's Religious Organisation - Buddhism the State Religion	202
Diagram: The System of Governance under the British: After 1815 - Kandyan Convention	203
Map: Difficult Topography of the Kandyan Kingdom	209
Map: Ceylon in 1815	234
Illustration: A Mural Representing Sri Wickrama Rajasingha - The Last King of Kandy: A 'Devaraja' or Living God	237
Illustration: Dutch Embassy before the King of Kandy - Kandyan Court Etiquette	238
Illustration: The Depressed Condition of the Palace Complex in Kandy after the British Occupation - A Cause for Concern	246
Map: Kandyan Kingdom with the British Forts in 1817	255
Diagram: The British Administrative setup in the Kandyan Provinces after the Rebellion of 1817	309
Diagram: The Kandyan Sinhalese Village - The Basic Unit of Administration and Settlement that D'Oyly had to study	310
Diagram: Land Distribution - Basis of the Socio-Economic Structure	310

Diagram: A Traditional Kandyan Sinhalese Village - Pattern
of Land Use for Paddy/Rice Cultivation that D'Oyly had to
Study 311

List of Appendices

Appendix I - A Brief Biography of John D'Oyly of the Ceylon Civil Service	322
Appendix II - A Cross Section of Persons who were Informants and Acted as Spies for John D'Oyly - 1810-1815 as revealed in his Diary	324
Appendix III - The Resources of the Kandyan Kingdom as revealed by Ehelapola to D'Oyly in Colombo after he sought Political Assylum	326
Appendix IV - Proclamation by General Brownrigg before the Invasion of the Kandyan Kingdom in January 1815	332
Appendix V - The March 1815 Kandyan Convention (Authored by John D'Oyly)	335
Appendix VI - D'Oyly's Letter of Appointment as Resident	339
Appendix VII - Memorandum of the King's Jewels and Ornaments	341
Appendix VIII - Deposition of the Former King's Servant in Regard to the King's Treasures	346
Appendix IX - Contemplated Restoration of the Monarchy by the Kandyan Sinhalese	351
Appendix X - Contemplated Restoration of the Monarchy - Extracts from D'Oyly's Report of 6th April 1816	357

Appendix XI - Letter No. IV from D'Oyly to Moratota indicating D'Oyly's Knowledge of the Correct Form of Communicating with the Buddhist Clergy	359
Appendix XII - A Sketch of the Constitution of the Kandyan Kingdom by John D'Oyly, as a Guide - Page 1	360
Appendix XIII - Letter by Governor Brownrigg for Help from India during the Kandyan Rebellion	362
Appendix XIV - The Mind of the Rebels: An Insight into Kandyan Sinhalese Thinking	364
Appendix XV - Proclamation Ending Martial Law	365
Appendix XVI - Proclamation of November 1818: Establishing British Supremacy and Direct Rule Authored by John D'Oyly	366
Appendix XVII - D'Oyly's Need to Codifying the Laws of the Kandyan Sinhalese due to Conflicting Judicial Judgements	384
Appendix XVIII - D'Oyly's Attempt to Study the Kandyan Administration: Second Phase of Infiltration	386
Appendix XIX - Death of John D'Oyly: while serving as British Resident in Kandy	390

Glossary

Adigar	Chief Minister to the King of Kandy
Amuna	Sowing extent of land equal to 4 pelas = 40 lahas
Appuhamy	Son of Aristocrat, Captain, aide at Palace, messenger
Aramudala	Royal Treasury
Aratchchy	Headman of the Goigama caste
Asweddumise	To convert high land into muddy fields for cultivation of paddy
Atapattu	Guards/Craftsman
Atuva	The traditional barn of the store, which was in charge of the storekeeper called the Atuva-keeper
Badda	A group of people of a particular caste, bound to supply certain provisions or service to the State
Bandara	A nobleman
Basnayaka Nilame	Principal lay custodian of a Temple
Bhikkhu	Monk / Priest, who had received Higher Ordination as a member of Buddhist order
Ceylon	Sri Lanka
Dalada	Sacred Tooth Relic
Dalada Maligava	Temple of the Sacred Tooth Relic
Dasa Raja Dharma	The ten attributes of a righteous Buddhist King
Devale	A shrine of gods of the Hindu
Disava	Governor of District (reference to Collector of a District with D'Oyly at one stage, and to a Government Agent)
Disavany	The area under the authority of the Governor

Diyawadana Nilame	Chief Officer of the Royal Bath of the Dalada Maligava, but now Chief lay-custodian
Dunukara	Military Bowmen
Esela	A month in the Sinhala calendar, July/ August
Gabadagam	Royal Villages, land belonging to King's Treasury
Gabada Nilame	Chief of Treasury
Gajanayaka	Chief in charge of the Royal Elephant stables
Government Agent	Chief Civil Servant in a Province/District. Evolved from post of Collector, and the ancient office of Disava
Gravets	Boundaries
Hiraluva	An ex priest/Monk of the Buddhist Order
Kachcheri	Government Agents office/ Secretariat
Kadavata	Frontier gate - thorn gates to the Kandyan Kingdom
Kapurala	Priest of a Hindu Temple
Katupulle	Messenger/Village supplying messengers for State service
Keypadma	An official note sent as part of an embassy to the Kandyan Court by European powers from Colombo
Kodituakku	Small artillery, field gun
Korala	Officer in charge of a subdivision of a Disavany
Korale	Subdivision of Disavany
Kumara Hapuva	Place where Kandyan Chieftains were beheaded, near the present Police Station on Kandy Colombo main road
Lekam	An Officer in charge/Secretary of Department
Lekam Miti	Land Registry

Madaliyar	Chief Headman/Chief in the Low Country of Ceylon
Madige	Organisation of people who provided transport services to the State
Magul Maduva	Audience Hall of the King of Kandy
Maha Adhikaram	Great/Chief Minister
Maha Disava	Governor with military power in any one of the four great provinces of the Kandyan Kingdom
Maha Nayaka	Chief of Monks of a Buddhist Sect
Maligava	Palace of the King of Kandy
Mohottala	Secretary
Muhandiram	An office of rank, a title of honour, Head of department below that of Mudaliya
Nayakkar Dynasty	Ruling dynasty of Kandyan Kings from 1739
Nilame	Office holder/man of high rank by birth
Nindagama	Estate owned by feudal tenants, a village granted by the King to a nobleman in return for service
Ola	Palm leaf to write on
Ootoon Kumaraya	Grand Prince - Title Adigar Pilama Taluva aspired for
Padikara Nilame	Officer in Charge of Royal Stipendiaries
Pallegampahe Adigar	Chief Minister, first in order of precedence among the two other Chief Ministers
Pansala	Temple/Residence of Buddhist priests
Paraveni	Hereditary
Pattu	Subdivision of Korale
Pattirippuva	Octagon on which the King comes to be seen built by the last King of Kandy
Perahera	Religious/cultural Procession
Poligar	A Chieftain of royal status in South India

Pooja	Offering to temple/Gods
Praveni/Paraveni	Private property for which service is not owing to an over lord
Radala	The highest cast of govi kula - The (Kandyan) Aristocracy
Rajakariya	Royal service/compulsory service to the King/State, a lord or temple
Rata	District, country, administrative unit into which Kanda Uda was divided
Rate Rala	Chief of District
Rate Mahatmaya	Chief of a Subdivision
Saluvadana Nilame	Officer in charge of King's robes
Sangha	Order of Buddhist Monks
Sangharaja	Highest pontiff in the Priesthood
Sannasa	Grant of land bearing King's Seal
Udagampaha Adigar	Chief Minister second in order of precedence
Upasampada	Higher Ordination of Bhikkus
Vasama	Administrative area
Vasagama	Family name
Veva/Weva	Lake or Tank for preservation of water
Vidane/Vidana	Headman/overseer
Vihara	Buddhist monastery, or place of worship
Walawe/Valavva	Manor house/house of an Aristocrat

Abbreviations Used in the Notes and Bibliography

A.A.R.	Asiatic Annual Review
C.A.L.R.	Ceylon Antiquary and Literary Register
C.G.O.	Ceylon General Orders
C.J.H.S.S.	The Ceylon Journal of Historical and Social Studies, New Series
C.L.R.	Ceylon Literary Register
C.O.	Colonial Office / 54/55 refers to Ceylon, containing the despatches of the Governors, and their replies from London. The documents so cited are available in the Sri Lankan Archives as copies from the originals, in London.
H.M.S.O.	His (Her) Majesty's Stationery Office
J.R.A.S.C.B.	Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society (Ceylon Branch)
S.L.N.A.	Sri Lanka National Archives

PART I - 1805-1815

**STAGE ONE OF INFILTRATION:
THE TAKEOVER OF THE KANDYAN KINGDOM**

Contents

Abstract

Chapter I Introduction

Chapter II John D'Oyly follows a Positive Policy of Infiltration to takeover the Kandyan Kingdom: A Decisive Turn in Diplomacy.

Chapter III The Takeover of the Kandyan Kingdom in 1815: A Positive Outcome Resulting from the Policy of Infiltration followed by D'Oyly

Abstract

The proposed study is to examine the contribution made by John D'Oyly, a British Civil Servant, to the British acquisition and control of the whole of Ceylon. It is also aimed to examine the history of this period (between 1805-1818) in Ceylon as a part of British colonial expansion in South Asia focusing on the policy of infiltration which was used by the British as a method of expanding and consolidating their power and influence.

In *The Cambridge Illustrated History of the British Empire*, published in 1996, P.J. Marshall submitted that the British had become a major political force on the south east coast of the Indian subcontinent, and had become the real rulers of the wealthy province of Bengal by the end of the eighteenth century. He further submits that the success of the British was mainly due to their ability to infiltrate into the internal politics of local states and kingdoms, and thereby dominate some of these political entities rather than overcome and destroy them by the use of military force. This process of infiltration will be examined in detail in the study of British relations with the Kandyan Kingdom, which was situated in the centre of Ceylon (Sri Lanka), and was the only local kingdom then in existence as an independent political entity.

The primary documents to be studied are those that relate to the British relations with the Kandyan Kingdom between 1805 and 1818, which covers the career of John D'Oyly as a civil servant working in Ceylon. He was the principal figure used by the British in their dealings with the Kandyan Kingdom, due mainly to his proficiency in the Sinhalese language and his knowledge of the customs and manners of the local people. His official diary, covering between the periods of 1810 and 1815, is one of the major sources of this study, examining the methods of infiltration.

What is attempted in this Thesis is to examine this new theoretical approach of infiltration (submitted by P.J. Marshall) to the history of British relations with the Kandyan Kingdom between the periods of 1805 to 1818. This study is associated therefore with giving a new dimension to D'Oyly's work as a civil servant, and also to give a deeper reason for British expansion in Ceylon (as much as in Asia) in the context of the broader British strategic objectives. It strives to give a new meaning to the primary documents available in studying British Kandyan relations, as a part of the successful political expansion of the British in India and Asia.

PART I - 1805-1815

Stage one of infiltration: The takeover of the Kandyan Kingdom.

PART II - 1815-1818

Stage two of infiltration: Consolidation of the process of infiltration.

Summary of Chapters

Part I

- Chapter I** This covers the main topic of British infiltration, its background, and the global and regional political issues. It also covers the Primary Sources of Study and deals with the history of the Kandyan Kingdom, the literary review that forms the background to the study, and a brief history of the Trincomalee Harbour, which legally was part of the Kandyan Kingdom, and formed the strategic factor in Britain's return into the Kandyan Kingdom. It deals with the significance of the study.
- Chapter II** This deals with the policies followed by D'Oyly in his dealings with the Kandyan Kingdom under Governors Maitland, Wilson and Brownrigg. With Brownrigg a definite policy was followed to subjugate the Kandyan Kingdom by subverting the loyalty of the Kandyan Chiefs to the ruling Monarch, Sri Wickrama Rajasingha.
- Chapter III** Deals with the process of the conquest of the Kandyan Kingdom. It refers to the decisive part played by D'Oyly in the conquest of the Kandyan Kingdom.

Part II

Chapter IV

This examines the provision of the Kandyan Convention of 1815. It was a difficult arrangement to have British rule while retaining the old rights and privileges of the Kandyan Chiefs. It was easier to placate the Buddhist Priests, as they did not take a direct part in the governing process.

Chapter V

This deals with the rebellion, which was inevitable due to the provisions of the Kandyan Convention, and the sudden change that was not well received by all the inhabitants. The British had to use force when it was absolutely necessary, but civil control was introduced when the situation eased. This was another aspect of this whole process of infiltration leading to the consolidation of the British administration.

Chapter VI

This examines the provision of the Proclamations of 1815, that now brought in direct British rule by civil servants, using the Kandyan Chiefs and the Headmen as instruments of the British rule and governance. These Government Agents now replaced the Adigars and Disavas, and ruled the Kandyan Provinces as the representatives of the British Government. For them to succeed, a better knowledge and understanding of the Kandyan Provinces was needed. This involved knowledge of the laws, customs, and manners of its inhabitants. This was the final stage of the process of infiltration, where British Administration was accepted as palatable, with an educated civil service as the main instrument of the governing process.

Conclusions

The objective of this thesis has been to examine the success of the process of infiltration, and the part played by D'Oyly. It also explores how the British as a small nation were able to establish an Empire over millions of persons living within substantial territories who enjoyed a long history of culture and civilisation. It also reveals the strategic factors seen in the British relations with the Kandyan Kingdom, flowing from the Anglo-French rivalry and the strategic significance of the Trincomalee Harbour.

Chapter I

Introduction

The Area of Research

The research undertaken is British Colonial History in Ceylon (Sri Lanka) between 1805-1818, centred on the official work of John D'Oyly, one of the British civil servants who arrived with Lord North, the first British Governor of Ceylon, in 1801. The focus of the study is on the British policy of infiltration, which was carried out by D'Oyly, to subjugate the Kandyan Kingdom. D'Oyly served in Ceylon till his death in 1824. He was a member of the Ceylon Civil Service, which was similar in its traditions to the Indian Civil Service that administered India for nearly two hundred years.

It is here that P.J. Marshall's submissions, as a historian, of the British Empire are significant.¹ In *The Cambridge Illustrated History – British Empire* (edited by P.J. Marshall) he states this to outline the first European impact on Asia:

“The Asian world – The impact of early European expansion on the Asian world was much less dramatic than in the Atlantic. There were no great conquests or decimations of populations by epidemics of European diseases. No new economic systems were created. During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the strength of the great Asian land-based empires of the Ottoman Turks, the Safavids in Iran, Mughal India, and the Chinese emperors was growing. Europeans lodged themselves on islands or in coastal enclaves on the margins of the Asian empires from which they could

¹ P.J. Marshall (ed.), *The Cambridge Illustrated History of the British Empire*, Cambridge, 1996, Chapter I – The British Empire at the End of the Eighteenth Century, pp.17-23.

draw off some part of Asia's existing trade and direct it round the Cape of Good Hope at the tip of southern Africa."²

Marshall refers to the Position of European Trading Companies at the Beginning of the Eighteenth Century

"The British began trading in Asia early in the seventeenth century. By the middle of the eighteenth century the east India Company, which enjoyed a monopoly of British trade to and from Asia, was conducting a highly successful business importing Indian cotton cloth and silk and Chinese tea from trading settlements at Bombay, Madras, Calcutta, and Canton."³

Marshall refers to the Beginning of Political Expansion by the French and the British

"Very significant new developments were, however, beginning to occur in India at that time. The British and French began to manipulate Indian rivalries in the south, their contest culminating in the great British victory at Wandiwash in 1760. In Bengal the British provoked the provincial ruler into attacking their settlement in 1756. Calcutta was recovered by an expedition by Robert Clive who succeeded in bringing down the ruler of Bengal after the battle of Plassey in 1757. As a result of these events, by 1783 the British exercised a decisive political influence along the south east coast and had become the actual rulers of Bengal."⁴

² Ibid, p.20.

³ Ibid, p.20.

⁴ Ibid, p.20 and 21.

Marshall sums up the Political Significance of the Process of Infiltration by the British

“It is not easy to explain why this great transformation took place. Was it because a rapidly industrializing Britain could not deploy resources, powers of organization, and advanced military technology on a scale that no Asian state could withstand and thus it was simply India’s misfortune to be picked on first? Or was it the case that eighteenth-century India, torn by political disintegration, was a society in terminal decline, which had lost all capacity to resist any outside threat? There are serious flaws in both these views. Britain did not have superior firepower or manpower: the Indians themselves also used the cannons and muskets used by the British in India and the British employed very large numbers of Indian soldiers. Nor was eighteenth-century India an especially soft target for European aggression. With the fall of the Mughal Empire, political fragmentation had certainly taken place, but new regional states were emerging, some of which, such as those of the Sikhs of the Punjab or of the Marathas of western and central India, were to prove effective opponents of the British. Sweeping explanations that stress either the power of the British or Indian degeneration are not very convincing. The success of the British seems to have been based on their ability to infiltrate and to take over some of the new Indian states rather than to destroy them by naked military power”.⁵

⁵ Ibid, p.20 and 21.

Marshall Points to the Momentum Generated by the Process of Infiltration

Once the first steps towards British expansion were taken there was no stopping the momentum. This process has been clearly indicated by Marshall when he states:

“Once the British had assumed political power with its great financial rewards in Bengal and the south, other Indian states were threatened with infiltration and takeovers. Although it was official policy in London to limit Britain’s territorial stake in India, processes of expansion had been set off and these would not be halted”.⁶

It is therefore proposed to study British relations with the Kandyan kingdom in the context of the success in the policy of infiltration, as opposed to destroying a kingdom by applying military force. Further, it is also proposed to study how individual British governors and civil servants determine the pace of British expansion. It is submitted that certain British governors, aided by officials, determine British imperial policy in Asia, within the realms of the broad strategy of improving British interests.

The main aim of the study therefore is to understand the methods of intervention used by the British between 1805 and 1818 in Ceylon; and to understand them fully in the context of D’Oyly’s career as a civil servant, who consciously followed this policy of infiltration in his policy towards the Kandyan Kingdom. It is further stated that the success of the British was mainly due to their ability to infiltrate, and thereby dominate, some of the Indian states, rather than overcome, and destroy them, by the use of military force.

The study will examine this aspect of ‘infiltration’ as a policy applied by the British to Ceylon during the period between 1805 and 1818. The British had

⁶ Ibid, p.23.

to follow a realistic policy, as they did not have the manpower to conquer large territories, and had, therefore, to rely on a strong navy, local native troops they trained and led, and their ability to turn local politics in their favour. In the pursuit of such a policy of expansion of the British Empire, civil servants like D'Oyly, played a vital role in the formulation of appropriate policies, aiding thereby the founding of one of the largest maritime empires.

Infiltration, in a political and diplomatic context, is a process of gradually extending influence without being noticed. The whole process is tied up with the good use of gathering relevant information: broadly categorised under the term 'intelligence'. Its main objective is to acquire data, which would aid and facilitate policy making. Wrong analysis of relevant information can lead to strategic disasters, a good example being the failure of Governor North's policy towards the Kandyan Kingdom.⁷ This was in contrast to the policy of Governor Brownrigg, who, relying on John D'Oyly, pursued a successful policy that led to the subjugation of the Kandyan Kingdom in 1815.⁸

The period between 1805 and 1815 in British relations with Kandyan Kingdom is an example of successful infiltration and consequent intervention into a fragile governmental structure, caused by conflicts between the ruling monarch and his nobles, which aided intervention by locating an interested section within the ruling elite of the Kandyan nobility willing to collaborate. This enabled the British, in this instance, to gain control of the Kandyan Kingdom. A study of D'Oyly's official diary, written between 1810 and 1815, reveals a typical example of the process of British expansion based on successful infiltration and consequent intervention,

⁷ Sir M. Burrows, *The Cambridge History of India, Vol. V (1497-1858)*, 'The Conquest of Ceylon', 1929, pp.404-407 - Critical of North, and praises Governor Brownrigg .

⁸ Ibid.

without the wastage of a purely military campaign.⁹ The King of Kandy, Sri Wickrama Rajasingha, had trouble controlling his nobles. He had no royal party supporting him. Under those circumstances he was forced to rely on his other relations and followers from South India. This weakened his position, making it easy for the British to infiltrate.

D'Oyly and the Emergence of the Civil Service in India and Ceylon: the Main Instrument of Infiltration and the Governing Process

The civil service in Ceylon developed into a well-organised service. Its members were specially selected and trained, and had the exclusive right to hold the most influential and powerful positions in government; both within the Provinces and the Central Government. The British Governors ruled the country with the assistance of a Council, which was mainly composed of civil servants. While the Governor's terms of office did not exceed five years, the civil servants spent most of their working lives in the country. Hence, the British Governors had to rely entirely on the civil servants to administer the country. In this way the Ceylon Civil Service emerged as virtual rulers of Ceylon until the period of self-government, and, even after this, had a big influence in the formulation of policies, and in the administration, of the country. At the time D'Oyly was in the Civil Service they were the chief lawmakers, the chief executors, and also held most of the judicial posts.¹⁰

John D'Oyly was a product of the educational system in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in Britain. He was a student of western classics, and

⁹ *Diary of Sir John D'Oyly, Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, XXV, No. 69, passim.

¹⁰ L. Woolf, *Diaries (1908-1911), The Ceylon Historical Journal*, Volume IX - July 1959 - April 1960, No. 1 - 4 - Introduction by Saparamadu gives an outline of the part played by the Ceylon Civil Service in the evolution of British Administration in Ceylon. Reference is also made to the fact that the Ceylon Civil Service was modelled on that of the Indian Civil Service.

graduated from Benet College (Corpus Christi), Cambridge, in 1796. During his university career he won the William Browne's Medal for a Latin ode, composed by him, in 1795. With this linguistic background he was able to learn the Sinhalese language in Ceylon, and became quite proficient in it. He was appointed Chief Government Translator due to his proficiency in Sinhalese.¹¹

While D'Oyly held this post, he was given the responsibility of conducting the British diplomatic relations with the Kandyan Kingdom. This involved corresponding with the Kandyan Court, and its nobles. In this sense he was virtually the Foreign Secretary for the British Settlements in Ceylon, at that time. His knowledge of the Sinhalese language was a great advantage in this assignment. Some of the significant documents examined in this thesis relate to this period.

John D'Oyly's arrival in Ceylon in 1801, as one of the earliest British public servants, marked a new epoch in British colonial history. From the mid-eighteenth century the British in India had been transforming themselves from traders to rulers. At the start of the eighteenth century the British East India Company (founded in 1660) was using India as a trading post. However by the end of the century this trading company had become a military power that was the dominant political force in South India and was making rapid progress of extending its power in North India.¹²

In 1802 the Madras Presidency was formed by the British. This followed the defeat of the forces opposed to the British, and sought French support.

¹¹ B. Gooneratne and Y. Gooneratne, *This Inscrutable Englishman*, London and New York, Cassel, 1999, Chapter V and Chapter VI - gives an insight of how D'Oyly had become a "native", in the context of Ceylon. To this extent his work and conduct was acceptable.

¹² P. Lawson, *The East India Company: A History*, London, 1992, Chapters II and III - It was in South India that the British first established themselves as a political force, free from the control of local rulers.

These were Tippu Sultan of Mysore, and the small kingdoms in the deep South of India, who opposed the Nawab of Arcot. The Nawab of Arcot was supported at one point by the British. In this Anglo-French conflict the British emerged successful, especially after the defeat of Tippu Sultan. In 1802 the British were the most powerful political force in South India, but there was yet a fear of the French as Napoleon and France were on the ascendent in Europe. There were yet local powers in contact with the French agents in India for assistance, and one of these were the Kings of Kandy, who had consciously tried to have good diplomatic relations with the French, hoping for assistance. The last King of Kandy was one such king, and as seen in D'Oyly's diary there was always a fear of French intervention in Ceylon, and this formed the strategic issue which was fundamental in British relations with the Kandyan Court, especially between the period of 1805 to 1815.

In political terms this meant that the British governors of the East India Company's trade and commercial centres (like Calcutta, Madras and Bombay) became political governors as well. Earlier the focus had been the development of commerce and the collection of taxes. During this period the locals had done the real work of administration, and there was no need for any new innovations. British Governors, like Warren Hastings (who administered Bengal from 1772 to 1785), felt that the existing institutions in India were sufficient, and adapted, to the local conditions.¹³

By the end of the eighteenth century these views and opinions changed. It was now felt that Indian government and administration was out of date, and hence was backward. The only way to improve these conditions was by

¹³ P.J. Marshall, *Bengal: The British Bridgehead, Eastern India, 1740-1828*, London, 1993, Chapter IV - At first the British utilised the local aristocrats to administer the districts, and were not totally for following European methods of administration over the local people.

an enlightened and benevolent administration by persons from outside: British civil servants appointed by the East India Company in India.

This concept emerged only after the British government had been driven to intervene directly in the affairs of the East India Company as a consequence of the investigation by the Parliamentary Select and Secret Committees of 1772 and 1781.¹⁴ The investigation, led to a direct attack on the work and activities of Robert Clive, and that of Warren Hastings. A Regulatory Act was passed by the British parliament in 1773, and another Act in 1784; and with this the impeachment proceedings against Warren Hastings. This helped to accelerate reform of the Indian Civil Service, initially carried out by Hastings, and later by Lord Cornwallis.¹⁵

Edmund Burke was among the foremost critics of the East India Company's administration. He focussed on the gradual development and expansion of British sovereignty in India, which was quite different from the expansion of trade and commerce.¹⁶ What was at issue, he submitted, was the expansion of Britain's sovereignty in Asia, and the consequent responsibility that was cast to administer it on a more just and equitable basis. The brunt of his criticism was the corruption that led to maladministration. What caused fears in Britain, at this time, were such abuses in India (apart from bringing in disrepute to the country) would lead to such forces gaining undue influence and power in the British Parliament. A number of 'new rich' persons who had grown due to the wealth generated by the English India

¹⁴ Cobbett, *Parliamentary History of England*, XVI, 402.

¹⁵ P.E. Roberts, *The East India Company and the State*, Chapter X, The Cambridge History of India, 1929 - The Indian Civil Service was to become a political force as much as a beaurcracy.

¹⁶ E.A. Bond, *Speeches of the Managers and Counsel in the Trial of Warren Hastings*, Four Volumes, 1859-1861 - The British government gradually came to realize that they had to play in a politically expanded India.

Company strived to enter Parliament and influence national politics and public policy in Britain.

Rather than take over the East India Company, the British government assumed a greater say in its administration, which would leave the Company to concentrate on matters pertaining to trade and commerce. The Regulation Acts that were passed, and the policies generally followed at the end of the eighteenth, and the beginning of the nineteenth centuries, saw this change gradually coming into effect. This change reflected in the development of the Civil Service in India,¹⁷ and later on in Ceylon. Ceylon as an island state formed a part of the vital global system of naval bases, so vital to project British power and influence. Hence, its administration and rule was controlled directly from London as a Crown Colony, like Singapore and Malacca. Consequently, it had a Civil Service distinct and different from that of India.¹⁸

Changes in the Civil Service to meet the Challenge of Being Rulers

A conscious effort was therefore made to improve the quality of the civil servants sent to India and Ceylon. Training of administrators was considered to be of prime importance, and a conscious effort was made to get the civil servants to study and understand the local languages, customs and culture of the people they had to administer. If this was not a necessary

¹⁷ P. Woodruff, *The Men Who Ruled India - Vol. I - Introduction*, The Founders, London, 1957 - Gives the background to the rise and development of the Indian Civil Service, in the context of an expanding British sovereignty in India.

¹⁸ G. Powell, *The Kandyan Wars - 1803-1815*, New Delhi, Navarang, 1984, pp.176-177 - Ceylon became a Crown colony in 1802. India was taken over by the Crown (by the British Government), after the mutany of 1857, when the British Government took control and abolished the Moghul Empire which up to that time existed in theory.

prerequisite, the new rulers would tend to make mistakes in the day to day administration as much as in broad policies to be followed.

The British were now involved in the higher politics of India, and consequently had to create a new class of rulers who would be acceptable to the people. They had to fall in line with the administrative and governing culture that the people understood, and appreciated. If this was not achieved, the initial infiltration that led to an increase of territorial holdings would have had no real significance, or meaning. This was the challenge, and the response was the growth and development of a world class Civil Service in the Indian Civil Service, on which the Ceylon Civil Service was modelled.

Dupleix, representing the French in South India, was the first to conceive the concept of a political expansion of European power in Asia.¹⁹ This was consequent to the decay of the Moghul Empire and the resulting political chaos in the eastern and southern parts of India. He succeeded in forming a set of protected Indian kingdoms dependent on the French, but he was not adequately supported by the French authorities. This was in contrast to the support given by the British authorities to the East Indian Company. However, Robert Clive, a British Civil Servant working in Madras, the southern headquarters of the East Indian Company, was the first to realise the significance of the French moves under Dupleix. Clive was a civil servant working in Madras. Due to the challenges faced by the British in South India he undertook military duties, which led to his victory at the siege of Arcot, and the battle of Plassey. This was the beginning of both the concept and the reality of the British founding an empire in Asia. In fact, it had a big impact on the whole course of European relations with Asia from the beginning of the nineteenth century.

¹⁹ Dodwell, *Dupleix and Clive - The Beginning to Empire*, London, 1920, Reprinted by Asian Educational Services, New Delhi, 1989, pp.31-33.

Dupleix in striving to found a French Empire followed a policy of European officials conducting themselves as Indian rulers, acceptable to the inhabitants. He consciously imitated the manners of an Indian prince, which was called “nabobism”. This was derived from the term “nawab”, which was the name given to a governor under the Moghul Empire. Dupleix himself received such a title from the Moghul Emperor in Delhi.²⁰

It was realised by the British that the British Civil Servants in India had also to understand and appreciate the local languages, customs, manners and civilisation of the people whom they saw to rule and govern. By the nineteenth century the idea of training the future civil servants in this aspect of understanding local culture became a part of British policy in Asia. The civil servants were therefore not those who promoted trade and commerce alone, but were the real governing class or caste, whose administration was to make British rule both acceptable and palatable. This is what made the civil service not only a bureaucracy but a political service of the highest order. They were the new rulers in Asia where the British were paramount.

This led to the establishment of institutions to train civil servants to understand their new environment, as much as to widen their intellectual horizons were established in Fort William in Calcutta, Bengal, and subsequently at Haileybury in England. It was Lord Wellesley, the Governor-General of India, who in 1801 started the College of Fort William. Under this scheme all the young recruits to the Civil Service had to spend three years at this College. The syllabus taught there included Indian history, Oriental languages and law. It was modelled on a college of Oxford or Cambridge, and the studies were strenuous.²¹

²⁰ A. Toussaint, *History of the Indian Ocean*, translated by J. Guicharnaud, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1966, pp.152-154.

²¹ P. Woodruff, *The Men who Ruled India, The Founders*, Vol. I, London, 1957, pp.279-286 – Though patronage was used, it was realised that the Indian Civil Service had to be of high intellectual calibre.

Subsequently, the East India Company began a College at Herts, and moved to Haileybury in 1809. Haileybury lasted for fifty years, till it was made compulsory that civil servants had to pass a competitive examination, and had to be graduates of a University; particularly from Oxford or Cambridge. The subjects taught at Haileybury were taken from the curriculum of the College at Fort William, and it was divided into 'Orientals' and 'European'. The Oriental Section included a study of Persian, Sanskrit and Hindi. In the European Section the study was concentrated on classical languages, Latin and Greek, mathematics and law. Subjects like economics, political economy, and general history were also taught. There were eminent scholars who taught at this Institution like Reverend Thomas Malthus, the writer on economics and population. The course of study lasted two years, and the College was residential like those at Oxford or Cambridge. The persons admitted were between 15 years and 22 years of age. There were examinations in every subject, at the end of each term, and the students were graded. The process of training and grading resulted in about one-fifth leaving the College. At the end about four-fifths were accepted as recruits to the Indian Civil Service. This process of selection was justified on the ground that it enabled only 'gentlemen' trained in a liberal education were admitted into the Civil Service in India.²²

In Ceylon these changes were reflected in Governor Maitland's reform of the Civil Service and provincial administration.²³ Collectors were the chief civil

²² Woodruff, *The Men who Ruled India*, pp.280-281 - The course of study was wide ranging, and included a study of Indian classical languages. This was to enable the officers of the Indian Civil Service to understand the culture and civilisation of India. Many dropped out of the course, which points to the rigour of the studies.

²³ *Maitland Strived to Eradicate Corruption in the Civil Service*, 18 October 1805 and 21 February (28) 1806, C.O. 54 - The objectives were to have an acceptable civil service to the local inhabitants, that would strengthen the British Administration within Ceylon.

servants in the provinces and districts. The Office of Collector (evolved in India) was later called the Government Agent in Ceylon. The office of Collector in India combined revenue, land and all matters pertaining to law and order within the districts. These officers also held the chief judicial offices. Thus they constituted a powerful set of officers who virtually ruled the provinces and districts of the country. Most of the civil servants began their early years in district administration, which enabled them to study the language and customs of the people, and acquire an intimate knowledge of the country they ruled. Hence, it is no surprise that D'Oyly too began his life in provincial administration, which made him well acquainted with the customs of the Sinhalese.²⁴ Maitland insisted on civil servants having a good knowledge of local affairs (including language, customs and traditions), and an intimate knowledge and understanding of the provinces and districts under them.²⁵

D'Oyly as a 'Writer' in the Ceylon Civil Service

D'Oyly began his career as a writer, the first step of admission to the civil service. It was a probationary and training period in the official life of a civil service cadet. The writer's main function was to copy letters, and at times to check cargoes when a ship arrived.²⁶ Copying letters enabled the new civil service cadet to get an insight into all aspects of public administration, and

²⁴ D'Oyly and Tolfrey were the only civil servants who had a knowledge of the Sinhalese Language, 8 March 1809, C.O. 54 - This was the first step to a better understanding of the local environment, and thereby be acceptable as a political and as an administrative officer in the governing process.

²⁵ Governor Maitland's Minutes of 1808 - G.C. Mendis, *The Colebrooke Cameron Papers*, Vol. II, pp.265-266 - This was to enable a better understanding and knowledge of local conditions, and to transfer this knowledge into an official diary, that will be useful for policy and to act as a guide for the future.

²⁶ Woodruff, *The Men who Ruled India*, pp.114-116 - This was the first step to understand the process of public administration.

the process of how policy was formed. The Secretary of State in London made the appointment of 'writers' to the Ceylon Civil Service, and the number of such appointments each year depended on the number of vacancies in the Civil Service, as shown in the Governor's Report on Vacancies.²⁷

The 'general attainments' was judged on the subjects of English composition, arithmetic, geometry, and the classics. A second language examination in the local languages had also to be passed.²⁸ These developments point to the importance given to the Civil Service by the British from the early years of the nineteenth century. The service evolved from one of patronage to that of a competitive examination by the end of the nineteenth century.

D'Oyly was a Cambridge graduate with a degree in classics, which was considered a good liberal education. As pointed out by Codrington, D'Oyly's appointment was due to Lord Liverpool, who was Secretary of State for the Colonies, and later Prime Minister.²⁹ As a 'writer' D'Oyly learnt his work 'on the job', and began his study of the local language, Sinhalese. His linguistic attainment in Cambridge University, especially in Latin, assisted him.³⁰ His promotions and advancement in the Civil Service depended on the capacity he showed in the performance of his official

²⁷ C.O. 55/61, 1 May 1802, S.L.N.A. 5.

²⁸ C.O. 54/371, 16 October 1862 and C.O. 55/106, 24 December 1862, S.L.N.A. 5 - The education was to be a competency in the European classical languages (Latin and Greek), and the local languages.

²⁹ H.W. Codrington, *Diary of Sir John D'Oyly*, Journal of the Ceylon Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society, Vol. XXV, Reprint 1995, Colombo, Navarang Press, 1917, page XI - Patronage was an avenue to enter the Ceylon Civil Service at this period of time.

³⁰ Ibid - A knowledge of the classical languages was a requisite to enter the high realms of politics and administration.

duties. His career was wide ranging and he developed his skills in the laws, customs, and culture of the people he had to administer. It developed skills that were of importance to a civil servant as an administrator, diplomat and a strategist for security uses.

Posts Held by D'Oyly in the Ceylon Civil Service

Like most junior officers who had been appointed as 'writers', John D'Oyly received rapid promotions within the Ceylon Civil Service, to higher posts, which carried salaries of up to £1,000 per year. He started with a judicial appointment as Assistant Provincial Judge. In this post he got his experience of formally assessing evidence, and an insight into the systems of justice prevalent in Ceylon at the time. During the Dutch period Roman Dutch Law became the common law of the land, and, as Assistant Provincial Judge, D'Oyly became acquainted with this system of law. In addition he learnt the Criminal Law and Customary Law, especially pertaining to land tenure.³¹ The Portuguese and the Dutch had maintained the traditional land tenure system when they occupied the maritime provinces of the island. Land tenure, taxation and the social division of caste, all went together, which made the system complicated, especially for a foreign official. All land belonged to the State as the king represented it, and this was inherited by the colonial powers, who took over the land. The government gave land to individuals, who in turn had to perform set services, or pay a tax, by way of an amount of the crops raised from the given land.³²

³¹ L.A. Mills, *Ceylon Under British Rule - 1795-1932*, Oxford University Press, 1933, pp.55, 58, 81, 91, 92, 97 - The civil servants had to have a good knowledge of the law of the country, as they had to act in administrative and judicial posts.

³² Ceylon Records 2, 6 February and 15 March 1798, Colonial Office Records - The management of the land was an important function of a civil servant in district administration.

Service tenure lands had two divisions: 'accommodessan' and 'paraveni' lands. Lands called 'accommodessan' were granted as a salary for services rendered to the government. For example local chiefs like the Mudaliyars and Headmen were paid by the grant of lands, called 'Accommodessans'. Such lands could not be sold or mortgaged to raise money – nor were they heritable. 'Paraveni' land was given out for personal services such as manual work. The government had a right to three months of unpaid work from persons who held such lands. These lands were heritable but could not be sold or mortgaged.³³

There was also non-service tenure land. Persons who held such lands were called 'ande' for paddy lands, under rice cultivation, or 'ratmahera', or garden lands, on which fruit trees, like coconut palms, were grown. For lands under 'ande' cultivation one-third of the produce had to be paid as tax, while in garden or 'ratmahera' half the produce went as tax. In some garden lands, especially in coconut plantations, no tax was paid on the basis of prescriptive right.³⁴

The land tenure system was tied to caste as a social and economic division of society. The Buddhists in Ceylon strictly followed the caste system in their economic, social, political and religious institutions. This made it more complex in its daily operation. Originally the caste system evolved in India, and was brought over by the migrants to Ceylon, and formed the basis of the socio-economic division within society. Caste evolved, as a division of

³³ L.J.B. Turner, *Ceylon Antiquary and Literary Register*, IV, IV, pp.188-189: A good account of the land tenure systems in the Maritime Products of Ceylon – Land tenure was the basis of the taxation and revenue system of the country at that time.

³⁴ E. Tennent, *Ceylon - 2 Volumes*, London, 1855, p.72; and Ceylon Records 2, 6 February and 15 March 1798, Colonial Office Records – Land administration was complex, and a good settlement system was therefore a pre-requisite towards an acceptable public administration.

labour by birth, each caste became hereditary and distinctly separated from others by restrictions placed on occupation and marriage. The whole social system in Ceylon was based on this distinction. In particular the persons who held service tenure land or 'paraveni' lands were those of a caste set out by virtue of birth.³⁵ D'Oyly acquired a good knowledge of the economic and the social system of the majority Sinhalese when he was Assistant Provincial Judge. The civil suits involved land rights, taxation and allied issues. Civil servants at this time held judicial office as well as high executive office.³⁶ There was no separation of powers. Judicial office added to the prestige of the Civil Service. Even today the District Collectors in India are gazetted as 'Executive Magistrates', to enforce preventive aspects of the Criminal Procedure Code. In Ceylon (Sri Lanka) the Criminal Procedure Code gives the District Officer (the Government Agent) powers of a magistrate to enforce law and order in an emergency situation of riot or civil disturbance. A good knowledge of the systems of laws prevalent is considered a part of the training for the higher Civil Service.³⁷

John D'Oyly was appointed in July 1803 as President of the Provincial Court at Matara, and in February 1804 got his appointment as Agent of Revenue and Commerce for the Matara District. In May of the same year his appointment was widened to include the Galle District.³⁸ This appointment launched him into the area of District and Provincial Administration, which were the most challenging and demanding of the posts within the Civil Service. In India district officers were called Collectors, and in some

³⁵ *Reference to the Salagama Caste of Cinnamon Peelers*, C.O. 54, 28 February 1806 - Service tenures were tied to the Caste System.

³⁶ Woodruff, *The Men who Ruled India*, pp.163-171 - In South Asia the traditional system of administration combined executive and judicial functions.

³⁷ *Ibid*, pp.279-286.

³⁸ *Diary of John D'Oyly* (first published in 1917), reprinted in 1995, Colombo, Lake House, pp. XI - XIII - Introduction - This points to D'Oyly being accepted as an efficient officer.

provinces were called Deputy Commissioners. In Ceylon they were at first called Collectors, later Agents of Revenue and Commerce, and finally Government Agents. During the period of British colonial history, the District Officers were the chief channels through which the country's administration was conducted.³⁹

When John D'Oyly was appointed an Agent of Revenue and Commerce, he also assumed the functions of an ancient office, that of a Disava, or provincial governor. To the local people therefore D'Oyly was the Disava or governor of the district, and represented in all aspects the state and government of the day. Within the Kandyan Kingdom a Disava or Disapati was a provincial governor, and his deputy was called a Mohotala.⁴⁰ In terms of the office of Disava he was the supreme authority, and in keeping with the traditional functions of the office a Disava had to not merely carry out judicial functions, but also to collect the revenue due to the state, obtain the labour or land tenure services, and carry out the orders of the king or the government.⁴¹ The Portuguese and the Dutch had maintained this same system when they administered the coastal regions of Ceylon. The British, when they took over the coastal areas in 1796, tried to change it. This was resisted, and they had to revert to the old system of land tenures, from which the social and economic structure was based. When D'Oyly took over as Collector of Colombo, he had to follow the ancient system of land tenures, and understand its allied institutions.

³⁹ P. Mason, *The Men who Ruled India*, London, Jonathan Cape, 1985, p.152 - The district officers, like the Government Agents in Ceylon, were the virtual governors in the provinces and districts.

⁴⁰ L.S. Dewaraja, *The Kandyan Kingdom (1707-1782)*, Colombo, The Lake House Publishers, 1988, p.286 - The Government Agent in Ceylon was a successor to the ancient office of Disava.

⁴¹ J. Davy, *An Account of the Interior of Ceylon*, reprinted in 1969, Colombo, Tissara Press, 1821, pp.109, 110, and 111 - There points to the importance of the office of the Disava under the Kandyan Kingdom.

In keeping with tradition, the Disava made his own appointment of local officials, such as the Mudaliyars, but subject to the approval of the governor, as seen in Dutch records.⁴² The other minor headmen were appointed entirely at his discretion. The lower rungs of the bureaucracy owed their appointments to the Disava. Hence, he was a powerful officer who was looked up to as a local prince in charge of a given territory.

District administration therefore gave D'Oyly an important insight into the economic, social and cultural life of the people, and consequently an understanding of their institutions. This enabled him to conduct his policy of infiltrating into the politics of the Kandyan Kingdom with easier understand.

Wealth, social position and taxation were based on the twin concepts of land tenure and caste. A good administrator would make it a point to study society and politics of the land and its people by understanding the aspects of district administration and its associated institutions. Becoming familiar with land records, maps, and registers pertaining to births, deaths and marriages, as well as the tradition and customs of the people, proved to be the best way of understanding the administration of a district. Hence, it is not surprising that the British Governors focused on this aspect a great deal. For example, Governor Thomas Maitland was the most keen in his evaluation of the part played by provincial and district administration, as seen in his various instructions and orders.⁴³

The central government in the capital city of Colombo was at a distance from the districts in the outlying remote districts. Hence, most of the powers of daily administration resided in the district officers (the Government Agents),

⁴² S. Arasaratnam, *Dutch Power in Ceylon*, Holland, Djambatan, 1958, pp.120-125
- These were the local Chief Headmen.

⁴³ Dickman, *Civil Service Manual* (88), Quotes Governor Thomas Maitland's Instructions on District Administration - District administration was the main function of the civil servants.

both in regard to day-to-day administration and the formulation of policy. This situation continued throughout the nineteenth century, and the Government Agents were subject to a closer supervision only when new roads and railways were opened.⁴⁴

In Colombo the Governor and the Chief Secretary formulated policies for the district administration system. However, all land and matters pertaining to revenue, along with law and order, was with the Government Agents. In broad terms their duties were to represent the central government in the provinces and districts. Following on this they exercised all the powers and duties of government within the provinces and districts. Within a district (headed by a civil servant) there were subdivisions in accordance with the ancient tradition of local administration: Pattus, Korales and Villages. The chief headmen within a revenue division were called Mudaliyars (in the coastal Sinhalese and Tamil districts) and Ratamahatmayas within the districts of the Kandyan Kingdom.⁴⁵ A group of villages were placed under a superior headman called Korals within the Sinhalese districts and Udayars in the Tamil districts. In a village there were the village headmen in charge.

Hence, work in district administration would give an officer like D'Oyly a real experience in administrating and ruling over people. As the Ceylon Civil Service evolved the pattern of postings of civil servants was similar to what John D'Oyly followed in his career. A young civil servant was given a strenuous training (under senior officers), and then appointed as a Magistrate, where he learnt law, the legal systems, and court procedure.

⁴⁴ L. Woolf, *Diaries in Ceylon*, London, The Hogarth Press, 1963, Introduction: pp.XXVII-XXIX – Saparamadu refers to the great concentration of power in the hands of the Government Agents.

⁴⁵ *The Matale District Maha Pisava Lekan Pota* – A local document that gives a description of the Sinhalese district administration. A copy in the British Museum Library: B.M Or. 6606 (141), (142), 143) and (144).

The civil servant would then be appointed as an Office Assistant to study and learn office administration. Thereafter he was appointed as an Assistant Government Agent to be in charge of a district, under the supervision of the Government Agent. A young officer was posted to various government departments, both in the central government in Colombo and in the provinces. By this process, a civil servant was to have acquired a good understanding of the whole administrative structure and machinery of government, which enabled him to hold senior positions.⁴⁶

John D'Oyly was appointed in July 1805 as Chief Translator to the government. In 1806, in addition to the post he held as Chief Translator, he was appointed as Agent of Revenue and Commerce for the district of Colombo. In 1808 the name of the office of Agent of Revenue and Commerce was changed, in accordance with Governor Maitland's reforms, to that of Collector. It was in his capacity as Chief Translator to government and Collector of the Colombo district that he was responsible for all diplomatic relations with the then Kandyan Kingdom. This involved all negotiations and communications with the Kandyan Court and its Chieftains. He was the first European to be appointed as Chief Translator; as the earlier appointments were made from among leading local chieftains who served the governors as Maha Mudaliyars. This appointment was significant as it indicated the degree of proficiency D'Oyly had acquired in the Sinhalese language. Records (as seen in the Governor's despatches and gazettes) indicate that D'Oyly had learnt the local language while he was stationed in Matara district, under a Buddhist priest named Karatota Nayaka Unansé. Buddhist priests and their monasteries, like what prevailed in Medieval Europe, were the repositories of learning and scholarship from ancient times. In these monasteries the training of priests was undertaken. It followed that the South Asian classical education was fostered, with an

⁴⁶ An unpublished History of the Ceylon Civil Service in the Early British Period by a Civil Servant named E.B.F. Sueter, S.L.N.A. 25.6.

emphasis on the study of classical languages like Sanskrit and Pali (in which the Buddhist spiritual works were written) along with the study of Sinhalese. Royalty and the nobility among the Sinhalese studied in these monasteries. D'Oyly had a good teacher when he got Karatota Nayaka Unansé to teach him the local language of Sinhalese.⁴⁷

The real work of D'Oyly as Chief Translator (in 1805) in the political sphere is illustrated in his official diary, maintained from September 1810 to the 23rd April 1815, and in his correspondence with the Kandyan Court and nobility. The events covering five years are important in the history of Ceylon as it saw the downfall of the last Sinhalese Kingdom and the establishment of British rule over the whole island.

D'Oyly was in communication with all the main Kandyan Chiefs, from Pilama Talawa, Ehelapola and Molligoda who were all Chief Ministers to the last King of Kandy, Sri Wickrama Rajasingha.

By this he was able to win the confidence of the Kandyan Chiefs as the spokesman of the British government in Ceylon. This fact seems to have been noticed by the King of Kandy. This is shown in an entry in D'Oyly's Diary.⁴⁸ This was due to the ability of D'Oyly to communicate directly with the Kandyan Chiefs, and the court, and not through the means of the Maha Mudaliyar (the Governor's chief local officer) in Colombo. As shown in his diary, D'Oyly had a good knowledge of the geography of the Kandyan Kingdom, and its topographical layout to facilitate the British takeover of the

⁴⁷ *Diary of Sir John D'Oyly*, Journal of the Ceylon Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society, pp. XI-XII - Introduction - Karatota in Nayaka, Unnanse, was accepted as a scholar in Pali, the classical language in which the scriptures of the Buddhist religion were written. D'Oyly was fortunate therefore to have him teach the local language.

⁴⁸ *Ibid*, Entry for December 1811, pp.70-71 - the King had requested Wattala Appu to prevail on D'Oyly to prevent war against the Kandyan Kingdom. This request of the King was conveyed by Disava Pusweylla.

Kingdom. It was also clear that D'Oyly was in communication with the Kandyan Chiefs, even while the army was on its march towards taking the Kandyan Kingdom. The communications were both verbal and in writing, and he was confident that he would be able to capture the King. This single event would bring the war to an end. D'Oyly himself accompanied the troops in the capture of the King and thus ended the war.⁴⁹

Primary Sources

The official diary of John D'Oyly (from 1805 to 1815) is an important primary source. D'Oyly's correspondence with the Kandyan Chiefs is another. These letters are found in the reports of the Historical Manuscripts Commission. The Governor's despatches (Maitland, Wilson and Brownrigg) have D'Oyly's correspondence as attachments. For the guidance of the British Civil Servants working within the Kandyan provinces, D'Oyly had drawn up a list of instructions, which can be taken as a guide manual. This guide manual was discovered, and has been published under the caption of *A Sketch of the Constitution of the Kandyan Kingdom*. The proclamations before the British Army marched into the Kandyan Kingdom in 1815, the Kandyan Convention of March 1815, and the Proclamations issued after the Kandyan Rebellion of 1817 constitute the legal primary documents.

The diplomatic correspondence of the Kings of Kandy is also another source of primary documents. These letters were found in the Palace of the Kandyan Kings, after the British took over the kingdom in 1815. They were subsequently translated, and published in the reports of the Historical Manuscripts Commission.

These documents point to the whole process of infiltration, and the consolidation of British rule within the provinces, that constituted the then

⁴⁹ Ibid, pp.182-211 - Series of reports to the Governor until the King was captured. D'Oyly accompanied the Army, and gave them much needed instructions as revealed in his diary.

Kandyan Kingdom. They also point to the strategic reasons why the British wanted control over the Kandyan Kingdom. This was due to the perception by the British Officials that the French wanted to dislodge the British from India, and establish an empire of their own. For this to happen Ceylon was a strategic naval base, mainly due to the Trincomalee Harbour. The attempts by the French to develop a diplomatic alliance with the Kandyan Kings were therefore a danger. D'Oyly's diary, and the despatches of the British Governors point to this fact.

There are some gaps in D'Oyly's diary maintained between 1805 and 1815. The original diary, available in the Archives in Colombo, does point to certain missing pages, some of which were later found; but some are yet missing. As the diary was written in a journal containing pages of ordinary paper, they might have been damaged by termites, which are plentiful in Ceylon due to the climatic conditions of the island.⁵⁰ The gaps pertain specially to the year 1814, a year of great significance as it was the year of the Ehelapola revolt which failed, leading to the flight of the rebel leaders into the British held territories, seeking and obtaining political asylum.

However, these gaps in the official diary (of D'Oyly) are covered by the official correspondence and despatches of the British Governors, especially that of Governor Brownrigg. The Governor's despatches (which are well preserved in London and some published to facilitate research) contain copies of letters and reports of D'Oyly as attachments. These original letters and reports are not traceable in the Archives in Colombo, or in Kandy, in Sri Lanka, at present. D'Oyly has left no diary while he functioned as Resident in Kandy from 1815.

⁵⁰ Gooneratne and Gooneratne, *This Inscrutable Englishman*, p.18 - "The damp termites and white ants of the tropics are famously destructive of papers and documents". Many of the documents written on paper suffered due to this fact.

The biggest gap is the lack of documents from the Kandyan side, and especially from the Kandyan Court. The lack of the Kandyan Court and Palace records has been a problem facing studies of this period. What the British found in the Palace of the Kings of Kandy were some letters written in the Tamil language. These letters were communications from the Kings of Kandy to powers in South India (like the British and the French) for assistance against the Dutch, who occupied the coastal regions of the country. Apart from these letters, nothing more was found in the Palace Archives of the Kings.

In this situation, contemporary books and articles are the only other sources to students of research. Dr Marshall, a surgeon who took part in the British Army that conquered Kandy in 1815, has recorded his observations in a book.⁵¹ In a similar manner Dr Davy, who was the personal physician to Governor Brownrigg, has also recorded his visit to Kandy in 1817,⁵² the year the rebellion broke out within the Kandyan Provinces. Both these authors were eyewitnesses to the two most significant events in British-Kandyan relations. Both these books record the then contemporary events covering the period of study, and are therefore useful in filling the D'Oyly Diary gap. Dr Marshall, for example, attended on the last King of Kandy, Sri Wickrama Rajasingha, and observed the whole process of the takeover of the Kingdom.

Dr Marshall accompanied the British Army into the Kandyan Kingdom in January 1815. He was a close observer, and was a critic of the reasons adduced by Governor Brownrigg and D'Oyly for the British Army to move against the king. The high moral ground taken, and the reasons as spelt out in the official proclamation, before the Army marched out into the Kandyan

⁵¹ H. Marshall, *Ceylon*, William H. Allen & Company, 1846, pp.109-111 – Critical of the reasons adduced to invade the Kandyan Kingdom. He is critical of the official British position.

⁵² Davy, *An Account of the Interior of Ceylon*, 1821 – He was not critical of the policy of the British in relation to the Kandyan Kingdom.

Kingdom, is examined by Dr Marshall. He does not approve of the reasons given, especially as regards the moral and ethical grounds put forward, as a compelling or adequate reason. He sees the whole campaign as one of conquest, and takeover of a local Kingdom, and as part of the whole campaign of the expansion of the British Empire in South Asia.

Marshall states this for the real reasons behind the British Army marching into the Kandydan Kingdom in 1815:

“It appears not to have been at this time deemed expedient to promulgate the real object of the war, which was obviously to destroy the national existence of the Kandyan government altogether, and to annex the country to the British crown. The doctrine of our right to seize a territory which suited us, provided we could only find an excuse for quarrelling with those who ruled over it, has been seldom publicly avowed, however frequently it may have been acted upon. But there seems to be a great propensity in the Saxon race to seize or acquire the possessions of contiguous estates, without much reference to consistency, justice, or good faith.”⁵³

Marshall also refers to the cause for the British invasion, which is stated in the proclamation issued as follows:

“The object of the war is thus stated in the proclamation: -
“For securing the permanent tranquillity of these settlements, and in vindication of the honour of the British name; for the deliverance of the Kandyan people from their oppressors.”⁵⁴

Brownrigg, and D'Oyly (who drafted the official Proclamation) strove to show that it was a step to support the Kandyan Sinhalese against a foreign,

⁵³ Marshall, *Ceylon*, 1846, pp.110-111 - This gives the real reasons for the British invasion of the Kandyan Kingdom in 1815.

⁵⁴ Ibid, p.110.

tyrannical king, and dynasty, which had to be replaced. The king is portrayed as a tyrant, who had gone against all customs, traditions and laws of the Kandyan Sinhalese, as much as against what was expected of a civilised monarch. The ethnic factor of him being a Malabar had been utilised in the propaganda used by the British when they invaded the kingdom, as observed by Marshall:

“Much is said in this proclamation of the barbarous or uncivilized character of the king, as if we were to constitute ourselves avengers or guardians of the globe, and make the infliction of punishment different from our own a pretext for war and conquest. The desire to possess the country opened our eyes to the delinquencies of its ruler; and, to justify aggression, it was deemed expedient to assail not only his character, but also the character of the Malabar dynasty, consisting of four sovereigns, each of whom had been freely elected by the chiefs and people.”⁵⁵

A study of this contemporary account of the whole conquest of the Kandyan Kingdom access a foil to the official British position. Dr Marshall is critical of the British hierarchy in Ceylon, and sees it as a deception on the Kandyan Sinhalese. He was critical of the high moral grounds taken to justify the invasion. This attitude of trying to portray the last king as a tyrant was, in Marshall’s view, a diplomatic strategy followed by the British. This gave the real reasons for the whole process of infiltration and subversion of the Kandyan Kingdom undertaken by John D’Oyly. Marshall sees the last King of Kandy, Sri Wickrama Rajasingha, as an acceptable monarch, but one that was unable to adequately control the Kandyan Chiefs:

“Whatever information we possess in regard to the king of Kandy, has been obtained chiefly from adverse parties, who may have magnified his vices, without considering the

⁵⁵ Marshall, *Ceylon*, 1846, p.110.

condition of Kandyan society, or giving him due credit for the difficulties of his situation, and the praiseworthy disposition he displayed towards the subordinate classes of his subjects. It is said that he administered justice with great impartiality, except in cases of treason or suspected treason, when all the severities of Oriental despotism were put in force.”⁵⁶

Dr Davy was a witness to the Kandyan rebellion of 1817 to 1818. As revealed in his book, he was aware of the great misery caused by the revolt to the Kandyan Sinhalese, especially those living in the Uwa Province. Dr Davy was more in line with the official British policy of justifying the British take over, though he does raise the obvious facts as he saw them during the course of the Kandyan Rebellion of 1817.

In addition to these two books there are other writings of persons who witnessed the important events covered by the period under study. Granville, a civil servant, was given the task of deporting the last King of Kandy to his exile in South India. His journal was published in 1830, and gives us a glimpse into the characteristics of the last king and how he faced his fate as a fallen Monarch.⁵⁷ The military aspects of the Kandyan Wars of the British have been dealt with in a number of works. The diary of a non-commissioned officer, a Colour Sergeant named George Calladine, was published in 1922.⁵⁸ A number of letters on Ceylon, written by Captain de

⁵⁶ Marshall, *Ceylon*, 1846, p.126 – Marshall appears to be sympathetic to the fate of the last king, and he blames the British for this.

⁵⁷ Journal of William Granville of the Ceylon Civil Service, who was in charge of the deposed King of Kandy, Sri Wickrama Raja Singhe, when he was taken from Ceylon to the Vellore Fort in South India. Printed by the Wesleyan Mission Press in Colombo, 1830 – The account reveals the human side of the last King of Kandy who was portrayed as a tyrant by the British Officials.

⁵⁸ The Diary of Colour Sergeant George Calladine, 19th Foot, 1793-1836, Edited by Major M.L. Ferrar, Eden Fisher and Company, 1922.

Bussche, who was in the British Army that conquered Kandy in 1815, were published in 1817.⁵⁹ There was an eyewitness account of the capture of the last King of Kandy written by a local official, Don V. Dias, written in the Sinhalese language, and thereafter translated into English.⁶⁰

Summary of Primary Documents in the Sri Lankan Archives - in Colombo and Kandy Depositories

- (1) Tamil Documents in the Archives - containing the diplomatic correspondence of the Kings of Kandy. Historical Manuscripts Commission Reports.
- (2) Ceylon Governor's Despatches - 1810-1818, S.L.N.A. 5, Sri Lanka Archives.
- (3) Government Gazettes - 1810-1818, Sri Lanka Archives.
- (4) Volumes Classified as "B Series" - 1815-1818, Sri Lanka Archives.
- (5) D'Oyly's letters - from the Historical Manuscripts Commission Reports, Letters and Correspondence Relevant to the Study.
- (6) Official Diary of John D'Oyly, 1805-1815, Printed by Ceylon Government Press.
- (7) Proclamation by the British before the Invasion of the Kandy Kingdom in January 1815, S.L.N.A.
- (8) The Kandyan Convention, Proclamation of 2 March 1815, Ceylon Government Gazette, 6 March 1815: *A Collection of Legislative Acts of the Ceylon Government.*

⁵⁹ Bussche-Captain, *Letters on Ceylon*, London, J.J. Stockdale, 1817 - He took part in the invasion of the Kandyan Kingdom in 1815.

⁶⁰ D.V. Dias, *Capture of Sri Wickrama Rajasingha by the British*, Translated by D.K. Williams, Monthly Literacy Register and Notes and Quotes for Ceylon, January 1896, pp.20-22 - This is the only eye-witness account recorded of this historic event. D'Oyly's diary records the events that followed thereafter.

- (9) The Proclamation of 21 November 1818 issued after the Rebellion of 1818 (amending Proclamation of 1815), Ceylon Government Gazette, 28 November 1818, S.L.N.A. Gazette Series.
- (10) Notes made by John D'Oyly while he was Resident in Kandy – collected as a *Sketch of the Constitution of the Kandyan Constitution*. Published in 1929, by the Government of Ceylon Printer.

In the Sri Lanka Archives the despatches of the Governors of Ceylon are in S.L.N.A.5. Some of them are not well preserved.

The Colonial Office Series 54/55 are the best preserved. They have been selectively published, and are useful to the student of this period. They contain attachments, of the Governors' despatches which are important.

The Emergence of an Asiatic Policy by the British

The development of the British 'paramountcy' in India can be said to begin from the early nineteenth century.⁶¹ It was during this time that the British in India became concerned that the French (and the Russians) were a definite threat to their expanding Empire in India and South Asia. The Treaty of Tilsit in July 1807 was a pointer to this danger.⁶² It envisaged a combined effort by the French and Russian to attack the British possessions in India. In the eighteenth century the Anglo-French rivalry was confined to India. During the eighteenth century the British policy was to disarm, or take over, any native state in India and South Asia, who was in communication with a European power opposed to the British, like the French. The Kandyan Kingdom fell into this category of local Kingdoms, having connections with the French. D'Oyly's Diary indicates this.⁶³

⁶¹ Sir A. Lyall, *British Dominion in India*, pp.280-281.

⁶² H.A.L. Fisher, *Napoleon*, Oxford University Press, 1967, p.87.

⁶³ *D'Oyly's Diary*, pp.5, 11, 17, 30, 50, 55, 80, 113 – points to D'Oyly's fear of a French connection with the Kandyan Court. This was the main strategic and security factor in the British relations with the Kandyan Kingdom.

On the 11 January 1811, as recorded in D'Oyly's Diary, a Buddhist priest named Kahapattala Unnanse met him and gave him news of Kandy. When questioned as to why the Disaves (Provincial Governors) had been sent to the Korales (smaller divisions of a district), he (the Priest) replied as follows:

Question: Was there no other Cause?

Answer: Publicly I know of no other Cause, but Secretly I can tell a little. It was because there was Intelligence of War prevailing in the Sea, and that the French and Dutch were coming.

On 26 July 1813 D'Oyly submitted a report to the Governor (Brownrigg) where the same concern is exposed. This followed reluctance on the part of the Kandyan Chiefs, of that time, to engage in diplomatic communications. D'Oyly was concerned that his letters written were not accepted, or the due attention paid to them:

"I am not however apprehensive, that without the approach of Foreign aid, or the appearance of a Foreign Force in the Indian seas, these untoward symptoms are likely to ripen into open hostilities, or that any immediate change will take place in our relations with the Kandyan people."⁶⁴

D'Oyly saw a change by the Kandyan Court in his attitude to the letters he sent on behalf of the British government in Ceylon. This change he attributed to the French (and Dutch) influence that was being then exerted with the Kandyan Court.

In the nineteenth century the expansion of British power within the Indian subcontinent resulted in a diplomatic change whereby there was a concern and interest that involved most countries of West Asia, from Kabul to Constantinople. The British interest in Asia was that of a growing great land power. The defence of India, both by land and sea, became a fixed policy of

⁶⁴ Contained as an attachment to Governor Brownrigg's despatch, C.O.54, 30 August 1813, S.L.N.A. 5.

Britain, and this lasted until the end of World War II when the British Empire in India was dissolved. This fact was dominant in the period under study (1805-1818) as revealed in the D'Oyly papers, and was the major factor in British relations with native states in India and South Asia, including the Kandyan Kingdom. It had both a strategic and commercial aspect that constituted the core of British interest in South Asia as stated by Pannikar.⁶⁵ Ceylon (with her strategic Harbour of Trincomalee) was vital for British naval deployments in the Bay of Bengal, and her expanding into South East Asia and the Pacific Ocean. The essence of British power, of its projection on a global scale, was due to her dominant navy. Ceylon, in this context, was essential for Britain's Naval Strategy.

Brief History of the Kandyan Kingdom, and the Trincomalee Harbour

The Kandyan Kingdom, within the central region of Ceylon, was established between the Southern Kingdom (of Kotte) and the Northern Kingdom (of Jaffna) by the end of the fifteenth century. By the beginning of the sixteenth century, it had evolved into an independent kingdom. The Portuguese captured the maritime kingdoms of Kotte and Jaffna, and this left the Kandyan Kingdom as the only independent political unit or native state, when the British occupied the coastal regions of Ceylon in 1796.⁶⁶

⁶⁵ K. Pannikar, *India and the Indian Ocean* [An Essay], Allen and Unwin, 1940 – As seen in this book, the theme is that for the defence of India, by sea, a friendly nation (towards India) should occupy the strategic harbour of Trincomalee. This was the factor that determined historical developments, including the major political events between 1805 and 1815, that saw the downfall of the Kandyan Kingdom in Ceylon.

⁶⁶ G.P.V. Somaratne, *Political History of the Kingdom of Kotte*, Colombo, 1975, p.193 – The Kandyan Kingdom emerged as the only independent kingdom, after the coastal areas were taken over by European powers, beginning with the Portuguese in the seventeenth century.

The capital city of Kandy, (traditionally called Senkadagala), was said to have been built by a Sinhalese Chieftain (a military general) named Vikrama Bahu, who subsequently assumed a royal status. He caused to be built a royal palace, and in 1542 the Tooth Relic (the “Daladawa”), which was believed to be both the fountain and symbol of sovereignty over the entire country, was installed in a temple within the royal palace complex. This was in keeping with the tradition of associating the theory of the divine right to rule by a King (or ruler) who possessed the relic. Earlier the tooth relic temple was in the ancient capital cities of Anuradhapura and Polonnaruwa, and when it was installed in Kandy it made this city and kingdom, in the eyes of the inhabitants of the island, the real source of all power to rule and administer the whole island state.⁶⁷

The Kings of Kandy had to take defensive measures against attacks from the European powers that controlled the coastal regions of the country. The first defensive measures and fortifications were established to withstand the attacks from the Portuguese. In 1594 King Vimala Dharma Surya fled the city of Kandy and sought refuge within the remote mountainous regions of the Kingdom, and thereafter successfully mounted a counter attack, and recaptured the city from the Portuguese. Before the King took refuge in the mountainous regions and forests, the whole royal city of Kandy was vacated and part of it burnt. Once the city was regained, the city was rebuilt and the King and his Court returned. The Portuguese attacked the city in 1602, 1611 and in 1629. On all these occasions a similar pattern of defence and attack was adopted. The topography, the monsoonal rains, and the type of

⁶⁷ Walpola Rahula, *History of Buddhism in Ceylon*, Colombo, 1956, pp.62-64 – Points to the importance of the Buddhist religion and priesthood in the political life of the country.

guerrilla warfare followed by the Kings of Kandy were successful, and enabled them to be independent and not subjugated.⁶⁸

The kings of Kandy followed a similar pattern of military operations when the Dutch replaced the Portuguese in the maritime provinces of Ceylon. In 1765 the Dutch attacked the kingdom, captured the city, plundered the royal palace, and destroyed many buildings within the city of Kandy. However, once peace was restored, the city was rebuilt. King Kirti Sri Rajasingha (who ruled from 1747 to 1782) built new temples, and made positive attempts to revive Buddhism, and caused, by this process, a new revival of learning and culture. The king brought Buddhist monks from Thailand to restore and revalidate the higher ordination of the local monks.⁶⁹

This pattern of military operations by the Kandyan Kings continued under the last King of Kandy, Sri Wickrama Rajasingha, who ruled from 1798 to 1815. In 1803 the British captured the city of Kandy, and the king fled from the city and sought refuge within the mountainous region of the kingdom. With the monsoon rains and the breakdown of communications, the British army was trapped and destroyed.

The king retook the city and thereafter began a large-scale restoration and building programme. The royal palace was rebuilt, and a new Octagon (called the Pathirippuwa) was built. The biggest project was the

⁶⁸ Channa Wickramasekera, *Kandy at War - 1594-1818*, Sri Lanka, Vijitha Yapa Publications, 2004, pp.142-147 - The writer concentrates on the military aspects of the history of this period.

⁶⁹ L.S. Dewaraja, *The Kandyan Kingdom of Sri Lanka - 1707-1782*, Colombo, Sri Lanka, Deepani Printers, 1988, pp.114-115 - The establishment of the Siam Nikaye was a milestone in the long history of the Buddhist Sangha (or church) in the country. It resulted in a spiritual and cultural revival, which covered all aspects of the life of the inhabitants of the country, involving all parts of the country where Buddhism was predominant. It had therefore social, cultural and political implications.

construction of the Kandy Lake, by draining the marshy land near the palace complex and creating an artificial lake by building a dam at the western end of the low ground. Under the rajakara system of forced labour, persons from the distant districts were forced to travel to Kandy, and work on these projects. This was not popular with the inhabitants of these districts.⁷⁰

From the sixteenth century onwards the area covered by the Indian Ocean, and Asia, in general, came gradually to be dominated by European powers. It began with the Portuguese, the Dutch, the French and the British followed it.⁷¹ By the end of the nineteenth century the whole of the Indian Ocean area could have been described as a “British Lake”.⁷²

Portuguese seapower laid the foundations for European domination, and other European powers, including the British, built their empires on this. Basically, it involved the control of the entry points into and exit points from the Indian Ocean, by establishing naval bases at vital points, with the superior technology, and thereby effectively patrolling the seas from these points: Socotra, Sri Lanka, Goa (in India), and Malacca. Albuquerque was the architect of this policy.

Sri Lanka, at the extreme south of the Asian landmass, and the Indian sub-continent, was considered vital for the Portuguese in their overall naval policy, for controlling trade, and commerce. Colombo, and Galle, in the

⁷⁰ *Diary of Sir John D'Oyly*, Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, Ceylon Branch, 1917, XXV, No. 69, p.72 - “Pusweylle Disawe went to Kandy with 1580 men for work on the Dam, which when completed will entirely surround Kandy - The people of the 7 Korales are very much dissatisfied”.

⁷¹ K.M. Pannikar, *India and Indian Ocean*, Allen and Unwin, 1945, Chapter III - Strong European Navies dominated the whole of the Indian Ocean, till the rise of the Japanese Navy.

⁷² G.S. Graham, *The Politics of Naval Supremacy*, Cambridge, 1964, p.44 - The naval dominance assisted the British policy of infiltration, and the consequent political expansion.

west coast of the island, were the chief harbours, and ports, for naval deployment, and consequently for the development of trade and commerce.

With the arrival of the Dutch as a European rival in the Indian Ocean, the Portuguese turned their attention to the east coast of Sri Lanka, and especially to the strategic, natural harbour, of Trincomalee. Tennent sums up the situation in the following words:

“In the earlier portion of their career in Ceylon the Portuguese showed the utmost indifference to the possession of Trincomalee, but after the appearance of the Dutch on the coast and their conclusion of an alliance between them and the Emperor of Candi, Constantine de Sa, in 1662, alarmed at the possibility of their dangerous rivals forming establishments in the island, took possession of the two ports of Batticaloa and Trincomalee and ruthlessly demolished the Temple of a Thousand Columns in order to employ its material in fortifying the heights on which it stood”.⁷³

From this date onwards the history of Trincomalee begins in the European era, in relation to the Indian Ocean. In this sense it begins the history of the Modern period, with new technologies in relation to naval deployment and strategy, which continues to the present day, having its impact on the history and politics of Sri Lanka.

The Portuguese were in Sri Lanka from 1505 to 1658, when the Dutch replaced them. From 1658 to 1796 was the period when the Dutch were dominant: and replaced the Portuguese as the occupants of the maritime districts of Sri Lanka, which included the harbour of Trincomalee.

⁷³ E. Tennent, *Ceylon*, Vol I and II, London, 1858, pp.411-412.

Winius has dealt with this period.⁷⁴ He deals at length with the Portuguese/Dutch relations. His main conclusion is that the Portuguese gave in to the Dutch in Sri Lanka, due to their shift of interest from the Indian Ocean to South America, when they concentrated on the development of Brazil. The most scholarly work, (in the modern period), which was on the Portuguese era in Sri Lanka was written by Paul. E. Pieris.⁷⁵ He used sources from Sri Lanka and Portugal. Its theme of the decline of Portuguese power is based on its growth of corruption and consequent lack of vigour, which had an adverse effect on its naval and military capabilities.

By the time the Dutch settled and took over from the Portuguese, the period of major naval rivalries of European powers in the Indian Ocean had begun. Gradually the Dutch built up a big commercial empire in Indonesia with their headquarters at Batavia. The Dutch in Sri Lanka as well as Indonesia started Plantation commercial-based agriculture. They monopolised East/West trade and had taken the place of the Portuguese in this regard.

Goonewardene studied in depth the successful establishment of Dutch rule over the Maritime Provinces in Sri Lanka.⁷⁶ He paid great attention to the Dutch relations with the Kandyan Kingdom, who legally claimed to control the Trincomalee harbour and port, which aspect was quite important in the diplomatic history of this period. Dutch relations with King Rajasingha II is

⁷⁴ G.D. Winus, *The Fatal History of Portuguese Ceylon: Transition to Dutch Rule*, Harvard University Press, 1971, passim.

⁷⁵ P.E. Pieris, *Ceylon and the Portuguese, 1505-1658*, Tellippallai, Ceylon, American Ceylon Mission Press, 1920.

⁷⁶ K.W. Goonewardene, *The Foundations of Dutch Power in Ceylon (1638-1658)*, Ph.D. Thesis, London University, Subsequently published, passim - Ceylon was under European influence from the sixteenth century, due to its strategic position in the Indian Ocean. Its modern period therefore had a considerable Portuguese, Dutch and British influence, that determined its history.

dealt with and the Dutch Treaty with this King in 1638. The provisions of this treaty show the importance of Trincomalee as an important naval base. Further, this treaty provided the basis for the Dutch intervention in the Kandyan King's struggle against the Portuguese. To the Dutch, Trincomalee and their presence in Sri Lanka, was an issue, and for the Kandyan King, to get rid of the Portuguese.

Trincomalee was the only good natural harbour near the east coast of India. As a natural harbour, it was considered one of the best in the world. Without any additional modifications to the harbour it was able to give safe anchorage to a number of ships. This was particularly useful during this period of sailing ships, when the monsoons in the Bay of Bengal made sailing, at certain seasons, unsafe. In this context, Trincomalee was a prize for any naval power, with an interest in the Bay of Bengal, and the Indian Ocean, from the point of view of naval strategy, politics and trade.

From Trincomalee it was possible to patrol the eastern waters of Ceylon, and the Indian Ocean, and also keep an eye on any naval power trying to cross into East Asia from the Bay of Bengal. Malacca was the route through whose straits ships entered East Asia, and the Pacific Ocean. To keep an eye on Malacca, from a naval point of view, the control of Trincomalee was essential. This prompted the Dutch to establish a strong naval presence in Trincomalee, then they were challenged by the French and the British, as shown by Mendis.⁷⁷ The Dutch position in Ceylon was challenged due to their hold of Trincomalee Harbour, in the context of the domination of the Indian Ocean, and ultimately the sub-continent of India, with its politics and trade.

⁷⁷ V.L.B. Mendis, *The Advent of the British to Ceylon (1762-1803)*, 1971 – Points to the strategic factor that dominated the British relations with Ceylon.

As pointed out by Arasaratnam,⁷⁸ the lesson to be learnt from the Portuguese/Dutch relations in Ceylon in the sixteenth century was that a power dominant on the seas was the ultimate victor. In the context of Ceylon it was specifically proved that only a power dominant at sea was able to drive the Portuguese from the country. Thus, sea power became the basic factor in the history of Ceylon, from now on.

When the Dutch entered the Indian Ocean in the sixteenth century, the dominant sea power in the region was the Portuguese. At that period of time Portugal dominated the political, and commercial aspects of sea power in the Indian Ocean. Further, their headquarters was at Goa, in the west coast of India, and the Portuguese navy controlled the seas around India.

Consequent to this fact the Dutch concentrated in the area called the East Indian Archipelago. From here they dominated the spice trade. Once established in this region, the Dutch turned to Ceylon. At this time cinnamon was the most attractive commercial crop in Ceylon and the Portuguese made large fortunes in their trade in this valuable commodity in Europe. Hence, Dutch policy at this time was to control the areas that produced valuable spices, and, thereby, to control the supply and thereafter become the sole supplier of this product to European markets.

Marguerite Wilbur refers to the Dutch and Portuguese tactics when the British first arrived in the Indian Ocean, for trade. The Portuguese placed every impediment in the way of the Indian Moghul Emperor from giving permission to trade, and settle, in India at the Port of Surat. This uncertain condition continued till the defeat of the Portuguese fleet, off Surat, by Best and Downton, which earned the British respect from the Moghul Emperor. Marguerite Wilbur states:

⁷⁸ S. Arasaratnam, *Ceylon*, New Jersey, Prentice Hall Inc., 1964, pp.137-147 - The major sea powers in the Indian Ocean had a considerable impact on the political history of the country.

“The Portuguese retreat sealed the hold of the English in India and won the friendship of the Moghul, who welcomed the English as his deliverers. Thus, by outwitting the Portuguese, Downton and Best had unwittingly flung open the Doors of Surat to English trade”.⁷⁹

This points to the importance of sea power to control trade, commerce and politics of the Indian Ocean. Without this initial display of naval superiority, the British would have found it difficult to get a foothold in India.

The Dutch were strong in the East Indies, and were alarmed at the British attempts to get a foothold in Indonesia. This is what led to the incident of a clash at Amboyane.⁸⁰ By 1626 the British withdrew from Indonesia, and the supremacy of the Dutch continued in this area till modern times.

From this time onwards the British concentrated their efforts on India, and its immediate adjacent area, where they consolidated their position to become a great power in Asia, and dominate in the Indian Ocean. The taking of Trincomalee, in 1796, from the Dutch, was one aspect of the British consolidating their hold over India, in the eighteenth century. Trincomalee, in a strategic sense continued to be an important naval base for the British till the second half of the twentieth century: they finally gave it up when they withdrew in 1958.

The British captured Trincomalee and the coastal regions of Sri Lanka from the Dutch in 1796. Subsequently, at the Peace of Amiens in 1802, the British

⁷⁹ Marguerite Wilbur, *The East India Company*, New York, Russel and Russel, 1970, pp.34-62 - Points to the domination of the British Navy in the Indian Ocean region, that lasted to the end of the Second World War.

⁸⁰ Ibid, pp.87-103 - The Dutch dominated Indonesia, while the British dominated India and South Asia and gradually moved on to the Malaysian Peninsula.

retained Trincomalee and Ceylon for strategic reasons. Pitt, the then Prime Minister of England, stated that Ceylon was retained for the security of the English East Indian possessions.⁸¹ At this time the French were well established in Mauritius and Seychelles. As pointed out by Colgate, from this base the French, at this point of time, would have been able to move on to the Dutch East Indies and Ceylon.⁸² Thus, the only way to prevent this was to have a strong British naval base at Trincomalee. Not only was it possible to protect India in case of a naval attack but also prevent the entry and passage of a rival naval squadron to South East Asia.

Trincomalee has a special place in naval strategy and tactics in relation to the Indian Ocean and the security of the eastern seaboard of India and the Bay of Bengal. This was the period of the sailing ships and, in this context; the monsoons played a vital part in the deployment of ships for naval and military purposes.

Between October and March there is the North East monsoon; the South West monsoon prevails during the months of April and September. In the intermonsoonal periods, in particular during the month of October, unsettled conditions prevail. These weather conditions at this period of time had an important bearing on naval deployments; and during the period covered by the North East monsoon there was no safe harbour or anchorage for ships on the east coast of India, which was therefore, from a British point of view, most unsatisfactory for both security and commerce in the area of the Bay of Bengal.

⁸¹ *Speeches of William Pitt*, House of Commons, VIII, 3 November 1801, pp.271-273.

⁸² H.A. Colgate, *The Royal Navy and Trincomalee: The History of Their Connection*, *The Journal of Historical and Social Studies*, January-June 1958, p.7 - Points to the fact that the British interests in Ceylon were determined by strategic considerations, especially the Trincomalee Harbour.

It is apt, therefore, to examine the harbours available during the monsoonal and unsettled conditions as this would point to the vital and important part played by Trincomalee: and the reasons why it had an important role in the Anglo/French rivalry in India.

Calcutta was the most important British settlement. It was established in 1690 and Fort William was founded which stood as a bastion against any attack from the land. To this extent it acted as a guardhouse to the whole province of Bengal, which was the richest possession, and most profitable land the British had in India. From a naval point of view Calcutta had little value. It was sited at a point, which was more than 100 miles from the sea on the Hooghli River. A naval squadron had, under these conditions, to be stationed only south of Calcutta, its function being to stop and intercept a rival force entering the Bay.

