SOME ASPECTS OF TRADITIONAL SINHALESE CULTURE

A SYMPOSIUM

edited by

Ralph Pieris

CEYLON UNIVERSITY CONFERENCE ON TRADITIONAL CULTURES
PERADENIYA
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Edited by
RALPH PIERIS

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Maṇḍiya The basic position assumed by a Kandyan dancer, "with knees bent outward, wide apart and in line with the body" (page 27.)

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INTRODUCTION

The papers included in this volume were originally read at a Conference on Traditional Cultures in Ceylon, initiated by UNESCO and held at the University, Peradeniya, during March 17th, and 18th., 1956. At the last session of the Conference it was resolved to publish these papers in order to make the public aware of the efforts made by the University to develop the traditional arts.*

What is Traditional Culture?

Since it was realised that any discussion of the term "culture" might give rise to interminable and fruitless controversy, the expression was restricted to the traditional arts and crafts, with special reference to the Kandyan provinces. There was no attempt to define "culture" in the theoretical sense in which it is commonly used by sociologists to signify a configuration or totality of elements which are functionally interrelated. For the very expression "traditional culture", if used in this all-inclusive sense, would be a contradiction in terms; few modern societies have been completely insulated from non-traditional cultural elements, while most peoples have preserved some aspects of traditional culture, handed down from generation to generation. There remains however, the further difficulty mentioned by Dr. Sower, that the expression "traditional cultures", by differentiating between the "traditional" and the "modern", has no place for the middle or transitional categories which belong to neither extremes. The movie, which emerged out of the embryonic stage of the silent film in 1929, is a case in point—it is not traditional, nor is it "modern", for it has long been accepted as a popular art-form.

*The papers are arranged in the order in which they were read at th Conference, with the exception of Dr. Tilakasiri's article which is new. Prof. Green made some comments during the Conference, and submitted his paper later; Dr. Sarathchandra's paper was communicated from Japan, and was read on his behalf. Most of the other contributions have been revised prior to publication. The introduction is based on an official repo.t on the Conference.

In order to bypass these vexed questions of definition, it was decided to refer in the plural to "traditional cultures" rather than to a unified "culture", and to specify various cultural elements which were acknowledged to be traditional. One test was the anonymity of traditional cultures. The traditional arts and crafts are impersonal, the manifestation of an experience and feeling which is older and deeper than the emotion or skill of the individual artist. The opening essay in this symposium enumerates numerous aspects of traditional culture so defined—song, fable, myth, legend and story, arts and crafts, music and dance, beliefs and ceremonial practices. Needless to say, it was not possible to include papers on all these aspects of culture.

"Traditional culture" is further restricted in this symposium by excluding the "high culture" or "art culture" such as religion, philosophy, and art-literature, which are already studied in the University, and concentrating instead on the "mass culture" or "folk culture" such as folk-dancing, crafts, and folk-plays.[1] Whereas the art-culture is relatively specialised and its appreciation limited to connoisseurs, the folk-culture has a mass appeal and thrives in the village rather than in the palace or manor. Fortunately in Ceylon there never was that fatal gulf between highbrow and lowbrow. Unlike the art-music of India, for example, the popular music of Ceylon, consisting mainly of drumming and singing, was part of the everyday life of the village folk, although it had the patronage of the king and the nobility as well.[2] The artist, it is true, was a professional, proficient in a traditional art, but appreciation was universal.

In recent times, the very existence of this universal and "popular" folk-culture has been threatened by social changes and new intellectual interests. Thus decline in belief has scarcely affected Buddhism—in fact there has been a Buddhist renaissance in our own time. It is the folk-religion that has proved most vulnerable in the face of science and scepticism. Had not the pure dance portions of the religious ceremony *kohomba kankāriya*

1. Here again the dichotomy between "art" and "folk" culture is not clear-cut, and Dr. Sarathchandra mentions that some of the dance-forms and varieties of drama "are on a higher level of sophistication than arts that would fall under the general category of 'folk arts' ".

2. "The art music of India exists only under cultivated patronage, and in its own intimate environment. It corresponds to all that is most classical in the European tradition. It is the chamber-music of an aristocratic society, where the patron retains musicians for his own entertainment and for the pleasure of the circle of his friends: or it is temple music, where the musician is the servant of God. The public concert is unknown, and the livelihood of the artist does not depend upon his ability and will to amuse the crowd" (A. K. Coomaraswamy, *The Dance of Shiva*. Bombay 1948, p. 103.)

been secularized and re-enacted independently of its ritualistic context, the art might well have been lost to posterity. For the elaborate ceremony performed in fulfilment of a vow or to avert a suspected calamity is now a rarity, while *ves* dancing, once an essential part of the ceremony, though practically divorced from its religious context[3], is now a living art in its own right.

Cultural Revival versus Innovation.

Throughout the symposium the question recurs as to whether any purpose is served in reviving moribund aspects of traditional culture. A dichotomy is often posed between arts and crafts which manifest a vitality and are actively practised, and those that are "dead." But whether or not any item of culture is "dead" is really a psychological question. From the point of view of demand, an art is "dead" only because of the negative attitudes of people who have no interest in it. Consequently, on the supply side, the artist's work declines in quality or quantity or both. An art ceases to be living because the artist enjoys neither patronage nor appreciation. The art itself may by aesthetic standards be of greater worth than what has captured the popular imagination, but the latter, though inferior in quality, is alive.

The interest shown in traditional and "primitive" art-forms has not been peculiar to this country. Primitive art has inspired artists ranging from Jacob Epstein to Jamini Roy. When post-impressionistic artists, yearning for subject-matter, turned with relief to primitive art, the erstwhile "curios" of West Africa were freed from the protective chrysalis of ethnology, and came to be appreciated by Western artists on aesthetic grounds. Leon Underwood interprets this recurrent quest for primitive art-forms as follows:

'Unrecorded history, brought to light by science, shows a recurring pattern of man groping eternally amid the ashes on the hearth of his ancestors—in search of the Phoenix egg. Man's invention of the Phoenix myth itself, is evidence of this urge to search amid ancestral ashes. We may not question the importance of such restless activity in removing dust and debris from the art of remote antiquity. It can make only one point in the mystery of man's existence—his genius for observation in the pursuit of the sublime. Man in his passage from dust to dust periodically searched the ancestral piles for some lost grain to stimulate his new grasp at perfection.' [4]

The laissez-faire theory which regards all innovation as a "natural" and inevitable process which should not be impeded

3. An important step in the secularization of *ves* was its inclusion in the Kandy Asala Perahara in the thirties by the then Diyavadana Nilame of the Temple of The Tooth, P. B. Nugawela. *Ves* dancing is still performed annually at the Vishnu Devale after the Perahara in the *valliyakum* ceremony, enacted to ward of the evil eye.

4. Leon Underwood, *Figures in Wood of West Africa* (London, 1951) p. ix.

by "artificial" means, raises difficult questions when applied to the arts. It is one thing to allow the eclipse of customs and beliefs which have no place in the context of modern life. The recording of these antique aspects of culture which are fast dying out is important, but the data will interest only the ethnologist: the exorcist's masks are rapidly finding their way into ethnological museums, and only poor imitations are now produced for sale to tourists as "curios." It is quite another thing to throw overboard an art-form simply because it has few to appreciate it and fewer to practise it.

In regard to the pertinent question whether the "development" of (say) painting should not be allowed free play, contributors to the symposium seem to be generally agreed that indiscriminate experimentation and innovation could be highly detrimental to the arts. Mr. Molamuré, replying to a question regarding the advisability of creating ballets based on Kandyan dance movements, expressed the view that the abstract character of Kandyan dancing would make it an inappropriate basis for ballet. As he explains in his paper, Kandyan dancing differs from the classical Indian dance forms in that "no conscious use is made of *mudras* and *abhinaya*, itended as such to convey a meaning and suggest a mood or idea. In fact, the movement is pure dance (*nrtta*) unmixed with expressive mime or dramatic action." Again, the predominantly masculine, heroic quality of the Kandyan dances, "epitomising the supple strength and sinewy grace of the male", make them unsuitable for women (with the possible exception of *pantēru*). Yet the masculine *ves* dancing is currently taught in girls' schools. Rather than drill girls in a dance-form suited to the male, it is preferable to introduce the South Indian *bharata natyam* which evidence indicates was anciently practised by women in this country.[5]

There is ample evidence of external influence and uncritical innovation giving rise to artistic distortion and deterioration. The style of painting associated with Sarlis which was in vogue until recently and was extensively employed in temples in place of the "old-fashioned" traditional murals, was but a poor imitation of nineteenth-century European water-colours.[6] As Dr. Gunesinghe

5. cf. the beautiful figurine of a woman in *bharata natyam* pose which adorns the 12th. century hanging lamp in the Dadigama Museum, and the wood-carvings in Ambakke Devale.

6. David Hume, in an essay *Of the Rise and Progress of the Arts and Sciences*, observes: "Perhaps it may not be for the advantage of any nation to have the arts imported from their neighbours in too great perfection. This extinguishes exulation.....So many models of Italian painting brought to England, instead of exciting our artists, is the cause of their small progress in that noble art."

points out, the correctness and beauty of Kandyan temple painting depend on studied effects: "All aspects of its technique, the measurements, the proportions, the choice of colours, the composition of the figures, the relative position of the figures to one another, are all based on traditional laws formulated by generations of masters." The same has been said of the minor arts such as embroidery. "There are extreme limitations in Kandyan embroidery but it is to these limitations that it owes its beauty and restraint. Introduce other colours or another style of design and the whole charm would disappear."[7] The Kandyan arts such as dancing, painting, wood-carving and embroidery, are all aesthetically satisfying precisely because the artist adhered to traditional canons which gave his particular art its distinctive form and proportion. Spengler has rightly suggested that time and again "the symptom of decline in creative power is the fact that to produce something round and complete the artist now requires to be emancipated from form and proportion.....But what is far more indicative is the arbitrariness and immoderateness which tramples on and shatters the conventions on centuries."[8]

Our quest then should not be for origins *as such*, nor should we attempt the futile task of resuscitating the various art-forms in their pristine purity, uncontaminated by external influences. Since no human community has contrived to live in complete isolation, no aspect of culture can be said to have been insulated from external influences *ab initio*. But just as an individual artist reaches a stage when he achieves, as it were, "a rounding-off of his oeuvre", an art-form attains a certain maturity—a perfection which is the product of aesthetic canons evolved by generations of masters, and not by the exertions of a single individual. "Under the spell of a great tradition full achievement is possible even to a minor artist, because the living art brings him in touch with his task and the task with him."[9] Subsequent innovation or compromise by artists who have lost the tradition results only in poor art.

Ours is an excellent period for taking stock of our traditional art-forms. Modern means of communication have placed within our reach a wealth of foreign art-traditions. But we are no longer bewildered by their variety: we tend to classify everything in its appropriate place. We are no longer troubled by any alleged

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7. E. M. Coomaraswamy, "Old Sinhalese Embroidery" (*Ceylon National Review*, July 1906).
8. Spengler, *The Decline of the West* (New York, 1926) I. 291
9. *ibid.*, I. 292

chasm between East and West. For we are aware that the different art-traditions mut be studied in their own historical and cultural setting. Consequently it is no longer necessary to harp on the necessity for innovation and novelty in order to revive interest in arts which are supposedly "dead." The proper appreciation and evaluation of art-forms is more important. In the field of music Mr. Dolapihilla maintains that the old way of rendering the traditional minstrel songs (*vannam*) might be forgotten. Indeed, many of these *vannam* have been crushed out of existence by the elephantine *gajagā vannama* which dominates the repertoire of the inept singer. The preservation of the minstrel tradition is not proposed in a spirit of chauvinism. We are aware of the limitataions of the form—limitations to which it owes its attractiveness.[10] But we are aware also that if music is to advance beyond the limits of the folk-songs, that aim will not be achieved by arbitrary inflation of the proportions of the *vannam* (in the manner of "Oriental" film-music), but by renewing our contact with the great tradition of Indian classical music.

In short, the crux of the problem of tradition *versus* innovation is that an art or craft, however ancient, should not be considered "dead" if there is a lively recognition of its merits, and such recognition requires study and effort. As Dr. Gunesinghe says of Kandyan painting.

'Reviving is probably the wrong word if it gives anybody the idea that the attempt is to bring to life something that is altogether dead: for Kandyan painting is not dead. If it is dead, it is so only in the eyes of those who are not aware of its existence. It is no more dead today than Kandyan dancing was two decades ago. It only awaits to be recognised. And that is just what we mean by reviving: to recognise Kandyan temple painting as a particular style of painting that deserves to be practised and appreciated. This depends of course on how satisfying aesthetically Kandyan painting is, and this kind of judgment depends entirely on what sort of art education we have.'

Unfortunately, our urban schools have been influenced exclusively by Western models and generations of schoolchildren have been imitating European forms, and have no feeling for the traditional painting. It is only outside the large towns that children have any conception of an indigenous artistic tradition. As a former Director of Education has said.

'Children for a long time have been copying Western art forms, and it is only very recently that.....emphasis has been laid on encouraging the child to express himself in his own way through line and colour.....School exhibits frequently reveal that, in what are called in Ceylon 'English" schools,

10. Every form of music, for that matter, has its own limitations within which the artist has to work and discipline himself. Jacques Ibert, the Head of the Opera Comique, once said, "Music, like a woman, has to be tamed. You can think of a tune with delight, but to develop it as a piece of music you have to use strict discipline."

the approach is often westernised and representational. Some of it is good, yet outside some of the big centres, children tend to express themselves through an Oriental approach, and I for one think this is a hopeful sign for the future, and to be given every encouragement.'[11]

Traditional Cultures in a Changing Society

Under the Kandyan sovereigns, artists and craftsmen were organised in various state departments or guilds, each under the direction of a royal official, *e.g.* the artificer's department comprising smiths, painters, and brass-workers (*koṭṭalbadda*), that of the drummers and trumpeters (*tambōru purampeṭṭukāra*), dancers (*nāṭum ilaṃgamē*), and singers (*kavikāra maḍuva*). The reward of the artist and craftsman was land, not wages. These service lands provided their holders with the basic means of subsistence, primarily the staple rice, and money played a negligible role. Commodities such as salt, cloth, or dryfish could be procured without resort to money, by bartering goods and services.