Madras, though well situated, on the east coast of India, was wide open: it had an open roadstead. In practical terms it meant that ships had to drop anchor over two miles from the shore, with intervening surf. The surf itself had to be crossed by small boats, and this proved a big logistical problem of transport to and fro. Further, the ships were most liable to be damaged during the strong winds of the northeast monsoon: many damaged by being driven ashore. All in all it was considered a dangerous and risky harbour.⁸³ The same characteristics as Madras were found on the other east coast harbour of India: Vizagapatnam, Nagapatnam and Musalipatnam.

In Ceylon Colombo and Galle Harbours were not adequate and therefore wanting in the area of anchorage for a large fleet. In Colombo the roadstead was not adequate, and ships had to drop anchor a far distance from the seashore. The inner harbour at Galle was very small: it could, at best, only hold two or three ships at one time.

⁸³ C. Parkinson, Northcote, *Trade in the Eastern Seas*, p.43.

Trincomalee alone remained to be utilised as a great natural harbour of the east coast of Sri Lanka. Colgate has very graphically described the Trincomalee Harbour as follows:

“Trincomalee Harbour is situated on the north east coast of Ceylon, 320 miles from Madras and 270 miles from Galle. It is a small part of the much larger Trincomalee or Kodyar Bay, the entrance of which is over four miles wide. The bay opens out to over twice this width and is about five miles across from east to west. In the northerly part, rocky headlands and islands enclose an area approximately three miles from north to south and four miles from east to west. This forms the inlet of Trincomalee Harbour, the fifth largest in the world”.⁸⁴

At this time it was estimated that over 500 ships can lie at anchor in this harbour. As observed by Vernon Mendis any country (with sea power at its disposal) that held Trincomalee had a great advantage over its rivals. This was the reason why in all the British diplomatic missions to the Kandyan Court the harbour of Trincomalee came up as a major issue.⁸⁵

British Diplomatic Missions to the Kandyan Kingdom: First Steps in the Process of Intervention in Ceylon and the Kandyan Kingdom

Following a request from the King of Kandy, the British Governor in Madras decided to send a diplomatic mission in 1762. For this purpose John Pybus, an officer working for the East India Company, was chosen. His instructions were to obtain a harbour on the east coast of Ceylon and to get trade

⁸⁴ H.A. Colgate, *Trincomalee and the East Indies Squadron 1746-1844*, Unpublished M.A. Thesis, 1959, University of London, p.7 - There was no harbour on the east coast of India, and the Bay of Bengal, to equal the Trincomalee Harbour for utility as much as for strategic reasons during a period of war and conflict in the region.

⁸⁵ Mendis, *The Advent of the British in Ceylon*, 1971, pp.79-80 - Points to the strategic significance of the Trincomalee Harbour.

concessions. He was not to enter into any security agreement against the Dutch, but was to cement good relations and obtain concessions. He carried with him a draft Treaty, a study of which would reveal the intentions of the British at this time: to prevent the French from gaining foothold in Ceylon, and the acceptance of the strategic significance of the island.⁸⁶ The proposed Treaty by Pybus pointed to the British wanting a settlement in Ceylon; preferable in the Eastern Province, where the strategic Trincomalee Harbour is situated. The Pybus Mission gives an insight into the issues involved in the diplomacy and politics of the Kandyan Court. Kandy, as the last political centre of indigenous power, had very specific aims, firstly to get rid of the Dutch from Sri Lanka and secondly to secure the help of a foreign power, which had a strong navy. Once this was achieved it aimed to cultivate, and thereby strengthen, the relations with this foreign power, based on the use of the Trincomalee Harbour and the trade and commerce of the island, especially in cinnamon.

Therefore, above all the Kandyan kings sought security. They claimed sovereignty over the whole island as the Kandyan Kingdom was the only remaining indigenous power within the country. In reality the Portuguese and the Dutch were in control of the maritime provinces, but the Kings of Kandy legally claimed them. The Dutch were a hindrance to this claim. Due to Dutch naval superiority, the Kandyans found themselves at their mercy in their contacts with the outside world, especially after the Dutch-Kandyan Treaty of 1766. All imports and exports were virtually under Dutch control, and the Kandyan Kingdom was increasingly becoming a land-locked country – hence the need for another country with a strong navy

⁸⁶ *The Pybus Mission to Kandy 1762* (ed.), Major Ravel-Hart, The National Museum, Colombo, 1958, Sri Lanka: Historical Series Vol. I – Paragraph I of the proposed treaty - p.9.

who were in a position to assist.⁸⁷ The need to break away from Dutch constraint resulted in the Kandyan kings looking for allies in India. That was the main political and diplomatic aim revealed in the letters, discussions, and proposed treaty relations. When Pybus arrived in Kandy, this was specifically put to him. Military assistance was sought against the Dutch. In return for this assistance the king was to provide a harbour or port for the use of the British. This was how Trincomalee Harbour and the Eastern Province of Sri Lanka came to play a vital part in these diplomatic parleys. British assistance was sought, on the basis of mutual gain to both parties.

At this time the British were not able to promise military assistance against the Dutch, as it might lead to diplomatic problems in Europe. International politics constrained the British in making such a definite military commitment. At the same time the British in Madras were aware that there was every possibility of the Kandyan kings turning to the French for assistance.⁸⁸ The Kandyan Kings had their diplomatic representative in South India, and they were approaching the French (as an alternative to the British) for assistance against the Dutch in Sri Lanka.⁸⁹ As far back as 1672 the French had shown interest in Sri Lanka, and the Harbour of Trincomalee.⁹⁰

⁸⁷ L.S. Dewaraja, *Sri Lanka Through French Eyes*, Sri Lanka, Institute of Fundamental Studies, 1989, pp.40-41 - The Kandyan Kings' foreign policy was to seek a strong European power with a considerable navy, to ensure the security of the kingdom.

⁸⁸ V.L.B. Mendis, *The Advent of the British in Ceylon 1762 - 1803*, Colombo, 1971, pp.29-44 - The British diplomatic moves in the Kandyan Kingdom was to prevent the French from getting a foothold within the country.

⁸⁹ *Ceylon Historical Commission Report*, 1935, Sri Lanka National Archives, p.21.

⁹⁰ H. Dron, *Les Francais dans l'Inde*, Paris, 1886 - Reference to the first French expedition to Ceylon, under de La Haye, in the seventeenth century.

French interest was shown in the naval expedition to Trincomalee undertaken by De La Haye, in 1672. The prelude to this expedition was the differences that had arisen between the Dutch and the Kandyan kings after their Treaty in 1638, which led to the capture of Batticaloa and Trincomalee.⁹¹ King Rajasingha, who was reigning at this time in Kandy, sent an embassy to meet the French Admiral, De La Haye during May/June 1672 at Trincomalee. The king went to the extent of granting the Bays of Kottiyar and Trincomalee to the French for assistance against the Dutch.⁹² But nothing came out of these diplomatic negotiations.

Instructions given to Pybus were to probe and gather intelligence about the Kandyan Kingdom due to the French interest. This related to the topography of the country, its economy and resources, its military capacity and organisation, and the political situation, which related to the monarch's position and whether there were rival factions within the Kingdom. A reading of the issued instructions points to the growing British interest in Ceylon and her potential to be of use to the growing British power in India, and her widening colonial interests within the Indian Ocean region. The draft Treaty carried by Pybus points to the growing strategic and commercial interests of the British East India Company.⁹³ A reading of Pybus' Diary reveals his powers of observation and his comments on the relevant issues within the Kandyan Kingdom and its Court. This was to act as a guide to future British policy in dealing with Ceylon and, in particular,

⁹¹ S.G. Perera, *French Expeditions Against Trincomalee*, Ceylon Antiquary and Literary Register Vol. V, Part III, pp.141-147.

⁹² *Memoirs of de Francois Martin*, Paris, 1931, p.342 - (translated from French) - King Rajasingha II was following the traditional Kandyan policy of seeking one European power with a strong navy to oust the European power occupying to coastal regions of Ceylon.

⁹³ Appendix I - Military Sundries, Vol. XVII, Tamil Nadu Archives, Chennai, India - Pybus' mission was to collect intelligence, and to secure if possible a British settlement in the country.

the Kandyan Kingdom. The Kandyans wanted aid against the Dutch, who then occupied the coastal areas of Ceylon. Pybus states in his report:

“The Kandyans pressed me earnestly to declare whether or not if the king should grant everything I proposed. I would take upon me to assure him that the Governor and Council would assist him against the Dutch.”⁹⁴

Therefore, unless the British offered military aid to the King of Kandy, nothing definite would be achieved.

Pybus’s mission was not a success, both from the view of the Kandyans and the British who did not gain any advantage as the Treaty, which was proposed by them, was not accepted. For the Kandyan Court what was needed was a definite Treaty of Alliance promising military aid against the Dutch. The British were not able to deliver this at this stage. The Mission only indicated the growing British interest in Ceylon as part of their expanding interests in India. It aroused a great deal of suspicion among the Dutch authorities in Ceylon at that time.⁹⁵ The Dutch felt that the British really wanted to conquer the coastlands, and that a fleet might be sent at any time for this purpose.⁹⁶ Even though Pybus was aware that Kandyan kings might turn to the French, he carried no instructions to enter into any agreement promising aid against the Dutch.

Twenty years later the Madras government of the British realised once again the importance of Trincomalee. It was an extension of the naval policy, and

⁹⁴ R. Hart, *The Pybus Embassy to Kandy [1963]*, The National Museum of Ceylon Historical Series Vol. 2, Colombo, 1958 - He commented on the seen resources of the kingdom, the topography, and his observations as to the politics within the kingdom. He mentions the existence of a Dutch faction among the Kandyan chiefs (pp.66-67).

⁹⁵ J.C. Paulz (ed.), *Secret Minutes of the Dutch Political Council - 1762*, Colombo, Sri Lanka Archives, 1954, p.88.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

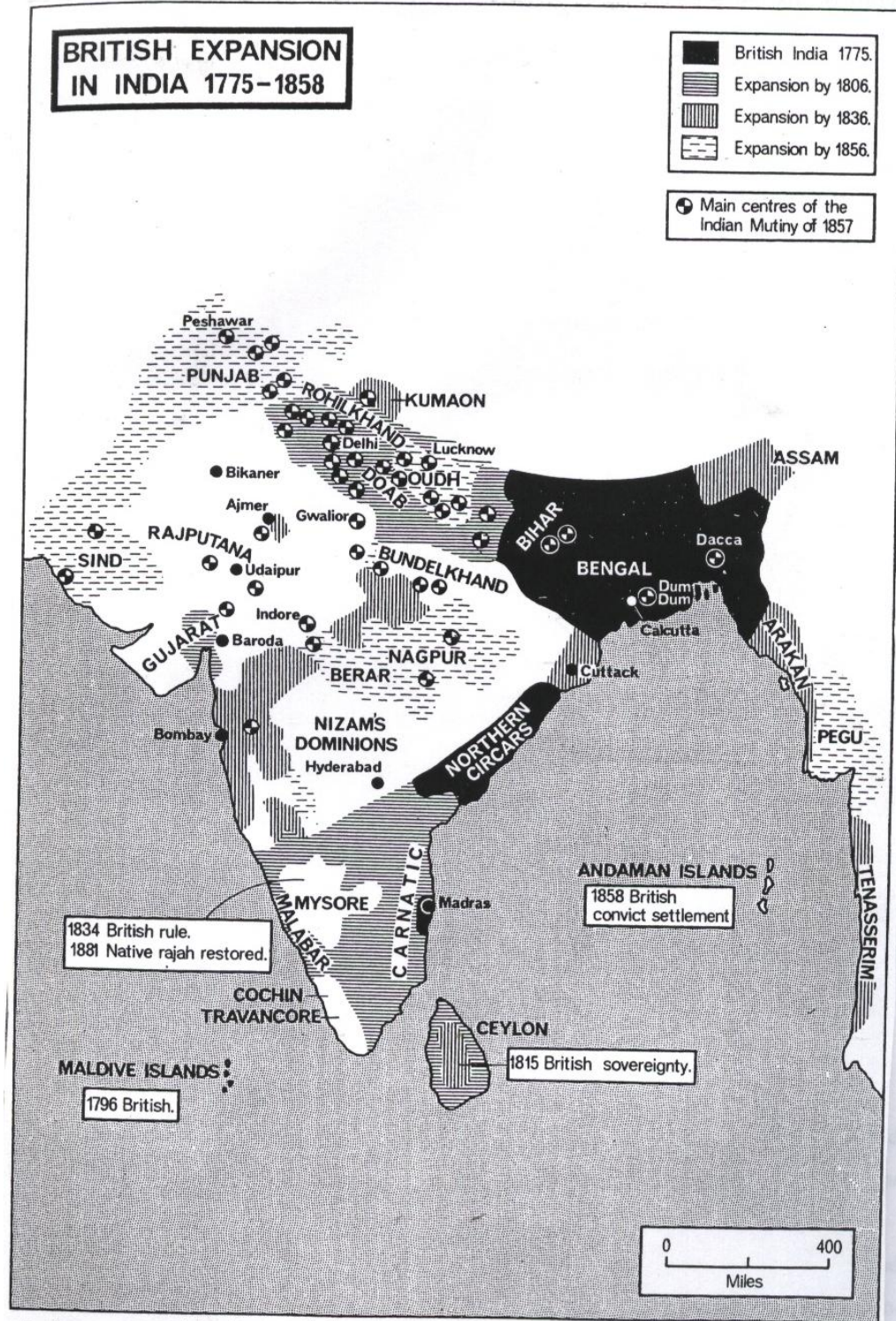
the need for a good base for the British fleet, that prompted Boyd's Mission to Kandy. Hugh Boyd was the Secretary to the British Governor of Madras, and the purpose of his mission was to seek the aid of the King of Kandy against the Dutch in Trincomalee. His instructions were very clear, and the security aspect became quite prominent. French designs on Ceylon as a naval base were quite obvious: Bailli de Suffren's expedition was an indication of the intention to dominate India and the Indian Ocean area. It would be apt to examine the instructions given to Boyd.⁹⁷ He was, in contrast to the instructions received by Pybus, instructed very specifically to enter into a defensive alliance with the Kandyan king. This alliance was part of the invasion plans of the British of which Trincomalee was to become the most strategic acquisition. Macartney, the Governor of Madras, wanted Boyd to get the king's assistance, and in turn to promise him military assistance.⁹⁸ Macartney's instructions to Boyd were to conduct his parleys with the king with a definite aim of a defence and security treaty, promising the king aid in military terms for assistance to the British in their conquest of Trincomalee and its subsequent maintenance.

Boyd's Mission was in this atmosphere of an ongoing clash between the British and the French. There was a greater need for the British to occupy Trincomalee Harbour in order to consolidate their position in India. Their anxiety to control Trincomalee did not spring from their need to take and capture it from the Dutch but rather to prevent it falling into the hands of the French. Boyd was again faced with the problem of the King of Kandy's demand for military assistance against the Dutch. At this time the British were on friendly terms with the Dutch, and the British government would

⁹⁷ L.D. Campbell, *The Miscellaneous Works of Hugh Boyd* (Volume 1-4), London, 1800 - Ceylon Records 1 November 1793 - Tamil Nadu Archives contains Boyd's Report to the Governor of Fort St. George.

⁹⁸ Macartney to Boyd, 12 October 1781, Selected Com., 22418, Tamil Nadu Archives, Chennai.

Map: The British Expansion in India 1775-1858



Reference : Martin Gilbert, The Dent Atlas of British history⁷⁷

not welcome any promise of aid. Therefore, Boyd (like Pybus) had no right to promise any aid to the king as regards the Dutch. His mission was basically to get the Kandyan king's support against the French.

It was indeed a difficult task for Boyd to accomplish. A mutual Defence and Security Treaty was the object of the British. Such an arrangement would be possible among nations that had common interests - mainly in defence and security matters. There was no common ground; in short, no common enemy to be faced. If the British entered into a security pact at this time, it could have been aimed only at the French. To them the Dutch factor was marginal, especially as regards India. At no time did the Dutch prove to be a rival in naval or military matters in the context of British dominance over India. Even worse, Boyd was captured by the French while carrying confidential papers relating to the British designs of getting control over Ceylon.

A clear cut defence treaty was what Kirti Sri Rajasingha, the King of Kandy when the first British embassy was sent to Kandy in 1762, would have most welcomed. At that time Kirti Sri Rajasingha had an ongoing conflict with the Dutch, which culminated in the 1766 Treaty he had to sign (under duress) with the Dutch, whereby (for the first time) the whole maritime province (including the Trincomalee Harbour) was acknowledged to be under Dutch Sovereignty. From the point of view of the Kandyan kings this was a low, and, in many ways, a rather humiliating treaty.

Unfortunately for Boyd, Kirti Sri Rajasingha died in 1781, and was succeeded by Rajadhi Rajasingha. The British proposal of a defence and security alliance was put forward as a primary policy move, keeping in mind what had transpired when Pybus met the king in 1762. By the time Boyd reached Kandy Rajadhi Rajasingha was on the throne.

The new king was more cautious. He did not fall immediately for the proposed defence and security alliance. He postponed it by stating that he

was prepared to sign a defence treaty only with the King of Britain, and not the Governor of Madras.⁹⁹ This insistence of the king virtually ensured the failure of the diplomatic mission. Apart from the king's position, his ministers were also not too anxious at this point in time to enter into this security alliance. Failure of the last British Mission twenty years earlier loomed as a background to this mission. Earlier Pybus was trying to get something for nothing. It was a disappointment, especially viewed in the light of what happened in 1766 with the forced treaty with the Dutch. The views expressed by the Chiefs with whom Boyd had a series of meetings, clearly indicated that they had grave doubts about British intentions. Perhaps some of them were in the pay (and therefore under the influence) of the Dutch in Colombo.¹⁰⁰

This was the period that saw the struggle for Trincomalee between the British and the French.¹⁰¹ It saw a naval struggle, and the stakes were high for an Empire in India between the French and the British. Local powers, like the Maharathas, and Mysore (under Hyder and Tippu Sultan), were not strong enough to fill the gap left by Moghuls as an all India paramount power. Thus, the choice was between the British and the French. The naval factor counted most: the British fleet led by Sir Edward Hughes and the French under Suffren.¹⁰² As observed by Admiral Sir Herbert Richmond, Sri Lanka was within the ambit of the clash between the French and the British, which broke out in 1781.¹⁰³ Trincomalee Harbour was a focus of vital importance and strategy from a naval point of view. Most of the French

⁹⁹ Journal of An Embassy from the Government of Madras to the King of Kandy in Campbell, I.D. (ed.), *The Miscellaneous Works of Hugh Boyd*, Vol.II, London, 1800, pp.107-264.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹ G.B. Malleson, *Final French Struggle on the Indian Seas*, London, 1878, p.77.

¹⁰² Dewaraja, *Sri Lanka Through French Eyes*, 1989, Chapter VI.

¹⁰³ Admiral Sir H. Richmond, *The Navy in India - 1763 - 1783*, London, 1931, p.117.

stations in India were captured, and the Trincomalee Harbour was taken over by the British in 1782. It was at this point that Boyd's Mission was sent to the Kandyan Court.

One of the reasons why King Rajadhi Rajasingha was not keen to support the British was due to the diplomatic relations in progress with the French in the eighteenth century. The enthusiasm for the French connection was further strengthened by the failure of the Pybus Mission, a great disappointment to the Kandyan kings as nothing concrete came out of it. It appeared to be only a mission prepared to give empty promises, and seek concessions. In 1777 the then Kandyan King Kirti Sri Rajasingha had gifted to the King of France a part of the Eastern Province of Sri Lanka, including the harbours of Batticaloa and Trincomalee.¹⁰⁴

The French Governors also communicated with the Kings of Kandy. Governor Bellecombe, stationed at Pondicherry was one such Governor.¹⁰⁵ At this period of time many South Indian rulers, like Hyder Ali, and Tippu Sultan of Mysore, favoured the French, and these sentiments were taken note of by the Kandyan kings in their diplomatic relations. King Rajadhi Rajasingha's letter dated 3 July 1791, to the French Governor at Pondicherry shows these pro-French sentiments. This letter (in translation) states:

“We intend to carry on that friendship which our previous great kings had acquired. As your high Agents tried their best to continue that old friendship, and as we are aware that you too are of a similar opinion of not giving up such friendship, you should, as an opportunity has now presented itself, bring about a friendship between us and your king as speedily as

¹⁰⁴ C. Rasanayagam, Historical Manuscript Commission, Bulletin No. 3 K.64, Sri Lanka National Archives.

¹⁰⁵ C. Rasanayagam, *Report on the Correspondence Between the King of Kandy and the French at Pondicherry*, Second Reprint of the Historical Manuscript Commission, 1935, pp.21-24.

possible, and to do such matters as will benefit your Company.”¹⁰⁶

It was to this Kandyan king that Boyd presented his credentials. Boyd tried his best to convince the king as to the strength of the British in the region.¹⁰⁷

Attempts were made by the French to consolidate their positions, both in Trincomalee and in India. Bussy, the French Commander in Charge of the land forces, along with Suffren, began diplomatic dealings with Indian powers like Mysore (under Tippu Sultan), the Marathas and the Nizam of Hyderabad. While Suffren was looking ahead and setting his strategies and tactics for French supremacy, peace was concluded in Europe between the British and the French, robbing France of her position in India. This came at an appropriate moment for British interests in Asia and the Indian Ocean.¹⁰⁸

At the peace talks the future of Trincomalee was discussed. Its strategic importance was clear. The French Minister, Comte de Vergennes was aware of Trincomalee's strategic importance, and he responded to the British claims by writing that all Dutch dependencies must be restored to the Dutch, particularly Trincomalee. The French understood the importance of Trincomalee and did not want the British to hold it. The peace talks were not finalised due to the disputes over the future of Trincomalee. However, the French Foreign Minister resolved it by giving Nagapatnam to the British and thereby agreeing Trincomalee to be given to the Dutch. This was a clever move by the French to deny the vital Trincomalee Harbour to the

¹⁰⁶ Rasanayagam, *Report on the Correspondence Between the King of Kandy and the French at Pondicherry*, Ceylon Historical Commission Report, Sri Lanka Archives, 1935, p.23 - Appendix I.

¹⁰⁷ Dewaraja, *Sri Lanka Through French Eyes*, 1989, p.52.

¹⁰⁸ G.B. Malleson, *Final French Struggle on the Indian Seas*, London, 1878, Introduction - VII.

British.¹⁰⁹ In 1785 the Dutch once again took control of the Trincomalee Harbour, following the stipulations in the peace treaty.

The French Revolution of 1789 and its effects on European politics had a decisive impact on Trincomalee and Sri Lanka's political future. In the first place it forged a closer alliance between France and the Dutch. Within Holland the Dutch were divided into two factions: the pro-French Patriots (in favour of a French Revolution and its ideas), and the Orangists, who were royalists and therefore favoured the Stadtholder.¹¹⁰ In 1795 the French revolutionary armies invaded Holland and the Dutch overthrew the Stadtholder who then fled to Britain. The Dutch proclaimed the Batavian Republic in Holland, and by this event the Dutch and the French were joined together against the British. The British government was clear and determined in its policy that Trincomalee (and Ceylon) should not be used as a base by the French to attack British interests in India.

Lord Hobart, the British Governor in Madras, sent a strong force of European and Indian troops to secure Trincomalee, and the rest of the Dutch settlements on the seacoast. The British fleet arrived off Trincomalee, along with a strong force under Colonel Stuart. Trincomalee was captured, and thereafter the other Dutch ports in Sri Lanka, from Batticaloa to Jaffna. Subsequently, in February 1796, the Dutch Governor Van Angelbeek surrendered Colombo, and the remaining Dutch settlements in Ceylon to the British.¹¹¹ Along with the despatch of an armed force to Sri Lanka to capture Trincomalee and the Dutch settlements, Lord Hobart sent Robert Andrews on a diplomatic mission to the King of Kandy. Hobart's instructions to Robert Andrews were to enter into a Treaty with the king, aimed at the French. He was to explain to the king the need the British had, to capture

¹⁰⁹ V.F. Harlow, *Founding of the Second British Empire 1763 - 1793*, Vol. I, Discovery and Rev., London, 1964, p.386, footnote 117.

¹¹⁰ Dewaraja, *Sri Lanka Through French Eyes*, 1989, p.68.

¹¹¹ L.J.B. Turner, *Ceylon Antiquary and Literary Journal III, IV 2*, pp.39-51.

Trincomalee, and to warn the king against the French and the terrors of Jacobinism. The French Revolution was against monarchy, and a British alliance at this stage would be advantageous to the king.¹¹² The British presence in Trincomalee and Sri Lanka was to protect the king from the Dutch and their allies the French.

The letter delivered to the king was very specific, to prevent a French invasion of the island whose intention was “to take away your life as they have done that of their own king”. To prevent this, the king was to agree to a treaty: a first step to a perpetual alliance between Britain and Ceylon. Accordingly, the king was requested to supply the troops, brought by the British, with the needed provisions.¹¹³ At the diplomatic discussions that took place the king’s main concern was the Dutch. He did not want their return to the island. The main aim of the treaty should be to prevent a return of the Dutch, and what steps should be taken in this regard. There were disagreements as to the details of how to prevent a Dutch return, and the king refused to sign the draft treaty. To this extent the mission failed, but the king did take steps to provide provisions for the British troops stationed at Trincomalee, after its capture.

There were differences as to the offer of a treaty between the British Officials in India. This held up the signing of any treaty documents with the king’s ambassadors who had been sent to Madras. The Governor, General Shore, objected to the proposed treaty with the King of Kandy as it was a commitment to protect the king against all his enemies. Such a treaty might complicate negotiations over a general European peace treaty, at a subsequent date.¹¹⁴ However a draft treaty was signed on 12 February 1796

¹¹² Hobart to Andrews, *Madras Political and Military Proceedings*, Vol. 45 – Sec. 2221, 21 July 1795, Tamil Nadu Archives, Chennai.

¹¹³ Ibid.

¹¹⁴ Bengal Council to Madras, *Madras Political and Military Proceedings*, Sec. 4678, 4 December 1795, Tamil Nadu Archives, Chennai.

by the Kandyan ambassadors and the British authorities in Madras. The British got possession of a permanent nature, and the King of Kandy was pleased, as the Dutch Treaty of 1766 was undone. Further, the king obtained a free outlet to trade, and to deploy ten ships in this regard. The British, until this stage, had not been aware of the Dutch Treaty of 1766. When Andrews returned to Kandy in August 1796 to get the king to ratify the treaty differences arose on details of the forts to be handed over to the king. Thus, in the end, the Treaty lapsed.

In 1798 King Rajadhi Rajasingha died and was succeeded by King Sri Wickreme Rajasingha. In December 1799 the new king sent his Chief Minister Pilama Talawa to meet the British Governor in Colombo, Lord North. These discussions revolved around the issues that moved British Policy:

- (a) To control the King of Kandy; and
- (b) To ensure the permanent possession of Trincomalee Harbour.¹¹⁵

The king requested that the Governor return to him Tambalagamam, and the seashore within Trincomalee. To counter this demand the British Governor was even prepared to conspire with the king's chief minister (the Adigar) against the king. The chief minister, having understood the Governor's mind, suggested that the king be overthrown and that he be installed as king. In turn he would place Kandy under British control. Lord North had conveyed his wish to control Kandy to the British Viceroy in India, Wellesley. North's ambition was to establish a protectorate over Kandy, with a British garrison stationed in Kandy, on the model of the Indian Protected States.¹¹⁶

¹¹⁵ Governor North's Despatch, C.O. 54, 21 February 1799 and 5 October 1799, S.L.N.A. 5.

¹¹⁶ Governor North's Despatch, C.O. 54, 13 January 1800, S.L.N.A. 5.

Governor North's Relation with the Kandyan Kingdom: A Failure of the Policy of Military Domination

British negotiations with the Kandyan Kingdom aimed at de facto annexation. The Kandyan Kingdom had steadfastly resisted European control of the seacoast, which had led to constant wars. All attempts by the Portuguese and the Dutch to control the Kandyan Kingdom had failed. The mountainous terrain of the Kingdom had given the king great natural defences.¹¹⁷ Robert Knox, an Englishman who lived in the Kandyan Kingdom in the seventeenth century, has described the natural features that made it difficult to penetrate and conquer:

“He hath no Artificial Forts or Castles, but Nature hath supplied the want of them. For his whole Country of Conde Uda (the Kandyan Kingdom), standing upon such high Hills, and those so difficult to pass, is all an Impregnable Fort: and so is more especially Digligy-neur his present Palace. These Places have been already described at large; and therefore I omit speaking any further of them here.”¹¹⁸

Knox also describes the type of warfare followed by the Kings of Kandy:

“In their War there is but little valour used, although they do accomplish many notable Exploits. For all they do is by crafty Stratagems. They will never meet their Enemies in the Field, to give them a repulse by Battel, and force of Arms: neither is the Enemy like to meet with any opposition at their first goings out to invade the King's Coasts, the King's Soldiers knowing the adverse Forces are at first wary and vigilant, as also well provided with all Necessaries. But their usual practice is to

¹¹⁷ C.R. De Silva, *Ceylon Under British Occupation - 1795-1833, Vol.1*, Colombo, Navrang, 1995, pp.85-128.

¹¹⁸ R. Knox, *An Historical Relation of Ceylon*, first published in London, 1681, republished by the Ceylon Historical Journal, 1957, p. 86.

way-lay them, and stop up the ways before them: there being convenient places in all the Roads, which they have contrived for such purposes. And at these places, the Woods were not suffered to be felled, but were kept in order to shelter them from the sight of their enemies. Here they lye lurking, and plant their Guns between the Rocks and Trees, with which they do great damage to their Enemies before they are aware. Nor can they then suddenly rush in upon them, being so well guarded with Bushes and Rocks before them, thro which before their Enemies can get, they flee carrying their great Guns upon their Shoulders and are gone into the Woods, where it is impossible to find them, until they come themselves to meet them after the former manner.”¹¹⁹

Politics within the Kandyan Kingdom revolved mainly around relations between the king and his nobles. The king claimed absolute power, which the nobles resisted over many centuries. Buddhism was the state religion, and the Buddhist priests and their organisations were a considerable force in its politics. The Buddhist hierarchy was invariably connected to the nobility by familial ties. There were two main Buddhist Chapters: Malvatte and Asgiriya. The Chief Priests of these Chapters wielded considerable influence. The so-called Moladanda Rebellion against King Kirti Sri Rajasingha in the mid-eighteenth century was mainly directed from the Malvatte Chapter.¹²⁰ This pointed to the Buddhist Priests’ involvement with politics.

From 1739 the ruling dynasty of the Kingdom was the Nayakkars, who were from South India, who strove for a place within Kandyan Sinhala Buddhist society. However, they never shook off their role as Buddhist Sinhala Monarchs, but yet they were at times looked up to as a foreign dynasty, which along with their relations and followers, were new to Kandy. Their

¹¹⁹ Ibid, pp. 90 and 91.

¹²⁰ Dewaraja, *The Kandyan Kingdom (1707-1782)*, pp.120-128.

foreign extraction was a weak point. If the king was not popular, and committed actions, which did not find favour, especially with a majority of the nobility there was room for revolts and rebellions.¹²¹

This formed the backdrop to Lord North's unsuccessful attempt to subordinate the Kandyan Kingdom to the British Empire. A policy of British expansion in India was based on infiltration and conquest, and diplomatically on the basis of subsidiary treaties that made the local princes dependent on the British to conduct their defence, security and foreign relations. It was by this process that the British emerged as the 'paramount power' in the Indian subcontinent. Such a subsidiary system was what North had in mind in his relations with the Kandyan Kingdom, so that it would be well and truly subservient to the British interests.

From the despatches of Governor North it is clear that such a policy was pursued, and that the British authorities approved it. Governor North refers to his assessment of the political situation within the Kandyan Kingdom, and also points to the lines of policy he contemplates:

“Besides the immense political and commercial advantages, as well as the perfect security which an established influence in that Kingdom will give us, I am convinced that it is the actual presence of a British army alone, which can prevent or put an end to the horrors of a civil war which amongst that cruel people are most peculiarly dreadful. From this time forward I do not think anything is to be dreaded from that power; and from the manner in which all the contending factions have solicited my assistance and offered to make their country tributary to my Government, I should infer that while we behaved to them with moderation and equity, they will not be surprised at any interference of ours in their concerns, or

¹²¹ Governor North's Despatch to the Secret Committee of the East India Company, 6 November 1798, C.O. 54/1, pp.123-128, S.L.N.A. 5.

jealous of any steps we may take to establish our influence among them".¹²²

The 'contending factions' referring to war were a group led by Pilama Talawa (the Adigar, or the chief minister of the King of Kandy) a section of the nobility opposed to the Adigar, the King (Sri Wickrama Rajasingha) and his immediate relations, certain of the king's relations, who fled to the British Settlements when the new king ascended the throne, as they were opposed to him. In this sense the Kingdom at the highest level was rife with factions, contending for power and position. In order to establish them as the power controlling the military security and foreign relations of the country, the British Governor (North) had to back the strongest faction. Infiltration, followed by intervention, was the realistic step towards establishing the British influence in the Kingdom.

Dundas' instructions to North pointed to the British interest to control the Kandyan Kingdom:

"Intercourse with Candia, etc

118. If the mission of Major General McDowall to the Court of Candia, should, as there is reason to believe, terminate in the fixed establishment of a garrison of our troops in the capital of that country, and in the present Government transferring to you by Treaty, the management of their whole revenue and Military Force, whilst that Government itself, in other respects, continues to be administered, according to its present forms and in the name of the Candian King".¹²³

These instructions issued to Governor North from London, in March 1801, clearly sets out the policy of the British government as regards the Kandyan

¹²² Governor North's Despatch to the Secret Committee of the East India Company, 13 January 1800, C.O. 54/2, S.L.N.A. 5.

¹²³ Dundas to Governor North, 13 March 1801, C.O. 54/5, S.L.N.A. 5.

Kingdom. The essence of the policy laid down was to enter into a subsidiary treaty that would effectively control the affairs of the Kandyan Kingdom by the British, by ensuring that a British force be established within the Kingdom, and to take over the direction of affairs in regard to the military, security and foreign relations. This was the policy of Wellesley in India that made the British “paramount power” within the Indian subcontinent.¹²⁴ Such a policy in Ceylon would make the British the virtual rulers of the country and consolidate their hold over the whole island. The challenge was to turn these instructions into reality: a matter left in the hands of the Governor, who was responsible for the direction of policy towards the Kandyan Kingdom, and who was in charge of the British forces within the British Settlements in Ceylon.

As seen in the events that followed, North’s Kandyan policy to impose a subsidiary treaty on the Kandy Kingdom was a failure. It showed a lack of understanding and appreciation of the real forces that were operating at the highest political level, within the Kandyan Kingdom. His judgement on the information he got as to events within the Kingdom was faulty. The Governor was not sure as to what direction to take. He couldn’t be certain that by backing the strongest faction within the Kandyan Kingdom, it would fall in line with British aims and objectives. The major faction was a section of the nobility, headed by the Adigar (chief minister), who was opposed to the reigning Monarch, Sri Wickrama Rajasingha. There was also at this point of time a section of the nobility who was opposed to the Pilama Talawa faction. There was also a prince of the ruling dynasty, Mootuswamy, who had settled within the British Settlements and was in contact with Governor North. He sought assistance from Britain to gain the throne of Kandy. The Adigar (not a royal prince) sought to be the defacto ruler within the Kingdom, ruling on behalf of the king, who was to be

¹²⁴ Despatch sent by Wellesley to the Secret Committee of the Honourable Count of Directors of the East India Company, 13 July 1803, C.O. 93, S.L.N.A. 5.

virtually banished to live as the formal monarch within the British Settlements of Ceylon. It was a complex situation and required an intelligent understanding of the real situation of Kandyan politics to enable a realistic policy to be followed in order to ensure that British interests would be safeguarded.¹²⁵

North's biggest mistake was to trust the Adigar, Pilama Talawa. From his first meeting with him, at Sitawaka, he knew that he was unfaithful to his own sovereign in the process of advancing his own personal ambitions. The Adigar's policy was to get British aid for him to become the de facto ruler of Kandy, and banish the reigning monarch. For this to happen the majority of the Kandyan nobility had to back this major political move and the king was to have no support within his own Kingdom. It should have been obvious to North that the Adigar was planning to cause a major disruption of the normal diplomatic relations between the king and the British. This was part of the strategy of the Adigar, and North, who fell victim to this, as the events unfolded, showing a lack of proper knowledge, on which policy had to be formulated.

North's embassy sent to the Kandyan Court, headed by General MacDowall, was a failure due to the trust placed with this Adigar. It was agreed to send a large British escort that would act as an army of occupation, and force the king and his Court to the terms proposed by the British Ambassador. The king was informed of the strength of the escort and he did not give permission for it to enter his territory. This virtually ended MacDowall's mission, as it achieved nothing at the end.¹²⁶ This sums up North's first definitive policy of interfering with the affairs of the Kandyan Court, to

¹²⁵ L.A. Mills, *Ceylon Under British Rule - 1795-1932*, Oxford University Press, 1933, pp.139-143.

¹²⁶ Sir M. Burrows, *'The Conquest of Ceylon'* in *The Cambridge History of India*, Vol. V, 1929, p.404.

make it a subservient power within the growing British Empire in South Asia, through the provision of an unequal treaty.

What followed was another move by the Adigar, Pilama Talawa, to cause a breach between the British and the King of Kandy, thereby provoking a war, which would bring a British army into the Kandyan Kingdom. With the British troops in occupation of the Kingdom, he hoped to become the defacto ruler with the help of Governor North. The Adigar caused a breach between the Kandyan Court and the British by causing a rich caravan, belonging to British subjects living within the settlements, to be robbed by certain Kandyan officials.¹²⁷ Governor North as a cause sufficient to invade the Kandyan Kingdom used this incident.

What happened was a total defeat of the British. Most of the soldiers were killed and Major Davie, the officer in command of the British Forces, became a prisoner of the Kandyan king. Many attempts made by the British government to free Major Davie failed, and he died in Kandy as a prisoner of war. The consequence of what transpired in Kandy had a widespread effect. It appears from a study of the Governor's despatches that the whole island revolted and the position of the British Settlements appeared at times to be precarious and uncertain. It was clear that the King of Kandy had widespread support at that time, and what the Adigar had submitted, about his (the king's) unpopularity was false. North's policy was therefore far from realistic, and that his knowledge of the affairs of the Kandyan Kingdom was not deep, so as to base good policies. He was misled by the Adigar in his assessment about Prince Mootuswamy being a suitable candidate to be proclaimed King of Kandy in place of the reigning monarch, Sri Wickrama Rajasingha. North's assessment of Prince Mootuswamy was wrong as he had no support, nor had he the character to take a positive stand. He was crowned as King of Kandy in place of the reigning monarch, Sri Wickrama Rajasingha, who had been recognised by North as the legal

¹²⁷ Governor North's Despatch, 13 January 1800, C.O. 54/11, S.L.N.A. 5.

king. Mootuswamy was not able to rally support and had to leave Kandy along with the British Army, which retreated and was subsequently trapped, and destroyed. Prince Mootuswamy was also executed and this was the greatest reverse suffered by the British in Ceylon.

North's despatches point to the perilous position the British were in, and he strives to shift the blame for the defeat on the defection of the British Malay regiment. His despatch to Lord Hobart, Governor of Madras, on the 1st of July 1803, points to this:

“My Lord, I have this day received the dreadful intelligence that Kandi was taken on the 24th ultimo, owing as I have too much reason to believe, to the defection of a great Detachment of His Majesty's Malay Regiment, which formed the principal force of that Garrison”.¹²⁸

In his despatch of the 31st of August 1803 to Lord Hobart he refers to his position within the British Settlements, and that the district of Matara was virtually lost:

“My Lord, Two months are now elapsed since the horrible event of the Massacre at Kandi. The consequences to be expected from it have to a certain degree taken place – after hovering for a considerable time on the Frontiers of the district of Matura, and having found means to intimidate Province with a very Considerable Force, and the Commandant was on the point of abandoning the Fort and withdrawing his Garrison to Galle”.¹²⁹

In an earlier despatch, dated 1st of July 1803, North admits that the Kandyan forces of the king had endangered Colombo:

¹²⁸ Despatch sent by North to Lord Hobart, 1 July 1803, C.O. 54/11, S.L.N.A. 5.

¹²⁹ Despatch sent by Lord North to Lord Hobart, 31 August 1803, C.O. 54/11, S.L.N.A. 5.

“Lord Hobart, One of His Majesty’s Principal Secretaries of State. London. My Lord, Not more than eight days ago, the King of Candy at the head of the Most Numerous Force which he could collect in his Dominions, burst into these Settlements at Sitawaca, and attacked the petty fortress at Hanwelle, at the distance of eighteen English miles from this city, which was defended by a Small Garrison of 50 Europeans, 160 Sepoys and 17 Gun Lascars on the 3rd, 4th and 6th of this month”.¹³⁰

Though North strives to show that the attack was beaten back, the fact remains that the Kandyan forces at one stage had covered most of the areas occupied by the British. It was only when forces arrived from India by sea that the situation was saved.¹³¹

North had, apart from acting on bad intelligence, not planned the military expedition to Kandy with due diligence. No regard was paid to past failures of the Portuguese and Dutch expeditions to conquer Kandy. The organisation of reserve forces and the commissariat are vital aspects, which were ignored. A letter addressed by General McDowell to North, dated 5th February 1803 hints at this aspect, and warns of the situation that led to the failure of the British expedition:

“Should no pacific offer be made by the ministers and the King and court have fled from the Palace, it will be necessary that Your Excellency should determine whether the army is to remain in Candi during the rainy season, or fall back into the Seven Corales, and take possession of that Province, with a view of retaining it”.¹³²

¹³⁰ North’s Despatch to Lord Hobart, 15 September 1803, C.O. 54/11, S.L.N.A. 5.

¹³¹ North’s Despatch to Lord Hobart, 15 September 1804, C.O. 54/13, S.L.N.A. 5.

¹³² Report of General Hay MacDowall, 6 February 1803, C.O. 54/10, S.L.N.A. 5.

This letter was sent to North before Kandy was occupied and the decision to proclaim Prince Mootuswamy as king. North had not been able to defend and uphold the Prince's position on the throne, indicating that the Governor's actions and policies were failures. It had brought the British to a low position, which had to be retrieved. The British objective of getting the King of Kandy to agree to a subsidiary treaty or to substitute a sovereign more pliable to fall in line with the British aims and objectives was a failure during the tenure of Governor North's term of office.

Literature Review: Traditional Sources

The literature available to reconstruct the history of the Kandyan Kingdom falls broadly into two categories: firstly the Buddhist Monastic National Chronicles called the *Mahavamsa* and *Culavamsa*, which brought the island's history up to the end of the reign of King Kirit Sri Rajasingha, in 1782. The Monastic National Chronicles of Ceylon are unique in the history of any country as it began in the sixth century A.D., when the first kingdom was situated in Anuradhapura. The records were written in the classical language of Pali. It is the recording of the facts from a Buddhist monkish point of view, but it is a reliable guide to tracing the historical events, especially when substantiated by epigraphical, archeological, numismatic, and foreign sources.¹³³

¹³³ The National Chronicles - The *Mahavamsa* and *Culavamsa*: A history up to 1782, which includes the Kandyan Kingdom. The first Buddhist priest to set out on this task was in the Sixth Century A.D., Mahanama, and Buddherakita brought the Chronicle history up to 1782 during the reign of Kirti Sri Rajasingha. The German scholar Wilhelm Geiger edited and translated the *Mahavamsa* and *Culavamsa*, and thereby rendered a great service to Ceylon (Sri Lanka) history. However, the pioneering work of translating these chronicles was by George Turnour, a British Civil Servant, who trained in Ceylon. Turnour's first publication was in the Ceylon Almanac, 1833, entitled *An Epitome of the History of Ceylon from Pali and Sinhalese Records*, Sri Lanka

The *Rajaveliya* and *Pujaveliya* are other sources of literature that covers the history of the kingdoms of Ceylon. The *Pujaveliya* was written in the local Sinhalese language in the thirteenth century. The *Rajaveliya* and later the *Bandaraveliyas* cover the history from the fourteenth to the eighteenth century.¹³⁴

These writings, along with their folklore, went into the making of the traditional view of the Kandyan Sinhalese, within the Kandyan Kingdom. They also influenced the perception the people had of their history and destiny: an outlook bonded through a common cultural and spiritual heritage transmitted through the Buddhist religion, with its “Sangha” or Church, which was spread throughout the country in the temples and monasteries. The Buddhist ceremonies, festivals and cultural events, and the sermons delivered by the Buddhist monks on a regular basis, strengthened a common historical consciousness. This historical perception was revealed in the letters written by Ehelapola (one of the King of Kandy’s Chief Ministers) to D’Oyly. For example, Governor Wilson enclosed a letter

National Archives. Gururige’s *Mahavamsa – The Great Chronicle of Sri Lanka* (Colombo, 1989, pp.29-30). We should not forget the fact that it was Turnour, who way back in 1833 worked out the first chronology of the long line of Sinhala rulers. In his *Epitome* he set out “the succession and genealogy of one hundred and sixty five kings who filled the throne during 2341 years” from Vijaya in 543 B.C. to Sri Vikrama Rajasingha in 1815 (Tennet, p.270).

¹³⁴ The *Pujavaliya* was written in Sinhalese prose, by a Buddhist monk in the thirteenth century. In a similar fashion the *Rajavaliya* and *Bandaravaliya* were written by other writers, covering the history of Ceylon up to the eighteenth century; Ananda S. Kulasuriya, ‘The Minor Chronicles and Other Traditional Writings in Sinhalese and Their Practical Value’, *Ceylon Historical Journal*, No. 25 (1978), pp.1-33; Ananda S. Kulasuriya, ‘Sinhala Writing and the Transmission of Texts in Pre-Modern Times’, *Sri Lanka Journal of the Humanities*, No. 16 (1990), pp.174-189; and *Puhavaliya* (Buddhist Cultural Centre, Colombo, 1997).

by Ehelapola to D'Oyly as an attachment in his despatch to Liverpool, dated 27 November 1811. This letter, in summary, contains the Kandyan Sinhalese point of view of the history of the country, and its perceived destiny. It points to the close association of the Buddhist religion with the King of Kandy and the Sinhalese inhabitants. Buddhism and the Sinhalese, led by the King of Kandy, were destined to protect the country as a preserve of the Buddhist religion, and all other elements are foreign and are a threat. As pointed out by Michael Roberts this letter contains the reference to over 23 centuries of history associated with Ceylon: *a Dhammadipa associated with the Sinhalese and then Kings*.¹³⁵ Roberts further maintains that all other people present within the island were foreigners who were therefore a threat to the 'Great Command' of the King of Kandy.¹³⁶

Apart from the National Chronicles there was a folk tradition. Mention must be made to the "hatana" or war poems. These cover the wars waged by the Kandyan Kings against the Portuguese, the Dutch and the British (a reference to the 1803 first British expedition, which was defeated). These popular poems/ballads were sung and recited at formal occasions (before a ruling monarch, or chiefs), and informally in the villages during festive seasons. This transmitted the popular imagery, associated with a shared sense of history and tradition, tied to popular myths within a heroic mould. This gave a sense of purpose and destiny to the people in their perception of

¹³⁵ Michael Roberts, *Sinhala Consciousness in the Kandyan Period, 1590's to 1815*, Colombo, Vijitha Yapa Publications, 2003.

¹³⁶ Ehelapola's letter to D'Oyly, of 27 November 1811. This letter enclosed in Governor Wilson's despatch to Liverpool, continued in C.O.54/42, pp.47-51, of 26 February 1812, S.L.N.A. 5. This letter written by the King of Kandy's Chief Minister captures the historical traditions of the Sinhalese people, and the true political and symbolic significance of the King of the Kandyan people. *The Collective Consciousness of the Sinhalese During the Kandyan Era; Manichean Images, Associational Logic*, Michael Roberts, University of Adelaide, Adelaide.

the past and present events. These constituted the varied and complex factors that went into the culture and outlook of the inhabitants living within the Kandyan Kingdom.

The capture and disposal of the last King of Kandy was a dramatic event in the country's history; consequently a substantial body of folklore had been built around this. It marked the end of a local royal dynastic history, and its associated traditions, spread over 2000 years of recorded history as seen in the National Chronicles. Dolapihilla has written these folk traditions in his book *In the Last Days of Sri Wickrama Rajasingha*.¹³⁷ The writer has gathered all the traditional folklore from diverse and varied sources, and set it down. It reiterates the traditional nationalist outlook. Some of the facts stated are not historically valid, but it does pass on the tradition that arose during this troubled period of history, where the reigning monarch was deposed following a series of tragic events that marked the conflicts that the last King, Sri Wickrama Rajasingha, had with his nobility.

Within the ambit of the traditional sources are those that relate to the laws and customs of the Kandyan Sinhalese. These were not written, and were applied and followed by conventions and traditions. Those pertaining to Kingship and the Buddhist clergy had written sources (such as the Laws of Manu for the Kings, and the Vinaya rules for the Buddhist clergy), and this was a challenge that British administrators like D'Oyly faced when the Kandyan Kingdom was taken over. Unless the British Civil Service acquired a knowledge of the rules, and had them codified it was difficult to understand and appreciate their significance in the process of administering the Kandyan provinces. D'Oyly initiated action, when he was Resident, to begin this process. A Buddhist monk was entrusted with this task and a

¹³⁷ *"Ingrisi Hatana" (War with the English)*, originally composed c. 1804 by Valigala Mudali, ed. by K.R. Jayatunga (Matugama, 1951). This war poem was composed in praise of Sri Wickrama Raja Singhe, who was able to beat the British army that entered the Kandyan Kingdom in 1803.

document was presented, but was only printed with an English translation in 1879. It was entitled as the *Niti-Nighanduva or the Vocabulary of Law*.¹³⁸

It set down the laws, as they existed in the last days of the Kandyan Kingdom. The introduction sums up its importance as a guide to understanding the laws of the Kandyan Sinhalese:

“NITI-NIGHANDUVA; or THE VOCABULARY OF LAW.

I make obeisance to Buddha, and in the spirit of his teaching, to the best of my ability compile Niti-Nighanduva.

In this island of Lanka there are three kinds of law. Of these, Royal law and Sacred law have been from ancient times set forth in books, but that kind of law which is called Traditional law has not as yet been committed to writing.

As the law therefore must have been often doubtful and uncertain, in the interests of the Sinhalese community, that the dispensers of justice may learn what is, and avoid bias in their investigations, and that Sinhalese law may be better known, I undertake this work.

¹³⁸ *Niti-Nighanduva; or The Vocabulary of Law*, Government Printer, Ceylon 1880, Reprinted in 1994 by Navarang in collaboration with Lake House Bookshop, as it existed in the last days of the Kandyan Kingdom. Translated by L.T.R. Le Mesurier, Ceylon Civil Service, and T.B. Panabokke, President of Dumbar, Kandy. According to Le Mesurier a Committee of Kandyan Chiefs under the direction of Sawers, the Judicial Commissioner, prepared a code of Kandyan Law. This was arranged in a systematic manner by the Secretary, who was a priest attached to the Malwatte Buddhist Monastery in Kandy. This was later not traced, and Le Mesurier had made a search for it. A copy was found with Panabokke and, based on this the first English translation was made by Le Mesurier. The topics cover persons and property, marriage and inheritance, and land tenures.

It is called Niti-Nighanduva, and is compiled from the archives of the Court of Kandy with the help of elders versed in the ancient law. Its contents may be summarized as the derivation and the general purport of the term law, and a brief account of what is legal and what is not.”

L.T.R. Le Mesurier, a civil servant like D’Oyly, who served in the Kandyan Provinces did the English translation. The original document had come into his possession in 1876 and he had the government print it as a guide.

The Kandyan Sinhalese legal and official documents are a good source of history of the times. For example *Sannasas* are royal grants, made on the King’s directions in copper, silver or gold. There have been instances where these were issued in the normal manner, written on palm leaves. Such grants or *Sannasa* were issued to temples, and to persons shown special favour by the King in recognition of services rendered. They are historically correctly dated in terms of the Buddhist manner, showing the era. The details of the person or the temple receiving this special grant is also clearly stipulated. In order to prevent fraudulent grants being made they passed an Ordinance in 1866 and 1867, where holders of the *Sannasa* were requested to register them.¹³⁹

The Kandyan Kingdom had a palace archive. There was a Chief Secretary who acted as an archivist of the kingdom. Records were kept of lands, territorial provinces and districts, and that of religious institutions belonging to the Buddhist Clergy. There was a list of land grants, which was given in *olas* (letters) written on gold or copper. These were all entered in a register.¹⁴⁰ However, after the takeover of the kingdom many of these

¹³⁹ Ordinance No. 6 of 1866 and Ordinance No. 15 of 1867. These ordered the registration of all *Sannasas*.

¹⁴⁰ International Council on Archives, Guide to the Sources of Asian History, Sri Lanka II (Vol. I), Colombo, 1996, p.XV.

valuable documents appear to have been lost. It is only the land grants found in the temples and with individuals that are available for study. The palace records are not traceable.

Governor Herbert Stanley initiated a Historical Manuscripts Commission, which began its work in 1931. Under this Commission unpublished manuscripts were to be traced. When discovered in institutions, or with private persons, specific steps were taken to preserve them, and for their translation into English. The Historical Manuscripts Commission published three reports, and many historical documents were identified, catalogued, and translated. With this came the letters of D'Oyly and his correspondence with the Kandyan Chiefs. Into this category fell the diplomatic letters written and received by the Kings of Kandy, which amounted to about a 160 letters. The work of the Historical Manuscript Commission proved to be of great assistance to scholars studying the history of this period.¹⁴¹

A Review of Contemporary Written History

While D'Oyly's contribution to the expansion of British territory in Ceylon has been sparsely covered in previous publications, no study has been made of the process of British expansion in Ceylon between 1805 and 1818 that concentrates on the methods, policies and approach followed by D'Oyly, within the context of infiltration, as a method utilised for political expansion. There has been no work on D'Oyly as a civil servant whose functions (at that period of time) combined the roles of an administrator, diplomat, and military strategist. D'Oyly's work and contributions appear to be akin to the work of persons, such as the Lawrence brothers and Jacob in India. This was

¹⁴¹ A. Rasanayagam, *Report on the Tamil Documents in the Archives - Letters written and received by the Kings of Kandy with their friends in Pondicherry, South India, in the Second Report of the Ceylon Historical Manuscript Commission 1935, Sessional Paper XXI, 1935, pp.21-24; and Rambutewelle Siddharta Thero (edited and translated), Letters from D'Oyly, 1937, Historical Manuscripts Commission: Bulletin, No. 2.*

a period of British colonial history when there was a transition from being traders to rulers in South Asia. The Kandyan Kingdom of 1815 and the Proclamations of 1818 have not been examined in the context of the British development of their sovereignty over Ceylon, and the significant part played by D'Oyly. In this sense the part played by D'Oyly, as an empire builder, has not been examined within the historical context of the extension of British sovereignty.

Lennox A. Mills in his *Ceylon under British Rule* covered a wide area between 1795 and 1932.¹⁴² It was written in 1931 and was the book recognised as a comprehensive account of British rule in Ceylon. It was well researched as far as the primary documents were concerned from the point of view of the British policy. Most of the primary documents pertaining to this period were studied from the colonial office in London, with very little from those available in Ceylon. It also covered a very wide area, and no assessment was possible on D'Oyly's work as a civil servant, or made of the British colonial policy in relation to South Asia and Ceylon.

Colvin R. de Silva submitted a thesis to the London University in 1932 entitled *Ceylon under British Occupation, 1795-1833*, which was later published.¹⁴³ In chapter five of volume one of the thesis he writes on the decline and fall of the Kandyan Kingdom. In examining the causes he refers to the part played by D'Oyly. It is a passing remark, and does not focus or assess the policy of infiltration, and the distinctive part played by D'Oyly. The writer makes no attempt to assess British colonial policy, in a critical manner, except that the Kandyan Kingdom after 1815 was subject to the

¹⁴² Lennox A. Mills, *Ceylon Under British Rule - 1795-1932*, London, Oxford University Press, 1933.

¹⁴³ Colvin R. de Silva, *Ceylon Under British Occupation - 1796-1833*, Volumes I and II, first published in 1941. Reprinted in 1995, Navarang in collaboration with Lake House Bookshop, 1995.

forces of modern development, as opposed to the feudal system, that prevailed under the Sinhalese monarchical system of government.

In his two books, *Tri Sinhala: The Last Phase - 1796-1815*¹⁴⁴ and *Sinhale and the Patriots 1815-1818*¹⁴⁵, P.E. Pieris covers the period of the British take over of the Kandydan Kingdom, and the period of the Kandyan rebellion. However he makes no evaluation of D'Oyly work in either book, only mentions his activities in passing. He used material from the Public Record Office in London supplemented by a few records available in Colombo. Pieris' history is descriptive and does not analyse the inner currents of the history of the time pertaining to British expansion, the strategic value of Sri Lanka, and the part played by D'Oyly in this process. Further, he has not fully utilised the resources available in the archives in Sri Lanka, such as the letters written by the Kandyan Kings to the French, the British and the Nawab of Arcot. These letters will point to the strategic significance of Ceylon, with its vital harbour of Trincomalee on its east coast that was claimed by the Kings of Kandy as coming within their kingdom.

V.L.B. Mendis submitted a thesis entitled *The Advent of the British in Ceylon* for his Master's Degree at the University of London.¹⁴⁶ It was subsequently published as a book in 1971. The book covers the diplomatic missions sent by the British to the Kandyan Kings. It covers the period from the mid-eighteenth century to the early nineteenth century. It does not cover the work of D'Oyly, though it examines the British policy from their base in South India towards the acquisition of a harbour for the British navy. In this

¹⁴⁴ P.E. Pieris, *Tri Sinhala: The Last Phase - 1796-1815*, Cambridge, W. Heffer & Sons, 1939.

¹⁴⁵ P.E. Pieris, *Sinhale and the Patriots - 1815-1818*, Colombo, The Colombo Apothecaries Co., 1950.

¹⁴⁶ V.L.B. Mendis, *The Advent of the British in Ceylon. 1752-1803*, Master of Arts Thesis, London University, June 1966. Published by Dehiwela (Ceylon), Tisava Prakasakayo, 1971 (*Ceylon Historical Journal*, Vol.18).

sense it does give an insight into the broad strategic policy at that period followed by the British. No attempt was made to assess the policy of infiltration, and the part played by D'Oyly.

In 1999 Brendon Gooneratne and Yasmine Gooneratne wrote a biography of John D'Oyly entitled *This Inscrutable Englishman*.¹⁴⁷ This book has the accuracy of fact, but it is a biography which examines his life within his own English society of the late eighteenth century, and that of a colonised society of Sri Lanka where he worked and interacted. It is an account of the ideological conflicts that he experienced. By no means is it a historical work that covered the process of British expansion, and the subtle methods used by its agents like D'Oyly. Its failure as a work of history is due to a lack of reference to primary documents, covering this period, and the emphasis on striving to infer facts on D'Oyly's personal life. This is a big problem, as D'Oyly left no personal records, except the letters he wrote to members of

¹⁴⁷ B. Gooneratne and Y. Gooneratne, *This Inscrutable Englishman, Sir John D'Oyly, Baronet*, London and New York, Cassels, 1999 - Patrick Peebles while reviewing the book stated: "While this book is a successful biography, it falls short as history". This is the main defect of this book, and does not adequately address, or assess, British diplomacy towards the Kandyan Kingdom, or provide an insight into the process of infiltration. Nor has the strategic factor of the diplomacy been dealt with. Peebles also states: "The conquest of the Kandyan Kingdom and D'Oyly's role are among the most frequently discussed events in Sri Lankan popular history". There has been no proper assessment of D'Oyly's role in relation to the British aims and objectives from its strategic dimension; or an analysis of the March 1815 Kandyan Convention, and the Proclamation of 1818 within its historical context. D'Oyly's contribution to the development of British sovereignty in Ceylon, and its consequent development of the colonial state has not been studied in depth.

his family, in England. However, these letters give very little information as to his official work in Ceylon, and his views in this regard.¹⁴⁸

Geoffrey Powell in his *The Kandyan Wars - the British Army in Ceylon, 1803-1818*, published in London in 1973 describes in one chapter the contribution that D'Oyly made in the capture of the Kandyan Kingdom in 1815.¹⁴⁹ It is essentially a military history, and does not deal with infiltration and the strategic factors underlying the British policy towards the Kandyan Kingdom. However, Powell does make an attempt to assess D'Oyly's contribution from a military point of view in the capture of the Kandyan Kingdom. His views on his official diary is that it is dry, and it can therefore be observed that he had made no critical analysis of this important document within the historical context of the period covered.

Lorna Dewaraja wrote on the history of the Kandyan Kingdom, covering the period 1707 to 1782. The book is entitled *The Kandyan Kingdom of Sri Lanka 1707-1782*.¹⁵⁰ This covers the reigns of King Narendra Sinha, Vijaya Rajasingha, and King Kirti Sri Rajasingha who ruled from 1747 till 1782. The book covers very adequately the institutional basis of the Kandyan Kingdom, including its socio-economic basis, caste system, origin and state, and the central and provincial government machinery. In particular it points to the difficulties of politics and administration faced by the Nayakkar Dynasty, who were South Indian, and were therefore foreign to the country. In the Introduction to the book there is a section that is relevant to the period of study between the periods of 1805 to 1818. In this there is also a reference to John D'Oyly and his work in relation to the Kandyan Kingdom. It is short and covers half a page.

¹⁴⁸ P.E. Pieris, ed. *Letters to Ceylon, 1814-1824, Being Correspondence Addressed to Sir John D'Oyly*, Cambridge, England, W. Heffer & Sons Ltd, 1938.

¹⁴⁹ Geoffrey Powell, *The Kandyan Wars, The British Army in Ceylon - 1803-1818*, New Delhi, Navarang, 1984.

¹⁵⁰ Dewaraja, *The Kandyan Kingdom of Sri Lanka - 1707-1782*, 1988.

Lorna Dewaraja has also written a book *Sri Lanka Through French Eyes*, which covers the French connections with Sri Lanka and the Kandyan Kingdom.¹⁵¹ In Chapter VII an account is given as to the background to the British capture of Trincomalee Harbour, and the rest of the Dutch Settlement in Ceylon. It flowed directly from the political events in Europe, where the Napoleonic armies occupied Holland, abolished the monarchy and established the Batavian Republic. This made the Dutch allies of the French, and the possibility of the French taking over Trincomalee. The British feared a capture of the Dutch possessions in Ceylon (including the strategic harbour of Trincomalee) by the French. This factor provoked the British to takeover the maritime provisions of Ceylon.

The strategic importance of the harbour of Trincomalee is explained as follows:

“The struggle for Trincomalee then began. It was not merely the struggle for a naval base but a contest between the two rival European nations for mastery over India and subsequently Asia to be fought on land and sea. It was envisaged that having defeated the British at sea, the expeditionary force under Bussy would land in the Coramandel while hords of Indians under Hyder Ali, the inveterate foe of the British would rally round the French”.¹⁵²

Channa Wickramasekera’s book entitled *Kandy at War* covers the periods between 1694 to 1818. The writer covers the military and its allied problems. His theme is that the fall of the Kandyan Kingdom was due mainly to the military superiority of the European Armies (in this instance the British) as expressed in the following words:

“Kandyan survival would have become increasingly a test of endurance between European armies and the Kandyan

¹⁵¹ Ibid.

¹⁵² Ibid, p. 52.

peasantry, rather than the outcome of military conflict. It was a struggle, which the Europeans, with their more efficient weapons and greater resources, were bound to win".¹⁵³

No reference is made to D'Oyly in the part displayed by diplomacy and consequent infiltration that made British expansion and consolidation easier to achieve. The main objective appears to trace the military aspects of the conflict between the European powers and the Kandyan Kingdom, and to see the conflict in the light of the military technology involved.

A British Civil Servant, H.W. Codrington, who was a historian, wrote a book on Ceylon History, titled *A Short History of Ceylon*. He had this to say on the last King of Kandy:

"It must also be recorded that he defended the lower and middle classes from the exactions of the chiefs, whose power he strove to diminish. In so doing he incurred the displeasure of powerful familiars, and their desire to be rid of him extended to his whole house, in whose debt many of the chiefs stood. Had he not alienated these expedition of 1815 might not have had a successful issue".¹⁵⁴

There have been a number of authors who have written on the British colonial policy covering this period of history. Alicia Schrikker's *Dutch and British Colonial Intervention in Sri Lanka, 1780-1815* based on her Leiden University Ph.D thesis, deals with the Dutch and British colonial policy.¹⁵⁵ It does not examine the facts between 1805 and 1818 from the point of view of the inner reasons of the British diplomatic moves. The British diplomacy in

¹⁵³ Channa Wickramasekera, *Kandy at War - 1594-1818*, 2004, p.53.

¹⁵⁴ H.W. Codrington, *A Short History of Ceylon*, London, MacMillan and Co. Ltd, 1939, p.174.

¹⁵⁵ Alicia Schrikker, *Dutch and British Colonial Intervention in Sri Lanka, 1780-1815*, Brill, 2007.

India and South Asia had a wider perspective, which is not covered in this book. This study in a sense covers the late eighteenth century when the Dutch East Indian Company (V.O.C.) ruled the maritime province of Ceylon, and the reactions of the British, who replaced the Dutch, in regards to the methods of administration, covering the aspects of public administration. Attention is paid to the new forces that were released in Europe consequent to the French revolution. Its influence in Ceylon during the period of 1805 to 1815 was the fear of a French intervention due to the success of Napoleon from a military point of view in the continent of Europe. In dealing with a native agency, the writer deals with the formative steps taken by the British in establishing a British colonial state in Ceylon.

Asoka Bandarage wrote on *Colonialism in Sri Lanka*¹⁵⁶, which covered the period between 1883 to 1886, pertaining to the Kandyan Kingdom. This book was a version of the thesis that was presented as a Ph.D dissertation at the Yale University in the USA. This book covers the different theoretical perspectives to colonialism, and therefore covers the aspects of concepts like 'development' and 'modernisation' within the context of colonial policy. It is a broad evaluation of the main theoretical positions on colonialism in the nineteenth century pertaining to the Kandyan Kingdom. For example, an analysis is made of the main Marxist, and the modernist schools, concerning the impact of western colonialism in Asia. No attempt is made to study the diplomatic and strategic issues, from a realistic perspective.

Patrick Peebles book *Social Change in Nineteenth Century Ceylon*¹⁵⁷ was, in essence, his doctoral dissertation, entitled *The Transformation of a Colonial Elite. The Mudaliyars of Nineteenth Century Ceylon*, submitted to the University of Chicago. It covers the evolution of the colonial elite, from the

¹⁵⁶ Asoka Bandarage, *Colonialism in Sri Lanka*, Lake House Investments Ltd in collaboration with Mouton Publishers, Colombo, Sri Lanka, 1983.

¹⁵⁷ Patrick Peebles, *Social Change in Nineteenth Century Ceylon*, Navrang in collaboration with Lake House Bookshop, 1996.

Dutch to the British periods of Ceylon history. It attempts to connect a number of interconnected subjects, pertaining to both economic and social changes, within the country. It refers to the close connection established between the Sinhalese Chiefs in the maritime districts of Ceylon and the then British government. This fact had a bearing on D'Oyly's process of infiltration into the Kandyan Kingdom, as he made use of these chiefs, as clearly shown in his official diary between 1805 and 1815.

C.A. Bayly has written a book entitled *Empire & Information, Intelligence gathering and social communication in India, 1780-1870*, which gives an insight into the political intelligence which was followed by the British during their political expansion in India, during the course of the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. This work has a direct relevance to the subject of infiltration covered in this study of British relations with the Kandyan Kingdom. Bayly states as follows:

“Recent studies have shown that historians have exaggerated the military superiority of the British in India. Indian armies were rapidly narrowing the gap in technology in the later eighteenth century. Where the British did have a critical advantage, however, was in their political planning and in the cohesion of their ruling group. They were now much more effective at anticipating the alliances and armed resistance of the Indian states. In large measure, this was because they were forewarned by increasingly effective systems of intelligence.”¹⁵⁸

Bayly points to the fact that British political expansion in India was not due to military superiority, but a consequent of a good intelligence system, which was followed. This is, in essence, a reference to the whole policy of a successful infiltration.

H.L. Seneviratne, in his book *Rituals of the Kandyan State*, points to the spiritual and political ties of the institution of kingship in Ceylon, during this period.¹⁵⁹ There was a close connection between Buddhism and politics. This tie spread to all social/economic issues within society. This was the biggest challenge to the process of governance that faced the British in their administration of the Kandyan provinces.

Michael Roberts in his book *Sinhala Consciousness in the Kandyan period 1590s to 1815* refers to the subject of the ethnic identity in Ceylon (Sri Lanka), where he examines this in the historical context of the Kandyan Kingdom.¹⁶⁰ He tries to prove that the modern concept of nationalism, and ethnic identities, are not due to the impact of colonial rule. By reference to contemporary records, he shows that there was an existence of a Sinhala consciousness prior to the British rule. This was one fact that the British exploited to their benefit in the process of infiltrating, and subverting, the then Kandyan Kingdom, as revealed in the correspondence and communications between D'Oyly and the Kandyan chiefs.

None of the writers on the history of Ceylon cover the diplomacy associated with infiltration as a first step towards extending British sovereignty, nor the concrete measures taken towards consolidating the takeover. These formed the crux of the foundation and expansion of the Second British Empire in India and South Asia. An explanation purely on military superiority is not adequate to explain the rise of the British Second Empire in Asia.

A reason given for the fall of the Kandyan Kingdom was the cruelty of King Sri Wickrama Rajasingha, and his ethnicity, which has been described as

¹⁵⁸ C.A. Bayly, *Empire & Information, Intelligence gathering and social communication in India, 1780-1870*, Cambridge University Press, 1996, pp.56-58.

¹⁵⁹ Seneviratne, H.L., *Rituals of the Kandyan State*, Cambridge University Press, 1978.

¹⁶⁰ Michael Roberts, *Sinhala Consciousness in the Kandyan Period 1590s to 1815*, Vijtha Yapa Publications, Colombo, 2003.

being a Malabar, from South India. Most of the writers, covering this period of history, ascribe the downfall of the kingdom to these two factors. Some of these writers refer to the clash between the king and the nobility; and the cause of this conflict to these factors of cruelty of the monarch and that of his being a foreigner. The easy British takeover, in March 1815, has been submitted to be due to these two factors, and little mention has been made of the strategic issues, or the subtle methods of infiltration, and consequent subversion, of the kingdom by the British.

The basic issue in regard to the policy of infiltration, followed by the British, is to examine the reasons as to how a small nation like Britain came to emerge as the “paramount power” over the whole subcontinent of India, and, in this process, became a great land power in Asia. With a strong land base, and a dominant navy, the Indian Ocean became a virtual British lake. There was no challenge till the emergence of the Japan Navy in the 1940s, during the course of the Second World War.

This process, and the impulse, towards infiltration will be examined in the British relations with the Kandyan Kingdom between the years 1805 to 1818, a process followed and applied by John D’Oyly. As to John D’Oyly himself no adequate assessment has been made as to his methods and achievements. His achievements were twofold: an easy take over of a kingdom that had withstood attacks by western powers for over three centuries, in March 1815, and thereafter, the laying of a framework and foundations towards consolidation.

In D’Oyly’s career one sees the strategy followed by the British in India and South Asia. In 1805 D’Oyly began his diplomatic career when he was put in charge of the British relations with the Kandyan Kingdom. It was in the same year that Napoleon became the head of the French state, and pursued a policy of world domination. This vision of domination stretched to India and Asia, and the British strategy was to support coalitions in Europe of countries opposed to Napoleon and his strategies, and to use the British

Navy to oppose him on the sea. In this context, Britain had a growing Empire spread worldwide, a strong economy, and a wide spread commercial and trade base, with a dominant navy that had a worldwide reach. In this situation, the British were able to follow a strategy through other means, rather than rely on purely military ones, for example infiltration, through acts of diplomacy and intrigue. D'Oyly's activities during this period refer to this, especially in keeping a watch over any activity of the French within the Kandyan Court, and to prevent the French from getting the strategic harbour of Trincomalee.

In order to understand the strategic significance of D'Oyly's policy towards the Kandyan Court, it is important to study the French strategy during this period globally and regionally as it applied to India, South Asia and the Indian Ocean. In 1811 Napoleon had stated:

“In five years, I shall be master of the world: there only remains Russia, but I shall crush her”.¹⁶¹

To the Kandyan court (especially its King, Sri Wickrama Rajasingha) what counted was the regional issue of an Anglo-French conflict. The British had tried to take over the kingdom in 1803, and failed. From that they had proclaimed Prince Mootuswamy as King of Kandy. Hence, it appeared to Sri Wickrama Rajasingha that the best policy was to activate a French alliance, and oppose the British occupation of Ceylon. Lorna Dewaraja had this to say:

“It is clear that Napoleon did have vision of an Indian empire and Sri Lanka too was in the picture. After the British occupation of the Maritime Provinces in 1796 the king of Kandy continued his correspondence with the French agents in India this time requesting their help to oust the British. The king had an ambassador permanently stationed in India: first Venkata Perumal and after his death Kadiresanpillai. In reply

¹⁶¹ History Today, Volume 57, Record 7, General Jonathan Riley, 2007, p.37.

to the king's letter Dumorier and Lescallier who had been appointed as Commissioners of the Civil and Municipal administration of all the French possessions in India, sent a letter dated 7 January 1799 from Mauritius to Kadiresanpillai through a person named Monneron. As the letter was in French it was translated into Tamil and forwarded to the king of Kandy at the time, Sri Vikrama Rajasingha (1798-1815). The contents of the letter reveal what the French had in their mind but failed to achieve. It says that their enemy (the English) had been defeated and that an army has been despatched to help their ally".¹⁶²

S.P. Sen in his book, *The French in India 1763-1816* had stated that Napoleon had a plan to reach India by land.¹⁶³ It is also known that Napoleon had a plan to use Ceylon and Trincomalee as a naval base. He had therefore ordered copies of Percival's book *An Account of the Island of Ceylon*.¹⁶⁴ These books, with Napoleon's crest, were later found and were exhibited in Colombo.

There are unpublished thesis which relate to this period of study. For example, Colgate in his thesis and title, "Trincomalee and the East Indies Squadron, 1746-1844" (London University M.A., 1959), gives an account of the strategic significance of the Trincomalee Harbour. S.B. Wickramasekera in his thesis "The Social and Political Organisation of the Kandyan Kingdom" (London University, M.A., 1961), gives an organisational setup of the Kandyan Kingdom. It gives an insight into the caste system, land tenure and political organisation, which are all tied up.

¹⁶² Dewaraja, *Sri Lanka Through French Eyes*, 1989, p.73 - This letter is found in the second report of the Historical Manuscripts Commission of Ceylon, September 1935, p.24.

¹⁶³ S.P. Sen, *The French in India 1763-1816*, Calcutta, 1947, p.557.

¹⁶⁴ Percival, *An Account of the Island of Ceylon*.

In the Sri Lanka Archives there is a Ph.D. Thesis on the subject of “British Administration in the Kandyan Provinces of Sri Lanka (1815-1833)”. This thesis covers the work of the Board of Commissioners, Kandy, and the Board of Judicial Commissioners, Kandy. D’Oyly as Resident and First Commissioner presided over the meetings. James Jay as Second Commissioner attended to the judicial functions. In 1821 the Officer commanding the troops was added as a member. The Judicial Functions of the Kandyan Provinces were to attend to all appeals from cases, while attending to major cases like that pertaining to murder. Appeals from the Board of Commissioners were sent to the Governor in Colombo.

The Thesis covers the work of these two Bodies, as the Kandyan Provinces had a distinct and different form of administration till 1833, where after the Colebrooke Commission the administration for the whole country was unified.

The Background to the Policy of Infiltration

It is proposed to do the study of British infiltration and diplomacy within a realist framework. Realism only looks to the aims and objectives of a state or kingdom, and no moral scruples are adhered to. In the European tradition Machiavelli’s “Prince” brings the realistic framework and policies to be followed.¹⁶⁵ The naval significance of Ceylon is important within a global and regional context. To understand this a study of Alfred Mahan,¹⁶⁶ Carl

¹⁶⁵ N. Machiavelli, *Prince*, Translated into English by J.H. Whitfield, 1947 - Machiavelli set out the realist view of the relations among governments. He maintained that governments are not motivated by high values and good intentions. They pursue their own interests by following any effective methods which are available. Power was therefore the principal moving force in the relations among nations.

¹⁶⁶ A. Mahan, *The Influence of Sea Power in History, 1660-1743*, USA, 1890 - Mahan maintained that it was important that a country should control the seas for success to be obtained in international politics.

von Clausewitz¹⁶⁷, Hans J. Morgenthau, and Robert J. Myers is relevant. In examining the principles of political realism it is proposed to follow the six principles as enunciated in Morgenthau's book *Politics Among Nations: Struggle for Power and for Peace* (Fifth edition revised)¹⁶⁸ and Robert J. Myers' book *United States Foreign Policy in the Twenty-first Century*.¹⁶⁹ Myers sets out a history of political theory, which touches on idealism, and its theoretical counterpart of realism.

Myers shows that it is only through a study of ancient and modern political philosophers that good statecraft can result based on the principles of political realism. As Ceylon is within the region of South Asia, the study of *The Arthashastra*¹⁷⁰ (the classical Indian manual on statecraft) is important. Kautiliya, its author, submits that human nature remains the same, and consequently that states behave as they always have done. The Kandyan kings and the rulers of Ceylon and India are inheritors of this tradition in politics and diplomacy. His views are realist and, therefore, a study of the basic theories of Kautiliya is relevant to understand the diplomacy and statecraft of India and Ceylon. Books 7, 11 and 12 of *The Arthashastra* were found to be useful specifically relating to the principles to be followed in interstate relations. It points to the unethical and lack of moral scruples advocated in the interest of a kingdom or states which points to the realist view of politics.

¹⁶⁷ C. von Clausewitz, *On War*, edited and translated by M. Howard and P. Paret, Princeton University Press, 1984.

¹⁶⁸ Hans J. Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations: Struggle for Power and Peace* (Fifth edition revised), New York, Knopf, 1973, Chapters I and II.

¹⁶⁹ Robert J. Myers, *United States Foreign Policy in the Twenty-first Century*, Louisiana, State University Press, 2002.

¹⁷⁰ Kautiliya, *The Arthashastra*, Indian Penguin Books, 1992.

The Significance of the Study

No study has been made of the diary, journals and correspondence of John D'Oyly, the Kandyan Convention of 1815, and the Proclamations and their value assessed as historical records and sources of evidence in the context of 'infiltration', as a policy to takeover local Kingdoms. They provide a continuous daily record of the period between 1805 and 1818 of the Kandyan Kingdom. This period of Ceylon's history is significant as it saw the downfall of the Kandyan Kingdom, and the assumption of direct rule by the British over the whole country, as a single political and administrative unit till 1948 when political independence was granted.

Not only are the diary, journals and correspondence of D'Oyly of political and administrative significance, but they are also an important source of study of the laws and customs, and religious ceremonies of the people of the Kandyan Kingdom. To this extent they are important to the study of the socio/economic conditions that prevailed during this period of time in Ceylon. The diary and other documents therefore provide an interesting historical insight into the conditions of Ceylon at this time, and of British rule, administration and the process of infiltration. The study forms an aspect of the British expansion in South Asia in the early nineteenth century.

Normally a diary is a personal record and is subject to the prejudices of the writer. D'Oyly's diary is an official one and is a record of official work as a civil servant, and was written as part of duty of office.¹⁷¹ These diaries were a part of policy to aid the British Governor in Ceylon to formulate policy and administration. Hence accuracy of record was necessary. Events were

¹⁷¹ G.C. Mendis, *The Colebrooke Cameron Papers*, Vol. II, Minutes of Governor Maitland, Sri Lanka Government Archives, 1808, pp.265-266.

recorded as they were witnessed or heard. To this extent the official diaries are quite reliable and indispensable to historical research.¹⁷²

It is also proposed to study the available diplomatic documents of the Kandyan Kingdom. In 1815 when the British captured the Palace of the King of Kandy they found the diplomatic correspondence of the kings. These letters were those written to the French and British in South India, and to the Nawab of Arcot.¹⁷³ To date no study has been made of these documents as part of the history and diplomacy of the Kandyan kings during the period of late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. These letters would indicate broadly the Kandyan point of view during this period of British expansion.

What is revealed is the Kandyan connection with the French authorities in South India at Pondicherry. The Nayakkar Kings had relations with the French from the mid-eighteenth century, and this continued during the period of Sri Wickrama Rajasingha. Its basis was the old Kandyan Kingdom policy of turning to a European power with a strong navy to unseat a European power already established in Maritime Provinces of Ceylon. This process was seen when the Dutch replaced the Portuguese, and the British replaced the Dutch in Ceylon. The new policy was to turn to the French to oust the British in Ceylon. Any European power with a strong navy looked to the strategic harbour of Trincomalee to dominate the region and to control the passage to the South East Asian region of Malaysia and Indonesia, and the Pacific Ocean. This constituted the strategic factor in the British relations with the Kandyan Kingdom and was a driving force to subordinate it to

¹⁷² W. Jayasuriya, *The Ratnapura Diaries*, A Research Paper on the Diaries kept by the Government Agents of the Rathapura District of Ceylon - up to 1960, Sri Lanka Government Archives.

¹⁷³ C. Rasanayagam, Second Report of the Ceylon Historical Manuscript Commission, 1935, Sessional Paper XXI, Sri Lanka National Archives.

British interests to establish a stronghold over the strategic harbour of Trincomalee.

The reasons for the British success in expanding their Empire in South Asia, and in the subcontinent of India, are central to the British interest in Ceylon during their period of expansion. Historians have given reasons for the expansion and rise of the British Empire: from the disintegration of the Moghul Empire to the superiority of British military technology, and the decay of the Asian society, and its political structures.¹⁷⁴ It is suggested that all these factors do not adequately explain the rise and fulfilment of British rule in South Asia. It is in this context that the policy of infiltration is offered as one of the most vital reasons for the rapid success of the British Empire in South Asia. One of the aims of this research is to test this aspect of British expansion in Ceylon from 1805 to 1818.

The facts, pertaining to the main events in the nineteenth century, have been covered in a number of written works covered in the period of British Colonial History in Ceylon. However, none of these written works (published and unpublished), have interpreted the strategic factors and the policy of infiltration in its two phases. The official role of D'Oyly has not been studied in this historical context. This study, therefore, is an attempt at a new interpretation to the facts of British political expansion in Ceylon during the early part of the nineteenth century.

¹⁷⁴ P.J. Marshall, *The British Empire at the End of the Eighteenth Century*, Chapter I, *The Cambridge Illustrated History of the British Empire*, Cambridge University Press, 1991.

Chapter II

John D'Oyly follows a Positive Policy of Infiltration to takeover the Kandyan Kingdom: A Decisive Turn in Diplomacy

As D'Oyly was in charge of conducting British relations with the then Kandyan Kingdom, as part of his duties as the Chief Government Translator, it is important to understand the politics of the Kandyan Kingdom. This would enable a true assessment of how he skilfully played the forces within the Kandyan Kingdom to the advantage of the British in Ceylon. D'Oyly worked under three governors: Maitland, Wilson and Brownrigg. The British policy was to subordinate the kingdom by controlling its external relations, and thereby further the growing British interests in India and South Asia. In this context D'Oyly's aims and objectives were to undermine the kingdom and to make it an appendage to the growing British Empire in Asia, later called the 'Second British Empire'.¹⁷⁵

British Policy towards the Kandyan Kingdom

Governor North, the first British Governor, realised the condition of the Kandyan Kingdom and its consequent disturbance to the British hold over the island, and its strategic harbour of Trincomalee on its east coast. British policy was, therefore, to control it and impose an 'unequal' treaty on the Kingdom, to enable the British to control its internal and external affairs. The external factor was the fear of a French attempt to control India and the Indian Ocean region. Lord Dundas, who was the British Secretary of State for War and was responsible for the Colonies, laid down a policy to be pursued towards the Kandyan Kingdom. This was revealed in a minute, which was appended to a despatch to Governor North. The policy was to

¹⁷⁵ *Ceylon Gazette* of 29 May 1824 - refers to his merits as a public servant and his contribution to annexing the Kandyan Kingdom.

subordinate the Kandyan Kingdom to ensure that the civil government was virtually in British hands.¹⁷⁶

Maitland and Wilson followed North successively as Governors of Ceylon. They followed a peaceful policy with the Kandyan Court. This was consequent to the disastrous First Kandyan War, and the need for caution as directed from the British government in London. Efforts were directed towards a Treaty, and to get the prisoners of war held in Kandy released. There was a fear of French influence within the Kandyan Court causing another war, but the period was peaceful.¹⁷⁷ In Governor Wilson's despatch of 4 September 1811 to the Earl of Liverpool in London he states as follows:

“The aspect of affairs in Kandy has grown more and more threatening since I last had the honor of addressing your Lordship, and on my arrival here I received intelligence that the most active preparations were making in the Kandian provinces called the 4 Corles and the 7 Corles, for the invasion of our Hina, Happitigam and Callootoor Districts – Even since I began the present Despatch, a letter has arrived from Matura, stating that the first Adigar is at a place called Battoogededar levying and training men and strenuously employed in all kinds of warlike preparation – messengers have also been traced from Kandy to a Malabar at Negapatam, who is known to have been the bearer of communications between the King of Kandy and the French settlements on the Coast”.¹⁷⁸

¹⁷⁶ Geoffrey Powell, *The Kandyan Wars – 1803-1815*, New Delhi, Navarang, 1984, p.67.

¹⁷⁷ Governor Wilson to Liverpool in London, 15 July 1811, C.O. 54, S.L.N.A. 5 – based on D'Oyly's Reports.

¹⁷⁸ Governor Wilson's despatch to the Colonial Secretary, 4 September 1811, C.O. 54, S.L.N.A. 5.

Diplomatic relations changed when Governor Brownrigg arrived in Ceylon in March 1812. Instructions issued to him were to avoid war with the Kandyan Kingdom as far as possible.¹⁷⁹ However he was ambitious to unite the whole island under British rule. In 1813 he reported on the military weakness of the Kandyan Kingdom.¹⁸⁰ He also sought instructions as to what action he should take if there was a revolt within the kingdom.¹⁸¹

D'Oyly, as Chief Translator and the head of the Intelligence Service, aided Governor Brownrigg in planning the take over of the Kandyan Kingdom. D'Oyly was given a secret vote of £1500, which he used to pay his spies and informants and to bribe key officials within the kingdom.¹⁸² He had a number of persons who entered the kingdom, posing as priests and traders, gathering information.¹⁸³ He was able to gather all the current information within the territory, and the growing dissatisfaction of sections of the nobility, that aided Brownrigg in his policy of expansion.¹⁸⁴

In Governor Brownrigg's despatch of 10 February 1814 to the Earl of Bathurst, in London, he states:

"I have the honour to transmit for your Lordship's perusal a copy of a communication from the 1st Adikar of Kandy to Mr D'Oyly the nature of which will not fail to strike your Lordship as bold and singular.

Of its authenticity Mr D'Oyly has no doubt as he recognizes the handwriting usually received from the same quarter, but he by no means vouches for the sincerity of the writer. In fact the difficulties opposed to the access of all inhabitants of the

¹⁷⁹ Liverpool to Governor Brownrigg, 31 March 1812, C.O. 55/62, S.L.N.A. 5.

¹⁸⁰ Governor Brownrigg to Liverpool, 30 November 1813, C.O. 54/48, S.L.N.A. 5.

¹⁸¹ Governor Brownrigg to Bathurst, 20 March 1814, C.O. 54/51, S.L.N.A. 5.

¹⁸² Governor Maitland to Wyndham, 28 February 1807, C.O. 54/25, S.L.N.A. 5.

¹⁸³ Powell, *The Kandyan Wars*, p.196.

¹⁸⁴ *D'Oyly's Diary*, pp.4, 5, 43, 60 and 65.

British Territories to the Capital of Kandy and the watchful suspicion, which surrounds all the dependents of the court, place it out of my power to gain intelligence of its secret purposes, and the actual views of the chiefs. And I am therefore unable to state to your Lordship whether the Adikar is really desirous of bringing the Kandyan Dominions under the protection of the British Government. But the reports, which have for a long time past been received from the Interior, tend to confirm the general fact, on which his present proposal is founded, in representing disaffection to the Reigning Monarch as prevalent in many provinces of that kingdom".¹⁸⁵

In another despatch from Governor Brownrigg to the Earl of Bathurst he states:

"On the 2nd of March I was informed by Mr D'Oyly that a Chief of some consequence in the Saffaragam Korale, named Ekneligoda Nilame was on his way through the Hewagam Korale for the purpose of communicating a secret message from the First Adigar".¹⁸⁶

He concludes the despatch by clearly stating his position and his contemplated policies:

"But important as the Entire Sovereignty of this Island would prove to the British Crown, and naturally ambitious as I am that such an event might take place during the period of my being entrusted with the direction of the Government - Your Lordship may be assured that it shall be my unceasing object to abstain from any act that can give serious cause of alarm, so long as no danger threatens His Majesty's Possessions.

¹⁸⁵ Brownrigg to Bathurst, 10 February 1814, C.O. 54, S.L.N.A. 5.

Believing however that the Kandian Power is on the decline, and the time is not far distant when the Headmen of Kandy may jointly and openly declare themselves determined to resist the importunities of their Malabar King, or solicit the protection of England, I shall wait with some anxiety Your Lordship's Instructions, how to conduct myself on the occurrence of such events and which I have taken the liberty to solicit in my Despatch No. 68 of the 10th February last".¹⁸⁷

The Feudal Nature of the Kandyan Kingdom

Another weakness of the Kandyan Kingdom was the lack of a strong standing army maintained by the King. In the evolution of the European state system the growth of a strong standing army strengthened the hands of the monarch relative to the nobility.

The leading figure in the development of the modern state system was Louis IX of France, whose policies laid down the basis of a modern state structure, of centralised administration, and a standing army, which strengthened the institution of monarchy. Prussia, under Fredrick William, England, Spain and Russia were the states that followed this pattern in the evolution of a new state and governing structure, with the growth of an army which upheld the monarchy, and was used to countervail the disrupting influence of the nobility and the feudal system. It was the age of great territorial states in Europe. The army was made effective: the infantry with its foot soldiers improved with new methods of training and discipline. The invention of the flintlock made it a formidable weapon, which was used with effect with the evolution of a new drill for firing and reloading. New hard-hitting artillery also evolved during the seventeenth century. Cannons were now produced in foundries and the artillery became a part of the normal army organisation,

¹⁸⁶ Despatch of Brownrigg, 2 March 1814, C.O. 54, S.L.N.A. 5.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid.

with specific tasks. At the same time as armies were modernised, a new navy was being developed to control the seas.¹⁸⁸ In the mid-seventeenth century the British and Dutch ships clashed to control the world's commerce. The French inaugurated a naval programme under Colbert's direction, which improved her ports, and dockyards, established new training schools, and increased her fleet.

In contrast to these developments the Kandyan military was feudal, with a small force within the capital which acted more as a bodyguard to the King rather than a modern army. The King's own soldiers amounted to less than 300 in number, who were foreigners, such as Malays and Malabars, and did not count in a real war or conflict.¹⁸⁹ When the last King, Sri Wickrama was not sure of his own nobility, he smuggled mercenary soldiers from South India, but they were not effective in a real contest, if the nobility did not support the monarch.¹⁹⁰ The Kandyan Kings had no navy, and this is what prompted them to seek foreign aid and alliances. The King's diplomatic initiatives were to get a strong European naval power to be their allies.¹⁹¹

Within the Kandyan Kingdom the nobles, who were the Adigars and Disavas, controlled the raising and control of the armed forces when the occasion demanded. Every villager was obliged to serve the King if required, as a feudal duty. Guns and ammunitions were distributed by the Adigars and Disavas, and delivered through the Headmen. In this situation, the loyalty of the nobility was the prime requisite for the King's own security and strength. To strike at the kingdom it was best to wean the loyalty of the nobles from their own monarch. If this was achieved, even for

¹⁸⁸ Dr C. Blitzer, *Age of Kings*, USA, Time Inc, 1967, pp.54-67, 167-173.

¹⁸⁹ C. Wickramasekera, *Kandy at War: 1594-1818*, Colombo, Vijitha Yapa Publications, 2004, pp.50-55.

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid*, pp.57-63.

¹⁹¹ Letter from King Rajadirajasingha to the French at Pondicherry, India, dated 3 July 1791, Colombo, S.L.N.A. 5.

a short period, the capture and conquest of the kingdom was an easy matter. In this case the king would be isolated from his nobles, and his strength and position would be thereby weakened.¹⁹²

The Politics of the Kandyan Kingdom

The Kandyan Kingdom occupied a large area of territory, and was an independent political unit. This political independence was never endangered. This pride of being independent was a heritage that the kings of Ceylon had.

Due to its geographical situation as an island, its boundaries were clearly defined and were comparatively free from foreign conquest and subordination, though there were conflicts of a dynastic nature with the Kingdoms of South India, its nearest neighbours. These factors gave uniqueness and significance to the Kandyan Kingdom in that it carried on the traditions associated for many centuries of a free and independent political entity in Ceylon. This concept of an independent political entity was born in the North Central region of Ceylon (Anuradhapura). Its traditions were associated with Buddhism as a religion. Its culture was associated with the Sinhalese, the main ethnic group within the country. The Kandyan Kingdom claimed dominance over all the territories of the island state. Its claims clashed with the interests of the European powers, Portuguese, Dutch and British, that controlled the Maritime Provinces from the sixteenth century.¹⁹³

¹⁹² P.E. Pieris, *Tri Sinhale, The Last Phase - 1796-1815*, Colombo, 1935, pp.49-50; and R. Knox, *A Historical Relation with Ceylon* (republished in 1958), London, 1681, Chapter V, VI and VII.

¹⁹³ L.S. Dewaraja, *The Kandyan Kingdom (1707-1782)*, Colombo, The Lake House Publishers, 1988, pp.1-21 - explains the significance of the Kandyan Kingdom in the country's history.

The Kandyan Kingdom was land-locked. Its only external outlet was the boats and harbours on its eastern coast; namely Trincomalee and Batticaloa. These two external outlets were in reality controlled by European powers like the Portuguese, the Dutch and the British. Hence, its ability to conduct and develop commerce and trade was very little. External trade and commerce was therefore very little, mainly confined to items like salt, dried fish and cloth, which was in the hands of Muslim traders. It was basically, a subsistence economy, producing most of its needs within the confines of the kingdom. Firearms and gunpowder were produced within its territories. The main items of exports were areca nuts and cinnamon. Barter was the basis of production and exchange. The cash nexus was small and there was no undue dependence on trade and commerce.¹⁹⁴ This situation continued till the mid-nineteenth century when the plantation economy with coffee, followed by tea, changed the economy of the island.

The European powers, who controlled the coastal or Maritime Provinces, had made many attempts to conquer and subordinate the Kandyan Kingdom. The attempts were failures, which enhanced the reputation of the Kandyan Kings. It was not easy to hold the Kingdom, even if an army succeeded in entering its territory and capturing its capital. This factor of holding out against the European powers gave a special status to the Kings of Kandy and the Kandyan Kingdom. The Portuguese writers, like Queyroz, whose book "The Temporal and Spiritual Conquest of Ceylon", illustrates this sense of frustration. In order to stabilise the position of European

¹⁹⁴ Powell, *The Kandyan Wars: The British Army in Ceylon, 1803-1818*, London, 1973 – explains in detail the geographical conditions that aided the Kandyans in their wars; and Journal of the Captain of a Kandyan Expedition, *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, Ceylon Branch, Vol. XVI, No.50, 1899.

powers on the island of Ceylon it was necessary to subordinate the kingdom of Kandy.¹⁹⁵

Many scholars have examined the subject of the military superiority of European armies and military power over those in America, Africa and Asia. Geoffrey Parker submits that the technological and organisational innovations were in favour of the Europeans. This position he takes up even though active Indian regional powers, like the Marathas, in Western and Central India, and the Sikhs of the Punjab had adopted European arms and followed by adopting modern techniques and military tactics in opposing the British.¹⁹⁶ Jeremy Black was of the view that by the mid-seventeenth century consequent to European developments in the military science, the balance went in favour of the European colonial armies. He specifically refers to the development of the flintlock musket canister firing artillery, and the development of naval warships, which tilted the balance in favour of the Europeans.¹⁹⁷ However, P.J. Marshall was of the view that the British success in India was basically due to their ability to infiltrate and take over some of the new Indian states rather than by naked military power.¹⁹⁸ This was one that ultimately prevailed in British relations with the Kandyan Kingdom.

In Ceylon the Kandyan Kingdom aided by the geography of the country and its consequent terrain, was able to resist European military defeat. Records indicate that three Portuguese armies, two Dutch armies, and one British army between 1803 and 1804 were completely trapped and destroyed. In

¹⁹⁵ F. de Queyroz, *The Temporal and Spiritual Conquest of Ceylon* – translated by S.G. Perera, Colombo, 1930, p.805.

¹⁹⁶ G. Parker, *The Military Revolution: Military Innovation and the Rise of the West 1500-1800*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998, pp.115-145.

¹⁹⁷ J. Black, *European Warfare: 1660-1815*, London University College Press, 1994, pp.13-33.

¹⁹⁸ Marshall, *The British Empire in the Eighteenth Century*, p.21.

1817 a serious rebellion broke out within the Kandyan Provinces (after the peaceful takeover of the kingdom in March 1815), which was put down ruthlessly by the British.¹⁹⁹ The British takeover in 1815 was peaceful mainly due to the diplomacy, and infiltration, spearheaded by D'Oyly. The British were more successful than the Portuguese or the Dutch due to this ability to penetrate deeply into the politics of the Kandyan Kingdom.

Within the kingdom there were struggles for power. In terms of the politics of the period it meant the deposing of a king, and substituting another. This was the factional conflicts that arose within the kingdom, from time to time. In these attempted revolts the nobility and the leading Buddhist clergy were involved. Kinship ties connected the Buddhist clergy, at the higher levels, with the nobility. Further, they were a strong force within the kingdom. Any revolt invariably had the clergy involved at some stage, along with sections of the nobility.²⁰⁰

The Moladanda Rebellion was an illustration of the forces within the Kandyan Kingdom, and the involvement of the higher clergy in politics.²⁰¹ The attempted assassination of the then ruling monarch, Kirti Sri Rajasingha, was hatched within the Malvatte Vihare (monastery). The attempted rebellion was headed by the Sangaraja the (Chief Priest), Saranankara, and his cousin, Samarakkodi, the second Adigar, who was one of the King's Chief Ministers. The plot was to assassinate the King when he visited the

¹⁹⁹ Wickramasekera, *Kandy at War*, pp.16-17.

²⁰⁰ L.S. Dewaraja, *The Kandyan Kingdom (1707-1782)*, Colombo, The Lake House Publishers, 1988, Chapter IV and VI; and H.D. Evans, 'Monastic Land Lordism in Ceylon', *The Journal of Asiatic Studies*, Vol. XXVIII - No.4, August 1969 - The writer strives to compare the Buddhist Clergy's plot against King Kirti Sri Rajasingha in 1760 and the assassination of the Prime Minister of Ceylon, Mrs S.W.K.L. Bandaranaike in 1959. In both the Buddhist clergy was involved.

²⁰¹ Dewaraja, *The Kandyan Kingdom*, pp.120-126.

Malvatte Vihare and place on the throne a Thai Royal Prince, Krumpty Pippit, son of King Boromkot of Siam, who had come to Sri Lanka as a Buddhist priest. The plot was a result of a personal dispute between the second Adigar, Samarakkodi, and the king. As Samarakkodi was related to Saranankara, the Chief Priest of the Malvatte, they joined forces. The ideological basis for the revolt was that the king was following Hindu practices and was a 'foreign Tamil'.²⁰² The implications of this attitude towards the Royal House of the Nayakkars in Kandy were taken note by the Dutch. Governor Van Eck even plotted to get a Siamese Prince on the Throne of Kandy and he sent a delegation to Siam (Thailand) for this.²⁰³ It was the same theme that D'Oyly played on when he strived to encourage dissatisfied Kandyan chieftains to rebel, and thereby seek British assistance, which paved the way towards the British takeover of the Kandyan Kingdom in 1815.²⁰⁴ The lesson that the British and John D'Oyly learnt was that the two great social and political forces within the Kandyan Kingdom were sections of the nobility and the higher Buddhist clergy who were drawn from the 'Radala' subcaste of the Govi Kula, who were the major caste within the Kandyan Sinhalese social framework of society.

The Nature of British Diplomacy: Back Channel Diplomacy or Secret Diplomacy aimed at subverting the King of Kandy

D'Oyly's diary points to the nature and content of British diplomacy at this period of time. It can be described as 'back channel diplomacy', a modern definition. Its basic ingredient is secrecy. This was conducted by agents of

²⁰² An Account of the Moladanda Rebellion of 1760 was left by De la Nerolle, a person who was of French extraction who served in the Kandyan Palace; *Ceylon Antiquary and Literary Register*, Vol. II, Part IV, pp.272-274. The Manuscript was found in the Alexander Johnstone Collection - who served as Chief Justice of Ceylon from 1811-1818.

²⁰³ Damast Limberger's Report, S.L.N.A. 1/4337.

²⁰⁴ *D'Oyly's Diary*, pp.60, 153, 154, 157.

the concerned parties, and was totally different from the declared policies. In normal diplomatic parleys and negotiations, the communications are direct between officials, who are empowered to undertake discussions to seek the aims and objectives of the parties they represent. Here the King's Chief Minister was going contrary to the King's interests, as he does not want his meeting to be known:

“He was directed by Udagampahe to go to wattala Vidan, & inform that he was very desirous of seeing the Disawe, & and that he hoped a Meeting might take place on the Frontiers.

He was directed also, if he found Opportunity to go to the Disawe, & inform him in the same Manner. It was the Intention of Udagampahe, that the Interview should take place without the Knowledge of the Public or the Knowledge of the King. It may be done (i.e. there will be no Difficulty) on Udagampahe's Side - & he believes, Udagampahe will send an Ola in 6 or 7 Days after his Return to Batugedara.”

As revealed in D'Oyly's Diary, all the diplomatic negotiations initiated were official and secret between the contending parties; but the front that was displayed was totally different from what the discussions and diplomatic moves were.²⁰⁵ All these events point to back channel or secret diplomacy.

There have been a number of modern writers, and thinkers, who favour such secret diplomacy, like Henry Kissinger, and Hans J. Morgenthau.²⁰⁶ A number of prominent persons have also argued against the use of these

²⁰⁵ D'Oyly's Diary, p.53.

²⁰⁶ For arguments in favour of Secret Diplomacy, see: H. Kissinger, *Years of Upheavel*, Boston: Little Brown, 1982; and H.J. Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*, Fifth Edition, New York, Knopf, 1978.

methods of secret diplomacy, like Woodrow Wilson, George Eller, and Samuel Reinsch.²⁰⁷

During the expansion of the British Empire in India and Sri Lanka, secret diplomacy was used as an instrument that assisted 'infiltration' and subsequent take over of native states and kingdoms. At that point in time such a policy was accepted and encouraged, so far as it proved to be successful in achieving the desired aims and objectives. When Lord North failed to control and dominate the Kandyan Kingdom during his tenure of office, he was criticised for his policy. When Governor Brownrigg, assisted by D'Oyly, succeeded, their methods of diplomacy were praised. In recent years back channel diplomacy has been studied and defined, and is pointed to as a tool of diplomacy and as a strategic tool of a country's foreign policy.²⁰⁸

In practical terms the secrecy associated with back channel diplomacy is that few persons have access to it. It involves the building of methods and structures to maintain this secrecy, so that it limits the number of persons with access to the information. Such information refers to alternative arrangements that are deliberately excluded. In normal circumstances a treaty between two countries would be deposited in the archives, and made available for present and future reference. In the case of D'Oyly's Diary it remained a secret document, which contained confidential information regarding negotiations of the contending parties. A close study will show the different persons with whom D'Oyly was in contact and their views, many of them had official empowerment from the King of Kandy, to be

²⁰⁷ For arguments against, see: G. Eller, *Secret Diplomacy*, London: S. Swift and Co Ltd, 1912; P.S. Reinsch, *Secret Diplomacy, How Far Can it Be Eliminated?*, New York, Harcourt Brace and Company, 1922; and Wilson, *Address of the President of the USA to the Two Houses of Congress*, 8 January 1918.

²⁰⁸ A. Klieman, *Statecraft in the Dark: Israel's Practice of Quiet Diplomacy*, Jerusalem: Centre for Strategic Studies, 1988.

distinguished from the official persons. The diary is, in this context, a document in which various solutions are discussed that is very different from the stated policies of the concerned parties.

In real terms such a picture of a single channel is not accurate. In the real world the picture is more complex; with a number of interests, leading to a number of channels of negotiations, reflecting diverse interests within the parties concerned. The diplomacy undertaken by D'Oyly, as revealed in his official diary, points to this.²⁰⁹

When the British arrived in the island of Ceylon in 1795/96, from South India, their objective was to oust the Dutch, and in this the King of Kandy aided them. The king, who had marshalled his forces, supplied the needs of the troops and was therefore an ally of the British in their initial conquest of the coastal regions of Ceylon. This was the situation when Lord North arrived in Ceylon and assumed duties as Governor of the newly acquired British settlements.²¹⁰

The real issues of politics and diplomacy between the Kandyan Kingdom and the British were revealed when the Governor met Pilima Talauve, the Adigar. After the diplomatic formalities were over, the real discussions revealed that the King's chief minister was focusing his attention on seeking British assistance to depose his king, and himself to take over the kingdom. In return for this favour he would give a number of privileges to the British, including the stationing of British troops in Kandy, and for a road to be constructed through the kingdom to the strategic harbour of Trincomalee in the east coast of the country. This was a complete turn around of the official

²⁰⁹ *D'Oyly's Diary*, pp.178 and 179: D'Oyly had a number of persons, in diverse situations spying for him. This ranged from Sinhalese Chiefs in the Kandyan Kingdom to chiefs in the British Settlements, traders, headmen and Buddhist priests.

²¹⁰ Letter of 22 June 1796 written by Col. Stuart to the King of Kandy, C.O. 55/1, S.L.N.A. 7.

stand. The chief minister represented the king and he was to represent his interests and those of the kingdom. Lord North had accepted the King, Sri Wickrama Rajasingha as the real ruler. Before the discussions had started the Governor had ordered a royal salute to be fired in honour of the new king who had ascended the throne.²¹¹

All the British diplomatic moves up to the fall of the kingdom in 1815 were directed towards undermining the king's position by dealing with his principal chiefs who were opposed to him. D'Oyly was following the same trend and his moves were to weaken the king's hold over his nobles, and to assist revolts within the kingdom, that would make it easy for a British take over. What was promised to the chiefs is not recorded, but the events within the kingdom were turned towards causing dissatisfaction and discontent, which would cause the downfall of the king. Governor North had followed the same path, as seen in his 1803 expedition to Kandy, and the discussions he had with the chiefs prior to the invasion, and during the course of the invasion. However, his grasp of the events was not adequate to win the majority of chiefs to work against the Monarch. This was achieved by the diplomacy practised by D'Oyly who had a good knowledge of the Kandyan Sinhalese, and their kingdom. The British diplomacy, therefore, was secret back channel diplomacy of conspiracy against a Sovereign whom they had acknowledged and got assistance when they captured the coastal settlements from the Dutch.²¹²

²¹¹ Governor North's Report to the Secret Committee of the East India Company, 13 January 1800, C.O. 54/2, S.L.N.A. 5.

²¹² Lord North Governor to Hobart (not dated), C.O. 54/6, S.L.N.A. 5 - refers to the discussions with the Kandyan Ambassadors of the King; C.O. 4/6, 5 February 1802, S.L.N.A. 5. Conversation recorded of the Governor North's conversation (of 3 February 1802) with the King's Chief Ambassador.

The process of British infiltration is well illustrated by Marshall where he correctly points to the methods adopted by the British in India for their political expansion, and the fear that the king of Kandy had in regard to this:

“On the continent of India, when conquest was not aimed at by open hostilities, our first object has been, under the pretence of friendship, to establish a subsidiary force in the dominions of those with whom we were connected, in return for a stipulated tribute. The king of Kandy was however, very cautious in committing himself with us, apparently placing little faith in our professions of amity: he uniformly declined our interference with his government, perhaps from observing, that the object of our friendship and our enmity had been the same in India; whether flattery or force were the means, extension of territory was always the end.”²¹³

This sums up the nature and content of the policy of infiltration followed by the British, and the reasons why Sri Wickrama Rajasingha was careful in not admitting British troops into his kingdom on the basis of an unequal treaty.

D'Oyly's Use of the Sinhalese in the British Settlements to spy on the Kandyan Kingdom

As D'Oyly was Collector (Disawa) of the Province of Colombo, he used the services of the Sinhalese (chiefs and commoners) to spy on the Kandyan Kingdom. This was easy as the British Settlements were adjacent to the territories of the Kandyan Kingdom, and therefore easy to cross the boundary into the kingdom and gather the needed information.

He used a Chieftain named Dias who was Mudalyar of Udugha and Gangaboda Pattus of Siyane to spy on the Kandyan Kingdom. The same officer held the post of Mudalyar Atapattu, and later promoted as Mudalyar of the Gate.

²¹³ Marshall, *Ceylon*, pp.158-159.

His very first entry of 4th September 1810 refers to this Mudalyar's information as to the activity of the King of Kandy's Second Adigar in the Sabaragamuwa Province, which belonged to the Kandyan Kingdom, and was adjacent to where Dias was residing within the British held settlements:

"Septr. 4th - Recd. Ola from Hewagam K. Modr. Informing That Eyhelepola came to Ruwanweylle on the 1st with 2 Elephants, & 2 Horses & Palanquin - Went on 2d to Panawala - on 3d to Kuruwita - Disawe of 3 Korles expected at Ruwanweylle on 2d - And Disawe of 4 K. expected at Beyligala -

5th - Ola from Hapitagam K. Modr. Informing, that the Rest-House of Iddamalpana is preparing Night and Day for the Disawes, who are coming down - Also that the Chalias of Eytnapitiya, who carry the Palanquin of Disawe of 4 Korles are gone, because it is said, that the Disawe of 4 K. is going to Kandy on the 2d.

6th - Ola from S. Dias Modr - informing, That the 2d. Adhikar is gone to Saffragam - the Disawe of 3 Korles arrived at Ruwanweylle - Disawe of 4 K. will come to Beyligala on the 9th - Pilima Talauve and Rakwatte Nilame both set out for 7K. on Sunday - The other Disawes also are gone to their Districts - They have not more Attendants, than is usual on such Occasions - No one knows the Object of their journey - but the inferior Head Men talk in secret, as tho' they thought, they were coming for War".²¹⁴

It appears that D'Oyly was always alert to any sign of military preparations on the part of the King of Kandy. He always suspected that the King with the aid of a foreign European power, like the French, would try to dislodge the British from the coastal regions.

²¹⁴ *D'Oyly's Diary*, 4 September 1810.

The entry made on the 21 September 1810 refers to a letter (Ola – letter written in palm leaf) by Mudalyar where he states:

“A letter from the King was brought to District 3 on last Saturday. That on the next day, Sunday, 3 White Men, a Mohotti, and about 20 others came to the Disava – one of the White Men was on horseback.”²¹⁵

This indicates that D’Oyly was sensitive to any European power dealing with the King of Kandy, and that he had directed the Sinhalese Chieftains under his authority to report any such incident. Therefore, Dias thought it fit and proper to inform D’Oyly of this incident as reported to him.

Mudalyar Dias had also used Muslim traders to spy on the Kandyan Kingdom, as they travelled quite often into the kingdom from the British territories. One such spy used by Dias was Ahamadu Lebbe Bawa. D’Oyly’s entry on 2 October 1810 points to this:

“Ola from Solomon Dias Mudalyar – sends Ahamadu Lebbe Bawa Lebbe, a spy sent to the 7 Korales, from whom he before sent me an Ola of Intelligence.”²¹⁶

On the 3 October D’Oyly received Ahamadu Lebbe Bawa sent by Dias, and the entry is as follows:

“Ahamadu Lebbe Bawa Lebbe, of Attanagalla sent by Solomon Dias Mudalyar informs that he wrote Intelligence from Handugala - - after which he went to Nettapolagedare which is ½ League distance from Itanawatte Mirihanpity where other Disava resides.”²¹⁷

The reference to the Disava was to one of the King’s Chief Ministers.

Reference is made in this report by this spy (Ahamadu Lebbe) that there were suspicious moves by the King’s officers:

²¹⁵ *D’Oyly’s Diary*, 21 September 1810, p.7.

²¹⁶ *D’Oyly’s Diary*, 2 October 1810, p.12.

²¹⁷ *D’Oyly’s Diary*, 3 October 1810, p.18.

“Headmen in secret write Account of the Guns and all those Persons, who have Lands, including Mooremen, but not of those, who have no lands.”²¹⁸

On 11 November 1810 there is an entry made by D’Oyly on a Ola (letter) sent by Mudalyar Dias, where reference is made to enlistment of new soldiers by the King of Kandy:

“Several Paduwas (caste of persons who are used as soldiers in the Kandyan Kingdom) below the age of 30 have been enlisted, furnished with red Caps, and white Jackets, and exercised every Day in the Maluwa with Musquets, in Troops of 30. There are altogether about 200 Men thus drilling.”²¹⁹

It is obvious that D’Oyly was concerned with every move of a military build-up by the King of Kandy.

Dias informed D’Oyly was informed on the 28 November 1811 that the senior Kandyan Chiefs were executed by the King (due to the attempted revolt):

“All the Riches of the beheaded Disawes and Adikars, having being collected as for the Aramudala (the state treasury), having being placed in Brass Jars or in the Tank now repairing.”²²⁰

This letter was undated but was received by D’Oyly from Dias on the 28 November 1811. This was a report sent in regard to events that followed the failed revolt of Pilima Talauve.

There was another Ola from Dias, which is recorded by D’Oyly in his Diary on the 30 December 1812 where he refers to the death of a son of a former King of Kandy, Kirtisiri Rajasingha, by a mistress. He was executed by the King of Kandy due to his involvement with an attempted revolt:

²¹⁸ *D’Oyly’s Diary*, 3 October 1810, p.18.

²¹⁹ *D’Oyly’s Diary*, 11 November 1810, p.37.

²²⁰ *D’Oyly’s Diary*, 28 November 1811, p.65.

“that Wahala Bandara, the Son by Yakada Doli, of the King who died in consequence of a Fall from his Horse, was put to death some Days ago.”²²¹

This indicates once again that all information of a political nature which was closely watched by Dias, through his spies and informants, was reported to D’Oyly.

Another Chieftain who served D’Oyly to spy and subvert the Kandyan Kingdom was Don Adrian Wijasinghe Jayawardhane, who was a Mudaliyar of the Guides. He had originally taken service under the Dutch, and was employed by General MacDowell in his embassy on behalf of the British Governor North, in 1800. He was Muhandira of the Adapattu, and was a guide in the first Kandy War of 1803. He was employed as a guide in war, and had a section of local troops under him. He was promoted as Mudaliyar of the Guides, and appointed Mudaliyar of Chilaw in 1808. He accompanied D’Oyly to Kandy in 1815, and assisted in the capture of the King of Kandy. D’Oyly utilised his services as seen in his Diary. He was called Tamby Mudaliyar, and D’Oyly refers to him by this name.

In D’Oyly’s Diary, entry of 30 September 1810, reference is made to certain information submitted by a Buddhist Priest from Kandy, named Godamunne Unnanse. Tamby Mudaliyar did not accept what the priest said on the basis of his own information. This is recorded as follows:

“Tamby Modr. discredits all he says – He will not therefore go again with any Person sent by him.”²²²

D’Oyly utilised the services of Tamby Mudaliyar to contact Major Adam Davie, who was a prisoner of war in the Kandyan Kingdom. He was in command of the British troops in Kandy during the First Kandyan War, and was not released by the King of Kandy. Some of the other prisoners of war were released, but Davey was not. Every effort was made by D’Oyly on the

²²¹ D’Oyly’s Diary, 30 December 1812, p.156.

²²² D’Oyly’s Diary, 30 September 1810, p.12.

instruction of the British Governors to get him released, or even aid in his escape. D'Oyly's entry on the 13 November 1811 in his diary points to the fact that he used Tamby Mudaliyar as a means to reach Major Davey in Kandy:

"Delivered to Tamby Modr. a Letter Dated Novr. 12th - to be sent to Major Davey by the Messengers who brought a Letter from him (Vide Novr. 8th) also Paper - also gave to him 25 Str. Pags. Whereof 20 to be given as a Reward to the 2 Messengers, 5 to be conveyed to Major Davey."²²³

Tamby Mudaliyar was also in charge of intelligence. D'Oyly's entry in his diary on the 20 December 1811 points to this:

"Letter from Tamby Modr. Colombo informing, That he had recd. Vague Intelligence, that a great Number of Malabar Men with Arms have been hastily sent from Kandy to the Disawe of Demala Pattu - that more are preparing to be sent, & that they are designed to disturb Chilaw & Putelam."²²⁴

D'Oyly carefully watched the King of Kandy's attempts to get foreign troops from India, and also feared a French intervention. Hence, the significance he placed on this information.

Tamby Mudaliyar played a part in the British conquest of the Kandyan Kingdom, in 1815. For example in a report sent by D'Oyly, as recorded in his diary, to the Governor dated 6 February 1815 he states:

"I think highly desirable, that for this Enterprize, Tamby Modr. and a Party of the Kandyan and free Malays should immediately join Major Hook - For they know the Paths and will conduct Matters well."²²⁵

²²³ *D'Oyly's Diary*, 13 November 1811, p.61.

²²⁴ *D'Oyly's Diary*, 20 December 1811, p.69.

²²⁵ *D'Oyly's Diary*, 6 February 1815, p.201.

D'Oyly also relied on Tamby Mudaliyar to trace the King of Kandy when he was fleeing from his capital in Kandy. In a report to the Governor from Kandy dated February 13th, 1815, D'Oyly states as follows:

“Dear Sir,

I have just seen a Man sent to me by Tamby Modr., who informs, that he left Dumbara yesterday - That the King is at Teldeniya, 2 Leagues beyond Leweylle Ferry, that some Chiefs with 2000 Men were building 2 Batteries on this side of it, and that People were carrying Rice (a Quantity of about 200 Parrahs) from Degaldoruwe, about a mile beyond Leweylle, to Hurikaduwe.”²²⁶

After the King was captured, there is reference to persons stealing property belonging to the Royal Family. D'Oyly tried his best to recover some property which was stolen, and this is mentioned in D'Oyly's report to the Governor dated 24 February 1815:

“Tamby Modr. delivered to me at Teldeniya a Box containing a few Articles (of which) 2 Cloths were delivered to the King's Relations, and the rest will be sent to Kandy.”²²⁷

Apart from persons of authority D'Oyly also sent his own spies from Colombo. His Diary entry of 16 September 1810 illustrates this:

“Sept. 16th - Andries Vid. Aratchy, of Attanagalla, attends and communicates Information recd. - The Messenger who went to Beyligala returned on Thursday, & learnt, that the Disawe of 4 K. was arrived at Kattota Walawuwe, near Walgowagoda, and was residing there & Magul Kanawa - Expected at Beyligala, but his Journey uncertain - The Roads are cleared - but no Preparations at the Rest-House - Another Messenger to Iddamalpana, returned from thence on Thursday. Disawe

²²⁶ *D'Oyly's Diary*, 13 February 1815, p.203.

²²⁷ *D'Oyly's Diary*, 24 February 1815, p.221.

expected, but not arrived - It is said, that 1st. Ad'hikar objects to his Son's going to 4 K. on account of his Age - & wishes to take him to 7 K. - Also that Lead & Gunpowder has been brought to Kattota Walawuwe - A Moorman who went to Handugala reported - That Rakwatte Nilame is arrived at Itanawatte - & was expected at Mirihanpitiya (N.B. 2 Places close to each other) where the Rest-House is in readiness - Also that the Disawe had sent to Kandy the Paduwas of Talampitiya & Diwala, belonging to Ihala dolos P. - to be drilled with the Malays - Pilama Talawuwe was expected in 7 K".²²⁸

This points to D'Oyly keeping an eye on the movement of arms, and the training of troops within the Kandyan Kingdom.

D'Oyly's Relations with Pilima Talauve, Ehelapola and Other Kandyan Chieftains and the Buddhist Clergy

The diplomatic relations are seen in the letters exchanged, and the recordings in D'Oyly's Official Diary. These documents reveal the nature and content of the diplomacy and its objectives. The diary is a recording of the day-to-day events from an official's point of view. These are tied to the history and politics that took place and it is on this basis an evaluation can be made of D'Oyly's skill as a diplomat.

After Maitland succeeded Governor North, in 1805, his policy (in accordance with his instructions from London), was to contain the Kandyan Kingdom, especially after the disastrous First Kandyan War. Maitland's immediate objective was to establish a state of normalcy with the Kandyan court with the main objective being to get the British prisoners of war released. He also was watching for signs of a French connection with the king, which would

²²⁸ *D'Oyly's Diary*, 16 September 1810, p.4.

be adverse to British interests in India and South Asia. These two twin policies are shown in the diplomatic correspondence of this period.²²⁹

It was a period that saw the King of Kandy, Sri Wickrama Rajasingha, gaining strength. The defeat of the British forces in 1803, and the inability of the British attack to subdue the Kandyan Kingdom, was a factor that assisted the king to strengthen his hold. During this time while the British followed a peaceful policy under Governor Maitland, the king was able to undertake a number of new projects to beautify his capital city of Kandy. For example the building of the Kandy Lake and the Plattiruppuwa (the Octagon), which are the two most distinctive features, as one enters the town of Kandy, even today. However, his relations with Pilima Talauve continued to cause considerable tension and trouble within the kingdom. The king was not able to quite control his nobles, and Pilima Talauve strove to displace the king, and his intrigues caused the kingdom to be rife with political instability.²³⁰

D'Oyly's Diary entry of 26 November 1810 reveals his activities as much as the politics within the Kandyan Kingdom from the time of the First Kandyan War. The Diary entry is a record of the information provided by W. Appu (an informant), who was used to communicate with the Kingdom Chiefs. In this instance it was a report that Appu was giving after his visit to the Kandyan interior where he had met the First Adigar, Pilima Talauve. His report is recorded in D'Oyly's diary:

“Novr. 26th - W. Appu returns & informs - He proceeded with the Cloths, Plates & Salt Fish to Maralande Walawuwe & delivered a Part of them to the 1st Adikar's Lady - A Messenger was sent to inform the 1st. Adikar of his Arrival - & the same Evening Pusweylle Korale came & called him to

²²⁹ Lord North Governor to Hobart (not dated), C.O. 54/6, S.L.N.A. 5.

²³⁰ J. Davy, *An Account of the Interior of Ceylon*, First Published in 1821, Reprint 1969, Sri Lanka, Tissara Press, pp.236-257 - Davy was able to meet with persons who had worked with the late King of Kandy.

attend the 1st. Adikar, who is now residing at the Village Arampala about ¼ League Distance - He was introduced, & presented his Offering of Salt Fish, with which he was pleased, & asked whether it was from the Disawe²³¹ or from himself - asked after the Disawe's Health, & entered into long Conversation, a great Part of which he cannot remember - The Adikar related the manner, in which Kandy was retaken from the English - How they hung out white Flags, & asked & obtained Permission to pass quietly to Colombo - How they marched out of Kandy that Evening & rested that Night at Wakola - That the next Morning the Malay Soldiers were first called aside, to the Number of 400, laid down their Arms & marched away - Next the Sepoys called away & treated in the same Manner. Then the Chief, Major Davey, & 2 others were called away, & the King gave directions to Massacre all the other White Men, without leaving one. They were first ordered to lay down their Arms, which was done & then they were all put to Death".

Pilima Talauve explained how the capture of the British regiment took place during the First Kandyan War, and his intention was to lay the blame on the king for the massacre of the British troops.

D'Oyly had sent presents to the First Adigar, in the form of cloth, salt fish, and plates. Then in a private meeting Pilima Talauve conveyed to Wattla Appu the nature of the massacre of the British troops in 1803 so that this treachery would be conveyed to D'Oyly, and thereby to the British authorities at the highest levels. ²³²

²³¹ This is a reference to D'Oyly, who was addressed by the Kandyan Chiefs as the Great Disawe of Colombo.

²³² *D'Oyly's Diary*, pp.42-44.

Pilima Talauve strove to discourage the diplomatic moves made to placate the king in order to release the prisoners of war. Apparently, Pilima Talauve did not want any sort of friendship established between the king and the British. Hence, his message was that the diplomatic efforts of the British were fruitless. The Adigar again dwelt on the injustice perpetrated by the king, and the displeasure he had caused. He again strove to get British intervention by asserting that only 50 British soldiers were necessary to take over the capital city of Kandy.²³³

Finally, the Adigar referred to the king's relations with the French. This, he knew, was a major factor of British policy, to prevent a French takeover. Hence, he sent information that the king had continued his relations with the French and the Dutch, and that the correspondence was established through the Port of Puttalam on the west coast, which was controlled by the British. He stated that one of the king's relations, who lived in Puttalam, was the source through which correspondence and connections were maintained. The Adigar was stirring up the fears of the British that the French were in contact with the Kandyan Court, inviting the British to invade the kingdom, and downplaying the results of the diplomatic overtures of the British undertaking, especially after Maitland took over as Governor. The Adigar refers to the injustice of the king, and the king's relations with the French in India. It was done to damage the British relations with the King of Kandy.

“The Adikar dwelt much on the Injustices done by the King, said, that he had stript the Kandyan Chiefs of all their Wealth, had taken from himself 3 Laks; that none of them were well affected towards him, & that if 50 Men came, they might take possession of Kandy – He told him another Circumstance, as a great Secret, & bound him by his Oath to disclose it to none, but to the Disawe – Viz. That there was a Malabar present

²³³ Ibid.

resident at Putelam, named Nayakkare – now Decd., but his 2 Sons are living – These are the People through whom the King conducts his Correspondence with the Dutch & French, & sends & receives Letters & sends Presents – The People from the Coast lodge at their House, & one of them accompanies them to Kandy - & when they depart, one of the Brothers comes & takes a Passport, & says they are his Relations”.²³⁴

D’Oyly played a major part in the diplomatic initiatives of Governor Maitland with the Kandyan Court. His objective was to request the release of the British prisoners of war held by the king and to initiate discussions for the conclusion of a Treaty.

Maitland’s policy was to downgrade the influence and power of the Sinhalese chieftains, and one important decision of this new policy was not to rely on his Maha Mudaliyars to be in charge of the diplomatic communications with the Kandyan court. For this he relied entirely on John D’Oyly.²³⁵ D’Oyly did use the Sinhalese Chieftains living within the British settlements to spy on the Kandyan Kingdom, but they acted as his agents and had no independent standing. In the past, Maha Mudaliyars wrote officially to the Kandyan Court, on behalf of the British Governor in Colombo. Now, this task was taken over by D’Oyly.

D’Oyly, on Maitland’s instructions, wrote to a high-ranking Buddhist priest in Kandy setting out the claims of the British government. It was realised by the British that the Buddhist priests had considerable influence within the Kandyan Kingdom, and also had the rare privilege of ready access to the king. Hence, the contents of a letter and any proposals in major policy issues could be placed directly before the monarch by this means. D’Oyly’s letter to the Buddhist priest, Moratota, had three principal demands of the

²³⁴ Ibid.

²³⁵ Pieris, *Tri Sinhala*, p.87.

British government: namely that all English officers and soldiers now resident in the territory of the King of Kandy as prisoners of war be released, then shall negotiations commence in order to open the barriers for commercial intercourse of the subjects of both powers, and thereafter to conclude a Treaty of Peace, which may endure “as long as heaven and earth shall endure”.²³⁶

The Buddhist priest, Moratota, replied that the King was prepared to deal with the British government if a ‘Keydapana’, an embassy, from Colombo, was sent to announce the arrival of a new British Governor. He cited precedence of former Dutch governors following this diplomatic etiquette when a new Governor arrived. Moratota concluded his letter by stating:

“we have thought it a sentiment proceeding from sense and wisdom that the present Governor making mutual enquiry, negotiates for peace before the occurrence of such a loss of property and loss of lives. If contrary to this hostile acts are committed, we shall make the necessary preparations”.²³⁷

The reactions of Governor Maitland were to make a counter proposal. He insisted on the release of the English prisoners as a condition to negotiating a Peace Treaty. It is possible that the Governor and the officials in Colombo at that time did not quite appreciate or understand Kandyan diplomatic practice when a ‘Keydapana’ was requested announcing the arrival of a new Governor. D’Oyly’s reply to Moratota contained a specific move of sending a British Officer to the frontier with a flag of truce to discuss the terms pertaining to the exchange of the prisoners of war after the First Kandyan

²³⁶ D’Oyly to Moratota, 3 October 1805, Historical Manuscripts Commission Report, S.L.N.A. 5.

²³⁷ Moratota to D’Oyly, 24 October 1805, Historical Manuscripts Commission Report, S.L.N.A. 5.

War.²³⁸ Once this was over a Treaty of Peace could be negotiated. D'Oyly's reply to Moratota was cleverly worded:

"His Excellency is willing at any future period to appoint a proper officer to confer on matters which are requisite to the establishment of friendship".²³⁹

He concluded by stating that he would recognise the efforts made to achieving the "good of the world" by presenting Moratota with any rich commodity, which was available with the British. These items of rich presents were a way D'Oyly strived to win the favour of the Kandyan chieftains.²⁴⁰ Moratota sent a reply that the British authorities should follow ancient custom; an obvious reference to the sending of a 'Keydapana'. In reply D'Oyly informed the priest that a British government representative would be sent to Sitavaka (on the frontier), when the King of Kandy sent his representative.²⁴¹

Following this there was a period of peace. However, a study of Maitland's despatches to London would reveal that every effort was made by the British to establish contacts with the Kandyan chiefs who had ready access to the king. The aim was to win their confidence by giving them rich presents, and thereby to succeed in winning the immediate objectives of the British, i.e. a release of the prisoners of war, including release of Major Davie, the most senior British Army Officer held. With peace the relations with the Kingdom court were good and no serious clash occurred. One incident that pointed to this growing amicability between the court and the British authorities in Colombo was the release of approximately three hundred prisoners of war. However, the king did not release Major Davie

²³⁸ D'Oyly to Moratota, 15 January 1806, S.L.N.A. 5.

²³⁹ Ibid.

²⁴⁰ Moratota to D'Oyly, 27 January 1806, S.L.N.A. 5.

²⁴¹ D'Oyly to Moratota, 11 February 1806, S.L.N.A. 5.

who was well looked after as was traditional with officers who were held captive within the Kandyan Kingdom.²⁴²

Apart from the letters written by D'Oyly, and those received by him in reply, the despatches of Maitland give insight into D'Oyly's real work in trying to penetrate into the politics and policies of the kingdom. In his despatch of 22 November 1805 Maitland refers to the fact that the Gabada Nilame, a chief attached to the Royal Palace (Pusvelle), who was close to the king, had accepted gifts from the British. In Maitland's own words he was now in a position "by underhand means and very real money" to get a hold over the chief subjects of that kingdom, rather than resort to armed military action.²⁴³ Maitland's despatch of 21 May 1806 indicated that D'Oyly had hinted to the Gabada Nilame that Major Davie be given an opportunity to escape and flee to the British settlements.²⁴⁴

In striving to get Major Davie out, D'Oyly, on Maitland's instructions, had followed many unconventional ways. The British authorities in London were aware of these devious methods adopted in dealing with the Kandyan Court. The British attitude flowed from the expediency of the situation. In this case Maitland stated that he was dealing with an Oriental Court, which he submitted was totally different from the manner in dealing with the contemporary European Court.²⁴⁵ In accordance with this policy to penetrate into Kandyan politics, valuable presents like horses, cloth and mirrors were given to the chieftains. This continuous giving of gifts was adopted as an alternative to the annual embassies, where presents had to be

²⁴² Pieris, *Tri Sinhala*, p.87.

²⁴³ Governor Maitland to the Colonial Secretary, London, 25 November 1805, C.O. 54/18, S.L.N.A. 5.

²⁴⁴ Maitland's Despatch to the Colonial Secretary, London, 21 May 1806, C.O. 54/22, Sri Lanka Archives, S.L.N.A. 5.

²⁴⁵ Maitland's Despatch to the Colonial Secretary, London, Despatch No.4 of 10 May 1806, C.O. 55/62, S.L.N.A. 5.

sent to the court.²⁴⁶ Maitland opted for this method of sending presents and thereby hoping to keep them on the side of the British government. It was a sort of bribery and corruption which in Maitland's own words was the "most unpleasant that could be adopted".²⁴⁷ In spite of these offers Major Davie's release or his escape from the Kandyan Kingdom could not be achieved. Though Maitland had offered a prize of £2000, as conveyed to the concerned parties by D'Oyly, there was no positive outcome. All this points to the vigilance over the movements of Major Davie, as the king was aware of the conscious efforts to get him freed by the British authorities in Colombo. The king's position and power grew during Governor Maitland's period of office. There was no obvious crack within the Kandyan politics that would have weakened his position.

Major General Wilson succeeded Maitland in March 1811. From this period the politics within the Kandyan Kingdom became unstable due to the clash between the king and his nobles. Pilima Talauve's communications with D'Oyly shows this growing conflict, and many factions within the Kandyan Kingdom asked for British intervention. There was a rapid deterioration of relations between the king and his Adigar, Pilima Talauve. Earlier in 1808 Pilima Talauve had suppressed a revolt in the Seven Korales, but the events after this point to a breakdown in their relationship. In 1811 he arranged to marry his son to the natural granddaughter of a former King, Kirti Sri Rajasingha, who had a daughter from a mistress rather than an accepted member of the royal family. However, such persons were considered to have royal blood, and were therefore in status above the normal aristocrats of the land. The king saw in this an attempt by the Chief Minister to oust him and ascend the throne. As a result of this move Pilima Talauve was

²⁴⁶ Despatch by Governor Maitland to the Colonial Secretary, London, 20 September 1806, C.O. 54/22, S.L.N.A. 5.

²⁴⁷ Governor Maitland's Despatch to the Colonial Secretary, London, 20 February 1807, C.O. 54/20, S.L.N.A. 5.

deprived of all his offices. Thereafter, Pilima Talauve was involved in a plot to assassinate the king. The plot was to get the Captain of the Malay soldiers within the Palace to stab the king while he was asleep. The plot failed and the Malay Captain fled to the British settlements. Pilima Talauve and the chiefs involved were arrested. After the trial the chief minister was executed.²⁴⁸ While major events were destabilising the kingdom, there were rumours of a French attack in India and the arrival of French warships in the Indian Ocean. This caused great alarm among the officials of the British government in Ceylon.

General Brownrigg as Governor: The Imperial Impulse was furthered with the assistance of D'Oyly

In March 1812, against a background of a likely French intervention, and a confused state of affairs within the higher politics of the Kandyan Kingdom, Robert Brownrigg assumed his duties as Governor of Ceylon. These factors gave an added reason to further extend the British authority within Ceylon, towards the objective of conquering the Kandyan Kingdom.

Brownrigg was a professional soldier and was promoted within the British Army ranks purely on the basis of his own ability rather than that of birth or inheritance.²⁴⁹ Maitland, the former Governor of Ceylon, had warned that a peaceful policy should be adopted in diplomatic dealings with the Kandyan Kingdom. One can infer that Maitland had cause to believe that Brownrigg would follow an aggressive policy in his dealings with the court.²⁵⁰ Hence, the policy laid down on how to conduct affairs with the kingdom of Kandy was received by Brownrigg after a week in Colombo. It was clearly

²⁴⁸ *D'Oyly's Diary*, p.60.

²⁴⁹ *Ibid*, p.198.

²⁵⁰ Governor Maitland to Peel, 29 January 1812, C.O. 54/55, S.L.N.A. 5.

stipulated that he should follow a peaceful policy, as far as possible, in his diplomatic dealings.²⁵¹

However, the events within the Kandyan Kingdom, and the close tabs that were kept on it by John D'Oyly who was in charge of diplomacy and intelligence, were factors that prompted Brownrigg to follow a course of interfering in the affairs of the kingdom. A steady decline had occurred in Kandy's political affairs, especially after the attempted revolt led by Pilima Talauve, and his execution, and the further estrangement in the relations between the king and his nobles.²⁵²

Some of Sri Wickrama Rajasingha's actions further contributed to the declining situation within the kingdom. He executed the natural son of Kirti Sri Rajasingha, a former king. Kirti Sri Rajasingha, as a king, was popular due to his support of the Buddhist religion, which led to a religious as much as a literary revival within the country. Further, consequent to the attempted revolt of Pilima Talauve, the king took severe steps to stem the growing discontent. For example, he tried to sever the connections between the 'loyal provinces' from those that had revolted. Buddhist priests and Moors (Muslims) living within these disturbed areas were ordered to move out. Families who were not born in these provinces were asked to get back to their former villages.²⁵³ These measures were introduced to the Sabaragamuva, Three and Four Korales, which were adjoining the British settlements within Ceylon. This caused hardship, and suffering, to all classes of the inhabitants of these areas. In addition the king had ordered the service persons (under the system of forced labour, or 'rajakaria') to his capital to build a new lake, roads, and ancillary work to beautify the capital city of Kandy. These acts caused a disruption to the normal lives of the

²⁵¹ Liverpool to Brownrigg, 31 March 1812, C.O. 52/62, S.L.N.A. 5.

²⁵² Powell, *The Kandyan Wars*, p.201.

²⁵³ Davy, *An Account of the Interior of Ceylon*, pp.238-239.

Kandyan peasants, and it was now easy for the nobles to plan and plot against the monarch.²⁵⁴

Ehelapola succeeded to the post of First Adigar on the execution of his uncle, Pilima Talauve. He too was ambitious like his uncle, but had greater guile in his character. The fact that the king appointed him to succeed his uncle, and that he too was suspect of having had a hand in the revolt of Pilima Talauve, points to the lack of choice confronting the monarch. It appears that he, the king, had not yet developed a strong faction within the ranks of the Kandyan nobles who would support him. Nor did the king have a strong standing army that he could rely on to uphold his authority. His only policy was to play one faction of the nobility against the other, which was a temporary move as seen in the events that followed.

With the events of the then recent attempted assassination and revolt, the relations between the king and his chief minister, Ehelapola were far from cordial. The king, Sri Wickrama, seemed to have suspected his chief minister from the start; hence the relationship was far from satisfactory. In February 1813, the king married according to the custom prevailing at that time, which was the taking of two wives, (who were sisters), as he had no children by his first marriage. The wedding was a state function, and all his Chiefs had to pledge their loyalty and offer presents to the monarch. During these celebrations, the king confronted Ehelapola as to his acts of maladministration and extortion, and also referred to the poor quality of the gifts he had presented to the king on the occasion of his marriage.

After these events the chief minister made moves to raise a revolt and he strived to obtain British assistance. He had earlier corresponded with D'Oyly, but now it increased. The correspondence with D'Oyly, and the Official Diary maintained by D'Oyly indicate the subtle ways in which the takeover of the Kandyan Kingdom was made by the British; with the

²⁵⁴ Ibid, p.239.

assistance of D'Oyly. D'Oyly was not encouraged in his attempts to establishing any relationships with Ehelapola. Ehelapola took no notice of D'Oyly's letters, stating that he was busy on work entrusted to him by the king. D'Oyly appears to have been disappointed, and was now aware that Major Adam Davie, the prisoner of war in Kandy, was dead.

D'Oyly's diary indicates that he got information about the death of Major Davie on the 16 February 1813 on information provided by a muslim trader who informed him as follows:

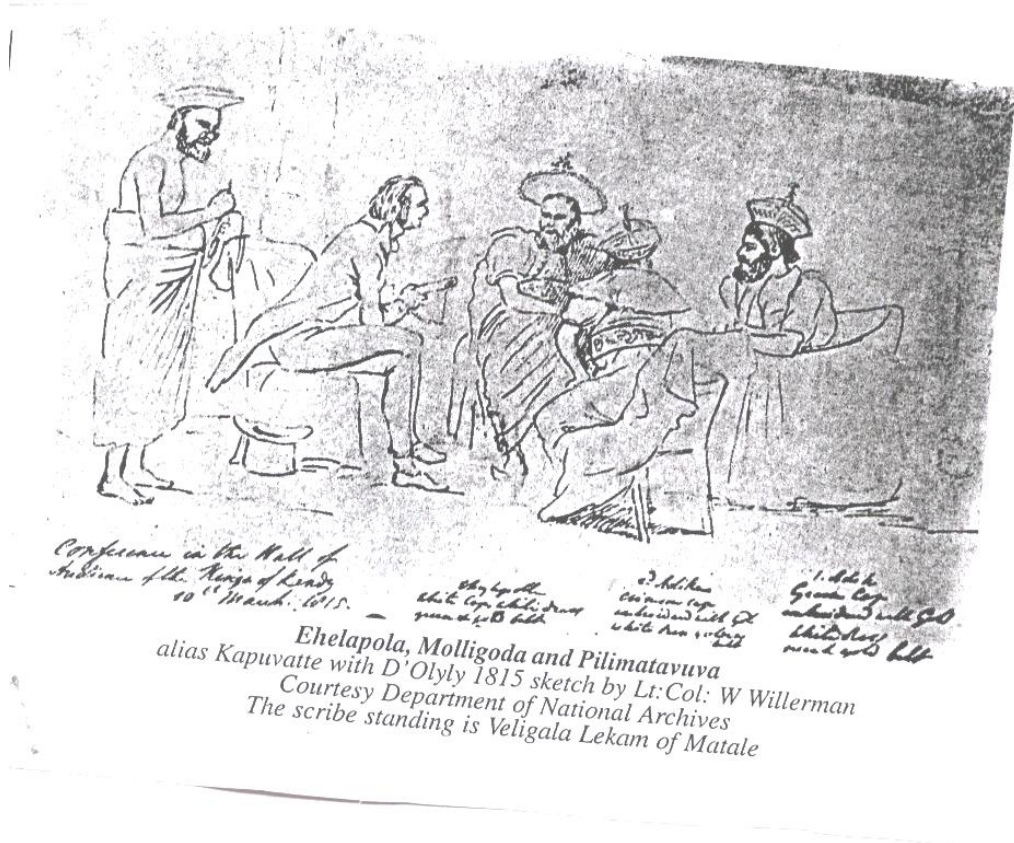
“The Yakadura above mentioned went to the Son of the late Adikar, who sent a Wahumpuraya Servant to the Mohandiram; & upon his desiring to procure Intelligence of the English Officer, the Adikar's Son with the view of obtaining more particular Information made Enquiry from Hakurugamma Vidan, formerly in his Father's Service, but since his Death living in the Family of Muttal Samy - This Person related in like Manner, that the Fact of his Death was certain; that he lay some time sick with Dysentery in the Garden of Muttal Samy, that Provisions were sent from Colombo, but he could eat nothing, & died in July last, & was buried in Udawatte Keyle - A strict Order was given, that his Death must not be mentioned”.²⁵⁵

Ehelapola Adigar sent a letter to D'Oyly in August 1813, which gave an opportunity to D'Oyly to exploit, in favour of the British objective of taking over the Kandyan Kingdom. This was a turning point towards achieving British aims and objectives, of taking over Kandy without much of a military effort.²⁵⁶

²⁵⁵ *D'Oyly's Diary*, 16 February 1813, p.167.

²⁵⁶ Ehelapola Adigar's Letter, received on the 25 August 1813, C.O. 54/48, S.L.N.A. 5 - The letter of the Adigar was sent as an attachment in the Governor's despatch to London.

Illustration: D'Oyly and the Kandyan Chiefs



Conference in the Hall of
 the King of Candy
 20th March 1815.

Veligala
 white Cap white dress
 yellow & red belt

2. Veligala
 white Cap
 white dress

1. Veligala
 Green Cap
 white dress

Ehelapola, Molligoda and Pilimatavuva
 alias Kapuvatte with D'Oyly 1815 sketch by Lt: Col: W Willerman
 Courtesy Department of National Archives
 The scribe standing is Veligala Lekam of Matale

In this letter to D'Oyly, Ehelapola makes an attempt to establish friendly relations with the British authorities in Colombo. He mentions the death of Major Adam Davie, which the Adigar was expressly prohibited on the king's orders. He states that he would send a personal representative to meet D'Oyly at a convenient time, and that a personal meeting at this time was not possible. Adigar Ehelapola's letter of 25 August 1814 to D'Oyly clearly shows his state of mind, and he suggests a confidential Vidane (a headman) to communicate his real feelings:

“Besides, because there are too many matters to send by writing, and because (I) have doubt to send writings, it cannot (be done). It is my intention to send a confidential Vidane who lives with me in order to communicate all things, and if I learn a suitable method for it, it is very good”.²⁵⁷

This shows the fear of the king becoming aware of any treasonable correspondence between his Chief Adigar and the British authorities. At the end of this letter he requests that D'Oyly obtains for him a shot gun of certain specifications. Ehelapola ends the letter by requesting a gun:

“Besides, I want a good handsome small gun with which English gentlemen shoot birds, 4½ spans in length, not heavy, strong, which has not become old by use, good and handsome. If (I) should obtain it, it is good”.²⁵⁸

D'Oyly's reply was positive: he said a representative of the Adigar, if sent to Colombo, would be well received, and that he would get the shot gun that was requested. He also inquired as to the fate of Major Davie.²⁵⁹ Ehelapola replied that Major Davie had died and all attempts to smuggle him out of

²⁵⁷ Ehelapola to D'Oyly, C.O. 54/48, S.L.N.A. 5 – Sent as an attachment to the Governor's despatch.

²⁵⁸ Ehelapola to D'Oyly, Letter received on the 3 September 1813, C.O. 54/48, S.L.N.A. 5.

²⁵⁹ D'Oyly to the Chief Adigar, 27 August 1814, C.O. 54/48, S.L.N.A. 5.

the kingdom had no bearing on the British future policy towards the Kandyan Kingdom.²⁶⁰ In a letter written by Ehelapola that was received by D'Oyly on the 31 January 1814 the discontent of the King's Chief Minister was clearly shown:

“Now women, men and all other persons residing on this side of the limits are disaffected to the Great Gate who governs our country. If it be said, for what cause? The wrongs and injustices, which at this time have befallen the world, are not things, which it is possible to finish relating. Because to write them separately would be much, and because these gentlemen will have intelligence of those things, we have not informed by writing.

Besides, the English Chief who resided in Kandy had a disease of the intestines. That sickness also having increased, and without care and assistance for it, because there was a want also of many other things, he died in the premises of Kat Nayakkara (the residence of a relation of the King's in Kandy). This matter is perfectly true. Thus Eheyleypola etc. etc. great disave of Saparagomu and Palligampahe Maha Adikaram Nilame”.²⁶¹

D'Oyly observed the point of discontent in the Chief Adigar's letter. D'Oyly specifically requested the Adigar to state his position when he said:

²⁶⁰ Ehelapola to D'Oyly, C.O. 54/48, S.L.N.A. 5 - Attachment to the Governor's Despatch.

²⁶¹ Ehelapola to D'Oyly, received by D'Oyly 31 January 1814, Historical Manuscripts Commission Report, S.L.N.A. 5.

“I shall rejoice to receive from you an explicit communication by what means you propose to accomplish that beneficial object”.²⁶²

This was a direct overture to Ehelapola to reveal his real aims and objectives. It was an opening that D'Oyly exploited. By posing this specific issue in the course of correspondence he achieved a needed breakthrough. It was both an important and sensitive issue in the context of the Adigar's position. Unlike in former times the letter sent to the chief minister in the Sinhalese language was not written and sent by a Sinhalese Official working for the British in Colombo. It was written by a senior British official, who was also the Disawa of the Province of Colombo. A greater confidence was therefore possible. It was tantamount to communicating with the governor himself. Hence, the Kandyan Chiefs, including Ehelapola, were confident about the effect of any serious and confidential communication would be given its true weight and value. This was a point of great advantage that D'Oyly had, due to his familiarity with the language, customs, and etiquette of the Sinhalese people. In his letters and discussions he was as good as any Sinhalese chieftain, and was able to talk and move with the local people with ease and dignity, inspiring confidence; though he represented a foreign government and people. It was a direct one-to-one talk, with no aides. Hence the flow of information to and from him to the Kandyan chiefs took on a new significance, not found in earlier diplomatic communications with a European power. This, along with D'Oyly's own skill as a civil servant and diplomat, were factors that favoured the British at that point in time.²⁶³

²⁶² D'Oyly's reply to Adigar Ehelapola, Historical Manuscripts Commission Report, S.L.N.A. 5.

²⁶³ *Ceylon Gazette* of 29 May 1824, which refers to Services rendered by J. D'Oyly, and the due application of His Royal Highness, the Prince Regent - "... intelligence in conducting the negotiations first with the Kandyan Government and latterly with Adikars and others who opposed it, and his

Ehelopola, like Adigar Pilama Talauva, was not happy to see a treaty concluded between the king and the British. Such a treaty would have strengthened the hand of the king, and the British would obtain an unequal treaty like what the British had done with the rulers in India. This would have ensured British control over the security and foreign relations of the kingdom. Also it would have stabilized the kingdom: leaving little room for sections of the Kandyan nobility to conspire against their own monarch. What was lacking was a strong standing army to protect the king and his kingdom. A strong British garrison within the capital city of Kandy, and its strategic mountain passes would have ensured this. Under these circumstances what Ehelopola strived to do was to get the British to intervene: leaving room for him to further his own ambitions of ascending the throne with British assistance. This was the point that D'Oyly exploited to extend British interests.

As the king kept a strict watch over the activities of his chiefs, it was quite risky to now engage in any correspondence with the English, mainly due to the situation created within the kingdom after the revolt of Pilima Talauve. Therefore, it was not surprising that Ehelopola's reply was delayed. However, when he did reply he was quite candid about his aims and objectives. He wrote about the 'wrongs' and 'injustices' that had come about, and he was quite open about inviting the British forces into the Kandyan Kingdom when he stated:

"If you have a desire for Our Country it is good that anything which is done be done without delaying".²⁶⁴

This was a direct invitation by the King's Chief Minister to the British to intervene and take over the Kandyan Kingdom.

indefatigable activity in processing information and in directing military detachments".

²⁶⁴ Adikar Ehelopola to D'Oyly, 31 January 1814, C.O. 54/51, S.L.N.A. 5 – Sent as an attachment to the Governor's despatch to London.

D'Oyly's reply was carefully worded, but a clear commitment was made to aid the chief minister's actions. It was, taken as a whole, a non-committal letter, especially in relation to the king and the existing government within the Kandyan Kingdom. While he stated that the British government acted with 'wrongs' and 'oppressions', it was necessary to proceed in a manner so as not to violate the principles of 'moderation' and 'justice'. He ended the letter on a more positive note, leaving room for future communications and connections to grow when he stated:

"to strengthen the bonds of mutual friendship, and co-operate with him (the Adigar) in promoting by just means the prosperity and welfare of all the inhabitants of the Island".²⁶⁵

Ehelapola was pleased with this response and confirmed his faith with the British authorities in his letter of reply. Governor Brownrigg was also pleased and in his despatch to London was of the opinion that there should be a change of government within the Kandyan Kingdom for any treaty to be finalised.²⁶⁶

After Ehelapola's letter, he (Ehelapola) sent his personal representative, Eknelligoda, to meet D'Oyly. He was quite open in his declaration in inviting British forces into the kingdom. He informed D'Oyly that the king had suspected Ehelapola since the failed revolt of 1811, and that he would not follow any summons to attend the court in the City of Kandy. It was conveyed to D'Oyly that the Four Korales, Uda Nuvara and Yati Nuvara were dissatisfied with the king. Only the Uva Province supported the king, and therefore if there was a march to Kandy with Ehelapola, the British forces would have had no opposition. If this was not possible at the moment the British were invited to occupy the Sabaragamuva Province. D'Oyly replied that the time was not proper to start any military operations, but that

²⁶⁵ D'Oyly to Ehelapola, 8 February 1814, C.O. 54/51, S.L.N.A. 5.

²⁶⁶ Governor Brownrigg to Bathurst, 10 February 1815, C.O. 54/51, S.L.N.A. 5.

the Adigar Ehelapola was assured of a safe asylum, if and when required by him, within the British held territory.²⁶⁷

Governor Brownrigg was satisfied with the turn of events, and the action and policy formulated by D'Oyly. Accordingly he informed D'Oyly that he had confidence in him and left it to him to guide the Governor in all the needed action that had to be taken in regard to the Kandyan Kingdom. From then on he relied entirely on D'Oyly.²⁶⁸

Ehelapola was satisfied with the mission. He was convinced that the British would intervene in case there was a revolt led by him. His actions, thereafter, indicate that he was satisfied and confident of British assistance. It appears that D'Oyly had given him this impression, and he went ahead in planning a revolt. He sent D'Oyly 'talapats' (letters) from important residents indicating the deep feelings of discontent, on the assumption that it would provide an incentive and justification for British intervention.²⁶⁹

However, D'Oyly was cautious in his actions, even when a revolt broke out in May 1814, led by Ehelapola. The king was aware of Ehelapola's intrigues along with other dissatisfied chiefs. D'Oyly had information that the king might move against Ehelapola, and that he would be removed from his high office as Chief Adigar. This news D'Oyly received one month before the actual revolt in April 1814.²⁷⁰ D'Oyly felt that the people would not move against the king unless they had support from the British. Once the revolt broke out the rebel chiefs applied for British arms. D'Oyly was again cautious, and did not consider it desirable to openly do so till he was sure of

²⁶⁷ A Report submitted by D'Oyly which was enclosed in a despatch sent by Governor Brownrigg to London, No. 71, 20 March 1814, C.O. 54/52, S.L.N.A. 5.

²⁶⁸ Governor Brownrigg to D'Oyly, 17 March 1814, C.O. 54/52, S.L.N.A. 5.

²⁶⁹ "Talpapat"/Letters from Kattapitiya Vidane, Aturupana Mohotala, and Bambaradeniya Liyana Rala, C.O. 54/52.

²⁷⁰ D'Oyly's Report to Governor Brownrigg, 3 April 1814, C.O. 54/52, S.L.N.A. 5.

the position, that there was a rupture with the king. However, D'Oyly did secretly give certain arms to the rebels, which were not effective in actual warfare. His objective was to appear to support the rebel chiefs from Sabaragamuva, while at the same time not to offend the king.²⁷¹

The revolt was a failure. Governor Brownrigg himself was not sure that he had sufficient troops to intervene militarily, and he was not sure as to the success of the rebels.²⁷² Hence a middle course was adopted of striving to please the major forces within the kingdom. Molligoda replaced Ehelapola, and he was ordered to proceed to Sabaragamuva to put down the rebels.

Molligoda led an armed force (about 1000 men) and beat the rebels. Delgoda Atapattu Nilame and Eknelligoda came to D'Oyly seeking British assistance for the revolt. D'Oyly questioned them about their resources and ability to carry on the revolt. After this no British help was forthcoming, though as a token and precaution 250 soldiers, under Major Kelly, were ordered to proceed to Avisawella, on the frontier of the Kandyan Kingdom. D'Oyly sought instructions from Brownrigg, and was informed that unless there was more support for the rebels the British troops would not move. D'Oyly realised that the revolt was a failure and that Ehelapola was a defeated chief.²⁷³

Governor Brownrigg's despatch of the 31 December 1814 addressed to the Earl of Bathurst gives the reasons for the armed intervention shortly thereafter, in 1815. It points to the reasons justifying the British invasion, and the type of propaganda carried out to further the fears of the king's subjects living in the Sabaragomava and Seven Korales. These were adjacent to the then held British settlements; and that made it easy for the British to

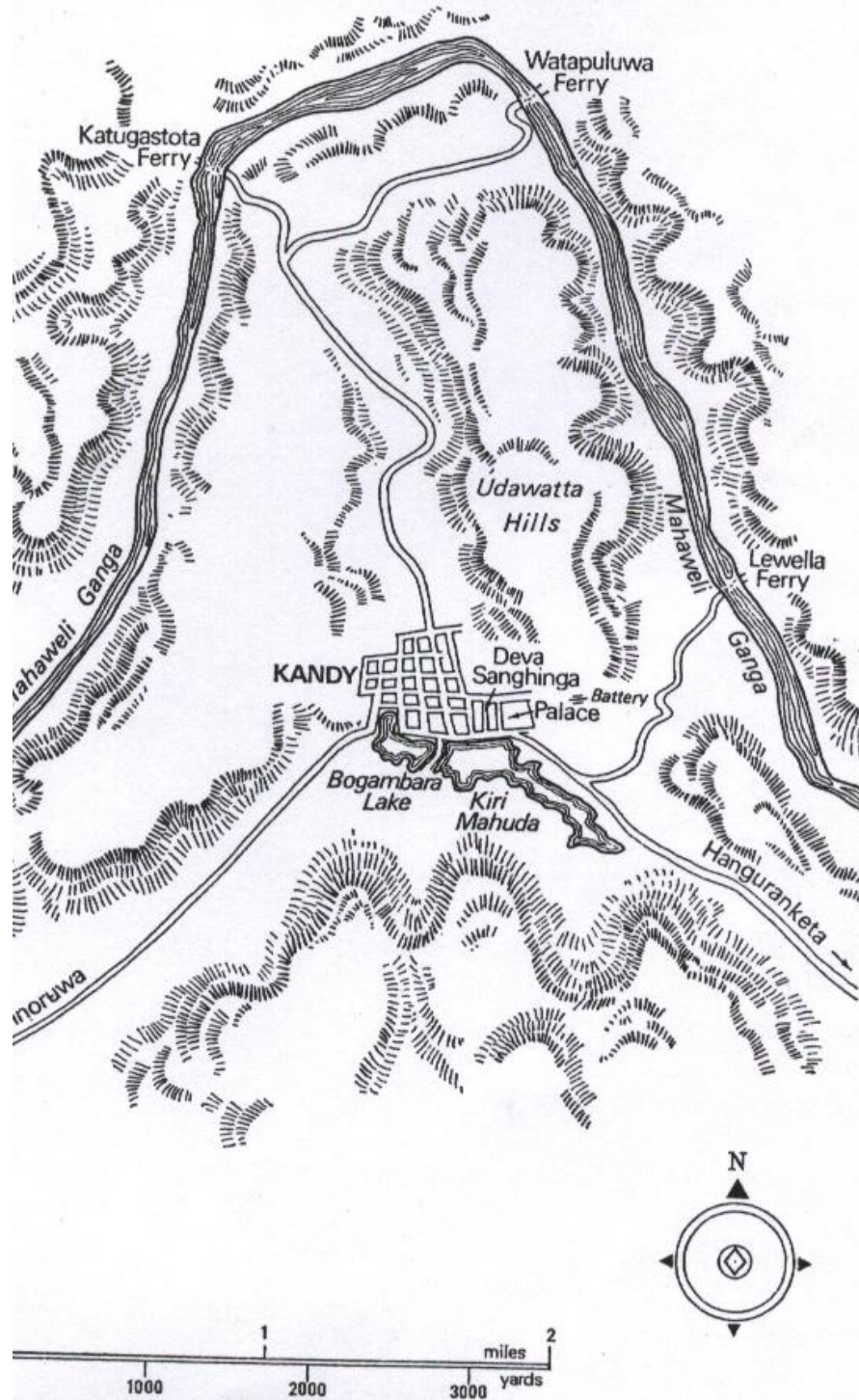
²⁷¹ D'Oyly's letter to Governor Brownrigg, 9 May 1814, S.L.N.A. 5: after the Revolt had begun.

²⁷² Governor Brownrigg to Barthurst, 16 August 1814, C.O. 54/52, S.L.N.A. 5.

²⁷³ D'Oyly's Report to Governor Brownrigg from Hanwella, 18 May 1814, S.L.N.A. 5.

Map: The Country around Kandy

The Country around Kandy



Ref: G. Powell, *The Kandyan Wars - 1803-1815*, Navarang, New Delhi, 1984.

win over the Kandyan Chiefs in charge of these provinces, and to thereby drive fear and apprehension into the minds of the king's subjects living there. The following extracts from this despatch points to the situation prevailing at this point of time, and how these events were turned in favour of a British armed intervention:

“Every communication received from the Interior at that time announced the establishing of guards at the passes, the assembling of the people the intended march of troops, clearing roads and building resthouses with other preparations which have been usually considered as marking the approach of warlike operations.

Further accounts disclosed that the chief and principal inhabitants of Saffragam and the Seven Korles were ordered in specified numbers of men and women from each family to proceed to Kandy, a mandate that immediately spread consternation throughout these provinces. To resist it was certain death but to obey it was considered as almost equally dangerous.

A prevailing belief on this subject amongst the higher and more intelligent classes was that the King suspecting the fidelity of the people of Saffragam and Seven Korales intended to remove them to the distant Provinces of Oova and to settle the Frontier Districts on this side with Malabars. That some plan of this sort was in contemplation I am fully disposed to believe and at the same time am convinced that the alarms of the people were very far from being groundless. Every man, particularly those of any rank, who did not stand sufficiently in confidence to be trusted at a distance, would without doubt have been sacrificed.

Those just and reasonable grounds of apprehension were worked up by the fears of the people to the certain expectation of all that could be conceived most dreadful, and they in consequence determined not to obey the order but to unite for their defence and, if overpowered, to take refuge within the British limits soliciting the aid of this Government to take those provinces under its protection and save their lives".²⁷⁴

The king who was from South India added the presence of Tamil soldiers to the fears of the local inhabitants, which made it easier for the British:

"... Certain information that a most active plan was in prosecution for recruiting the Kandian army with Malabar soldiers from the Coast. Thirty in one party were traced from Manar into the Interior and the Collector of Chilaw learned on inquiry that great numbers had previously found means to introduce themselves there to the extent of about 700 within a few months".²⁷⁵

Brownrigg concludes that the time is now opportune for a successful British armed intervention:

"I contemplate with great and I hope not unpatriotic satisfaction the extraordinary Revolution which has taken place in the disposition of the Kandyan people towards the British Government and the opportunity which in consequence offers for assuming the Government of the Interior with comparatively trifling danger expense or risk of failure. My firm persuasion is that the troops will march on friendly ground all the way to their point of destination, that a period of three months will accomplish any part of the enterprise which can be called warlike and place the Government of the

²⁷⁴ Governor's despatch to London, 24 May 1814, C.O.1/54, S.L.N.A. 5.

²⁷⁵ Ibid.

country so far in our power that an ola will be obeyed in the most distant parts of it".²⁷⁶

On the 23 May 1814 D'Oyly was informed that Ehelapola had crossed the frontier, and was now in British territory seeking asylum. D'Oyly understood the significance of this move, and he went up to meet him to arrange for his stay. The other rebel Chiefs, Eknelligoda and Dolasvela, later followed Ehelapola. D'Oyly made out a detailed report to the Governor, and set about obtaining information from the rebel leaders to aid the British. As to the revolt it was over, and the British had to take stock of the situation before their next move.²⁷⁷

Ehelapola gave a detailed account of the resources of the Kandyan Kingdom and of its armed forces. Based on this information that the British built their plan to successfully invade the Kandyan Kingdom. The discussion with Ehelapola pertaining to the resources of the Kandyan Kingdom is given in Appendix III. This aided the British in planning their invasion of the Kandyan Kingdom in January 1814.