These social and economic conditions determined the temperament of the artist. He worked at a leisurely and unhurried pace. He might work hard, but never feverishly. Above all, he was never required to vary the tempo of his work since there were no violent fluctuations in the demand for his services. His best work was un-self-conscious: it was not the product of that kind of intense striving which strains every nerve in the extraction of ideas and inspiration and makes many a modern artist a self-conscious eccentric. An art handed down from father to son constituted, as it were, an artistic "second nature", an instinct of workmanship.

Ananda Coomaraswamy has repeatedly and earnestly urged that it is vain to expect great things of Eastern art until the East once more learns the art of living, when "once more art shall sweeten all man's life and labour."[12] He rightly argues that the prospective traveller who, wishing to visit some "lost paradise" such as Bali, asks whether or not the Balinese have yet been "spoiled", is condemning his own industrial civilization. But it is most unrealistic to yearn for a revival of the "lost paradise" of an agrarian barter economy as a basis for a resurrection of artistic "treasures" which, as in Melanesia, have been lost; owing to "the breakdown of culture in the islands where the objects were made, they may be studied more satisfactorily in museums."[13]

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11. H. W. Howes, "Oriental and Occidental Art" (*Ceylon Today*, 1/4, Dec. 1952)
12. Ananda Coomaraswamy, "Kandyan Art: What it Meant and How it Ended" (*Ceylon National Review*, *I*, Jan. 1906), and throughout his writings. e.g., *Am I my Brother's Keeper*? (New York, 1943.)
13. G. A. Richard, *Melanesian Design* (London 1931) p. 90.

Introduction

Ananda Coomaraswamy's social philosophy demands an adjustment in the constitution of society itself in order to resurrect art treasures of the past now buried in soulless museums "where we display the damning evidence of a way of living that we have made impossible." It was such a social philosophy that inspired certain African tribes to form secret societies which insisted on the wholesale preservation of the old, in opposition to everything foreign, in a desperate bid to prevent the total disintegration which their societies were undergoing in consequence of foreign domination. Admirable though this romantic ideal may be, it is less practicable than the alternative policy of adapting the arts themselves so that they could have a place in the context of modern social conditions. The case of Japan provides an admirable illustration of the fact that industrialization need not necessarily lead to a decay of the traditional cultures, particularly the arts.

For a money economy has come to stay, and we have accepted without reserve the cinema, the airplane, electrictiy, printing, and the radio. These technological innovations have made a deep impression on the structure of society in general, and on the temperament of the artist in particular. The artist has had to adjust the tempo of his work to keep pace with the market for his wares. If he is "successful", he has perforce to work in haste. for experience has taught him that time is money. Ironically enough, he can afford to take his own time over his work, as of old, only if he is unemployed—in other words, a failure.

In Ceylon today, few would favour a wholesale reversion to the old order of society; magic and "superstition", caste and the monarchy, have few defenders now. And the Kandyan Peasantry Commission (1951) recommend the abolition of service tenures "as a first step in the fight against caste."[14] Instead, the most popular form of "selective conservatism" is in favour of technological changes, but associates "tradition" (which most people are loth to dispense with altogether) and "nationalism", with dress and language. Unfortunately, dress and language too often masks an appalling lack of feeling for the arts. In his purblind worship of the dress, the crude nationalist has ignored the substance of culture, and the slightest scratch reveals a philistine.

On the other hand there is the irrational hostility to traditional cultures on the part of the pattern-setting western-educated elite. The present nationalist upsurge expressed in the demand to give Sinhalese its due place in the national life has, according to Dr. Sarathchandra, "created among the English educated

14. Sessional Paper XVIII, 1951. p. 108.

minority a psychology of self-defence, and their attitude to the national culture has turned from being a negative and cynical one, to an attitude of active antagonism". Mr. J. E. Jayasuriya has dwelt further on this phenomenon, and concludes that "our first task is to save our English educated upper class from their artificial bi-culturality and to re-introduce them to the heritage of our traditional cultures".

With such widespread lack of appreciation and patronage, the entire problem of the revival of interest in the traditional cultures turns out to be a psychological one. Prof. Green mentions that the repeated references made by contributors to this symposium to the need to develop the arts and crafts is in striking contrast to the refusal of our schools to accept such responsibility. That negative attitude on the part of our educators is largely due to the unhappy dichotomy between manual and mental occupations. Before the work of the artist and craftsman reaps a fitting reward, and before manual work has a vocational appeal, attitudes must be changed by some measures of psychological strategy.

The scant respect accorded to the artist is not peculiar to this country. It was only relatively recently that the Western European artist was freed from subservience to an aristocratic patron who, like Old King Cole, would "*call* for his fiddlers three." Paderewski in his Memoirs, recounts that even late in the last century musicians were treated as servants.[15] But experience has shown that ancient prejudice can be removed in modern democratic conditions. The social stigma that banished the temple dancers (*davadasis*) from South Indian temples was eventually overcome, and girls of respectable families began to study the dance of the *devadasis* as a social accomplishment, under its new name *bharata natyam*.

One obvious measure of psychological strategy would be the removal of the stigma of caste attached to the artist and craftsman. In the case of Kandyan dancing the widespread popularity of *ves*, once a ritual dance practised exclusively by people of the lowly drummer caste, has led to its inclusion in the curricula of many a Central School. If the annual schools' competitions organised under the auspices of UNESCO have demonstrated that such instruction has given children little more than a slender acquaintance with a difficult art, teaching in government schools has at least had the beneficial effect of removing the odium of caste from the art of dancing, besides revealing potential talent and building up a responsive and critical public.

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15. cf. Boyd Neel, "In at the Servants' Entrance" (*The Listener*, 17th October 1946).

Another useful suggestion is that art should increasingly become part of everyday living, and that the museum should not be considered the only proper abode of all aspects of traditional culture. In the case of Kandyan painting, the inaccessibility of the temple murals is a significant factor militating against popular appreciation. The inadequate lighting of the interiors of temples like Dambulla, is exasperating even to the enthusiast. Dr. Gunesinghe suggests that there is nothing to prevent paintings in the Kandyan tradition being reproduced on wood or canvas.[16] An attempt has in fact been made to convince some of these *sittaras* that the "easel picture" might be profitably exhibited and may well become part of the average home.

Future Prospects

Aristocratic patronage of the artist and craftsman has gone with the decline in the system of service tenures and the eclipse of the traditional guilds. Emancipated from subservience to a feudal lord and to a caste-oriented skill, the artisan craves for more lucrative employment. A renowned traditional artist recently bemoaned the fact that since all his sons wanted to be bus drivers, there was none left to continue a tradition which had been kept alive in his family for generations. The existence of dancers, drummers, singers and painters, is largely due to the temples which still require their services and form a rallying point for them. The recent Land Tenure Commission concluded that "ritual and ceremonial play so important a part in the religious life of the country that nothing must be done to cause damage to the system that sustains them." The Commissioners recommended that the system of service tenures be retained in the case of temples, and add (presumably to justify the retention of a species of serfdom) that increasing devotion to the Buddhist faith has made pilgrims throng the temples on holy days and festive occasions, and that a "necessary effect" of this has been "a greater enthusiasm on the part of *nilakārayas* to participate in such ritual and ceremonial."[17]

But in the final analysis the present time is one of cultural malaise, and the whole question of the preservation and development of our cultural heritage merits state concern, for the state alone can furnish adequate assistance at the national level. Some of the immediate measures which might profitably be pursued may now be enumerated.

16. Painting on cloth is mentioned in literary works of the thirteenth century (cf. M. B. Ariyapala, *Society of Mediaeval Ceylon*, Colombo, 1956. p. 256)

17. *Report of the Commission on the tenure of Lands of Viharagam etc.* Sessional Paper, I, 1956. pp. 61—63.

(1) The establishment of village schools, wherever possible in the homes of outstanding exponents of the several arts. The necessary equipment should be supplied and a monthly grant paid to keep the teacher above want and to enable him to concentrate on the perfection of his art. The scheme already begun in the case of Kandyan dancing may be extended to the other arts and crafts. The progress of the six village schools founded by the Kandyan Dancing Panel of the Arts Council of Ceylon has been so satisfactory and revealed such a wealth of talent that the scheme aroused great enthusiasm among professional dancers, and numerous applications have been received for the establishment of more schools. Since there is no lack of teachers or pupils, immediate provision should be made for 50 such schools of dancing. Singing and drumming should also be taught in these dance schools or in separate institutions.

In the case of the other arts and crafts, a scheme has been proposed[18] whereby the government assures prominent artists and craftsmen a regular monthly allowance of Rs. 150/- with the sole proviso that they should impart their skills to apprentices and maintain high standards. Such a scheme, if implemented, would revive the idea of the traditional guild and build up a body of competent artists in the course of a few years.

An institution like the Government School of Art could teach Kandyan and Low-country temple painting under the guidance of leading painters.

(2) The Rural Development Societies should take a leading part in the development of village arts and crafts.

(3) The scope of the work done by the semi-government Kandyan Art Association should be extended. Dr. Fernando suggests that its present policy seems to be directed mainly towards achieving the second of the twin objects for which it was founded in 1893, *viz.* (*a*) to preserve the purity and originality of Kandyan art work and (*b*) to form a medium between the would-be purchaser and the producer of such work. Resources should be provided to enable the Association to pay more attention to the first objective, that is, preserving the purity and originality of Kandyan art.

(4) The activities of the national museums, particularly the provincial institutions like the Kandy Museum, should be extended. At present no attempt is made by their administrators to educate the public and the craftsmen themselves. Periodical lectures with illustrations from Museum exhibits can create a new

18. by the Director of Rural Development and Cottage Industries.

interest in the traditional arts and crafts. Encouragement can also be given to students and teachers to undertake research on the traditional cultures.

It must be emphasised that the combination of a natural history Museum and an ethnological museum is undesirable. Since the Kandy Museum is confined to cultural exhibits, the ethnological and archaeological exhibits of the Colombo Museum should be transferred there, and Museum of Science and Technology maintained in Colombo.

(5) Since the written material pertaining to the traditional cultures is to be sought in palm-leaf Mss., many of which are in an advanced state of decay, a team of full-time research workers should be entrusted with the task of collecting and editing them, possibly under the direction of the Historical Manuscripts Commission. The Government Film Unit should be entrusted with the task of making motion pictures of the various dance-forms, ranging from the basic steps to the more elaborate movements. Similar films should be made of the work of the craftsmen. The publication of illustrated monographs on the arts and crafts is also essential.

It remains to comment on the suggestion made by one of the contributors to this symposium that the upper classes should spend their leisure in the active practise of an art or craft, since such activity is immensely satisfying both to the individual practising it, and to society in general, and serves as an example to the common people. This is indeed a heretical view which merits careful consideration. It is alien to the traditional ideas according to which art is a vocation, never a recreation:

> 'The civilizations of Asia do not afford to the inefficient amateur those opportunities of self-expression which are so highly appreciated in Europe and America. The arts are nowhere taught as a social accomplishment; on the one hand there is the professional, proficient in a traditional art, and on the other the lay public. The musical cultivation of the public does not consist in 'everybody doing it', but in appreciation and reverence.' 19

In modern conditions, leisure activity is too often "other directed", governed by the changing judgments of significant people within the individual's purview. Industrial civilization has cumulatively complicated the intricacy of every segment of life, both of work and of leisure. It has engendered a peculiarly puritanical attitude towards leisure, expressed in the adage that Satan finds mischief for idle hands. Leisure, according to this view, should be uplifting and strenuous.[20] The element of striving

19. Ananda Coomaraswamy, *The Dance of Shiva*, p. 103.

20. cf. David Riesman, "Some Observations on Changes in Leisure Attitudes" (*Perspectives*, 5, 1953)

which was absent even in the efforts of the professional artist, comes into its own. Self-styled social reformers often comment on the lack of opportunities for uplifting leisure activity in our villages. A similar complaint is heard of undergraduates at Peradeniya, who spend whole evenings doing nothing productive. Yet may not this passivity be a revolt against the modern puritanical view of leisure? It may well be that this love of idleness may, in a favourable cultural atmosphere, engender the "inner directed" activity associated with the traditional artist and his public both steeped in an artistic tradition which was older and deeper than the skill or wisdom of any individual: the artist dedicating his life to the perfection of his art, the layman responding with an art of his own.

DYNAMISM OF TRADITIONAL CULTURES

I consider it a distinct honour to be invited to this Conference—probably the first of its kind and I hope not the last—to participate in the proceedings at its opening session. My thanks are due to the organisers for this great honour. Perhaps this opportunity is given to me because I also happen to be the Chairman of a Sub-Committee of the UNESCO National Commission which has been appointed to direct a specific study of the traditional cultures in four areas of Ceylon, *viz.*, Kandy, Minneriya, Matara and Jaffna. This privilege may be due to the fact that I have shown some interest in cultural studies in my own humble way and contributed a little towards furthering them in this Island. Whatever the circumstances may be I am happy to be present this morning and to address this select gathering assembled at this would be great seat of learning. The presence of those genuinely interested in furthering the studies of national culture also gives me confidence.

The history of this conference may also be mentioned in brief. This is the outcome of the discussions the Vice-Chancellor had, I believe, with the Deputy Director of the Department of Cultural Activites of UNESCO in August 1955. The subject was discussed with the Vice-Chancellor on the one hand and the Cultural Sub-Committee of the UNESCO National Commission on the other. It was explanied by the Deputy Director of Cultural Activities of UNESCO that UNESCO was gravely concerned with the falling in the standards of traditional culture in South East Asia as a result of industrialization. Therefore, it was deemed expedient at this critical stage to organise meetings of students of culture and others interested in allied studies. Similar conferences or seminars will be held during 1956 in Andhra, Calcutta, Decca, Delhi, Jakarta, Karachchi, Lahore, Madras and Nepal. Related studies are also being pursued by the National Commissions in Ceylon and Burma. A seminar of this nature for this very purpose has been held in Madras on 26th February, 1956

under the Chairmanship of the Vice-Chancellor of the Madras University.

The objects of these studies and seminars are:—

(*a*) to establish closer international understanding

(*b*) to collect and to preserve information relating to traditional arts and crafts

(*c*) to analyse inherent ideas and values for planning for the future, and

(*d*) to develop the cultural life of communities.

The important questions for which we are required to suggest a solution, or to assist in answering are how best the traditional cultures could be studied, preserved, evaluated and attuned to the life of a changing modern society. It is hoped that to-day's deliberations will go a long way in evolving a scheme for realising the objects mentioned above. In order to achieve this, first and foremost, it is essential to get together a band of persons genuinely interested in cultural studies. In this country particularly at present culture has no intrinsic value apart from propaganda purposes. Culture holds no passport to office or provides no ladder to success. It yields no immediate benefits financial or otherwise. In fact, culture appears to be an unwanted child and nobody's particular darling. Secondly, culture does not attract trained persons for directing and organising proper studies both in the field and office. It is essential that these persons should be young and belonging to this country as they alone will be able to carry out the field duties objectively and directly since no difficulties of language or bias will stand in the way. Last but not least, culture lacks a strong organisation and needs a few patrons who are genuine lovers of culture whose goodwill and generosity alone can contribute to material success both in the rehabilitation and development of national cultures. It is my fervent hope that this Conference will help to bring together, on a common platform, all these persons whose interest and devotion alone can help to revitalize and articulate the dry bones of culture.

I have chosen for my paper the title "Dynamism of Traditional Cultures." I have chosen this after careful thought and I hope that those present will appreciate the significance of the theme. The need to canalise the dynamic energy inherent in traditional cultures to the lasting benefit and happiness of this nation is particularly great at this stage of culture conflict. Before I proceed to the subject it may be useful to explain what is meant by "tradition" and "culture." I shall try to avoid being too technical

Dynamism of Traditional Cultures

All of us know what is meant by tradition. It is an accretion of lore through the process of transmission and preservation in successive stages; from generation to generation, from family to family, from caste to caste, from father to son, from teacher to pupil, from school to school. This lore is acquired not by written records but by oral tradition or by precept and example, by trial and error. Such ancient lore has been preserved from ancient times and the crystalisation of any specific elements is known as tradition. This is not a static phenomenon but a dynamic process. The process itself undergoes continuous change yielding place to external influences and internal adjustments. The irrelevant and the non-essential elements get sifted and left behind in process of time. But the main current of values capable of influencing the group or community continues. This continuum of values evolved through generations is potent in maintaining the spirit of the community. It sustains the virility of its people. Therefore, a tradition plays a vital role in the survival, evolution or development of a community and the potentiality of such development depends on the strength and adaptability of the cultural trends. The traditions so acquire an antiquity and a national and social recognition almost amounting to religious worship and belief.

Culture is a difficult term used in different meanings by different persons at different times. Here a distinction must be made between culture and civilization. Culture must necessarily take into account not only the assemblage of industries and technical processes but also other factors such as art, customs, beliefs, etc., for the latter elements alone help us to know anything of the life and mind of the people themselves. Civilization denotes a larger and more extensive unit than a culture. It may consist of many cultures, the connecting bond between each being the conditions and mode of life obtaining. On the basis of cultures we can have a nomadic civilization, an agricultural civilization or material civilization. Civilization is the physical development of the natural ability of a community which enables it to enjoy the highest fruits of the society. Culture on the other hand tempers the civilization with a sense of values in determining what is lasting and morally binding for the good of humanity. Therefore, a community that has a culture need not necessarily imply that it is the most advanced in material progress. The Germans use the word "culture" to denote a more abstract concept of the way of life and mental outlook of the people with whom we are concerned. The English use it in another sense whilst the Americans apply it in a third sense.

For the purpose of this Conference, I think, culture is understood to mean the vital elements of ancient lore preserved by the

people for enlivening and ennobling the life of the community. Degeneration of the elements of a traditional culture may easily account for the loss of nerve and the absence of the urge to live; for it is culture that sustains the interest and maintains the spirits. It gives life to mind and heart. What then are the traditional cultures? I may mention a few as being the immediate concern of this Conference for there are very many traditional cultural elements in our society. Some of them are; folklore, *i.e.*, song, fable, myth, legend and story, arts and crafts, music and dance, beliefs and ceremonial practices. These are among the most important.

Traditional cultures embody the genius of the people and reflect in them the "verities of life." These survive with the people of rural areas and not amongst the urban populations. This is true of all traditional cultures practically in every part of the world. It is the new and the sophisticated that is popular with the urban folk. They are more susceptible to change, more daring and more progressive whilst the rural folk are averse to change, less daring and more conservative. There is therefore a constant conflict between the two elements; an interplay of psychical forces and cultural complexes; a balancing of values and an adaptability to new forces. The speed of change and the mechanism of change are the most noteworthy for on these factors depend the survival or extinction of traditional cultures. Change is however inevitable but a balance between speed of change and the change itself is what is essential and necessary for survival. It is here that the conservatism of cultures counts. It is here that the dynamism of cultures display their innate capacity to determine its strength of character.

There are many influences that change cultures. On the physical plane, they are political, social, technical and industrial; and on the psychical plane, prestige, imitation, borrowing and adoption. In fact it is the psychical that creates the disposing factors leading to the physical changes. Any maladjustments or disharmony between these two conditions may lead to disastrous consequences culminating in extreme impotency or primitiveness on the one side or degeneration and total extinction on the other. That is the reason which makes dynamism of a culture so all important for its survival, continuation and development.

Dynamism is not a tangible quality which could be seen nor can it be felt. But it pervades the complete cultural complex. It creates a sense of values within itand in fact is the determinant value itself. It is the power, the strength and the spirit both for change and stability. It permeates society and religion. It gives colour to society, and life and spirit to a people.

Dynamism of Traditional Cultures

Every traditional culture does possess in its own way a strength and a weakness; both a positive and a negative value. The manner and method of fusing the positive factor of one culture with the negative of another determines the result in acculturization or rejection. "The three phases of culture contact and change are: the impinging culture with its institutions, intentions and interests; the reservoir of indigenous custom, belief and living traditions and the process of contact and change where members of the two cultures co-operate, conflict or compromise." There is a state of suspension or a period of inactivity when the dynamism of a culture may for obvious reasons remain dormant. It is this period of "hibernation" as it were which generates the greatest potential for survival in any conflict or change. It is this state of suspended animation which helps to discern the direction of its latent forces. Any mechanism that helps to direct such power in the right direction helps the culture to motivate, revive and develop to even greater heights than it ever reached before. This leads to efflorescence.

Industrialization is only one aspect of change. There are other aspects, *e.g.*, colonization, socialization or "politicalization" if such a term is permitted. And there is also national regeneration or recreation. All these processes of change are ancient as humanity itself. To the anthropologist who knows the history of human progress there is nothing new in them. Humanity always feared change as much as it now fears disaster through man made or heaven sent forms of death and destruction. Humanity always evolved and developed safeguards for its own preservation and these constitute a body of eternal values. These values are inherent in the traditional cultures. Therefore, if industrialization or for a matter of that any change is to be resisted or averted then these values must be released in sufficient strength to neutralize the negative forces. They must be understood, appreciated and controlled so that in case of conflict they may be properly absorbed and directed. That would be the most serious task facing the students of culture and that is our task to-day. For industrialization is not the taking over of "isolated traits" but the result of organised processes. If we want to understand it we have to consider it as a complex. It involves trade, employment agencies, techniques, processes as well as the whole psychology which works in institutions. Industrialization releases a process by which the existing order of society is more or less rapidly transformed.

Since the problem that is posed by UNESCO is how the traditional cultures can be saved from industrialization, I should now like to deal with this problem specifically. Now industrialization

is not a single phenomenon. It is a complex of phenomena operating concurently. It covers techniques, mechanised processes, mental make up, social conditions, amenities, beliefs and knowledge. In fact it attempts to reduce every other attendant trait to one standardised drab pattern. It is not very much concerned with the aesthetic values, human feelings and the national genius. It allows the soul of man no freedom of self-determination or expression but attempts to reduce it and man to a slave of the machine. In this process man becomes secondary. Tradition finds no place. Eternal values lose their eternal strength. All that it is concerned with is the manner and method of production and the rate of output and the mechanism essential for the process of material change.

It is obvious to anyone that in such a climate traditional cultures cannot survive. The serious attempt of industrialization in fact is to make man a machine or at least an integral component of the process of industrialization. But man does not live by food, shelter, clothing and luxuries alone. Whilst his body may be satisfied by these temporary indulgences but not satisfied by them, his mind seeks an escape from its fatal grip. It needs spiritual food. Man's urge for survival is greater than his momentary indulgences. Hence the eternal values of humanity continue to dominate the mind of men. Traditional cultures preserve these eternal values and provides man a way of escape. The modern age has shown that the atom of destruction is not the answer to man's problems but the eternal values based on traditional cultures provide the only answer to man's ills. This moral force, I think, is the greatest human asset found in the traditional cultures and it is this that demands its preservation for serving humanity from ultimate destruction. That is why the dynamism of traditional human cultures must be matched against the changes due to industrialization. The dynamism born of spiritual and moral values is greater than anything known so far. It is the answer to the problem of hasty industrialization.

I will illustrate by one historical example how traditional cultures have played their role in the past and withstood the dangers of disintegration by conquest, both physical and psychological. In Ceylon there have been periodical crises from ancient times. These occurred practically once in every three centuries. During these periods attempts have been made to suppress and forcibly eliminate traditional cultures. Due to religious and political conflicts, social and martial superimpositions, psychological inducements and diverse other subtle influences the traditional cultures were threatened with extinction. In all these conflicts the dynamism and adaptability of culture helped in the end. The superimposed

elements may have enjoyed dominance and special treatment in select circles whilst the contending native cultural elements receded to the background. In urban areas the new forces apparently won and continued to win under the favoured auspices of the powers that controlled the situation. The people in the cities benefited by an immediate change. They secured to themselves and their associates the new processes, pleasures and advantages. But they sacrificed their culture and paid for it by loss of national conscience. In the rural areas the traditional cultures refused to yield and exchange their precious heritage for something evanescent and alien to them. Whilst they suffered humiliation, physically and mentally, and were denied material benefits they found solace in embracing their cultures. They preserved traditional lore and the national genius by this process.

A peculiar characteristic of traditional cultures is that they recede when conflicts arise but return again in opportune time to supply the spiritual, moral and psychological force for resurgence. They return to the people for protection and lives with them during periods of crisis. In times of stress and storm, subjugation and active suppression traditional cultures take shelter in the heart and mind of rural folk where they find permanent nourishment. That is how traditional cultures are preserved. That is why they cannot be easily destroyed or suppressed for all time. That is why the mind of man yearns for them. When the dangers either of conflict, of invasion, of subjugation or of a foreign suppression are removed then the traditional cultures begin to re-manifest themselves, exerting their telling influence and move the minds of men not only of rural but of urban areas as well. This process should not be confused with upsurge of nationalism though it is in certain respects related to it.

Students of culture would, of they look back on the history of Ceylon, observe that there have been periods of cultural efflorescence during the 2nd century B.C., 1st, 3rd, 9th, 12th, 15th and 18th centuries A. D. If the periods preceding these are further examined they would find that the people then either enjoyed peace and tranquility or obtained freedom from years of tyranny and suppression. Immediately preceding these periods of national efflorescence one did not hear of the existence of any culture for the climate preceding them was not conducive to their re-appearance. It is after these periods that the national cultures have flourished and reached such heights of excellence as to earn admiration from connoisseurs and lovers of culture. If the factors embodied in these cultural peaks are evaluated they would find a common basic substratum running through all of them. It is the dynamism of the culture that sustained these factors. It is this force that moulded

the elements of the highest cultural attainments of the periods of efflorescence.

It would appear from a further study of the material remains of such periods that art and architecture, sculpture and painting, drama and music, literature and philosophy developed on the foundations of traditional cultures. The dynamism of the traditional cultures provided the vitality and new spirit to the many movements. During these periods when art, architecture, painting music and drama, and literature flourished, it was the traditional cultures that provided the raw material or base for creative effort. This is most apparent in paintings and sculpture, for in the frescoes that have survived one sees the traditional style and more developed style side by side. Such oscillations from period to period indicate the continuity of the process. The movement never ceased. Only its visibility diminished within a range of maximum oscillation. One point of the movement can be called the peak of development and the other the depth of degeneration. It was like the pendulum that attains different positions at different times.

The question often asked is why these traditional cultures need preservation? What is the harm if they become extinct? Are modern cultures not better than and far superior to these? Have they not outlived their usefulness? The question of superiority of culture does not arise. Small seeds produce giant trees. There are certain things that cannot always be accomplished by big machines. No one can say for certain what greatness or potential greatness is inherent in a culture. Each culture has a contribution to make towards human progress and the value of each cannot be judged by size or present degree of popularity. Just as the quota of intelligence is equitably distributed amongst all races; just as intelligent children are born to poor parents even so eternal values are constant and are obtainable in traditional cultures to the same extent as in any other.