Ehelapola, after his arrival in Colombo, was provided with all that was needed for an officer of his status. He was provided with a large residence, along with the needed staff, and given due security. Thereafter, he was given an interview with the governor. As observed by Marshall both Governor Brownrigg and Adigar Ehelapola had a common objective: of deposing Sri Wickrama Rajasingha. Apart from this, their individual objectives were different. Ehelapola had the idea of ascending the throne of Kandy, with British assistance. Brownrigg wanted to make the Kandyan Kingdom a part of the growing British Empire in South Asia. Marshall states this:

²⁷⁶ Ibid.

²⁷⁷ D'Oyly to Governor Brownrigg, 24 May 1814, C.O. 54/52, S.L.N.A. 5 – Sent as an attachment to the Governor's despatch to London.

“The governor and Eheylapola had, no doubt, one object in view, namely the deposition of the king; but, in all other respects, their interests were very discordant. How little did Eheylapola anticipate, at this time, that, in a comparatively brief period, he should without the form of a trial, be incarcerated in a state-prison, thereto remain until it was deemed expedient to banish him for life to a foreign land.”²⁷⁸

On Brownrigg’s instructions D’Oyly continued his communications with the principle Kandyan Chiefs within the kingdom. He was anxious to get the new Adigar appointed by the king, Molligoda, to aid the British. This was not successful at first, as observed by Marshall:

“An attempt was, about this time, made by General Brownrigg to induce Molligoda, the adikar and primer minister to the king, to abandon his sovereign and to join the allies, namely, the Kandyan rebels and the British invading force, and hopes were entertained that he would have been won over from his allegiance, several communications having passed between him and Mr D’Oyley, but the measure did not succeed.”²⁷⁹

However, as seen from the subsequent events, D’Oyly in fact had been successful in enducing Molligoda to abandon his king, and side the British. Marshall subsequently finds that Molligoda favoured the British takeover of the kingdom, as seen in this reference to him while the British Army was on the march:

“Numerous communications were made to Major Hook by Molligoda and other chiefs, all professing their willingness to promote the advance of the British troops, provided they could

²⁷⁸ Marshall, *Ceylon*, p.105.

²⁷⁹ *Ibid*, p.105.

do so without openly renouncing the Kandyan government.”²⁸⁰

Molligoda devised a false front to aid the British invasion. In his interview with Major Hook, as recorded by Marshall, this is made clear.

“The result of the interview of Molligoda with Major Hook was, that the former promised to make as little opposition to the advance of the British troops as he could, consistently with the appearance of obeying the orders of his sovereign. With this view, he informed Major Hook that, although the people under his control would continue to fire upon his division, no bullets would be put in the firelocks.”²⁸¹

This points to the British success of a successful infiltration into the politics of the Kandyan Kingdom. D’Oyly had succeeded in subverting the Kandyan Kingdom by getting Ehelapola to revolt and flee to the British settlements, and at the same time got around his successor, Adigar Molligoda, to side the British in their plans of invasion. This is what made the takeover the Kandyan Kingdom an easy task: as the loyalty of the leading Kandyan Chiefs to their king was effectively stopped.

²⁸⁰ Ibid, p.112.

²⁸¹ Ibid, p.112.

Summary

This Chapter dealt with the diplomacy of the British as conducted by D'Oyly. Use was made of his knowledge of the Sinhalese language and culture, and he was able to solicit all the information needed to aid the British in infiltrating the affairs of the Kandyan Kingdom. The degree of his success is seen when the chief minister escaped into British territory on the coast where he was given asylum. Following this necessary needed information for a successful takeover of the kingdom, when the circumstances warranted it was obtained. D'Oyly's diplomacy of penetrating the inner circles of the Kandyan government had been a success.

D'Oyly's greatest diplomatic achievement at this stage was to win the confidence of the key chiefs, especially Adigar Ehelapola. It was a risky game. He had to show that the British were not openly hostile to the king of Kandy at that point of time. An accurate judgement had to be made as to the success or failure of Ehelapola's revolt. In a military sense it was not in the British interest that the revolt be a success without British intervention. If Ehelapola had succeeded in the revolt a new dynasty would have been established in Kandy, which would not follow the dictates of the British in Ceylon. It was a case of substituting one king for another, with no advantage for the British in their bid to control and direct the affairs of the Kandyan Kingdom. D'Oyly, therefore, aimed at breaking the loyalty of the leading Kandyan nobility towards their monarch, and to exploit the growing dissatisfaction among their ranks for an easy British intervention to depose the king. If the main chiefs wanted a British intervention the road was open for an easy British takeover of the kingdom, as the king had no strong standing army to protect his interests. D'Oyly achieved a great diplomatic triumph when Ehelapola, along with his followers, crossed the boundary of the kingdom, and sought political asylum within the British held coastal regions. Such an event had never happened in the past. D'Oyly was also able to establish contact with the remaining Kandyan Chiefs, including the new Chief Minister of the king, Molligoda. This was therefore the best

occasion provided for the British to intervene in the Kandyan Kingdom. Both the British in Colombo and the King of Kandy had to take note of this, and set their tactical moves accordingly.

Chapter III

The Takeover of the Kandyan Kingdom in 1815: A Positive Outcome Resulting from the Policy of Infiltration followed by D'Oyly

The consequences of Ehelapola's revolt in 1814 were far reaching. It gave an opportunity to the British to intervene in the affairs of the Kandyan Kingdom, and to thereby establish themselves as the sole power in the country. Within the Kandyan Kingdom the King, Sri Wickrama Rajasingha, now faced a number of political problems as he steadily lost the support and confidence of his chiefs. They were the persons who really counted for the stability and administration of the government at that time, mainly due to its feudal political and social structure.²⁸² In this unstable situation D'Oyly, representing the British government, played the major role in negotiating and directing events, which led to the takeover of the Kandyan Kingdom by the British.²⁸³

D'Oyly, whose official duty was to watch the events within the Kandyan territory, moved to the frontier after the Ehelapola revolt to take the necessary steps towards forwarding British interests. Apart from getting the needed information from Ehelapola, he continued to correspond with the other Kandyan Chiefs who mattered at that time. This enabled him to infiltrate and penetrate into the inner political forces within the Kingdom, and, thereby aid in the final takeover, after the flight of Ehelapola into the British held settlements.²⁸⁴

²⁸² J. Davy, *An Account of the Interior of Ceylon*, First Published in 1821, Reprint 1969, Colombo, Sri Lanka, Tissara Press, pp.321-323.

²⁸³ *Ceylon Gazette* of 29 May 1824 - It has a note referring to D'Oyly's part in the conquest of the Kandyan Kingdom. The note was written by Governor Barnes, who succeeded Brownrigg as Governor of Ceylon.

²⁸⁴ The Kandyan Convention, 2 March 1815.

Governor Brownrigg, who was anxious to annex the kingdom, saw the events as an opportunity to attain his objectives.²⁸⁵ In this he sought and obtained the support of D'Oyly. Consequent to the failure of the First Kandyan War, the British government in London laid down a cautious policy to be followed, and Brownrigg had to first prepare the ground carefully. His despatches point to this, and present a cause for intervention.²⁸⁶ At the same time he had to take the necessary military preparations, taking into consideration the difficulties of topography that prevented earlier European attempts to conquer Kandy. A good case for intervention, and to win over the Kandyan chiefs, was the major component of this policy. A study of this process that led to the takeover of the kingdom would point to the part played by D'Oyly as a military strategist, in addition to his skill as a diplomat.²⁸⁷

Governor Brownrigg's Steps towards the Conquest of the Kandyan Kingdom with the Assistance of D'Oyly

Governor Brownrigg watched the growing instability within the Kandyan Kingdom, and he instructed John D'Oyly to proceed to the border between the kingdom and the British settlements, and to report all significant events and continue his contact with the chiefs. Accordingly D'Oyly moved up to Sitiwaka, near the Sabargamuwa Province, to observe what was apparently

²⁸⁵ Governor Brownrigg to Bathurst, 87 of 31 December 1814, C.O. 54/53, S.L.N.A. 5.

²⁸⁶ Governor Brownrigg's Despatch 88 of 16 January 1815, C.O. 54/55, S.L.N.A. 5.

²⁸⁷ D'Oyly to Adigar Molligoda, enclosed in D'Oyly's Report to Governor Brownrigg, 16 January 1815, from the village of Mattamagoda. D'Oyly's reply to the Chief Minister was that the British forces had come to remove "the calamities which had befallen the World and Religion".

a developing situation of instability following Ehelapola's revolt, and his seeking political refuge with the British authorities.²⁸⁸

After the failure of Ehelapola's revolt, Brownrigg carefully watched the situation that followed with care. Molligoda Adigar, who replaced Ehelapola, proceeded to Sabargamuwa on the king's instructions, put down the revolt, and returned to Kandy with a number of prisoners. Brownrigg was therefore not sure as to the real opposition that was building up against the king. His policy, at this stage, was revealed in one of his despatches to London.²⁸⁹ It was one of "wait and see".

Sri Wickrama Rajasingha's policy, after the failed revolt and the fleeing of Ehelapola, was extreme. He had been portrayed as a tyrant, having a vicious side to his character, but this was not correct, at least up to this point during his reign. He was generous to Pilima Talauve, his former chief minister, and treated some prisoners of war (European and Asian), in the 1803 First Kandyan War, with due consideration. He subsequently released many of the prisoners of war. However, now he was isolated and felt that all the leading chiefs were conspiring against him.

In this situation, the king lost his former sense of balance, and took several steps to put down opposition to his rule. A number of arrests were made after the Ehelapola rebellion. When Adigar Molligoda brought prisoners to the capital, Kandy, the king sentenced forty-seven of them to be executed. Nearly seventy headmen from the Seven Korales were summoned to the capital, and after a trial were flogged and executed. When the Dissawa of Matale was found to have corresponded with Ehelapola, he was arrested

²⁸⁸ Brownrigg to D'Oyly, from Aripo, near Mannar, commending D'Oyly's work, 17 March 1814, C.O. 54/52, S.L.N.A. 5 - Governor Brownrigg placed his total confidence in D'Oyly, thus in turn giving D'Oyly confidence to act on his behalf.

²⁸⁹ Brownrigg's despatch to Bathurst, 16 August 1814, enclosure of 1 June, C.O. 54/52, S.L.N.A. 5.

and subsequently executed. The king also ordered the execution of Ehelapola's brother-in-law, who was the son of the Dissava of Uva. The king executed a Buddhist priest, this action having no precedent, and this increased the dissatisfaction of all classes within the kingdom.²⁹⁰ Finally, he executed the family of Ehelapola (his wife and children), who were hostages in Kandy, after he sought refuge with the British.²⁹¹ Governor Brownrigg refers to the Kandyan practice of punishing the ladies in the nobility. Under this punishment, a woman belonging to the nobility was given the option of death or being forced to live with a man of a low caste. Brownrigg's despatch to Bathurst refers to this specifically:

"The policy of a barbarous Court has a further provision against the possibility that a family of respectable connection might revive from misfortune of losing its parent by delivering the females to degradation with men of the vilest and most despised condition".²⁹²

The king appeared to have lost considerable support among the Kandyan Chiefs. His actions had provoked important sections within the Kandyan Kingdom, the nobles, and leading members of the Buddhist Sangha. These actions caused many persons to seek refuge within the British settlements.²⁹³ They set out in a petition their appeal for British intervention. In this petition they stated that the king had executed seventy-three chiefs, their

²⁹⁰ *D'Oyly's Diary*, page VIII - Introduction - refers to the execution of Moratota Kuda Unanse.

²⁹¹ D'Oyly to Brownrigg - letter written on the 23 May 1814 stating that a report had been received that Ehelapola's wife, four children and a nephew had been executed, Sri Lanka Archives.

²⁹² Brownrigg in his despatch to Bathurst, 31 December 1814, C.O. 54/53, S.L.N.A. 5.

²⁹³ Despatch No. 18 of 10 May 1815, C.O. 55/63, S.L.N.A. 4, Bathurst's instructions to render all assistance for settlement of those who fled the Kandyan Kingdom.

relations, friends and servants.²⁹⁴ Hence, they were now prepared to hand the kingdom over to the British. Brownrigg, with the assistance of John D'Oyly, studied the situation carefully. He kept the authorities in London informed, and was hoping that there would be a reaction from the people against the king, which would give him the opportunity to intervene:

“... who had no principle of union amongst themselves, no feeling of civil rights, nor under any circumstances the least idea of a common cause”.²⁹⁵

He wanted a definite indication of dissatisfaction, so that the intervention and takeover of the Kingdom would be made easy.

While Brownrigg was looking for causes, the king's officers arrested a few British subjects from the coastal regions from the village of Mahara adjacent to the Kandyan Kingdom. The villagers had entered the kingdom in the guise of traders, but were suspected to be spies. After their arrests they were formally charged as spies working on behalf of the exiled Ehelapola. After a trial they were ordered to be mutilated, one arm, ear and nose of each man found guilty was to be cut off, and the arm hung round the neck. Mutilation was a punishment inflicted on spies under the Kandyan law. D'Oyly submitted a report of this incident to the Governor, and the Governor denounced it as a cruel act, constituting a ground for intervention.²⁹⁶

The arrest, trial and punishment of these alleged spies was controversial. Governor Brownrigg had to defend his position on account of the accusation from the Kandyan Court that they were spies. Further, as D'Oyly had been conducting intelligence work and operations, his hand in this was also

²⁹⁴ Address to D'Oyly enclosed in Brownrigg's Despatch, 5 September 1814, C.O.54/57, S.L.N.A. 5.

²⁹⁵ Despatch of Brownrigg to London, 5 September 1814, S.L.N.A. 5 - Brownrigg was expecting action expecting actions indicating a revolt against the king.

²⁹⁶ D'Oyly to Brownrigg, 30 October 1814, Report enclosed in Brownrigg's Despatch 86 of 30 October 1814, S.L.N.A. 5.

suspected. In whatever way it was looked at, from the point of view of the Kandyan Court, they were spies who had come from the British settlements, under Governor Brownrigg's administration. Hence, Brownrigg had to explain his position.²⁹⁷ Further, even when the king had been taken captive, he maintained that those punished were spies and justified the punishment meted out to them under Kandyan law.²⁹⁸

These events point to the steps taken during Brownrigg's governorship to study what was going on within the Kandyan Kingdom, for the purpose of future interference. Even before Brownrigg received approval for intervention, steps were taken to prepare plans and move the armed forces towards this objective. A request was made for more troops from India, along with auxiliary personnel who would be used in an invasion of the Kandyan Kingdom. Brownrigg's view was that at least 10,000 troops would be needed to conquer the kingdom.²⁹⁹

With the help of D'Oyly and Ehelapola a strategy of attack was accordingly formulated. Apart from subverting the king's position by dealing with his chiefs through D'Oyly, Brownrigg used his own experience as a professional soldier to plan a strategy. Firstly, the time for an attack was planned so that the climate would be favourable to the movement and deployment of the troops and 'material' of war. Ceylon is situated north of the Equator, and this position places it on the main path of the two monsoons, which characterise and dominate the climatic patterns of the whole of South Asia. The South Western coastal area gets the monsoon rains from the end of May to October. The Central Highlands, the core of the Kandyan Kingdom, are

²⁹⁷ Governor Brownrigg to Bathurst, Despatch 86 of 30 October 1814, C.O. 54/53, S.L.N.A. 5.

²⁹⁸ The king's view was said to Granville in February 1817 after he was captured. Recorded in Granville's Journal, Sri Lanka Archives.

²⁹⁹ Brownrigg to Bathurst, Despatch 87 of 31 December 1814, C.O. 54/53, S.L.N.A. 5.

free from rain and pleasantly cool from January to April. Hence this period was the best to conduct a military campaign.³⁰⁰

Brownrigg understood that an invasion of the Kandyan Kingdom involved strategic operations in the mountains. Mountainous countries are well placed for defence. This is more so when the war is seen as a national one, where a whole people rise to defend their homes. For example, in Europe, Switzerland can easily be defended if her inhabitants are united in spirit. In the past, geography and climate aided the defenders of the Kandyan Kingdom. The earlier military campaign of the Portuguese, Dutch, and the British in 1803 illustrate this. These factors weighed heavily in Brownrigg's mind when he prepared the strategy to invade the Kandyan Kingdom in 1815.

Brownrigg now had to find a cause to declare war; preferably some aggressive act by the king. The king, on his part, was taking the needed steps to stem the impending intrusion of British troops, one of which was to guard his frontiers with vigilance. He is purported to have moved certain mercenary troops from South India, and had strived to stem, and deal with, the discontent in the Sabaragamuwa, Three and Four Korales, which were immediately adjacent to the British settlements.³⁰¹

Brownrigg, denied troops from India due to commitments against the Marathas, took great care in planning the strategy for the invasion, taking into consideration the resources available. He was aided by D'Oyly's intelligence reports and correspondence with leading Kandyan nobles, and by two Swiss soldiers attached to the army, Major General Willerman, the

³⁰⁰ Brownrigg to Bathurst, 16 January and 25 February 1815, C.O. 54/53, S.L.N.A. 5.

³⁰¹ Brownrigg to Gouldurn, July 1814, C.O. 54/52, S.L.N.A. 5.

Deputy-Quartermaster General, and Captain de Bussche, Brownrigg's A.D.C.³⁰²

Brownrigg's strategy was to make best use of the troops available under the given circumstances. He utilized the troops to defend the British settlements along the coasts and to take over the Kandyan Kingdom in the mountainous region of the central part of the country. In this he faced the same challenges that earlier European armies had confronted, and was determined not to fall into the same traps. Earlier invasions had achieved initial success in reaching the capital, Kandy, only to find that the king and the court had fled to the interior mountains. Thereafter a familiar pattern occurred, with the invading troops struggling to hold on, especially when the rainy season arrived. The king's forces regrouped and followed a pattern of guerrilla warfare, which trapped and destroyed the invading forces. Therefore the strategy was to capture the king, thereby preventing him taking refuge in the interior parts of the country.³⁰³

Both Brownrigg and D'Oyly had studied the past campaigns conducted by European powers, and the failure of the 1803 campaign of North against the Kandyan Kingdom. However much the military materials poured into the campaign they did not count due to the nature of the terrain, which facilitated the defence measures taken. The varying weather and the nature of the country favoured the defenders. This was on the assumption that the majority of the chiefs and the inhabitants were strong and determined in the defence of their king and country. The peasants, led by their chiefs, had

³⁰² A Dutch Officer's observations of Kandyan Warfare after the 1761-1766 Dutch Invasion of the Kandyan Kingdom, Observations of the War with the Sinhalese, India Office Collections, Mackenzie Ms.39, called 'Aanmerkingen'

³⁰³ A. Johnston, *Narrative of the Operations of a Detachment in an expedition to Candy in Year 1804 with some observations on the previous campaigns and on the nature of Candyan Warfare*, London, 1810.

locally made flintlocks and 'gingalls' or small artillery, which were effectively used.³⁰⁴

There had been reports available, which were well documented, on the disastrous effects of jungle fever consequent to the monsoon rains. This had been a major contributory factor to the failed British expedition in 1803. Malaria was rampant and as there was no known cure for it, except the taking of quinine, taken from the bark of the cinchona tree, the consequent deaths that followed did the greatest damage. Brownrigg had good reports of this from the experience of the last failed British expedition against the kingdom in 1804.³⁰⁵

Brownrigg, had to evolve a strategy to make this invasion a success, and to effectively take over the Kandyan Kingdom. The only advantage that Brownrigg had at the moment he decided to intervene with troops was that he was intervening in the internal affairs of a kingdom where civil strife was already in progress. The intervention came, therefore, at an opportune time, and the invading forces had to throw their weight on one side of the scale, namely on the side of the revolting chiefs. It may be noted that the Romans in the past had made use of such opportunities to acquire power, and extend their Empire. This pattern had been followed by the British East India Company to expand, and consolidate, their territories in India.³⁰⁶ The other factor that favoured Brownrigg was that the intervention was not distant, being close to the frontiers of the British-held settlements. This enabled a greater provision of their forces available, which was backed by resources

³⁰⁴ C. Wickramasekera, *Kandy at War*, Colombo, Sri Lanka, Vijtha Yapa Publications, 2004, Chapter IV.

³⁰⁵ Johnston, *Narrative of the Operations of a Detachment in an expedition to Candy in Year 1804 with some observations on the previous campaigns and on the nature of Candyan Warfare*, London, 1810.

³⁰⁶ De Jomini, *The Art of War*, London, Greenhill Books, (first published in French in 1838), Reprinted in 1996, pp.19-20.

that were available due to the strength of the British navy and the growing power of the British in India at this period.³⁰⁷

Brownrigg also had the advantage of a good knowledge of the military statistics and geography of the Kandyan Kingdom, thanks to Ehelapola who provided this much needed information. In the past European armies that entered the Kingdom had to surmount a number of natural and artificial obstacles, spread throughout the theatre of war. Now a good knowledge of alternative routes to get over the obstacles was available with the assistance of the rebel chiefs, and their supporters.³⁰⁸

D'Oyly, who was watching the developments on the frontier, reported the incidents of the king's troops burning a house at Ruwanwella and crossing the border into the British settlements. Brownrigg placed D'Oyly's report before the Council and urged that this be regarded as an "act of aggression". This was construed as sufficient provocation. Accordingly Major Hook, who was on the frontier at Sitawaka, was ordered to move his troops into the Kandyan Kingdom, and Brownrigg's plans of operations, conceived before the incident were now put into effect. D'Oyly was appointed as Commissioner of His Excellency, The Governor. This gave him all powers to direct the army. Marshall who was in Major Hook's regiment had this to say:

"Within a very brief period after it had been ascertained that a cottage in our territory had been set on fire, Major Hook received instructions from Mr D'Oyley to commence hostile operations. Preparations for that purpose were forthwith put in progress, and at daybreak on the morning of the 11th January, the division crossed the Sitawaka river and marched towards Ruangwelle, a post situated upon a point of land at

³⁰⁷ H. Marshall, *Ceylon*, Allen & Company, 1841, p.141.

³⁰⁸ Ehelapola's interview with D'Oyly, C.O. 54/52, S.L.N.A. 5 - Sent as an attachment in Governor Brownrigg's despatch to London.

the confluence of the Kalani Ganga and the Maha Oya, where it was ascertained that a large body of the loyalists, was collected.”³⁰⁹

It was obvious that the preparations for war had already been made, and the British only looking for a convenient reason to put forward. In this instance it was the burning of a cottage belonging to an inhabitant within the British settlements, which was, in the view of Marshall, not a valid reason as he observes:

“The irruption of the Kandyan people into our territory had, it may be presumed, very little influence in occasioning the war – all the requisite preparations having been made long before it took place. Besides, the irruption in question was obviously so unpremeditated and accidental, and really of so contemptible a character, that it deserved no consideration. Major Hook, who saw the king’s people wade the river after the fugitives, did not think it necessary to move a single man to repulse them. It may also be observed, that no opportunity was afforded the king to apologise for the alleged insult.”³¹⁰

This points to the fact that Brownrigg and D’Oyly had already planned their invasion into the Kandyan Kingdom. For D’Oyly, it was the positive result of his work from 1805 into infiltrating into the higher politics within the Kandyan Kingdom.

Brownrigg had no special plan or strategy, other than what had been conceived during the previous British invasion of 1803, similar to that of Major General Wemyss, who had planned to take over the Kandyan Kingdom in 1803. Its central idea was to take over all the strategic passes that surrounded the Kandyan Kingdom, so that the movement of the king

³⁰⁹ Marshall, *Ceylon*, p.109.

³¹⁰ *Ibid*, p.110.

and his followers would be restricted and thereby preventing movement to other parts of the kingdom, which lay beyond the passes. Such a military movement would trap the king and his supporters. Due to a lack of reinforcements from India, the movement of the troops and detachments using nine routes was reduced to five. Each of these five detachments, entering the Kandyan Kingdom, was constituted to be self-sufficient; consisting of its own artillery (the light three pounders), its supplies (carried by bullocks and coolies), and its supply depots and convoys. The detachments varied in numbers of between 200 and 700 soldiers. The First Division under Major Hook from Colombo, operated from Avissawella, and its objective was to take the Balane Pass. Following Major Hook and using the same route was the Second Division. The Third Division marched from Galle and the Fourth from Hambantota. Their objective was to take the Idalgashinna Pass into the Kandyan Kingdom, which lay in the southeastern section of the mountains. The Fifth and Sixth Division under Major General Jackson moved from Trincomalee on the east coast via Nalande to Kandy. The Seventh Division under Captain Ajax Anderson was to march from Batticaloa to Kandy via Bintenne, which was heavily forested. The Eighth Division under Captain de Bussche was to move from Negambo on the west coast, and move onto Kandy. The troops totalled 2762, of which little more than one-third was European. The rest were Africans, Malays, Sepoys from India and local levies from the Maritime Provinces.³¹¹

The only difference from the 1803 invasion was the greater attention paid to the commissariat, and an attempt to lessen the personal baggage of the soldiers on the march. The details of the equipment to be carried were carefully thought out, as previous European campaigns had proved that transport of baggage was a big obstacle, due to the high topography. In the

³¹¹ Governor Brownrigg to Bathurst, 16 January 1815, 25 February 1815, C.O.54/51, S.L.N.A. 5; Diary of Captain Lockyer who commanded the 19th Regiment, as part of the 5th Division, 1815, Sri Lanka Archives.

planning, assisted by Major Willerman, Brownrigg was superior to North. Further, Brownrigg had drawn on the nature of the war to be expected by his reading of Captain Johnston's account of his expedition to Kandy in 1804.³¹² However, due to the past experiences of invading the kingdom, the officers were prepared for big losses.

D'Oyly's Contribution to the Success of the Campaign

In spite of the pessimism (due to failure of the last British invasion in 1803), at the beginning, the part played by D'Oyly was decisive and effective. He was able to neutralise the royal forces, and negotiate with the Kandyan Chiefs on the march. With Ehelapola, he was able to easily move the British forces without any major opposition.³¹³ The account of the campaign, so successfully carried out, is detailed in his official diary.

D'Oyly was appointed as Commissioner representing the Governor. In this position he was given the task of negotiating with the chiefs and in the context of the invading forces he was the key figure. The rebel chiefs, the ex-Adigar, Ehelapola, the junior Molligoda, and Eknelligoda, accompanied D'Oyly with the British Army. In total the Kandyan Chiefs had with them about 300-armed persons, and most of the arms and ammunitions were provided to them on D'Oyly's instructions. D'Oyly was in contact with the principal Kandyan Chiefs, including Molligoda, the King's Adigar and Chief Minister, who were sent by the king to intercept the British invasion forces.³¹⁴

³¹² Johnstone, *Narrative of the Operations of a Detachment in an Expedition to Candy in the Island of Ceylon in the Year 1804 with some observations on the previous campaigns and the nature of Candyan Warfare*, London, 1810.

³¹³ *D'Oyly's Diary*, pp.181, 191 and 202.

³¹⁴ *D'Oyly's Diary*, pp.182-184 - D'Oyly was able to turn the loyalty away from the king, and favour a British intervention.

As seen in the official diary of D'Oyly, he was not too sure as to how Molligoda and other Kandyan Chiefs would behave. The earlier British invasion of the Kandyan Kingdom had witnessed the disastrous consequences of having to depend on Pilima Talauve. Lord North had conducted an ongoing correspondence with Pilima Talauve and at critical moments the British felt he had let them down: a contributory cause for the total defeat of the invading forces, and the massacre of the British army in the vicinity of the capital city of Kandy. This massacre of the British forces had happened while discussions were ongoing, hence the suspicion that a similar situation might recur even now. D'Oyly was cautious when he recorded this in his diary.

“The Adikar had thus yesterday fair Opportunity of placing himself in our Power, but probably thinks it imprudent to take his Resolution prematurely, and intends to adhere to the Plan stated in his last Ola (i.e. letter)”.³¹⁵

Adigar Molligoda, who was in correspondence with D'Oyly, had his personal difficulties and consequent apprehensions, when the British forces began their invasion in January 1815. In accordance with the customs and conventions of those times, his family was in Kandy and therefore were hostages to the king. Hence, Molligoda was not able to show outwardly his hand in favour of the invading British forces. If there were any cause for suspicion the king would have punished his family. Therefore, Adigar Molligoda had to show that he was opposing the British forces in their march toward Kandy. Further, it appeared that the king had sent some of his relations and followers to the frontier to further strengthen the defences against the invading army.³¹⁶

³¹⁵ *D'Oyly's Diary* - D'Oyly sent reports to the governor as to the situation on the ground while he was with the Army.

³¹⁶ *D'Oyly's Diary*, p.198

Hence, it is not surprising that Molligoda had to feign a defensive measure by ordering shots to be fired on the British invading forces. This was contrary to the correspondence and communications he had with the British before the invasion began. When there appeared to be opposition D'Oyly himself had his doubts as to Molligoda, and to his real motives:

“No communication whatever has been received from the Adikar today - Nor have any Chiefs of Consequence in the Upper Part of the 4 Korales made their appearance, but merely a few inferior Chiefs and people of the neighbouring Villages”.³¹⁷

However, Adigar Molligoda had to reassure D'Oyly that he had no intention to oppose the British, but due to the position of his family in Kandy he had to outwardly show his opposition to the invasion. He sent messages to the British, and in fact appeared in disguise within the British advance camp to reiterate his true position and his loyalty to the British. It was only when he was sure that his family had left Kandy and were safe within British territory that he took definitive steps of welcoming the British forces. He did this when he formally handed over the provinces of which he was in charge, along with the outward signs of his office, to indicate a formal surrender. This step was a blow to the king's position and the way was now open for the British entry into the capital city. Such a gesture had not happened in the past, and the moves made by D'Oyly showed his ability to negotiate and facilitate an easy conquest. D'Oyly, while marching with the army, was also constantly in communication with the Kandyan Chiefs, and not to resist the British Army. The following entry in the diary indicates this:

“About 8 pre Hiyambalapitiya Mohottale, who is in the confidence of the Adigar (Molligoda) came to the Camp and The Adikar would send no Armed forced to attacks our Troops

³¹⁷ *D'Oyly's Diary*, 30 January 1815, p.192.

on their Way, or in our Posts, but fire empty Shots occasionally".³¹⁸

D'Oyly knew the topography of the Kandyan Kingdom. His knowledge, gained due to his involvement in directing intelligence operations, also was furthered by the information he received from the guides and informants during the course of the march to Kandy:

"The Extent of my Excursions about 2 miles to Walgowagoda, where I found a Palace erected for the King, containing many Apartments united, built with Mud Walls and I learnt further from these Natives, that the King's relations (of whom one of superior Rank was on Horseback) retreated last Night to Dodanwala - 3 or 4 Miles beyond Amunupura".³¹⁹

His knowledge of the Sinhalese language aided him in this, as he was able to converse with persons whom he encountered, and got needed information to aid the march of the troops into the interior of the country. D'Oyly had also a plan to capture the king and prevent his retreat to the remoter areas of the country. His diary entry indicates that he had a plan to stop the king's retreat as early as possible.

"I would acquaint with Plan of an attempt, which I suggested to him, to intercept the King's Retreat from Kandy".³²⁰

D'Oyly, as much as Governor Brownrigg, had understood the need to be as free as possible from cumbersome baggage. At this time the food of the troops was mainly rice, the staple item of food of the locals. Transport of rice, from the coast, was cumbersome, and D'Oyly strived to utilize stocks of rice belonging to the king and nobles, which was stored in graneries, for the

³¹⁸ *D'Oyly's Diary*, 2 February 1815, p.195 - This was a decisive point in the British campaign.

³¹⁹ *D'Oyly's Diary*, 3 February 1815, p.198.

³²⁰ *D'Oyly's Diary*, Instructions issued by D'Oyly to Major Willerman, 6 February 1815, p.200 - If the king was captured, the war was over.

use of the troops. This would make the march quicker, as much as save the need for transport and coolies, to carry them from the base camps, for the use of the troops. At one stage he used the stocks available with the former Adigar, Ehelapola, for this purpose:

“A Sergeant of the Cavalry has made an Application to me for Paddy, and states that 160 seers are required pr. Day - I believe there is no Deficiency of Paddy in the Country, but the Inhabitants have removed it out of the Way, and I do not think it possible to obtain this Quantity immediately without having Recourse to the Adikar’s Granary”.³²¹

D’Oyly’s Diary also indicates the true nature of the topography of the Kandyan Kingdom, which was the main obstacle. The capital city was surrounded by mountains, and encircled by the Mahaveli Ganga, which formed a natural moat. These strategic passes, and river crossings, were ideal places to intercept and delay an invading army on its march. D’Oyly understood the significance of getting over the difficult passes that led to Kandy, the capital city of the kingdom. He records this in his diary:

“I sincerely rejoice that the reputed Difficulties of the Balane Mountains have been surmounted with so much Facility, and that Yatinuwara and the Capital are fairly opened to our Troops”.³²²

It was here that D’Oyly used his negotiating skills to influence the chiefs to desist from their traditional rule of delaying an attacking army. There was evidence of structures (the batteries and stockades) that had been built, but the chiefs offered no resistance, or opposition, to the British forces. Further, the king’s minister, Molligoda, once he was sure his family had fled from Kandy and from the king’s control, formally handed over his province of the Four Korales to the British. In this instance the handing over was to

³²¹ *D’Oyly’s Diary*, D’Oyly’s Report to the Governor, 6 February 1815, p.199.

³²² *D’Oyly’s Diary*, D’Oyly’s Report to the Governor, 2 February 1815, p.197.

Governor Brownrigg. It is, therefore, no surprise that the British troops, under the guidance of D'Oyly, reached the Balane Pass and took it over with ease, and the road was now open to the Capital City of Kandy, where the king resided:

“I preceded with the Adikar this Morning from Kandy, and finding myself much in Advance, came leisurely, visiting on my Way the King's Granary at Dambarawa”.³²³

At this point D'Oyly laid out a plan for the quick interception of the king, so that his capture and confinement would end the war. He formulated a number of quiet, disguised, night marches by the troops that would surround the Capital, and intercept and capture the king. He had intelligence of the normal flight movements taken by the Kings of Kandy when there was an invasion. The route taken was normally towards Mada Maha Nuwara, crossing the Mahaveli Ganga, and striving to get to Bintenne and the Uwa Mountains. If the king succeeded in his flight as seen on previous invasions the British forces would not be able to apprehend him. This enabled the king to rally his loyal forces especially from Bintenne and Uwa to fight the invading forces. Aided by the adverse weather, it was easy to carry out guerrilla warfare, which was most effective under these circumstances. The last British invasion in 1803 illustrated this pattern of flight and subsequent attack very well. Hence, the capture and confinement of the king, Sri Wickrama Rajasingha was the prime objective of D'Oyly. As he stated in his letter to Major Willerman on 6 February 1815 the capture of the king would at one blow win the battle, and effect the capture of the kingdom:

“For believing that he (the King) is now in Kandy, and he will not leave it till our Troops have forced the Passage of the River, his Person will be found more easily now, than then after his Retreat into the remote Provinces; and is certainly politic to

³²³ *D'Oyly's Diary*, Report by D'Oyly to the Governor, 16 February 1815, p.204.

attempt the Termination of the War in one Day, and with one Blow".³²⁴

D'Oyly cleverly utilised the services of the rebel chiefs, led by the ex-Adigar Ehelapola, to get the necessary local support and consequent advantage to the British to take over of the Kandyan Kingdom. Apart from vital information pertaining to the resources of the kingdom, its topographical layout, security and military dispositions, were set out. Further, to swing the forces within the kingdom to favour a British entry, D'Oyly gave a hint that Ehelapola and his followers would be well rewarded for their actions in favour of the British forces, and that Ehelapola was the real head of the movement to depose an unpopular monarch.

By this means an impression was to be conveyed that the British troops had come to aid the movement to depose the king. It was a delayed aid to a revolt which had begun in 1814 and led by Ehelapola within the province of Sabaragamuwa. This impression was given when D'Oyly entered the capital city, followed by Ehelapola, and other rebel chiefs, along with their armed retainers. It also appeared that Ehelapola had ideas of ascending the throne of Kandy, supported by the British troops, and thereby to found a new Sinhala dynasty. This assisted the British to finally trace the king and his immediate family within Mada Maha Nuwara before they escaped into the Badulla Mountains, where detection and capture would have been difficult:

"We have information, that the King fled Meyda Maha Nuwara yesterday and Some inhabitants of 2 villages near Meyda Maha Nuwara have made their Appearance here, and promised to co-operate, and gone away with some Kandyan

³²⁴ *D'Oyly's Diary*, pp.200-201.

Armed Men, to guard the Passes at some little Distance, but I fear the King has escaped beyond".³²⁵

The local people saw the capture of the king as a step towards a change of monarch that ruled the kingdom. It was not seen as a conquest by a foreign military power that would, thereafter, not leave the country, and rule over it. If the chiefs and the people had known that this was a foreign conquest that would change their forms of government and administration, and that their traditional religion and its institutions would not have official patronage and support, there would have been more opposition. There was hardly any opposition to the British march to Kandy. D'Oyly's report to the Governor from Kandy dated 12 February 1815 clearly points to this when he stated:

"I arrived here with Major Moffatt's detachment in about $\frac{3}{4}$ of an Hour from Ganoruwe at about 2 o'clock this Afternoon without the slightest Opposition -

We were accompanied from Ganoruwe by 15 or 20 Kandyans of Yatinuwere, but found this City entirely deserted and the Houses destitute of all Property, except Mats, Baskets, Chatties. After halting the Troops and looking all round the Place, no more convenient Spot could be found, for the present exigency, than the Road Side just without Wadugodapitiya Widiya Gravet, where the Troops are now encamped".³²⁶

It is here that D'Oyly's moves and his steps proved decisive. His handling of Ehelapola, and the rebel Kandyan Chiefs, showed his skill as a strategist and tactician who turned events in a manner towards attaining his aims and objectives. In the initial stages of the march to Kandy he consciously strived to keep Ehelapola and his followers from confronting Adigar Molligoda, mainly due to their earlier clash during the 1814 revolt in the province of Sabaragamuwa. When the revolt took place, the king appointed Molligoda

³²⁵ D'Oyly's *Diary*, Report by D'Oyly to the Governor, 18 February 1815, p.210.

as Adigar to replace Ehelapola and sent him to Sabaragamuwa to suppress the revolt. This was done and resulted in Ehelapola fleeing to the British settlements and seeking political asylum. As there was a clash of interest, D'Oyly strived to keep them apart as this would have prevented an easy march of the British forces into the kingdom:

“I did not invite our Adikar (Ehelapola) and Disave to accompany us on this Expedition, because the present Adikar Molligoda must certainly feel Apprehensions and Scruples towards them”.³²⁷

As the British forces took over the Sabaragamuwa, Three and Four Korales moved on to Kandy, and then to Mada Maha Nuwara, D'Oyly realised that the British were now in areas that did not oppose the king. Mada Maha Nuwara, Bintenne and Uwa were considered to be 'loyal areas'. D'Oyly felt that he had, therefore, to resort to bribery by making payments to the locals to get at vital information about the king's flight and movements, towards tracking and capturing him. D'Oyly then made application for 'pagodas', the currency most favoured, to be sent to him for this purpose:

“The Time being arrived when Gold may probably be employed with Success, I beg leave to request that some Pagodas may be sent to me, with Authority to dispose of them on account of Secret Service for the Object of discovering and securing the King's Person”.³²⁸

D'Oyly also got the services of the rebel chiefs, and their armed retainers, to join in the operation. He correctly surmised that this would be easier than the foreign troops searching for the king within this environment. The response from the local people would be better if the Kandyan Sinhalese who rebelled, mainly from Sabaragamuwa, were to track and capture the

³²⁶ *D'Oyly's Diary*, p.202.

³²⁷ *D'Oyly's Diary*, D'Oyly's Report to the Governor, 20 January 1815, p.183.

³²⁸ *D'Oyly's Diary*, D'Oyly's Report to the Governor, 17 February 1815, p.208.

king and his immediate followers. D'Oyly, therefore, got Ehelapola, and his followers, to join him and the British troops in this sensitive operation. Hence, the British forces with D'Oyly and Ehelapola led the forces that finally captured the king and brought the war to an end:

“He (the king) was surrounded by the People of Dumbara, in conjunction with some armed Kandyans sent by the Adikar (Ehelapola) in the Precincts of Meyda Maha Nuwara, and taken about an Hour before dark in the House of Udupitiya Aratchy at Galleyhewatte a mile beyond Meyda Maha Nuwara, with 2 of his Queens”.³²⁹

The Capture of the King: End of the War

D'Oyly arrived at Teldeniya, within Mada Maha Nuwara, along with a detachment of troops and the Ehelapola with his armed followers. His instructions to guard the passes and the river crossings clearly show his grasp of the situation as it developed. In particular his instructions to guard the vital crossing at Weeragautota ferry, over the Mahaveli Ganga, points to this. If the king had succeeded in getting to Bintenne, and then to the Uwa Mountains, tracing and capturing him would have become a difficult task:

“P.S.6½ P.M.: 5 Men have arrived with Intelligence, that the King is in a Forrest about 6 Quarter Leagues from here. Though I cannot altogether rely upon it as certain, it comes with such an Appearance of Credit, that according to their Request, a Detachment will be sent, with the View of attempting to intercept him, and at once terminate the War”.³³⁰

With monsoon rains expected, the plight of the troops within the Kandyan Kingdom would have become quite difficult. If the king was free to rally

³²⁹ *D'Oyly's Diary*, D'Oyly's Report to the Governor, 19 February 1815, pp.211-212.

³³⁰ *D'Oyly's Diary*, Report to the Governor, 18 February 1815, pp.210-211: His diary entry: “King's Granary - Teldeniya - February 18th 1815”.

support against a foreign invading force, the war was not yet concluded and the possibility of a counter attack, as had happened in past European invasions, was very strong. D'Oyly realised that this situation had to be avoided, and his idea of bringing the ex-Adigar Ehelapola along with his armed supporters was to aid in the capture of the king:

“I received this Afternoon a Message from our Adikar (Ehelapola), in-forming that he had arrived at the River. I sent Word that I thought he should enter Kandy in the same manner as the first Adikars have heretofore been accustomed”.³³¹

Stationed at Teldeniya, D'Oyly encouraged these armed parties of Ehelapola to scour the surrounding country in search of the king. Success in this tactic was to follow when an armed party of Kandyan Sinhalese succeeded in locating his hiding place. It was in a house of a headman and his party would have spent the night here in their flight towards the loyal and difficult mountainous country of Uwa. The armed party that discovered the king and his retinue did so just before dusk. Hence, the king had no chance to escape:

“I have the sincerest Joy in reporting to Your Excellency, that the Object of our anxious Wishes is accomplished, and the King of Kandy a Captive in our Hands”.³³²

D'Oyly interviewed the king. D'Oyly was shrewd to treat the king and his immediate relatives that included his two Queens very well. He was anxious to get them out of the kingdom as early as possible to Colombo. Such a move would stop any resistance and attack on the British forces. The king represented the kingdom or state to the Kandyan Sinhalese, and his capture and removal meant the end of the war. Unless there was a king,

³³¹ *D'Oyly's Diary*, Report of D'Oyly to the Governor, 13 February 1815, p.203.

³³² *D'Oyly's Diary*, Report to the Governor, Diary entry: “King's Granary - Teldeniya”, 19 February 1815.

who was the symbol of the kingdom, there was no cause to fight. The king was the embodiment of the kingdom, and his power was supreme:

“The Power of the King is Supreme and absolute. The Ministers advise, but cannot control his Will, The King makes Peace and War, enacts Ordinances and has the sole Powers of Life and Death”.³³³

By treating the king with due respect and kindness, he was able to get him to reveal the other royal symbols of the kingdom: the throne, the crown, and the sword of state. The king willingly assisted D'Oyly in regaining these state symbols, without which the conquest of the kingdom was not complete:

‘The King having desired to speak to me the Night before, took me by the Hand and requested my Assistance, and said, he would discover to me Places, where Royal treasures are concealed’.³³⁴

When an invasion occurred, the king caused all these items of state to be removed to safe hiding places, along with the other treasures. These were hidden in various parts of the kingdom. In fact, apart from the king, the influence of the other kingdom chiefs was also shrewdly utilized by D'Oyly to recover these vital items. This was to ensure a clear conquest and takeover of the kingdom.³³⁵

D'Oyly then concentrated on recovering and transporting the Buddhist and Hindu sacred relics back to the city of Kandy. This was especially so of the Sacred Tooth Relic, said to be a tooth of the Buddha which was kept in the

³³³ J. D'Oyly, *A Sketch of the Kandyan Kingdom – Guide Manual* written between 1815-1824, published in 1928, Page i.

³³⁴ *D'Oyly's Diary*, D'Oyly's Report to the Governor, 22 February 1815, p.218.

³³⁵ *Memorandum of the Delivery of the King's Jewels*, British Headquarters Kandy, 13 March 1815 – Present the Governor Brownrigg, John D'Oyly and Sutherland, Sri Lanka Archives.

Palace as a symbol of Sinhalese sovereignty. The Kandyan Sinhalese political myth was that whoever possessed the Tooth Relic had the right to rule over the country. Therefore its custody in Kandy, watched over by the British, was vital to ensure the right to rule and administer the Kingdom:

“The High Priest leaves Kandy this Morning for Hindegala to conduct the Sacred Relic”.³³⁶

D'Oyly's Part in the Post Conquest Settlement

D'Oyly played a significant part not only in the military operations of the conquest of the Kandyan Kingdom, but also in the immediate post conquest settlement. Due to the deep infiltration into the politics of the kingdom, the British were able to easily assume control of the realm, without any loss of military personnel. This was due to the virtual betrayal of the ruling monarch by his chiefs; mainly due to the clever exploitations of certain events within the kingdom by D'Oyly, acting on behalf of the British government:

“The merits and exertions of Sir John D'Oyly as a Public Servant, and principally as connected with the addition to his Majesty's Dominions of the larger post of this Island”.³³⁷

This reference to D'Oyly contributed to the easy take over of the Kandyan Kingdom.

Immediately after the king was captured it was decided to send him into exile in South India, and the British assumed rule over the captured territory. This had to be done with the cooperation and assistance of the majority of the Kandyan nobility and higher clergy, who wielded great influence within the kingdom. These two segments had to be satisfied. This task was left to John D'Oyly. The formulation of the Kandyan Convention, the settlement in regard to the powers and priviledges of the Kandyan

³³⁶ *D'Oyly's Diary*, pp.266-267.

³³⁷ *Ceylon Gazette*, 29 May 1824.

Chiefs, and the Buddhist Clergy were the immediate tasks that D'Oyly had to attend to. For this to be done the king had to be exiled, for his presence even as a prisoner in Ceylon would leave room for a royalist rally, to install a traditional Buddhist Monarchy. Accordingly, the King Sri Rajasingha was exiled along with members of his immediate family. All members of the royal family were banished, and sent to South India.

D'Oyly tried his best to treat the fallen king, along with members of his immediate family with due respect, avoiding embarrassing encounters with any of his subjects who opposed him, and to effect a quick exit to Colombo:

“I went forward with Palanquins to meet him (the King) at Rambukkeylle, and have conducted him to this Place with his Queens - from whence, after Rest and Refreshments, they will be sent to Kandy under sufficient Military Guard and ... that the King should be sent to Colombo without Delay”.³³⁸

The way the fallen monarch was treated by D'Oyly led to his cooperation with the British, and therefore did not prove to be troublesome during the whole period he was in Ceylon prior to his permanent exile. This was in contrast to the way he was first treated when his own subjects, led by Eknelligoda, captured him:

“This morning the King again desired to see me, and formally present to me his Mother and his 4 Queens, and successively placing their hands in mine, committed them to my Charge and Protection”.³³⁹

The Kandyan Convention of March 1815: An Act of Settlement

The Kandyan Convention of 2 March 1815 was an act of settlement, as far as the Kandyan Kingdom was concerned. By this Convention the king of the Kandyans, Sri Wickrama Rajasingha was formally deposed, and the claims

³³⁸ *D'Oyly's Diary*, p.212.

³³⁹ *D'Oyly's Diary*, p.218; and Pieris, *Tri Sinhale*, pp.158-159.

of the ruling dynasty to rule were extinguished. While this was a dynastic change, the chiefs and the Buddhist clergy reserved for themselves their inherent rights and privileges.³⁴⁰

The Chief Negotiator for the British government and the author of the Kandyan Convention was John D'Oyly. His absence for eight days, after the capture of the king, as shown in the official bulletins, was what delayed the signing of the Convention:

“The political and civil arrangements, consequent to the great change which has been effected here, were interrupted for eight days by the absence of Mr D'Oyly, in attendance on the King”.³⁴¹

The negotiations with the chiefs by D'Oyly ensured a smooth changeover, and all the parties to it appeared to be happy with the outcome. They were all re-appointed to their former offices by Governor Brownrigg in keeping with tradition and custom. Thereby an impression was conveyed that there had been no radical changes, except a salutary change of the monarchs.

Buddhism, in keeping with ancient custom, was declared the virtual State religion. The Chief Priests were re-appointed by the Governor, and a solemn promise made to uphold the religion of Buddhism. This was the only occasion where the British government, which was Christian, promised

³⁴⁰ *The Kandyan Convention*, 2 March 1815, Clauses 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5, Sri Lanka Archives, Gazette Series.

³⁴¹ No. 1 - Official Bulletin, British Headquarters in Kandy, 2 March 1815, Sri Lanka Archives - This clearly points to the real work undertaken by D'Oyly in the takeover and the consequent settlement of the Kandyan Kingdom. His work in subverting the Kandyan Kingdom, through the use of his network of spies, his negotiation with the Kandyan leaders, and his giving of directions to the army officers while on the march to Kandy, indicate that wide nature of his duties. It was much more than would have been expected of a civil servant in the discharge of his normal work.

to uphold and further the religious institutions of Buddhism. This was done at the insistence of D'Oyly, who, knowing the great influence that Buddhism and the Buddhist clergy had within the kingdom, realised it would assist in a smooth transfer of political power to the British:

“I beg the Priests will rest assured that they will receive under the British government full Protection and Security”
(D'Oyly).³⁴²

D'Oyly's Steps towards Consolidating the British Administration of the Kandyan Kingdom

It is a normal occurrence when there is a radical change of government, and administration, to witness a period of confusion and uncertainty. This problem D'Oyly faced after the king was exiled and the Kandyan Convention adopted. For centuries the government and administration had revolved around a visible and live monarch, resident within the capital of Kandy. A whole ritual and a style of government had grown that was familiar to the people, and was, therefore, a part of the routine of daily life of the Kandyan Sinhalese. This was now no more.³⁴³

Brownrigg appointed D'Oyly as the British Resident to the Kandyan Provinces. By this D'Oyly virtually took place of the former king in Kandy. His objective was to consolidate and to give order and consistency to the newly acquired kingdom. D'Oyly, with his deep knowledge of the language, customs, and culture of the Sinhalese, was the best English person under the circumstances to hold this high office. His letter of appointment gave him total control of the Kandyan Kingdom, and, in addition, he was made a member of the Governor's executive council.³⁴⁴ Armed with these

³⁴² *D'Oyly's Diary*, p.230.

³⁴³ H. Marshall, *Ceylon*, London, William Allan and Company, 1846, p.178.

³⁴⁴ *Appendix* - Letter issued on the same day as the Convention from the British Headquarters in Kandy, dated 2nd March 1815; and *D'Oyly's Diary*, pp.226-227

powers, he resided in the Palace (Maligawa) of the former Kandyan Kings, and began his period of rule and administration, which lasted from March 1815 to 1824 when he died.

His first task was to work within the confines, and the provisions, of the Kandyan Convention. The Proclamations of 1817 were another landmark in the history of the country. D'Oyly's first task was to work a dyarchy in respect to rule and administration, which was quite a difficult task. Strictly, in terms of the Kandyan Convention, the chiefs, the Buddhist Sangha and its religious institutions retained their powers and privileges. This was a medieval Sinhalese/Buddhist society, which had evolved over centuries, with no written laws, and based mainly on customary laws and conventions. To adjust to this system of government, and administration, an individual had to be born into it, and grown within its confines. This D'Oyly had to learn on a daily basis before he was able to run the machinery of government efficiently on behalf of the British government.³⁴⁵

His task was to settle the institutions, appointments, and administration to make it work again after the king was deposed. In this initial task of working within the terms of the Kandyan Convention, the cooperation of the major chiefs and the higher Buddhist clergy was important. Another task was to get the capital city working again. It was the practice, when there was an impending foreign invasion that the entire royal treasures along with the sacred religious symbols and relics were to be removed from the capital and hidden in various parts of the kingdom. This included the deities of the major temples, and the sacred 'tooth relic', of the Buddha, which was the 'palladium' of the Sinhalese sovereignty. They had to be brought back, housed in the respective temples, before normal life was resumed. This, for a foreign government to do, was a difficult task. Both the chieftains and the higher Buddhist clergy had to cooperate, and have confidence in the new

³⁴⁵ D'Oyly, *A Sketch of the Kandyan Constitution*.

rulers, and their ability and willingness to comply with ancient tradition and custom.³⁴⁶

This was what D'Oyly had to do in the first phase of his new appointment. The entire major lay and ecclesiastical appointments in keeping with customs and traditions were made, and an air of goodwill prevailed within a short time after the turmoil. Armed with this experience he now faced a challenge of striving to achieve a stable and acceptable administration in these newly acquired provinces. A good knowledge of the land tenure systems, and the service obligations or 'rajakaria' was a necessity to work the system. The system of service tenures was the chief sources of taxation and revenue to run the government. It had a small cash economy, and foreign trade and commerce was limited. It was an agricultural, as much as a pastoral economy. All these intricacies had to be studied, and understood, first hand, and on the job. From the beginning D'Oyly performed these administrative tasks with the efficiency of a good civil servant:

"This dedicated man (D'Oyly) was fluent in Sinhala, sympathetic towards the people, and appreciative of their culture. Every hour of the fourteen years he had spent in Ceylon had been devoted towards preparing himself for this role".³⁴⁷

To start the administration working the major central and provincial government offices had to be filled. To achieve this, traditional custom had to be followed.³⁴⁸ The two major central government offices were those of the Adigars. Those of the Disavas, Provincial Governors, and those of the Rate Mahatayas followed this to the smaller districts, and finally the lesser offices in the Provinces and the Districts, which were, in the past, left to the

³⁴⁶ Extract from *Asiatic Journal 1816 - Letter from Correspondent from Kandy dated 28 April 1815.*

³⁴⁷ Powell, *The Kandyan Wars - 1803-1815*, p.221.

³⁴⁸ *D'Oyly's Diary*, pp.235-236.

chiefs themselves. This ancient system of government and administration, which included the justice system, had to be carefully watched, and for this purpose, D'Oyly appointed government agents in strategic areas to ensure that the administration did not get out of hand. These government agents were British officers. Their task was very difficult as they had to work with the Kandyan Chiefs and to ensure that the administration was smooth: "Monarchism was woven into the very tissue of their institutions".³⁴⁹

From the beginning of British rule of the Kandyan Province, the Buddhist clergy were most apprehensive and suspicious of the change. They had a fear that their power, position and privileges would be lost. No longer were the chiefs the recipients of the patronage they received from the king's resident in Kandy. This would only be ensured if the monarch was a Buddhist King who followed the ancient traditions and customs:

"The politic patronage of a Christian government was hardly a satisfactory substitute for a Buddhist King".³⁵⁰

D'Oyly takes over the Treasures, Royal Regalia, and the Symbols of the Kandyan Kingdom

The visible symbols of the Kandyan Kingdom were taken over by D'Oyly.³⁵¹ These included the throne, and footstool, the sword of state, state jewels, and other visible symbols. Apart from their value as legitimate 'Prize Money', based on a successful war, they were symbolic of an independent and free Kandyan Kingdom. These symbols had, therefore, to be taken over, and given to those who now claimed to be the new rulers. The late king's regalia

³⁴⁹ Brownrigg to Bathurst, 28 February 1817, C.O. 54/65, S.L.N.A. 5.

³⁵⁰ C.R. De Silva, *Ceylon Under British Occupation, 1795-1833*, Vol. I, Colombo, Lake House, p.171; and Brownrigg to Bathurst, 20 July 1815, C.O. 54/56.

³⁵¹ Memorandum of the Delivery of the King's Jewels, etc: British Headquarter, Kandy, 13 March 1815; and C.O. 54/53, Despatch No. 95 of 25 February 1815, S.L.N.A. 5 - refers to the King's Throne and to Footstool, the King's Seal, and Royal Banner.

or Appendages of State, and jewellery were to be exempted from the provisions contained in the official prize fund, and to be therefore disposed of by the Prince Regent in England at his own will and pleasure. In Appendix VII there is a list of certain of the king's possessions taken over in Kandy and recorded on the 13th of March 1815. Some of the items were sent to England, and others disposed of in Colombo.³⁵²

Some of these jewels and royal regalia were in possession of Ehelapola, the ex-Adigar, and hence points to his ambition of ascending the Throne of Kandy. Ehelapola had indicated his wish to D'Oyly:

“Called on Adikar. He begs to retire from Office unless he obtains the honours of the Regal Office”.³⁵³

What can be inferred, therefore, was that this idea of attaining royal honours was uppermost in the ex-Adigar's mind when he came along with D'Oyly and the British forces, which took over the Kandyan Kingdom. D'Oyly, and the British, had encouraged the ambition of Ehelapola, up to the capture of the king. Such a promise had been held out to another ex-Adigar of the Kandyan King, Pilima Talauve, as 'Utum Kumarayan', or Grand Prince.³⁵⁴ Under the Sinhalese concept of kingship Ehelapola would not have been accepted as the king due to his lower caste, a 'govigama', not from the kingly caste of a 'Kshatriya' from the sun dynasty, or 'Sooriya wamsa':

“No one, they conceived, was regularly qualified to sit on the throne, unless they were of the Rajah or Soorea wansa, either by the father's or mother's side”.³⁵⁵

However, the ex-Adigar, Ehelapola, was able to trace a relationship to royalty by marriage from lesser queens or mistresses of former Kandyan

³⁵² Regalia of the King of Kandy in Pieris, *Tri Sinhale*, pp.219-229.

³⁵³ *D'Oyly's Diary*, Entry 27 February 1815, p.223.

³⁵⁴ Enclosure No. 3, Governor North's Letter to Hobart of 4 May 1803 refers to this arrangement, C.O. 54/22, S.L.N.A. 5.

³⁵⁵ Davy, *An Account of the Interior of Ceylon*, p.106.

Kings. Further, with the help of British arms and support his ambitions could have been realised. The British refusal to assist was a great disappointment to Ehelapola, who thereafter refused to accept any office. In this context, he was a disappointed individual who had to be carefully watched and observed. He, therefore, became a danger to the British occupation. D'Oyly had made use of him to infiltrate into the inner politics of the kingdom. Governor Brownrigg and D'Oyly were duly recognised for their services. Ehelapola was arrested after the rebellion of 1817, on no firm grounds, to maintain a charge and exiled to Mauritius, where he died.³⁵⁶ His fate was similar to that of the late king who was a state prisoner at the Vellore Fort in South India. The British policy of an active diplomacy and infiltration had succeeded in the takeover of the Kandyan Kingdom, and did not rely on a purely military conquest.

³⁵⁶ A. Pilima Talauva, *Biographical Sketches of Some Kandyan Chiefs*, Colombo, Stanford Lake Publication, 2005, pp.43-45.

Summary

The British takeover of the Kandyan Kingdom and with this the whole of the country was by an active process of 'back channel diplomacy', with forces opposed to the king. This led to the chiefs' betrayal of their monarch, and an invitation to the British to takeover the kingdom. This achievement, and the whole process of conquest in 1815, was the result of D'Oyly's work of intrigue, and his ability and skills, in negotiating with the chiefs.³⁵⁷

D'Oyly mainly directed the manner, in which the British against the Kandyan King declared war in 1815, and the way the events were managed prior to this. This involved the whole process of the takeover of the kingdom: the clever moves of encouraging Ehelapola to revolt, seek British assistance and asylum within the British settlements, the reasons given for war to be declared, the actual march of British forces to Kandy, and the capture of the king with the assistance of Ehelapola's supporters. The process began with the revolt of Ehelapola, who was encouraged by his communications with D'Oyly, in Colombo, and the veiled promise of British assistance to the rebels from Sabaragamuva, which encouraged the rebels. Ehelapola had, after his contacts with D'Oyly, made sure of British assistance and sympathy for his cause. When the revolt failed, Ehelapola, and his supporters, were granted political asylum. For the British, Ehelapola's revolt would not have taken them into the Kandyan Kingdom. They waited for a situation where intervention with their armed forces would have been effective.³⁵⁸

Hence, the British policy of ostensible assistance and the drawing in of Ehelapola and his rebels into the British territory was a tactic. Once this happened the British were better positioned and equipped to march into

³⁵⁷ Dr E.F.C. Ludowyk, *The Story of Ceylon*, 2nd Edition, London, Faber and Faber, 1969, p.149.

³⁵⁸ Governor Brownrigg to Bathurst, 20 March 1814 - enclosure, C.O. 54/51, S.L.N.A. 5.

Kandy with strong local support. Ehelapola's flight into the British settlements, along with other rebels, and their reception accorded by the British authorities, was in the context of the politics of the times, a great triumph for British infiltration into the affairs of the Kandyan Kingdom. It built up the rapport, and allowed the British to appear as 'liberators' of the Kandyan Sinhalese from their 'monster' monarch. The proclamation issued, and the Kandyan Convention, point to the British role as liberators. This, as proved by the subsequent events, was not true. It was a ruse:

“Led by the invitation of the Chiefs, and welcomed by the people, the forces of His Britanic Majesty entered the Kandyan territory”.³⁵⁹

D'Oyly was rewarded for his services by his immediate appointment as Resident. His Letter of Appointment (as seen in the Appendix VI) illustrates his key role in the takeover of the Kandyan Kingdom. Hence, he was the most qualified to takeover the Kingdom, administer it on behalf of the British and thereby consolidate the easy takeover. The Kandyan Convention was a monument to the work done by D'Oyly over the years. The Kandyan Kingdom, which had defied conquest from the Portuguese and the Dutch, and had defeated the British invasion of 1803, was now part of the British Empire.

³⁵⁹ *Official Declaration of the Settlement of the Kandyan Provinces*, British Headquarters, Kandy, 2 March 1815; *Kandyan Convention – 2 March 1815* (Arising out of Clause I), Sri Lanka Archives.

PART II - 1815-1818

**STAGE TWO OF INFILTRATION:
CONSOLIDATION OF THE PROCESS OF
INFILTRATION**

Contents

Chapter IV	The Kandyan Convention of March 1815: The Act of Settlement by John D'Oyly that made the Kandyan Kingdom a Ceded Territory of the British Empire
Chapter V	The Rebellion of 1817: A Challenge to D'Oyly and the British within the Kandyan Provinces where Force had to be Used
Chapter VI	The Proclamation of 1818 and its Consequences: D'Oyly's Policy of Consolidating British Rule after the First Phase of Infiltration
Conclusions	
Appendices	
Bibliography	

Chapter IV

The Kandyan Convention of March 1815: The Act of Settlement by John D'Oyly that made the Kandyan Kingdom a Ceded Territory of the British Empire

D'Oyly's Steps Towards Ruling and Administering the Kandyan Kingdom: The Second Phase of Infiltration

D'Oyly, as British Resident, occupied the Palace (or 'Maligawa') of the last King of Kandy, from which he attempted to administer the provinces that constituted the Kandyan Kingdom. The king's palace was built as part of a complex of temples which surrounded it, the premier temple being that which housed the 'Tooth Relic',³⁶⁰ or 'Dalada' of the Buddha, which was and still is held with great veneration by all Buddhists. A number of other shrines and temples, which were mainly Hindu, surrounded the palace complex - the 'Natha Devale', 'Mahavishnu' Devale, the 'Pattini' Devale, and the 'Kataragama' Devale. All these temples were closely tied to the ceremonial etiquette associated with the ruling monarch.³⁶¹ A monarch in Kandy was, in this context, a living deity, and so was addressed, and looked up to by his subjects. As D'Oyly took up residence within the royal palace, he had to play the role of a monarch to keep up the pomp and power associated with an ancient system of government.³⁶² This was the initial

³⁶⁰ D'Oyly's *Diary*, Entry of the 6 March 1815 and 10 March 1815, pp.228-229.

³⁶¹ H.L. Seneviratne, *Rituals of the Kandyan State*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1978, pp.2-4, 95-101 - The writer refers to the Kandyan Kingdom from the point of view of a cultural anthropologist.

³⁶² L.S. Dewaraja, *The Kandyan Kingdom (1707-1782)*, Colombo, The Lake House Publishers, 1988, pp.210-211 - The King of Kandy was looked upon as a living god. D'Oyly was not able to play this part. Hence, an immediate void was felt by the inhabitants. It would take quite a period of time for this to change, with new ideas flowing in after the land locked kingdom was opened up.

challenge that D'Oyly faced in his efforts to consolidate British power: a second phase of the policy of infiltration.

The Kandyan Sinhalese Institution of Kingship and Monarchy: An Understanding Necessary for the British Civil Servants in the Second Phase of Infiltration

In every sense of the word the King in Kandy represented the apex or fountain of justice, administration, and all that was represented as the highest in ideals and beliefs of the Kandyan Sinhalese.³⁶³ Most of the king's day-to-day functions involved hearing appeals, representations, and the dispensing of justice. The last king had spent a good deal of his time on these aspects. It was absolute rule, but one that appeared quite natural to the people at large. This system of government and daily administration, which had grown over the centuries, was well understood. The king was advised by the principal chiefs, but was not bound to follow them. He alone had the right to inflict capital punishment, and on any appeal, his decision was final and decisive.³⁶⁴

Buddhism was the state religion, but in practice it was a combination of Buddhism and Hinduism, along with a strong layer of folk beliefs and customs surviving from a bygone age. There was no separate Buddhist institution of kingship. It was a Hindu (Indian) concept, evolved over the centuries, allied to an administrative system and a practising statecraft. The 'Dhrama Sastras', Manu's 'Nithi Sastra', and Kautiliya's 'Arathasastra' formed the basis of the king's guidance to rule and administer a kingdom. These basic concepts were tempered with local tradition and custom.³⁶⁵

³⁶³ J. D'Oyly, *Constitution of the Kandyan Kingdom*, Ceylon, Government Printer, 1929, pp.1-2 - This system of despotic, personal rule was what the inhabitants were used to.

³⁶⁴ J. Davy, *An Account of the Interior of Ceylon*, London, 1821, reprinted in Colombo, 1965, p.106.

³⁶⁵ H. Marshall, *Ceylon*, London, 1846, reprinted in Colombo, 1982, pp.127-128.

The caste system was basic to the economic and social organisation of society.³⁶⁶ In this sphere, the king's authority was supreme. He was able to downgrade a person, or persons, from the hierarchy of caste.³⁶⁷ However, the main concept was that a person was born into a particular caste and allied consequently to an occupation, based on the belief in one's 'Karma' (or destiny), which was a broad result of merit or demerit, of actions in a past birth of an individual. This basic idea was strong and binding; and that was what governed the division of labour within society. Both prince and peasant were bound by this moral rule. One's present actions in this life added to, or lessened, the merit gained in a previous birth.³⁶⁸ This was the basis of the social and personal ethics of the people.

This spiritual belief system governed the actions of the king as much as it influenced the art, architecture, and the physical layout of the capital city of Kandy. The king's worldview was what led to the physical layout of the city: its palace, temples, streets and lakes, and the conduct of its public festivals. All these facets of its art and its practical manifestations revolved around the concept of kingship as a 'Dewaraja', or a living god.³⁶⁹ Once the

³⁶⁶ M. Weber, *The Religion of India: Sociology of Hinduism and Buddhism*, Translated (from German) and edited by H.H. Gerth and D. Marindale, 1958, Illinois, p.233 - The caste system was basic to the spiritual as much as to the social economic structure of society. This in turn was tied to the land tenure service systems, and an understanding of this was a basic necessity for those who had to administer and rule the countries within India and South Asia.

³⁶⁷ "Lak Rajalo Sirita" - Customs of the kings and people of Sri Lanka - Answers by certain Buddhist Monks to the Dutch Governor of Ceylon, I.W. Falck, 1769. Manuscript available in the British Museum Library: Or.6603 (65).

³⁶⁸ S. Sawers, *Digest of Kandyan Laws*, British Archive, C.O. 416/19, Folios 84-124.

³⁶⁹ D.R. Sar Pasai, *South East Asia: Past and Present*, Boulder, West View Press, 1984, p.27 - The capital of Kandy was another example: symbol of linking

monarch was removed from the scene (under the March 1815 Kandyan Convention) the rest of the government and administration had no meaning. To the chiefs, who were party to the removal of the monarch, there was a quick realisation of a great void in their lives that could not be replaced – a sudden removal of a world that they knew, understood and appreciated. The new British government and Resident John D’Oyly could supply no adequate replacement. Governor Brownrigg with reference to D’Oyly states:

“He had to arouse him into that energy of which he is so capable when the occasion appears sufficiently interesting to require it and a private gentleman of very retired and unostentatious habits”.³⁷⁰

The Nature of the Kandyan Kingdom as Perceived by the Kandyan Sinhalese: The Most Difficult Challenge posed to D’Oyly as Resident

The Kandyan Sinhalese had a certain perception of their kingdom as impregnable; in this sense the British occupation was seen by them only as a temporary affair. The British occupation in their view had no purpose other than to get rid of an unpopular monarch. According to Marshall:

“The Kandyans used to inquire when the English intended to return to the Maritime Provinces. “You have now,” said one “deposed the King, and nothing more is required – you may

kings and the Gods: “Closely linked to the Dewaraja cult was the concept of the Universe. The plan of the royal capital at Angkor reflected the world structure”.

³⁷⁰ Governor Brownrigg’s despatch to Bathurst in London, 25 September 1815, S.L.N.A. 5; and Brownrigg to Bathurst, 5 September 1816, S.L.N.A. 5 – This reflects the personality of D’Oyly. He was an official civil servant but his personality did not fit to fill the place of a visible monarch.

leave us.” The people showed no dislike to us individually, but as a nation they abhorred us.”³⁷¹

The unpopularity of the last king was, to a large extent, confined to a section of the higher aristocracy. Further, the Kandyan Kingdom had not witnessed any great internal convulsion or disruption of its socio-economic structure. It was not a failed kingdom, run down, and ready to be absorbed. According de Silva:

“There was no real decline of the Kandyan Kingdom in the sense of a deep rooted crisis of society, nor an economic breakdown which affected the people”.³⁷²

The Kandyan Sinhalese looked upon their kingdom as having triple qualities, which made it unique. Firstly, it was a ‘giri durga’, or a rock fortress. This flowed from the physical fact that the central core of the kingdom was covered by mountains, and therefore difficult to surmount and hold on to:

“Once the Europeans had entered Kandyan territory, the strategy shifted to trapping the Europeans within the mountains of the Kandyan heartland by cutting off its supply lines and blocking routes of egress”.³⁷³

³⁷¹ Marshall, *Ceylon*, p.130 – This sums up the attitude of the Kandyan Sinhalese, at this point of time. Sections of the Kandyan nobility had wanted a change of the monarch, but they were not prepared to change the institution of the traditional Buddhist Monarchy, which was known and understood for centuries.

³⁷² K.M. De Silva, *A History of Sri Lanka*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999, p.230 – The political crisis was a clash between a section of the nobility and the king. The common people had no deep grievance. Society was still stable.

³⁷³ C. Wickramasekera, *Kandy at War*, Colombo, Vijitha Yopa Publications, 2004, p.130 – This was the basic pattern of Guerilla warfare of the Kandyan

Secondly, that it was a 'vana durga', or a forest fortress. Forest covered most parts of the kingdom, and a conscious strategy was followed by the Kandyan Kings to keep it in this state, to aid in its defence and security. Finally, the Kandyan Kingdom was perceived as a 'jala durga', or a fortress surrounded by water, or a giant moat. The capital of the kingdom, Kandy, was surrounded by the Mahaweli Ganga, which has been described as the 'master river of the country'. It was the largest river, which arose from the Adams Peak range, flowing through the Kandyan Kingdom, and into the sea in the Eastern Province, near the great natural harbour of Trincomalee. In addition, there were a number of other smaller rivers and streams, which were difficult to cross due to the hilly terrain, especially during the monsoon rains. Though the British had taken over the kingdom due to cooperation extended by the leading aristocrats of the realm, their continued stay was resisted. It only needed a rallying point to throw them out:

“Few persons present at the solemn conference (the Kandyan Convention) gave the Chiefs credit for acting with sincerity and honesty of purpose in lending their sanction to a transfer of the dominion of the Kandyan provinces to the sovereign of the United Kingdom ... they submitted with reluctance, but with admirable grace, to the force of circumstances, and did as they were desired, leaving to time the development of the result”.³⁷⁴

Myths, spiritual beliefs and traditions also contributed to this belief that the Kandyan Kingdom could not be conquered. As submitted by Roberts:

Sinhalese. Its success in the wars with the European powers gave a sense of invincibility to their kingdom. They felt that they were not a conquered people. Hence, they expected the British to leave.

³⁷⁴ Marshall, *Ceylon*, p.122 - Points to the fact that the middle grade chiefs and the lower sections of Kandyan society had no deep grievance against the king.

“Because they had successfully beaten back foreign invaders on so many occasions in previous centuries, these conceptions, as we shall see, even extended to notions of invincibility and But they had even more faith in the force of cosmic powers. In this view the guardian deities of Lanka would ensure no cataclysmic disorder, evil befall Sinhale (Sri Lanka)”³⁷⁵

The kings carefully fostered these beliefs as a way of keeping up a brave morale in the face of numerous attempts to conquer and subdue the kingdom by the Portuguese, Dutch, and by the British in 1802-1803. This sense of being specially protected by the gods or ‘devas’, and led by a living god, the king, was still alive among the population. They, the Kandyans, felt a sense of being a special favoured people who could not be conquered or subdued. This sense of a protected and invincible people was portrayed in their arts, from architecture, and paintings, to popular ballads.³⁷⁶

These perceptions contributed to the Kandyan Sinhalese having a strong sense of a separate political identity, a freedom, and a way of life which the Kandyan Chiefs wished to preserve and foster:

³⁷⁵ M. Roberts, *Sinhala Consciousness in the Kandyan Period*, Colombo, Vijthe Yapa, 2003, p.87 - This reveals the political perceptions of the Kandyan Sinhalese, which resulted in their opposition to British rule at that time. This was the biggest problem faced by D’Oyly.

³⁷⁶ Letter sent by Ehelapola Adigar to D’Oyly, 8 February 1812, Containing Governor Wilson’s despatch of 1812, 26 February 1812, C.O. 54/42. pp. 53-55. SL.N.A. 5. This letter contains the gist of the Kandyan’s view of their kingdom and king as being divine. The imagery points to the religious beliefs, and the world view: a product of the total cultural environment (Sri Lanka Archives); and “Ingrisi Hatana”: (War Poem - was against the English), Popular Ballad by Kavisundara Mudali in 1805, published in Colombo, 1951, Sri Lanka, Archives - The Kandyan Sinhalese had a sense of being special in the context of Ceylon and its history.

“The Court of the late King, barbarous as it was, had yet a certain splendour to attract great Interest ... One must therefore be very sanguine to expect they (the Chiefs) should be fondly attached to the New Order of things”.³⁷⁷

These were the driving forces that opposed the British presence within the Kandyan Kingdom. This was an obstacle, which D’Oyly had to face during his term as Resident. There was no ready policy to overcome this and a careful policy of conciliation with firmness, had to be followed. However, as events turned out this was not enough. There was a deep undercurrent of dissatisfaction with the British occupation, though, outwardly, there were no signs that had been established of espionage, and intelligence, which did work to remove the then existing monarch, but was not a success when it came to governing the kingdom on behalf of the British. It was a totally different challenge:

“Your Lordship will observe that the suppression of the present insurrection depends entirely upon the capture of the Malabar Pretender” (a person who claimed to be from the Nayakkar dynasty, which had been deposed by the Kandyan Convention of 1815).³⁷⁸

The Kandyan Sinhalese (including the chiefs) looked up to the Nayakkar dynasty for their political deliverance, as they felt uncomfortable with the changes in social life that was revealed after the British occupation of the country.

³⁷⁷ Brownrigg to Bathurst, 5 November 1811, C.O. 54/61-169, S.L.N.A. 5: Chief’s attachment to the old order – This sums up the dissatisfaction that the chiefs had with the change, after the British took over the kingdom.

³⁷⁸ Brownrigg from Kandy, 27 November 1817, C.O. 54/66, No.251, S.L.N.A. 5 – This points to the fact (from a political point of view) that the Nayakkar dynasty was the rallying point for the Kandyan Sinhalese.

Traditionally the Kandyan King, in his position as the overlord of the country including the Maritime Provinces occupied by the Western Powers, gave a sense of satisfaction to the nobility, who were a part of the court. If the king was perceived as the overlord of the country, then the nobility were the next in this tier of ascendancy, sharing in great measure the glory that surrounded the king. In this context it was considered correct etiquette for the Kandyan Chiefs to maintain this aura of greatness, including a divinity, associated with the king and his court. The nobles, under the former king, enjoyed a reflected glory. Seneviratne refers to the divinity associated with the Kandyan Kings:

“The King of Kandy was looked up to as an Emperor or ‘Cakravarti’ with a divine aura of a Buddhist Bodhisattava”.³⁷⁹

Ceylon, at this time, was said to be a ‘galactic state’ where the core or centre of the country was represented by the king, who was the source of power, and associated sovereignty. This was the most difficult part D’Oyly had to play, as he now represented the king, in a physical sense, within the royal palace complex. The concept of a ‘cakravarti’ or Emperor flowed from the evolution of this perception that prevailed in India.³⁸⁰ This was present from the time of the Mauryan Empire, in North India, and followed by the Gupta, Moghul and the British Empire. Each of these empires added to the concept of an all-powerful Emperor, around whom the rest of the kingdoms, or local states, were satellites. The kings of Ceylon were influenced by this vision,

³⁷⁹ H.L. Seneviratne, *Rituals of the Kandyan State*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978, pp.2-4, 95-101 – This was the basis of the ritualistic Kandyan Kingdom. The Kandyan Sinhalese closely followed the caste system, and the patterns of social behaviour and spiritual observations, including the belief that the king was a semi-divine person. In this they were following the traditional Hindu customs associated with the institutions of kingship.

³⁸⁰ S.J. Tambiah, *Culture, Thought and Social Action: An Anthropological Perspective*, Harvard University Press, 1988, Chapter 7.

and thereby perceived themselves as the emperors of the island. Hence, the National Chronicles, the Mahavamsa and Culavamsa, and the literature of the country reflected this perception. Tied to a divine scene, associated with a divine right of Kings, the monarch was looked up to as a god – a living Bodhisattava, who was endowed with divine qualities.³⁸¹

Western powers, including the British, when in occupation of the Maritime Provinces, played up to these sentiments, as revealed in their diplomatic correspondence:

“To the Great and Mighty King of Kandy blessed with all virtues – like unto a silver mountain – King of all Kings – superior to all warriors – in beauty equal to the God Vishu – superior in wisdom and power to the elephant God of the Island of Ceylon – a King whose throne is of precious stones ...”³⁸²

In agreeing to the Kandyan Court’s etiquette during diplomatic parleys, this concept was further reinforced. In this sense symbolically, at least, the King of Kandy and his Court were the centre of sovereignty over the whole country. This conception was a driving force of the Kandyan Kings’ diplomatic stances. The Kandyan Chiefs in these circumstances were the chief power brokers between the European powers and the monarch.

³⁸¹ G. Obayasehera, *The Cult of the Goddess Pattihī*, New Delhi, Motilal Banarsidass, 1987, p.54 – This combined the imagery of both Buddhist and Hindu mythology.

³⁸² Colonel J. Stuart, Commander of the British forces in Ceylon to the King of Kandy, dated 22 June 1796, C.O. 51/1; and The Dutch letters to the Kings of Kandy were addressed in terms of subordinates – Governor Pijl – called himself ‘the King’s most faithful governor and humble servant’, and the King as ‘invincible Emperor of supreme power’. In this the British were following the Dutch diplomatic etiquette in their correspondence with the King of Kandy.

During the Nayakkar period of Kandyan monarchical history, the chiefs wielded a great deal of influence, as the king was foreign. Earlier kings, like Rajasingha II, dealt directly with the foreign powers. The king personally directed the kingdom's foreign policy, in which the chiefs were directed to follow his instructions. Rajasingha II was fluent in the Portuguese language, and was able to use this European language in his diplomatic correspondence.³⁸³ The Nayakkar Kings were not proficient in any European language, and as they were of foreign extraction, the chiefs were the main formulators of foreign policy. This added to the powers and prestige of the chiefs and the nobility. During the British period all attempts were made to conduct diplomatic correspondence through the Kandyan Chiefs. While this aided the British in the process of infiltration into the politics of the country, it gave a prestige and standing to the Chief Adigars as the persons who really mattered in the politics of the kingdom. Hence, all the diplomatic correspondence was conducted at the highest levels with the Kandyan Chiefs. This was different during the time of Rajasingha II, when he conducted the process of diplomatic communications with European powers. With his death, there was a change as observed by Dewaraja:

“With the death of Rajasingha II, the grip of royal authority on the nobility gradually weakened”.³⁸⁴

³⁸³ P.E. Pieris, *Ceylon and the Hollanders: 1658-1796*, New Delhi, Navarang, 1995 (reprint of original of 1918), p.23; and T.B.H. Abeyuinghe, *Princes and Merchants: Relations between the Kings of Kandy and Dutch East India Company in Sri Lanka, 1688-1740*, Journal of the Sri Lanka National Archives, No.2, 1984, pp.40, 57. There are 10 Volumes of Correspondence in the Archives in Colombo that contain the diplomatic correspondence of Rajasingha II.