On the other hand it is known that traditional cultures have preserved many noble elements to humanity. The moderns can benefit a great deal from the values embodied therein. What remains unknown cannot be pre-judged. Just as everything that is old is not necessarily bad even so everything that is new need not necessarily be good. The old and the new must both be attuned to the good of humanity. It would therefore be dangerous to allow the traditional cultures to die out since their inherent potentialities for the good of society cannot yet be evaluated. For have not certain societies where traditional cultures were abandoned become extinct within our living memory? Some of the South Sea Islands have become depopulated. The Tasmanians are no

more. The ancient cultures of Mayas and Incas have died out. The modern tribes of India are on the point of extinction. Why? All suppressed populations have degenerated and lost the noblest human elements. No colonial people have contributed to human progress nor have they progressed themselves. All of them without exception were on the point of losing their soul and self-respect because of the suppression of traditional cultures and the imposition of alien cultures on unwilling minds. It can be maintained that this is due to the conflict with foreign cultures when what is native, what is traditional and what mattered were exchanged for the novel, and the foreign. Above everything these cultures lacked a dynamism for they failed to adapt themselves to changing circumstances.

Therefore, care must be exercised by those who know and should have learned by the experiences of others that the present is not a case of complete preservation of the traditioanl cultures in their pristine purity nor a wholesale acceptance of modern cultures with industrialization in the vanguard. A happy mean must be struck. The evolution of society should be aided by a judicious adjustment of the contending forces of interacting cultures. Change must come methodically without sudden upheavals. Ancient values, ideals and norms tested through the ages must be preserved for they alone possess an enduring spirit and charm characteristic of each race and place. These supply the nerve and the urge for survival. Change must come, as it is inevitable, but it should come methodically and in fusible doses. In the face of industrialization many less developed, less dynamic cultures have found it impossible to stand firm witout being swept away from the traditional homes by the strong storms that blow around. Economically less developed countries are also subject to pressures from within and without. The dynamism of a culture alone can resist such stormy situations. Rapid and haphazard acceptance is good for neither culture.

Traditional cultural values must be preserved and re-adjusted lest a rapid progress of industrialization and standardisation may remove the very foundation of the social structure. That would mean chaos and ultimate extinction of the traditional culture or both. Our traditional cultures are living and vital for the continuation of our society. They have a vivacity and diversity characteristic of the national genius. They are a living force within a live society. They lack extreme specialization and can be moulded. They possess a dynamism beyond comparison. Their quality of adaptability and lack of extreme specialization give hope of blending and survival with others. They are

rooted in this soil and in the hearts of the people. These have been nurtured through the ages. They alone have suffused the life of the mind and spirit of the people of the soil. They alone provide the hope of endurance and lasting values. "There has been no perceptible variation in the average sample of human nature in the past; there is no ground, in the evidence afforded by history to expect any great variation in the future either for better or for worse" says Professor A. J. Toynbee in *Civilization on Trial.*

We must understand the traditional cultures if we are to know and evaluate them. "We must understand the individual as living in his culture and the culture as lived by individuals. This requires a deep penetration into the genius of the culture, a knowledge of the attitudes controlling individuals and group behaviour. Not every culture is characterised by a dominant character, but it seems probable that the more intimate our knowledge of the cultural drives that actuate the behaviour of the individual, the more we shall find that certain controls of emotion, certain ideals of conduct, prevail that account for what seems to us abnormal attitudes when viewed from the standpoint of our civilisation. The reality of what is considered social or asocial, normal or abnormal, is seen in a new light," says Franz Boas. These apply with equal force to the traditional cultures both social and material, literary and aesthetic, religious or philosophical.

What then is our solution? What is the best organisation for ensuring the study and preservation of these traditional cultures? The traditional cultures are still preserved in remote rural areas of the Island. There are individuals and families with whom they are a living force. Some of these are still practised as professions, *e.g.*, metal casting, devil dancing, temple dancing, singing, painting, sculpture, etc. Some of these cultures have generated so low as to earn for the guilds, castes or persons who preserve them a social stigma. The preservation has been helped by the conservatism of women for whom customs and ceremonials particularly find an immense appeal. The wealth of material so preserved throughout the Island is immense and powerful if properly canalised for the good of the society. The encouragement of these cultures and their rehabilitation would be a certain solution to check industrialization. The material can still be salvaged and there is not much time to lose.

Three factors must be obtained before this can be done. These are, patronage, funds and lovers of culture. In the past traditional cultures flourished as a result of royal patronage and finacial assistance from the nation. There were also wealthy individuals who extended their patronage and helped with funds. Lovers of culture

should band themselves for the task of revitalizing the culture so essential for the well-being of the people and so pregnant with latent possibilities. In this task the dynamism of the traditional cultures themselves provide the surest key to success. Unless the present opportunity is seized, industrialization would have reduced all that is of permanent value to a standard pattern. That is the last thing that sould be allowed to happen. We need to save the world from the melancholy effects of industrialization. This is our problem and the solution rests with our courage and sacrifice in that cause. Let us then dedicate ourselves to save a priceless treasure for the well being and welfare of the nation.

A. H. E. Molamure

THE OUTLOOK FOR KANDYAN DANCING

"It is not speculation on the possibilities of remoulding a changed image
But it is the dream of an occurrence—
The confluence of circumstances once more,
The flowing of a favourable flood—"

(George Keyt)

The description "Kandyan is generally used to refer to those typical forms of traditional dance that have survived only in the central parts of Ceylon. This territory, the *kanda uḍa raṭa* or region above the hills, maintained its independence under the Sinhalese kings long after the littoral had passed within the dominion of successive European powers from the early years of the sixteenth century, and came to be known among them as the Kandyan kingdom. The indigenous population called it Siṃhalē. In 1815 A.C. the Sinhalese monarchy was deposed and British colonial rule established over the whole island, an event productive of far-reaching changes affecting every aspect of the life of the people. For the traditional arts of the country, the consequences have been calamitous. Nevertheless, it is surprisingly true that Kandyan dancing has retained its fundamental character and its basic purity of technique and style comparatively immune from foreign influences.

In considering the nature of traditional dances it is often useful to make a broad functional distinction between two kinds of dancing—one secular, primarily intended for exhibition, to entertain and give pleasure by the display of talent and skill and, in its higher forms, to evoke aesthetic satisfaction which results from the contemplation of art. The other is ritualistic in purpose, whether propitiatory and magical or as the expression of worship in religion. This distinction should not be pressed too far; the two functions sometimes overlap. Of the Kandyan dances *uḍākki*

and *pantēru* were assigned by the Sinhalese to the former category as falling within the ambit of *sangīta sāstra*, the science of music, song and dance. In *uḍākki*, formerly considered pre-eminent among the dances, the performer must, simultaneously, sing, dance and accompany himself with a small hand-drum shaped like an hour-glass, the pitch of which can be altered at will by the exercise of digital pressure on a band of decorated cloth encircling its middle. Such a combination of talent in a single person is uncommon and for this among other reasons *uḍākki* has ceased to be widely practised. The *pantēru* dancer keeps passing from one hand to the other, in a smooth effortless movement, a circular metal frame like that of a tambourine.

The *ves* dance, on the other hand, is ritualistic in intention and is properly employed in invoking and propitiating the animistic deity Kohomba Deviyō in the profound ceremony of the *kohomba kankāriya*, either in fulfilment of a vow or as a periodical safeguard against a threatened or suspected calamity in the present or even in the future. In recent years *ves* has been adapted for secular use by drawing from and elaborating the pure dance portions as distinct from its episodic sequences and has now gained prominence at the expense of *uḍākki* and *pantēru*. Traditionally, the *ves* dance was never performed for pleasure and entertainment or outside its ritual context nor was it allowed in a *perahāra* procession. The *ves-taṭṭuva* (head-dress) of the dancer was regarded as an object of special sanctity, carefully preserved against the risk of pollution, and frequently kept, when not in use, in the shrine-room of a *dēvāle*.

A characteristic feature of all Kandyan dancing is the combination of song and dance by the performer. The dance does not represent or interpret the content of the song, which constitutes a melodic accompaniment to the movements danced. The songs however contribute to the total effect of pleasure created in an audience appreciative of the quality of the singing, the technical skill in versification and the freshness in presentation of themes. They draw their themes from episodes in the life of the Buddha and the Jātaka stories or celebrate the exploits of a king or notable personage (*srināma*) or describe a God and his abode. Many deal with the sentiment of love (*sringāra*). The *tālam poṭa* (a pair of small cymbals) beats out the time measure while in *pantēru* and *ves*, drummers supply the music for dancing which is predominantly percussive. The drums (*gāṭa bera*), tuned to a different pitch at each end and played by a man standing up with the drum slung around his waist, produce an extraordinary range of powerful rhythms and are capable, in expert hands, of a wide variety of

subtle and complicated effects. The vigour of the dancing is matched as well as balanced and controlled by the drumming, sound and gesture becoming one. In comparison the use of the drum in the West is elementary, relegated to a very subordinate position in an orchestra.

No attempt is made here to discuss the origins of Kandyan dancing, except to mention that its affinities with Indian forms are unmistakable, probably indicative of a common source. The evident dissimilarities are such that Kandyan dancing may be regarded as a distinct species, possessing in its own right the attributes of refinement and distinction associated with such highly evolved Indian forms as Kathakali and Bharata Natyam. Its technique is stylised, developed far beyond the stage of merely "folk" and exemplifies an aristocratic and classical tradition inherited from the past although its exponents are peasant cultivators, not solely dependent for their livelihood on the profession of dancing.

The basic position assumed by a dancer is a strenuous one with knees bent outward, wide apart and in line with the body. The structure of the dance consists of spatial movement in which abstract, decorative gestures are co-ordinated with swift, patterned footwork, bringing into play every part of the body without disturbing the aesthetic balance of the whole. Unlike in India, no conscious use is made of *mudras* and *abhinaya*, intended as such to convey a meaning or suggest a mood or idea. In fact, the movement is pure dance (*nrtta*) unmixed with expressive mime or dramatic action. Its predominant quality is *tāṇḍava*, masculine, heroic, epitomising the supple strength and sinewy grace of the male. The dance is performed by a team or set of men, usually five or six in a row, trained to move in unison, solo dacing being a recent innovation. Until a few years ago women took no part in dance performances other than the *diggē näṭīma*—a dance now extremely rare—which formed part of the ritual service attached to certain *dēvāles* or shrines of localised Hindu gods.

From what has been said above it should not be supposed that Kandyan dancing is mechanical or, at best, an essay in rhythmic acrobatics, except, of course, in the sense that any dance can be reduced to this by an inept performer. Informed by an artist's imaginative force, it becomes a spectacle of great beauty. The delicately defined gestures, intricate footwork, speed and precision of movement, provide scope, within its formal limitations, for almost infinite variety in treatment and improvisation. The high standard of technical perfection expected of a performer requires many years of arduous training and practice; observers have noted

with admiration how a dancer can go on for long periods at a time without a trace of exhaustion. The method of teaching is by practical instruction imparted by *guru* to pupil—no system of notation having yet been devised.

Whatever its origins, Kandyan dancing acquired its present form in a rural, agricultural society based on a system of land tenure which entailed the obligation of performing services to the community. The land, cultivated by co-operative effort founded on reciprocal assistance, sustained the population, with money used as a secondary commodity of negligible account. Society functioned on a basis of personal relations involving, implicitly, the close inter-dependence of every constituent member. An overall pre-occupation with the soil and, foremost, the bond of a single religion (Buddhism), resulted in a unity within a common frame of reference, which had for all an equally accepted validity. The pattern of daily living, arts, customs and religion formed an integrated whole, incapable without disruption, of separation into its component parts.

In this independent self-contained community a rich heritage of folk-lore, painting, craftsmanship, song and dance flourished as a part of everyday life. The holding of land assured economic stability and security nor was there under the Kandyan kings a landless, disestablished class. Moreover, artists, craftsmen and dancers were organised under state departments and religious establishments to serve the needs of the people and the religion. Talent was duly recognized and encouraged and notable achievement rewarded with gifts, generally in the form of substantial grants of land, as marks of royal munificence and favour. The slow, even rhythm of a rural environment afforded the leisure in which the arts could develop while a discerning public provided the necessary complement which ensured the maintenance of high standards of performance. The dancer and drummer fulfilled a positive, indispensable function in the community, constantly in attendance at temples and *dēvāles* and at secular ceremonies as the occasion demanded. A peasant himself, every member of the community was dependent on his services, whether king or peasant, priest or nobleman.

With the advent of foreign rule in 1815 the social organism began to disintegrate—a process hastened by the ruthlessness with which the abortive attempt at independence in 1818 was suppressed. The sudden imposition of a money economy, combined with large-scale expropriation of land, soon created a comparatively landless peasantry, reluctantly compelled to offer their services for hire. Because of the differentiation between the religion of the ruling

power and that of the subject people and the withdrawal of state support from Buddhism, the traditional foundations of morality and education gradually crumbled. The resulting sense of insecurity was paralleled by the emergence of absentee landlordism, loss of contact with the soil and an ever-increasing maladjustment in human relations, a weakened sense of mutual obligations.

The lack of cohesion in the social structure had disastrous effects on the entire culture so that the arts in general along with the dance forms became submerged in the course of time. The British were incapable of replacing that which they had destroyed with a system compatible with and suited to the temperament and psychology of the people, their customs and institutions in which they had their being. Nor had they the comprehension or sympathy with the indigenous arts which might have enabled them to step easily and naturally into the position of benefactors and patrons of national art. All the while, shoddy influences from nineteenth century Europe and its commercialism were at work undermining the taste of a people, rendered peculiarly vulnerable by the circumstances of an historical situation.