³⁸⁴ Dewaraja, *The Kandyan Kingdom of Ceylon*, p.278; and Rajasingha II, Letter to Jacob Van Kittensteijn, 1652, *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, Ceylon Branch*, Vol.XXI, No.62, 1909, p.261 – The British wrote and corresponded directly with the Kandyan Chiefs, as seen in D'Oyly's relations with the Kandyan Court. There was no direct correspondence with the King of Kandy. During

This added prestige and power ended after the kingdom was taken over by the British. No more foreign embassies were seen in Kandy, and the Kandyan Chiefs felt that they had no real stake in determining important issues of policy and governance. Earlier the diplomatic relations were between the British Governor and the Adigar, representing the Kandyan Court. Now, all matters were referred to the Resident in Kandy, and the Governor in Colombo. Prior to this the Adigar, or Chief Minister, was the main player in Kandyan foreign policy. This was seen in a letter sent to Governor North from the Governor of India:

“The whole of your conduct in your negotiations with the Adigar or Prime Minister of that distracted country (Kandy) has been marked by so much knowledge of those rules of sound policy ...”.³⁸⁵

Colombo now tended to overshadow Kandy as the real capital: Kandy was now reduced to the status of a provincial town. It was no more a centre of power and sovereignty. This not only diminished the status of the city of Kandy, but also the Kandyan nobles and chiefs who were now reduced to the level of provincial grandees. This added to their frustration and despair.³⁸⁶

the time of Rajasingha II, the King corresponded directly with the European powers, as he was fluent in the Portuguese language.

³⁸⁵ Letter by Governor North to Wellesley Governor General of India, 4 August 1800, C.O.54/2, S.L.N.A. 5; and Despatch sent to North, 13 March 1801, C.O. 54/5, S.L.N.A. 4 - The governor's diplomacy with the Kandyan Kingdom was conducted with the Adigar, who was the chief minister to the king. He hardly had any direct communication with the king.

³⁸⁶ T.B. Pohath Kehelpannala, *Life of Ehelapola, Prime Minister of the Last King of Kandy*, Colombo, 1896 - Ehelapola was reduced to the status of a retired person with no responsibility. This added to his sense of frustration and bitterness.

An examination of the diagrams (on pp.198-200) appended pertaining to the administrative structures for the governance of the kingdom after the British occupation would reveal the disappointment felt after 1815 by the chiefs. When the king ruled he was supreme with a Council of Chiefs from which he sought advice. Ultimately, it was the will of the monarch that prevailed. His power, and the exercise of sovereignty, was supreme and absolute. He was given the divine status, and as pointed out by Roberts one of the Kandyan Kings, Rajasinha II, described the institution of kingship in a letter addressed to the Dutch in Ceylon in the following terms:

“As god our lord created the heavens and the earth, he likewise created kings who are gods of the aforesaid earth.”³⁸⁷

The Central Government consisted of the two Adigars, and the Heads of Departments, called Baddas. Included in this administrative set up were the officials who were attached to the Palace, who, by close physical presence to the ruling monarch, exerted influence, and therefore, a degree of power. Any official attached to the Palace (broadly called Courtiers), tended to yield this power and influence.

This was now no more. All these palace officials, with the exception of the custodian of the Temple of the Tooth Relic, were removed. In the earlier set up the Palace, and its complex, was the real fountain of power and justice. This was now gone, with no substitute in its place:

“In no Court, perhaps, was there ever a greater display made of barbarous pomp than in the Kandyan, or greater respect shown to a Monarch, or more minute attention given to etiquette and The marks of respect required and shown to the

³⁸⁷ M. Roberts, *Sinhala Consciousness in the Kandyan Period 1590s to 1815*, Vijitha Yapa Publications, Colombo, 2003 – This clearly indicates the absolute power of the king of Kandy, and his divine status in the eyes of his subjects.

Kandyan Monarch come so unbounded that one would suppose they were intended rather for a god than a man".³⁸⁸

The Adigars and the Heads of Departments had now no real say. Their influence in the Provinces and Districts remained to a point, with a degree of respect and acceptance, in a ceremonial sense. Yet the real power, as seen in the diagram showing the British administrative setup, was with the new breed of British civil servants. They were the new rulers, controlled and directed from Colombo. The local Kandyan Chiefs were no more the real administrators. Their power depended on John D'Oyly, the Resident, and he was in turn under the British Governor, resident in Colombo:

"Though officially treated with respect, it was only officially, as common soldiers passed a proud Kandyan Chief as little attention as he would a fellow of the lowest caste. Thus they considered themselves degraded and shorn of their splendour".³⁸⁹

In the Kandyan system of administration, judicial and executive powers went together in the power of the office: for example, the Adigar and Disavas combined both executive and judicial power. Both these functions were of benefit to the holder, and adequate revenue and services were derived from them. The British approach to governance was different. The Adigars and Disavas had received gifts and money from litigants, and those presenting petitions, and this was not quite understood, or appreciated, by the British officials. Thus, at all levels at this time there were

³⁸⁸ Davy, *An Account of the Interior of Ceylon*, pp.118-119 - This was the source of power, justice and honour that the Kandyan Sinhalese were familiar with. In this sense, D'Oyly was not able to play this part as a king. The Kandyan Chiefs as much as the common people felt a void in their life. Hence, their yearning for the past, and the presence of a Buddhist monarch ruling in Kandy.

³⁸⁹ Ibid, p.326.

misunderstandings as to the whole system of administration. To the Kandyan it was too big a change to understand or accommodate:

“The Chiefs and the higher class of Kandyans were greatly offended at what we called the impartial administration of justice, whereby the privileges and civil distinctions of caste were practically extinguished ...”.³⁹⁰

Tied to this was a broad culture that was understood by the locals. Observances of religious customs, caste structures, modes of behaviour and communication (spoken and by physical movements) flowed from this cultural milieu. It was not only difficult for foreigners to understand this, but also impossible for them to operate in the same way. This was a major drawback when D’Oyly functioned as Resident, and it generated a great deal of resentment, which was not openly revealed. It was there all the time since the British occupation, and would only come into the open at the opportune moment. There was always an opposition to foreigners by the Kandyan Sinhalese, which was a part of their political psyche:

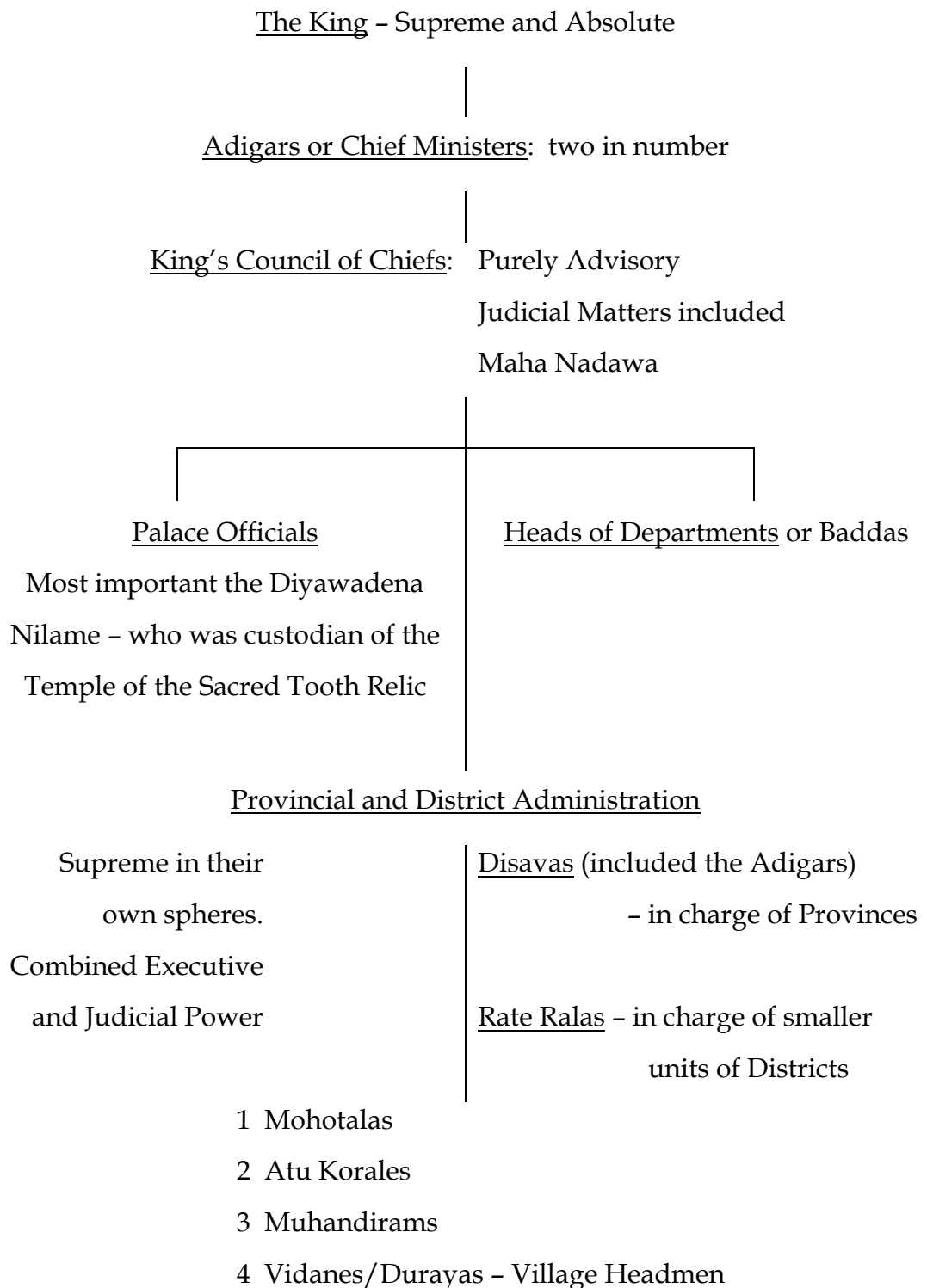
“Besides, not only the English host, although the Dutch, French, Caffre, and many foreign Hosts united should come and make war against the happy isle of Lanka, most assuredly they cannot conquer”.³⁹¹

This was the popular image in the minds of the inhabitants of the kingdom. The Kandyan Kingdom and its king represented the centre of political

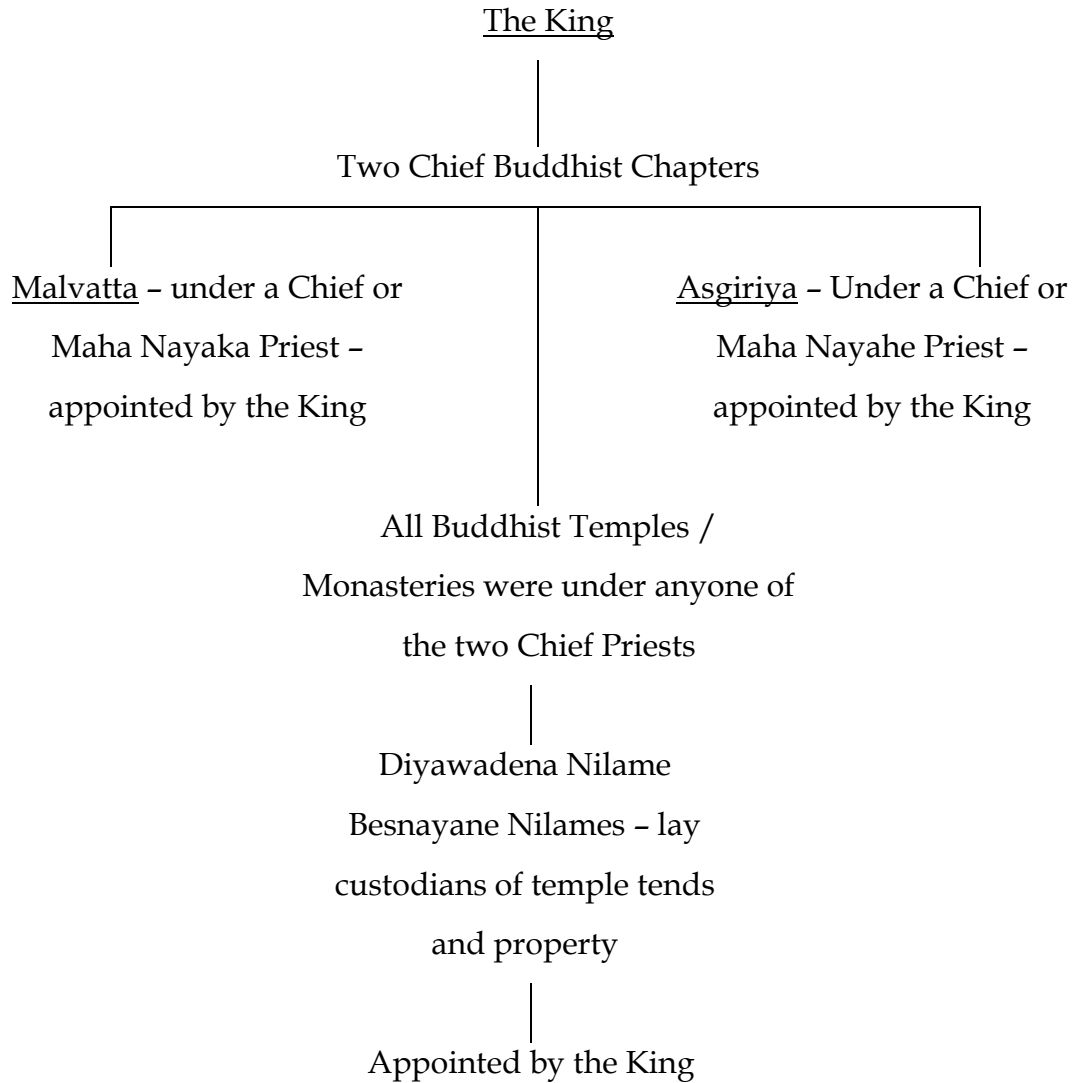
³⁹⁰ S. Sawyer – Judicial Commissioner, Notes – quoted in Marshall, *Ceylon*, p.132 – The Kandyan Chiefs were down graded. Their dignity, power and prestige were no more seen.

³⁹¹ Letter sent by Ehelapola Adigar to D’Oyly, 27 November 1811, S.L.N.A. 5 – The quotation refers to the political past of Sri Lanka contained in C.O. 54/42 – Governor Wilson to Liverpool, sent on 26 February, 1812, S.L.N.A. 5. This feeling of the Kandyan Kingdom, as a special and divinely protected power, was prevalent in the minds of the Sinhalese.

Diagram: The System of Governance under the King



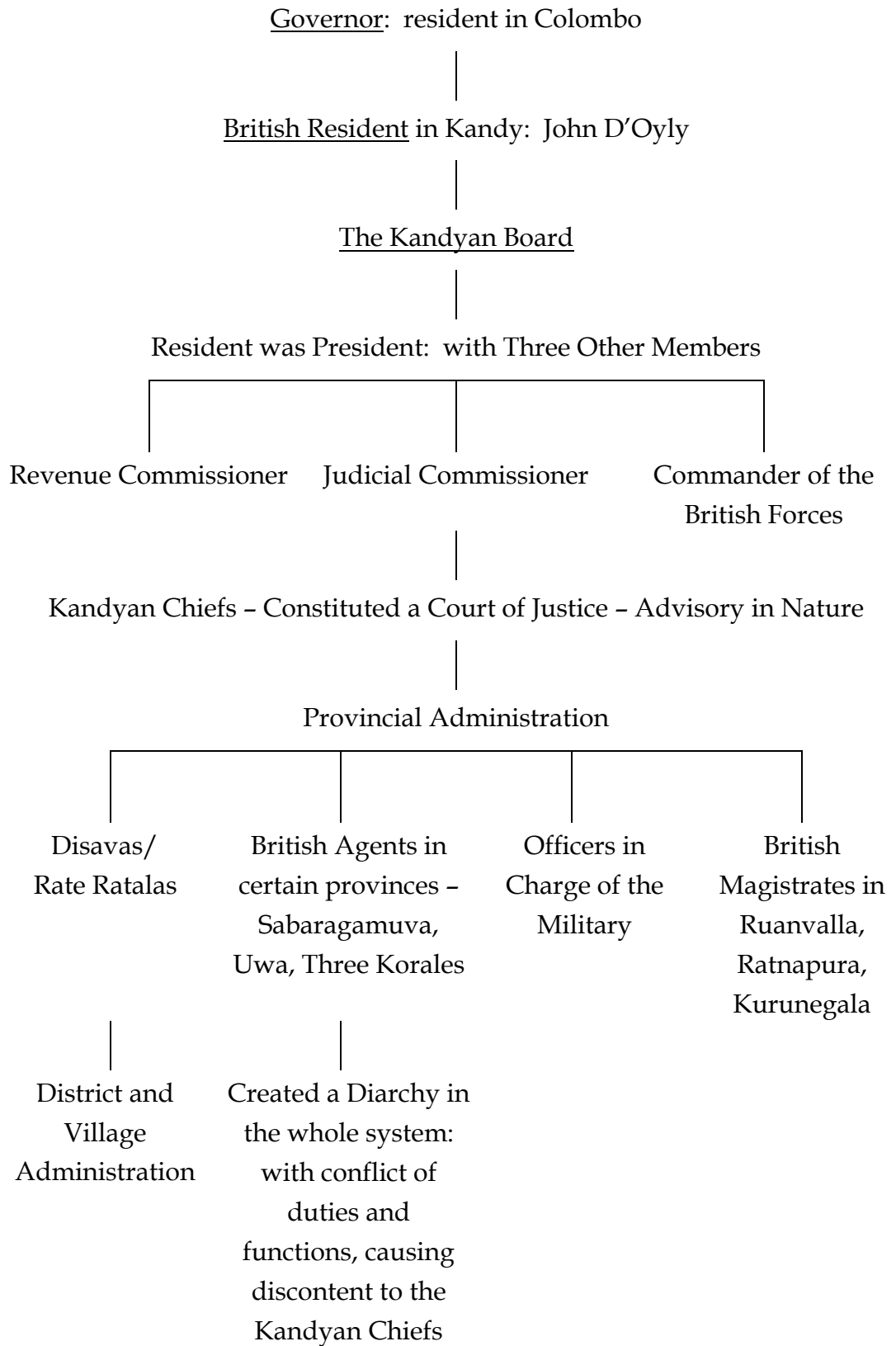
**Diagram: The Kandyan Kingdom's Religious Organisation - Buddhism
the State Religion**



Note: All Buddhist Priests had to belong to the Govigama Caste.

Ref: W. Rahula, *History of Buddhism in Ceylon*, Colombo, 1956; and L.S. Dewaraja, *The Kandyan Kingdom*, Colombo, Lake House, 1988, Chapter IX.

**Diagram: The System of Governance under the British:
After 1815 - Kandyan Convention**



power, which had been able to withstand attacks from those outside, and therefore had a special mission of being protected. This sense of political supremacy within the country was consciously propagated by the king and his nobles, and therefore was the ideological basis for the existence of the Kandyan Kingdom.

Tied to this was the support that was given by the Buddhist clergy to further this concept. In this sense the king represented the spiritual and the secular leader of the kingdom. The institution of a Buddhist Monarch ruling in Kandy was what gave strength to it. Therefore, following from this, there arose the fact where the people would only accept a king who was from the kingly caste and the upholder of the Buddhist religion.³⁹² The Nayakkar dynasty were very conscious of this in formulating their policies in administrating the kingdom.

D'Oyly's Challenge

Because the former King of Kandy had been exiled to South India, John D'Oyly had to play the role of king while striving to control and consolidate British power in the Kandyan provinces.

D'Oyly, as a civil servant, was not able to fulfil these tasks, though he had the knowledge and ability to understand the socio-cultural setting that existed. Once again he had to infiltrate deeply into the belief systems and social structures to perform a holding operation to make way for new ideas

³⁹² W. Rahula, *History of Buddhism in Ceylon*, Colombo, 1956, pp.62-64 – The belief that only a Buddhist can be the ruler of Ceylon, a belief from the 3rd Century B.C. when Buddhism was introduced.

British Museum – Library, London, Or. 6603 (65) – A document which contains answers given by a Buddhist priest to the then Dutch Governor in Ceylon, Willem Falck – 1765-1785, Document entitled “Lak Raja Lo Sivita”. This document gives the basis of kingship as an institution in Ceylon, set within the historical and spiritual heritage of the country.

and persons from outside the old provinces of the kingdom. He needed to pave the way for new socio-economic concepts to enter. This was a big challenge to the whole process of British infiltration in its second phase. It was an important challenge of consolidating the gains in the first stage of infiltration, which brought the British as protectors of the Kandyan Sinhalese. Now a different challenge was presented with establishing an administration that was acceptable to all sections of society.

Gradually, with a better understanding of Kandyan society, its laws, and customs, D'Oyly established greater British control. This had to be done with due caution, backed up with the necessary force if the circumstances warranted it. His was a mild administration (in contrast to that of the last King of Kandy), but had to keep its focus or objective on spreading British control and dominance. It is no surprise, therefore, that D'Oyly placed agents (called Agents of the Resident), in various strategic points within the kingdom:

“Not long after the signing of the Convention the size of the civil administration had to be increased and Government Agents were posted to Uva, Sabaragamuva and the Three Korales”.

After a few months of the Kandyan Convention Simon Sawers was appointed as agent in Badulla. This was done as the people in this province showed a resentment to the new regime. D'Oyly, in consultation with the Governor, appointed agents to coordinate channels of communication between Kandy (the headquarters of the British) and the other British officials. The reason for this was conveyed by Governor Brownrigg in a despatch to London.³⁹³

These agents, along with various units of the British Army, were the instruments used to develop a better control system, and with it a deeper

³⁹³ Brownrigg to Bathurst, 20 July 1815, C.O. 54/61, S.L.N.A. 5.

infiltration into the day-to-day administration of the provinces, districts, and villages. In essence, it involved a slow, but sure, extension of control over the activities of the Kandyan Chieftains.³⁹⁴

Such moves created an obvious clash of interests and a consequent build up of resentment. This resentment was an inevitable process; a part of the slow evolution and development of total British sovereignty over the Kandyan Kingdom. The gradual, but sure, control was the aim of D'Oyly's administration and he had to know the intricacies of the customs and laws of the people before this process was successful. A good knowledge was acquired by actual work experience at the centre (in Kandy), and by associating with the chiefs in the process of the day-to-day administration of the provinces within his charge. Under the terms and conditions stipulated in the Kandyan Convention, the chiefs retained all their powers and privileges as under the Kandyan kings. These included both executive and judicial power, within the provinces and districts under their charge. In this context it was a difficult task for D'Oyly to effectively control the chiefs and, at the same time, to extend the authority of the British government to all parts of the country. His administration aroused the resentment of the Kandyan Chiefs, leading eventually to their open opposition to the British presence:

“Before, no one but the King was above them; now they were inferior to every civilian in our service – to every officer in the army”.³⁹⁵

³⁹⁴ Brownrigg to Bathurst, 28 February 1817, C.O. 54/65, S.L.N.A. 5 – If the Kandyan Chieftains were not controlled the process of British infiltration within the administrative setup, as envisaged in the second phase, would have failed.

³⁹⁵ Davy, *An Account of the Interior of Ceylon*, pp.326-327 – A sure indication was that the Kandyan Sinhalese opposed the process of British infiltration.

Geographical Impediments Faced by D'Oyly in the Administration and Supervision over the Ceded Kandyan Provinces

Geographical factors were an obstacle to D'Oyly's objective of expanding British control and infiltration into the administrative structure and direct governance of the Kandyan provinces.

While the geography of the island had aided in the defence of the Kingdom from foreign invasions, it also acted as an impediment to the proper control of the kingdom, from the capital of Kandy. This was the case even when the Kandyan Kings ruled, and in most of the outlying provinces, like Uva, the authority from the central government from Kandy was hardly felt. In this situation, the local chiefs supervised the day-to-day administration, without control from the centre, and the taxes were paid mainly in kind from agriculture, which was based on paddy cultivation and services, which flowed from the caste structure.³⁹⁶ The accompanying map gives an idea of the topography of the Kandyan Provinces, pointing to the rugged mountainous nature of the country.

Communications were most difficult as wheeled traffic was impossible at that point of time.³⁹⁷ All travel had to be on foot; the mode of travel by the

³⁹⁶ H.L. Seneviratne, 'The Buddhist Historiographical Tradition in Sri Lanka' (unpublished), David Little refers to this in "Sri Lanka: The Invention of Enmity", 1994, Washington, US Institute of Peace, 1994, pp.127-128 - Reference is made to S.J. Tambiah (sociologist) who described Sri Lankan tradition as that of a 'galatic' state of political organisation. It is Centre oriented, with the King as an Emperor, or "Cakravarti". However, the units in the outlying areas had autonomy, independence, managing their affairs. Division of a single ruler over the whole island was there, even if the relatives of the actual political situation on the ground was otherwise. This had therefore both a symbolic and political significance.

³⁹⁷ Major Skinner, *Fifty Years in Ceylon*, edited by Miss Skinner, London, 1891, pp.21-22, 26-29, 162 - Skinner was Commissioner of Roads, and worked

Kandyan chiefs was by being carried in palanquins. It was difficult to use horses, and the cavalry arm of the army was not deployed due to the difficult terrain of the land:

“There are no roads in Ceylon, and wheeled traffic carriages can only be used in the neighbourhood of the larger European settlements and many of the Kandyan paths were impossible for horses”.³⁹⁸

All stores and supplies had to be carried by coolies, or on bullocks, which was slow and cumbersome: transport of artillery, like cannon, was very difficult and in many instances had to be manhandled.³⁹⁹

Hence, the geography of the country was such that it was difficult to administrate. It was in contrast to the maritime provinces of Ceylon, where the land was flat, and communications were therefore easy. These geographical conditions were similar to the flat undulating Deccan plateau in India. It was in contrast to the Kandyan Kingdom, dominated by hills and valleys. This was made worse consequent to the heavy rainfalls during the monsoon period.⁴⁰⁰

With the rain there was the spread of disease and illness. Jungle fever, malaria, was common as stagnant water was a good breeding ground for mosquitoes that carried the infection. The health of the British officers was always at stake in this situation, especially if there were military

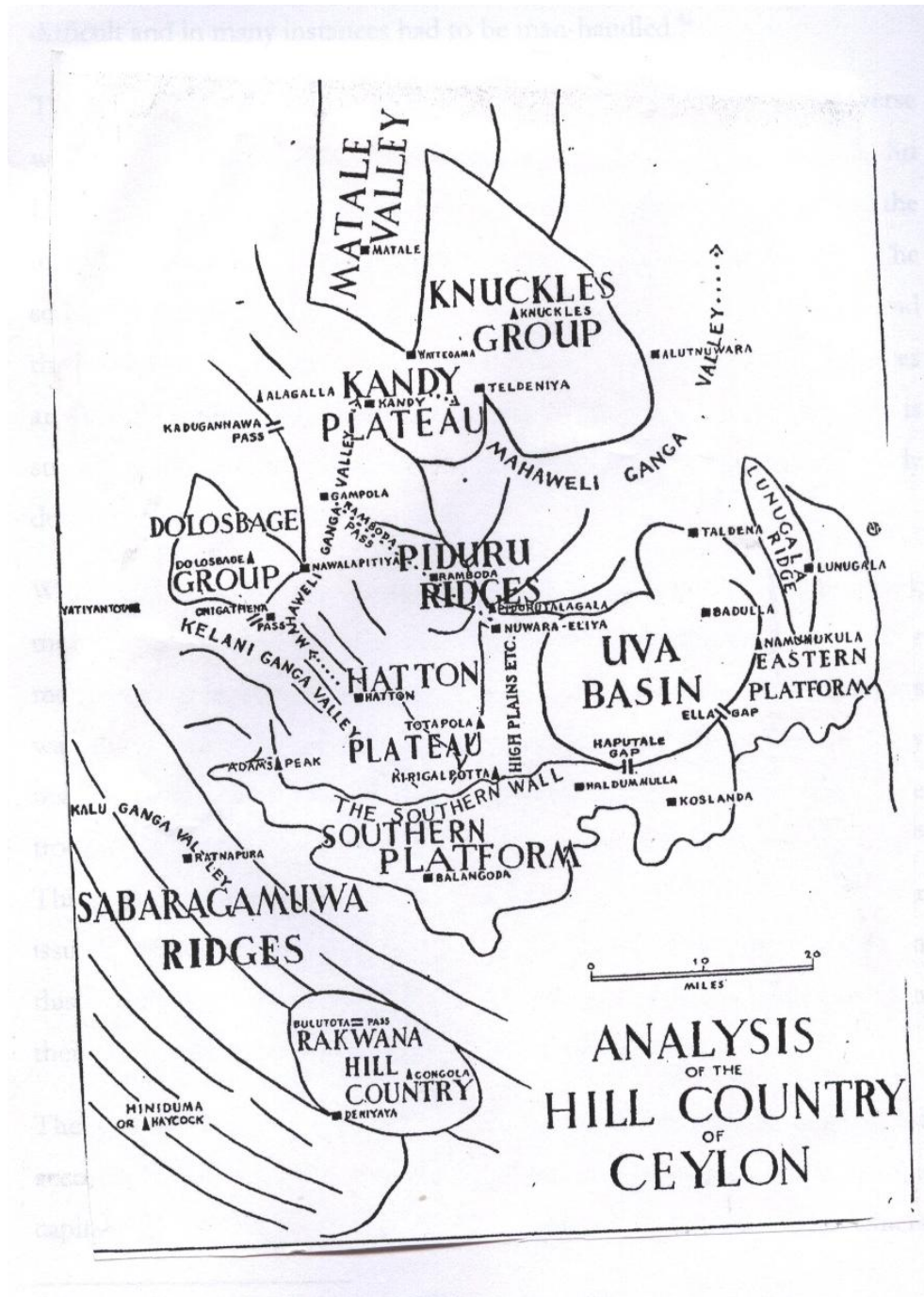
mainly to open up the country and by this have a better communication system to aid the British in the process of infiltration and control.

³⁹⁸ J. Cordiner, *A Description of Ceylon*, London, 1807, pp.15-16, 167-168, 290-293.

³⁹⁹ Bussche-Captain, *Letters on Ceylon*, London, 1826, p.21.

⁴⁰⁰ R. and R. Bradnock, *Sri Lanka, Handbook*, Footprint Handbooks, 1998, pp.24-25.

Map: Difficult Topography of the Kandyan Kingdom



Source: E. Cook, *A Geography of Ceylon*, 1931.

manoeuvres. This fact is obvious if one examines the health reports of the troops: in fact, more troops died of illness than in the fighting.⁴⁰¹ This was a major factor that had to be taken into account in relation to law and order issues where troops and the army had to be deployed in remote areas. In this context the army had to rely on fixed defences within their temporary forts (often built of mud) to defend themselves.

The premier Kandyan chiefs were drawn from the leading families (in accordance with ancient custom) and resided immediately adjacent to the capital city of Kandy, where the king ruled. When the occasion demanded, the chiefs were sent to the provinces and districts, but their families had to remain in Kandy as hostages, to prevent possible sedition or revolts led by the chiefs. With the removal of the monarch, the chiefs dropped this practice, and what transpired in the more remote provinces and districts became difficult to detect. The British officials in the out-stations were not that effective, as they had to work with the local chiefs who were used to an easy style of administration. D'Oyly's task of getting the needed information and to penetrate deep into administrative matters was therefore made more difficult. This was clearly revealed by Marshall:

“The Chiefs reprobated any change in the forms of government, and the common people appeared to consider an alteration of their institutions as downright impiety and it is not sufficient that a government is just, it must be palatable; and to render a subjugated people, more especially an Oriental

⁴⁰¹ Turner, *Ceylon Antiquary and Literary Register* V, ii.69 - Turner points to the fact that disease caused by the spread of malaria, and dysentery were a major cause for the defeat of European Armies that entered the Kandyan Kingdom in the past.

people submissive and contented subjects, is a matter of some difficulty".⁴⁰²

D'Oyly, in this environment, was hindered in his objective of getting better control of the administrative machinery of the governance of the country. To overcome the impediments imposed by the topography of the country, frequent circuits had to be undertaken.⁴⁰³ This was comparatively easy in the plains (within the coastal or Maritime Provinces), but quite trying and difficult within the mountainous Kandyan province. Penetration and infiltration into the actual governing process was by no means easy. In this context and environment, D'Oyly tended to become more and more isolated in Kandy.

D'Oyly Attempts to Rule with the Chiefs: Signs of Unrest

D'Oyly, with his competence in the Sinhalese language, strived to rule with the assistance and cooperation of the chiefs, based on a firm, but humane administration. He strived to show that the new administration was not 'tyrannical' or 'despotic' as was the case of the deposed monarch, Sri Wickrama Rajasingha:

"They (the Sinhalese) made no complaint of oppression or misrule".⁴⁰⁴

Accordingly, D'Oyly held Court at the Audience Hall (Magul Maduwa) of the late kings, and sought the advice, and concurrence, of the principal chiefs with his executive and judicial actions:

⁴⁰² Marshall, *Ceylon*, pp.131-132 - This was the biggest challenge faced by D'Oyly in his attempt of infiltration with a view to consolidating British rule.

⁴⁰³ *Ceylon Government Gazette*, 29 May 1824, Sri Lanka Archives - It may be noted that D'Oyly died consequent to fever he contracted while in a circuit.

⁴⁰⁴ Marshall, *Ceylon*, p.175 - A sudden change is not acceptable. A traditional Buddhist Monarch was one that was acceptable to the people.

“After all these Appointments are conferred, I retire with all the Chiefs to the Dakina Mandape – where the people of each Disavany & Rata etc. are severally called (not omitting first those appointed on the 3d) & the Appointments announced to them – We all return to the Govr.’s Presence in the Hall of Audience. My Commission, by the Govr., appointing me Accredited Agent or Resident, on the part of Govt. in the Kandyan Province, is read first in English by Mr Sutherland, & afterwards the Substance explained in English by A. de Saram Modr. – They express their Satisfaction, & take leave about 5pm. Fine hot clear Day. The following appointments were also determined this Day, but not conferred on Account of the Absence of the Parties.”⁴⁰⁵

In fact, he administered the provinces under his charge with assistance of the Kandyan Board, which was drawn from the principal civil servants serving in Kandy, along with the commander of the army. Outwardly, the chiefs appeared to have their ancient rights and privileges, but in fact D’Oyly as Resident and the Kandyan Board directed the administration and the governance of the country.⁴⁰⁶

It is not surprising therefore, that from the start of the British occupation of the Kandyan Kingdom there was dissatisfaction with British rule. Ehelapola, the principal Kandyan Chief, was not happy with the British. He had hoped to be elevated as the King of Kandy when Sri Wickrama was captured, and was disappointed when this did not eventuate. The British

⁴⁰⁵ *D’Oyly’s Diary*, Entry of 5 March 1815 – Refers to appointments D’Oyly made. As far as possible D’Oyly strived to play the part of the earlier Buddhist Monarch.

⁴⁰⁶ Letter by J. Sutherland from Colombo to D’Oyly, 23 August 1816, C.O. 54/61, S.L.N.A. 5 – Contains a Minute by the Governor on the Administration of the Kandyan Provinces.

Governor Brownrigg and the British hierarchy in Ceylon were suspicious of the ambitions of Ehelapola.⁴⁰⁷ When Ehelapola was not offered the Crown he refused to accept any office. Further, Ehelapola's action of hiding the Kandyan royal regalia and jewels was another indication that he had not given up his ambitions to ascend the throne of Kandy:

“Ehelapola donned the golden hat and coat of royalty. Rebuked by the official for the impropriety of the action, Ehelapola replied he would in a few days be king”.⁴⁰⁸

He lived grandly within the city of Kandy, and sought to live a life of 'make believe' that he was of royal descent. This was revealed in poems composed by bards during this period. In this situation of dissatisfaction, there was every possibility of his falling into any plot to oust the British from Kandy.⁴⁰⁹

There were factions among the chiefs: the most obvious was the ill feeling between Ehelapola and Molligoda, the First Adigar. Issues of protocol and those pertaining to influence and power between the two chiefs were points of conflict. The following entry in D'Oyly's diary points to this conflict of interests:

“18th - Sundry Visits and Complaints of Kandyans in the Morning - In Afternoon recd. The Visit of Eyheylepola at the Magul Maduwa from 5 to 6½PM - He assents to my Proposal, and Opinion that the Disave of Uwa and Molligoda Adikar, of 7 K., should go to their respective Disavannies - He fears, the rest will oppress the Inhabitants and thinks it unnecessary, that they should go - He hears Molligoda Adikar is preparing a Toppiya similar to his own (made and first worn at Colombo)

⁴⁰⁷ Governor Brownrigg to Bathurst, 12 April 1818, C.O. 54/70, S.L.N.A. 5.

⁴⁰⁸ Deposition of Welleygedera Appuhamy, a “Stambi” (a Court in) attached to Sri Wickrama Rajasingha's Court, 1829, recorded in Kandy, Sri Lanka Archives.

⁴⁰⁹ Pohath Kehelpannala, *Life of Ehelapola*, pp.35-37.

with Gold Bopat and designs to obtain leave at Colombo to wear it – He begged in the Commencement to be subjected to no Singaleze, but to serve at the Feet of the English. If others obtain the same Privileges, he desires to go and reside in the English Country – He has been sick for the last few Days, and not yet recovered”.⁴¹⁰

These issues of protocol illustrate the conflict of interests between the two most important Kandyan Chiefs. D’Oyly realised this situation and was accustomed to taking specific steps that would avoid any clash, which would be detrimental to British interests. His approach was to maintain good relations with both, but he knew their clash of interests, and accordingly this guided his actions. When it came to making senior state appointments he did consult the two premier Kandyan Chiefs (Ehelapola and Molligoda), but his decision was based on the fundamental objective of consolidating and expanding British interests.

Other important Kandyan Chiefs were not satisfied, one of whom was Madugalle, who was the Diyawadene Nilame, the chief lay custodian of the Sacred Temple of the Tooth. This was an important office as the Tooth Relic was symbolically important to Kandyan sovereignty. Madugalle’s action should show how the majority of the Kandyan Sinhalese felt: the need for the British to leave, and the resurrection of a traditional Buddhist monarch. These factors moved the chiefs who wanted a reversion to the former system of administration and governance.⁴¹¹

⁴¹⁰ D’Oyly’s *Diary*, Entry of 18 April 1815 – Complaint by Ehelapola about his position as against that of Adigar Molligoda – Matters of protocol and precedence were vital to the Kandyan Chiefs to maintain their dignity among the local inhabitants. Any reduction was construed as an insult.

⁴¹¹ D’Oyly’s Report, 5 October 1816, C.O. 54/61, S.L.N.A. 5.

The plot initiated by Madugalle, the Diyawadene Nilame, or lay custodian of the Sacred Temple of the Tooth, points to the growing discontent felt by the Kandyan Chiefs in spite of D'Oyly's tact as an administrator:

"I have the honour to acquaint you for information of His Excellency that in pursuance of his Intention expressed in my letter of the 14th the Kandyan Chiefs were yesterday assembled at the Hall of Audience and Madugalle Uda Gabbada Nilame was publickly called upon to answer to the charge of Treasonable Practices".⁴¹²

Both the secular and religious sectors were combined in their disapproval of the British rule. The general feeling was that unless there was a traditional Buddhist Monarch in Kandy the spiritual and political future was bleak and uncertain:

"Question: When you presented offerings at Bintenne you prayed that the English be destroyed and a King arise - Did you say this in according to instructions of anyone, or did you say it yourself? Answer: I said it because Udagebeda Nilame bid me to say so".⁴¹³

The Buddhist belief was combined with the symbolic spiritual and political aspirations of the people. Since British occupation the capital city of Kandy, with its symbolic palace complex (combining spiritual and secular beliefs) became neglected. A graphic illustration of this is seen in a painting dating from just after the British conquest. The old brilliance of the palace complex was gone, and with it the whole symbolic representation of significance of sovereignty as far as the Kandyan Sinhalese were concerned. Kandy was no longer a capital city as in the past:

⁴¹² D'Oyly's Report, 16 September 1816, C.O. 54/61, S.L.N.A. 5.

⁴¹³ D'Oyly's Report, 16 September 1816, C.O. 54/61, S.L.N.A. 5.

“In the indigenous view, the Capital city of Senkadagala or Kandy was a cosmic centre that could stand as a sign for the whole Kingdom”.⁴¹⁴

This fact added to the growing discontent and displeasure with the British occupation.

Along with this, there were rumours afloat as to what the British contemplated to do with the chiefs, in order to increase their hold over the newly acquired kingdom. One of these rumours was that the British intended to forcibly transport to a distant land, beyond the seas, all the important chiefs. By doing so they, the British, would emerge as the supreme body to rule the country. The British had already done this with the late king (Sri Wickrama Rajasingha) and his family, followers, and other members of the royal family. There were also members of the royal family held in custody in Colombo, awaiting deportation. In this context, it was easy to spread rumours that the principal Kandyan Chiefs would suffer a similar fate:

“He (meaning the Buddhist Priest) rejoined that the report was, that a great Day at Colombo approaching the Governor was to send for all the Headmen to attend from Kandy, and intended to take that opportunity of putting them on board ship, and sending them away beyond the Sea. That if that was the intention then we the Priests, Adikara, Dissaves, Mohitirales, Nilames, etc could do something ...”.⁴¹⁵

⁴¹⁴ Roberts, *Sinhala Consciousness*, p.70 – Symbolism and its associated perception of government as represented by a righteous king was of importance to the Kandyan Sinhalese.

⁴¹⁵ Report from Rathnapura, dated 20 July 1816, C.O. 54/61, S.L.N.A. 5 – This Buddhist priest was a vital link in the plot to oust the British from Kandy.

This gave a justification and an impetus towards a revolt to remove the British, and establish a Buddhist Monarch, who would uphold their religion and retain their political independence and way of life.

There were signs of unrest from the very beginning, which went unnoticed. While there had been reports of unrest, outwardly it appeared to be placid and peaceful. In the remote areas, such as the Uwa Province, the people were not reconciled to the change of rulers:

“Molligoda Adigar sends Message, that he heard from Lewke these were symptoms of Insurrection in Uwa”.⁴¹⁶

The Uwa Province was remote, forested, and in many areas occupied by the aboriginal people called the Veddhas. These Veddhas were fiercely loyal to the Kings of Kandy. In the past there was little interference with their way of life as hunter-gatherers. Now they were apprehensive about the British government, especially when British officials and units of the army were placed to control and police these remote districts.

The British realised that the opening up of communications was the best way to gain better control and infiltrate all parts of the country. The Western Powers, who occupied the coastal regions, had no accurate information about the topography of the Kandyan Kingdom. There were many steep passes to climb before entry to the capital city of Kandy was gained: the Balana, Galegadera, Giragama, Yatawara, Hanguranketa and Madamahanuwara. In December 1814, in anticipation of an invasion, D'Oyly had checked on the entry points to the Kandyan Kingdom. His entry on the 31 December 1814 states as follows:

⁴¹⁶ *D'Oyly's Diary*, Entry of 16 April 1815 – This points to the difficulties D'Oyly had in gaining control over the remote areas falling within the Kandyan provinces.

“Decr. 31st 1814. Gabbala Miyana Owita Lekam - From Gabbala Miyana Owita the nearest Road to Kandy is by Bokara beywila - 2 Days’ Journey for a Messenger - 4 for a cooly.

In the Road from Kandy to Sripade are 2 Openings:

1 - At Maskeliya in the Keylany Ganga, leading to Bulugoda in Bulatgama along the North Side of the Kelany Ganga - By Report, it is not very difficult, and about 1 Day’s Journey, but he never passed it - After passing Maskeliya, Udapalata ends and Kalugammala begins, but higher up the River, there are Houses belonging to Kalugammala, on both Banks of it.

2d - At 2 Heytakma Southward from Maskeliya, is a Bogaha and 2 or 3 Houses near it - from thence, you ascend 2 Heytakma to the top of Bokara beywila, and descend 3 Heytakma to Polgaswatta in Gabbala - The Road is very difficult, and it will be 4 or 5 Hours Journey.”⁴¹⁷

There were in addition a number of mountains, widely dispersed over the country. Within this topography there was an imposed isolation, and this was an obstacle to the growth and expansion of British influence. In this situation, there were military problems as how to meet internal revolts with the ability of deploying troops quickly where the need was urgent.⁴¹⁸

Prior to the British takeover of the Kandyan Kingdom, there were plans to build a road from Colombo (in the Western Province) to the strategic harbour town of Trincomalee:

⁴¹⁷ *D’Oyly’s Diary*, entry of 31 December 1814.

⁴¹⁸ Ceylon Government Gazettes - 1817-1818, *The Uwa Rebellion*, Colombo, 1888, Sri Lank Archives - This gives the difficulty of logistics of military operations. Until roads were opened into the Kandyan provinces, there was a problem for both military deployment and administrative control. It was a great barrier for British infiltration.

“That His Kandyan Majesty will allow the British Government permission to make a road through his territories for the passage of troops from Colombo to Trincomalee, and full power to the subjects of the said British government to pass and repass along it without let or hindrance”.⁴¹⁹

This proposal would invariably have to run through the Kandyan Kingdom, and a number of moves were made to get this started. This road project was given a high priority in the strategic context. Its prime purpose was to consolidate the hold over the country, and its strategic harbour in Trincomalee, as it was ultimately for the defence and security of the growing British Empire in India. Road building was now pursued in earnest when the Kandyan Kingdom was taken over.⁴²⁰ This project was the first major road and communication project that would, in the years to come, break the isolation of the Kandyan Provinces and open up its resources for economic and commercial exploitation. Such an opening up of the Kandyan Provinces also needed a good survey of the land. These land surveys were part and parcel of the opening up of the isolated Kandyan Provinces. This enabled maps to be turned out that aided military operations and road building with the consequent development of the economy and commerce.

During D'Oyly's period as Resident there was an interest shown in the economic and commercial possibilities of the Kandyan Provinces. Apart from the traditional sources of revenue from cinnamon, areca nuts, rice and food production, there was the possibility of introducing other commercial agricultural products. Governor Brownrigg in his despatches did refer to

⁴¹⁹ Proposed Treaty Between Governor North and King of Kandy, Sri Wickrama Rajasingha, 3 February 1803, Paragraph 9, Sri Lanka Archives, S.L.N.A. 5.

⁴²⁰ Governor Brownrigg to Bathurst, 5 November 1816, C.O. 54/61, No.169, S.L.N.A. 5 - This process of road building was started by Brownrigg and pursued vigorously by his successor, Governor Barnes.

these possibilities: the potential that the Kandyan Provinces had for producing goods for export:

“The object of retaining possession of the Kandyan Provinces, which had been by the experience of Three Years manifested not to be the unwholesome and pestiferous country that it had been ever before supposed, and from which daily proofs were arising of its value in procuring Food and exportable commodities of Trade ...”.⁴²¹

The British had shown an interest in promoting commercial agriculture such as producing coffee. The Dutch had strived to cultivate coffee in the coastal areas, but these were not successful. They had coffee plantations close to Galle and Negombo, but these were failures. However, the Dutch did buy a certain amount of coffee from within the Kandyan Kingdom, and exported it.⁴²² This pointed to the fact that the Kandyan uplands were suited for coffee to be grown as a commercial crop. To develop coffee on a commercial basis in the Kandyan Provinces transport was also a problem. Brownrigg’s policy of building roads in the Kandyan hill country served both a military and a commercial purpose. The program was interrupted by the Kandyan rebellion of 1817, but it was pursued vigorously after the rebellion was suppressed. Governor Barnes, who succeeded Brownrigg, wanted to build more roads:

“We can never be said to have secure possession of the country, nor can it be commercially improved (without roads)”.⁴²³

⁴²¹ Governor Brownrigg’s Report of 12 April 1818 sent to Bathurst, C.O. 54/70, No.278, S.L.N.A. 5 - In subsequent years coffee followed by tea were grown within the Kandyan provinces as commercial crops.

⁴²² J.E. Tennet, *Ceylon*, London, 1860, pp.226-227.

⁴²³ L.A. Mills, *Ceylon Under British Rule - 1795-1932*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1933, p.224; and Governor Barnes, who succeeded Brownrigg, wanted to build more roads, 13 November 1819, C.O. 54/74, S.L.N.A. 5.

These dual characteristics of roads and the development of the communications purpose continued during the nineteenth century, opening up the Kandyan Provinces, reducing its isolation and enabling a stronger presence of the British within the ancient Kandyan Kingdom. This was the objective of infiltration leading to better control over the provinces that were ceded.

D'Oyly's Relations with the Buddhist Clergy

As the Buddhist Sangha (the Church) was an important component and element in Kandyan society and its politics, D'Oyly made all attempts to placate them. He realised the influence exerted by the Buddhist clergy when he worked as Collector stationed in Matara, and this was further confirmed when he studied the Sinhale language and had a Buddhist priest to teach him.⁴²⁴ In traditional Sinhalese society the Buddhist temple was the only source of knowledge and learning. Royalty and the nobility had to turn to the Buddhist monasteries to learn their letters, and to understand the higher spiritual and secular aspects of knowledge and its allied culture. What the Brahamins were to Hindu society, the Buddhist priest was to the Kandyan Sinhalese society. They were the learned and intellectual class within the society then prevailing:

"From the fall of Kotte, Kandy became the last stronghold of independent Buddhism and the two monasteries, Malvatte and

⁴²⁴ D'Oyly studied the Sinhalese language under a Buddhist priest at Matara, by the name of Karatota Unanse - Note by C.W. Codrington, *Introduction to D'Oyly's Diary*, Colombo, 1917, pp. XI and XII - D'Oyly learnt his Sinhalese from a Buddhist priest. This was the normal practice, as Buddhist Monasteries were the real schools before the European period. It is from these institutions that the people learnt to read and write, and understand their spiritual heritage. D'Oyly was exposed to this old, classical mode of education, and in this process understood the history, culture, and civilisation of the local inhabitants.

Asgiriya claimed to preserve the traditions of the ancient Mahavihava in Anuradhapura, the first Monastery to be founded in Sri Lanka".⁴²⁵

Their strategic position within society was recognised by the Kandyan Kings, who were their great patrons. This aspect of patronage and support was fostered as a policy by the Nayakkar dynasty, which ruled the Kandyan Kingdom from 1739 to 1815. It was a foreign dynasty, which were Hindu and Tamil speaking from South India. In order to foster and grow into an indigenous dynasty they actively supported the Buddhist Sangha:

"Kirti Sri Rajasingha, a King of South Indian origin, tried to strengthen the Buddhist Sangha in order to weaken the Sinhalese aristocracy".⁴²⁶

The Nayakkar rulers were able to achieve the founding of two new Buddhist Chapters called the 'Siam Nikaya': Buddhist priests, whose succession was on the principle of a pupillary claim ('sishia paramparawa'), had to come from Thailand (Siam), and the higher ordination for the Buddhist priests revived. The Nayakkar Kings had diplomatic relations with Siam (Thailand), cemented through religious and cultural ties: an important aspect of this was the founding of the 'Siam Nikaya' in Kandy during the reign of King Kirti Sri Rajasingha. Priests came from Thailand, who were able to revive the higher ordination or 'upasam padava', which had been lost in Ceylon.⁴²⁷

The Siam Nikaya in Kandy was represented by the two leading monasteries of Malwatte and Asgiriya. These two monasteries became centres of religious

⁴²⁵ Dewaraja, *The Kandyan Kingdom*, p.8.

⁴²⁶ H.D. Evers, "Monastic Landlordism in Ceylon", *Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. XXVIII, No. 4, August 1966, pp.685-692.

⁴²⁷ P.E.E. Fernando, "Kandyan Mission sent to Siam", *Ceylon Journal of Historical and Social Studies*, Vol. II, No.1, p.72.

learning and scholarship.⁴²⁸ By lending their patronage and support to the Buddhist Sangha, and its associated institutions, the Nayakkar dynasty strived to win their favour, to further strengthen their hold on the country they ruled. It was realised by the Nayakkar Kings that they were foreign, and this did not assist them to get total control over the country they were called upon to rule, especially over the Kandyan Chiefs and the nobility. In this context the support of the Buddhist clergy was perceived as a vital step of their statecraft:

“Kirti Sri Rajasingha attempted to restore the Buddhist Sangha, endow it strengthen it so that he could (as he thought) have the support of the community of monks, who yielded much influence over the people”.⁴²⁹

It is not surprising that the British, with the advice and guidance of D’Oyly, tried their best to placate the Buddhist clergy. In the Kandyan Convention a very specific clause was inserted that they would support the Buddhist religion:

“The Religion of the Boodha professed by the Chiefs and inhabitants of these Provinces is declared inviable, and its Rites, Ministers and Places of worship are to be maintained and protected”.⁴³⁰

This step had to be taken not only to placate an important segment of Kandyan Sinhalese society, but also show to the population that they would, as a government, follow ancient custom and tradition in matters pertaining to administration and governance of the Kandyan Kingdom. D’Oyly did his best to please the Buddhist clergy. He gave patronage and support to their institutions as a shrewd step towards consolidating British gains following

⁴²⁸ K. Wáchissara, *Valivita Saranankara and the Revival of Buddhism*, Ph.D. Thesis, London University, 1961, pp.245-261.

⁴²⁹ Dewaraja, *The Kandyan Kingdom*, p.114.

⁴³⁰ *Kandyan Convention*, 2 March 1815, Paragraph 5.

its takeover of the kingdom. His was an intelligent policy of infiltration and deception. One such move was to take an active part in Buddhist national ceremonies, and by playing the part of a Buddhist ruler, as required by custom and tradition.⁴³¹

D'Oyly in his earlier letters had shown a good understanding of how to address and deal with the Buddhist clergy. There is a special way of address, spoken and written, which is followed when a layman addresses a Buddhist priest. A correct manner of writing would indicate that an individual has understood the significance and place a Buddhist priest held within Sinhalese society. If this was not understood, any official relationship would have been difficult, and would be of no avail. In 1808 D'Oyly, while he was Chief Translator to the government, wrote a letter to the high priest Moratota on a sensitive diplomatic issue concerning the release of British prisoners of war, held within the Kandyan Kingdom. This was a matter where the King of Kandy had to make a decision. In Appendix XI, the English translation of the letter written by D'Oyly in 1808 is given.⁴³² The letter indicates that D'Oyly had been in regular contact with this priest on high political and diplomatic issues. D'Oyly understood that the Buddhist clergy (especially the higher clergy) had a ready access to the king, and therefore, were in a position to influence his decisions. This indicates that D'Oyly had a knowledge and understanding of the influence the Buddhist clergy had, and he was conscious of this fact as Resident.

⁴³¹ *D'Oyly's Diary*, pp.267-269 - Extract from *Asian Journal 1816*, p.91: D'Oyly took part in the religious ceremony connected with the sacred Tooth Relic. He strived to play the former King's role in these ceremonies, to placate the religious feelings of the inhabitants.

⁴³² Historical Manuscript Commission, Ceylon, Bulletin No.2, Letters of John D'Oyly - edited and translated by Rev. Rambukwelle Siddharta Thero, 1937, Sri Lanka Archives: Letter addressed by D'Oyly to the Buddhist priest named Moratota. This letter was written on the instructions of Governor Maitland.

While D'Oyly understood the influence of the Buddhist clergy within the Kandyan society, the British authorities (as revealed in the correspondence of the Governor of Ceylon) were fully aware of their opposition to British rule:

“The Priests appear to be the grand movers of these Plots and their influence over the Chiefs falling in with any sentiments of disaffection or causes of complaint, they can at all times organise a Party. Their own Councils are secret, their emissaries numerous, and their access and means great. It is hard to fathom their true sentiments, being by habit and education deep and artful dissemblers”.⁴³³

Although Buddhist priests were not expected to take part in politics, in practice they did. This was a factor that had always been prevalent in the country's history. The Buddhist clergy was a prop to a Buddhist monarch and to this extent the clergy were invariably involved in the process of politics. As such the Buddhist clergy's position would weaken under a foreign (and Christian) dominated administration. Opposition from the Buddhist clergy would therefore always be there. They could never be easily reconciled to British occupation. This was shown in Governor Brownrigg's despatches while D'Oyly was Resident in Kandy. D'Oyly, therefore, while following a soft policy towards them, had also to be vigilant about their plots against the British government:

“In course of Mr D'Oyly's enquiries about the conspiracy which has thus been detailed, it came to his knowledge that Madugalle Uda Gabada Nilame, one of the Chiefs principally suspected of being concerned with the Priest Ihagama, had advised the High Priest to remove the Dallada or Sacred Tooth, secretly from Kandy, and had also sent offerings to the

⁴³³ Governor Brownrigg to the Earl Bathurst, Colombo, 5 November 1816, C.O. 54/61, No.169, S.L.N.A. 5.

Temples of Bintenne and Kateregam to implore the destruction of the British government".⁴³⁴

D'Oyly, as Resident, made an effort to study the Kandyan Administration, and to lay down a code and instructions for the British Officials to follow. A document was found in the Kandy 'Kachcheri' or Secretariat, which was entitled "A Sketch of the Constitution of the Kandyan Kingdom". This contained the original notes made by John D'Oyly, most of them in his own handwriting, while he was Resident. In 1929, the British government printed these notes along with other relevant documents pertaining to the Kandyan Kingdom.⁴³⁵ In D'Oyly's instructions to the future British civil servants working within the Kandyan provinces he states the following in relation to the position of the Buddhist clergy under the King of Kandy:

"Before innovations of Importance are carried into Effect it is customary to consult the principal Chiefs, and frequently the principal Priests, and when other matters of Public moment are in agitation the same Persons are usually called to his Councils".⁴³⁶

D'Oyly was, therefore, fully aware of the part that the Buddhist clergy had played when the king was ruling, and their consequent loss of status and power in matters pertaining to administration and governance under the new British administration.

⁴³⁴ Ibid.

⁴³⁵ J. D'Oyly, *A Sketch of the Constitution of the Kandyan Kingdom* (and other relevant papers), published by the Department of Statistics and Office Systems, Colombo, Government Printer, 1929.

⁴³⁶ Ibid, p.I - This points to the influence that the Buddhist clergy had when there was a Buddhist Monarch ruling in Kandy.

Administrative Measures to Work within the Provisions of the Kandyan Convention in relation to Provincial, District and Village Administration - 1815-1817

D'Oyly, along with two other British Commissioners, James Gay in charge of judicial work, and Simon Sawers in charge of Revenue and Public Services, together with the principal chiefs, were to function as the executive, legislative and judicial authorities over the Kandyan Provinces.⁴³⁷ Within the country they were subject to the governor who was resident in Colombo. The governor laid down policies and excised the power of mercy and decided on appeals. This administrative set-up flowed directly from the provisions contained in the Kandyan Convention. This somewhat cumbersome body ruled and administered the Kandyan provinces in a tortuous manner till the outbreak of the Kandyan rebellion of 1817. Thereafter the process of martial law, and its consequent administrative procedures, was followed until the revolt was contained and eventually crushed. Once the revolt was crushed a new set of proclamations were issued, setting aside the earlier provisions of the Kandyan Convention:

“His Excellency the Governor therefore now calls to mind of every person and every class within these Settlements, that the Sovereign Majesty of King of Great Britain and Ireland exercised by His Representative the Governor of Ceylon and his Agents in the Kandyan Provinces is the source alone from which all Power emanates, and to which obedience is due: that no Chief who is not vested with Authority or Rank from this Sovereign source is entitled to obedience or Respect”.⁴³⁸

⁴³⁷ Minute of Governor Brownrigg, 23 August 1816, C.O. 54/61, S.L.N.A. 5 - Pertaining to the Administration of the Kandyan Provinces.

⁴³⁸ The Proclamation of 21 November 1818 issued after the Rebellion of 1817 (amending the Proclamation of 1815) by Governor Brownrigg: Clause 7 - British Supremacy, S.L.N.A. Gazette Series.

What followed was more direct rule over the chiefs, mainly through the Government Agents stationed in the provinces. In an administrative sense, this marked a further stage in British infiltration leading eventually to direct control by the British over the whole of the ancient Kandyan Kingdom.

The administrative history of the Kandyan Kingdom, from March 1815 up to the new Proclamations issued in 1818, was troubled.⁴³⁹ D'Oyly's tact, understanding and knowledge of the language and customs held the situation under a semblance of control. However, there had been a deep resentment of the change from the beginning of the British takeover. The system of retaining the rights of the Kandyan Chiefs, along with that of D'Oyly and his officials, especially the agents and officers of the Army in the provinces, was a contradiction, resented by the chiefs and the people who found it strange and unacceptable:

“They made no complaint of oppression or misrule, contenting themselves with expressing a wish that we should leave the country. Conversing on this subject, a subordinate Chief observed to an Officer, that British rule in the Kandyan Country was incompatible as yoking a buffalo and cow in the same plough”.⁴⁴⁰

The British rule was mild, as administered by D'Oyly. Hence there was no more complaint of oppression. However, it lacked a charisma and glamour, which made the whole process of government and administration palatable and acceptable.

By tradition and custom this was a necessity. All the rights, power, pomp, and privileges of the Kandyan Chiefs flowed, in their view, from having a

⁴³⁹ The Proclamation of 21 November 1818 issued after the Rebellion of 1817, *Ceylon Government Gazette* of November 1818, Sri Lanka National Archives.

⁴⁴⁰ Marshall, *Ceylon*, p.4 - This points to the incompatibility of joint rule between the British and the Kandyan Chiefs, as was envisaged in the Kandyan Convention of 1815.

monarch. When the king was in Kandy, the chiefs were the only authority of the State in the Provinces and Districts. Not only did it give the much needed and sought after charisma and glamour of power, prestige and pride, it aided the chiefs in the discharge of their duties and functions, hence, the yearning for a monarch, and the removal of the British. These feelings were dormant: the chiefs ostensibly hid their true feelings. However, inwardly there was great disappointment and resentment to the British takeover, which had so radically changed a system of government and administration that had existed for so many centuries (based on upholding ancient tradition and custom). Chiefs and people were proud of having beaten back so many invasions by successive European powers that had occupied the maritime or coastal regions of Ceylon:

“Thus they (the chiefs) considered themselves degraded and shorn of their splendour”.⁴⁴¹

However, innate, conservative, feelings and sentiments of all sections of society wanted a reversal to a known, time tested and honoured form of government. Under these circumstances the Kandyan Chiefs and the rest of the inhabitants wanted the British to leave, and to restore the government and administration they had been used to. The new change was not acceptable and the future seemed most insecure.⁴⁴²

Administrative Arrangements to Control the Kandyan Chiefs: The Process of Infiltration taken Further

As Resident, D'Oyly, appointed his representatives, called 'Agents', to various strategic points within the kingdom. These Agents were stationed at

⁴⁴¹ J. Davy, *An Account of the Interior of Ceylon*, London, Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme & Brown, First Published in 1821, Reprinted in Sri Lanka, 1969, p.227.

⁴⁴² Despatch to London, 5 November 1816, C.O. 54/61, S.L.N.A. 5 - Governor Brownrigg was of the opinion that the Chiefs' position was diminished and their position reduced to that of mere persons who attended before British Officials. They had lost status.

Uwa (Badulla), Sabaragamuva (Ratnapura), and in the Three and Four Korales. In addition, Judicial Officers (styled Magistrates) were appointed to outlying areas within the kingdom.⁴⁴³ By these steps, D'Oyly was making moves to supervise and, thereby, downgrade the powers and privileges enjoyed by the chiefs.⁴⁴⁴ The Adigars, Disavas and Rataralas (when the king was in power) had been supreme within their regions or territories under their charge. Further, the chiefs, within their provinces, wielded both executive and judicial power. Now, an Agent, representing the Resident in Kandy, was located to supervise and report the situation on the ground. These Agents, in time, would emerge as the real focus of British power, and the chiefs would be made subordinate to them. It was a gradual process; once set in motion the Agents would be the real wielders of power in the Provinces and Districts. With this, all power and privileges would pass on to the British officials who administered the country.

British Agents monitored the work of the Kandyan Chiefs and sent reports that complained of the inadequacy, and consequent incompetence, of the chiefs' work and conduct. The cultural differences reflected in attitudes to work, relating to administrative and judicial functions, were constant sources of irritation:

"That the Government will never obtain much benefit from any branch of Revenue, the collection and management of which is entrusted to native authority".⁴⁴⁵

⁴⁴³ A few months after the Kandyan Convention Simon Sawers was appointed as Agent in Badulla. The people in this Province showed resentment to the new regime: C.O. 54/61, Brownrigg to Bathurst, 20 July 1815, S.L.N.A. 5.

⁴⁴⁴ Brownrigg's Letters and Despatches, outlining the policies and rules to the newly acquired provinces, S.L.N.A. 5 - These point to the need for a single Administrative System for the whole island, as a step towards stabilising the British position in the country.

⁴⁴⁵ Brownrigg to Bathurst, 30 July 1815, C.O. 54/56, S.L.N.A. 5 - Refers to Major Hardy's report against Chief Millawe of Uwa; Brownrigg to Bathurst, 9

It was an irreconcilable difference: one or other had to give in. In judicial procedures the system of caste in society, with its consequent social standing, determined the substance of evidence accepted or rejected, and the ultimate verdict. In administration too this phenomena of caste considerations was taken into account. To understand this, as D'Oyly did, a good knowledge of the language and customs was required. The majority of British Officials working within the Kandyan Kingdom, did not have such knowledge. The new regime was attempting (almost the impossible) to superimpose an alien administrative class on an indigenous system of governance, which was bound to be resisted.⁴⁴⁶ The Kandyan Chiefs felt that their earlier position in the administration of the kingdom, and the prestige that went with it, was lost. Hence, they were not prepared to cooperate with the British authorities. This was a big obstacle that D'Oyly faced in the Second Phase of Infiltration and consolidation of British power within the Kandyan Kingdom.

It was not surprising, therefore, that attempts to oust the British were made from the very beginning of the takeover. Worse was to come. After only 18 months of the British takeover D'Oyly was confronted with a real attempt at revolt.

February 1816, C.O. 54/59, S.L.N.A. 5; Brownrigg to Bathurst, 5 June 1816, C.O. 54/60, S.L.N.A. 5; and Governor Brownrigg's report to Bathurst, 25 September 1817, C.O. 54/66, S.L.N.A. 5.

⁴⁴⁶ Governor Brownrigg issued an order in the form of a Minute to the Kandyan Board to investigate all aspects of Kandyan Administration: Administrative, Revenue and Judicial: contained in Brownrigg to Bathurst, 8 July 1817, C.O. 54/66, S.L.N.A. 5 - Both D'Oyly and Brownrigg were anxious to understand the intricacies of the traditional administrative process within the Kandyan provinces. This is the first step to infiltrate deeper into the understanding of the system of public administration, so as to stabilise British rule.

Plots to Restore the Monarchy and get rid of the English

Most of the Kandyan Chiefs and the Buddhist 'Sangha' (clergy), with the exception of Adigar Molligoda, Eknelligoda, and Ehelapola, wanted a change over to the old forms of government under a Buddhist Monarch in real existence in Kandy.⁴⁴⁷ Under the new government of the British the Buddhist clergy and religion received no state support. What was stipulated in the Kandyan Convention as support to the Buddhist religion was, at best, only a sentiment expressed to meet a political situation, pertaining to a newly ceded territory to the British Empire. It was a promise never to be fulfilled.

The main objective of the plot, as revealed by Eknelligoda, was to restore the Nayakkar dynasty by placing on the throne one of the princes who was under British custody in the Western Province.⁴⁴⁸ It appears the plot had been brewing for quite some time.

The details of the plans for the revolt were revealed to Eknelligoda, the Disava in charge of Sabaragamuva. Eknelligoda had been a supporter of the British takeover in 1815, and was instrumental in the actual process of the capture of Sri Wickrama Rajasingha.⁴⁴⁹ It is no surprise that he informed the

⁴⁴⁷ Governor Brownrigg to Bathurst, 28 February 1817, C.O. 54/65, S.L.N.A. 5 - made a case for a greater military force within the Kandyan Provinces as he was aware of the dissatisfaction of the Kandyan Chiefs. He realised that though the Kandyan Sinhalese had welcomed the British Army, inwardly they wanted the British to leave.

⁴⁴⁸ English translation of Eknelligoda's statement, dated 20 July 1816, C.O. 54/61, S.L.N.A. 5 - These royal princes were available in Ceylon as they had not yet been exiled to South India. Further, to get a foreign royal prince from Siam (Thailand) was difficult at this period.

⁴⁴⁹ Pohath, *How the Last King of Kandy was captured by the British*, p.107; Eknelligoda was honoured by the British with high office. He was

British authorities of the plot which led to the British officials being alerted, and the needed steps taken to thwart the plans of the plotters. The plans had to be revealed to Eknelligoda as the Nayakkar princes were to have been brought to Sabaragamuva, and the younger of the two princes proclaimed as the King. Hence, it was necessary to get the active cooperation of Eknelligoda who was in charge of the Province in his capacity as Disava or provincial governor. The Buddhist priest had stated this:

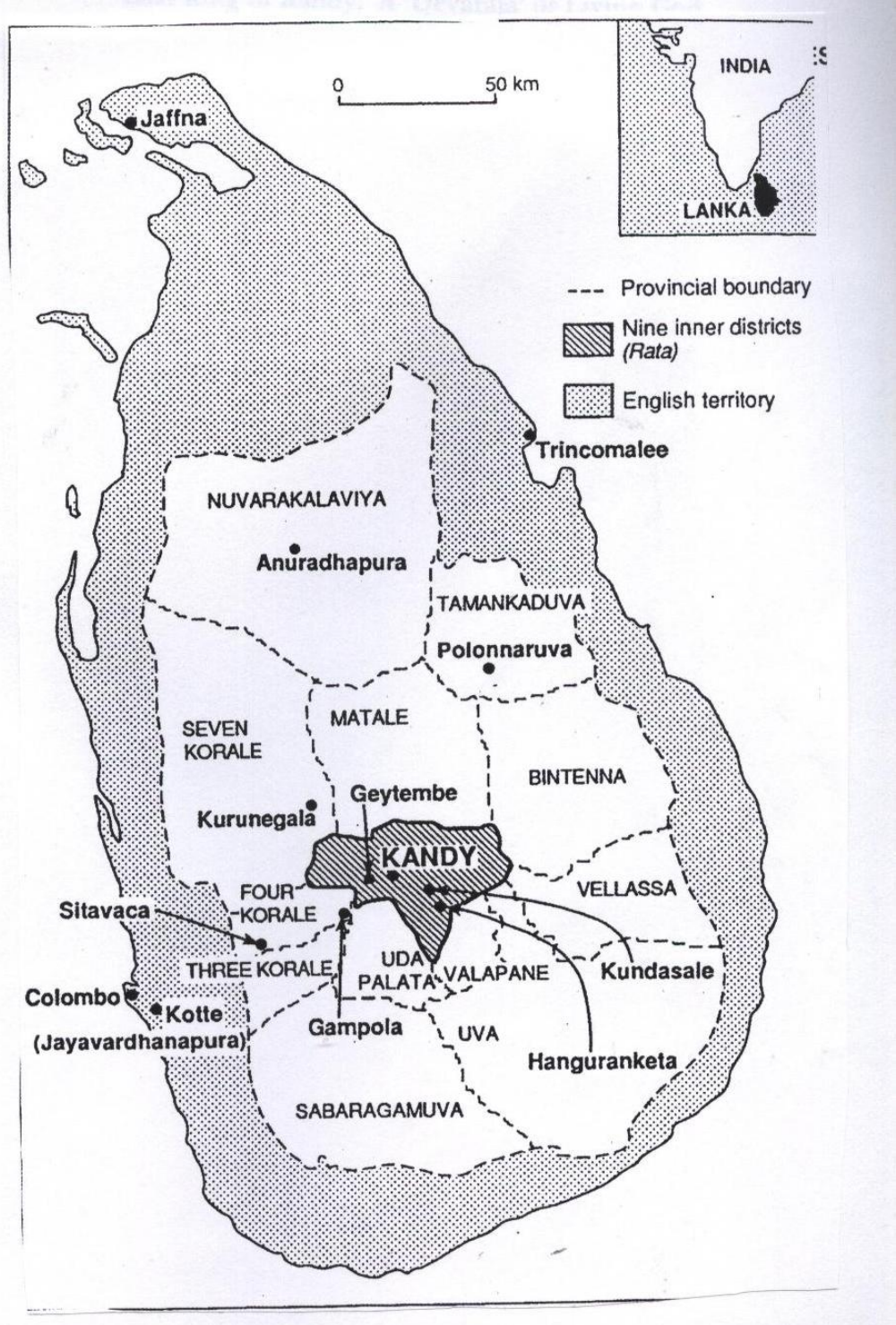
“The Malay Mohandiram will get the 2 Malabar Princes liberated by bribing the guard placed over them. He will likewise gain over 12 Malay native officers and some Malay soldiers by presents, and will cause them to proceed to Saffragam. In arrival at Saffragam they will repair to the Temple at that Place, and there invest the youngest of the two Princes with the Sovereignty. On this occasion you (Eknelligoda) will be made Disava of Saffragam and Mahawellatenne Disava of Ouwa”.⁴⁵⁰

This plot revealed the deep-seated resentment that the Kandyan inhabitants had against the continued British occupation. They were now prepared to turn to a royal prince from the Nayakkar dynasty who had been ousted from the Kandyan Kingdom under the provisions of the Kandyan Convention of 1815.

subsequently appointed as the Second Maha Mudaligar to the Governor, *Ceylon Government Gazette*, 5 June 1819, Sri Lanka National Archives.

⁴⁵⁰ Information of Kapooligadde Poochi Rala, 9 and 10 September 1816, Colombo, C.O. 54/61, S.L.N.A. 5 - This was the basic outline of the plot. It revealed the discontent that arose due to the abolition of the traditional Buddhist Monarch in Kandy.

Map: Ceylon in 1815



Summary

D'Oyly had found it difficult to rule and administer the Kandyan Kingdom, because the sudden changes were not acceptable to the Kandyan Sinhalese. They were used to a living Buddhist Monarch, who was the symbol of the kingdom (state) and sovereignty. Flowing from this was a way of life accepted, for centuries, by all inhabitants, which fell in line with their cultural and spiritual heritage. A sudden change to this way of life was not acceptable. Hence, an inward urge to remove the British and return to the old, tried and tested, ways of rule. This formed the basis of opposition to British rule.

All the important segments of society did not approve of the change. The chiefs lost their positions, dignity of office and the protocol they were used to, in the discharge of their official functions. The Buddhist clergy lost the position they enjoyed when a Buddhist monarch was ruling. All these factors contributed to the sense of dissatisfaction with the British, and contributed to the forces that sought to revive the traditional monarchy and replace the British. These constituted the obstacles faced by D'Oyly in his second phase of infiltration, which aimed at consolidating British rule within the recently acquired provinces that constituted the Kandyan Kingdom.

D'Oyly was an efficient civil servant, but his personality was not fitted to fill the void created by the loss of a Buddhist Monarch in Kandy, along with the Kandyan Court and its etiquette. This Court etiquette, and its allied institutions, was, in the eyes of the local inhabitants, associated closely in the whole governing process. Once this was removed, there was a sense of loss, and nostalgia, felt by the Kandyan Chiefs and the rest of the inhabitants. Hence, D'Oyly with his personality and style of administration was found wanting. No more was there glamour in the Kandyan Court in Kandy, which had both spiritual and secular significance.

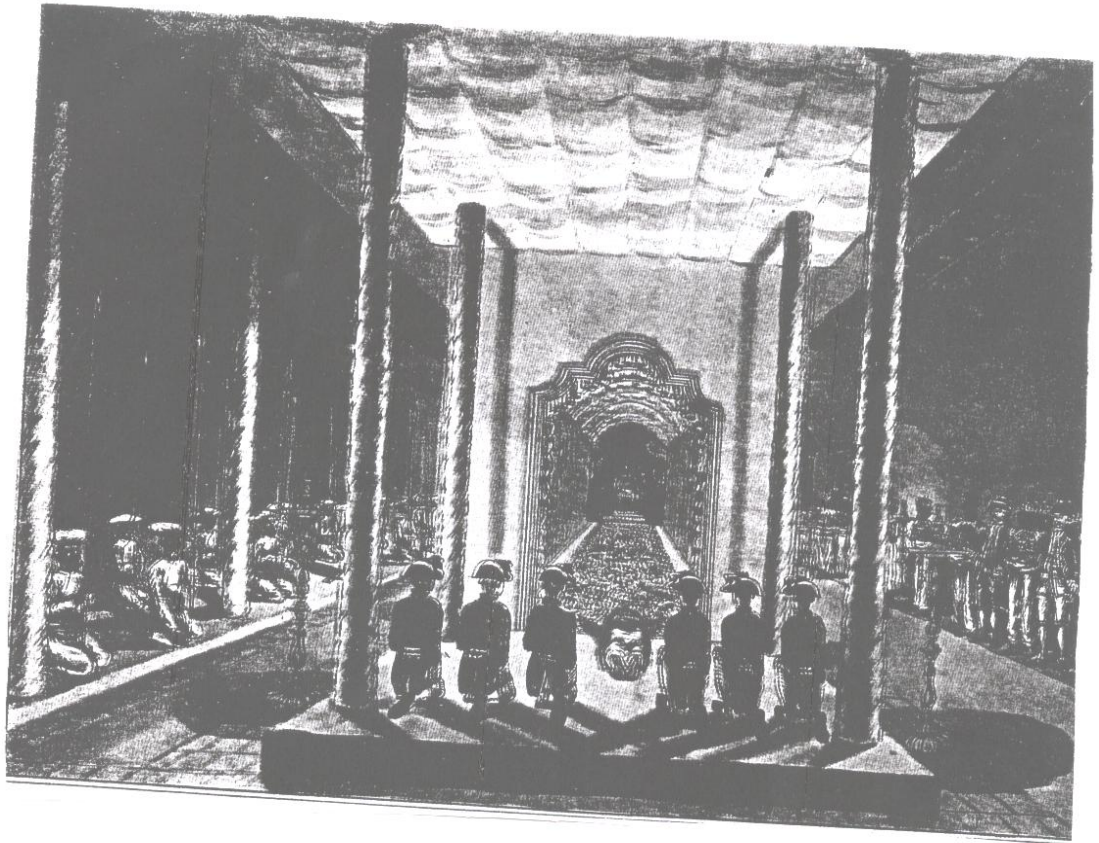
This was what drove the Kandyan Sinhalese to make attempts at restoring the deposed Nayakkar dynasty, and thereby restore a living Buddhist

Monarch. The British takeover, in 1815, met with no opposition, and under the terms of the Kandyan Convention, the Nayakkar dynasty was abolished, on the basis that the king was a cruel tyrant, and that the Nayakkar dynasty was foreign, implying that the people wanted a major change. However, the plot to restore a Nayakkar prince as king points to the real feeling of the people wanting a Buddhist King, in keeping with their traditions, and heritage. The ethnicity of the king was not that significant if he followed the traditional religion, Buddhism, and its aligned institutions associated with the history and culture of the country.

Illustration: A Mural Representing Sri Wickrama Rajasingha - The Last King of Kandy: A 'Devaraja' or Living God



**Illustration: Dutch Embassy before the King of Kandy -
Kandyan Court Etiquette**



Chapter V

The Rebellion of 1817: A Challenge to D'Oyly and the British within the Kandyan Provinces where Force had to be Used

The Kandyan Rebellion of 1817 pointed to the resentment that was felt with the loss of the traditional monarchy associated with the history, culture and spiritual heritage of the people. In tracing its course and development one can see the deep resentment felt, and gain an insight into the political problems the British faced in their newly acquired provinces. The first phase of infiltration resulted in an easy conquest of the Kandyan Kingdom. The problem was thereafter to rule and govern it in such a way there would be no deep resentment. This was the problem faced by British in the political expansion in India. This political expansion was over a large population, and involved in essence a rule of a strong minority over a large majority, with a long history and civilisation. In this the problems were quite different to that faced by the British in their first empire in North America, and in the areas of what came to be described as settler colonies, like that was established in Australia and New Zealand. These were comparatively free of local inhabitants, and what was sought were lands to permanently settle European colonies.

In India and Ceylon (as much as in the rest of Asia) the problems were not of settlement of Europeans, but to dominate with a view to increasing the resources, trade and commerce, with the overall objective of being in a position to project power and influence on a global scale. In doing this a cautious policy, which aims at making the ruling process acceptable becomes the biggest challenge. For this a new set of rulers, as much as an enlightened policy is required. For in its absence there would be a reaction, and it will be difficult to hold onto political domination.

However, this does not mean that force was not to be used. A large army, trained and led ably was a prime pre-requisite to maintain law and order.

The army had to be under civil control, so that it does not become an instrument of oppression. It is only used when necessary.

A study of the history pertaining to the course of the Kandyan Rebellion of 1817 will point to these facts. Force was used only when the British positions were attacked. Once the need for force was over, the civil administration was restored, and every attempt made to evolve a system where there would be a British dominance, but a system of administration and rule acceptable, and in accordance with the old administrative culture and practices of the people. This was the essence of a fulfilment of the first phase of infiltration. Therefore the history and the results of the Kandyan Rebellion is a subject of study that forms part of how the British were able to successfully expand their political domination in Asia with the resources available to them.