Against this background it is not difficult to understand why, at the present day, the arts and crafts are almost defunct. Caught up in an unequal struggle for existence, dominated by a sense of futility, the artist has neither the leisure nor the incentive to Practice his art, let alone develop it. Indeed, it is remarkable that the Kandyan dances have survived at all. They owe their existence to the temples and *dēvāles* which still require the services of dancers and drummers and form a rallying point for them. Of the various dance forms, *uḍākki* and *pantēru* have suffered most and are now on the verge of extinction. Apart from the general malaise, there is the difficulty of their techniques. Also, they have had to contend with the rival attractions of the *ves* dance. The impressive costume of the *yakdessa* (*ves* dancer) readily draws the crowd; it also enables him to pass off as genuine any vulgarised or incompetent version of the dance he chooses to display. The more austerely dressed *uḍākki* and *pantēru* dancer has to rely on his own technical skill and artistry and few today consider the exacting discipline worthwhile.

The situation is inevitable with a public disinherited from its own culture and set adrift, deficient both in knowledge and sensibility, inclined, more often than not, to be contemptuous of indigenous art and, in any case, full of apathy. In the outcome, not only *uḍākki* and *pantēru*, but every dance form has fallen off in quality of performance and a few years more must see their end as art forms if the present condition of neglect is allowed to continue.

Remedial measures are beyond the scope of any individual and must obviously be the responsibility of the State. If the State is prepared to offer its support with no loss of time it is still possible that an independent Ceylon will succeed in fostering national art where foreign rulers met with failure.

Present indications are that, as a result of a polarizing of national consciousness, the Kandyan dances have assumed a new significance in the estimation of the public and even of the Government. They have now begun to be taught even in Government educational institutions and a panel for Kandyan dancing has been appointed in the Arts Council of Ceylon. The time is appropriate, therefore, to consider the means for their resuscitation and continuance as living art forms in the furure. It is of utmost importance to realize that the problem, at this stage, is one of preservation rather than development. Whatever remains of the traditional and authentic must be consolidated on a firm foundation. Once this is achieved the natural laws of mutability may be expected to work out to a logical aesthetic development, truly creative, but still related to the tradition. Yet, there appears to be a tendency towards meretricious attempts at innovation based neither on an appreciation of correct technique nor on a genuine awareness of the real nature of the Kandyan dance—its intrinsic limitations no less than its creative possibilities. Nowhere is this inadequacy in the grasp of fundamentals more apparent than in the manner of dance instruction in Government Central Schools. If the annual schools competitions organised under the auspices of UNESCO are any indication of the results achieved so far, the system must be considered a failure. There arises a serious doubt whether these students will ever acquire anything more than a bare acquaintance with a difficult art, still less receive the highly specialised training requisite for a dancer wishing to adopt it as a vocational pursuit. What seems certain is that when the present generation of accomplished dancers has passed away there will be none of equal attainments to take its place. However, teaching in Government schools, if conducted with imagination, will serve a valuable purpose both in revealing hidden talent and in building up a knowledgeable public capable of criticism and appreciation.

A plan for rehabilitating the Kandyan dances, if it is to succeed, must be formulated on a realisation of the following points:—

(*a*) Kandyan dancing is still a product of the village.

(*b*) It is difficult and complicated and cannot be mastered without years of hard work.

(*c*) A solid grounding in technique is imperative.

(*d*) Finally, and not the least important, dance teachers must be placed above economic want in order to devote themselves to the work of teaching and also preserve their integrity as artists.

The answer to the problem would seem to be the establishment of state-aided village dance schools, entrusted to the care of outstanding exponents of Kandyan dancing and located wherever possible in their homes. The necessary equipment should be supplied including *nāṭum maḍuvas* or training halls and a monthly salary or grant by way of adequate remuneration will do much to secure for the teacher economic sufficiency and leisure and also, perhaps, a heightened sense of the importance and value of his work. He will be required to instruct pupils along traditional lines with emphasis, as of old, on intensive practice, perfection of technique, and attention to teamwork. Each school will, doubtless, perpetuate and develop its own individual style, fostering besides the *sāstra*, the traditional relationship between *guru* and pupil, so valuable and noteworthy a feature of life in India and Ceylon up to the present day, although absent from Europe since the Middle Ages. The correct atmosphere, scope for individual attention, fewer pupils, greater intimacy and warmth in personal relations —all these factors should contribute towards producing a well-taught generation of finished pupils capable of upholding the best standards of professional competence and even of creative genius. Famous dancers, many of whom are teachers in Government Central Schools, are unanimous in acknowledging the efficacy of such a system of schools and are eager to undertake the work. It is to be expected that students from other educational centres will resort to these schools for higher studies in dancing, encouraged, in deserving cases, by the grant of state scholarships. The enthusiasm of students and teachers can be kept alive by periodic competitions, prize-awards and participation in national dance festivals. Some safeguards are naturally necessary to ensure the smooth functioning of these schools. But it would be advisable to avoid the stifling effects of excessive bureaucratic control. Above all, it would be fatal to expect quick results.

The scheme envisaged above has been adopted by the Panel for Kandyan Dancing in the Arts Council and six schools have already been established in villages. Although only a few months old their progress is most satisfactory. There is no lack of pupils and among them was discovered an astonishing wealth of talent. Stress is laid on sound technique and traditional methods of teaching. A special effort is directed towards gaining the good-will of parents and the co-operation of all inhabitants of a village and

its surroundings. This system of village schools has aroused great enthusiasm among professional dancers and numerous applications have been received for schools. Unfortunately, sufficient funds are not yet available for more of them. For the same reason the grants allotted to the schools already set up are pitifully inadequate. The Panel is of the view that much can be done to reinstate Kandyan dancing if immediate provision is made for fifty village schools, with more to come in the future year by year. Schools of drumming should similarly be endowed particularly in the case of *hēvissi*, comprising *davul, tammāṭṭam, horaṇāva*, or, at any rate, special provision made for them in dance schools.

Singing is an integral part of the Kandyan dance. A great many of these songs are mistakenly classified as "folk." The traditional tunes and melodies are fast dying out, assisted to their end by vulgar film and radio music. Very few now possess authentic knowledge of the old songs and they are men advanced in years. Immediate recordings must be made from them if anything is to be saved for posterity. Motion pictures of the various dance forms can be of immense benefit to students. Complete sets should be made, ranging from basic steps to the more elaborate and complex movements. The urgency of the need for documentary films of ceremonies like *kohomba kankāriya, devol, bali*, etc. cannot be sufficiently stressed; not many years remain before they too become unknown.

Research has to be undertaken on the origins, history and development of all dance forms in Ceylon and material collected from every source. It is too often forgotten that much of this information is contained in an oral tradition handed down from generation to generation and this tradition is rapidly disappearing. The written tradition is to be found in palm-leaf manuscripts, fragile and easily destroyed by climate and white-ants. At least, collections should be made at once of all available data to be worked at later by competent scholars. The task of gathering material requires a team of full-time field workers. It should be possible at some future date to bring out a scholarly and authoritative work on the dances, provided the preliminary work is done now.

From every aspect the conclusion is inescapable that the whole problem merits State concern and that the State alone can furnish an adequate solution. But the situation demands immediate action before it becomes irretrievable. If a policy based on the considerations adumbrated above is implemented without delay the traditional dances may yet receive a fresh impetus towards renewal and re-invigoration. Although the social context in which Kandyan dancing flourished under the kings has been briefly

touched upon in order to present it in historical perspective, it is neither relevant nor necessary to revive that social order as something apart from which Kandyan dancing cannot survive. On the contrary, it is possible to contemplate with optimism its future as a vital art form in a modern democracy, with the State as principal patron. It is significant that Kandyan dancing survives as a popular art produced in the village and, however damaged its condition may be, there is, as yet, no real cleavage between the artist and his public such as has occurred elsewhere, particularly in the West. For in the final analysis, Kandyan dancing cannot thrive as a museum-piece, to be looked at, as it were, from the outside. It must re-enter the life of the people, commanding the respect and appreciation of a responsive public, if it is to become the living thing it was in the past.

SINHALESE MUSIC AND MINSTRELSY

In mediaeval Siṃhalē (the Siṃhala land that kept back the tide of European invasion from the early sixteenth to the ninteenth century) nothing of a festival nature could go forward without song and music. This music, as has been seen and described by tradition, consisted of the *horaṇāva* and a variety of drums. The puberty of a girl, a wedding ceremony, and every kind of religious ceremony or festival, as well as the *tēvaya* (offering) in the temples, was attended with drums. Where a sickness lasted a couple of weeks a *baliya* or *pidēniyu* or *käpum vīdiya* became necessary; and it was mostly song and dance and drums. If epidemics visited a village, a *gam maḍuva* had to be held. Wealthy families found it necessary to have a periodical *devol* ceremony or a *kohombā-yakkama* to ensure the health and prosperity of the family. Each of these was an occasion for drums and song and dance. There was a funeral band too. The notes that the two drummers and the *horanākārayā* (flautist) produce in this three-man band, for an expression of sadness and despair, is hard to beat.

When women step into the mud to transplant the young paddy, their sweet low singing swells through the vale. In the *hēnas* on the hillsides, they sing more lively tunes as they climb gathering the *kurahan* cobs. The *goyiya* harvesting paddy has a *bummāḍiya* besides a special drum meant for the field. Add to these the *magul-berē, ana-berē* and the *hēkaḍē*, drums used for state affairs—one has to accept that to the Sinhalese their drums were an essential adjunct of life. We are European proselytes today; yet the drum is as popular amongst us as before.

The Sinhalese word for orchestral music is *pancatūryanāda*. The term is defined in more than one way. The most common definition includes in the *pancatūryanāda* the following five kinds of instruments:—*ātataya, vitataya, vitatātaya, ghanaya*, and *susiraya*. These stand for drums played with the hand, drums played with

a drum-stick, drums played with one hand and one drum-stick, cymbals, and flutes or other wind instruments. It is apparent that the most important of the instruments are the drums. It also explains why the drums alone, besides the cymbals and the flute, are in preservation.

These drums were in existence even before the Indian Vijaya came. The Mahāvaṃsa mentions the song and music of a wedding feast that alarmed Vijaya. The song and music of a wedding procession amongst the Sinhalese of the hill country, in the early years of the present century, perhaps differed little from the song and music Vijaya heard on that day in the fifth century B. C., celebrating the union of a bride and groom of Sirivattu and Laṃkāpura. Sinhalese literary works describe glorious music as a sound that would drown the roar of the ocean. This does not mean that such music was any different than the sound produced by a number of bands and singers as one sees in the Äsala Perahära. But it does mean, to my mind, that a great variety of drums were there. Perhaps during the Anuradhapura and Dambadeniya periods there were a greater variety of drums than we have today.

There are some interesting verses a *guru* teaching ministrelsy and drums gets his pupil to sing. These give the beginning (*upata*) of music. Briefly the story is: in the beginning God Visvakarma chose four notes. They were *tat, dit, ton, nāṃ*. He took them from the sound of falling rain, the neigh of the horse, the trumpeting of the elephant, and the sound of a lion's challenge, respectively. The Dēva Isvara split the four sounds into sixty-four, and from these *gāndarva* musicians developed 216 notes. These same *gāndarvas* staged their first performance in honour of the first Mahasammata ruler, with the following:—*gäṭa bera; panā bera; ekas bera; mihingu bera; maṇḍala; umavaṃga; hayāhi; kombu; sakun; viridu; kāladam; dārā; dalaham; lohām; kinnara; randārā; radidārā; samut-tālam; gi-tālam; dhamaramaḍu; ḍeṇḍa; (mē ādi häṭahatarak nerta sammata raju haṭa däkavu sēka)* *

There is a longer list in the *Thūpavaṃsa*. Of this list, 49 are drums, 16 wind instruments, and 3 *vīna*. Little wonder that with such a large variety of drums in the orchestra the practical-minded Kandyan found he could spare the *vīna* and most of the wind instruments too. The Kandyan's life was unremitting war, and the drums perhaps gave the best expression of the defiant thoughts that filled his mind. That is, if the *vina* was in use up to the fourteenth century. It is not probable it was. No part of a *vīna* has been found in temple or *dēvāla*. None of the fresco paintings

* Sixty-four kinds of dances, beginning with the aforesaid, were performed before king Mahasammata.

depict a *vīna* player. This is strange amongst a people whose queens and later rulers came from South India. With each princess that came to wed a monarch came princely relatives and large retinues as a proof of the greatness of the future queen's family. If *vīnas* were not brought, in these retinues were princes that loved its music. As a rule these retinues stayed behind, but the *vīna* did not, if it did come, take a hold on the country. It by no means became a national instrument, in mediaeval Siṃhalē at any rate. Mention of the *vīna* in literature is undoubtedly due to the fact that the instrument is present in the *jātaka* stories. A stray *vīna* performer may have come over and been employed at court. But the Sinhalese did not fancy it and no one took the trouble to learn the art. The absence of anything like a *vīna rājakāriya* in *dēvāla* or *daladā māligāva* supports this view.

Old residents of Kandy would however remember a blind minstrel who sang verses from the *jātaka* stories. He would sing a line and then play what he had sung on a stringed instrument whose body was a large cocoanut shell covered with a hide on which stood the bridge for the two strings. He played it with a bow much like the bow of the Indian esraj. John Davy in his *Account of the Interior of Ceylon* (1821), gives an illustration of this instrument: he calls it a *vīna*. What he says about its use is interesting. Obviously the instrument is not a copy of any indian *vīna* but an instrument that had not developed beyond the folk-music stage.

How far do we owe our songs and music to India? Like the mythical origin attributed to most things in Oriental writings, singing and music like everything else is traced to the land whence came the religion of the Sinhalese. Prof. S. N. Ratanjankar (who was invited by the Government to go into the quality of Sinhalese musical broadcasting) was not far wrong when he declared that the Sinahalese have no music of their own and that their songs, with the exception of the *vannam*, are all compositions set to Indian airs.

The modern Sinhalese song began with the dramas of John Silva. The airs to which he set his songs were mostly, if not all, from the Indian Visvanath Laugi. The accompaniment to his songs, as those in their advanced middle-age now will remember, were the imported *seraphina* (harmonium) and the *tabla*. The Indian *vīna* was not seen in Ceylon till after 1915 or even later. Before the days of John Silva, songs were such as developed from the *vannam* airs, or Kaffirinna in the Western Province. The average man's musical instrument was the *ḍōle*. In the Kandyan areas the *uḍākkiya* was still popular. John Silva's object was to make the

Sinhalese proud of their ancient story. His plays, however, had quite another effect. They swept away the *vannam* songs and the *nāḍagam* songs that had developed from the *vannam*, and gave the Sinhalese what Ratanjankar describes as Sinhalese words set to Indian airs. But Lanka had an art of her own, an art of song and music that was altogether indigenous.

In fact in Kandyan times clever Nayakkar chiefs strove to reconcile the Kandyan to their influence here by adopting Siṃhala ways in place of their own. King Kīrti Srī Rājasiṃha's father had made his son's education so completely Sinhalese that the prince had been taught even the most difficult items of the Kandyan dancer's art. Kīrti Srī Rājasiṃha had a favourite, a lad of the *näkati* caste who was even permitted the privilege of sleeping on the floor by the monarch's bed. Attracted one day by the clever performance of a dancer in the difficult dance known as *asme yāma*, he bade him teach the steps to his favourtie. Dutifully the man took the boy over. He was however not going to teach his art to anyone outside the circle of his family. A fortnight later the boy did his steps clumsily. The teacher explained that teaching was of little avail where there was no inherited gift. The boy went back to the palace. A few days later he appeared to the *vāhala ilaṃgama* again. The king asked a chieftain what he thought of the lad's performance. The king during the nights had put the boy through his steps.

It is understandable that at the educated levels there was a tendency to attribute everything to Indian origin, in that way adding dignity to art. For from Dambadiva came not only the religion of the *tathāgata* but Lanka's classics, "Demala, Saku, Magadha." Indeed, if not for the ties of religion, I doubt whether the Siṃhala peoples would have been proud of the Vijayan ancestry. Vijaya's landing at Tamrapani is so intertwined with the *parinirvana* of the Buddha and the entrusting of Lanka's future to Sakra and Vishnu that few dared to question the story. Yet with the common man Indian influence did not go far. In his everyday talk he placed before the name *demala* an adjective by no means complimentary. In the Ramayana story as told in Lanka's folk-lore, not Ravanna but Rāma is the aggressor, the monarch of Lankapura having brought away Sita not for love of her beauty but to avenge Rāma's insult to his sister. Curiously enough Sita's unsullied chastity, and the freedom allowed her by Ravanna in her captivity bears out the folk-tale and not Valmiki's story. I have spoken to old Kandyan grandfathers who had not the least hesitation to say that their ancestry was from Ravanna's Lanka. It is not a little strange that the Mahāvaṃsa too, in spite of what it would

have one understand, leaves a large loophole in the Vijayan ancestry of Anuradhapura. Music and song are facets of society. It will be pertinent to delve into the beginnings of Siṃhala society.

Social history in oriental lands is tangled with caste. The Buddha's doctrines of equality could not alter the ideas of caste in India. The wide divergence of caste as known in Lanka from the Indian system would show the two systems are not from the same source. Amongst communities that observe caste, a good caste man coming from one country to another retained the privileges of his good caste. So a man of lower caste was subject to the disadvantages he suffered in his own land. The proud brahmin of India met with different treatment in Lanka.

Brahmins were brought to cure King Panduvasdēva of *dividos*. Those claiming descent from these brahmins in Lanka—they practice the art of their forbears and till very lately had even the table manners of the Indian brahmin—fall into a very humble caste-group, the *näkati* people. Centuries later, brahmins were again brought to Kurunägala. The *goyigama* palanquin-bearers of the rulers in Kurunägala refused to render their hereditary *rājakāriya* because the new king was an arab lady's offspring. Prince Vattimi's arab advisers promised to bring brahmins, men of far better caste than the *goyigama* people, to take the place of the proud palanquin men. They inveigled a band of the best brahmins of Soli-raṭa to their ships and brought them hither captives. Under persuasion and threat the men settled down to the palanquin service of Prince Vattimi. When the young brahmins—they were all men in their prime—wanted wives, the king's ministers were commanded to get them suitable partners. A number of women were brought and the young men were asked to choose whom they liked. Of the women there were good-looking young ones as well as middle-aged dames. The former were all of the *hangara* caste, and the latter *goyigama* women. The newcomers had no hesitation in selecting the comliest lasses. And those brahmins had to take their place much below the *goyigama* people. In India the cultivator is a *sudra*; here he is at the top of the social ladder.

With this if one could read chapter ten of the Mahāvaṃsa, an Indian origin for Sinhalese society becomes an improbable story. Pandukabaya for a number of years gathers an army. He massacres the princes of the Vijayan line, and when their heads were gathered before him says it is like a heap of water-pumkins (*labu*). Then he sets about to extend and order the city of Anuradhapura. He places a Yakā chief in command at each of the four gates. He has a Yakā queen in his palace and restores the Yakā religion in the city. To every other community he allots a separate

quarter. Above all he shares his throne with a Yakā chieftain, Citta. All that is left of Vijaya is Suvannapali and a story whose truth has no better evidence to back it than the word of a slave woman.

Taking this ancestry to be true it still remains that the able monarch during a reign of seventy years "befriended the Yakā people." The culture then that Pandukabaya's Anuradhapura handed down to the Sinhalese race was a Yakā culture.

Conquerors like Elāra must have brought to Anuradhapura Indian music and Indian instruments. But a conqueror's gifts are thrown away when reconquest takes place. The case of the *tappu* drum affords an illustration. For well over a century has it been is use amongst the hills. Dearly does the Siṃhala man and woman love to make any kind of instrumental noise during New Year celebrations. But I have never seen a villager having anything to do with a *tappu*. Ask him why, and he will invariably answer *ēka demala vāḍak*.* The Sinhalese are, and their forbears doubtlessly were, satisfied with what instruments they had inherited. Change is coming over us with a kind of education that has been arranged to welcome foreign things.

Musical instruments (drums) of Siṃhalē preserved to us are:**

1. Different forms of the *davula*.
2. The *magul-berē* and its variations.
3. The *magul-berē* when made a little longer with the hide-faces proportionately smaller becomes the *yak-berē*, which has a number of modified forms, and is used for *bali* &c. When a *yak-berē* has faces too small in proportion to its middle girth, it is said to be like a *demala-berē*, though such a drum is not in existence.
4. There are about three forms of *tammāṭṭam*.
5. For use in the paddy fields we have the single-faced *bummāḍiya*, its trunk made of pottery.
6. A small two-faced drum much like the *ana-berē* used for government notifications.

In the *daladā māligāva* is a drum that resembles an *uḍākkiya*. It is about four feet long and each face about eighteen inches in diameter. It comes into use on Perahära days to call the elephants to the temples from Gāṭembe, Kaṭugostota, and Lēvälla, where they await the signal.

We have two wind instruments in use today. The *horaṇāva*

* That is a Tamil practice.

** for further details see note on illustrations of drums (appendix)

is seen everywhere. The distressingly sad notes of the funeral band owes much to its presence. The other wind instrument is known as the *nāga-sinnama*. You will see it in the three-man band that marches right in front of the *daḷadā māligāva* tusker at the Äsala Perahära. The band besides the *nāga-sinnama* includes a large pair of cymbals and a drum much like a *davula*. There are preserved in the Lankatilaka temple two other wind instruments. They are at times seen in the *māligāva perahāra*. One a formidable-looking piece shaped like a monster S, is called *kombuva*. It produces a couple of notes well calculated to tell an opposing army that the forces against them are powerful. The other is of reasonable dimensions, and sounds a few notes that might keep time to a horse's lively trot.

It would be remembered that in the van of a Kandyan army marched a numerious band of *davulkārayō*. The *horaṇāva* cannot be of any use in such a band. Wind instruments like the two I have mentioned would be a fitting accompaniment to the tremendous sound a band of *davulkārayō* can produce. During an era when the defiant words of a warrior and the twang of bow-strings were all the sounds the business of killing could produce, conches, wind instruments, and above all drums in increasing variety, were all a necessary accompaniment to war. It is significant that songs sung when the monarch took his place on the throne were invariably set to the tune of the conch, the *gāhaka vannama*.

For music in hall and for relaxation the instruments were *uḍākkiya, pantēruva*, and *tālam poṭa* (cymbals), as accompaniment to what has come to be popularly known by the term *vannam* songs. It would be more correct to name them Siṃhala minstrelsy. Vadugoḍapiṭiya Kōralēmahatmayā, the founder of Dharmarāja College, is said to have used a fat whip (*kasaya*) in place of the cymbals. He cracked it to keep time as he sang, while a young member of the family played the *uḍākkiya*. The three-man band of the *nāga-sinnama*, found today in the *daladā māligāva*, is another kind of music suited for indoor performance.

In the monarch's palace as well as in each great one's manor clever singers gathered towards evening in a spacious chamber set apart for the purpose. They sang of deeds of valour and prowess in arms, of noble bearing and justice during peace. This verse in the *udārā vannama* gives us an idea of what appealed as great to these singers:—

Sāra daham savanata laṃkārā—mudu
mīra vadan sata sita pemi bārā—
nārē siyan räki hadamen vīrā — hari
hāra rakin mēmäti pin bārā—

The *kavikāra maḍuva* in the palace had two sections. One was an assembly of poets that had won the king's regard. In the evenings after the worries of state were over, the king came to the Hall of the Poets for relaxation. He was received with a pean of praise by those assembled. Each poet then took his turn before the monarch. In his left hand he carried an ola on which he had inscribed his compositions for the day. On the thumb of his right hand was a large ring called a *vengāyam mudda*. It gave a soft tinkling sound as the thumb was jerked. He sang from his ola, the *vengāyam mudda* tinkling to keep time to the *vannama* he sang.

In the Palace the singing was in praise of the monarch, his knowledge of the *dharma*, his piety, his beneficence, and the courage with which he fought to protect the *sasana*. When a song impressed, the king discussed it with his courtiers, at times rewarded the composer. He ordered the ola to be strung on to the palace song repertoire. From this the king's minstrels drew songs for their *kavikāra maḍuva*. Each copied such compositions as caught his fancy into a collection of his own. It is these collections that one comes upon in print, loosely named *Paraṃgi Hatana, Maha Hatana, Sringāra, Pavan*, etc. A close examination of these booklets will show that the same verse often occurs in every one of them. After the poets had done, the *kavikāra maḍuva* of the minstrels began. They sang to soothe the king's ear—to the accompaniment of *uḍākki, pantēru*, and a pair of cymbals. The instruments were not played noisily as when men danced to the song. The essence of the music was song, and the beauty of the song is the *kīma*, the thought embodied in the words. I have often heard men who in the early years of the present century were reckoned old, discuss the singing of minstrel songs. They admired a man who interpreted a *vannama* well: but if the *kīma* in his songs was poor, the man did not stand a chance.

Besides the *kavikāra maḍuva* there were a number of institutions dependent on the Hall of the Poets for their songs. These were the *ilaṃgama*, the *vāhala ilaṃgama*, the *nayiṭum ilaṃgama* and the *piccamal ilaṃgama*. The first was an institution under an official designated the *ilaṃgamē lēkam*, into which came troupes of dancers from all over the country considered clever enough to perform before the throne. Their object was royal praise more than reward. The *vāhala ilaṃgama* was the king's own troupe of dancers. It included troupes of *nayiandi, pantēru uḍākki, raban*, and other dancers. But not *ves nāṭum* which were strictly religious dances. In the *nayiṭum ilaṃgama* the dancers were all women. Songs of love and passionate longing were wanted in the *piccamal*

ilaṃgama whose dancing no male other than the king could see. They danced within the walls of the *antaḥpura*, the king's harem, and the dancers were the ladies themselves. When the king felt inclined he joined in the dancing, a flute at his lips.

The *kavikāra maḍuva* of the *daladā māligāva* is said to be just what the king's Hall of Minstrels was. Their instruments are two *uḍākki*, two *pantēru*, and one pair of cymbals, all turned out of silver. Two or three of these men sing, the man with the cymbals one of them. The instruments are never allowed to drown the singing. Thirty years ago when I began to learn *vannam* songs, their singing was of a quality far different from the noise they make today. What I then heard I might describe as a song the minstrels sang in an act of worship rather than with the object of producing pleasant sound.

I had spent long years on an European musical instrument when at my father's request I went to the *daladā māligāva* one day. The minstrels were told that an European trained ear was listening below. They stopped for a minute, then resumed their singing, changing the *vannam* now and again as if to break the monotony. The singing was different from what my ears had caught when I entered the temple. It impressed. I began learning from different masters. I have never regretted the time I took away from my European music to learn the *kavikāra maduva* art. Let us go the *daladā māligāva* on a day the sacrosanct relic is uncovered of its many caskets.

Crowded within the gilded chamber are the two *mahānāyaka thēros*, each with this golden key, either followed by a couple of stalwart pupils, for strength is necessary to lift the upper half of the outermost casket. The *diyavadana nilamē* and the four *basnāyaka nilamēs* of the Kandy *dēvāles* are there too, gilttering in their gorgeous dresses, a guard of honour to the *daladā*. Every priest wears a broad saffron band round his robes lest a flowing end should touch the holy casket. The chieftains stand complete with bejewelled hat, and flitting hither and thiether in the antechamber are temple officials in their *tuppoṭṭi* and round hats. The temptation is great to sketch the impressive scene as one priceless casket is raised disclosing another. But it would be out of place here. A solemn silence reigns, in spite of the packed chamber. The last casket is now taken out on the silver table, and the High Priest whispers *sad-durē*. It is a command that the conches should announce that the Relic is about to be uncovered to the sight of a blessed world. A warder on the other side of the gilded door takes the order to the street end of tne floor; and as a conch peals the announcement, the Tooth of the *tathagata* is uncovered.