The Start of the Rebellion

The Kandyan Rebellion of 1817 was the most concerted effort of the Kandyan Sinhalese to free the country from British rule, and restore the deposed Nayakkar dynasty. Beginning from the Uwa Province, on the eastern side of the Kandyan Kingdom, it spread to all the provinces of the Kandyan Kingdom, making it most difficult for the British to hold on to their positions in the interior of the country. It was mainly due to the loyalty of Adigar Molligoda, the chief in charge of the Four Korales, that the British were able to maintain their line of communications with their base in the coastal areas. Most of the chiefs (with the exception of Molligoda and Eknelligoda), including Ehelapola (who had assisted the British in their conquest of the Kandyan Kingdom), were suspect as having their sympathies with the rebels. The rebels rallied around a pretender named Doraiswamy; claiming to be from the deposed Nayakkar dynasty:

“Report was first made to the Resident by a letter from Mr Wilson dated at Badulla Sept. 16th that a stranger of suspicious appearance had been seen in the South Eastern part of Uwa,

near the borders of Wellasse, in Company of some Kandyan priests, using a Malabar dress, but occasionally the yellow robe of a priest and The Adikaram of Bintenne (who is Deputy of the Dissave appointed by him, and the second person in the Dissavany) received from the Malabars a Proclamation in which he plainly arrogated to himself the style and authority of King".⁴⁵¹

He posed as brother-in-law of a former king, Rajadhi Rajasingha. In fact, the pretender was a Sinhalese, who had been a Buddhist priest. The whole episode of this revolt points to the influence of the deposed dynasty, as yet having the potential of a political force of this magnitude to replace the British, and to re-establish Sinhalese government, and administration, in the form of a Buddhist King, and the ancient institution of Sinhalese monarchy:

"It was at first supposed and generally declared by the Chiefs that this Stranger was really connected with the Family of the Deposed King".⁴⁵²

Though there were plots to oust the British from the Kandyan provinces from the beginning of their rule, the British appeared complacent as revealed in Governor Brownrigg's tour of Kandy before the outbreak of the revolt. The governor and his party had a small escort, which pointed to his false confidence that there were no serious signs of a pending revolt of this magnitude. Dr Davy, who accompanied the Governor (as his personal

⁴⁵¹ Governor Brownrigg to Bathurst, 7 November 1817, Kandy, C.O. 54/66, No. 248, S.L.N.A. 5.

⁴⁵² Governor Brownrigg to Hastings, 23 February 1818, Kandy, C.O. 54/71, S.L.N.A. 5.

physician), has recorded his impressions and the events that took place before and during the course of the Kandyan Rebellion.⁴⁵³

D'Oyly's Weakness

The rebellion was a pointer to a partial failure of D'Oyly's intelligence system as stated by William Toffrey, Chief Translator to Government:

“... that a deep and extensive plot was organised by the Chiefs and Priests to overthrow British authority”.⁴⁵⁴

Apart from the Government Agents and the British Army units placed in strategic points within the former Kandyan Kingdom, D'Oyly had also the assistance of the intelligence system he had formed (and effectively utilized) before the kingdom was taken over. D'Oyly did get information of dissatisfaction, especially in the province of Uwa, but did not understand the true extent of the dissatisfaction and the significance of the events that preceded the revolt. The means of communication used by the rebel leaders was never fully penetrated, or understood, by the intelligence services used by D'Oyly. The rebel communication appeared to have been predominantly by word of mouth, and their modes of information were through a variety of sources: a good part played by Buddhist priests and within their temples. D'Oyly's intelligence apparatus appears not to have penetrated this, and the revolt (when it took place) was a surprise to the British Officials.⁴⁵⁵ Governor Brownrigg was in Kandy, and he remained there throughout the period of the revolt directing military operations against the rebels. Until the revolt was totally suppressed Brownrigg did not leave Kandy. D'Oyly's part in crushing the revolt was as an assistant to the British Governor: in this sense, D'Oyly was playing a secondary part to a Governor who was by

⁴⁵³ H. Marshall, *Ceylon*, London, 1846, reprinted in Sri Lanka, 1982, pp.133-134; and J. Davy, *An Account of the Interior of Ceylon*, London, Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme and Brown, 1821, reprinted in Colombo, 1965.

⁴⁵⁴ Governor Brownrigg to Bathurst, 6 November 1817, C.O. 54/61, S.L.N.A. 5.

⁴⁵⁵ Governor Brownrigg to Bathurst, 28 February 1818, C.O. 54/70, S.L.N.A. 5.

profession a soldier. Brownrigg declared martial law, and the civil administration and the justice system was subordinate to the Army Commanders. The Kandyan Rebellion was the only real bloody episode after the defeat of the British Army in the First Kandyan War of 1803. The crushing of the Rebellion formed a part in the whole process of establishing British rule in Ceylon.⁴⁵⁶ It is therefore recorded as a British military victory that caused great damage to an ancient culture and civilization:

“In Ceylon in 1818, the British destruction of the Capital of Kandy and the ravaging of the inland Kingdom amounted to the cultural annihilation of an advanced civilization, an act unparalleled since the Spanish conquest of the Inca and Aztec empires”.⁴⁵⁷

It broke the back of the local resistance to the British infiltration, and the consequent expansion of British power and influence within the country. In political terms, it left no real opponents to the British rule of any significance.

The British Fallacy: Leading to a Lack of Precautions

The British failed to see that the Kandyan Sinhalese were not against the restoration of the Nayakkar dynasty. In the case of the last deposed Monarch, Sri Wickrama Rajasingha, a series of events made him appear as a tyrant whom the chiefs wanted removed. This fact was not a general feeling of disgust with the dynasty that had produced model Buddhist Kings, like Kirti Sri Rajasingha, during whose reign there was a Buddhist revival,

⁴⁵⁶ The main primary documents for the military aspects of the operation against the rebels are in: Governor Brownrigg's despatches, C.O. 54 - Volumes 66, 70, 71 and 73, S.L.N.A. 5; Colombo General Orders for 1817-1818; Asiatic Journal VI, Colombo; Marshall, *Ceylon*, 1846; Davy, *An Account of the Interior of Ceylon*, 1821; and Calladine and Major MacDonald's Order Book, Sri Lanka Archives, Colombo, Sri Lanka.

⁴⁵⁷ C.A. Bayly, *Imperial Meridian*, London, Longman, 1989, p.64.

leading, in turn, to a new renaissance of learning and culture. The effects of this were felt throughout the country. The British had seen to it that the Nayakkar dynasty's claim to the throne was set aside under the provisions of the Kandyan Convention of March 1815:

“and all claim and title of the Malabar race to the dominion of the Kandyan provinces is abolished and extinguished”.⁴⁵⁸

However, there was a desire among the Kandyan Sinhalese for a restoration of the Buddhist Monarch, who would carry on the ancient system of government and administration, and be a patron of their culture and spiritual heritage:

“The Kandyans had grown up under an unlimited monarchy, they knew nothing of government but dependence of the governed upon the will of one person and were, from tradition and habit, attached to it”.⁴⁵⁹

The British policy was based on a false racial factor; that as the deposed king, Sri Wickrama, was a foreigner from South India, and that the nobles and peasantry were opposed to a Nayakkar restoration:

“The desire to possess the country opened our eyes to the delinquencies of its ruler; and, to justify aggression, it was also of the Malabar dynasty, consisting of four sovereigns, each of whom had been freely elected by the Chiefs and people. The Malabar Kings were it is believed neither worse nor better than the general run of Asiatic princes, including the Kandyan or Singalese dynasty”.⁴⁶⁰

The British felt that the Sinhalese might prefer a traditional Buddhist monarch, though they outwardly did not show hostility towards British

⁴⁵⁸ *The Kandyan Convention, March 1815*, Sri Lanka Archives, Paragraph 2.

⁴⁵⁹ Marshall, *Ceylon*, pp.130-131.

⁴⁶⁰ *Ibid*, p.111.

rule. They therefore were reconciled to the British. This at this point of time was a wrong perception:

“The Chiefs are eager to manifest their attachment to Government and to recommend themselves by their zeal and the people, as far as I can learn, are satisfied with the attention paid to their rights”.⁴⁶¹

Ehelapola (and earlier Pilima Talauve) had played on the racial factor as the king was from South India, to further his own ambitions by getting British aid. Ehelapola was of the view that the British would raise him to the throne of Kandy, and be a subservient king to the British, with a British army stationed in Kandy for his protection. Both Ehelapola and Pilima Talauve were not successful in their aims of attaining royal status.

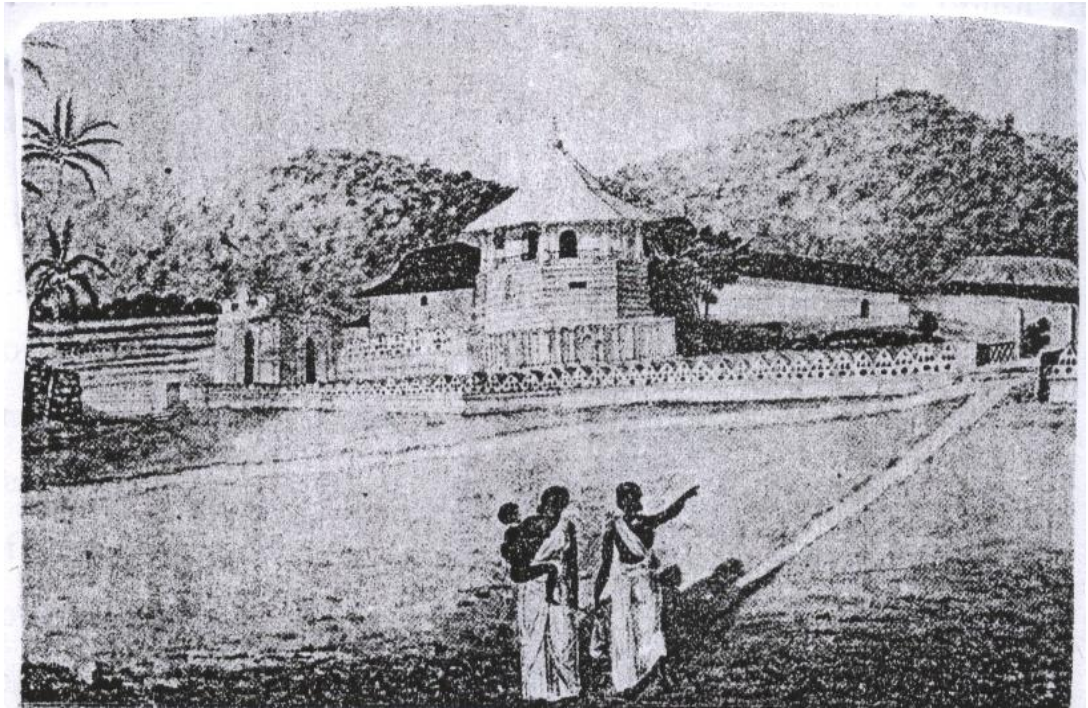
However, when Ehelapola failed in his ambitions, he had sided with other chiefs and Buddhist priests for a restoration of a monarchy; by getting a royal prince from Siam or India who would restore the ancient institutions, traditions and customs, which they all agreed was endangered with the British occupation. In this Ehelapola was not opposed to the restoration of the deposed Nayakkar dynasty, which was acceptable to all levels of society at that time. This is shown by his support of the pretender in the rebellion of 1817:

“Nevertheless most Kandyans believed the claims of the rebel leaders, and the danger that Ehelapola might join them was more than Brownrigg could entertain. On 2nd March, therefore, Brownrigg arrested him and removed him out of harms way to Colombo”⁴⁶² and “A letter was brought from Ehelapola by a Priest and delivered to Keppetipola at Wallowaye about the beginning of 1818. The Priest who

⁴⁶¹ Brownrigg to Bathurst, 25 September 1817, C.O. 54/66, No. 245, S.L.N.A. 5.

⁴⁶² G. Powell, *The Kandyan Wars – 1803-1815*, New Delhi, Navarang, 1984, pp.245-249.

**Illustration: The Depressed Condition of the Palace Complex in Kandy
after the British Occupation - A Cause for Concern**



The Palace about 1820. This shows the state of dilapidation of the area after a few years of British occupation.

Ref: G. Powell, *The Kandyan Wars - 1803-1815*, Navarang, New Delhi, 1984.

brought the letter told Keppetipola in my presence that Ehelapola had desired him to say that if the Pretender was fortunate he (Ehelapola) would also join him".⁴⁶³

D'Oyly's friendship with Ehelapola over the years coloured his (D'Oyly's) judgement. D'Oyly was not willing to believe that Ehelapola would lend his support to a Nayakkar prince and thereby restore the deposed dynasty:

"The capture was contrived by Keppetipola, although both D'Oyly and Sawers believed at the time that it had not been premeditated. Brownrigg had, however, strong doubts".⁴⁶⁴

D'Oyly had been with him in the whole process of the British takeover of the Kandyan Kingdom, and was well aware of Ehelapola's professed dislike for the last king and his dynasty. D'Oyly's judgement of Ehelapola was faulty, as proved by the events that led to the revolt against the British:

"Mr D'Oyly however appears so much at ease on these points, and so confident that no danger would be incurred by the proposed change (of making Ehelapola first Adigar over Molligoda), that I did not think it reasonable to urge my scruples of that nature any further".⁴⁶⁵

The British that would have stemmed the development of the revolt should have taken earlier precautions. The events proved that the British were taken unaware: a point, which went in favour of the rebels at the start.

The initial intelligence pointed to the Uwa, and the eastern side of the kingdom, as being the seat of the rebellion. In fact the feeling against the British was widespread throughout the kingdom. In hindsight it appears

⁴⁶³ Brownrigg to Bathurst, Annexure, 27 November 1817, C.O. 54/56, S.L.N.A. 5.

⁴⁶⁴ Powell, *The Kandyan Wars*, p.244 - Keppetipola, leader of the rebels, was the brother-in-law of Ehelapola. He contrived a plan to be captured by the rebels: when, in fact, he had joined. D'Oyly was mistaken on this vital fact.

⁴⁶⁵ Brownrigg to Bathurst, 25 September 1817, C.O. 54/66, No. 245, S.L.N.A. 5.

that plots had been there from the very inception of the British occupation of Kandy in March 1815, involving the principal Kandyan chiefs and the Buddhist priests.⁴⁶⁶ No details of this plot have so far surfaced with any documents. In the society and politics prevailing at this time all decisions were not recorded and the oral tradition was what prevailed. The plans and the manouvers were kept as a secret, and no evidence was to be revealed. The political rally was to be with the aid of a foreign royal prince, who had to profess the Buddhist religion, and in this be a patron and defender of the traditional culture, civilization and the spiritual heritage of the Kandyan Sinhalese. The theory that the whole revolt was an accident and there was no pre-planning was not correct. The plans to confront the British and to rise in revolt were there: only the appearance of a pretender, claiming to be of royal Nayakkar descent, was an accident.⁴⁶⁷ There was difficulty getting a royal prince from abroad, from Siam or India, as the British navy were supreme on the seas surrounding the country. The sudden appearance of a pretender was only symbolical as a call to arms:

“The outbreak of revolt in Velassy acted like a match thrown into a barrel of gun powder upon the dissatisfied and disaffected population of the whole country”⁴⁶⁸

It was to fill a void before the revolt began.

The rebellion also showed that a rallying point was not yet found within the local Sinhalese nobility claiming any royal connection (like Ehelapola or Pilima Talauve), and that the Sinhalese rally to oust a foreign force (the British in this instance) was yet with the Nayakkar dynasty, which was from India. Tradition and political acceptance, at all levels, both lay and spiritual, looked to an accepted royal prince who would support the traditional

⁴⁶⁶ Despatch sent by Governor Brownrigg, July 20 and 21, C.O. 54/56, S.L.N.A. 5.

⁴⁶⁷ Marshall, *Ceylon*, p.179.

⁴⁶⁸ *Ibid*, p.188.

religion, government, and culture of the people.⁴⁶⁹ The Kandyan Chiefs had to look to such a royal prince to get the needed support and acceptance, as an alternative to the continuance of British rule within the Kandyan Kingdom.

D'Oyly also failed to take the needed steps to prevent the Sacred Tooth Relic, or the 'Daladawa', being taken from the temple situated in Kandy. The relic was a sacred symbol (over the centuries) to symbolise Sinhalese sovereignty: all the rulers of the country made great efforts to retain and protect this relic within the premier temple of the royal palace complex.⁴⁷⁰ The Temple of the Tooth was part and parcel of the King's Palace. The ruling monarch drew his right to rule and administer the country, as he possessed the Sacred Relic. This belief and superstition was deeply engraved in the minds of the Kandyan Sinhalese. Any challenge to the British had to be ideologically and spiritually accepted by the people only by the possession of this relic. Hence, the rebels took this step to reinforce the claims of the pretender.⁴⁷¹ The removal of the Sacred Tooth from Kandy only pointed to a lack of proper security and an intelligence system. D'Oyly, as Resident, lived within the former royal palace and this relic was removed from the temple within the palace complex. This act points to the widespread nature of the secret plot that preceded the outbreak of the revolt.

The Military Aspects of the Revolt

The British were faced with a typical guerrilla warfare that greatly strained their resources. It was a military operation (especially in its earlier phase)

⁴⁶⁹ Customs of the kings and people of Sri Lanka - "Lak raja ló siritā" - Answers of a Buddhist priest given to the Dutch Governor Falck in 1769 - British Museum Library: Or.6603 (65).

⁴⁷⁰ Despatch of Governor Brownrigg, 24 July 1818, C.O. 54-71, S.L.N.A. 5.

⁴⁷¹ W. Rahula, *History of Buddhism in Ceylon*, Colombo, 1956, pp.62-64 - The Sinhalese believed that their ruler had to be Buddhist.

where initiative was with the rebel forces, mainly due to the topographical nature of the country, with its forests and mountains:

“Two previous attempts in the early part of the Month to surprise the Pretender, were baffled by the impossibility of passing the Mountain Torrents on the roads to the place in which he was reported to be concealed”.⁴⁷²

The topography, the modes of mobilization, and the ideological basis of the conflict aided the rebels. It was a type of warfare that was quite familiar to the Kandyan Sinhalese, who, in the past, had defeated all European powers that had invaded their kingdom. This gave them the needed confidence that they were not to be subordinated, and that their gods (like Vishnu and the deity of Kataragama) would protect them, and give them the ultimate victory over their foes:

“Kataragama played a very important role in the Great Rebellion of 1818. It is a shrine dedicated to Kathi-Keya, the son of the all-powerful Brahmanic god Siva. It is the one and only place where the ruler and the ruled appeared before the deity and made vows for the fulfilment of their prayers, which according to them were answered”.⁴⁷³

Most of the peasants had muskets, which they, like the Swiss in Europe, had to use when the call of duty to defend their King and country was issued. The aboriginal Veddhas, who were present in large numbers in the Bintenne District of the Uva Province, were expert bowmen. In the past, the Kings of Kandy were able to undertake a quick mobilization due to this factor of the

⁴⁷² Governor Brownrigg to Bathurst, 30 January 1818, Kandy, C.O.54/70, No.259, S.L.N.A. 5.

⁴⁷³ T. Vimalananda, *The Great Rebellion of 1818*, Colombo, M.D. Gunasena and Co Ltd, 1970, Introduction – pg. XXXIII.

peasants having, in their possession, the needed arms.⁴⁷⁴ The king's agents controlled the ammunition, and the chiefs acted as their natural military leaders. What followed was a bloody and bitter conflict that left the eastern part of the Kandyan Kingdom in a very dire state after the revolt was crushed with a heavy hand:

“This kind of warfare finds no place in military history, properly speaking, but left indelible marks on the face of the country, for it was partly owing to the stern methods of repression, that Uva has been, considering the character of its soil, its climate and its people, the most backward, the most stagnant of any portion of Ceylon”.⁴⁷⁵

The revolt began within the Uva Province, and it was centred on an alleged Nayakkar royal prince, from the deposed Kandyan dynasty, named Doraiswamy, who claimed to be a close relation of a former King of Kandy, Rajadhi Rajasingha. On an auspicious day, at the Temple of Kataragama, whose deity was considered by the Sinhalese as their protector and war god, the pretender Doraiswamy was presented as the chosen by the deity to lead a war against the British, then in occupation of the lost kingdom:

“made his entry at the shrine of Kataragama in July 1817 soon after the annual festival there had been brought to a close: he made a declaration that he had been chosen by the god of Kataragama to be King of Sri Lanka”.⁴⁷⁶

⁴⁷⁴ *Letters of Lewis Gibson*, the British Collector stationed at Matara, Sri Lanka Archives 7/43, pp.897-899 – Gives an account of the rapid mobilization of the Kandyan Sinhalese forces for war: Lewis Gibson to Colombo, 8 August 1803; Lewis Gibson to Colombo, 10 August 1803; and Lewis Gibson to Colombo, 13 August 1803, Sri Lanka Archives, Colombo.

⁴⁷⁵ H. White, *Manual of the Province of Uva*, Colombo, 1895, pp.109-110.

⁴⁷⁶ K.M. De Silva, *A History of Sri Lanka*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981, pp.232-233 – The Pretender Doraiswami.

The Kandyan Sinhalese, though Buddhists, believed in Hindu gods, traditions and superstitions:

“Besides, not only the English host, although the Dutch, French, Zaffre, and many foreign hosts should come and make war against the happy isle of Lanka, most assuredly, they cannot conquer. This is no other cause, (but) by the power of the Gods called Vishnu, Sumana, Kartlika, Wibhisans”.⁴⁷⁷

The Kataragama deity, by traditional belief, was looked up to as the guardian deity of the Sinhalese, and a deity whose guidance and protection was sought during war and conflicts. Earlier the Kings of Kandy made vows to this Temple of Kataragama before any war was waged, and the due blessings were sought for its successful result. It was not surprising therefore, that the blessings of the Kataragama deity were sought before the revolt began, in accordance with traditional superstition and beliefs:

“Our king is gone to worship at Kataragam Pura. Having dreamt in a Dream, the Explosion took place at Kataragam as a signal to begin war”.⁴⁷⁸

The revolt started within a remote area in the eastern side of the kingdom. This area was forested and had mountain hideouts, which aided the rebels. Earlier Kandyan Kings had sought refuge within this territory during the course of foreign invasions of their kingdom. In fact, the last king of Kandy, Sri Wickrama Rajasingha, was on his way to this part of his kingdom when he was captured and handed over to the British. D'Oyly was most anxious that the king should not be allowed to cross the major river (the Mahaveli Ganga) and reach this area, as it would have been most difficult to track him down within this country:

⁴⁷⁷ Adigar Ehelapola to John D'Oyly, 26 February 1812, content in C.O. 54/42, pp.42-51, S.L.N.A. 5.

⁴⁷⁸ *D'Oyly's Diary*, 10 October 1810, p.23.

“I beg leave to acquaint you that the king is now supposed to be at or near in the Neighbourhood of Meyda Maha Nuware about 8 or 9 miles East of this place, and it is apprehended with great probability, that on the Advance of our forces, he will retire to the village of Mimura, situated on the eastern extremity of Dumbara, from whence the way would be open for his flight into the Country (full of) Forrest, where it may be most difficult to discover his Retreat”.⁴⁷⁹

Hence, it was most prudent to start the revolt in this part of the country, which was remote, easy to hide in and conduct a guerrilla type of warfare. As stated earlier, it was a country inhabited by the Veddhas, the aboriginal inhabitants of the country. As a people, the Veddhas were hunter-gatherers, who used bows and arrows for hunting and as weapons of war. The discharge of the arrow was silent, and did not reveal (like the musket) the location of the attacker. During the rainy, monsoon season, transport and communications were difficult in this type of country. The rough jungle paths, used by the troops, were very boggy due to the constant rain. The rivers and streams were swollen, making them difficult to cross. In addition, the rainy season also brought with it jungle fever (malaria), and a number of water borne diseases like dysentery and typhoid. These factors were a great impediment to the effective deployment of troops by the British against the rebel forces:

“In the Interval, I regret to state, that the fatigues and privations which the Troops had undergone, added to a longer drought than usual at that Season of the Year in the Interior, occasioned a very heavy increase of sick, and between the

⁴⁷⁹ *D'Oyly's Diary*, 17 February 1815, pp.208-209.

dates of my Past Despatch and the arrival of reinforcement, at least 400 fighting men were rendered unfit for Service".⁴⁸⁰

At one stage the lack of troops to sustain the British forces within interior positions compelled Governor Brownrigg to seek the needed assistance from the British in India:

"I am therefore under necessity of requesting prompt Aid of Your Honourable Board to enable me to act with energy and vigour in retaining the Kandyan Provinces as part of the Dominions of Great Britain".⁴⁸¹

The near proximity of India to Ceylon, the growing power, and the expansion of the British Indian Armed Forces, along with the dominance of the British Navy, ultimately prevailed in favour of the British. Brownrigg, directing operations from his military headquarters in Kandy, was at times quite concerned as to holding the British positions. However, as the revolt dragged on the factors favouring the British, in carrying out their strategy and tactics of obtaining a total military victory became a reality. The British Second Empire in India was expanding, and with this, she became a land force of considerable strength due to the manpower resources made available to the British-Indian Army. The British Navy was supreme in all the oceans of the world, and this added to her armed strength as much to her growth in trade, commerce and wealth. British naval victories at Abuquire Bay in Egypt, and at Trafalgar in 1805, had made her naval power unchallenged in the world. Ceylon was one of her key naval bases, forming a major one in South Asia. This growing power was a major factor that ultimately prevailed, in a military sense, in defeating the rebels:

⁴⁸⁰ Governor Brownrigg to Bathurst, 24 July 1818, Kandy, C.O. 54/71, No. 298, S.L.N.A. 5.

⁴⁸¹ Governor Brownrigg to Hugh Elliot Governor in Council, 21 February 1818, India, C.O. 54/71, S.L.N.A. 5.

Map: Kandyan Kingdom with the British Forts in 1817



Ref: G. Powell, *The Kandyan Wars - 1803-1815*, Navarang, New Delhi, 1984.

“In the 19th Century, the option of foreign help was completely scaled. The British were clearly the paramount power in India and also in the Indian Ocean and there was no other power, which could challenge it. On the sea as on land, by the early nineteenth century, the Europeans had gained a firm grip on Kandy”.⁴⁸²

Keppetipola, the Kandyan Chief, as the Leader of the Rebels: D’Oyly’s Faulty Judgement

When the Kandyan Rebellion broke out, D’Oyly, as Resident, had to take steps to contain it. In this process, he made a number of errors due to the close relations he had with the leading chiefs: one of the major errors being the trust and confidence he placed on Keppetipola, who became the leader of the Rebellion after he was sent to the Uwa region by D’Oyly.⁴⁸³ He was the brother-in-law of Ehelapola, the leading chief. It was Keppetipola’s sister, along with her children, who were executed by the last King of Kandy, Sri Wickrama Rajasingha when Ehelapola deserted the services of the King and took refuge with the British. D’Oyly’s system of intelligence did not indicate that the chiefs and people did not mind the restoration of a Nayakkar royal prince from the deposed dynasty; under the terms and conditions of the Kandyan Convention, these royal princes were debarred from entering the country. Most of the royal princes were exiled to live in India.⁴⁸⁴

The magnitude and widespread nature of the rebellion was not quite understood by D’Oyly. Nor did he (D’Oyly) realise that most of the Kandyan Chiefs wanted a change to the old monarchical form of

⁴⁸² Wickremesekera, *Kandy at War*, p.198.

⁴⁸³ Governor Brownrigg to Bathurst, 12 April 1818, C.O. 54/70, No. 278, S.L.N.A. 5 - Doubts were cast by Brownrigg on all the Kandyan Chiefs as to their loyalty.

⁴⁸⁴ *The Kandyan Convention*, 2 March 1815, S.L.N.A. Gazette Series.

government and administration. D'Oyly's major mistake was, therefore, sending Keppetipola to be Dissava of Uwa, and taking into confidence the other Kandyan Chiefs. During the course of the rebellion all the major chiefs joined the rebels, with the exception of Molligoda and Ekneligoda. Governor Brownrigg's understanding of the nature of the rebellion and that of the Kandyan Chiefs was more realistic than that of D'Oyly. For example, Keppetipola's feigned capture by the rebels appeared highly suspicious to Brownrigg, whereas D'Oyly believed the story. Subsequent events proved D'Oyly was wrong in his judgement of the true character of Keppetipola, and his loyalty to the British government:

“There is, I am sorry to say, too much reason to fear that his capture was a plot contrived to save the appearance of a treachery, and if that fact be so, much suspicion will necessarily attach to several other Chiefs of high rank with whom he is nearly connected, not excepting Ehelapola, whose brother-in-law the Disave is” and “The Resident Mr D'Oyly was indeed by no means convinced of the Disava's treachery”.⁴⁸⁵

During the crowning of the pretender as the king of the Kandyan Kingdom, at Diabetma, along with the exposure of the Sacred Tooth Relic (the Daladawa), were deliberate acts by Keppetipola to give the rebels an ideological basis for their political struggle. The pretender was given a royal name in accordance with the customs and tradition of Kandyan Sinhalese Kingship. The Tooth Relic (the Daladawa) was a symbol of Sinhalese Sovereignty, and the possessor was, by virtue of this fact, able to be the ruler of the kingdom. The Tooth Relic being the symbol, or the 'Palladium', of Sinhalese Sovereignty, was embodied in the historical traditions of the

⁴⁸⁵ Brownrigg to Bathurst, 7 November 1817, C.O. 54/66, No. 248, S.L.N.A. 5 - Referring to the capture of Keppetipola; and C.O. 54/66, No. 251, 27 November 1817, S.L.N.A. 5.

country; and specifically mentioned in the national chronicles of the land. The Tooth Relic was stolen from the Temple of the Tooth (coming within the Palace Complex), which was next door to where D'Oyly lived as the Resident. It was a deliberate move to give the needed strength to the cause of the rebels:

“Keppetipola who was aware of his identity had kept up the pretence, and on 7th May 1818 even conducted an inauguration ceremony for him at Diyabetma. Finally, on the 5th July, displayed the Sacred Tooth Relic which was ingeniously removed from the Dalade Maligava by Variyapola Sumangala Thero, the officiating priest”.⁴⁸⁶

Even when Keppetipola discovered that the pretender, whom he assisted to be crowned as king, was not a royal prince from the Nayakkar dynasty as claimed, he hid this fact. When other Kandyan Chiefs who were in the revolt found out this fact, of the pretender not being of royal dynasty, there was resentment. However, the chiefs patched up their differences as at that stage they were combined to oust the British from the kingdom; the royal prince from India was only needed to act as a rallying point and to give legitimacy to the revolt. At one time, they were even prepared to put up another pretender by the name of Vira Vauoo, a person from the opposite coast of India, merely to act as a rallying point:

“... wanted to set up another Pretender as one considered necessary as a rallying point to continue their War of liberation against the British. The person selected was one ‘Vira Vauoo’”.⁴⁸⁷

Once the British found out the real origin of the pretender (Vilbhava), and recovered the Sacred Tooth Relic, the ideological basis for the revolt was

⁴⁸⁶ A. Pilima Talauva, *Biographical Sketches of Some Kandyan Chieftains*, Colombo, Stanford Lake Publication, 2005, pp.96-100.

⁴⁸⁷ *Ibid*, pp.96-100.

over. Brownrigg gave wide publicity to who the pretender was. He was an ordinary govigama Sinhalese, who had once been ordained as a Buddhist priest:

“The inquiry into the real Person of the Pretender referred to in my despatch No. 267 was pursued with as much diligence as the subject would allow. The result has been to establish as near certainty as the retired State which this Pageant affects to maintain, consonant to Kandyan Practice, has permitted that the conjecture of his not being of the Royal Race as so well founded. He is of an obscure family in the Seven Korales”.⁴⁸⁸

Such a person was not eligible to be enthroned as a king under the traditions and customs associated with the Kandyan Sinhalese institution of Kingship and royalty. The repossession of the Sacred Tooth by the British gave the needed legitimacy for the continuance of British rule. With the possession of the Sacred Tooth Relic the British were accepted as the legitimate rulers, having the needed divine sanction to rule over the country:

“Keppetipola exhibited a basket (casket) which he declared had been brought away from the Principal Temple of Kandy by Two Lascorens who were on watch over it, and contained the Sacred Tooth of Buddha (on which it was considered the Government and Prosperity of the Country depended)”.⁴⁸⁹

The life and activities of Keppetipola clearly illustrates that the Kandyan Sinhalese, at that point of time, were not willing to accept British rule. They (the Sinhalese) yet yearned and fought for the restoration of the deposed Nayakkar dynasty from South India, who would resurrect the traditional Buddhist Sinhalese monarchy. This dynasty yet represented to the nobility and peasantry (who fought so hard against the British) the traditional religion, culture and civilization, which were highlighted and given

⁴⁸⁸ Brownrigg to Bathurst, 12 April 1815, C.O. 54/70, No. 278, S.L.N.A. 5.

⁴⁸⁹ Brownrigg to Bathurst, 24 July 1818, C.O. 54/71, No. 298, S.L.N.A. 5.

approval, in their national chronicles: the 'Mahavamsa' and the 'Culavamsa'. These national chronicles, written in Pali, gave a Buddhist and Sinhalese character to the history of the country. Keppetipola, in leading the revolt, was inspired by them: and is looked up to today as the first leader who fought for the independence of the country:

"Keppetipola was executed after he was captured by the British - "His name is enshrined in the history of this country for his patriotic endeavour to save its national independence""^{.490}

The Indian Factor: The Vital Part Played by the Indian British Army to maintain Law and Order, and Project Power in Britain's Second Empire

The close proximity of India to Ceylon (Sri Lanka) has always had a determining effect on its history and this fact was strengthened with a strong British position in South India at this time, which had a decisive effect on the course of the Kandyan rebellion:

"Nearer home, the environmental geography of Ceylon in relation to South India, its next door neighbour, steadily exerted a profound influence on Ceylon, historically, socially and culturally"^{.491}

From the mid-eighteenth century, the British had been steadily growing as the major military power in South India, and this had its effects on the history of Ceylon. Since the military defeat of the Mysore State (under its ruler Tippu Sultan) there was a decline of French power and influence, which was centred in Pondicherry; the British emerged as the biggest force, both on the western and eastern coasts of South India.

⁴⁹⁰ Vimalananda, *The Great Rebellion of 1818*, Introduction - pg. xi.

⁴⁹⁰ M.D. Raghavan, *Tamil Culture in Ceylon*, Colombo, 1972, p.1.

Most of the military aid to the British in Ceylon, during the Kandyan rebellion, came from Fort St George in Madras (presently Chennai) and from Fort William in Calcutta. There was a sense of urgency and desperation seen in Governor Brownrigg's letters to India seeking assistance:

“Contemplating the danger that will arise, as well to the Military Reputation of the Country as the safety of the British Empire in India, from allowing the Kandyans to succeed in their efforts to throw off our Government, and thereby weaken the Force among the Nations of the Indian Continent, he goes on to state: I venture earnestly to solicit Your Lordships early attention, counsel and aid towards the effectual maintenance of Sovereignty of the United Kingdom, over the whole of the Island”, he specifically requests: “I shall be enabled to call as occasion may require for further Reinforcements of Troops from the Honourable Company's Residency of Fort St. George, by that Government being instructed from Your Lordship to hold in readiness to move immediately on my requisitions as Additional Force of the following strength to such parts of the Island as the Season and Circumstances render advisable.

Europearn Artillery	-	60 Rank and File
Gun Lascars	-	100
European Infantry	-	800
Native Infantry	-	<u>2,400</u>
		<u>3,360</u> ⁴⁹²

The Kandyan rebels had no hope of foreign assistance, especially from the French, after the Battle of Waterloo, which sent Napoleon into exile. As the British naval power was supreme, the Kandyan Sinhalese were left helpless.

⁴⁹² Governor Brownrigg to the Marquis of Hastings, Governor General of India, 28 April 1818, C.O. 54/71, S.L.N.A. 5.

No Indian or European power was able to assist as in the past. The Dutch were no longer an effective naval power, and their main interests were confined to Indonesia.

The Portuguese, with their headquarters in Goa, were no more a power in South Asia, and were not in a position to challenge the British; in fact the Portuguese were greatly dependent on the British during the Napoleonic Wars. In these circumstances the British had only a fear of a Russian invasion of India from the north west of India. The continuing expansion of Russia in Central Asia was a cause of concern to the British in India. Consequent to this, all the strategic policies of the British, in the context of India, were formulated with the fear of a Russian intrusion into India from Central Asia:

“In this case there was little to fear from neighbouring states, but behind them in the north-west lay the Bug Bear of Russian influence. Since the defeat of Napoleon Russia was regarded as the strongest power in Europe”.⁴⁹³

However, the Russians had no fleet capable of challenging the British in South Asia. In this situation, the British in Ceylon had no fear of a foreign intervention to assist the Kandyan rebels.

With the close proximity to India and its resources, the British superiority of weaponry was a major factor in favour of their war in Ceylon. The then modern British musket (for its infantry forces) and the light artillery were to prove as decisive factors:

“The improved muskets and light infantry that did so much to thwart the Kandyan guerillas had originated in Europe in the course of developments in European warfare”.⁴⁹⁴

⁴⁹³ P. Spear, *A History of India*, Vol. 2, Pelican/Penguin, 1970, p.129.

⁴⁹⁴ Wickramasekera, *Kandy at War*, p.208.

This was an aspect of the growing Industrial and Technological Revolution in Britain, and in Europe, which gave the needed edge over the forces of the Kandyan Sinhalese rebels. The mechanism of the musket was more efficient than the flintlock used by the Kandyan rebels. It is seen that the Kandyan Sinhalese got their firearms from the Portuguese, and, thereafter, from the Dutch. Subsequently the local Kandyan blacksmiths were able to produce a flintlock and a matchlock based on these designs.⁴⁹⁵ The Kandyan cannon were also got from the Portuguese and subsequently from the Dutch. The rebels had 'gingals', which were light mortar-type field artillery. In contrast, the British had light artillery cannon, which were proved to be very effective in the highlands. The British musket was the most modern infantry weapon, where the process of loading and firing, and its effective range, was more superior to what the rebels had. The gun lascars and artillery troops, got from Madras and Culcutta, were quite efficient against the rebel forces:

“With 17 regiments, a large number of South Indian coolies, lascars and pioneers, the counter offensive began as Brownrigg had planned and entered into the field of mountainous warfare with the insurgents”.⁴⁹⁶

The British Army, and its equipment (armed Commissariats), was hampered by lack of 'coolies' (labourers), who were expected to carry them due to the mountainous nature of the country. There was no facility to transport other items due to lack of roads making it impossible for any wheeled traffic to operate. In this context a large number of 'coolies' were sought and got from India: “It speaks well for this newly arrived Indian Battalion that that it did not disintegrate on the way”.⁴⁹⁷ This strengthened the process of

⁴⁹⁵ Wickramasekera, *Kandy at War*, pp.94-95.

⁴⁹⁶ Vimalananda, *The Great Rebellion of 1818*, p.1.

⁴⁹⁷ Powell, *The Kandyan Wars - 1803-1815*, p.252 - Refers to the arrival of Indian troops for Madras.

communications between the British bases on the coast and the interior positions, up in the highland, from where the rebels operated.

With the overwhelming military support from India, Brownrigg was able to follow a tough and aggressive policy by which the rebels were beaten and the rebellion suppressed. The policy was to crush the revolt by all means available to him - "British policy consequently developed into plain terrorism".⁴⁹⁸ Martial law was declared, which in practice meant the suppression of all civil law, including the normal judicial courts of justice, and substituting it with courts martial to deal with the offenders. This, at one stroke, gave all power to the military officers. The army officers conducting the operations were free to take all steps to put down, in a most brutal fashion, the rebellion. Apart from summary executions by the military a policy of totally destroying the villages was carried out:

"The whole country was traversed in every direction by predatory military parties who applied the torch to the cottages and whatever other property fire could consume".⁴⁹⁹

Food crops, houses, and livestock were all burnt and destroyed in this process. The objective was to terrorise the inhabitants into submission. It resulted in total destruction: a fact felt for years within the Uwa Province on the eastern side of the Kingdom.

The Collapse of the Kandyan Rebellion: John D'Oyly's Part in the Process of Reconciliation

There were a number of causes for the rapid collapse of the rebels. Firstly, they lacked a unity of leadership, especially when it was discovered that the Pretender (Vilbava) was not the royal Nayakkar Prince he claimed to be:

⁴⁹⁸ C.R. De Silva, *Ceylon Under British Occupation, 1795-1834*, Colombo, Lake House Press, 1984, pp.189-191.

⁴⁹⁹ Marshall, *Ceylon*, p.149.

“It turned out that the Pretender to the Kandyan Throne was but a puppet of Keppetipola. He was not even a royal Prince he was supposed to be. Brownrigg made inquiries in India and discovered that Duraisami was residing peaceably in Madura”.⁵⁰⁰

Keppetipola, who initially led the rebels, may have known this fact, but to maintain the rebel cause he hid it; partaking in his crowning ceremony, and thereafter procuring the Sacred Tooth Relic (‘the Daladawa’) and exposing it to the public to give the Pretender a divine sanction. The presence of a real royal prince (drawn from the ‘Suryawansa’, the rajah caste) would have acted as a great incentive for the rebels, giving the rebellion the needed legitimacy to continue the struggle to restore indigenous rule and drive the British out of the Kandyan Kingdom. Without a proper monarch, the rebel cause was lost. Even in their appeal for divine intervention they requested (in their prayer) for “a king to arise”: as seen in the ‘sloka’ or prayer to the deity of the Kataragama Temple.⁵⁰¹

D’Oyly (and Governor Brownrigg) realised how important it was to prove that the Pretender was not a royal prince, and to show to the Kandyan Sinhalese that he was an ex-Buddhist priest from the Govigama Caste, who was not, therefore, fit to be a ruler and a monarch. By this, the cause for the rebels to fight for was false, and the rebel Kandyan Chiefs had perpetrated a fraud on them. It was found out that the real royal prince Doraiswamy who was said to be Pretender (and crowned as king) was in South India in the town of Madura, and what the leaders of the revolt professed was a false claim. This fact was now given wide publicity by means of a special

⁵⁰⁰ De Silva, *Ceylon Under British Occupation*, p.192.

⁵⁰¹ D’Oyly’s Report to James Sutherland in Colombo, 16 September 1816, C.O. 54/61, S.L.N.A. 5.

Government Gazette and a Proclamation.⁵⁰² The Proclamation, under the direction of D'Oyly, was widely circulated within the Kandyan Provinces. Here D'Oyly played a shrewd part by conducting widespread propaganda, which virtually broke the ideological basis for the whole revolt. The distribution of the propaganda operated through the wide network of the intelligence system that had been set up.⁵⁰³

This sudden discovery of the false claims of the Pretender also caused a split among the Kandyan Chiefs who led the revolt.⁵⁰⁴ It stoked up old family animosities. Madugalle and Pilima Talauve joined ranks against Keppetipola and the Pretender (Vilbava) who was now known as an ex-Buddhist priest. Madugalle captured both, and at one stage the rebels were in a great state of confusion. However, their differences were patched up, and a desperate attempt was made to find a royal prince. One such person was found from Mannar to lend legitimacy to the cause of the rebellion, which was now fast disintegrating. This attempt to procure a new royal prince was the last desperate attempt to revive the ancient monarchy by the rebel chiefs. This in addition to the recovery of the Sacred Tooth Relic by the British was a great blow to the ideological basis of the whole revolt. The re-possession of the Tooth Relic by the British authorities was a divine indication that the British were now the real rulers of the country: with this the whole rebel cause in the eyes of the Kandyans was lost:

“Whatever the English might think of the consequence of having taken Keppetipola, Pilima Talauve, and Madugalle, in his opinion, and in the opinion of the people in general, the

⁵⁰² The Pretender's true identity given wide publicity in special Gazette of 21 March 1818, and Proclamation of 19 March 1818, Sri Lanka National Archives.

⁵⁰³ De Silva, *Ceylon Under British Occupation*, p.191.

⁵⁰⁴ An Extract of Letter sent by D'Oyly giving the details of the conflict among the rebel Chiefs after the discovery of the true person of the Pretender, C.O. 54/71, No. 306, Enclosure 2.

taking of the relic was of infinitely more important” and “A sign of the destiny of the British to rule the Kingdom”.⁵⁰⁵

This gave the ideal opportunity for D’Oyly to exploit, and he tried his best and succeeded in getting a number of local chiefs and headmen to surrender to the British. He offered them a pardon and a return to normal life without any further punishment. His objectives were to win over the rebels, and to repair the discontent caused by the very repressive measures taken by the military operations. Martial law was accordingly repealed, and the normal civil administration restored.⁵⁰⁶ An amnesty was offered, contained in a special Proclamation to all who peacefully surrendered.⁵⁰⁷ This was carefully supervised and directed by D’Oyly with great success. This led to a large number of local leaders surrendering without any further molestation by the armed forces. Accordingly, all persons who surrendered were given a pardon and were not punished for having taken part in the revolt. The amnesty was liberally given to those who laid down their arms. A large number of leaders, along with their followers, accepted what the amnesty offered. D’Oyly travelled widely within the troubled provinces and districts, and with his knowledge of the language and customs of the Kandyan Sinhalese was able to persuade many to surrender and accept the terms and conditions offered.⁵⁰⁸ He strove to heal the wounds caused by the revolt. This was a wise step in the consolidation and expansion of British rule over the Kandyan provinces during the course of the nineteenth

⁵⁰⁵ Davy, *An Account of the Interior of Ceylon*, p.369 – quote Adigar Molligoda’s observation; and Governor Brownrigg to Bathurst, 8 January 1818, C.O. 54/73.

⁵⁰⁶ Martial Law revoked – Proclamation, 21 November 1818, Sri Lanka Archives.

⁵⁰⁷ *Ceylon Government Gazette*, 28 August 1818; and *Ceylon Government Gazette*, 1 August 1818, Sri Lanka Archives.

⁵⁰⁸ A free pardon was offered to those who surrendered by the 21st of September 1818, *Ceylon Government Gazette*, Sri Lanka Archives.

century. It was a further step in the process of British infiltration aiding the expansion of British power within the country.

D'Oyly's New Role with the Collapse of the Rebellion

Brownrigg remained in Kandy, directing the military operations, until the rebels were effectively contained.⁵⁰⁹ The premier rebel leaders, Kepettipola, Pilima Talauve, and Madugalle were captured, and tried before the Courts Martial. Kepettipola and Madugalle were found guilty and were executed. The other leaders were banished to Mauritius.⁵¹⁰ This marked the effective end of the rebellion. The process of surrender continued under the directions of D'Oyly, and civil law and administration were restored. With this D'Oyly's power as the Chief Executive (as Resident and Commissioner) was restored. Governor Brownrigg left for Colombo and D'Oyly resumed his administration and control over the Kandyan provinces. With this D'Oyly faced new challenges of a direct rule over the Kandyan provinces under his charge. He was free from the shackles he had faced under the Kandyan Convention of 1815, which was now replaced by a series of new Proclamations that covered all aspects of administration within the Kandyan provinces.⁵¹¹ With this, there was no more ambiguity or a diarchy in the administrative set up, or in the process of the day-to-day governance of the old Kandyan Kingdom. All the Kandyan Chiefs were brought under the control of D'Oyly, as Resident, and the British Civil servants working in the provinces and districts. This gave John D'Oyly the chance to mould the

⁵⁰⁹ Powell, *The Kandyan Wars - 1803-1815*, p.269.

⁵¹⁰ Major J. Forbes, *Eleven Years in Ceylon*, Vol. I, Richard Bentley, 1840, pp.52 and 233; and Marshall, *Ceylon*, pp.277-281 - The Execution of Kepettipola.

⁵¹¹ *Ceylon Government Gazette*, 21 November 1818, Colombo, Sri Lanka Archives - Proclamations of 12 November and 14 November 1818.

British administrative system as a more pliable system to infiltrate into the country and totally dominate it.⁵¹²

The government's new Proclamations were a milestone in the island's history. In essence it gave the needed framework for a uniform system of administration and governance for the whole country. Like in the case of the 1815 Kandyan Convention, the new Proclamations were a product of D'Oyly's understanding of the language, customs and institutions of the Kandyan Sinhalese. The Proclamations virtually set aside the provisions of the Kandyan Convention and replaced it with a series of new laws and administrative regulations:

"To fortify the hands of the British Officers appointed to the executive Government, to invest them with powers of compelling immediate obedience from the Chiefs".⁵¹³

It formed a new constitution for the old Kandyan Kingdom, and gave the basis of the provincial and district administration of the country. The main objective of the Proclamations was to subordinate the chiefs to the British civil servants, especially in the provinces and districts where the Government Agents emerged as the virtual rulers and administrators, representing the British government. The official British position was that the Kandyan Chiefs had broken their contract with British government by joining the rebellion against the British in occupation of the Kandyan Kingdom, and that, as the rebels had been crushed, the country was now under direct British rule by virtue of conquest.⁵¹⁴ While the Kandyan

⁵¹² Clauses 9 - 15 of the Proclamation - Made the Resident and the Kandyan Board supreme and all Kandyan Chiefs subordinate.

⁵¹³ Governor Brownrigg to Bathurst, 8 January 1819, Enclosed the Governor's Minute, C.O. 54/73, S.L.N.A. 5.

⁵¹⁴ Clauses 1 - 6 of the Proclamation - This gives a brief history of the Rebellion; and

Convention of 1815 was a good example of subtle British infiltration in South Asia, the Proclamation indicates the stage where military force when required was used to stabilise their position.

The Government Agents, and the British Ceylon Civil Service, who now took over the administration of the provinces and districts within the Kandyan Kingdom, combined executive and judicial power.⁵¹⁵ They represented the British government, with power over policing, security, and the issues of law and order. The Government Agents within the Kandyan provinces had the same powers and functions, like the British Collectors within the coastal regions of Ceylon, which were taken from the Dutch in 1796. Subsequently all the collectors were designated as Government Agents: thereby all the provinces in Ceylon were in the charge of Government Agents and the districts under Assistant Government Agents. They formed the government of the country combining all revenue and security powers, with all the local chiefs under their direction and control.

This apparatus created made the British civil servants the real rulers of the land, at the central and the provincial levels. Their influence through the chiefs in the revenue division and the superior and village headmen at the grass roots levels made them a powerful and elite group of administrators, on whom the British Governor in Colombo, the capital city, was heavily dependent. All the major legislative enactments from revenue, land, criminal and civil procedure, had the Government Agents as the real administrators and executors of the law and regulations. This was widened to include the basic social services, like the medical and preventive services. This created a powerful new district administration, whose influence

Clauses 7 - 8 of the Proclamation - Specifically state the supreme power and authority of the British government, and the Kandyan Board, and the Government Agents.

⁵¹⁵ Power derived from Clauses 7 - 8 of the Proclamation.

percolated to the remotest villages within an administrative district.⁵¹⁶ This facilitated the British in their infiltration and consolidation of their rule over the whole country. Even today the consequence of these moves has made the Government Agents and the Assistant Government Agents the backbone of district administration within the country. Any decline in the effective governance of the country is the result of the decline of district administration. The Proclamations therefore introduced a uniform pattern of district administration in the country where the chain of command began at the top, with the Government agents and assistant Government agents, then went down through the revenue divisions to the villages at the lowest level. In effect it was an imposition of a new foreign bureaucracy at the top over an ancient administration familiar to the people. The Government agent was now looked upon as the Disava of the traditional administrative set up, giving the office an aura of traditional authority and command.⁵¹⁷

While D'Oyly had learnt some hard lessons during the course of the Kandyan Rebellion, what he failed to appreciate was the deep conservative nature of Kandyan society. This conservatism was largely a consequence of its landlocked situation, its mainly subsistence agricultural base which made it a predominantly peasant society with a few leading aristocrats, the lack of a large foreign trade and an absence of a commercial middle class. In this context, Kandyan society was not subject to new ideas, and this made it resistant to any change, or receptive to any fresh outlook. In a society used to foreign trade there is generally an impetus to change, with a variety of goods and services available. Kandyan society was cut off from contact with

⁵¹⁶ Clauses 9 - 15 of the Proclamation - Limited and diminished the power of the Kandyan Chiefs, and all appointments to be made by the Kandyan Board and the Government Agents.

⁵¹⁷ Minute by the Governor Addressed to the Kandyan Board of Commissioners to carry this into effect, 25 September 1818, C.O. 54/73, S.L.N.A. 5 - Order signed by Geo Lusigman in Kandy, Clearly lays down the powers of the Government Agents, Sri Lanka Archives, Colombo.

foreign countries, and its isolation, for centuries, gave it a basically feudal orientation with a strong caste system, that overlay its economic and social structure.⁵¹⁸ D'Oyly did not quite understand its true nature and the consequences this had on its leaders and the people who constituted its society. At this time, the Kandyan society stood in stark contrast to the Sinhalese society in the Maritime Provinces, which was familiar to D'Oyly before he was appointed Resident in Kandy. In the Maritime Provinces, most of the Sinhalese chieftains were Christians, consequent to the Portuguese and Dutch occupations. The leaders were more modern in the context of the time. As seen by the events of the Rebellion, D'Oyly had not quite understood the nature of Kandyan chieftains or the nature of Kandyan society and its politics.

D'Oyly was not informed of what was really transpiring in the remote outlying districts, like Uwa, where the British occupation of the Kandyan kingdom was not accepted. During the period of the Kandyan Kings, these areas, like Uwa, were given a deal of autonomy, and their chiefs had a nominal loyalty to the king in Kandy. In some of the remote areas the behaviour of the British troops stationed was not satisfactory. For example, Badulla, the capital city of the Uwa Province, was the scene of troops not under control, and there were a number of complaints of disorderly behaviour and looting:

“Between 7pm and 8pm Molligoda Adikar sends message that he heard from Lewuke, there are symptoms of Insurrection in Uwa - Lewuke says he heard that Katugaha Mohottale has told the People, that Soldiers and Robbers are going about and plundering the country”.⁵¹⁹

⁵¹⁸ R. Pieris, *Sinhalese Social Organisations*, Colombo, Kandyan Print, 1956, Chapter I; and H.L. Seneviratne, *Rituals of the Kandyan State*, Cambridge, 1978, Chapters I and II.

⁵¹⁹ *D'Oyly's Diary*, 10 April 1815, p.262.

Some of the major temples were looted by these troops:

“We have received Accounts that the Soldiers are committing Disorders and Depredations in the countries and me fear that after your H.E.’s Departure they will not be controlled”.⁵²⁰

This added to the dissatisfaction of the local chiefs and the peasantry against the British. This was the background to the British appointment of a British Agent to Badulla, as complaints came pouring into British headquarters at Kandy. D’Oyly took no adequate notice of these events, and even when there was a plot discovered by the British from reports sent by Eknelligoda from Sabaragamuva. D’Oyly did not take the needed precautions. He continued to rely on the advice tendered by the Kandyan chiefs, especially Ehelapola, with whom he had a close association for many years prior to the British occupation in 1815.⁵²¹ However the enquiries conducted during the Rebellion pointed to the involvement of most of the Kandyan chiefs, including Ehelapola. His arrest, removal to Colombo, and thereafter his

⁵²⁰ *D’Oyly’s Diary*, 19 March 1815 – Refers to the meeting of the Chief Buddhist Priests with the Governor. There was a fear that the British troops would not be controlled, and consequently the inhabitants would suffer.

⁵²¹ D’Oyly’s friendly correspondence with Ehelapola – Letter sent by Ehelapola while he was Adigar of Sri Wickrama, the last King of Kandy, 8 April 1812, C.O. 54/52, S.L.N.A. 5, Colombo: He sends medical plants to D’Oyly, living in Colombo, and requests in return birds – geese and grouse; Letter sent by Ehelapola to D’Oyly, 25 April 1813, C.O. 54/48, S.L.N.A. 5– Requests a shot gun; Governor Brownrigg to Bathurst, 28 June 1814, C.O. 54/51, S.L.N.A. 5 – Contains D’Oyly’s Report of Adigar Ehelapola’s secret message through Eknelligoda seeking British aid. Reference is also made to D’Oyly’s report as to the Kandyan revolt against the King; and Letter of D’Oyly sent to Brownrigg, 24 May 1814, C.O. 54/52, S.L.N.A. 5 – Ehelapola seeks political sylum with the British after the failed revolt.

banishment to Mauritius, was the result.⁵²² Governor Brownrigg who suspected Ehelapola took this drastic action. Though Ehelapola professed loyalty to the British, inwardly he was part of a plot to oust them.⁵²³

Brownrigg and D'Oyly: The Soldier and the Political Agent

D'Oyly was a complimentary personality to his superior, Governor Brownrigg. As shown in the events that followed the rebellion, it proved to be beneficial to the continuance and consolidation of British rule over the Kandyan Kingdom. Brownrigg was a soldier by profession who rose consequence of his performance in the European Wars, especially against the French:

“Lacking both money and influence when he was a young man, this 53 year old Anglo-Irishman had carried out a career by his own ability. He was lucky enough to catch the eye of the Duke of York during the disastrous campaign of 1794 in the Netherlands, and became the Duke’s Military Secretary in the following year. In 1803 he exchanged that appointment for Quartermaster General at the Horse Guards, a position analogous then to Chief of Staff. Without experience either of civil administration or of the East, this now elderly soldier was rewarded with the post of Governor of Ceylon”.⁵²⁴

John D'Oyly on the other hand was a civil servant. He was a product of Cambridge University, England where he acquired a strong classical

⁵²² Governor Brownrigg to Bathurst, 12 April 1818, C.O. 54/70, No.278, S.L.N.A. 5 - This gives reasons for Ehelapola’s arrest, removal to Colombo, and thereafter his banishment to Mauritius.

⁵²³ Governor Brownrigg to Bathurst, 8 July 1819, C.O. 54/74, S.L.N.A. 5 - Points to evidence of Ehelapola’s support to the rebels.

⁵²⁴ Powell, *The Kandyan Wars - 1803-1815*, p.198.

education, considered a prerequisite for an educated person. He had the necessary accomplishments to partake in the higher public services.⁵²⁵

The situation within the Kandyan provinces in 1817 demanded a military response to the guerrilla tactics of warfare practiced by the Kandyan Sinhalese against the British forces. At one point in this conflict the British troops were pinned down in the remote highlands. The difficult topographic nature of the country, with its mountains, forests and rivers, and the adverse weather conditions during the monsoon rainy season, made communications very difficult. This resulted in a breakdown of the military commissariat: food and equipment were not reaching the troops:

“The entire line of posts between Badulla and Kandy had been given up, and the troops remaining in Uva were now dependent for all their food and stores upon the tenuous supply line from Sabaragamuva. For a time in April even the communications between Kandy and Colombo had been severed”.⁵²⁶

This weakened the British military counter offensive, and a lack of coolies to transport the needed goods further weakened and reduced the strength of the British troops. At one stage the British contemplated leaving their positions in the highlands and returning to the coastal regions of the country. Brownrigg, who was in Kandy, was determined to fight and hold on to the positions. He ably conducted and directed the military operations under these trying conditions. He called for and got the needed military assistance from India, which enabled him to defeat the rebels:

“Brownrigg’s difficulties rapidly dissolved with the reinforcements from India. The 15th, 7th, 18th and 20th

⁵²⁵ H.W. Codrington, *Diary of Sir John D'Oyly*, Journal of the Ceylon Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society, Vol. XXV, 1917, Reprint 1995, Colombo, Navarang Press, p.XI.

⁵²⁶ Powell, *The Kandyan Wars - 1803-1815*, pp.253-254.

Regiments of the Native Infantry, and a company of Golondanze (artillery), landed in March, April, and September respectively. The 86th and 49th British Regiments arrived in September and October. A corps of 5,000 Pioneers did away with the shortage of coolies and solved the chief defect of the Commissariats".⁵²⁷

While Brownrigg directed the military aspect of containing the rebellion, John D'Oyly undertook the propaganda aspect of winning over the rebels. Once the true identity of the pretender was found out as being not of royal stock as claimed, and the Sacred Tooth Relic was recovered, the ideological basis for the revolt was over:

"The recovery of the Tooth Relic was the real turning point of the Rebellion".⁵²⁸

This resulted in a number of local rebel chiefs coming over to the British, as they had no cause to fight. While this aspect was cleverly managed by D'Oyly, he was also preparing the needed administrative framework to run the Kandyan Kingdom once the rebels were contained and ultimately defeated:

Propositions: "That the British accredited Agents of Government either resident in Kandy or in the various provinces shall have powers similar in nature to those exercised by Collectors in the Maritime Provinces and That the Disavas (where it shall be deemed expedient to continue the high class of native Officers) shall only act under the orders of

⁵²⁷ De Silva, *Ceylon Under British Occupation, 1795-1834*, p.190.

⁵²⁸ Davy, *An Account of the Interior of Ceylon*, p.365 – Quotation from Adigar Molligoda.

the British Agent, but shall be entitled to all personal honours by which they are now distinguished".⁵²⁹

D'Oyly realised that until the administrative framework was in place to control the Kandyan chiefs, British infiltration and control over the Kingdom was difficult. Before the rebellion broke out D'Oyly had appointed Agents to some districts (like Uwa, for example), but they had to work alongside the Kandyan chiefs, under the terms and conditions of the Kandyan Convention of March 1815. This proved to be a difficult task.

After the rebellion, it was appropriate to curb the power of the Kandyan chiefs, and for the British to assume direct administrative control. This was in relation to both executive and judicial functions. Under the terms and conditions of the Kandyan Convention, the premier Kandyan chiefs retained their ancient powers and privileges of office, which contained executive and judicial power. This was bound to conflict with the concepts of British judicial procedures at that time. Now uniform criminal and civil law procedures were envisaged, though the personal laws pertaining to the Kandyan Sinhalese were to remain:

Proposition: "That the administration of Justice and Police shall be on the following system. All cases relative to personal property not exceeding in value 25 Rix Dollars and all cases of assaults, petty thefts, or breaches of peace may be heard by the Agent of Government solely and decided on".⁵³⁰

D'Oyly was also aware of the position and influence of the Buddhist clergy, and their organisation or Church, called the 'Sangha', within Kandyan society. While the powers of the Kandyan chiefs were being curbed and controlled it was prudent not to antagonise the Buddhist priests. They (the

⁵²⁹ Propositions in Response to the Governor's Minute, 25 September 1818, Geo Lusignana, Kandy, C.O. 54/73, S.L.N.A. 5 and S.L.N.A. 21.

⁵³⁰ Ibid.

Buddhist clergy) had no direct power under the traditional laws, except in relation to their assets, namely land and temples. Hence, to placate them at this stage would be a wise decision. Therefore, it was ensured that their economic rights, protected under the Kandyan Convention of 1815, were continued, especially those related to the rights of land tenure and its allied services, on which the Buddhist temples and monasteries depended for their sustenance and upkeep:

Proclamation: "As well the Priests as all the Ceremonies and Processions of the Budhoo Religion shall receive the Respect which in former times was shewn them".⁵³¹

By these moves D'Oyly was trying to balance the major forces within Kandyan society and thereby consolidate British control and rule over the provinces under his charge. All these objectives were envisaged in a series of new Proclamations that were issued by Governor Brownrigg before he departed to Colombo, leaving John D'Oyly in charge as British Resident. It was D'Oyly's task to carry these Proclamations into effect and to inaugurate a new era of direct British rule and control over the Kandyan Kingdom:

"D'Oyly understood the implications and probable results of the measures. For months he and his fellow Commissioners argued with Brownrigg as to the details of the scheme".⁵³²

It was another phase in the British policy of infiltration and ultimate control, which was successful in building their Second Empire in Asia.

⁵³¹ Proclamation of 21 November 1818 - gazetted, Clause 16: Buddhist Clergy and Property protected, Sri Lankan National Archives, Paragraph 16, S.L.N.A. Gazette Series.

⁵³² Powell, *The Kandyan Wars - 1803-1815*, p.270.

Summary

The Kandyan Rebellion of 1817 was the most significant effort made by the Kandyan Sinhalese to dislodge the British from Ceylon and to replace their imposed structures with the traditional forms of governance and administration. The cause and course of the rebellion pointed to deep-seated resentments felt by a people when there is sudden change. The changes had had a traumatic effect on their lives, both spiritually and culturally, and were the driving force of the whole process related to the outbreak of the revolt in 1817.⁵³³

The rebellion also showed that the Kandyan Sinhalese yearning for an independent existence was tied to the return of the deposed Nayakkar dynasty. The Pretender (Vilbava) was presented to the Kandyan Sinhalese as a Nayakkar royal prince, named Doraiswamy, who belonged to the ruling 'Kshatriya', or raja caste, from the sun or solar dynasty. When it was found out that the Pretender was not the Nayakkar Prince (he claimed he was), the ideological basis for the revolt was undermined. This fact, along with the recovery of the Sacred Tooth Relic (the 'Daladawa') was a turning point in the revolt; it favoured the British – "a sign of the destiny of the British to rule the Kandyans".⁵³⁴ Force was used when there was no alternative. However the military administration (martial law) was revoked as early as possible and civil administration restored, with D'Oyly as head. This enabled the process of infiltration to be continued and to make the government more palatable and acceptable to the inhabitants.

⁵³³ Brownrigg to Bathurst, 12 April 1818, C.O. 54/70, S.L.N.A. 5 – This shows that within two months of the Kandyan Convention of 1815 the principal Kandyan Chiefs had agreed to evict the British.

⁵³⁴ *Ceylon Gazette* of 21 March 1818, S.L.N.A. Gazette Series – The British revealed the true identity of the Pretender, Vilbava; This was issued as a special Proclamation on 19 March 1818, Sri Lankan National Archives; and Recovery

Because all the major Kandyan chiefs joined the revolt at some stage, with the exception of Adigar Molligoda and Eknelligoda, the British took the position that they were no more bound by the terms of the Kandyan Convention of 1815. If the Kandyan Convention of 1815 was the direct result of British infiltration, aided by D'Oyly's diplomacy, the series of Proclamations issued on the 21st of November 1818 was the result of the defeat of the rebels. It was a step made by the British to further establish total control over the Kandyan Kingdom; one that led to the second phase of the whole process of infiltration.⁵³⁵

The rebellion left parts of the Kandyan Kingdom in a ruined state. This was so in the eastern parts of the kingdom from where the revolt began. Brownrigg followed a very repressive policy, laying waste a number of villages, and driving terror into the minds of the people. Martial law was declared, and a very repressive policy was followed to defeat the rebels:

“But the rebels are not get at-able. So we are reduced to burning and laying waste the property of the headmen, their leaders”.⁵³⁶

Within the framework of the Proclamations, D'Oyly took steps to further infiltrate and establish total control over the Kandyan Kingdom: the Kandyan chiefs were now made to be subordinate to the British civil servants, who were posted as Government Agents in the provinces. These administrative steps were to be another milestone in the history of the country.

of the Sacred Tooth Relic (the “Daladawa”), November 1818: Governor Brownrigg reports to Bathurst, 8 January 1819, S.L.N.A. 5.

⁵³⁵ Proclamation of 21 November 1818, *Ceylon Government Gazette*, 28 November 1818, Colombo, S.L.N.A. Gazette Series.

⁵³⁶ Brownrigg to Bathurst, 27 November 1817, C.O. 54/66, S.L.N.A. 5.

Chapter VI

The Proclamation of 1818 and its Consequences: D'Oyly's Policy of Consolidating British Rule after the First Phase of Infiltration

This chapter examines the definitive steps taken by the British (under John D'Oyly, as Resident) to consolidate British rule within the Kandyan Kingdom, by subordinating the Kandyan Chiefs to British Officers (the civil servants) within the provinces and districts:

“No person shall be considered entitled to executive Office, either of the Higher or Lower Class of Headmen, unless thereto appointed by a Written Instrument signed in respect to Superior Chiefs by His Excellency the Governor and for Inferior Headmen by the Honourable Resident or provisionally by any Agent of Government”.⁵³⁷

The Resident, the Kandyan Board, and the Government Agents were the real representatives of the British government. A new system of district administration emerged, and D'Oyly began the process of establishing a codified modern judicial system:

“And in order that justice may be duly, promptly, and impartially administered throughout the Kandyan Provinces to all classes, His Excellency the Governor is pleased to declare his pleasure to be touching the same and to delegate and assign the following Jurisdiction to the Public Officers of Government”.⁵³⁸

D'Oyly assisted in a policy of opening up the Kandyan Kingdom by building roads:

⁵³⁷ Proclamation of 21 November 1818, *Ceylon Government Gazette*, 28 November 1818, Paragraph 10, Colombo, S.L.N.A. Gazette Series.

⁵³⁸ Proclamation of 21 November 1818, *Ceylon Government Gazette*, 28 November 1818, Paragraph 34, Colombo, S.L.N.A. Gazette Series.

“All Persons shall be liable to Service for Government on the requisition of the Board of Commissioners and Agents of Government and By the duty of clearing and marking Roads and putting up and repairing Bridges, be considered a general gratuitous service falling on the Districts through which the Roads pass or wherein the Bridges lie”.⁵³⁹

Governor Barnes, who succeeded Brownrigg in 1819, encouraged this. This policy facilitated easy communication and assisted the process of infiltration. The easier communications within the Kandyan Kingdom had military administrative, economic and social consequences. In a military sense, the roads made it easy for the movement of troops and materials to troubled spots, as and when required. The British Government Agents, in charge of district administration, found that roads made it for easy administrative communications with the remotest villages within the areas under their charge, and quickened the pace of infiltration, and consequent consolidation, of the hold they had over the whole Kandyan Kingdom. The roads facilitated the movement of the civil population: leading to the growth of trade and commerce as it linked these areas with the coast and with it trade from the outside world. This led to significant economic and social changes, leading to the introduction of new social ideas, and breaking down of the old isolated Kandyan society:

“All Kadawettes and ancient Barriers throughout the Country shall be from henceforward discontinued and removed”.⁵⁴⁰

During the course of the nineteenth century, one of the concrete economic results of the new roads was the opening up of the Kandyan Kingdom to new plantation crops; coffee followed by tea, which is still the main

⁵³⁹ Proclamation of 21 November 1818, *Ceylon Government Gazette*, 28 November 1818, Paragraph 30, Colombo, S.L.N.A. Gazette Series.

⁵⁴⁰ Proclamation of 21 November 1818, *Ceylon Government Gazette*, 28 November 1818, Paragraph 31, Colombo, S.L.N.A. Gazette Series.

foundation of the country's economy. These economic benefits quickened the pace of development.

The Rationale of the 1818 Proclamation

Paragraphs 1 to 6 of the Proclamation of 1818 give the brief history of the events between March 1815 and the outbreak of the rebellion in 1817 from the official British point of view. In Paragraph 1 is set out the reasons for the British intervention in the affairs of the Kandyan Kingdom: it seeks to point to humanitarian reasons for the British action in assisting the Kandyan Sinhalese of getting rid of a tyrant king:

“The Chiefs and People of the Kandyan nation no longer able to endure the Cruelties and Oppressions which the late King Sri Wickrama Raja Singha tyrannically practised towards them prayed the assistance of the British Government for their relief”.⁵⁴¹

A conscious effort was made to show that the British had interfered in the internal politics of the kingdom, driven by high moral considerations: hiding their real intent of expansion of their power and influence.

In the British relations with the Kandyan Kingdom the fear of a French intervention in the country was shown. This is revealed in a note made by the first British Governor, Lord North which stated as follows:

“Any danger should exist of a French attack, and during the last 2 years both the one and the other, and those circumstances notorious ... existed. For, as the only material assistance which the Kandyans would give to invaders would

⁵⁴¹ Proclamation of 21 November 1818, *Ceylon Government Gazette*, 28 November 1818, Paragraph 1, Colombo, S.L.N.A. Gazette Series.

be in supplying them with provisions and in distressing our province by owning them".⁵⁴²

There is an attempt to blame the Kandyan chiefs for the rebellion:

"Those Plotters against the State were found among the very Persons who had been restored to Honours and Security by the sole intervention of British Power".⁵⁴³

The British were invited by the Kandyan Chiefs to take over the kingdom, led by Ehelapola. This they openly revealed in their Proclamation issued at the start of the British invasion in 1815. Now, after the rebellion, they turned against the chiefs, and aspired to control and administer the kingdom in the interests of 'the general mass of subjects'.

These reasons show the British imperial ideals, inspired from mainly classical Roman times. The Romans, during the course of their history as empire builders, were inspired by the ideals of spreading order and justice in the then known world, bringing civilization to persons who they believed had no concept of law and order in their civic lives. It was a sense of mission and destiny that was imposed by them on others. The British clearly stipulated that they had taken over the kingdom, and that the loyalty of the people should be expressed to the British Governor and the Government Agents:

"His Excellency the Governor therefore now calls to mind of every person and of every class within these settlements, that the Sovereign Majesty of Great Britain and Ireland exercised by

⁵⁴² Lord North, while Governor of Ceylon - Dealings with the King of Kandy and his Adigar (Prime Minister). Manuscript found in the Maidstone Archives of the Earls of Guilford, in the United Kingdom. Reproduced in the Gunasena Historical Series Vol. II, published in Colombo by T. Vimalananda in the British Intrigue in the Kingdom, 1973, Ceylon, p.544.

⁵⁴³ Proclamation of 21 November 1818, *Ceylon Government Gazette*, 28 November 1818, Paragraph 4, Colombo, S.L.N.A. Gazette Series.

His Representative Governor of Ceylon and his Agents in the Kandyan Provinces is the source alone from which Power emanates".⁵⁴⁴

This clause of the proclamation clearly stipulates the supremacy of the British within the Kandyan provinces. The agents of the British Government were now to be accepted as the real rulers of the country. The late king's rule was held up as cruel and barbarous; a rule from whose clutches the British freed the people. Following from this gracious act the Kandyan chiefs proved 'treacherous' when they revolted against the British occupation. The rebellion of 1817 was shown, therefore, to be an act of ingratitude on the part of the Kandyan chiefs, especially as the British rule had been 'mild', and had led to peace and prosperity. It was inspired by their personal ambitions, not in the interest of the Kandyan people. In this context the continuation of British supremacy was in the interest of the people: the British being portrayed as the supporter of the rights of the people. This justified the takeover of the Kandyan Kingdom by the British, who were shown as 'liberators' of the Kandyan people, from cruel and barbarous rule:

"Led by the invitation of the Chiefs, and welcomed by the acclamations of the people, the forces of his Britannic Majesty have entered the Kandyan territory, and penetrated to the Capital: Divine Providence has Blessed their efforts with uniform, and complete success. The ruler of the interior provinces has fallen into their hands and the government remains at the disposal of his Majesty's representative".⁵⁴⁵

⁵⁴⁴ Proclamation of 21 November 1818, *Ceylon Government Gazette*, 28 November 1818, Paragraph 7, Colombo, S.L.N.A. Gazette Series.

⁵⁴⁵ Official Declaration of the Settlement of the Kandyan Provinces, Official Bulletin, signed by the Deputy Secretary, J. Sutherland, 2 March 1815 - Reference: J. Davy, *An Account of the Interior of Ceylon*, London, Longman,

This was the same position that the British took when they invaded the Kandyan Kingdom in 1815. They were now settling to directly govern and administer the Kandyan Kingdom in the interests of the Kandyan people. It was an act inspired by high ideals, which would be of benefit to the people. Earlier the target was the 'cruel king', now it was the 'ambitious' Kandyan chiefs who had to be put down. Their first step was to capture the king, who was then exiled to South India where he was a state prisoner until his death in 1832.⁵⁴⁶ In the case of the leading Kandyan chiefs, the treatment was harsh after the Rebellion: Ehelapola, who was so useful to the British in their conquest of the kingdom, was banished to Mauritius:

“As the running the least risk of a Person of such influence and riches joining the Pretender, would have been conduct so greatly inconsiderate, that had a sinister event occurred, I should never been able to pardon myself so much neglect of Public Duty and Interest. Accordingly, He was on the evening of the 2nd of March, arrested in the Hall of Audience, and conveyed under Escort and Bearers previously posted with secrecy to Ruvanwella, and thence by water to Colombo”.⁵⁴⁷

He died while in exile as a prisoner who had not been formally charged or faced a trial. Many Kandyan chiefs were banished to Mauritius, and some

Hurst, Rees, Orme and Brown, 1821, reprinted in Colombo, 1965, Appendix No. I, p.369.

⁵⁴⁶ Journal of William Granville of the Ceylon Civil Service, who was in charge of the deposed King of Kandy, Sri Wickrama Raja Singhe, when he was taken from Ceylon to the Vellore Fort in South India. Printed by the Wesleyan Mission Press in Colombo, 1880.

⁵⁴⁷ Brownrigg to Bathurst, 12 April 1818, Kandy, C.O. 54/70, No. 278, S.L.N.A. 5 - Refers to the arrest of Ehelapola.

returned after 1832 when the deposed king, Sri Wickrama, died.⁵⁴⁸ The king was deposed and the Kandyan chiefs effectively put down, leaving it clear for a total British takeover of the kingdom.

The Proclamation made the British Officials supreme in the Kandyan provinces, and Marshall confirms this when he says this about the Proclamations:

“With the exception of the temples, the administration of the public affairs of the Kandyan provinces was to be solely executed by English functionaries.”⁵⁴⁹

This in a sense points to the establishment of a framework of the development of the second phase of infiltration, namely the consolidation of British rule within the Kandyan provinces. This process was seen during the course of the rest of the nineteenth century, which saw a concerted effort to break a feeling of national uniqueness among the Kandyan Sinhalese, who represented the last independent political unit within Ceylon. The Kandyan provinces thereafter were forcibly united with the rest of the country to facilitate British infiltration, and consequent political domination, over the whole of the country.

Marshall sums up the position of the Kandyan Sinhalese as a consequence of these developments:

“A few Kandyans continue to be employed in subordinate situations where they have little influence. Distinction, high place, and power, the objects of laudable ambition, are, by our assumption of the government of the country, placed beyond

⁵⁴⁸ A. Pilamataluva, *Biographical Sketches of Some Kandyan Chieftains in the Last Phase of Tri Sinhale*, Colombo, Stanford Lake Publication, 2005, pp.41-45 and 104.

⁵⁴⁹ Marshall, *Ceylon*, p.160.

the attainments of its indigenous population of every class and grade.”⁵⁵⁰

D'Oyly and the Development of British Sovereignty in Ceylon

The development of the concept of British sovereignty in South Asia, and in the Indian subcontinent, was a tortuous task.⁵⁵¹ In South Asia the British were confronted with kingdoms that were densely populated, and having an ancient history and civilization. For example, the Moghul Empire in India was looked upon as one of the then world's great empires, and a centre of civilization and culture. This was the situation in the seventeenth century when the British appeared as traders in South Asia, with no political or territorial ambitions.

This situation changed in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, where the British became rulers with political ambitions: with it went the development of the British concept of sovereignty. The British sovereignty in India, as pointed out by Ilbert, had three sources: the British Crown, the Moghul Emperor, and the local rajas, or kings:

“British authority in India may be traced to a two fold source. It is derived partly from the British Crown and parliament, partly from the Great Mogul and other native rulers of India”.⁵⁵²

This involved a combination of diplomacy and military force. In this process infiltration into the internal politics of the local Indian states was a method adopted by the British. It was the first major step, and once involved in the internal politics of a local state or kingdom it led to the British hold, consolidation and consequent growth of a British state. This was the path

⁵⁵⁰ Marshall, *Ceylon*, p.166.

⁵⁵¹ H.H. Dodwell, 'The Development of Sovereignty in British India', *The Cambridge History of India*, 1929, pp.585-607.

⁵⁵² Sir C. Ilbert, *The Government of India*, India, 1915, p.1.

that proved most successful in the establishment of the Second British Empire in South Asia.

For centuries Ceylon had been divided into a number of kingdoms. At the time the Portuguese arrived in the sixteenth century there were three kingdoms, but now there was one political unit that controlled the whole country. The governor in Colombo was the supreme authority, who yielded sovereignty on behalf of the British Monarch. In this sense the Kandyan Convention of 1815 and the proclamations of 1819 were major events, in the history of the country, and they were associated with John D'Oyly. The proclamation of 21 November 1818 was clear on this.⁵⁵³

By 1818 the British supremacy was, both by fact and law, accepted in Ceylon. The Kandyan Kings, at various times, claimed to be 'emperors' over the country. This fact the Kandyan Kings took up in their dealings with the Portuguese and the Dutch. The Dutch acknowledged this, and the first British diplomatic correspondence reflected this attitude. The British had a legal document to substantiate that they were the successors of the Kandyan Kings, under the Kandyan Convention of March 1815. After the rebellion this fact was now openly espoused and acted upon by the British Governor and his civil servants:

"No Person shall be considered entitled to execute Office, either of the Higher or Lower Class of Headmen, unless thereto appointed by a written Instrument in respect to Superior Chiefs by His Excellency the Governor".⁵⁵⁴

Earlier all persons entitled to office in the Kandyan Kingdom were dependent on the king. It was through the king of Kandy that all officers

⁵⁵³ Proclamation of 21 November 1818, *Ceylon Government Gazette*, 28 November 1818, Paragraph 7, Colombo, S.L.N.A. Gazette Series.

⁵⁵⁴ Proclamation of 21 November 1818, *Ceylon Government Gazette*, 28 November 1818, Paragraph 10, Colombo, S.L.N.A. Gazette Series.

acquired their authority, and their status in society. This power was now transferred to the Governor of Ceylon in Colombo, and the British Resident in Kandy.