At the sound of that conch troupes waiting below for the moment all start simultaneously. A band of *davul* drummers, a numerous band of *hevissi*, the *nāga sinnam* and *pantēru* troupes and on the upper floor the *kavikāra maḍuva* all strike up at the same moment, and you get something like the sound old Sinhalese writers must have meant when they spoke of music that could drown the noise of the ocean. Midst the din below one could hear the songs of the minstrels near at hand. They are in praise of the Relic and as it is brought out and the minstrels behold it, they sing a song that means "Is this not the noble Tooth Relic of Gautama Buddha."

In the modern Sinhalese song, one has to admit, the same words are repeated over and over again to give one the Hindustani air to which the words are set Such unpleasant repetitions do not occur in the *vannam* songs, not even in the *mudrap-pada* songs where the first few words are repeated twice or thrice during the course of a song.

In the country, in every big manor a large room was set apart for a *kavikāra maḍuva* Here followers of the chieftain brought songs in praise of his chief's great deeds and also of the brave fight the men of their district put up for the *sasana* and the country. When the song was admired, the chief himself joined in. During war, *kavikāra maḍu* were considered a necessity. Giving utterance to words of courageous defiance was an essential part of the fighting. When waiting for battle, round each leader the men under him gathered into a *kavikāra maḍuva*. The *davul* drums and drums used to broadcast orders while the battle waged were for the moment forgotten. Not so the *uḍākki* and cymbals, which too had been brought. The ease with which these could be carried seems to have made them dear to the soldier's heart. They sang brave songs of what they meant to do the next day. When a specially brave song was concluded there was a huzza. De Queyroz makes mention of the noise in the Sinhalese camp on the eve of Constantine de Saa's defeat at Vellavaya.

During the British period *kavikāra maḍu* of this type were continued when *raṭēmahatmayās* gathered with their numerous followers for the purpose of kraaling elephants. Round the herd they had encircled, the men from each district were assigned a post. For each party it was a point of honour not to let any animals escape from the section entrusted to it. The *kavikāra maḍuva* of the chieftain sang and played the live long night to be awake if the herd should make any attempt to break the imprisoning circle of men.

Today songs of our old minstrelsy coming over the air show that the art will have to be watched by the educated if it is to be saved from degeneration. If students who value the nation's heritage do not take up their study and preservation we shall have under the caption *vannam* a kind of singing which we might as well forget. To mention an instance, the funeral drums of Kandy are still in use. But the sad, heart-rending note one was accustomed to hear but ten years back is missing, though only one man of the band of three has departed from life. If we remember that these minstrel songs are what the Sinhalese can call their own in music, a few at least will take up ther study and give them a place in the home. To my ear the foreign instrument and the Sinhalese song set to Hindustani airs are sweet, but I prefer to hum a *vannama* to while away an idle moment.

The number eighteen of the *daha-aṭa vannam* should not mislead. For if you collect all the *vannam* in preservation today, you will find many more than twice eighteen. A few of these I shall try to sing to you in the way I have heard the old masters sing.

Minstrel Songs of Simhalē

1. ශ්‍රී අරහන්තේ නමෝ නමෝ-ජන
ශ්‍රී මුඛ දන්තේ නමෝ නමෝ
මාර ජයන්තේ නමෝ නමෝ-දස
පාරමිතන්තේ නමෝ නමෝ

2. හිරිනිදු තරගුණ යසසින් සිරිනි දු
සුරනිදු සිරිසර තෙදණින් කරනි දු
පිරි සිදු ගුණරැදු රජසිංහ තරනි දු
සිරි විදු සිරිවිදු සිරිවිදු සිරිවි දු

ගාහක වන්නම (gāhaka vannama)

3. අමර ගඟ සුර මතඟ හිමකර
කිරණ ලෙස යස රැස ඉස පුවන්
අසුර පුර සුර සෙනඟ මෙන් වන්
රණ ජය සිරි ලැබ පුවන්
ලතර කරදර යුදව පැලඹෙත
පුරුදුකාහුන් කියත රැ පුවන්
පවර රජසිහ රජුගෙ සෙන්
අතසිපත් ගෙණ ලත රිදී කොං පුවන්

මයුරා වන්නම (mayurā vannama)

4. බඹසර උවිදු පුද ලද ලොවිදු
මුදුන සැ දු
තැණයුර ගණිදු තද තෙද දිනුදු
විකුමැති රමිදු සිරිදු ඉ දු
රූපු රණ විරිදු ඔද සිඳ පසිදු දියතුළ
සුසැදු යසැති උ දු
සිරිසර පුරැදු රජසිංහ නිරිදු කිව්දත
කුමුද තරිදු බ දු

ගජගා වන්නම (gajagā vannama)

5. මුහුල මතෙයි බැඳ තුන දලතෙයි තෙත
තිලකලතෙය අත වලලු අතෙ යි
කොමල ගතෙයි සදු තළුරතෙයි හර
දෙසවතතෙයි සක් පත් තියුතෙ යි
මෙලෙස සිතෙයි කම් කෙළිය මතෙයි
සැරසි දිමුතෙයි ඉද යහන මතෙ යි
මෙයම වෙතෙයි රජසිංහ තෘපතෙයි
තුන්සමට සිතෙයි නිදි විය අපතෙ යි
රතිරඟ වන්නම (ratiraṅga vannama)

6. ර න් හිරඹින් දිලිපුන් සඳ
කිරණෙම් දිනක රු
දු න් වෙර සීතල වන්දන මෙන්
මිය වෙසෙන රු
ම න් කර වැඹියොත් තරේන්දු
සිංය හිමි ලක් සු රු
ම න් මද පත්සර විද යුද
තොකරයි සේ පෙ රු
ආලෙස්සම් වන්නම (ālessam vannama)

7. කුන්දින්දු සේම සත සතොසකර
හැමදම සතර සඟරු වහින් පුරු දු
මන්තීන්දු නේක ඕරි සහ සෙතඟ පිරිවරා
පත්වූ ලෙස තුරු සහිත තරි දු
ලංකින්දු බූපාල කුලතිලක මෙන්
උදුර සිරි රජසිංහ මහ නිරි දු
කින්කින්දු අසමාන විපුල තද තෙද උතුම්
රජෙකී මනු මෙසිරිලක පුරු දු
කුන්දින්දු වන්නම (kundindu vannama)

8. ත දේ ගුනැති මෙවිමලදම්
තරතිදුගේ අ ගේ
සි දේ රුපුන් ඔද බිඳ වැවූ
සෘසත මුනිදු ගේ
ඔ දේ වඛමමින් කල ඒ
දලද පුද ර ගේ
ස දේ අදිමි අත දිග තැති
සන්ද මිස ම ගේ
(Harvesting Song)

KANDYAN PAINTING

The traditional art of painting, both in the Kandyan provinces and the Low Country, had to face very much the same fate as all the other traditional arts and crafts and requires no special analysis as regards the causes that led to its decline. While some of these traditional arts, Kandyan dancing for instance, have been given a chance for revival, painting as an art form has been completely neglected, except for an occasional classroom discussion: that too in an altogether disinterested academic manner, lacking in any feeling for the art, the discussion very often limited to a laboratory analysis of the utility value of some of the well known decorative motifs in so far as they could be employed in the decoration of walking sticks and ash-trays. In other words this form of traditional painting, the only significant form of temple decoration in Ceylon, does no longer exist as an art in its own right. Though there is some attempt at appreciating the artistic value of Kandyan dancing and probably also of some of the so-called minor arts and crafts there is hardly a sign of any appreciation of Kandyan painting.

It appears only normal to isolate Kandyan painting and forget that of the Low Country, because to all appearance the latter is altogether dead due to the overwhelming popularity of a new school of temple painting that has been inspired to the last detail by European methods and techniques. We have, so far, not come across any low country painter who could work in the same tradition as could be seen in the mural paintings of Mulgirigala or those of Telvatta. This, one must say, is mainly due to the excessive interest shown by the low country Buddhists, in a Buddhist revival. Kandyan temple painting on the other hand was completely neglected, and it is in a way a good thing that it happened to be so: this negligence on the part of the Buddhists and the other types of connoisseurs helped survive at least some of its traditional methods and techniques.

We have to admit, however, that the complete Europeanisation of public taste prevented the growth of this art, as it resulted in a lack of patronage. Till very recent times, all appreciation of painting in Ceylon was limited to the possession of a handful of cheap reproductions of the cheapest nineteenth century European water-colours. It is, of course, very difficult for people with that kind of taste to appreciate a traditional art like Kandyan painting. Unlike Kandyan dancing, Kandyan painting had no foster parents among foreign connoisseurs, and unlike the minor crafts, it had no patronage from tourists.

It is a very significant fact, and one we very often refuse to recognise, that Kandyan temple painting is not a folk-art. It is what one might very justifiably call an academic art: academic not in the sense of decadent, but in the sense that its correctness and its beauty depend on studied effects. All aspects of its technique, the measurements, the proportions, the choice of colours, the arrangement of colours, the composition of figures, the relative position of figures to one another, are all based on traditional laws formulated by generations of masters. And to appreciate it therefore requires study and effort. To say that painting a full eye on a face in profile is not aesthetically satisfying is as meaningless as saying that to paint a head in full-face with the profile combined, as does George Keyt for instance, is confusing. It shows either ignorance or lack of sympathy, or both. An art based on a traditional theory which requires serious learning on the part both of the artists and the public cannot develop in the absence of this learning. In the case of Kandyan temple painting, this learning is altogether absent among the public, while it survives in a very small degree among a handful of painters with whom it might die a natural death if no timely action is taken.

If the information we were able to collect is true, there could not be living more than ten painters who could produce anything like the murals of Degaldoruva or Ridīvihāra, both works of the famous Devaragampola Silvat Täna. The painters are themselves aware of the fact that the techniques have degenerated much and attribute this situation to the lack of patronage and the economic insecurity that resulted from the break up of the traditional social framework. As is well known, Kandyan painting is mainly temple painting, and temples are not built so very frequently as to provide sufficient and consistent income to a painter, as to compel him to take to painting on a purely professional basis. During the last two hundred years only a handful of temples may have been built, while those that were already there, were left uncared for and in disrepair. The Kandyan painter therefore had little employment. A good number of the newly built temples were painted

in the new low country tradition which as we have observed is a poor imitation of the nineteenth century European water colours. What is still more deplorable, is that whenever an old temple had to be renovated, the older paintings were very often covered over with this new type of murals.

In any case, the traditional painting and the traditional painters were altogether neglected. There was no more than an occasional job available to the traditional painter, and as a result it was only a very rare person that would even think of learning the technique. It was also a very rare father that would consent to his son adopting painting as a profession, knowing how insecure it is. There is also the significant social factor, true of the other arts and crafts as well, viz., a not very high social position to which these *sittarās*, as they are called, are relegated. It is very unfortunate that craftsmen are never paid their due respect; it is still worse that an art like Kandyan temple painting, which is one of the few surviving ancient traditions of mural painting, and by no means a folk art in the unhappy sense this word is used, cannot secure a place of honour for the master who practises it. The result is that we do not have more than ten painters of any repute, and probably there is not a single person who is learning it now, except perhaps most mechanically and in the most disinterested fashion, and that because he is not intelligent enough to do something else, or courageous enough to leave the village he was born in. One could not expect master painters to be produced with this kind of material.

The few painters who could still practise the ancient art have very little chance of developing the art. Any one of them could produce a long catalogue of difficulties that prevent them from taking to the art of painting in a serious way. Among these difficulties one has to recognise a few major problems that should be given sufficient thought if an attempt is made to revive the art. The painters always complain that there is no great money to be made by practising this art. As we have observed, temples are not built frequently enough to provide sufficient employment for the painters. They are thus forced to take to various other crafts and consequently they have neither the time nor the will to develop the art of painting. There is no one person who could devote his whole time to painting alone, and we have so far not come across a single painter who does not at the same time practise two or three of the traditional crafts.

Whenever an artist gets a chance of painting a temple, the quality of the product, he would admit, is very low for the simple reason that the employers do not allow them their full freedom.

Although the employer does not curb the freedom of the artist as regards the methods and techniques, his insistence on quick work, results in very mediocre murals. Although this may not appear to be a very serious obstacle, a situation like this is bound to retard the development of the art. After all good art is never produced according to schedule.

The quality of the murals done within recent times is very low, and the artists' excuse in this regard is that the materials with which they have to work are far from being satisfactory. The ground plasters, the pigments and vehicles that were used by the old masters were not only more durable, but were also of a quality that automatically produced results which were aesthetically more satisfying than what the modern muralist has to work with. A very important element that went into the composition of the ground plaster was kaolin (*kirimāṭi*) which is hardly ever used now. The surface finish was done with magnesite (*makulu*) which, according to the painters, is very difficult to obtain. Most of the paintings now are done on a layer of lime wash, which the painters believe, does not help produce good work. This, we feel, is not a sufficient reason for producing mediocre paintings, although there could be a lot of truth as regards the better quality of the ancient ground plasters. The more significant objection however is with regard to the definitely inferior quality of the pigments and media that are in use to-day. The traditional palette was happily limited to red, yellow and black with an occasional green or blue or white. All these colours were prepared from mineral and vegetable substances which the modern painters believe are no more available in Ceylon, or very difficult to obtain, even if available. The truth perhaps is that all these natural products have lost their popularity due to the ease with which the imported dyes could be used. It is a well known fact that the old mineral and vegetable pigments required very laborious preparation, in the grinding and mixing etc., while the imported dyes require no such preparation. It is possible that some of the old pigments were made out of imported materials too: this is the case perhaps with regard to cinnabar from which the red was prepared. But most of the others, the latex of the *gokaṭu* plant from which was obtained yellow, or the leaves of the indigo plant used for the blue or the magnesite which gave the white, are still found in Ceylon. The painters are not unaware of the method of preparing the black from lamp-black, latex of jak, *kākuna* oil etc. But all these pigments are altogether prohibitive as regards their preparation as compared with the facility with which the imported dyes could be used, especially as the painters are very often required to produce

quick results. There is also the difficulty of obtaining these natural products since nobody has taken seriously to producing these materials for the market.