The Proclamation of 1818 was a logical sequel to the Kandyan Convention of 1818. Both are the two legal documents that established British supremacy in Ceylon, and established a uniform administration and governance over the whole country. What the Kandyan kings claimed as a legal title of being the rulers of Ceylon was now a fact. This was a rare feature in the history of Ceylon. In this D'Oyly was the principal actor as a diplomat, strategist, and administrator. In all the roles his objective was the infiltration and expansion of British power and authority to all parts of the country. In this, D'Oyly was the principal author of the expansion of British sovereignty and supremacy in Ceylon.⁵⁵⁵

The British Policy as regards Buddhism after the Rebellion of 1817

John D'Oyly understood the great influence that the Buddhist clergy, and Sangha (the Buddhist Church), had within Kandyan Sinhalese society. He strived to get them to agree to the British take over of the Kandyan Kingdom:

“I address them saying – we are not come to this Country to destroy Religion of Buddha and the Gods, which have

⁵⁵⁵ Powell, *The Kandyan Wars*, p.270 - “For all that, the ancient social structure of the country, so well suited to its people, had been undermined. D'Oyly understood the implications and probable results of the measures. For months he and his fellow commissioners argued with Brownrigg on the details of the scheme. But it is likely that he realized, from his profound knowledge of Kandy and its people, that it would be many years before the changes – radical though they were – would make much difference to the daily life of the cultivator in his village.”

prevailed from ancient Time in this Country, but to protect it and promote it".⁵⁵⁶

Buddhism had a great influence in the politics and the social development of the country. Art, architecture, literature, and the manners of the people were greatly influenced by Buddhism. Its influence was far reaching, and any government, including the last ruling dynasty in Kandy recognise this fact. It was not possible for any administration to be unaware of this basic fact. One of the reasons that the last ruling dynasty were acceptable, and in some instances respected, was for this reason of being patrons of the Buddhist religion, and its associated culture:

"... but the Nayakkars in contrast displayed an intense devotion to the faith and became lavish benefactors of the Sangha. Their aim, undoubtedly, was to stabilize their position amidst a powerful nobility by gaining popularity with the Sangha, and thereby with the people".⁵⁵⁷

In every village and town of the Kandyan Kingdom there was a Buddhist temple, and the Buddhist priests therefore had considerable contact with the people. Buddhist priests were looked up to as a learned class of persons, and their guidance and advice was sought by all sections of society. It was therefore necessary for the rulers to patronise Buddhism to survive. D'Oyly had ensured this in the provisions of the Proclamation:

"As well the Priests as all the Ceremonies and Processions of the Buddha Religion shall receive the Respect which in former times was shown them".⁵⁵⁸

⁵⁵⁶ D'Oyly's *Official Diary*, entry of 8 April 1815, p.255.

⁵⁵⁷ L.S. Dewaraja, *The Kandyan Kingdom*, Colombo, Lake House, 1988, p.163.

⁵⁵⁸ Proclamation of 21 November 1818, *Ceylon Government Gazette*, 28 November 1818, Paragraph 16, Colombo, S.L.N.A. Gazette Series.

However, while promising to protect Buddhist institutions, a slight variation was made in the Proclamation by agreeing to allow other religions to establish institutions within the Kandyan provinces, subject to the approval of the Governor:

“At the same time it is in no wise to be understood that the protection of Government is to be denied to Peaceable exercise by all other persons of the Religion which they respectively profess or to the erection under due License from His Excellency of Places of worship in proper Situations”.⁵⁵⁹

Christian missionaries to establish schools, and to carry out missionary activities used this provision. It was also made to accommodate the criticism that Governor Brownrigg had to face for agreeing to protect and uphold the Buddhist religion in the Kandyan Convention of March 1815:

“Brownrigg was reluctant to permit evangelism there and discouraged the Wesleyan missionaries who sought to establish a mission station in Kandy. However, with the expansion of the civil and military establishments in Kandy, he appointed the Rev. Samuel Lambrick as Chaplain to the forces there in 1818. Lambrick extended his activities to evangelical work among the Kandyans and eventually opened a vernacular school in the district”.⁵⁶⁰

Specific provisions were made in the Proclamation to give favourable treatment to the Buddhist Sangha and its allied institutions:

“The Governor, desirous of showing the adherence of Government to all its stipulations in favour of the Religion of

⁵⁵⁹ Proclamation of 21 November 1818, *Ceylon Government Gazette*, 28 November 1818, Paragraph 16, Colombo, S.L.N.A. Gazette Series.

⁵⁶⁰ K.M. De Silva, *A History of Sri Lanka*, 1999, p.252.

the people, exempts all lands which now are the Property of temples from all Taxation whatever”.⁵⁶¹

These provisions enabled D’Oyly, as British Resident, to be closely involved with Buddhist temples and monasteries. Lands belonging to the Buddhist temples and monasteries were exempt from tax. The service tenures due from persons who occupied these lands were also secured. These provisions safeguarded the wealth and assets of the Buddhist clergy. Close connections were maintained between the government and the Buddhist clergy by the provisions that the fees payable for appointments be abolished excepting those in temples situated in the villages, which were to be made by the Resident on the advice of the Temple Chiefs:

“The Governor abolishes all fees payable for Appointments either to the government or to any Chief excepting for Appointments in Temple Villages, which will be made by the Resident”.⁵⁶²

Invariably the Governor in keeping with ancient custom and traditions made the appointments of Temple Chiefs from the leading aristocratic families. These provisions gave D’Oyly and other British civil servants a close association with the Buddhist Clergy, their temples and monasteries, and their major ceremonies like the annual Kandy ‘Perahara’, which is yet the major religious ceremony in the country. D’Oyly made a close study of the ceremonies, customs and traditions of the Buddhists, which enabled him to control and supervise their activities – Referring to D’Oyly:

“In addition to his Diary, he has left an unfinished account of the Kandyan administrative system, which was printed in 1929. No student of Kandyan affairs can ignore the importance

⁵⁶¹ Proclamation of 21 November 1818, *Ceylon Government Gazette*, 28 November 1818, Paragraph 21, Colombo, S.L.N.A. Gazette Series.

⁵⁶² Proclamation of 21 November 1818, *Ceylon Government Gazette*, 28 November 1818, Paragraph 18, Colombo, S.L.N.A. Gazette Series.

of this work, since in many matters it remains the sole authority".⁵⁶³

By this process he was able to effectively infiltrate into the spiritual institutions of the Kandyan Sinhalese. For example, the Buddhist laws of spiritual succession were governed by the concept of pupillary succession or "sishya paramparawa".⁵⁶⁴ It was a complicated principle, and most of the land disputes and those relating to assets revolved around this.

By securing the land tenures and services due to the Buddhist clergy, an attempt was made by the British (on the advice of D'Oyly) to reinforce the ancient systems of land holding and the social fabric of caste. D'Oyly was a Resident, and his advice was taken in all major matters in relation to the Kandyan Kingdom. He was aware of the influence yielded by the Buddhist clergy, and this clause pertaining to land tenures and services was included as a step to placate the clergy. This was of advantage to the Buddhist clergy within the Kandyan provinces as they were drawn from the 'Siam Nikaya', whose priests had to be from the highest govigama caste.⁵⁶⁵ By providing the continuance of the ancient land tenures and the caste obligations, the privileged position of the Buddhist priests was continued. In a material sense, the Buddhist clergy's position was not disturbed. While the chiefs (who were disloyal) were punished, and in this process the powers yielded by all the chiefs were reduced, the Buddhist clergy were left free to themselves. This policy of subordinating the Kandyan Chiefs was another

⁵⁶³ Dewaraja, *The Kandyan Kingdom*, p.163.

⁵⁶⁴ A study of this system as it applies to the Asgiriya Buddhist Monastery has been done by H.D. Evers, published in the *American Anthropologist*, Vol.69, No.6, December 1967, pp.703-710.

⁵⁶⁵ A.C. Lawrie, *A Gazette of the Central Provinces of Ceylon*, 2 Volumes, Colombo, 1896-1898 - Refers to the monks who received the higher ordination, all from the higher govigama caste.

step taken by the British, and D'Oyly to get a firm grip over the administration of the country:

“The two fundamental issues of the administration of the Kandyan Provinces were: the position of the chiefs, and secondly the question of security. With the suppression of the rebellion of 1817-1818 the British were able to devise means of reducing the power and status of the Chiefs by requiring them to function completely subordinate to and under the direct supervision of British Officials”.⁵⁶⁶

The Ritualistic Kandyan Society: D'Oyly's Understanding of it and the Adoption of Appropriate Measures in Official Protocol

D'Oyly, with his knowledge and understanding of Kandyan Society, realised its ritualistic features. These features were common to the concepts of power and politics within a South Asian context, which arose over the years within the socio-political cultural context of the Indian subcontinent:

“According to Hinduism, the individual was born into a station in life in which he or she had to follow precise rules of conduct and deferences to superiors and avoidance of contamination by subordinates”.⁵⁶⁷

The British, mainly due to D'Oyly's advice as British Resident, made a conscious effort to tie the ritualistic state known and understood by the Kandyans, to the new British rulers. The average Kandyan peasant had a certain perception of power, and how it was to be exercised:

“The acts of his government was presumed to be guided by the institutions and customs of his Kingdom and Though the

⁵⁶⁶ De Silva, *A History of Sri Lanka*, p.261.

⁵⁶⁷ L. Pye, *Asian Power and Politics*, Harvard University Press, 1993, p.136.

King's power was "supreme and absolute", the aspect of monarchical government and administration was wide".⁵⁶⁸

This perception, common to all Indian and South Asian culture, was that power flowed from a divine source, which led to certain patterns of ritualistic behaviour and protocol:

"Points to the great respect by prostrations by the Chief Ministers to the Monarch. This respect points to the respect due to a divine being".⁵⁶⁹

It followed from the concept of kingship, and the right to rule, and govern. All the outward trappings of power, to give it a legitimacy that was readily recognised and respected, strengthened this. If legitimacy was not obtained, and visually recognised, it was difficult to rule and administer. The British Officials, especially the civil servants, had to consciously create this perception. As D'Oyly recognised, from the start of British rule, within the Kandyan Provinces, that policy and administration had to keep with ancient tradition and practice: of being protectors of religion respected and accepted by the majority of the people, having the right to govern with the divine approval of the gods. Hence, the need for the British Officers to lend their patronage to the major religious ceremonies within the Kandyan Provinces, such as the annual Kandy 'Perahara':

"He took part in all the religious ceremonies in Kandy, including the annual 'Perahara', where the sacred Buddhist relics were exhibited. This ceremony by tradition was conducted on the directions of the ruling monarch. D'Oyly as

⁵⁶⁸ J. D'Oyly, *A Sketch of the Constitution of the Kandyan Kingdom*, p.I - With reference to the Kandyan Constitution.

⁵⁶⁹ H. Boyd, *Miscellaneous Works including his Diary of the Embassy to the Kandyan Kingdom*, London, 1800.

Resident did the same action of conducting the 'Perahara': A Buddhist and Hindu festival".⁵⁷⁰

At the provincial and district levels the British civil servants had to follow the customs pertaining to the ceremonies followed by the earlier Adigars and Disavas. The British King had replaced the Kandyan King, and all the respect due to the former kings had to be shown to the British Governor in Ceylon, and the British Agents who represented the king and the governor. By this an appearance of continuity to government, (along with it the needed legitimacy), was given to the British administration. Apart from paying homage to the portrait of the British Monarch, kept in the Hall of Audience in Kandy, the senior British Officials were to be treated with the same respect and regard given to the premier Kandyan Chiefs, like the Adigars and Disavas, during the course of discharging their official duties:

"It is also in this respect directed, that on entering the Hall of Audience, every Person shall make Obeisance to the Portrait of His Majesty there suspended; and as well there is in any other Court of Justice to the presiding Authority. And it is further directed that when His Excellency the Governor as His Britannia Majesty's Representative travels, he shall be attended by all the Persons in Office belonging to each Province in a manner as they attended the former Kings of Kandy and that when any Members of His Majesty's Council, or the Commanding Officer of the Troops in the Kandyan Provinces travel into any Province on duty they be met and attended in such Province in the same manner as the Great Dessaves were and are attended in their Provinces, likewise the Resident Agents and Officers Commanding the Troops in each Province

⁵⁷⁰ *D'Oyly's Diary*, April 1818, pp.249-267 - A report filed later after the event in 1818.

are in their Provinces to be similarly attended and receive like Honours".⁵⁷¹

These provisions were laid down to reinforce the pattern of ritualistic behaviour that the Kandyan Sinhalese were used to, by custom and tradition. By this process, the acceptance of British rule was to be made easy and palatable to the population, in keeping with their cultural traditions.

While new changes were to come to the Kandyan people, especially with the opening of new roads and a communication system, the basic ritualistic aspect of the functioning of society remained. In the daily life of the people, especially in relation to all aspects of public administration, there appeared to be no radical change. The headmen system at the village and divisional levels continued as in the past. It was only at the top that the changes were made; with British civil servants like the Agents, who were in charge of the provinces and districts. To the ordinary people their dealings were with the headmen and Chief Headmen (the Rate Mahatmayas): with no visible changes. The ancient practices pertaining to local tradition and customs were maintained. A fair measure of continuing these traditions was due to the efforts and policies of D'Oyly, who strived to study local custom and tradition of the people, especially as regards administration and governance.⁵⁷²

The Judicial System and the Proclamation of November 1818

The provisions as regards the judicial system within the Kandyan Provinces, pertaining to the Civil and Criminal Courts, were contained in paragraphs 34 to 55 of the Proclamation:

“And in order that justice may be duly, promptly, and impartially administered throughout the Kandyan Provinces to

⁵⁷¹ Proclamation of 21 November 1818, *Ceylon Government Gazette*, 28 November 1818, Paragraph 12, Colombo, S.L.N.A. Gazette Series.

⁵⁷² R. Pieris, *Ceylon University Press*, Sinhalese Social Organization, 1956, p.266.

all classes, His Excellency the Governor is pleased to declare his pleasure to be touching the same and to delegate and assign the following Jurisdiction to Public Officers of Government for Hearing and Determining Cases wherein Kandyan are considered as Defendants either Civil or Criminal".⁵⁷³

In essence, this provided for the judicial functions to be solely exercised by the Kandyan Board, in Kandy, and by the British Agents (representing the Resident and the British government) in the Provinces and Districts within the Kandyan provinces. There were minor judicial powers given to the Kandyan chiefs; and the Agents closely supervised these. These provisions in the Proclamation enabled D'Oyly to spread his control, influence wider within the Kandyan provinces, and thereby assist the whole process of infiltration and a better knowledge of the local conditions. In essence both at the centre (in Kandy), and in the provinces and districts, the opportunity was given for a greater degree of control, and the consequent effect of consolidation of British administration. In this situation there was an urgent need for the local laws and customs to be properly codified, to enable the British civil servants (who were the judges) to adequately administer justice and decide issues brought before the Courts. At this period, the civil servants, including D'Oyly, functioned as judicial officers. A good administrator was also a good judge. D'Oyly therefore took great pains to get over this situation by aiding the administrative process, as stated by Dewaraja:

"Among the early British administrators whose writings have come down to us, pride of place must be given to John D'Oyly who, during his period of service in the Island, mastered the Sinhalese language and acquired a thorough knowledge of the

⁵⁷³ Proclamation of 21 November 1818, *Ceylon Government Gazette*, 28 November 1818, Paragraph 34, Colombo, S.L.N.A. Gazette Series.

details of the Kandyan administrative system, which had frequently baffled other foreigners".⁵⁷⁴

D'Oyly began this task of codifying the laws and customs of the Kandyan Sinhalese; in this he was following the policies and examples of the British Officials in India. Warren Hastings, the British Governor General, had already set the British policy of judicial administration, and D'Oyly followed these broad principles, as regards the Kandyan provinces:

"In all suits regarding inheritance, marriage, caste and religious usages or institutions, the laws of the Koran with respect to the Mohamedans and those of sastras with respect to Gentoos (Hindus) shall invariable be adhered to".⁵⁷⁵

Kandyan law was in many ways based on the ancient Indian (Hindu) traditions in its basic approach. Of the ancient Indian lawgivers Manu was the most important. In his Laws ('Neti Sastra') the basis of Indian society and law was laid down.⁵⁷⁶ These were general principles, and the law and customs evolved separately in the different regions within the Indian subcontinent. With the laws of Manu as a basic guide the regions followed and evolved their own local laws and customs. The broad corpus of law (which was codified by the British) forms the basis of what is called Hindu Law in India. Kandyan law followed the same pattern. Certain basic concepts like caste, and consequent spiritual beliefs like the law of 'Karma' and rebirth were accepted, and this was the basis on which the laws and customs were based. Another concept was that of 'Dandane' or punishment,

⁵⁷⁴ Dewaraja, *The Kandyan Kingdom*, p.17.

⁵⁷⁵ Governor General of India, W. Hastings, Section 27 of the Administration of Justice Regulations of 11 April 1780 (Calcutta Archives of the Indian Government).

⁵⁷⁶ The Institutes of Manu, translated by Sir W. Jones, London, 1794.

that had to be administered to enable the social order to be maintained, and to prevent a situation of chaos and lawlessness.⁵⁷⁷

When the British captured the last King of Kandy, he commented on the manner he administered the laws. He had been held up as a tyrant, but he defended his actions on the basis of following the traditional 'Brahma Sutras' like the Law of Manu:

"I governed my Kingdom according to the "Sastras" - Hindu or Brahaminical law books, of which the Institutes of Manu are said to have the highest reputation, Manu professes to have great confidence in the utility of punishments".⁵⁷⁸

It is appropriate to examine the broad divisions of the laws of Manu to understand the basis of the Kandyan Laws understood and codified by the British (under the initiative taken by D'Oyly, as Resident) within the Kandyan Provinces. Manu traces the origin of the institution of kinship, and goes on to specify the qualities that a King should possess. Caste was the basis of the organisation of society, and the whole system of governance.

⁵⁷⁷ The Institutes of Manu, translated by Sir W. Jones, London, 1794: Structure and Content: Chapter I - Deals with the Creation of the World; Chapter II to VI - Refers to the proper conduct of the higher castes, like the Brahamins (the Priests) and the Kshatriyas (the Warriors, from whom the Kings were chosen); Chapter VII - Deals specifically with the duties of a King; Chapter VIII - Deals with justice and punishments. Punishments were to be meted out in accordance with the caste status of a person; Chapters IX to X - Deals with customs and laws pertaining to inheritance, property, divorce and the lawful occupations in accordance with caste; Chapter XI - Refers to the penances that had to be done for misdeeds; and Chapter XII - Expounds the theories of Karma, rebirth and "moksha" or salvation.

⁵⁷⁸ H. Marshall, *Ceylon*, London, 1846, pp.127-128 - Refers to the conversation he had with the captured King of Ceylon, Sri Wickrama Rajasingha.

The social ethics within society flowed from the caste system, specifying the duties expected of each caste or group that constituted society.⁵⁷⁹

The Proclamation, by introducing the British civil servant judges into the Kandyan provinces, began the process of bringing in British laws. At first the Kandyan chiefs were appointed as ‘assessors’ to assist the British judges:

“In the Provinces, of the Agent of Government, and one or more Disaves of the Province and One or More Mohottales or Principal Korales so that there shall be at least two Kandyan Assessors”.⁵⁸⁰

This was like the appointment of ‘Pundits’ to Indian Courts, to assist the British judges on points of Hindu law and customs. Gradually these Kandyan chiefs as assessors were given up. The same process took place in India. The British law pertaining to criminal law, procedure and commercial contracts was introduced. Kandyan law was mainly used in the areas of personal laws, like that of inheritance and marriage. The presence of British judges in all the Courts of justice was the first positive step taken to change the whole judicial and legal system within the Kandyan provinces to a more British system: from court procedure to that of the deposition of evidence:

“In practice, however, Kandyan law became increasingly ‘mixed’ up with English jurisprudence and criminal law in particular, became rapidly obsolete”.⁵⁸¹

Subsequent writers on Kandyan Sinhalese law, like Lawrie, Lemesurier, Modder and Hailey, drew heavily from notes left by D’Oyly.⁵⁸² D’Oyly had

⁵⁷⁹ Laws of Manu, Chapter IX and X.

⁵⁸⁰ Proclamation of 21 November 1818, *Ceylon Government Gazette*, 28 November 1818, Paragraph 37, Colombo, S.L.N.A. Gazette Series.

⁵⁸¹ C.R. De Silva, *Ceylon Under British Occupation*, Colombo, 1995, Ph.D. Thesis – London University, 1931, pp.307-308.

as his objective to draw guide minutes on the local manners, customs and laws of the Kandyan Sinhalese inhabitants living in the different provinces and districts that constituted the Kandyan Kingdom. These had been preserved mainly by the way of oral traditions, land grants, given to temples and chieftains, boundary limits called 'Kadinampoth' and 'Lekam Mitti' which were maintained for purposes of obtaining services and goods (mainly paddy), from the peasants who held land. It was understood by D'Oyly that unless these local customs, laws and conventions were codified, they would be wrongly applied to cases and issues that would arise by the British civil servants who replaced the Kandyan chiefs in the governing process, hence the need for codification to aid as a guide. This task was one that was a big challenge, and once started by other British Officials carried out D'Oyly.⁵⁸³ These strived to cover all the varied provinces and districts, and related to all branches of the laws: property, inheritance, marriage, and to Buddhist ecclesiastical law that involved property and succession. By this D'Oyly set in motion a process of infiltrating and understanding most of the customs, laws and institutions of the Kandyan Sinhalese in all its working aspects. It was this knowledge and understanding that made British rule and administration acceptable and therefore palatable. This was the most positive steps towards maintaining power and authority. An understanding of the traditional concept of statecraft and public administration was the end result.

⁵⁸² Niti, *Nighanduva or Vocabulary of Law*; C.R. Lemesurier and T.B. Panabokke, 1994 (reprint), Colombo; and F.A. Hailey, *Treatise on the Laws and Customs of the Sinhalese*, Colombo, 1993 (reprint).

⁵⁸³ Sir A. Lawrie, (1896-1898), Government Printer, Colombo: *A Gazette of the Central Provinces of Ceylon*, 2 Volumes; and M.S.S. Lawrie, *Kandyan Law and History*, 5 Volumes, Commonwealth Relations Office Library, London (These papers found after Lawrie's death in 1914).

The Taxation on Paddy Lands: The System that Simplified Taxation and Strengthened the Administration

The lands held by the peasants were subject to a tax in kind (apart from the service due, called 'rajakaria', based on caste), which was mainly focused on lands under paddy cultivation. This importance of paddy lands flowed from the fact that rice was the staple diet of the Kandyan Sinhalese, and their agricultural customs:

“The Paddy Cultivation Cycle: In the pursuit of agriculture (called “govitan”), rational and empirical behaviour intermingled with cult and ritual. The husbandman (“goviya”) made use of instruments and techniques derived from accumulated knowledge and experience of his ancestors, but since the empirically observable connections of fact were always liable to interference by supernatural events, by drought, flood and pestilence the peasant who resorted to certain magical practices handed down to him from time immemorial”.⁵⁸⁴

As the cash nexus was only small in the operation of the whole economy the main source of revenue was through the tax in kind imposed on paddy lands. This was so from the time of the Kandyan Kings, who had their own royal stores to collect the paddy. The efficiency of the system, therefore, depended on the effective collection and storage of paddy as much on the effective utilization of water, based on irrigation:

“Since rice produced by the ‘wet’ method was the mainstay of a purely agrarian economy, irrigation was a matter of cardinal importance in the lives of the people”.⁵⁸⁵

⁵⁸⁴ Pieris, *Ceylon University Press*, Sinhalese Social Organization, p.78.

⁵⁸⁵ Pieris, *Ceylon University Press*, Sinhalese Social Organization, pp.40-41.

This fact was reiterated in the provisions of Paragraphs 18 and 33 of the Proclamation of November 1818. Under Paragraph 18 of the Proclamation the tax on paddy was fixed as one-tenth of the crop:

“The general assessment Tax on the entire Paddy Lands of the Kandyan Provinces is fixed at one-tenth of the Annual Produce, to be delivered by the Proprietor or Cultivator at such convenient Store House”.⁵⁸⁶

This was a fair tax, taking into consideration that the peasant had to maintain his family, and to have the needed reserves for an emergency to meet unexpected situations. Vagaries of weather, and the socio-political disturbances caused by wars and civil unrest, were the main reasons for unexpected contingencies. The paddy was stored in ‘atuvas’ or storage bins.

As the land tenures were complex, and tied to the service dues called ‘rajakaria’ or duties due, its administration was a challenge to the British:

“Rajakaria, which may be properly interpreted King’s Duty, implies either the Personal Service, or the Dues, in Money or kind, to which any Person or Land is liable”.⁵⁸⁷

It was in this milieu of service tenures (of lands held for the king, chiefs, and Buddhist temples), that public administration was difficult to administer with equity and justice:

“The personal services to which holders of land were liable was by far the most important aspect of ‘rajakaria’, for on this system of service tenures the machinery of state administration largely hinged”.⁵⁸⁸

⁵⁸⁶ Proclamation of 21 November 1818, *Ceylon Government Gazette*, 28 November 1818, Paragraph 18, Colombo, S.L.N.A. Gazette Series.

⁵⁸⁷ D’Oyly, *A Sketch of the Constitution of the Kandyan Kingdom*, p.45.

⁵⁸⁸ Pieris, *Ceylon University Press, Sinhalese Social Organization*, p.95.

A proper understanding of the local institutions, traditions and conventions had to be known. The challenge was met by D'Oyly by taking steps to build an efficient system of administration, based on an equitable system of tax and land system that was based on a good knowledge and understanding of the institutions, customs, laws and manners of the Kandyan Villagers.⁵⁸⁹

Accordingly, D'Oyly made every attempt to ensure that there was a good knowledge of the Kandyan system of village governance and its economy. It was closely allied to the whole process of the cultivation of paddy.⁵⁹⁰ Not only was it the backbone of the whole economy (at this point of time), it was the basis of the entire social system. The British Agents, who were the Chief Revenue Officers, were to study and understand the whole revenue and taxation system so as to improve the system of administration. A good knowledge of the total ecology of the Kandyan Sinhalese Villages was a prerequisite to understand and infiltrate into the inner workings of the basic unit of human settlement. This was the foundation of the real socio-economic life of the peasants. Tied with issues of land holdings and tenures, the real issues and conflicts brought before the law courts, sprang from this environment. Knowledge of the laws and customs governing them was an absolute necessity for proper administration and control. D'Oyly realised this and during his official time as Resident, began the process of studying these laws and customs, and encouraging other British civil servants, working within the Kandyan provinces, to do so. By this a corpus of laws, customs and a general sociology of the Kandyan Sinhalese was obtained:

⁵⁸⁹ D'Oyly, *A Sketch of the Constitution of the Kandyan Kingdom* - It was an unfinished document. Covered only One Province, the Four Korales, of the Kandyan Kingdom. He had contemplated to cover all the Provinces: to aid his successors in Office.

⁵⁹⁰ H. Wright, Agent at Sabaragamuva, Reports to John D'Oyly and the Kandyan Board - Matters pertaining to Revenue, Land Tenure and Administration within the Sabaragamuva Province (Ref: Reports of 4 September 1818 and 6 October 1818, A551, S.L.N.A. 21).

this was the basis of the knowledge needed by the British civil servants. The Diaries and Reports of the British Agents reflected this attempt to understand the whole socio-economic organisation and system of administration that was traditional and therefore easily understood by the peasants. The British use of the locals as the Chief Headmen and Village Headmen was a step in this direction.⁵⁹¹ From the point of view of the collection of revenue, especially in relation to the tax on paddy, the use of the local administrative systems came in useful to get an insight into all forms of administration and governance at the grass roots levels. D'Oyly's period as Resident was the real beginning of this whole process of understanding and codifying them where possible:

“The Kandyans have no written Laws, and no Record whatever of Judicial Proceedings was preserved in Civil or Criminal Cases”.⁵⁹²

By this whole process (intensely supervised by D'Oyly) the British were able to obtain a fair view of the whole of Kandyan Sinhalese society. Knowledge was obtained from information and observation, which had a great effect on the life of the people within the provinces. Each province and district was subject to a vigorous examination of all its available land as it was the mainspring of the taxation and revenue systems.⁵⁹³ The revenue systems and the enforcement of law and order were combined at all levels and

⁵⁹¹ At the Revenue Divisional Level the 'Ratemahataya; was in charge. Below him were the 'Korales' in charge of a group of villages, and at the lowest level of the village the 'Vidane' or 'Headmen'. These officers came daily in contact with the peasant, and had to speak to them in their language, and know their ancient customs and manners.

⁵⁹² D'Oyly, *A Sketch of the Constitution of the Kandyan Kingdom*, p.31 - D'Oyly's view was that there were no codified laws or procedures.

⁵⁹³ Sir A. Lawrie, *A Gazetteer of the Central Provinces of Ceylon*, 2 Volumes, Colombo, Government Printer, 1896 - In this is traced a history of most of the Provinces and Districts of the Kandyan Provinces.

actively supervised and directed at the apex by the British civil servants. This was what made the administration efficient as an instrument for a British infiltration and aided the public administration at all levels. This assisted the British in the gradual formation of a South Asian colonial state in Ceylon during the course of the nineteenth century.

**Diagram: The British Administrative Setup in the Kandyan Provinces
after the Rebellion of 1817**

Functioned from Kandy, the Capital City - most of them from the Ceylon Civil Service	<u>Resident and Commissioner (John D'Oyly)</u> <u>Board of Revenue and Commerce</u>
Combined Revenue, Policing and Judicial functions: drawn from the Ceylon Civil Service - all British	<u>Government Agents</u> At Provinces - Badulla, Ratnapura, Seven Korales, Kunnegalla <u>Assistant Government Agents</u> In Districts
Local native officers - most of the functions were concerned with revenue, and a few police functions. Offices held by local dignitaries - drawn mainly from the "Govigama" Caste	<u>"Rate Mahatayas"</u> In charge of a Revenue Division <u>"Korales"</u> In charge of a set of villages <u>"Vidanes"</u> Headmen in charge of Villages

Diagram: The Kandyan Sinhalese Village - The Basic Unit of Administration and Settlement that D'Oyly had to study

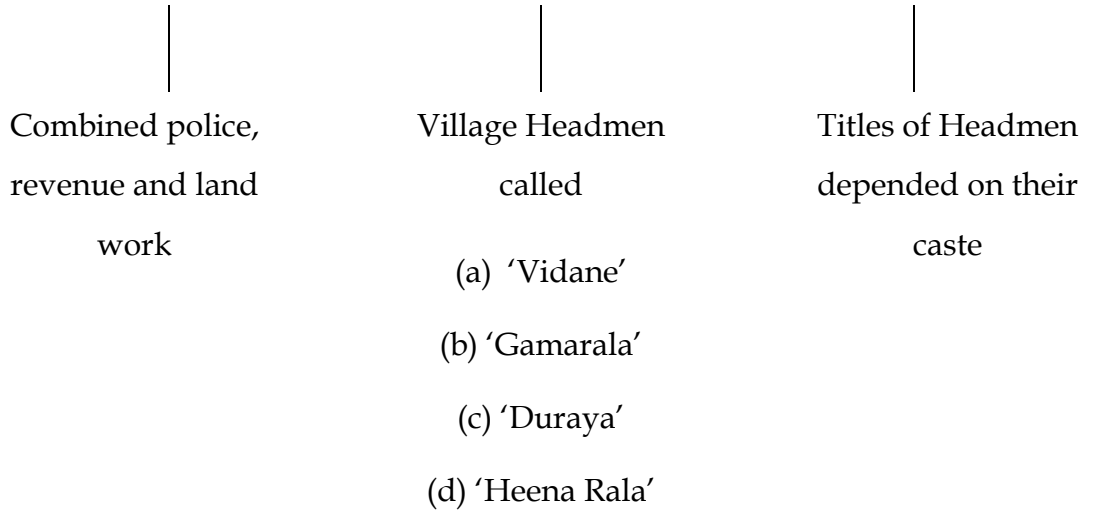
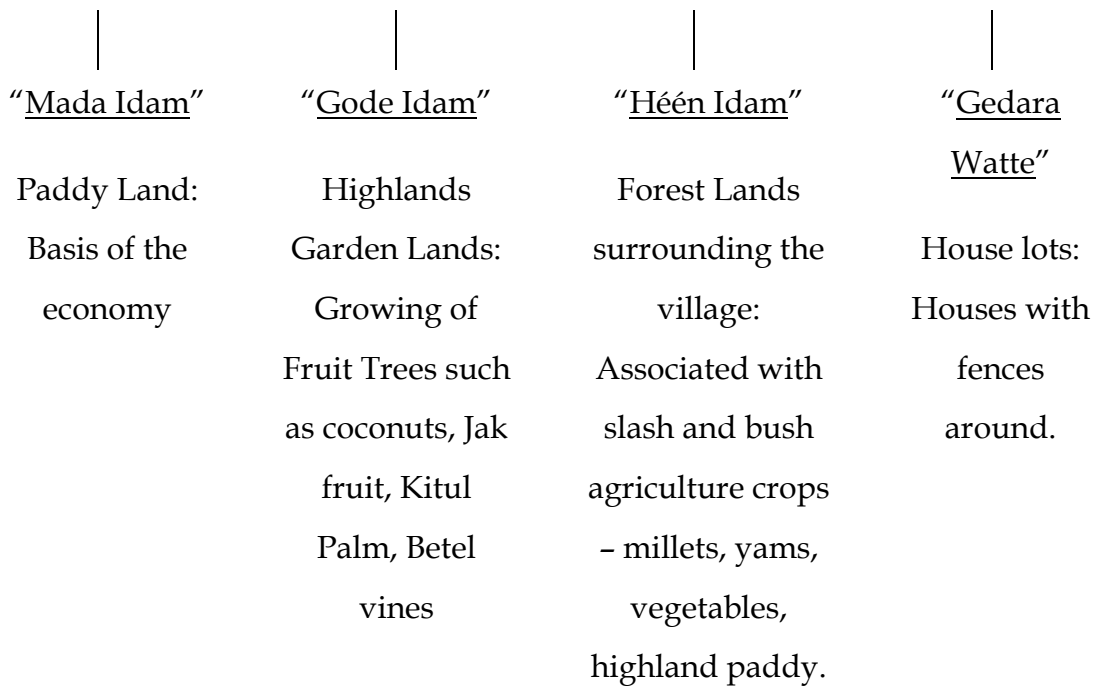
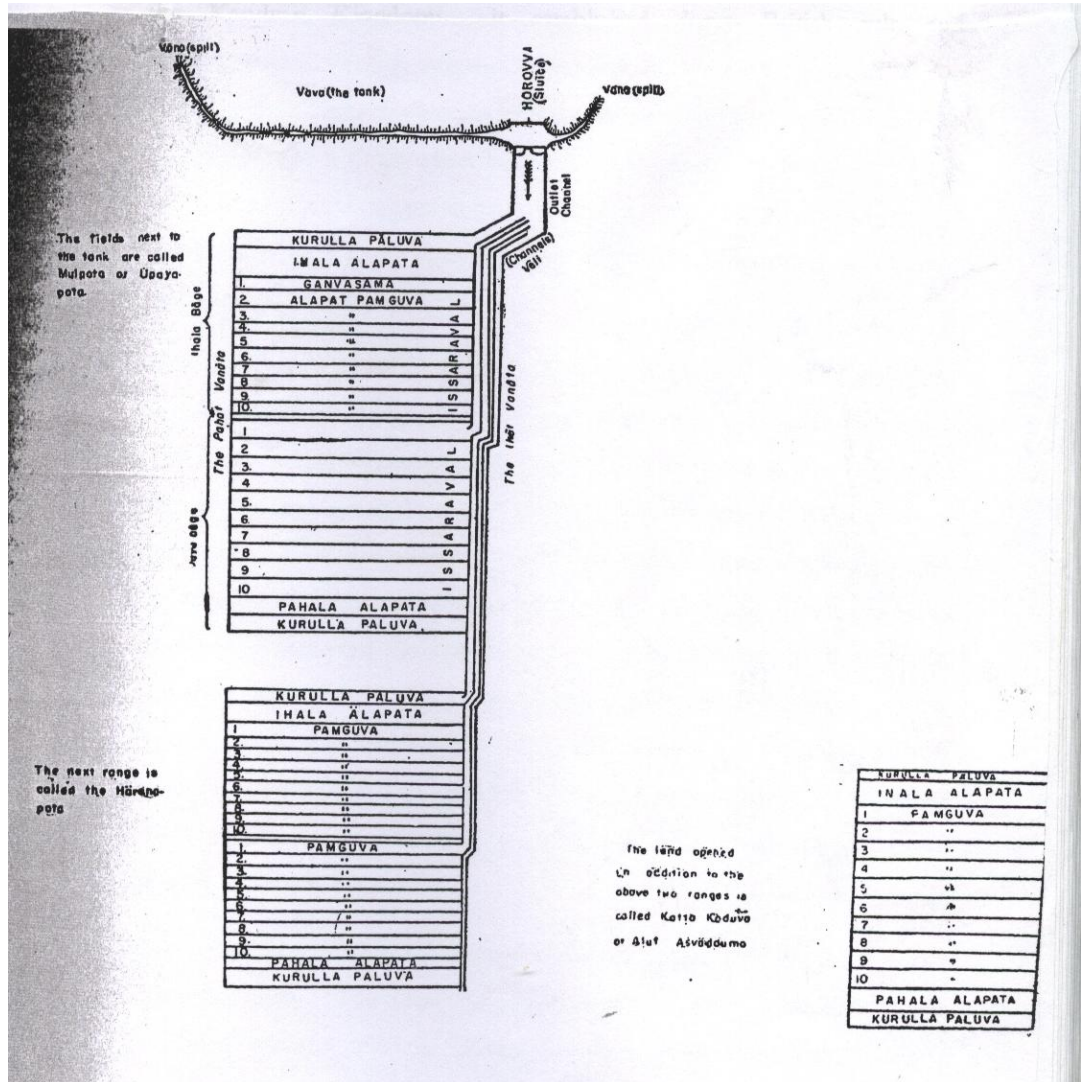


Diagram: Land Distribution - Basis of the Socio-Economic Structure



(Ref: J. D'Oyly, *A Sketch of the Constitution of the Kandyan Kingdom*)

Diagram: A Traditional Kandyan Sinhalese Village - Pattern of Land Use for Paddy/Rice Cultivation that D'Oyly had to Study



Ref: R. Pieris, Ceylon University Press, Sinhalese Social Organization, 1956.

Summary

The Proclamation of 21 November 1818 was a milestone in the history of the Kandyan Kingdom; it established direct British rule and administration. The Kandyan Convention of March 1815 deposed the then Kandyan King, but retained the traditional powers of the Kandyan Chiefs. It was a Convention between two parties, and while the chiefs accepted the British Monarch instead of their king, they were not prepared to surrender their rights to rule and administer the kingdom in accordance with their ancient laws and customs.⁵⁹⁴

After the Kandyan rebellion of 1817 led by a majority of the chiefs, the British took up the position that they were the real rulers on the basis that the chiefs had repudiated their solemn pledges by trying to re-establish the earlier Nayakkar dynasty, and get rid of the British by force.⁵⁹⁵ Therefore as the rebellion was crushed, they (the British) had the right of conquest over the Kandyan Kingdom. Taking this position the rights of the Kandyan Chiefs were removed. In their place the real rulers were the British civil servants, led by John D'Oyly at the centre (in Kandy) as Resident, and the Agents within the various provinces and districts. This established a system of direct British rule over the former Kandyan Kingdom. It was a sequel to the peaceful takeover in 1815, and now it was appropriate to expand and consolidate.⁵⁹⁶

This new phase of direct British administration was best seen in District Administration. The local Kandyan Sinhalese were employed at the divisional revenue level as 'Ratemahatas', as superior headmen called 'Korales' below them, and as headmen in charge of villages. All these officers were under the direct control of the British Agents, who combined

⁵⁹⁴ Kandyan Convention of March 1815, Paragraph 14, S.L.N.A. Gazette Series.

⁵⁹⁵ Proclamation of 21 November 1818, *Ceylon Government Gazette*, 28 November 1818, Paragraphs 3 and 4, Colombo, S.L.N.A. Gazette Series.

⁵⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

executive, judicial and revenue powers. The old offices like 'Adigars' and 'Disavas' were now only honorary courtesy titles.⁵⁹⁷

John D'Oyly, between 1817 and 1824 (when he died in service), administered the Kandyan Provinces on behalf of the British as Resident, with enhanced powers. The Kandyan Board and the Agents were the instruments of direct rule and governance. D'Oyly took up this challenge of direct rule, and did his best to consolidate British rule at all levels of administration. He continued to take all steps towards understanding the Kandyan laws and customs, and endeavoured to codify them. These appeared both complex and complicated, as the Kandyan Sinhalese had no written legal system. Hence, the urgent need for codifying the laws and preparing guidelines for the British civil servants. The passing of specific laws and regulations to form a body of substantial law followed these.

D'Oyly also made efforts to open up the Kandyan provinces by having a better system of roads. Isolation over the centuries had produced a landlocked feudal society, which was not prone to change. With roads and a better system of communications this isolation broke. D'Oyly was a pioneer in this process that led to a new society being developed within the province that contained the old Kandyan Kingdom.

⁵⁹⁷ Proclamation of 21 November 1818, *Ceylon Government Gazette*, 28 November 1818, Paragraphs 9 and 10, Colombo, S.L.N.A. Gazette Series.

Conclusions

A study of the D'Oyly papers will show that the British policy in Ceylon, from the beginning of the nineteenth century, was to stabilise their hold over the strategic harbour of Trincomalee, and to subordinate the Kandyan Kingdom, that was perceived to have diplomatic connections with the French. This was to be achieved either by imposing an unequal treaty, or by the actual process of conquest. At the beginning, it was proposed to support a candidate to the Kandyan Throne, who would abide by British instructions. It was an intervention on a succession issue in relation to the Kandyan Throne. This, in real terms would make the Kandyan Kingdom a protected state of the British. This failed under the policies pursued by the first British Governor, Lord North. North was following the same pattern of intervention in succession issues, like what happened in the south of India.

P.J. Marshall had referred to the method of infiltration by the British as the major reason for the success of their political expansion in India. The manner, the time and the mode of operation, depended on local circumstances. It also depended on the senior British Officers on the spot. In this sense, the political expansion was a process of an imperial impulse, which once begun was difficult to stop.

What was examined in this study was not only the process of the initial conquest, but the steps taken to follow it up. This refers to the aspect of consolidating the initial gains in Ceylon. The period of study of British Kandyan relations, between 1805 and 1815, constituted the initial phase. This now expanded to include what followed thereafter. It is based on the steps taken to consolidate the initial gains, on which the political gains were used, in a concrete manner. This aspect of settlement of the administration and land issues was vital in the establishment of British rule.

During this period of study there were three British governors: Maitland, Wilson and Brownrigg. However, D'Oyly was the main figure who worked

under them in pursuing British policy towards the Kandyan Kingdom. Governor Maitland was to preserve peace, after the disastrous first Kandyan War. Maitland strived to get the British prisoners of war held in Kandy to be released, and at the same time to get the Kandyan Court to enter into an unequal treaty with the British. Governor Wilson, who followed him, pursued the same policy. As this was the period of a global conflict between the French and the British, the policy was to closely watch political developments within the Kandyan Kingdom, to prevent any French alliance with the King of Kandy. With the arrival of Governor Brownrigg, the policy at the local level changed to that of a conquest of the kingdom, and the abolition of the ruling Naykkar dynasty. Local political circumstances aided the policy of infiltration, due to the clash between the King of Kandy and a section of his chiefs. The king's connections with the French were the strategic factors that worried the British, as revealed in D'Oyly's diary.

D'Oyly followed the policies laid down by the respective British Governors. His official diary reports, and those containing the state documents from this period, are important to understand British policy of infiltration. This, in essence, meant an effort at political expansion, consequent to the opportunities presented, and the challenges imposed.

The study points to the successful result of the policy of infiltration followed by the British (headed by John D'Oyly, a competent civil servant) in their relations with the Kandyan Kingdom between 1805 and 1818. It resulted in the easy conquest of the Kandyan Kingdom by the British in March 1815, with the Kandyan Convention, which was an Act of Settlement, by which the Kingdom became a ceded territory of the British Crown. It marked a milestone in the rise and development of British sovereignty in Ceylon, which continued as a British Crown Colony till 1948. During this period Ceylon was to develop as a typical British Colonial State in South Asia.

Infiltration, as a policy, arose in response to the challenge to a power (in this case, the British) becoming paramount, and filling a power vacuum, created

by the decline and disintegration of the powerful Moghul Empire in India. The Marathas, the French and the British strived to become paramount in India. In this struggle for power, position, and ultimate paramountcy, the British were successful. It was achieved by means of a policy of infiltration, backed by a strong locally raised army of 'sepoys', and the presence of a strong navy that guarded the coasts, and maintained the lines of communications with Europe.

Force was a last resort, and was a backup to a good strategy, and its consequent tactics, whereby there was an expansion of British power leading to the establishment of a Second Empire in South Asia. For strategy, tactics and formulation of appropriate policies it had to have a good civil service. This challenge was what led to the development of a strong civil service, which ultimately ruled on behalf of the British Crown and interests. The instruments of infiltration, as seen in the process of the rise and development of the British Empire in South Asia, were therefore a competent civil service, a strong and powerful British Indian Army, and an unchallenged navy that was supreme on the sea. All these three factors were shown in the British relations with the Kandyan Kingdom between 1805 and 1818.

With the arrival of Governor Brownrigg in Ceylon a new chapter opened in British relations with the Kandyan Kingdom. Brownrigg had been instructed to follow a peaceful policy towards the Kandyan Kingdom after the failure of the British expedition to takeover the Kingdom in 1803, when Lord North was the Governor. The British failure to subjugate the Kandyan Kingdom was similar in pattern to what had happened to other European powers, who occupied the Maritime Provinces of Ceylon in the past, such as the Portuguese and the Dutch. It appeared that a purely military takeover was not feasible. Even when the European armies were able to reach and capture the capital city of Kandy, they were not able to hold it for long. The king escaped into the remote areas of the kingdom, and was able to mount a

counter attack: aided by the topography as much as the wet weather which made communications difficult during the wet monsoon seasons. Brownrigg, being a professional soldier, was anxious to subjugate the Kandyan Kingdom, and under his instructions, D'Oyly did his best to infiltrate into the local politics, cause dissension and encourage revolt among the nobility, which would make it easier for a British takeover.

D'Oyly's official Diary, covering the years between 1810 and 1815, and the letters he exchanged with the leading Kandyan Chiefs reveal the policy of active infiltration. John D'Oyly was competent in the Sinhalese language, customs and manners. There was no need to rely on interpreters to communicate with the Kandyan Chiefs, and to obtain first hand knowledge of the events within the Kandyan Kingdom. Earlier the British had to rely on interpreters who were the leading low-country Sinhalese Chieftains living within the British held territories. D'Oyly, holding high office (as Collector of the Colombo District and Chief Translator), was able to get at the heart of the Kandyan Chieftains who mattered. The chiefs too were confident that they were in communication with a high British civil servant, who had immediate access to the British Governor in Ceylon. Therefore, the Kandyan Chiefs, holding the highest rank within the kingdom were more open and frank in their communications with D'Oyly. This accounts for their open conspiracy against their own King. Apart from winning their favour, D'Oyly also won their confidence. This was seen when Ehelapola Adigar wrote to D'Oyly, revealing his innermost thoughts, without any fear of betrayal.

D'Oyly's Diary also points to his clever use of spies working within the Kandyan Kingdom. They reported to him all relevant information: the presence of foreigners (indicating the fear of a French intervention), and the movements of the king and the principal chiefs, which would show any hostile military movement against the British held settlements in the coastal areas. Any signs of military mobilization, presence of foreigners,

procurement of weapons, and the king's instructions were duly reported to D'Oyly. They were all studied to understand what was really going on within the Kandyan Kingdom.

As shown in D'Oyly's Diary and letters the revolt of Ehelapola Adigar against his own monarch was a turning point. It can be seen that this was the direct result of D'Oyly's infiltration. Ehelapola was certain of British support and assistance. In case things turned out badly for him, he was sure that through D'Oyly he would seek and get political asylum within the British held territories. D'Oyly consciously did not want Ehelapola's revolt to succeed: it would have made him free and independent of British help and assistance. If this revolt was a success, the British position would therefore not change and the Kandyan Kingdom would yet be a free political entity. D'Oyly was shrewd in not giving Ehelapola the full complement of arms when he sought British assistance during his revolt. Once the king's forces quelled the revolt, Ehelapola, along with his principal supporters, had no alternative but to seek refuge and political asylum with the British. D'Oyly was able to stoke Ehelapola's ambition and get all his knowledge and assistance in planning the military campaign against the king. This was the first decisive step towards the successful subjugation of the Kandyan Kingdom.

For infiltration to be a success, a backup army was needed. A local army was raised, trained in European military methods, and officered by Europeans. The British Indian Army was Britain's strongest land force in South Asia. This was the way the British Army Corps were formed and utilised. The army and its units were utilised for internal security as much as to project power, and were effectively used for local wars to further British interest, and the expansion of the Empire. The army on the march to Kandy in January 1815 was one such example, with a large component of local, Indian, Malay and African troops. This army was used as an army of occupation within the Kandyan Kingdom, though there was no opposition

to it. Thereafter, it was utilised when rebellion broke out, suitably assisted by troops from India when required. The British Indian Army, along with the resources of the Indian sub-continent are what made the British a great land power, especially in Asia and in the Middle East.

Britain's naval supremacy was another factor that strengthened her military might and gave substance and effect to the policy of infiltration. It was a substantial factor in the foundation of Britain's second Empire in India and Asia. Hence, for infiltration to be a success, as a conscious diplomatic policy there had to be a competent civil service, strong army (recruited locally) and the supremacy of the British navy. These were the necessary ingredients for the projection of power and influence.

What gave the real substance to the policy of infiltration was a competent civil service. This was seen in the official career of John D'Oyly. This civil service was needed when Britain moved from being traders to rulers in India in the eighteenth century. A liberally educated class of scholarly administrators was needed. They were drawn from the ancient British Universities (Oxford or Cambridge), or specially trained in institutions such as Haileybury. The courses of study at Haileybury reflected this: the classical languages of the West (Latin and Greek), law, political economy, maths and sciences, and oriental languages. The oriental languages included the classical languages of Sanskrit, Persian and Arabic. John D'Oyly was a product of Cambridge University with a good competence in classical languages, especially in Latin, hence his ability to master the Sinhalese language and understand the culture, laws and manners of the local people. The civil service in India evolved into one of the most competent civil services in the world, and was called the 'steel frame' that held the British Indian Empire together. The Ceylon Civil Service was similar in nature, and function as the backbone of the British Administration.

This study of British relations with the Kandyan Kingdom between 1805 and 1818 reveals all these features – the results of a competent civil service (in

this instance the official work of John D'Oyly), a large and competent army, consisting of troops locally recruited, the Indian Army (of sepoys), backed up with a navy which was supreme on all the oceans of the world. One of the objectives of the policy of infiltration was to cause disturbances within local kingdoms, as a first step towards intervention. In this situation, infiltration was a success and was a consistent policy that made for the rise and consolidation of British power in South Asia.

The study gives an indication as to how the British were successful in their policy of political expansion in Asia. The British Second Empire in Asia was different to the First Empire established in North America, and subsequently in Australia and New Zealand. These were settler colonies, where the objective was to open land for European settlement, which resulted in the evolution of new European societies. In Asia the challenge was to rule and administer a large extent of land with a big population of persons with a different culture and civilisation, and, under these circumstances, not available for European settlement. It was therefore a rule of a minority over a majority. This called for new methods and skills. The British rule and administration had to be accepted, and not opposed by the majority of the inhabitants. Its merits were to be examined in the context of the historical period. It is in this milieu that the study of British relations with the Kandyan Kingdom gives certain definite clues as to the new methods adopted for political expansion, and domination. It was a challenge met with a very positive response.

In this process, persons like John D'Oyly played a decisive part, in formulation of policies as much as in carrying them out with success. D'Oyly belonged to a long list of able scholar civil servants who got a deep understanding of the country (that was a necessity for understanding and consolidating British rule), in all its aspects pertaining to its history, civilisation and culture. Into this category fall persons like Turnour (who translated the Mahavamsa), Bell and Hocart (who contributed to

archaeology), Codrington and Tennent (to history) and Rhys Davies to Pali and Buddhist studies.

Appendix I

A Brief Biography of John D'Oyly of the Ceylon Civil Service

- 1 Born 11 June 1774: second son of Archdeacon Mathias D'Oyly, rector of Buxted, County of Sussex, in England.
- 2 Educated at Westminster School, and at Benet College, Cambridge, where he took the degree of B.A., in 1796.
- 3 Arrived in Ceylon in September 1801 as a 'Writer' in the Ceylon Civil Service, during the Governorship of Lord North.
- 4 In 1802 appointed as Second Member of the Provincial Court of Colombo.
- 5 On 7 July 1803 given the office of President of the Principal Court of the Matara district, in the Southern Province of Ceylon; where he studied the Sinhalese language under a Buddhist priest, named Karatota Nayake Unanse.
- 6 February 22nd, 1804 appointed as Agent of Revenue and Commerce (a post later called Collector, and subsequently a Government Agent) of Matara. In the Sinhalese language this post was called that of a 'Disava', or local governor. On 2 May of the same year, the district of Galle was also added to the district of Matara, under the charge of D'Oyly.
- 7 On 10 July 1805 in recognition for his proficiency in the Sinhalese language, D'Oyly was appointed as Chief Translator to Government; a post he held till he resigned (from this post) on 12 June 1816.
- 8 On 12 February 1806 D'Oyly was appointed as Agent of Revenue and Commerce for the District of Colombo in addition to his post as Chief Government Translator. In this capacity he was addressed as the Disava of Colombo, as seen in the correspondence, and communications, with the Kandyan Chiefs.

- 9 On 12 August 1814 D'Oyly was appointed as Civil Auditor General and Chief Translator, and on the 3 November of the same year made Military Auditor General. As he (D'Oyly) held the combined posts he was addressed as the Auditor General, from December 1814.
- 10 In the Kandyan War of 1815 D'Oyly was attached to the invading British Army as Commissioner of His Excellency the Governor, and entrusted with the negotiations with the Kandyan chiefs.
- 11 On the 2 March 1815, after the capture of the King of Kandy, D'Oyly was appointed as Resident of the newly acquired Kandyan Provinces, and as Member of His Majesty's Council on Ceylon.
- 12 On the 11 September 1816 D'Oyly was gazetted as First Resident and First Commissioner of the Board formed to administer the ceded Kandyan Kingdom.
- 13 On 27 July 1821, D'Oyly was made a Baronet of the United Kingdom, in recognition of his services.
- 14 D'Oyly died on the 25 May 1824 in Kandy. His remains were buried in the Garrison Cemetery in Kandy, where an inscription to his memory exists.

Ref: A note on D'Oyly by H.W. Codrington of the Ceylon Civil Service, 1917, for the Ceylon Board of the Royal Asiatic Society

Appendix II

A Cross Section of Persons who were Informants and Acted as Spies for

John D'Oyly - 1810-1815 as revealed in his Diary

Minor Headmen and Common Persons:

Adrian Vidane
Wattala Appu
Nilhamy of Mitirigala
Poruwalage Tikiri Rala
Simitchy Appu
Paola Appu
Kiribathkumbara Punchirala
Arukgammana Vidan
Jayantuhany
Upasaka Korale of Atigala
Awusadhmy of Talawitiya
Godamunne Appu
Kaluwa Yakadava
Hewagan Korale Muhandiram
Kirchamy of Atupatdinya
Poruwalage Tikirirala
Sihna Mira Mohidun
Andries Vidan of Atlanagala
Ahemedlebbe Bawalabbe
A Hunna of Hunupitiya
Ja Mohanndivam, a Malay
Malay Mohendiram, Assan a Capten
Koraleze Don Johannes
Alawaturage Babu Appu, of Mitirigala

Buddhist Priests:

Godamunne Unanse
Pannala Unnanse
Koskandawela Unnanse
Wanduragala Unnanse
Marasena Unnanse
Hanguranketa Unnanse

Chiefs from the Kandyan Kingdom:

Adigar Molligoda
Adigar Ehelapola
Kapuwatte Dissawa
Pusswelle Disawa
Adigar Unambuwe
Adigar Pilataluva

Chiefs from the Low Country or Maritime Provinces that were under the British from 1796:

Solomon Dias Mudaliyar, of Gangaboda Pattu, Siyana Korale
Tamby Mudaliyar of the Guides
Chandros Mudaliyar, Negambo

The Kings of Kandy's Relations, opposed to him:

Sinna Samy Raja
Ayá Samy Raja

(Relations of Mutuswamy, who was proclaimed King of Kandy by the British forces in 1803: subsequently executed when the British Army in Kandy surrendered)

Appendix III

The Resources of the Kandyan Kingdom as revealed by Ehelapola to D'Oyly in Colombo after he sought Political Assylum

Questions put to Ehelapola by D'Oyly and his answers.

Q. - What is the number of the King's constant military force? Of what description of people does it consist? Who is their Chief? What pay do they receive? Besides this regular force, in time of War in what manner and from what parts are his additional military forces collected? What number is he capable of assembling from each country or Dissavany?

Ans. - The military force at this time constantly on foot near the Great Gate consists of about 300 Moormen and about 100 Sinhalese. In a time of War forces are assembled from the Five Countries of the Upper Country, strong stout young men, supernumeraries, but men are not pressed from the four Dissavanies. People may be collected from the Five Countries for soldiers as follows:

From Uda Palata	...	...	...	about 25 men
From Udu Nuvara	...	...	...	about 50 men
From Yati Nuvara	...	...	...	about 50 men
From Tunpane	...	...	...	about 70 men
From Harasiya Pattuva	...	...	...	about 300 men
From Dumbara	...	...	...	about 300 men
From Hevaheyta	...	...	...	about 80 men
From Walapana	...	...	...	about 40 men

Besides these the whole number of Malabar soldiers from the Dissavani of Uva, from the Dissavani of Sabaragamuva, from Kandy, is:

In Uva residing	...	...	...	32 Malabars
In Sabaragamuva	...	...	...	14 Malabars
In Kandy	...	...	...	36 Malabars

These Malabar soldiers receive no pay. Lands are delivered to them. The Sinhalese and Moormen abovementioned receive pay. The person who is Muhandiram of soldiers according to Sinhalese account: 15 ridi

The Aratchy	...	...	...	...	...	10 ridi
The Kankanama	...	...	...	...	...	7 ridi
The soldier	...	...	...	...	...	5 ridi

These Malabars and Moormen are under charge of the Nayakkara, the King's Malabar relations. The Sinhalese are under charge of the Sinhalese Chiefs. There is no single great Chief to the soldiers. Besides all persons who have villages and lands in the Upper Country and the Low Country when they come having provided with guns for the service of these lands, lead and gunpowder are given from the Great Gate. The Chiefs who have obtained the several Countries and Dissavanes make War, but there is no other method.

Q. - What quantity of arms and ammunition, cannon, matchlocks, musquets, lead, gunpowder, saltpetre, sulphur? What quantity foreign and what Sinhalese? In what places are they deposited?

Ans. - There is altogether no manufacture of cannon in our country. The cannon, which are now in Kandy, are of the guns, which were carried to Kandy at the time when the Fort of Gurubeybele was destroyed. There are:

2 cannon at the Kadawate of Nalanda in Matale.

2 cannon at Balani Kadawata in Yati Nuvara.

There is 1 gun in a mud hole in the village Diwela in the Four Korales.

2 guns are buried in the village Hatoluwa in the same Dissavani.

There are 2 guns at Girihagame Kadawata in Harasiya Pattu.

There are 9 guns in Kandy.

There is a small gun at Batugedera.

There are 22 matchlocks or Ginjaals (Kodituwakku) belonging to Kodituwakku Lekam.

18 in the Dissavani of the Four Korales.

16 in the Dissavani of the Seven Korales.

9 in the Dissavani of Uva.

8 in the Dissavani of Matale.

13 in the Dissavani of Saparagomu.

Of these 8 guns will have been delivered at Hitawaka; whether the other five are in the middle of the country or in charge of what persons I do not know.

There are:

7 Kodituwakku in the Three Korales.

5 Kodituwakku in Uda Palata.

6 Kodituwakku in Walapana.

5 Kodituwakku in Nuvara Kalaweya.

5 Kodituwakku in Taman kada.

5 Kodituwakku in Wellasse.

Besides those there are no others.

The hand guns (musquets) belonging to the Great Gate will be the Dutch, French, English and Sinhalese guns, about 2,000 or 3,000, not more. Lead and gun-powder are distributed to all the people of the provinces, but gun-powder is deficient to make war many months. There will be some sulphur; the sulphur is in Bintenne. There will also be some saltpetre in Kandy, it is in the village called Hairuvelli.

Q. - From what several sources do the King's Revenues arise? What amount is collected annually from each source?

Ans. - The revenues received by the Great Gate: of the things produced in the Dissavanies, the Countries, the Lekam, Badu, Widhana, Gabada Villages - of the things produced in all these places there is nothing which is not received into the Great Gabadawa. Those I have not written separately because the things which are profitable to men are numerous, but not intending (or entertaining) any disingenuity. Of the things accruing to the

Great Gate at the lowest even plantain leaves are fixed to be given. For whatsoever thing is produced there is no expenditure.

Q. - Where are the King's Treasures deposited?

Ans. - The King's Treasures are concealed at Uduwela, Sanguranketa, Manakola, Walapane, Meyde Maha Nuvara, Teldeniya, Hairuvelli (Hiruwala) Kosgama, Arattana, Mawela, Kotmale, Gabbela, Pupureyssa, Ramukeneylli.

Q. - In what Chiefs does the King at present place most confidence? What Chiefs are most attached to him? What Chiefs are of greatest ability for Counsel or for War?

Ans. - Of all the Sinhalese people great and small I do not believe that even a single person is friendly to the Great Gate at this time. He who both lived most friendly and was received into his confidence was Puswelle Dissave and there is intelligence that that person has been put to death. The persons now living perform the things, which they are told because of their inability to satisfy but it is not that they are friendly. Besides either for Warfare or for Counsel in all affairs and matters except the few Chiefs now living there is no other person. Besides since the King is little pleased with such persons of understanding it does not appear to me to state that such a person is a favourite, a man of Counsel.

Q. - In case of attack from hence to what places would the King retire from Kandy? What are the means of obtaining possession of his person? If War were undertaken, what plan of operations would he recommend? By what roads should detachments march and what numbers by each? What are the means of subsisting them?

Ans. - If you should proceed from here to war the King leaving Kandy will not go to a new foreign country. The English Government surrounds our country. Because he is living as fish encompassed by a net, in a time of War

he will retire to a village or the jungle but there is not a place, which does not appear to men. If in the same manner as you made War the former expedition, although you go again two or three times, you will fail. If you should proceed from hence to War, a military force of about 500 men, going across Madakalapuwa to Bintenna Nuvara should stop there. About 500 men proceeding from Katuwana going by the road of Idalpitiye to Badulla should stop there. If a small number should go by Hitawaka to Sabaragamuva and Korle Tune, and by the road of Tiru Kuna Male to Matale and to the Seven Korales, without allowing much trouble to take place, your intention may speedily be accomplished.

If arrangements be made for about 200 of the force which went to Bintenne to come to Meda Maha Nuvara, and for a few of the force at Badulla to come to Mulnuvara in Walapane, and for a force to be stationed at Hanguranketa Nuvara and Maha Nuwara (Kandy) and for a few of the force which went to Matale to stop at the places Kosgama, Naranpanawa, even the places in which the property is are in these places which have been mentioned. Still there are remaining about 2 villages called Nillamba, Kotmale on the side of Kandy on which is Samantakuta. There is no other quarter to go to. If he should go to Nillamba it will be near to the people stationed at Hanguranketa. If he should go to Kotmale there are roads to go thither either from Korle Tune or from Sabaragamuva. If it should be arranged in that manner, there is no other place to go to. If it be done in this manner it may be in a much better method than going by one road only. I can assemble and furnish forces so that there shall not be any failure of all the people dwelling in the Countries or the Dissavanes and in Kandy.

With respect to the circumstance stated, in what manner can the force which goes to War obtain provisions, it cannot be obtained by trade as in this Country. They may be supplied from the paddy and rice which is in the Gabada Villages. There is altogether no occasion to doubt that the Warfare will fail as the last time. It failed the last time both because the manner of

Warfare was not good, and because the principal Chiefs living at that period were adverse but it was not that he escaped by entering a secret place, which does not appear to men. Hereafter also if there is an intention of making War, if you inquire at that time the manner of going and coming, and the methods necessary to be adopted, I can inform.

Source: C.O. 54/52, Sri Lanka Archives (undated)

Appendix IV

Proclamation by General Brownrigg before the Invasion of the Kandyan Kingdom in January 1815

Proclamation by His Excellency Lieutenant-General ROBERT BROWNRIGG, Governor and Commander-in Chief in and over the British Settlements and Territories in the Island of Ceylon, with the Dependencies thereof.

In Council

His Excellency the Governor and Commander-in-Chief of the British Settlements in the Island of Ceylon could not hear with indifference the prayers of the inhabitants of five extensive provinces, constituting more than one-half of the Kandyan Kingdom, who, with one unanimous voice raised against the tyranny and oppression of their ruler, taking up arms in defence of their lives, or flying from his power, implored the protection of the British government, while the most convincing circumstances indicated corresponding sentiments, from the same causes, in other provinces less within the reach of direct communication. Neither could his Excellency contemplate, without the liveliest emotions of indignation and resentment, the atrocious barbarity recently perpetrated in Kandy upon ten innocent subjects of the British government – seven of whom instantly died of their sufferings, and three miserable victims were sent, in defiance, with their mutilated limbs, across the limits, to relate the distressing tale, and exhibit the horrid spectacle to the eyes of an insulted government, and an indignant people in the capital of the British settlements.

In the perpetrator of these acts, His Excellency convincingly recognizes the true author of that implacable animosity which has constantly been opposed to every approach of friendly intercourse, so often attempted on the part of His Majesty's government.

No shadow of doubt now remains that the rejection of all relations of amity originated and continues with the king alone, and that the people are not otherwise parties to such a policy, than as they are compelled to become so by a coercion alike hostile to the British interests, and intolerable to themselves.

To him and his advisers is imputable the impossibility, proved by repeated trials, of terminating, by any just or defined conditions, a state of relations unsettled and precarious beyond all precedent – which bears no essential character of a peace, nor has any title to that appellation – which yields no solid tranquillity or safe intercourse, but perpetuates the alarms of war without its remedies – and which, to continue any longer, after a public unequivocal act of hostility, would be to sanction injury and encourage insult.

By the irresistible influence of these feelings and considerations, His Excellency had become convinced of the unavoidable necessity of resolving to carry His Majesty's arms into the Kandyan country. In this, however, he has been anticipated by the irruption of an armed Kandyan force into the British territory; who, having pursued the fugitive inhabitants across the boundary river of Sitawaka, fired upon them from the opposite bank, and finally, crossing that river in arms into the Hewagam Korle, proceeded to commit depredations on His Majesty's subjects.

This measure, therefore, supersedes every deliberative consideration, and leaves no choice but that of repelling the hostile forces from the British frontier.

But it is not against the Kandyan nation that the arms of His Majesty are directed; His Excellency proclaims hostility against that tyrannical power alone, which has provoked, by aggravated outrages and indignities, the just resentment of the British nation, which has cut off the most ancient and noble families in his kingdom, deluged the land with the blood of subjects,

and by the violation of every religious and moral law, become an object of abhorrence to mankind.

For securing the permanent tranquillity of these settlements, and in vindication of the honour of the British name; for the deliverance of the Kandyan people from their oppressions; in fine, for the subversion of that Malabar dominion, which, during three generations, has tyrannized over the country, His Excellency has resolved to employ the powerful resources placed at his disposal.

His Excellency hereby proffers to every individual of the Kandyan nation the benign protection of the British government; exhorts them to remain without fear in their dwellings, to regard the armed forces who pass through their villages as protectors and friends, and to co-operate with them for the accomplishment of these beneficial objects.

In their march through the country, the most rigorous discipline will be observed by the British troops; the peaceable inhabitants will be protected from all injury in their person and property, and payment will scrupulously be made for every article of provisions which they furnish. Their religion shall be sacred, and their temples respected. The power of His Majesty's arms will be exerted only against those who, deserting the cause of their country, oppose the progress of His Majesty's troops, and of their own countryman united in arms - for their deliverance.

Source: Sri Lanka Archives

Appendix V

The March 1815 Kandyan Convention (Authored by John D'Oyly)

At a Convention, held on 2nd day of March, in the year of Christ 1815, and the Sinhalese year 1736, at the Palace in the City of Kandy, between His Excellency Lieutenant-General Robert Brownrigg, Governor and Commander-in-Chief in and over the British Settlements and Territories in the Island of Ceylon, acting in the name and on behalf of His Majesty George the Third, King, and His Royal Highness George Prince of Wales, Regent of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, on the one part, and the Adikars, Dissaves, and other principal chiefs of the Kandyan provinces, on behalf of the inhabitants, and in presence of the Mohottales, Coraals, Vidaans, and other subordinate head men from the several provinces, and of the people then there assembled, on the other part, it is agreed and established as follows:

1st. That the cruelties and oppressions of the Malabar ruler, in the arbitrary and unjust infliction of bodily tortures, and the pains of death, without trial and sometimes without an accusation or the possibility of a crime, and in the general contempt and contravention of all civil rights, have become flagrant, enormous, and intolerable; the acts and maxims of His Government being equally and entirely devoid of that justice which should secure the safety of his subjects, and of that good faith which might obtain a beneficial intercourse with the neighbouring settlements.

2nd. That the Rajah Sri Wickreme Rajah Sinha, by the habitual violation of the chief and most sacred duties of a sovereign, has forfeited all claims to the title, or the powers annexed to the same, and is declared fallen and deposed from the office of king; his family and relatives, whether in the ascending, descending, or collateral line, and whether by affinity or blood, are also for ever excluded from the throne; and all claim and title of the

Malabar race to the dominion of the Kandyan provinces is abolished and extinguished.

3rd. That all male persons being, or pretending to be, relations of the late Rajah Sri Wickreme Rajah Sinha, either by affinity or blood, and whether in the ascending, descending or collateral line, are hereby declared enemies to the government of the Kandyan provinces, and excluded and prohibited from entering those provinces, on any pretence whatever, without a written permission for the purpose, by the authority of the British government, under the pains and penalties of martial law, which is hereby declared to be in force for that purpose; and all male persons of the Malabar caste, now expelled from the said provinces, are, under the same penalties, prohibited from returning, except with the permission before mentioned.

4th. The dominion of the Kandyan provinces is vested in the sovereign of the British empire, and to be exercised through the Governors or Lieutenant-Governors of Ceylon for the time being, and their accredited agents, saving to the Adikars, Dissaves, Mohottales, Coralls, Vidaans, and all other chief and subordinate native head men, lawfully appointed by authority of the British government; the rights, privileges, and powers of their respective offices, and to all classes of the people the safety of their persons and property, with their civil rights and immunities, according to the laws, institutions, and customs established and in force amongst them.

5th. The religion of Boodhoo, professed by the chiefs and inhabitants of these provinces, is declared inviolable; and its rights, ministers, and places of worship, are to be maintained and protected.

6th. Every species of bodily torture, and all mutilation of limb, member, or organ, are prohibited and abolished.

7th. No sentence of death can be carried into execution against any inhabitant, except by the written warrant of the British Governor or Lieutenant-Governor for the time being, founded on a report of the case

made to him through the accredited agent or agents of the government resident in the interior, in whose presence all trials for capital offences are to take place.

8th. Subject to these conditions, the administration of civil and criminal justice and police, over the Kandyan inhabitants of the said provinces, is to be exercised according to established forms, and by the ordinary authorities, saving always the inherent right of government to redress grievances and reform abuses, in all instances whatever, particular or general, where such interposition shall become necessary.

9th. Over all other persons, civil or military, residing in or resorting to these provinces, not being Kandyans, civil and criminal justice, together with police, shall, until the pleasure or His Majesty's government in England may be otherwise declared, be administered in the manner following:

First, All persons, not being commissioned or non-commissioned military officers, soldiers, or followers of the army, usually held liable to military discipline, shall be subject to the magistracy of the accredited agent or the agents of the British government, in all cases except of murder, which shall be tried by special commissions, to be issued from time to time by the governor for that purpose. Provided always, as to such charge of murder wherein any British subject may be defendant, who might be tried for the same by the laws of United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in force for the trial of offences committed by British subjects in foreign parts no such British subject shall be tried on any charge of murder, alleged to have been perpetrated in the Kandyan provinces, otherwise than by virtue of such laws of the United Kingdom.

Second, Commissioned or non-commissioned military officers, soldiers, or followers of the army, usually held amenable to military discipline, shall, in all civil and criminal cases, wherein they may be defendants, be liable to the laws, regulations, and customs of war, reserving to the governor and

commander-in-chief, in all cases falling under this ninth article, and unlimited right of review over every proceeding, civil or military, had by virtue thereof, and reserving also full power to make such particular provisions, conformable to the general spirit of the said article, as may be found necessary to carry its principle into full effects.

10th. Provided always, that the operation of the several preceding clauses shall not be contravened by the provisions of temporary or partial proclamation published during the advance of the army; which provision, in so far as incompatible with the said preceding articles, are hereby repealed.

11th. The royal dues and revenues of the Kandyan provinces are to be managed and collected for His Majesty's use, and the support of the provincial establishment, according to lawful custom, and under the direction and superintendence of the accredited agent or agents of the British government.

12th. His Excellency the Governor will adopt provisionally and recommend to the confirmation of his Royal Highness the Prince Regent, in the name and on behalf of His Majesty, such dispositions in favour of the trade of these provinces, and may facilitate the export of their products, and improve the returns, whether in money, or in salt, cloths, or other commodities, useful and desirable to the inhabitants of the Kandyan country.

God save the King!

By His Excellency's command,

JAMES SUTHERLAND,

Dep. Secretary.

Source: Sri Lanka Archives

Appendix VI

D'Oyly's Letter of Appointment as Resident

British Head Quarters

Kandy 2nd March 1815

Sir,

The Convention held this Day having placed the Kandyan Provinces under His Majesty's Dominion it remains to select a proper person to be the Representative of the British Government in the newly acquired Territory.

In this choice however important I can have no difficulty. Your general attainments and those in particular of which you have possessed yourself in the Cingalese Language your extensive Knowledge thro' that medium of the Kandyan people & their customs and manners and the whole economy of their Civil Institutions eminently qualify you for the exercise of public Functions amongst them - while the zeal and judgment with which you have for some time back applied your Talents in the furtherance of those measures which have so happily terminated in the extension and consolidation of His Majesty's Ceylonese possessions by the accession of the Interior Country give me the most perfect confidence in committing this great charge into your Hands.

I further think it due to you not only with a view to the support of your consequence and authority with the Chiefs and people of these Provinces, but as a mark of approbation for the merit and importance of your Services to nominate you until the pleasure of His Royal Highness the Prince Regent is declared a Member of His Majesty's Council in the Island.

Herewith you will receive a Warrant or Commission of appointment constituting you Accredited Agent of the British Government in the Kandyan Provinces under the Proclamation of this date and with the more summary and convenient appellation of Resident. Instructions for your

guidance will be immediately prepared; and I shall on my return to Colombo issue in Council an authority for your being sworn a Member of that Board. In the meantime you will consider yourself as fully nominated to the situation.

The Honble.

I have etc.

..... D'Oyly Esq.

Robert Brownrigg.

etc. etc. etc.

Source: Sri Lanka Archives

Appendix VII

Memorandum of the King's Jewels and Ornaments

British Headquarters,
Kandy, 13th March 1815.

On Monday the 13th March the Adikar Ehelapola sent to request an audience of H.E. the Governor, which being agreed to he arrived at the Palace about half past five in the afternoon and was received by Mr. D'Oyly in the Great Hall where the Governor soon after joined him.

He requested the screen of the doors might be let down that the conference might be entirely private. This being done he made a signal for some of his people, and three bundles were brought in and laid on the table, which he proceeded to open himself.

One proved to contain a complete suit of Gold Armour, with the exception of the shoes which were afterwards explained to have been forgot at his house, and of the head pieces which probably consisted of the Crown and Cap about to be mentioned.

Pieces:

- 1 for the back.
- 1 for the front.
- 1 tippet for the neck and shoulders.
- 1 each hand.
- 1 each leg.
- 1 each ankle.

The second bundle contained a Gold Crown and a Cap of the Cingalese form, the upright part of which was a band or circlet of gold and the top plaited linen according to the custom of the country. Some ornaments, appendages of the Crown, either unscrewed or broken, were separate. One was in the form of a Plume resembling in some degree the feathers of the

Prince of Wales' arms except that the number of divisions was five instead of three and were said to be Snakes' heads of the species called Cobre Capelle. This jewel was of gold set with stones. The remaining appendages consisted of several changes of tufts for the top of the Crown and one or two ornamental pieces of gold set with stones.

The third bundle when unfolded proved to contain a silver box of globular form and considerable size, which being opened a variety of rich ornaments were produced of gold and precious stones. There being no opportunity to take a particular Inventory of them at the time and as the whole of the articles were immediately sealed up in a trunk, the following particulars are put down from memory and must be considered to be very incomplete as well as deficient in point of accuracy.

- 1 Breast ornament attached to a gold chain, very large, of massy gold set with rubies, the centre stone of a great size.
- 1 Breast ornament, smaller, also with a gold chain, having a very broad square emerald in the middle, also set with rubies.
- 1 Breast ornament, small, with a chain, having a smaller emerald in the centre, set with rubies, very bright.
- 1 Breast ornament, the centre comprised of rows of table diamonds forming a square, the rest rubies.
- 1 very long and heavy chain of fine workmanship,
- 1 Catseye of extraordinary size richly set in gold and with a massy gold chain. The form of the stone a little oblong but the uppersurface a fine uniform convex and of considerable height. The long diameter about 1½ inches, the short one about 1¼. The ray double and very fine dividing the length exactly. The ground sea-green.
- 13 Medallions in the form of stars, gold set with rubies.
- 3 pairs massy gold bracelets set with stones.
- 1 pair smaller in the calibre but deeper in the band.

- 1 Necklace of massy gold Bezils closely pointed, set with diamonds, the front part made to fall on the breast and much enlarged.
- 1 piece of an ornament unknown, of the same construction.
- 1 gold necklace set with blue stones.
- 1 tuft of white and green fibres.
- 1 right hand Chank mounted with gold.
- 1 gold box containing an Ear of Paddy with a small pearl attaching to one of the grains and said to have grown upon it.
- 1 Dagger carried in the hand, gold set with stones. The sheath of the Blade Velvet.

There were several other articles which cannot be remembered. It was stated that the most valuable and curious had belonged to Rajah Singa, and the Catseye, the Chank and the miraculous Ear of Paddy were mentioned as instances.

When the Adikar had exhibited the contents of the bundles, he stated that they were the King's jewels and ornaments (the Regalia) which had been deposited at Dombera and that he having heard there was a design on the part of some of the natives to plunder the deposit had sent confidential persons to bring the things away.

Present: His Excellency the Governor,
The Hon'ble John D'Oyly, Esqr.,
Mr Sutherland.

Source: Sri Lanka Archives

Additional Memorandum

Kandy, 15th March 1815.

This forenoon some of Ehelapola's people came with the King's Palanquin (details of the pieces follow). C.O. 54/55.

The *Ceylon Gazette* of 5th April, 1815 stated that Major Brownrigg who was sailing in H.M. Frigate *Africaine* "takes with him the Royal Kandyan Standard and two other flags also the Throne and Sword of State of the Kings of Kandy".

(*N.B.* - The reference to the Sword seems to be an error. Lieutenant Blakeney, who was on Board, states in his 'Oriental Journal' that what was received on board were "the throne and sceptre of the captive King". Blakeney's dates are all incorrect, as he places the ship off Ascension on 10th October and at Spithead on 2nd December. The package was delivered at Woolwich about the 10th or 11th October).

Despatch 105 of 21st July, 1815 (C.O. 54/55) deals largely with captured property and states that "The Throne and Footstool of the King Rajah Singa (since sent of England) the Seal of State and the Royal Banner were also mentioned as being amongst the valuables taken".

Source: Sri Lanka Archives

Instructions for the Prize Committee, 22nd June, 1815

"The King's jewels delivered to H.E. the Governor by Ehelapola Adikar and certain other articles of which a list will be furnished, being Regalia or Appendages or State, are excepted from the Prize Fund now to be divided by the Governor's authority and reserved for the disposal of H.R.H. the Prince Regent". C.O. 54/56.

Source: Sri Lanka Archives

Some Treasures of the King

“Amongst other articles we are in possession of a rich and curious piece of ancient workmanship and State, in the Throne and Footstool of Rajah Singa, and ancient Malabar King of this country, whose remarkable reign is treated of in the works of Baldius and Vallentine. The King’s Seal has also been brought to me and the Royal Banner”.

Major Brownrigg is taking this Despatch to England. “He will be charged with the Banner or Standard of Kandy to be laid at the feet of His Royal Highness the Prince Regent. The Throne already mentioned and all other Insignia of Royalty that can be recovered will be forwarded for the gracious acceptance of His Royal Highness”.

Despatch 95 of 25th Feb., 1815, C.O. 54/55.

Source: Sri Lanka Archives

Appendix VIII

Deposition of the Former King's Servant in Regard to the King's Tresures

Kandy, 4th February 1829

Resumed from 31st ultimo.

Welleygedera Spoohamy Sattambo examined.

I had been from my childhood about the palace and was already a household Servant at the time the deposed King came to the Throne. I was appointed Kankanema of Ulpengawa Aramodelle about three years before the deposition; at the same time Tallagoone Wanekoo Neleme was appointed Lekam. About a year prior to the accession the Hettepenagawa Aramodelle was also placed under Tallagoone Wanekoo Neleme. As his Assistant I had in fact the management of the department. A relation of the King Aiyaloo Nayeka Unanse was always present at the opening and closing of these Treasuries. As soon as we heard the Ehelapola Adikar had thrown off his allegiance and gone over to the English an invasion was apprehended, and I think about three months before the invasion actually took place the King ordered that his Treasures and other movables should be distributed among headmen and others to be concealed and this distribution was carried out in great secrecy. I was the person who chiefly packed up the Articles. If they were too bulky I used to call in the Sattambies in the Ulpengey. Tallagoone Wanekoo Neleme wrote the account of the distribution in Sinhalese and Aiyaloo Nayake Unanse in Malabar. In each box a List was deposited of the Articles contained in it, and it was marked and locked and sealed.

Besides these lists a Lekamitiye was kept specifying the numbers of boxes, the mark on each and to whom entrusted. If the articles formed any part of the Regalia, or were of great value they were also specified in the Lekamitiye

but of cloths and other valuable goods no further account was made out than the list thrown into each box. The people who were to receive charge of the boxes, used to be ordered to assemble at the Saanchy Mandape after night fall and the boxes were given out after the people in the town had retired to rest. The parties receiving the boxes could neither ask or be afforded any information as to their contents; they are only told that they are to take care of the boxes and be responsible for them till called for. But as the boxes containing the Regalia and other costly Articles are packed up in wax cloths and ropes and sticks for removing them are fastened on within the Aramodelle before they are given out (which is not the case with the other boxes) it was pretty well known which of the chests contained the most valuable things. The Articles of the Regalia, the carriage and the Throne were entrusted to the Headmen and people at Potdulgodde and a box of jewels was entrusted to the people of Palaate. The Silver Articles were chiefly entrusted to the people of Manakalla; the Kalley Korale had the concealment of these things and from the nature of their office which are that of ranger and preserver of forests only confidential and trustworthy people were selected for it. I could by referring to the Lekamitiye give detailed information, which from memory alone I could not do.

The personal ornaments of the King were kept in the apartment adjoining the bedchamber. Those Articles were not packed up till news came that the troops had crossed the borders at Sitawakke. The state dresses were sent off to different villages. The ornaments of gold and jewellery were packed up in two boxes. The late Pahallewelle Deve Neleme, Tallagoone Wnekoo Neleme, Aiyaloo Nayake Unanse and myself packed up those two boxes and its contents were also written in the Lekamitiye. Madugalle Wanekoo Neleme was certainly not there, though he did assist on other occasions - the deponent describes the Articles to be nearly the same as those specified by Madugalle. These two boxes as well as two boxes of the riches dresses were kept to be taken when the King left the capital. Two days before the King started he sent off two boxes of treasury Lekamitiye and among them the

Lekamitiye of the division of the treasure, &c. to Teldeneye. A memorandum taken from that Lekamitiye Tallagoone kept in his hands that he might send for any particular box if called for by the King for rewards. At Teldeneye the King gave the two boxes of Lekamitiyes and two large copper bathing chaldrons to Pattawelle Vidahn - a box of gems was despatched from thence to Palata. The King started for Meda Maha Neura taking the four boxes of ornaments and dresses with him, as well as immediately about him a box of pagodas and trinkets to be given away in rewards. At Meda Maha Neura we found that detachments of troops were approaching us in different directions. The King gave the two boxes of ornaments to Tallagoone and Madugalle Wanekoo Neleme, telling them that the carriage, &c. were concealed in the neighbourhood, but the place of concealment had become known. They were therefore to get them removed further and the boxes placed in safety. Before those Chiefs could return the King was captured having by him only the box of pagodas and of trinkets and a gold mounted sword. I was not present at that moment having been sent to reconnoitre in another direction.

I concealed myself in Dombere till I heard that the King had been sent beyond the Kandyan limits. I then came into Kandy and made my appearance to Ehellepolle. I think that was six days after the King had been captured. Ehellepolle said that he had got information where the King's ornaments had been concealed and that I must assist in bringing them; on that very day I Petteyedere Aratchily Teldeneye Radda Bade Vidahn and half a dozen Madowe men started. We called on the Kalley Korale to show us the cave at Potdulgodde. He went with us attended by several of his people; by chool light it being night. We found the two boxes of jewels, the gold and silver jackets, and the carriage - a golden chair (not the Throne) was also said to be there but I did not see it. We were desired to break open the boxes and bring the Articles clandestinely - we did so but the two silver heppos in which the Articles were contained were not opened. We tied them up sealed as they were in bundles with cloths, some smaller heppos (I

think five) also containing jewels and the two jackets. Three golden ornaments a foot long each of the chair and some trifling articles consisting of gold mounted canes. These things were brought into the town secretly tied up in the form in which Adookoo (provision) are brought to the Adikar. It was day light by the time we reached the two; they were delivered to Ehellepolle who removed them unopen to an inner room. I was desired not to leave the house. At night I was called into the inner room. There were there the Adikar; his beetle bearer Pinnawelle Appoo and myself only, by candle light the heppos. were opened and the articles examined. The Adikar put the golden hat and jacket on himself. I noticed to him the impropriety of that act; he replied that in a few days I should hear him proclaimed King by the British Authorities. In the morning I asked him to appear before the Resident lest I should hereafter be criminated for bringing these valuables without apprizing the English Authorities thereof. He said that it was not necessary, that he would report the circumstance. He gave me a silver heppoo and a chunam box a couple of cloths and sent me off to my village in Kotmale. In about 10 days I got an order from the Resident to appear before that gentleman. I did so. He enquired if I knew how the King's property had been disposed of. I told him to the best of my recollection and mentioned that the Royal ornaments had already been delivered to Ehellepolle. I could not discover from that gentleman's manner, whether he had been already apprized of that circumstance. He made me state the Articles, which he wrote down in a separate piece of paper. He also took down a general statement of the distribution of the property; by this time I understood that the carriage and many other articles had already been recovered and that Tallagoone Wanekoo Neleme had given to the Resident the memoranda he had by him of the more valuable articles. The General Lekamitiye was not attended to at all beyond my saying that such a document had been formed and left at Teldeneye. I was permitted by the Resident to return to my village and was never after that questioned by that gentleman. About a year thereafter Messrs. Gay and Sawers sent for me and

told me that I ought to be able to assist in recovering the King's effects. I replied that I could do little without the Lekamitiye. They said that it was not to be found but that I should search. In about ten days I searched the houses of Potdulgodde and the caves of the adjacent mountains attended by the Judicial Commissioner's Aratchy and Peon. We found the gun and powder horn, etc. of King Rajasingha (which were plated with gold) contained in a box. Those things must have been concealed on some former reign. We also found some silver mounted arms of the deposed King deprived of the silver ornaments and in use among the villagers. Also a number of boxes and utensils.

I am quite certain that many of these goods remain in the hands of the persons to whom they were originally entrusted. Owing to so great a length of time having elapsed, the fear of a search must have long been allayed. I would recommend an immediate search of the houses of the principal persons entrusted with these goods. The people themselves might afterwards be brought into Kandy and for any Articles not forthcoming, be made to state to whom they were delivered ap.

Source: Sri Lanka Archives

Appendix IX

Contemplated Restoration of the Monarchy by the Kandyan Sinhalese

C.O. 54/61

Substance of Information Communicated by Kapooliyadde Poonchi Rala, in presence of Mahawellatenne and Ekneligoda Nilame.

Colombo 9th and 10th September, 1816.

In the month of January last, I left Kandy for Colombo in Company with the Priest Ihagama Ratnapala and Umbagolla. The two latter came no further than Paliugoda, but Ihagama and myself proceeded to Colombo. On our arrival we went to the house of the Malay Mohandiram who asked Ihagama where he was going. Ihagama replied: "I am going to Satya-baddu-purwutu to worship Boodoo - I have asked the Governor through the Second Maha Modeliar for permission to go, but have been told that the leave cannot be granted except by means of an application to Mr. D'Oyly". The Mohandiram said "Is it merely to worship Boodoo or for any other purpose that you wish to go" Ihagama said "Not for that purpose alone, though it is the ostensible motive but for another purpose". "What is that?" said the Mohandiram; Ihagama said "I am going to Amarapoora to beg of the King of the Country to send a prince to Govern Ceylon". "What is the use" said the Mohandiram "of going so far when there are Two Malabar Princes now at Negombo". Ihagama said "Are they not Prisoners?" The Mohandiram said "I will contrive to set them at liberty, and to have a force to support them, if you will concert with the Chiefs and get assistance from them". After this conversation Ihagama myself and the two other Priests above mentioned returned to Kandy, from whence we proceeded to Anooradhappoor - On our arrival at Anooradhappoor I was sent down by Ihagama to Manar for the purpose of engaging vessels to take him and the other two Priests to Amarapoora - but not being able to meet with any, I

returned to Anooradhapoor from whence we all went back to Kandy at which place we arrived sometime in the month of Buk (April).

The second time of my leaving Kandy for Colombo was early in the month of Poson (June) last. I then came in company with Ihagama Oonnanse and Potdalgoda Oonnanse - They both remained at Kalani, whilst I went by desire of the former to the house of the Malay Mohandiram and said to him "The Dessave of the Seven Corles, the Oodugampuhu Adikar and all the other Chiefs with the exception of Eyheylapola Maha Nilame; the 1st Adikar Molligoda and the Wellasse Dessave, are desirous that you should go to Kandy". The Malay Mohandiram said "that country, as well as this, now belongs to the English I receive at present some pay from the English Government and may perhaps obtain more, but if I go to Kandy I shall receive nothing whatever. If I could collect a considerable number of Malays and were accompanied by the two Malabar Princes now at Negombo I might proceed to Kandy through the Seven Korles, otherwise I shall risk my life to no purpose - If the Chiefs and people of the Country are willing this may be done", I then went back to Ihagama and communicated to him what the Mohandiram had said. Ihagama then told me and Potdalgoda Oonnanse to go to Kandy and consult the Chiefs and ascertain the inclination of the People, he himself remaining at Kalani.

I and Potdalgoda set off accordingly. The next day after our return to Kandy, he went to the House of Madoogalle Oodagabada Nilame and I to Kapooliyadde my village - Four days afterwards, I came back to Kandy, and repaired first to my Pansal and then to the house of Oodagabada Nilame, who said "I have no *men* at present to send with you, but Potdalgoda will endeavour to collect some and do you in the meantime go down with this Appoo (a servant of the Nilame) to Ihagama Oonnanse and tell him that he may provide *the articles* which are requisite". Being aware of what was going on, I knew that by the work Men, Oodagabada Nilame intended to signify money and assistance from the Chiefs, and by articles - The Men to

be furnished by the Malay Mohandiram; and that this was a secret way of intimating, that the Nilame would take measures for consulting the Chiefs and see what money he could raise - I then proceeded to Kalani and delivered Oodagabada Nilame's message to Ihagama.

The day after my arrival at Kalani, Ihagama went alone to Colombo, after being absent during the whole Day, he returned and said to me "I have been at the Malay Mohandiram's; He tells me that the two Malabar Princes have been removed from Negombo and are now confined at Colombo; that therefore there is no possibility of going to Kandy through the Seven Corales; that they must accordingly go through Saffragam; and that it will consequently be necessary to speak to the Chiefs of that District - adding further, that the Malay guard over the Princes as well as such other Malays as they can collect must be persuaded to accompany them".

The day after the return of Ihagama to Kalani, he and I set off from thence accompanied by two coolies bearing loads, as we passed through the Mahrendahn the Malay Mohandiram came up to us, and taking Ihagama aside, conversed with him for about a Singhalese hour, whilst I and the Two Coolies stood at a distance - as we were ignorant of the Road, we waited a little longer until the Mohandiram sent to us two Merchants who were going to the same place - at Papiliyana they staid behind to cook their Rice after having pointed out to us the road we were to go.

We then proceeded to the House of Ekneligoda Nilame leaving the coolies with their Loads at a rest house - at Ekneligoda's we were invited to sit down, and after partaking of some refreshments, Ekneligoda enquired from whence we had come - we said "We have come from the Aloomoor Corle and are on our way to Kandy", Ekneligoda said "Why do you come this Road since it would have been much easier for you to go by the road of the Aloomoor Corle" - Ihagama said "We came here for a particular purpose and wish to have some conversation with you at a convenient time". There were many people present, and we therefore continued talking on different

matters - when they were gone Ihagama said to Ekneligoda "Do you know what is about to be done?" "I know of nothing" replied Ekneligoda. What do you mean?" Ihagama said "It is intended under pretence of conferring some distinguished honours on the Kandian Chiefs to invite them all to Colombo, and from thence to embark them for some foreign country". Ekneligoda said "I have heard of no such thing nor does it appear to me probable, but if it be the pleasure of Government so to do, we must submit". Ihagama said, "There is a remedy". Ekneligoda said, "I don't perceive it". Ihagama said, "There is an excellent remedy", "What is it?" enquired Ekneligoda - Ihagama said, "I came here not merely on my own business but at the desire of others" some further conversation passed between Ihagama and Ekneligoda which I did not hear.

In the evening we went to our Pansal.

The same night, Ihagama and myself went again to the house of Ekneligoda but I sat at too great a distance to hear what passed.

The next day we went again to Ekneligodda's - Ihagama then said, addressing himself to Ekneligoda "Have you considered of what I said to you yesterday, and respecting which you promised that you would let me know your sentiments today - Ekneligoda replied, "I have considered it, but I do not see how it is to be done - who is to be the Leader?" Ihagama said, "The Dissave of the Seven Corles and the Oodagampaha Adikar; but besides these, all the other chiefs, except Eyhalapola Maha Nilama, the 1st Adkgar Molligoda and the Wellasse Desave will unite with the inferior Headmen and the Inhabitants: The Malay Mohandiram will get the two Malabar Princes liberated by bribing the Guard placed over them - He will likewise gain over Twelve Malay Native officers and some Malay soldiers by presents, and will cause them to proceed with the Princes to Saffragam. On the arrival at Saffragam they will repair to the Temple at that Place, and there invest the youngest of the Two Princes with the Sovereignty. On this

occasion you will be made Dessave of Saffragam and Mahawellette
Dessave of Ouwa.

Matters will be so arranged that all the fortified Posts belonging to the English in the Interior shall be taken possession of on the same day - One or two days before the departure of the Princes from Colombo, I will write to the Chiefs of Districts to apprise them of that event, in order that they may all begin their hostile operation at the same period - Two days before they set off the Malay Mohandiram will write to the Malay officer at Ratnapoora to take possession of that Post - at the same time, the Rata Mahatmaya of Harispattoo will take possession of the fortified Post in that District. The Fort at Amanapoora will be taken possession of by the Inhabitants of Oodanoowara and Yati-noowara who will have received orders to that effect from the Chiefs of those Districts - The insurgents will then surround the city Kandy so as to intercept the communication between it and the country - The Malay and Caffree soldiers in the Garrison of Kandy will be gained over by presents, and on the appointed day, will load their musquets secretly previously to their coming out to Drill. On the Drill Ground they will separate themselves from the European Soldiers and fire upon them before they can be prepared for their defence. The insurgents will then go to the Fort seize the Europeans there and after preserving Mr. D'Oyly and seven or eight other Gentlemen of Rank will put the rest to death - Mr. D'Oyly and the other Gentlemen whose lives it is intended to spare will be detained in captivity until the restoration of the Treasures of the late King which have been taken to Colombo.

Ihagama Oonnanse, further said to Ekneligoda in my hearing "Oodagabada Nilame has sent Presents to Katragam and to all the other Devales, praying the Deities of these Temples to destroy the English and re-establish Sinhalese Government".

At another time I heard him to say Ekneligoda "I know that the Sattambies have in their possession the Golden Sword, and other Treasures of the late

King, and that they will produce them as soon as the Malabar Princes appear at Saffragam. Indeed they have told me so themselves”.

Kapooliyadde further says I myself know that the following Chiefs are well acquainted with all the circumstances of the Plot, viz.:

The Dissave of the Seven Corles

Oodagabada Nilame

Oodagampaha Adikar

Mampitiya Dissave of the Three Corles

Mampitiya Dessave of Oodunoowara

But the most active of the conspirators is Oodagabada Nilame.

A Translation from the evidence given in the Sinhalese language

Source: Sri Lanka Archives

Report submitted by Governor Brownrigg to London

Appendix X

Contemplated Restoration of the Monarchy - Extracts from D'Oyly's Report of 6th April 1816

Weragama Kapurala of Saman Dewale in Bentenne states as follows:

Polwatte Unnanse and Ma-Eliya Vidan carried offerings and called me, I went to them and asked why was I called, they replied, that some offerings were sent by Uda Gabeda Nilame, we asked for what purpose Gabeda Nilame sent the offerings, the Priest and Vidan replied, To pray, that the English may be destroyed, I told them, if such were the words, that they may not tell me of it, and saying so, I came away to my village, On the next day, they came to the Ferry and called me. They called thrice, but we both speaking among ourselves did not go, lest we should be blamed. On the next morning the Vidan came and called again, after this, I and Loku Kapurala both went and asked why they thus trouble us calling 3 different times, they replied, that it was to present offerings for the above purpose, we told them, that there were several Headmen, to the City, and that the offerings could not be received without their knowing after this, the Vidan went and informed Raterala, the Head of the country, Raterale told, that they would not blame us (as being concerned) on any Day, and to tell them, that they may carry offerings and do what they like, after which Vidan took the offerings and laid them on the Thresh-hold of the Temple - Priest read a Soloka and offered Blessings and then added, May the wish that we desire be accomplished and God protect it.

Question: Did not the Priest speak anything else besides the above?

Answer: What else besides the above words? The Prayer was, that the English may be destroyed and a King arise.

Persons in whose presence the above Witnesses confirmed their Evidences at the Temple Maha Dewale, Dodanwala Hirege Knakan of Udaganpaha

Patberiya Mohotale of 3 Korales. Batabure Korala of 4 Korales.
Talagahawatte Mudiyanse of Harispatu Don Hendric Kankan.

Source: Sri Lanka Archives

Appendix XI

Letter No. IV from D'Oyly to Moratota indicating D'Oyly's Knowledge of the Correct Form of Communicating with the Buddhist Clergy

The following matter is written and sent with the prayer that the gods may protect Moratota Rájaguru Dhammakhandha Mahanáyaka Unnánsé bestowing benefaction upon him:-

The Palm Leaf sent here to my name has been received, and it has been placed before His Excellency the Governor. From the time of his arrival in Ceylon, His Excellency the Governor has not only been desirous of remaining friendly to His Majesty, the Lord of Sri Lamká, but also tried to express that desire in various ways. He has, first of all, not only released the subjects of the Simhala country who had been prisoners here, but also has sent away from here the widowed Kurmàrihàmi of Muddusàmi Nàyakkar who was hostile to His Majesty, the Great Lord of the Three-Simhala. Further, he has also ordered to have justice meted out to the people of the Simhala country living on the frontiers for the wrong done to them. Besides, he will be pleased to show all honour and respect as well as all civilities in a manner befitting the commands of His Britannic Majesty and justice. But as long as the English officers and other soldiers remain prisoners there, and as long as he does not receive a reply to the requests made about them His Excellency cannot suggest a way for peace: and even if he were to suggest a way for peace it cannot be in any other way except in accordance with the conditions mentioned before.

Written and sent on the Sixth day of May in the year One thousand Eight hundred and Six, in Colombo.

This matter also thus (attest), (We), the Chief Translator to His Excellency the Governor,

J. D'OYLY

Historical Manuscripts Commission, Ceylon, Bulletin No. 2, Letters of J. D'Oyly, ed. and trans. by Thero, Rev. R.S., August 1937, Colombo: Ceylon Government Press.

Appendix XII

A Sketch of the Constitution of the Kandyan Kingdom by John D'Oyly, as a Guide - Page 1

The Power of the King is Supreme and absolute.

The Ministers advise, but cannot control his Will.

The King makes Peace and War, enacts Ordinances and has the sole Power of Life and Death.

He sometimes exercises Judicial Authority, in civil and criminal cases, either in original Jurisdiction or in appeal.

The Acts of his Government are presumed to be guided by the Institutions and Customs of his Kingdom.

Before innovations of Importance are carried into Effect it is customary to consult the principal Chiefs, and frequently the principal Priests, and when other matters of Public moment are in agitation the same Persons are usually called to his Councils.

The Authority of the King is exercised through many officers of State.

The principal officers employed in the administration of Public affairs, are,
The two Adikarams, commonly called Adikars.

The Disaves or Governors of Provinces chiefly situated below the
Mountains.

The Lekams, or Chiefs or Departments, within the Mountains.

The Rate Mahatmeyo or Governors of smaller Districts above the
Mountains.

The Officers attached to the Kings Household, the Chiefs of Department employed in his Personal Service and the Principals of Temples, attend also on many Public occasions, and in some Instances take Rank above a part of

those just mentioned, but for the sake of Distinction will be separately described after them.

The Officers are either chiefs of Provinces or Villages possessing Jurisdiction within certain local Limits; or Chiefs of Departments possessing Jurisdiction over Persons dispersed in different Districts or Villages.

They possess universally authority both Executive and Judicial within their respective Jurisdictions. Two or more offices, are sometimes conferred upon the same Chief.

They receive no stipends, but are entitled to sundry Emoluments from the Persons under them, and in Consideration thereof, pay certain fixed annual Tributes into the Royal Treasury.

The Kandyan Chiefs and all other subjects on approaching the King, make obeisance by three prostrations, and receive all his orders, and make all communications to him on their knees.

Appendix XIII

Letter by Governor Brownrigg for Help from India
during the Kandyan Rebellion

C.O. 54/71

Kandy 25th May, 1818

Private and Confidential

THE RIGHT HON'BLE
HUGH ELLIOT, etc.

Dear Sir

In my letter of the 28th Ultimo I did myself the honor to convey to You the knowledge of an Application I had thought it necessary to make to The Most Noble The Governor General, for an additional reinforcement of Troops, to be furnished from the Establishment of Your Government, in the event of the Insurrection in this Island still continuing unsubdued, notwithstanding the increased efforts to that purpose which the Arrival of the 2d. Battalion of the 18th Regiment of Native Infantry then daily anticipated would have enabled me to make.

The length of Passage which that Corps experienced (Six Weeks, and only just now arrived at two opposite points of the Island) has baffled my expectation of making a powerful impression by the aid of that Additional Force, on the Insurgents, and the Effect of Sickness in the interval between the date of that Letter and the present time, has diminished the Effective Force (exclusive of that Battalion) by at least Six hundred Men, while the consequences have been the necessary abandonment of several Posts, (some of which were certainly untenable on account of the unhealthiness of their situation at the present season) without a countervailing and necessary occupation of more advantageous Position in parts of the Country where the

Rebels have still continued unmolested in their haunts, and their hoards of Grain and other Stores still at their disposal.

From the information received from the different Provinces it does not appear to me that the Insurgents have acquired any Actual Increase of Strength or Confidence since I last had the honor of addressing You; on the contrary it is well ascertained that the lower Orders are generally worn out and distressed by the continuance of the state of disturbance, which exposes their Lives and property to destruction, and obstructs them from their usual occupations and habits; but the alternate Promises of divine Aid, and Threats accompanied by cruel Punishments, used by the Rebel Chiefs who despair as well of Pardon for the past as of continuing in the power of oppressing the People for the future, still induces the greater number to withhold their submission.

In this state of Affairs which promises no hope of a speedy termination of the Rebellion unless by the presence of an overwhelming Force spread through the Country, to afford effectual protection to the well disposed, and threaten with extermination the refractory and disaffected; and for the reasons I detailed at full length in my Letter to His Excellency, The Marquis of Hastings; I feel it now absolutely necessary to make the Official Application for a further movement of Troops to this Island contained in the accompanying Despatch, and which I am confident will be granted with the readiness which has so uniformly characterized Your Measures in aid of their Government.

I have the Honor to be etc.

(Signed) ROBT. BROWNRIGG.

Source: Sri Lanka Archives

Appendix XIV

The Mind of the Rebels: An Insight into Kandyan Sinhalese Thinking

C.O. 54/71

Translation of an Ola left by the Inhabitants of Doombera near Atgalle

That we have received a King for this Country by the favour of Gods from the four parts of the world and from the God Kandassaamie of Katergam, and also it is known to all the people of Kandy as at this place the 18 Forts shall be taken by him, the while Gentlemen will know that at present one or two Countrys and a part of a Dessavony is under his Government and at present there is no person in Kandy nor in the Dessavonies that is faithful to the English Government - The English will never have any success except they will sustain a great loss by losing of their soldiers and officers in Kandy. No one of Kandy shall come to be under the English Government by being afraid for your burning Houses for killing people and for your writing; no danger whatever shall come upon any (The maritime districts) Cingalese man if they will go to the Districts by leaving Kandy - And we are still in quietness thinking that they will leave this place and go away but we do not mind our lives nor for the whole Kandy whether it is ruined entirely; if they remain without going before the expiration of this short period we have orders from the Deya to fight on the Month of May - this letter was written in presence of all the Headmen and other common persons are friends to the English Government and if the English remain for how many years so ever they will not have this Country.

True Copy

GEO. LUSIGNAN,

Sec. Kand. Prov.

Source: Sri Lanka Archives

Appendix XV

Proclamation Ending Martial Law

By His Excellency Lieutenant General Sir Robert Brownrigg Baronet and Knight Grand Cross of the Most Hon'ble Military Order of the Bath Governor and Commander in Chief in and over the British Settlements and Territories in the Island of Ceylon with the Dependencies thereof -

(Signed) Robt. Brownrigg.

Whereas by our Proclamation bearing date at Kandy the Twenty first day of February in the Year of Our Lord One Thousand Eight Hundred and Eighteen. We did command that Martial Law should be executed in and throughout the whole of the Kandyan Provinces, and where as tranquillity and good order having been restored the necessity for executing Martial Law within the Provinces and Districts of the Four Korles, the Three Korles, the Seven Korles, Matele, Udunoora, Yatinoora, Tumpany and Lower Bulatgamme has ceased. We do hereby proclaim and command that the administration and Execution of Martial Law shall forthwith cease in and through the Provinces and Districts herein above mentioned.

Given at Colombo the Twelfth day of February One Thousand Eight Hundred and Nineteen.

By His Excellency's Command,

(Sd.) Geo Lusignan,

Secy. Kandyan Provinces

God Save the King!

Source: Sri Lanka Archives

Appendix XVI

Proclamation of November 1818: Establishing British Supremacy and Direct Rule (Authored by John D'Oyly)

The Proclamation of 21 November 1818 issued after the Rebellion of 1818
(amending Proclamation of 1815)

*By His Excellency Lieutenant General Sir Robert Brownrigg Baronet and Knight
Grand Cross of the Most Hon'ble Military Order of the Bath Governor and
Commander in Chief in and over the British Settlements and Territories in the
Island of Ceylon with the Dependencies thereof.*

ROBT. BROWNRIGG

The Chiefs and People of the Kandyan Nation no longer able to endure the Cruelties and Oppressions which the late King Sri Wikreme Raja Singha tyrannically practised towards them prayed the assistance of the British Government for their relief and by a solemn Act declared the late King deposed, and Himself and all Persons descending from or in any manner related to His Family incapable of claiming or exercising Royal Authority within the Kandyan Provinces; which were by the same solemn Act ceded to the Dominion of the British Sovereign.

2 The exercise of Power by the Representative of His Britannic Majesty from the date of that Convention, March 2, 1815, till the hour that Insurrection broke out in the Month of October, 1817, was marked with the greatest mildness and forbearance towards all Classes; the strictest attention to the protection and maintenance of the Rights, Ministers and Places of Worship of the Religion of Boodhoo; and a general deference to the Opinions of the Chiefs, who were considered as the Persons best able from

their Rank and Knowledge to aid the Government in ensuring the Happiness of the Mass of its New Subjects. In exacting either Taxes or Services for the State an extraordinary and unprecedented laxity was allowed to take place in order that the Country might with more ease recover from any evil effects sustained by the contrary practice of the late King; in assessing Punishments for Offences even where a Plot to subvert the Government was proved, spirit which always characterizes the British Rule was strongly to be contrasted with the Ancient and frequent recurrence of Capital Executions, preceded by the most cruel and barbarous Tortures.

3 Under this mild Administration on the part of the British Government the Country appeared to rest in Peace; Cultivation was increased and Divine Providence blessed the exertions of the Labourers and rewarded them by plenteous Crops; yet all this time there were factious and intriguing spirits at Work seeking for an opportunity to subvert the Government, for no purpose but to assume to themselves absolute Power over the Lives and Properties of the general Mass of Subjects, which by the equal Justice of British Authority were protected from their Avarice or malicious Cruelty.

4 These Plotters against the State were found among the very Persons who had been restored to Honours and Security by the sole intervention of British Power, and the opportunity of raising Disturbance was chosen, when relying on the merited gratitude of all Orders of the Kandyan Nation. The Government had diminished the number of Troops; and the insurgent Leaders unconscious or forgetful of the extensive Resources of the British Empire thought, in setting up the standard of Rebellion, as easily to effect their purpose of expelling the English from the Country as the people had been deluded to prostrate before the Phantom whose pretensions they espoused merely to cover their own ambitious views of subjecting the Nation to their arbitrary Will.

5 After more than a Year of conflict which has created Misery and brought destruction on many, the efforts of the British Government and the

bravery of His Majesty's Troops have made manifest in the Kandyans the folly of resistance and that in the Government along resides the Power of protecting them in the enjoyment of Happiness: the flimsy veil which the Rebel Chiefs threw over their ambitious designs was torn aside by themselves, and the Pageant whom the People were called to recognize as the descendant of the Gods exposed as the Offspring of a poor Cingalese Empyric.

6 After such a display to the Public of depraved Artifice and injurious and unfeeling deception, the Government reasonably hope that a sense of the Misery brought on them by delusion should prevent the great body of the People from listening to any one who should attempt in future to seduce them into Rebellion against its beneficent rule. But it is also incumbent on it from a consideration of the circumstances which have passed and the evil consequences which have ensued on the blind obedience which the People have thought due to their Chiefs instead of to the Sovereign of the Country, to perform, by its inherent right, such parts of the practice of Administration, as by occasioning the subject to lose sight of the Majesty of the Royal Government, made him feel wholly dependent on the Power of the various Chiefs, which to be legal could only be derived to them by delegation from the Sovereign Authority of the Country.

British Supremacy

7 His Excellency the Governor therefore now calls to the mind of every person and of every Class within these Settlements, that the Sovereign Majesty of the King of Great Britain and Ireland exercised by His Representative the Governor of Ceylon and his Agents in the Kandyan Provinces is the source alone from which all Power emanates, and to which obedience is due: that no Chief who is not vested with Authority or Rank from this Sovereign source is entitled to obedience or Respect; and that without Powers derived from Government, no one can exercise Jurisdiction of any kind or inflict the slightest Punishment. And finally that every

Kandyan be he of the highest or lowest Class, is secured in his Life, Liberty and Property from encroachment of any kind or by any Person, and is only subject to the Laws which will be administered according to the Ancient and established usages of the Country, and in such manner and by such Authorities and Persons as in the Name and on behalf of His Majesty is herein declared.

8 The general Executive and Judicial Authority in the Kandyan Provinces is delegated by His Excellency to the Board of Commissioners, and under their general Superintendence to Resident Agent of Government in such Dessavonies of the said Provinces in which it may please His Excellency to place such Agents, with more or less Authority or Jurisdiction as by their several Instructions may be vested in them and of which the present disposition and arrangement is hereinafter contained.

9 The Adigars, Dessaves and all other Chiefs and Inferior Headmen shall perform duty to Government under the Orders of the said Board of Commissioners and British Agents and not otherwise.

10 No Person shall be considered entitled to execute Office, either of the Higher or Lower Class of Headmen, unless thereto appointed by a Written Instrument signed in respect to Superior Chiefs by His Excellency the Governor and for Inferior Headmen by the Honourable the Resident or provisionally by any Agent of Government thereto duly authorized, excepting in certain Villages or Departments which will be allotted for personal Services to the Dessaves, in which the Dessave shall as before have the sole privilege of making Appointments.

11 Honours shall be paid to all Classes of Chiefs entitled to the same under the former Government, in so far as the same is consistent with the Abolition which the British Government is resolved to effect of all degrading forms whereto both Chiefs and people were subjected under the Ancient Tyranny and which a liberal Administration abhors. All prostrations

therefore from or to any Person, including the Governor, are henceforth positively as they were before virtually and in fact abolished, and the necessity which existed, that Chiefs or others coming into the presence of the Sovereign Authority should remain on their Knees, is also abrogated. But all Chiefs and other persons coming before, meeting or passing any British Officer, Civil or Military, of Rank and Authority in the Island of Ceylon shall give up the middle of the Road, and if sitting rise and make a suitable Obeisance, which will be always duly acknowledged and returned.

12 It is also in this respect directed, that on entering the Hall of Audience, every Person shall make Obeisance to the Portrait of His Majesty there suspended; and as well there as in any other Court of Justice to the presiding Authority. And it is further directed that when His Excellency the Governor as His Britannic Majesty's Representative travels, He shall be attended by all the Persons in Office belonging to each Province in manner as they attended the former Kings of Kandy, except that the Dessaves may always use Palanqueens beyond the River Mahavillaganga, within which limit the Adigars only have this Privilege, and that when any of the Members of His Majesty's Council or the Commissioners for the Kandyan Provinces, or the Commanding Officer of the Troops in the Kandyan Provinces travel into any Province on duty they be met and attended in such Province in the same manner as the Great Dessaves were and are to be attended in their Provinces, likewise the Resident Agents and Officers Commanding the Troops in each Province are in their Provinces to be similarly attended and receive like Honours.

13 The Chiefs holding the high Offices of 1st and 2nd Adigar will be received by all Sentries whom they may pass in the Day with carried Arms, and by all Soldiers off duty or other Europeans or persons of European extraction, by touching their caps or taking off their Hats, and by all Natives whether Kandyans or not, by rising from their Seats, leaving the middle of the street clear and bowing to the Adigars as they pass. And to all other

Dessaves and other Chiefs, all Natives coming into their presence meeting or passing them are to make a proper inclination of the Body, in acknowledgment of their Rank.

14 The Adigars, Dessaves and other Chiefs shall further be entitled to proper attendance of Persons of the different Departments in such numbers as shall be determined by His Excellency on the Report of the Board of Commissioners, provided that where such Persons are not belonging to the Villages or Departments allotted to the Adigar or Dessaves the application for their attendance when required must be made to the Resident in Kandy or to the Agents of Government in the Provinces in which such Agents may be stationed.

15 The Persons entitled to sit in the Hall of Audience of in the presence of the Agents of Government are those Chiefs only who bear Commissions signed by the Governor, or to whom special License may by the same authority be given to that effect. Of these only the Two Adigars or Persons having the Governor's Letter of License can sit on Chairs, the others on Benches covered with Mats of different heights according to their relative Ranks. In the Courts hereinafter mentioned of the Agents of Government when the Assessors are Mohottales or Corales they may sit on Mats on the Ground.

Buddhism

16 As well the Priests as all the Ceremonies and Processions of the Budhoo Religion shall receive the Respect which in former times was shewn them; at the same time it is in no wise to be understood that the protection of Government is to be denied to the Peaceable exercise by all other Persons of the Religion which they respectively profess or to the erection under due License from His Excellency of Places of Worship in proper Situations.

17 The Governor abolishes all Fees payable for Appointments either to Government or to any Chief excepting for Appointments in the Temple

Villages, which will be made by the Resident on the recommendation of the Dewe Nileme or Basnaike Nilemes appointed by the Governor; the Dewe Nileme or the Basnaike Nileme receiving the usual Fee; also all Duties payable heretofore to the Gabbedewas Aramudale Awudege and all other Duties or Taxes whatsoever are abolished save and except that now declared and enacted, being a Tax on all Paddy Lands of a portion of the Annual Produce under the following modifications and exceptions and according to the following Rates.

General Rate of Tax on Paddy Lands

18 The general assessment of Tax on the entire Paddy Lands of the Kandyan Provinces is fixed at One Tenth of the Annual Produce, to be delivered by the Proprietor or Cultivator at such convenient Store House in every Province or Subdivision of a Province as shall be with due regard to the interests of the subject appointed by or under the Instructions of the Revenue Agents.

19 To mark the just sense which His Excellency has of the Loyalty and good conduct of the Chiefs and people of Oodanoora, the Four Korles, the Three Korles, and the following Korles of Saffragam, to wit: Kooroowitti Korle, Nawadoon Korle, Colonna Korle, Kukula Korle, Atakalan Korle, the Uduwak Gampaha of Kadewatte Korle, the Medded Korle, except the villages Udagamme, Gonilande, Kolutotte, Golettetotte, Mollemore, Piengiria, and Mulgamma, and the following Korles of the Seven Korles, viz. Tirigandahaye excepting the Villages Hewapolla, Katoopitiye and Torrewatere, Oodapola Korle, Kattugampaha Korle, Oodookaha, Kattugampola Korle, Medapattoo, Petigal Korle, Yagame Korle, Rakawah Pattoo Korle, Angamme Korle, Yatekuha Korle, and of the Villages Pubilia, Kongahawelle and Nikawelle lying in the Oodoogodde Korle of Matele. The Governor declares that the rate of Taxation in these Provinces or Korles shall only be One fourteenth part of the Annual Produce.

20 But, on the contrary, that it may be known that Persons who are Leaders in Revolt or disobedience shall meet Punishment, all Lands which may have been declared forfeited by the misconduct of the Proprietors shall, if by the Mercy of Government restored to the former Owners, pay a Tax of One fifth of the Annual Produce.

Vihara and Devala Lands

21 The Governor, desirous of shewing the adherence of Government to its stipulations in favour of the Religion of the people, exempts all lands which now are the Property of Temples from all Taxation whatever - but as certain Inhabitants of those Villages are liable to perform fixed gratuitous services also to the Crown, this obligation is to continue unaffected.

22 All Lands also now belonging to the following Chiefs whose loyalty and adherence to the lawful Government merits favour, Vizt. Mollegodde Maha Nileme, Mollegodde Nileme, Ratwatte Nileme, Kadoogamoone Nileme, Dehigamme Nileme, Mulligamme Nileme lately Dessave of Welasse, Eknillegodde Nileme, Mahawallatene Nileme, Doloswalle Nileme, Eheyleyagodde Nileme, Katugaha the Elder, Katugaha the Younger, Damboolane Nileme, Godeagedere Nileme, Gonegodde Nileme formerly Adikaram of Bintenne shall be free of Duty during their Lives and that their Heirs shall enjoy the same free of duty; excepting with regard to such as paid Pingo Duty which shall now and hereafter pay One tenth to the Government of the Annual Produce unless when exempted under the next Clause.

23 All Lands belonging to Chiefs holding Offices either of the Superior or Inferior Class and of Inferior Headmen shall during the time they are in Office be free of duty.

24 All Lands belonging to Persons of the Casts or Departments allotted to the Cutting of Cinnamon shall be free of duty, also Lands held by persons for which they are bound to cultivate or aid in the culture of the Royal

Lands; and also the Lands of such Persons who may be allotted to the performance of personal Service to the Dessaves by the Board of Commissioners and of those who perform Katepurale or Atepattoo Service gratuitously, it being well understood that the Persons last mentioned have no right or authority whatever to exact or receive Fees or Fines of any kind when sent on Public duty, which they are required to perform expeditiously and impartially.

25 The Veddas who possess no Paddy Lands shall continue to deliver to Government the usual Tribute in Wax.

26 All Presents to the Governor or the British Authorities are strictly prohibited. In travelling every Officer, Civil or Military, Chiefs, Detachments of Troops or other Servants of Government on notice being given of their intended march or movement are to be supplied with the Provisions of the Country in reasonable quantity and on payment being made for the same at the Current price.

27 All Fees on hearing of Cases to Dessaves or others except as hereafter mentioned which are for the benefit of Government shall be and are abolished.

28 The Services of the Adigars, Dessaves and other Superior Chiefs to Government shall be compensated by fixed Monthly Salaries in addition to the exemption of their Lands from Taxation.

29 The Services of the Inferior Chiefs shall be compensated as above by exemption from Taxation and that they also receive One Twentieth part of the Revenue Paddy which they shall collect from the People under them, to be allotted in such portion as the Board of Commissioners shall under the authority of Government regulate.

30 All Persons shall be liable to Service for Government on the requisition of the Board of Commissioners and Agents of Government

according to their former Customs and Families or Tenure of their Lands, on payment being made for their labour: it being well understood that the Board of Commissioners under His Excellency's Authority may commute such description of Service as under present circumstances is not usefully applicable to the Public good, to such other as may be beneficial. And Provided further that the holding of Lands Duty free shall be considered the payment for the Service of the Katepure and Atepattoo Departments and Persons allotted to the Dessaves Service, and also for the Service to Government of certain persons of the Temple Villages, and in part for those which cut Cinnamon; and also that the duty of clearing and making Roads and putting up and repairing Bridges, be considered a general gratuitous service falling on the Districts through which the Roads pass or wherein the Bridges lie, and that the Attendance on the Great Feast which certain Persons were bound to give be continued to be given punctually and gratuitously. The Washermen also shall continue to put up white Cloths in the Temples and for the Chiefs gratuitously.

31 All Kadawettes and ancient Barriers throughout the Country shall be from henceforward discontinued and removed and the Establishments belonging to them for their maintenance and defence abolished, the services of the Persons usually employed therein being applied to such other more beneficial purpose as the Board of Commissioners shall determine.

32 And it being necessary to provide Rules for the Service of certain Persons who were to perform duty to the Persons of the King of Kandy, viz. the Kunamaduwe or Palenquin Bearers, the Talepatawedunakaria or Talpat Bearers, and Pandankareas or Torch Bearers. It is Ordered by the Governor that such Persons, being paid for the same, shall be bound to serve in their respective Capacities the Governor, the Members of His Majesty's Council, any General Officer on the Staff of this Army, the Commissioners for Kandyan Affairs, the Secretary for the Kandyan provinces, and the Officer Commanding the Troops in the Interior.

33 And for ensuring the due execution of all the above Ordinances relative to the collection of the Revenue and performance of Public duty by all Chiefs and others, His Excellency empowers and directs that the Board of Commissioners in Kandy collectively or in their several Departments and the Agents of Government in the Provinces shall punish all disobedience and neglect by suspension or dismissal from Office, Fine or Imprisonment as particular Cases may require and deserve. Provided that no Person holding the Governor's Commission may be absolutely dismissed but by the same Authority; and no other Chief but by the Authority of the Honourable the Resident, but as well the Commissioners as other Agents duly authorized by Instructions from the Governor may suspend Chiefs of the superior or Inferior order on their responsibility, for disobedience or neglect of the orders or interest of Government, reporting immediately as the Case may require, to the Governor or the Resident, their Proceedings for approval or reversal.

Civil and Criminal Courts

34 And in order that justice may be duly, promptly, and impartially administered throughout the Kandyan provinces to all classes, His Excellency the Governor is pleased to declare his Pleasure to be touching the same and to delegate and assign the following Jurisdiction to the Public Officers of Government for Hearing and Determining Cases wherein Kandyans are concerned as Defendants, either Civil or Criminal.

35 Every Agent of Government shall have power and Jurisdiction to hear and determine alone Civil Cases wherein the object of dispute shall not be Land, and shall not exceed in value Fifty Rix Dollars, and also Criminal Cases of inferior description such as common Assaults, Petty Thefts, and Breaches of the Peace, with power of Awarding Punishment not exceeding a Fine of Rix Dollars Twenty-five, Corporal Punishment with a Cat and Nine Tails or Rattan not exceeding Thirty Lashes, and imprisonment with or without labour not exceeding Two Months, to which terms of Imprisonment

and Fine such Agents are also limited in punishing Neglects or Disobedience of Orders according to the Provisions above detailed.

36 The 2nd or Judicial Commissioner shall sitting alone have power to hear and determine Civil Cases wherein the object in dispute shall not be Land and shall not exceed Six Dollars One Hundred in value, and also Criminal Cases of Inferior description, with power of Punishment as in the last Clause conferred on Agents of Government.

37 The 2nd or Judicial Commissioner and such Agents of Government in the Provinces to whom the Governor shall delegate the same by his Instructions, shall hold at Kandy and in the Provinces a Court for the Trial of all other Civil Cases and of Criminal Cases excepting Treason, Murder or Homicide, with powers in Criminal matters to assess any Punishment short of Death, or mutilation of Limb or Member, which Court shall consist in Kandy of the 2nd Commissioner and two or more Chiefs; and in the Provinces, of the Agent of Government, and One or more Dessaves of the Province and One or more Mohottales or Principal Korales so as there shall be at least Two Kandyan Assessors, or of Two Mohottales or Korales where no Dessave can attend.

38 The decisions of the Courts in the Provinces shall be by the Agent of Government, the Kandyan Assessors giving their advice, and where the Opinion of the majority of such Assessors differs from the opinion of the Agent of Government, there shall be no immediate decision; but the Proceedings shall be transferred to the Court of the 2nd Commissioner, who may either decide on the Proceedings had in the Original Court or send for the parties and witnesses and rehear the Case, or take or Order the Agent to take further Evidence and shall decide the same.

39 Appeals also shall lie from the decisions of such Agents to the Court aforesaid of the 2nd Commissioner in Civil Cases if the Appeal is entered before the Agent in Ten Days from his Decree and the object in dispute be

either Land or personal Property exceeding Rix Dollars One hundred and fifty in value; in which case Execution shall stay and the Proceedings be transmitted to the said Commissioner's Court, which shall and may proceed in the same as in the Cases mentioned in the former Article. That Appeals also may be allowed upon Order of the Governor or the Board of Commissioners although not entered in Ten days if Application is made in a Year.

40 The Decisions in the Court of the 2nd Commissioner shall be by the said Commissioner, the Kandyan Assessors giving their Advice; and if the Opinion of the majority of such Assessors shall be different from that of the 2nd Commissioner the Case, whether originally instituted or in Appeal or reference from the Agent of Government, shall be transferred to the Collective Board and by them reported on to His Excellency the Governor, whose decision thereon shall be conclusive and without Appeal, but that in Civil Cases decided by the 2nd Commissioner either in Original or brought before him by Appeal or reference, Appeal shall lie to the Governor if entered before the 2nd Commissioner in Ten days from his Decree and if the object in dispute be either Land or personal Property exceeding in value One hundred and fifty Rix Dollars, in which Case Execution of the Decree shall be stayed and the Proceedings be transmitted to the Governor. But Appeal may be allowed by Order of the Governor on application within One Year from the date of the Decree.

41 Appeals to the Governor will be disposed of by His Excellency in correspondence with the Board of Commissioners according to Justice.

42 In Criminal Cases no Sentence either by the 2nd Commissioner or the Agents of Government shall be carried into effect if it awards Corporal punishment exceeding One hundred Lashes, Imprisonment with or without Chains or Labour exceeding Four Months, or Fine exceeding Fifty Six Dollars, unless after reference to the Governor through the Board of

Commissioners, which will report on the Case and Sentence, and after His Excellency's confirmation of such Sentence.

43 The Hon'ble the Resident may when he thinks needful assist and preside in the Court of the Judicial Commissioner, and that the Resident may also hold a Court for hearing Cases to consist of himself and two Kandyan Chiefs or Assessors under the Provisions respecting References and Appeals and limitation of execution of sentences in Criminal Cases prescribed to the Judicial Commissioner, and to preserve regularity the Records of such the Resident's Judicial Proceedings in each Case shall be deposited with the Judicial Commissioner on the conclusion of the same.

44 In all Cases of Treason, Murder or Homicide the trial shall be before the Courts of the Resident or of the 2nd Commissioner and his Kandyan Assessors, whose opinion as to the Guilt of the Defendant and the Sentence to be passed on any one convicted is to be reported through the Board of Commissioners with their Opinion; also to His Excellency the Governor for his determination.

45 All Cases Criminal or Civil in which a Superior Chief is Defendant shall be originally instituted and heard before the Resident or the 2nd Commissioner. That all other Cases shall be instituted before the Jurisdiction in which the Defendant resides. Provided that in Civil Cases the Plaintiff may appoint an Attorney to prosecute in his behalf, as may the Defendant to defend his Case.

46 In Civil Cases the losing Party may be by the 2nd Commissioner or Agent of Government discretionarily ordered to pay a sum to Government of One twentieth part of the value of the object in dispute not exceeding in any case Six Dollars Fifty.

47 The 1st and 2nd Adigar shall and may execute Civil Jurisdiction over all Katepurales and their property, subject to Appeal to the 2nd Commissioner, and also over such other Persons and Property as the

Governor may by Special Warrant assign to the Jurisdiction of either of these two great Officers subject to Appeal as aforementioned. And that the 2nd Commissioner or any Agent of Government may refer Cases for hearing and report to him in his Court to the Adigars, Dessaves, or Mohottales.

48 The Adigars shall have Jurisdiction to punish disobedience of their Orders and Petty Offences by inflicting Corporal Punishment not exceeding Fifty Strokes with the open Hand or Twenty Five with a Rattan on the Back, or by awarding Imprisonment for a term not exceeding Fourteen Days.

49 The Dessaves or Chiefs holding the Governor's Commission may also punish Offences by Corporal Punishment not exceeding Twenty five Strokes with the open Hand and of Imprisonment for a Term not exceeding Seven days, and similarly the principal Mohottales, Liennerales and Korales being in Office, may inflict Corporal Punishment for Offences on persons over whom they might have exercised such Jurisdiction under the former Government not exceeding Ten Strokes with the open Hand, and may Imprison such Persons for a term not exceeding three days. Provided that the several Persons on whom the above Power is exercised shall be duly and lawfully subject to the Orders of such Adigar, Dessave, Chief Mohottale, Liennerale or Korale, and that no such Power shall be exercised on Persons holding Office or on Persons of the Low-Country, Foreigners or on Moormen of the Kandyan Provinces. And Provided that in all cases where Imprisonment is awarded for a term exceeding Three Days the Prisoner be sent with a Note of the Sentence to the 2nd Commissioner or the nearest Agent of Government to be confined.

50 To ensure a due and uniform administration of Justice, it is declared and enacted by His Excellency that all Evidence before te Resident, the 2nd Commissioner or other Agent of Government in a Civil or Criminal Case shall be taken on Oath; which Oath in the Case of Kandyan or Hindoo Witnesses shall be administered after the Evidence is taken (the Witness being previously warned that such will be the Case) at the nearest Dewale

before a Commissioner or Commissioners order by the Court to see that the Witness declare solemnly that the Evidence he has given is the Truth the whole Truth and nothing but the Truth. That no exemption can lie to this mode of giving Evidence except where Buddhist Priests are examined, and that every person except a Priest giving evidence must stand while He delivers it.

51 The People of the Low Country and Foreigners coming into the Kandyan Provinces shall continue subject to the Civil and Criminal Jurisdiction of the Agents of Government alone, with such extension as His Excellency may by special Additional Instructions vest in such Agents and under the limitation as to execution of Sentences of Criminal Cases herein before provided as to Kandyans in the 42nd Clause until Reference to the Governor through the Board of Commissioners, excepting in Cases of Treason, Murder and Homicide in which such Persons shall be subject to the same Jurisdiction now provided for Kandyans, and that the same line shall be pursued in Cases wherein a Kandyan, Moorman shall be Defendant.

52 And His Excellency the Governor takes this occasion to confirm the Provisions of his Proclamation of March 2, 1818, respecting the Moormen, but to explain that they are nevertheless when living in the Villages wherein also Kandyans reside to obey the Orders of the Kandyan Chief or Headman of the Village on pain of Punishment by the Agent of Government for disobedience, notwithstanding anything in the said Proclamation contained.

53 According to such known Rules Justice will be accessible to every Man, High or Low, Rich or Poor, with all practicable convenience and the confident knowledge of impartiality of decision. And to give effect to this Plan for the administration of Justice and to collect the Public Revenue and ensure the execution of Public duties. His Excellency is pleased to assign to the immediate Control and exercise of Jurisdiction of the Board of Commissioners the following Provinces: The Four Korles, Matele, oodapalata including upper Bulatgama, Oodanoora, Yatenoora, Tumpanne,

Harissiapattoo, Doombera, Hewahette, Kotmale, the part of Walapana lying West of the Kuda and Ooma Oya and the Hooroole, Tamirawane Maminiya and Ollegalla Pattoos of Nuwera Kalawiya, in all of which the Higher judicial duties and the Collection of Revenue will be made by the Commissioners of the Board, but in those limits there will be besides Two Agents of Government to hear minor Cases, at Attapittia in the Four Korles and at Nalende in Matele.

54 There will be an Agent of Government resident in Ouva, to whose immediate Jurisdiction are assigned the Provinces of Ouva, Wellasse, Bintenne, Weyeloowa and Royal Village of Madulla; all Civil and Criminal Cases will be heard by him with the exceptions mentioned, and under the rules detailed above. He will give Orders to collect Revenue, perform Public Service, suspend and punish Headmen for disobedience, and exercise general Powers of Government in those limits subject to the superintendence of the Board of Commissioners.

55 Similarly an Agent of Government in the Seven Korles will exercise Jurisdiction over that Province and the Northern part of Nuwera Kalawiya. An Agent of Government in Saffragam will perform like duties in that Province. An Agent of Government will reside in the Three Korles with like Powers, and the Collector of Trincomalee will hear all Cases and collect the Revenue and cause Public Service to be performed in the same manner in Tamenkadewe.

56 In all matters not provided for by this Proclamation or other Proclamations heretofore promulgated by the Authority of the British Government His Excellency reserves to himself and his Successors the Power of reforming Abuses and making such Provision as is necessary, beneficial or desirable. He also reserves full power to alter the present Provision as may appear hereafter necessary and expedient, and He requires in His Majesty's name all Officers Civil and Military, all Adigars, Dessaves and other Chiefs and all other His Majesty's Subjects to be Obedient, Aiding

and Assisting in the execution of these or other His Orders as they shall answer the contrary at their peril.

*Given at Kandy in the said Island of Ceylon this Twenty-first day of November One
Thousand Eight Hundred and Eighteen.*

By His Excellency's command

GEO. LUSIGNAN

Sec. for Kandyan Provinces

Source: *Ceylon Government Gazette*, Sri Lankan Archives

Appendix XVII

D'Oyly's Need to Codifying the Laws of the Kandyan Sinhalese due to Conflicting Judicial Judgements

CONFLICTING JUDGEMENTS BY OFFICIALS

In *Halliadde Vidan vs. Dantahami Vidan**, a land case, the following vouchers were produced by the parties;

- 1 *Ola* on which defendant claims that the *gamvasam* of Hakkamuve was granted to Loku Etena, eldest daughter of Suriya-arachi, is dated Śaka 1620.
- 2 *Sīṭṭuva* in possession of plaintiff dated Śaka 1665 by the then disave of SAbaragamuva, granting one-half of the *Gamvasam* to Gillemule Appu. "But on reading the deed it appears to be not a decree granted after a hearing of both parties, but one of the *sīṭṭuvas* which could always be obtained by a fee of 5 *pagodas*, and was never considered of any force if disputed".
- 3 Deed of Śaka 1667 by the new *disāva* of Sabaragamuva in favour of the same person and of the same tenor as the former.
- 4 A deed of Śaka 1678 by the third disave, of like import.
- 5 A deed of Śaka 1685 by the then disave, in favour of defendant's ancestor, granted after hearing bothe parties and examination of witnesses, "so that the *sīṭṭuvas* granted after hearing of parties and witnesses is in favour of defendant".

6 Deed of second day, Nikini māse, Śaka 1687, granted by Pilima Talauve *disāva*, without hearing parties or witnesses, to Gannehami, father of plaintiff.

“The circumstances of the plaintiff’s family procuring all these separate *sīṭṭuvas* is almost proof that their cause was bad, and that they did not possess the land”.

7 *Sīṭṭuvas* of the fourteenth day, Durutu mase, Śaka 1687, by Pilima Talauve *disave*, which recites a hearing of the parties and witnesses and decess the *gamvasama* to Punchirāla, eldest son of Loku Etna, from whom defendant is descended, thus reversing his former decree granted without hearing.

Decree of the Board of Commissioners: “On the whole therefore as defendant possesses an *ola* transferring the *gamvasam* from Suriya Arachi to Loku Etana as from the several applications made to *disavas* by plaintiff’s ancestors for separate *sittuvas*, it is clear they did not possess the land. When *sittuvas* were given after a hearing of both parties and their witnesses, they were in favour of defendant’s ancestors”. Plaintiff’s appeal was dismissed.

* *Kandyan Board Judicial Decisions*

Source: *Ceylon Government Gazette*, 23/4

Appendix XVIII

D'Oyly's Attempt to Study the Kandyan Administration:

Second Phase of Infiltration

LIST OF KANDYAN HEADMEN COMPILED BY JOHN D'OYLY AND
JAMES GAY, 1817

First Adikar

Second Adikar

Disave of Four Korales

Disave of Seven Korales

Disave of Matale

Disave of Three Korales

Disave of Sabaragamuva

Ratemahatmaya of Udunuvara

Ratemahatmaya of Yatinuvara

Ratemahatmaya of Tumpane

Ratemahatmaya of Harispattuva

Ratemahatmaya of Dumbara

Ratemahatmaya of Hevahata

Ratemahatmaya of Mimure

Ratemahatmaya of Kotmale

Ratemahatmaya of Uda Bulatgama

Ratemahatmaya of of Pata Bulatgama

Mahadiyavadana nilame

Palle vahala diyavadana nilame

Mahagabada nilame

Udagabada nilame

Pallevahala gabada nilame

2 Vannaku nilames of the Treasury
Batvadana nilame
Gajanaike nilame
Maha lekam
Atapattu lekam
Wedikara lekam
Nanayakkari lekam
Vadana tuvakkukari lekam
Padikara lekam
Kodituvakkukara lekam
Maduve gankaru lekam
Kuruve lekam
Kuruve lekam of Kingalle
Kuruve lekam of Matale
Dunukara lekam
2 Kunam maduve lekams
Muhandiram of Hatapenge
Ranavude Madapa Lekam and
Muhandiram of Atapattu Murapola
Muhandiram of Sudiliya
Muhandiram of Maruvaliya
Diyavadana nilame of the great Temple, Dalada Maligava
Basnaike nilame of Nata devale
Basnaike nilame of Maha devale
Basnaike nilame of Kataragam devale
Basnaike nilame of Pattimi devale

Principals of Temples
Vannaku nilame of the Arm's House
Kottalbadde Nilame
Chief of the Mahabadda or Beravayo

Chief of the Badahalla bade or Potters
Chief of the Rada bade or Washers
Chief of the Hunu bade or chunam-burners
Chief of the Anilabadde
Chief of the Kinnara bade
Muhandiram of Aspantiya

Six Muhandirams attached to Maha Lekam, viz
Muhandiram of Udunuvara
Muhandiram of Yatinuvara
Muhandiram of Tumpane
Muhandiram of Harispattuva
Muhandiram of Dumbara
Muhandiram of Hevahata

Eight Muhandirams attached to Atapattu Lekam:
Muhandiram of Udunuvara
Muhandiram of Yatinuvara
Muhandiram of Tumpane
Muhandiram of Harispattu
Muhandiram of Dumbara
Muhandiram of Hevahata
Muhandiram of Udispattu
Muhandiram of Gampahe

Eight Muhandirams attached to Vedikara Lekam:
Muhandiram of Harispattuva
Muhandiram of Dumbara
Muhandiram of Udispattuva
Muhandiram of Gampahe
Muhandiram of Pallispattu

Muhandiram of Meddisiapattu

Muhandiram of Egodatchi

Muhandiram of Hevahata

Four Muhandirams attached to Nanayakkara Lekam:

Muhandiram of Udunuvara

Muhandiram of Pattinuvara

Muhandiram of Tumpane

Muhandiram of Gampola

One Muhandiram attached to Vaduna Tuvakkukari Lekam.

Five Muhandirams attached to Padikari Lekam:

Muhandiram of Dolosbage

Muhandiram of Haloluva

Muhandiram of Palluta

Muhandiram of Tumpane

Muhandiram of Hevahata

Source: *Ceylon Government Gazette*, Sri Lankan Archives

Appendix XIX

Death of John D'Oyly: while serving as British Resident in Kandy

The following is from the Ceylon Gazette of May 29th 1824:-

“Died: At Kandy on the 25th Instant at 1 o'clock A.M. of Remittent Fever caught on an Official Tour in the Seven Korles, The Honourable Sir John D'Oyly Baronet, a Member of His Majesty's Council in Ceylon and Resident and First Commissioner of Government in the Knadyan provinces.

His remains were removed from his late residence in the Palace for Interment in the Burial Ground of the Garrison on the morning of the 25th Inst. At 7 o'clock the troops of the Garrison lining the road from the Palace to the Burial Ground resting on their arms reversed, while Minute Guns were fired by the Royal artillery in the Gastle, as the procession moved along in the following order:

The Korales and Arachchies of the Udaratte.

The Band of the Ceylon Regiment.

THE BODY

Borne by twelve European soldiers of the 45th Regiment.

The Pall borne by six Field Officers and Captains of the Garrison.

Chaplain The Rev. N. Garstin. Medical Attendant Surgeon Armstong.

Lieut. Colonel L. Greenwell, S. Sawers, Esqr., H. Wright, Esqr., the Commissioners of the Board, as Chief Mourners.

Officers of the Garrison & Gentlemen of Kandy.

The Adigar of the Kandyan Provinces & Kandyan Chiefs.

Modliars, Mohandirams of the Residency, Clerks of the Public Offices, together with an immense concourse of Natives.

To all in Ceylon and everyone in any way connected with this Island, no Eulogium on the character of Sir John D'Oyly is necessary; and to those unacquainted with the deceased, Language must fail in conveying an adequate idea of his worth as a man and merit as a Public Servant.

His talents and acquirements were of the first order, and little doubt will be entertained on this head, when it is known that before he quitted Westminster, he was particularly distinguished by the friendship of the late learned Head of that School Dr. Vincent, with whom we have heard he maintained a correspondence till the death of the Reverend Doctor: The honourable and high feelings which were conspicuous in Sir John D'Oyly's character, combined with an amiable gentleness of disposition, naturally produced a courteousness of manner which made his society much more desired by all who were acquainted with him, than his laborious zeal in the execution of his public duties would allow of their enjoying it; while the esteem and admiration of his countrymen and friends were fully shared by the natives of every part of Ceylon in which his official functions had been displayed, and towards whom authority was always exercised by the deceased, with such strict and patent justice, tempered with attention to all their wants, and a general charitableness of disposition, that their regret as evinced by the numbers of all ranks in and about Kandy who spontaneously attended the funeral and loudly lamented the loss they had sustained, we fully believe to be unfeigned and sincere.

The merits and exertions of Sir John D'Oyly as a Public Servant, and principally as connected with the addition to His Majesty's Dominions of the larger part of this Island, have, our readers will

know, been duly appreciated by the highest authorities. His Majesty's approbation was first conveyed in the Despatch from the Secretary of State to Sir Robert Brownrigg published by the Government here on the 1st of June 1816 in the following words:-

'I am also commanded particularly to express the sense which His Royal Highness (The Prince Regent) entertains of the conduct and services of Mr D'Oyly upon the late occasion. To his intelligence in conducting the negotiations first with the kandyan Government and latterly with the Adikars and others who opposed it, to his indefatigable activity in procuring information and in directing the Military Detachments, the complete success of the Enterprise is principally owing; and His Royal Highness avails himself with pleasure, of this opportunity of expressing, how greatly he appreciates, not only Mr D'Oyly's latter Services, but those which he has at former periods by his attention to the Kandyan Department, rendered to the Colony and his Country.'

His Majesty's approval thus expressed, was afterwards followed by the elevation of the deceased to the dignity of a Baronet of the United Kingdom on the 27th July 1821. This title becomes extinct, as Sir John died without heirs, never having been married".

Source: *Ceylon Gazette*, 29 May 1824

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Letter from J. D'Oyly to Pilematalawe Adigar dated 18 September 1810: *Letter from J. D'Oyly under the instructions of H.E. the Governor to Pilematalawe Adigar, explaining at length the attitude of the English Government towards the King of Lanka and his subjects.*

Letter from J. D'Oyly to Puswella Rajakaruna Vaidyaratna Attanayake dated 21 September 1810: *Letter from J. D'Oyly to Puswelle Rajakaruna Vaidyaratna Attanayaka Sri Ranga Narayana Bamunu Mudiyanse Ralehamy, inquiring after his health and intimating the desire to maintain friendly relations and supply necessities.*

Letter from D'Oyly to Pilematalawe dated 23 February 1808: *A letter from J. D'Oyly to Pilematalawe, Chief Adigar of Kandy, intimating the aversion of H. E. the Governor to part with any portion of his territories.*

Letter from J. D'Oyly to Adigar of Udagampaha dated 2 October 1806: *A letter sent by J. D'Oyly to Rajakaruna Seneviratne Abhayakoon Vasala*

Mudiyanse Ralahamy of Dumbara, Adigar of Udagampaha, in connection with the preliminary arrangements for the British Ambassador's journey to Kandy.

A letter sent by J. D'Oyly to Rev. Rajaguru Dhammakkhanda Maha Nayaka Thera dated 3 October 1805: *A letter sent by J. D'Oyly to Rev. Rajaguru Dhammakkhanda Maha Nayaka Thera intimating the despatch of an officer to discuss matters in connection with the release of English officers and soldiers.*

Letter from J. D'Oyly to Pilematalawe dated 21 January 1808: *A letter written by J. D'Oyly to Pilematalawe Adigar regarding the despatch of a horse or any other requirements.*

Letter written by J. D'Oyly to Ehelapola Adigar dated 14 October 1809: *A letter written by J. D'Oyly to Ehelapola Adigar inquiring whether it would be possible to release the English officers when ambassadors arrived there.*

Letter from J. D'Oyly to Puswella Gabada Nilame dated 14 June 1809: *A letter written by J. D'Oyly to Puswella Gabada Nilame demanding the return of the English officer, in order to gain permanent peace, which, he says, is essential for the welfare of the two parties.*

Letter from J. D'Oyly to Pilematalawe dated 21 September 1810: *A letter sent by J. D'Oyly to Pilematalawe Maha Adigar, under the orders of the Governor, intimating the arrival of British soldiers in Ceylon and the desire to arrive at permanent peace and happiness between the two nations.*

Letter from J. D'Oyly to Dumbara Rajakaruna Seneviratne Abhayakoon dated 20 February 1808: *Letter from J. D'Oyly to Dumbara Rajakaruna Seneviratne Abhayakoon Vasala Mudiyanse Ralahamy Basnayake of Sri Vishnu Devale and Adigar of Udagampaha, intimating that he would be furnished with necessaries after hearing from him, when the ambassador started on his journey.*

Letter from J. D'Oyly to Adigar of Udagampaha dated 21 November 1806: *Letter written by J. D'Oyly to Dumbara Rajakaruna Seneviratne Abhayakoon Vasala Mudiyanse Ralahamy, Adigar of Udagamapaha, informing him of the despatch of an ambassador to Kandy, and expressing the desire of H. E. the Governor to be at peace with the King of Lanka.*

Letter from J. D'Oyly to Pilematalawe dated 20 January 1808: *A letter written by J. D'Oyly to Pilematalawe Adigar, intimating the Governor's desire to*

reciprocate feelings of trust in the King of Kandy, and inquiring whether the King would have the kindness to give into the charge of an ambassador all the captive officers and soldiers, which was considered to be helpful in many respects.

Letter from D'Oyly to Moratota Rajaguru Dhammakhandha dated 6 May 1806: *Letter from D'Oyly to the Chief High Priest Moratota Rajaguru Dhammakhandha stating the inability of the Governor to make peace in any way other than that previously suggested, until the restoration of the English captives or any definite reply was made regarding that matter.*

Letter from J. D'Oyly to Moratota Rajaguru Dhammakhandha, Maha Nayaka dated 15 January 1806: *Letter expressing the desire of H. E. the Governor to send a suitable officer to undertake friendly negotiations for the purpose of gaining peace; and it further states that His Excellency will send a gift to Moratota Rajaguru Dhammakhandha, Maha Nayaka, in recognition of his efforts in the interests of the welfare of the world.*

Letter from J. D'Oyly to Rajaguru Dhammakhandha dated 12 November 1805: *Letter addressed by J. D'Oyly to the Chief High Priest, Rajaguru Dhammakhandha, requesting the King of Lanka to send nobles to discuss matters in connection with the mutual release of prisoners.*

A letter dated 30 December 1795: *Letter from Sabapathy, an employee under Captain Bowser, the officer stationed at Mannar, to Gopal Krishna Nayakkar, an officer employed under the King of Kandy, asking him to bring about a state of friendship between the King and the Captain as it was necessary for both parties.*

A letter dated 21 February (1796 ?): *Letter from Major-General Stuart to the King of Kandy expressing friendship and hoping that it would continue till the sun and moon endured.*

Letter dated 18 October 1795: *Letter from the King of Kandy to the Governor of Madras informing him of the execution of the Treaty and the despatch of the same for the seal and signature of the Governor. The letter also recommends the appointment of Robert Andrews as the Governor of Colombo Fort.*

I have identified and studied most of the relevant documents pertaining to the British relations with the Kingdom of Kandy in the nineteenth century, up to 1818.

The Rest of the Primary Documents Studied

Col. Stuart to the King of Kandy, 22 June 1796: *Explains that he is not authorised to treat with the King himself, but that Andrews has come as ambassador from Madras and awaits an escort to proceed to Kandy.*

Col. Stuart to the King of Kandy, 22 July 1796: *Professes friendship; due courtesy shown to the ambassadors.*

Col. Stuart to Horbart, 23 July 1796: *Transmits correspondence with the Kandyan Court. The ambassadors have left and Andrews will follow.*

Proceedings of the Madras Council, 4 December 1795, Hobart's Minute: *Stresses the need for an agreement with the King of Kandy, strongly defends the terms negotiated by Andrews in his Preliminary Treaty, and rejects the course advised to be taken with the Kandyan ambassadors on their arrival.*

Proceedings of the Madras Council, 4 December 1795, Tallofield's Minute: *Value of the Kandyan treaty in conducing to the security of the Southern Provinces and of trade in the Bay of Bengal and the Eastern Seas.*

Hobart to King Rajadhi Raja Sinha, 12 February 1796: *Commends treaty for the King's acceptance.*

North to the Secret Committee of the East India Company, 26 November 1798: *Reasons against ratifying any part of the Treaty negotiated with the King of Kandy in 1796; conditions in the Kandyan Kingdom and British relations with it.*

North to the Secret Committee of the East India Company, 21 February 1799: *Reports discussion with Kandyan Emissaries at Sitavaka on 5 February.*

North to the Secret Committee of the East India Company, 13 January 1800: *Reports circumstances leading to interviews with Pilima Talauve at Sitavaka and substance of discussions there on January 5th and 6th.*

North to the Secret Committee of the East India Company, 4 February 1800: *Reports intention to send Boyd to Kandy in support of request to the King to receive a British force into Kandy.*

North to Hobart (n.d.): *Discussions with the Kandyan ambassadors make it clear that the failure to negotiate a treaty is due to obstruction on the part of ministers. Steps taken to counter their influence.*

Minute, 5 February 1802, of Audience to the Ambassadors from Kandy: *Conversation at the Governor's Garden House on February 3rd between North and the Chief Ambassador.*

Proposals for a treaty between North and Sri Wickrama Rajasingha, (3 February 1802): *Terms proposed by North when ambassador declared that MacDowall's proposals were not acceptable.*

Account of the Conference between Boyd and the Kandyan ambassador, (n.d.): *Discussion between Boyd and the ambassadors on the several terms of item 13.*

Hobart to North, 8 February 1803, (Extract): *Stresses need for caution in dealing with a Government so weak as the Kandyan.*

North to Hobart, 4 September 1802: *Reports despoiling of merchants from Puttalam when trading in the Kandyan Kingdom and transmits report of evidence and copies of letters of remonstrance sent.*

North to Hobart, 21 November 1802: *Pilima Talauve and Leuke show willingness to promote negotiation of a treaty; action taken and contemplated in response.*

North to King Sri Wickrama Rajasinha (n.d.): *Complaints of spoliation of Puttalam merchants; asks redress and stresses value of a treaty as a means of preventing recurrence.*

Arbuthnot to Pilima Talauve, 10 September 1802: *Transmits depositions regarding plunder of Puttalam merchants and asks for satisfaction to them and to the British Government.*

Hobart to North, 7 May 1803, (Extract): *Kandyan relations: Vaccination, restitution to Puttalam merchants treaty negotiations as means of promoting amity.*

North to Clive, 30 January 1803: *Repeated evasion of the reparation promised to the Puttalam merchants and gathering of Kandyan troops on the Matara frontier have led to sending of British troops into the Kandyan territory; but proposals have also been sent for reconciling differences. Requests a supply of carriage bullocks.*

North to King Sri Wickrama Rajasinha, 29 January 1803: *Explains that British troops have entered the King's territories to secure indemnification of expenses caused by Kandyan aggression, but operations will cease if a treaty is concluded with the commander, who is a plenipotentiary for the purpose, such treaty being subject to the approval of the British Sovereign.*

Articles of a proposed Convention between North and King Sri Wickrama Rajasinha, 29 January 1803: *16 clauses; if accepted to take effect immediately till pleasure of His Britannic Majesty is known.*

North to MacDowall, 2 February 1803: *Instructions to be observed during Invasion of Kandyan territory.*

North to Hobart, 25 February 1803: *Reasons, which led to espousal of Buddhaswamy's claim to the Kandyan throne and terms of engagement. Progress of the invasion.*

North to Hobart, 14 April 1803: *Recounts circumstances, which have provoked the invasion of Kandy and the adoption of Muthuswamy's claim to be King. Lack of support for that Prince and outbreak of fever among the troops from Colombo increase Governor's desire to end hostilities. Steps for that purpose.*

North to MacDowall, February 1803: *Object of campaign is not conquest but to obtain indemnity; possession of the Seven Korales will suffice for this. Buddhaswamy's accession would counter delaying tactics by the King. Recruitment of bearers and troops for their protection proceeds.*

Lewis Gibson to Arbuthnot, 8 February 1803: *Reports military preparations by Kandyans on the frontier of the Matara district.*

Kandyan Chieftains to North, 12 February 1803: *Professes friendship towards the English; annual exchange of embassies prevents disputes.*

North to MacDowall, 10 March 1803: *The terms of convention with Muttuswamy having been already revised, makes suggestions for avoiding a second revision.*

North to MacDowall (or Barbut), 23 March 1803: *Muttuswamy should not be proclaimed King, being without Kandyan support. Possible action in North East and Sabaragamuwa. Conquest was never intended.*

Colonel Baillie to MacDowall, 16 March 1803: *Report of his expedition to Hangurankette in pursuit of Sri Wickrama Rajasinha.*

General MacDowall, 2 April 1803: *Notes of a conference with the Second Adigar at Kandy on 29 March 1803.*

MacDowall to North, 23 March 1803: *Reports that Prince Muthuswamy was proclaimed King.*

Maha Mudaliyar to Pilima Talauve, 26 March 1803: *Indicates terms that would be acceptable for a settlement of the dispute between the British and the Kandyan Court.*

North to Hobart, 15 September 1803: *Reports repulse of a strong Kandyan attack on Hanwella and successful counter-attack easing the military situation.*

North to Hobart, 1 January 1804: *Extracts, dealing with legislation and military affairs, taken from a general survey at the end of 1803. Kandyan incursions repulsed everywhere.*

North to Hobart, 3 March 1804: *Conditions have improved vastly, but the threat of Kandyan incursions remains and fever on the Northern coasts must subside before offensive operations can be undertaken. Considers conquest and annexation of the Kandyan Kingdom highly desirable, and discusses plans for its future administration.*

Maha Mudaliyar to the Second Adigar, 17 June 1804: *Explains the Governor's attitude towards the negotiating of peace.*

The Director of the King's Private Domains, (n.d.): *Ola given to Talgama Unnanse for the Maha Mudaliyar's information.*

Talgama Unnanse's statement, (c.27 August 1804): *Gives an account of his (second) visit to Kandy.*

Resolution of the House of Commons, 14 March 1804: *Asks that extracts from North's despatches relating to the outbreak of hostilities with the Kandyan Kingdom be tabled.*

North to Camden, 11 January 1805: *Describes attempts at secret negotiations with the Kandyan Court and their failure; discusses course to be pursued in these circumstances.*

Arbuthnot to D'Oyly, 24 October 1804: *Wishes Gallegodda Bandara informed secretly through his father-in-law that the British desire neither territory nor tribute but satisfaction for the massacre at Kandy and exemplary punishment of Pilima Talauve.*

Maha Mudaliyar to Gallegodda Bandara, 9 January 1805: *Glad to learn that the massacre was not authorised by the King, but points to several unsatisfactory features which will compel the Governor to continue the War.*

North to Camden, 8 February 1805: *Describes military operations within the Kandyan territory in the last quarter of 1804. Discusses military establishments in Ceylon and gives reasons for the considerable increase in military expenditure.*

North to Camden, 21 February 1805: *Reports concerted attacks by Kandyans on all parts of the frontier, their repulse near Negombo, and steps taken to increase the British force to meet them.*

Mudaliyar of the Palace to the Maha Mudaliyar, 13 February 1805: *Deplores Governor's decision to continue hostilities and predicts dire consequences to the British.*

Puswella Ralahamy to Mudaliyar Ilangakoon, 13 February 1805: *Sinhalese of the low country have always been loyal to the Kings of Kandy when their foreign rulers resisted them; details extensive support to the King within his Kingdom on the present occasion.*

Brownrigg to Bathurst, 3 November 1816: *Crown Jewels delivered by Eheylepola, carefully packed will be despatched at first opportunity.*

Narrative by Ekniligodde Nilame regarding the Conspiracy mentioned in the foregoing. 20 July 1816.

Account of the trial of Madugalle Uda Gabada Nilame for treason, held at the Audience Hall on 15 September 1816.

James Sutherland to John D'Oyly, 25 September 1816: *Madugalle Uda Gabada Nilame to be sentenced to imprisonment and forfeiture of property. Reasons for not imposing death sentence. Other sentences approved.*

John D'Oyly to James Sutherland, 26 September 1816: *Transmits copy of further proceedings at the Audience Hall regarding the case of Madugalle Uda Gabada Nilame.*

John D'Oyly to James Sutherland, 6 October 1816: *In reply to Governor's letter of the 25 September recommends that Madugalle be sentenced to 2 years imprisonment at Delft Island on the Jaffna Peninsula.*

John D'Oyly: *Proceedings in the case of Madugalle Uda Gabada Nilame on 27 September 1816.*

John D'Oyly: *Proceedings in the case of Madugalle Uda Gabade Nilame on 5 October 1816.*

James Sutherland to John D'Oyly, 23 August 1816: *Transmitting the Governor's minute regarding the appointment of an additional civil servant to be in charge of the Judicial Department.*

James Sutherland to John D'Oyly, 30 September 1816: *Transmitting a Commission issued by the Governor.*

John D'Oyly to Governor, 2 November 1816: *Informing that the unrecovered Regalia have been safely delivered into his possession.*

Brownrigg to Bathurst, 25 September 1817: *Periodical visits to Kandy; celebration at Kandy of Prince Regent's Birthday; good effects of pardoning Madugalle; difficulties in disposing of appeals in Civil Judicial cases; proposes making Eheylepola the First Adigar, the post he now aspires to get.*

Brownrigg to Bathurst, 5 November 1817: *Seeks approval of a salary of £300/- for George Turnour.*

Brownrigg to Bathurst, 7 November 1817: *Reporting the activities of the Malbar Pretender; the murder of Wilson; the capture of the Dessave; steps taken to suppress the uprising in Wellasse; Martial Law declared in Kandyan Provinces.*

Brownrigg to Bathurst, 27 November 1817: *Pretender's followers deserting; new Dessave sent to Ouva with MacDonald – good effects; late Dessave trying to make trouble; measure adopted; convinced on the duplicity of the Chiefs who are almost without exception systematically treacherous.*

Brownrigg to Bathurst, 15 December 1817: *Enemy adopts hit and run tactics – never appears in force. Difficulty of capturing the Pretender who is constantly moving from place to place. Leniency has emboldened the rebels of Walapane. Rebel Dessave's influence rapidly declining. Eyewitnesses' account of Wilson's death.*

Brownrigg to Bathurst, 28 December 1817: *Swollen mountain torrents prevented operations in Weyaloova; successful operations on the Western side of Wallapane; complete tranquillity restored in Wellasse and Bintenne; insurrection almost suppressed in Ouwa; no symptom of insurrection in other Provinces.*

Brownrigg to Bathurst, 30 January 1818: *Tranquility re-established in most places; main strength of rebels in South-East Ouwa; not yet able to capture Pretender.*

Minute by His Excellency the Governor, 3 March 1818: *Explains to the Kandyans the reasons for removing Eheylepola.*

Brownrigg to Marquis of Hastings, 23 February 1818: *Transmits copy of a letter to Fort St. George requesting help. Gives an account of the insurrection.*

Brownrigg to Marquis of Hastings, 28 April 1818: *Sends duplicate of the Despatch of 23 February; rebellion still continues unabated. Solicits early counsel and aid; requests permission to ask for aid from Madras.*

Brownrigg to Hugh Elliot, 25 May 1818: *Yet again requests re-enforcements.*

Brownrigg to Bathurst, 24 July 1818: *Proceeds from sale of Property deposited in Colonial Treasury. Queen's Jewels recovered. Eheylepola deprived of his jewels.*

Brownrigg to Bathurst, 17 August 1818: *Decision of Fort William Government to send troops; Madras Government again approached; Recommends a permanent increase of Forces in Ceylon; increase of Revenue will meet the expense; spirit of submission among rebels manifest. List of enclosures in Despatch No. 3030 dated 17 August 1818.*

C. Lushington to John Rodney, 3 July 1818: *Reports despatch of troops to Colombo.*

C. Lushington to John Rodney, 14 July 1818: *Despatch of re-enforcements.*

Brownrigg to Hugh Elliot, 16 August 1818: *Requests troops as Bengal troops will take some time to arrive.*

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