It will thus become clear that the three major difficulties that prevent the development of Kandyan painting are:

(*a*) The absence of an appreciative public and the consequent loss of patronage.

(*b*) The economic situation that forces the artists to abandon the art.

(*c*) Lack of traditional painting material.

It is obvious that with the solution of the first problem others will be solved too.

Kandyan temple painting has had no appreciative public except for the so-called uneducated villager who looked up to it for its religious significance and not for its artistic merits. No art form could develop soundly unless there is recognition of its value as an art form. And this recognition can come only from the educated few whose artistic sensibility has been cultivated. In Ceylon, the educated few have had no initiation as regards the merits of Kandyan temple painting as an art. If ever they knew of it, it was only as a folk-art. There is nothing so untrue as this statement, as regards Kandyan painting. It is a well known thing that educating public taste in the matter of art-appreciation is not so difficult as it appears at the beginning of any new situation. There is ample evidence in the history of art as to how new disciplines, ridiculed and condemned at the start, have become the norm in no time. In Ceylon itself we have the good example of Geroge Keyt. George Keyt, however, was made outside Ceylon. Kandyan painting did not have such good fortune. It did not have even the little luck that fell to the lot of Kandyan dancing. As for Kandyan dancing there was the possibility of public performances and of course, the Kandy Perahära. Kandyan painting on the other hand can have no such possibility so long as it remains a temple painting; there can be no public exhibition. But there is nothing to prevent paintings, done in the Kandyan tradition, on panels and canvases, being exhibited from time to time.

An attempt has been made to convince some of the painters that there could be good money in this kind of "easel picture" which could be exhibited and which could be bought by individuals. This however is not a new possibility for Kandyan painting: there still are Kandyan paintings done on cloth and on wood. The painters can be educated to look for subject matter in fields

beyond the normal traditional religious stories, to suit a variety of tastes. To foster this art, we believe, one of the best ways is to organise this kind of exhibition and the University is about the best organiser.

As for educating public taste much can be done in the way of publications regarding the history, technique and aesthetics of Kandyan painting. As far as we know there is no other significant publication than that of Coomaraswamy: the *Medieval Sinhalese Art*. One has to admit that even this book does not do all that can be done in the way of publicising Kandyan painting. Coomaraswamy's work is more an analysis of the social situation in which the traditional arts found themselves at the time he wrote, than a study or a documentation of the art of painting alone. What is required is a standard documentation of the best as well as the worst paintings that are extant and studies both popular and academic on the different aspects. The best paintings reproduced in book form will prove a very great educator. There are at least half a dozen ancient *vihāras* where some of the best paintings could be seen in a good state of preservation: Māvela Kande Vihāraya, Danakirigala, Dambulla, Degaldoruwa and Ridīvihāraya are some of the most talked of *vihāras* in this respect. We must observe that some of the older temples are now being renovated, and since there is no control by any authority like the Department of Archaeology for instance, much of the older paintings are being replaced with more modern looking Europeanised paintings, or they are completely repainted, in the ancient tradition of course, but the result is little short of grotesque. A documentation of the sort we envisage will also remain a permanent record in the libraries and in the museums.

What could be a very successful method of popularising this art is for a well known painter to try his hand at this kind of painting. One does not thereby propose that a modern painter should accept the traditional methods and techniques in toto. We have to wait for a modern painter who has as much sympathy for Kandyan painting as for the "ecole de Paris" to come along. We could instance the case of Jamini Roy who meant so much for the folk paintings of India, or Rouault who created so much interest in the traditional stained glass windows of ancient French cathedrals. This of course must come from within, from the Ceylon painters, and no amount of external persuasion could be of avail.

In the absence of a course of studies at the University pertaining to the arts of Ceylon, an institution like the Government School of Art could do much by way of popularising this dying art. Kandyan temple painting, as well as that of the Low Country, could be

included in the normal curriculum and be taught under the guidance of any of the well known traditional painters. We do not propose that the emphasis should be laid on producing Kandyan painters in large numbers as is done in the case of Kandyan dancers. We only propose that it should be available as a particular idiom, for anyone to study and practise. Such a situation might attract the attention of some of the young men who still try to imitate, sometimes blindly, the European styles alone. It might also create some interest among the public who are still unaware of the aesthetic values of this style of painting.

The availability or otherwise of the traditional pigments and media should not be considered a major problem. The painters themselves are aware of the fact that these materials could be obtained in Ceylon. They insist that some of the mineral substances are available in Maturaṭa. A mineralogical survey could be able to tell us the exact situation. As for the vegetable substances, we know, there is no difficulty about growing these plants. It may perhaps be meaningless and a retrograde measure to insist on the use of the traditional material if the same effect could be obtained by the use of modern material. In this matter there is no other authority than the painters themselves. The painters should be made aware of the relative merits of the various pigments, and thus should be prevented from using any cheap dye that comes in handy.

We have been avoiding asking ourselves the question whether an attempt should be made by way of reviving this ancient art. Reviving is probably the wrong word if it gives anybody the idea that the attempt is to bring back to life something that is altogether dead: for Kandyan painting is not dead. If it is dead, it is so only in the eyes of those who are not aware of its existence. It is no more dead today than Kandyan dancing was two decades ago. It only waits to be recognised. And that is just what we mean by reviving: To recognise Kandyan temple painting as a particular style of painting that deserves to be practised and appreciated. This depends of course on how satisfying aesthetically Kandyan painting is, and this kind of value judgment depends entirely on what sort of art education we have. It must be observed that Kandyan painting does not come within the range of any of the schools of painting that normally attract the attention of modern critics. If we look for a similar tradition in painting elsewhere we might not find any, except probably in ancient Egypt, where, too, comparison should be very limited.South India, from where, in all probability, this tradition has been introduced to Ceylon, apparently ignores it altogether.

Kandyan Painting

The value of Kandyan painting depends entirely on the two most significant elements in any form of painting: line and colour. In the best of Kandyan murals, anybody would recognise a very significant use of lines. Unlike in most other techniques the line does not disappear under the daubs of pigment, after playing its insignificant role of defining the figures to be painted. In Kandyan painting. however, all the lines remain for ever and serve a purpose as important as that served by the colours. A network of bold, sensitive, coloured lines is a very significant feature in any Kandyan painting and there are not many traditions of painting that could exhibit the same virtuosity. Kandyan painting is two-dimensional and its pictorial quality depends largely on this. Light and shade and volume, most critics would agree, are unnecessary and also dangerous, since they destroy the pictorial value of most paintings. And that is why the moderns prefer to work in the two-dimensional style. The result therefore is the enhanced value of colour and the great emphasis laid on colour. Kandyan painting is undoubtedly one of thefew traditions of painting where colour gets its rightful place and where colour is used with great success. It has a very limited palette, we have observed, but this does not do the least harm. In fact this is one of its great qualities because the colours have remained brilliant and unadulterated. Like all great art it is stylised and the motifs and subject matter are traditional. But there is nothing to prevent changes being brought about either in its technique or in the choice of its subject matter. There is one painter who maintanied that he could paint any scene from ordinary life, a harvesting scene for example, in the Kandyan technique. Changes with regard to technique, however, should be done with much understanding, lest we destroy the traditional art.

P. E. E. Fernando

WEAVING, METAL WORK AND LACQUER WORK

These three industries have been carried on in Ceylon almost from the beginning of the historic period, i.e. from the time of the coming of the Aryan-speaking peoples in Ceylon. The Pali Chronicles, the Aṭṭhakāthās, Sinhalese inscriptions and other literary documents bear ample evidence as to the growth of these industries in this country. The Mahāvaṃsa refers on several occasions to metal images of the Buddha and statues of royal personages that were constructed under the direction of various kings, while Sinhalese literary works such as Daṁbadeṇi-Asna enumerate the different types of "tapestries", hangings and curtains used in the royal household in the thirteenth century. The Mihintalē Tablets of the tenth century contain a long list of the various artisans and craftsmen such as potters, weavers, carpenters, joiners and painters who were attached to the monastery at Mihintalē at the time. These artisans and craftsmen numbering over 175 were allotted land and other emoluments by the king for their services.

Both in ancient and in mediaeval times the craftsmen depended on the patronage of the king and the nobles, and in the case of those who served the needs of the temples they were again paid for their services by the king. But we have to assume that some of these craftsmen served the needs of the ordinary people too, for besides the bare essentials of life they too needed articles such as baskets, boxes, betel-stands and so forth.

With the comming of the Europeans and their gradual occupation of the low country the traditional crafts of the people were bound to suffer a set-back not only because of the foreign products they may have imported and sold in the country at cheaper rates, but also because of the new influences they may have introduced into the arts and crafts of the country. Their influence can clearly

be seen in the wood-work and painting of the low country. Later on with the coming of the English, and the occupation of the whole country by them, further Western influences were introduced, with greater competition from foreign goods. It is significant that just as Kandy has remained the last stronghold of the Sinhalese till 1815, so has it remained the last stronghold of the traditional arts and crafts of the Sinhalese up to the present day.

The crafts with which this paper is concerned are practised today only by a handful of craftsmen living in Pāta Dumbara and in one or two villages in Yaṭinuvara. The weavers of Dumbara confine themselves to the production of curtains, bags and mats of different kinds while the craftsmen of Yaṭinuvara specialise in the production of brass overlaid work such as trays, lamps, and other trinkets, and lacquered articles such as walking sticks, lamp stands, ash trays and such other oddments. What is important to realise is that their efforts are limited to the production of mere curios and it would not be far wrong to say that today they depend mostly for their sales on producing 'souvenirs' to tourists and visitors to carnivals and exhibitions. They no longer produce wares to meet the day to day needs of the people. Thus the continuance of their activities has to be fostered and nurtured by artificial means.

The circumstances that have led to this state of affairs are not far to seek and may broadly be ascribed to economic and social causes, which are interdependent. The disintegration of the economic and social structure of the country which started with the coming of the Europeans found these traditional craftsmen in a helpless state. The patronage of the kings and chieftains ceased to be extended to them and owing to the introduction of western tastes and western manufactured articles to replace the indigenous products, the local craftsmen found themselves in a situation which they were not competent to overcome. Brought up and trained in a tradition that was somewhat rigid, not possessed of that flexibility of attitude and imagination to adapt themselves to the changing circumstances, and not possessed of resources to undertake new ventures, these craftsmen were forced to adapt themselves in the only way open to them. They were forced to debase their designs, to use cheap and imported materials and to abandon their well-tried techniques and processes. Thus we find the weavers no longer preparing their own yarn or dyes. The lacquer the craftsmen use is imported, and the designs, patterns and colour-schemes of their products are all modified for the two purposes of approximating to the imported article and getting a small profit.

The question may now be asked whether, with social and economic conditions militating against the continuance of these arts and crafts, they should be rehabilitated and given a new lease of life. Frankly I must say we can import at cheaper rates articles of comparable utility value and artistic merit. But then we have to take into consideration the artistic heritage that will be lost to the future—an artistic heritage that has favourably impressed very many who are competent to express opinions on such matters. In all enlightened countries efforts have been made and are being made to revive such traditional arts and crafts. But any such efforts must be directed to revive them as something living—something that will give to the people of the country both utility and beauty. They should not be revived in order to provide more plentiful souvenirs to tourists or "objects of art" to rich people who indulge in the pleasure of collecting museum pieces.

I propose now to examine the problem under the following heads: (1) the Craftsman, (2) the Public, (3) Training and Study, (4) Organization.

The craftsmen who are still practising these arts and crafts belong mostly to the so-called low castes. They live in humble hovels a life that can only be described as utter degradation. Their crafts, which should be their pride is only a means to eking out a none-too-pleasant existence. Their education is almost nil and the knowledge of their artistic tradition is subordinated to earning a living. The ancient craftsmen, as their work shows, though not educated in the modern sense of the word, were well versed in their traditions and techniques, their tastes were cultivated and they regarded their craft with pride—as something with which they were in duty bound to serve their patron and their religion. Today not trained in any other more profitable trade, the craftsman produces something—regardless of quality—and goes about peddling his wares from house to house. If he is lucky he may be registered with the Kandy Art Association and may hope to sell his wares there regularly. Occasionally he might be asked to show his craftsmanship to visitors at an exhibition and all that he may get at the end may be a certificate of merit—which is of not much use to him. Thus as far as the craftsman is concerned the most important service that one can render to him is to assure him the wages due to him as a skilled craftsman, and to give him some form of training and education that will permit him to practise his art with imaginative technical skill.

The public too has to be educated to appreciate and take a pride in the traditional arts of their country. They must also be provided with some kind of guidance to recognize what is good

and bad. The large volume of popular books published in European countries, on such subjects as pewter, tapestries, wood-work etc. should serve as a good illustration of the work that can be done in this direction. The museums and the University can render very valuable service to the public in this direction by undertaking the publication of a few popular and cheap booklets on these subjects.

Training of craftsmen also should occupy the attention of those who attempt to revive our arts and crafts. According to customs prevailing in the country, a craftsman's son usually followed in the footsteps of his father and in time took his father's place as a skilled craftsman. But today the conditions are different. Sons and daughters of craftsmen are keen to take to other more profitable trades and occupations, and show a keen desire to go to the towns abandoning, quite properly I think, the sordid surroundings of their impoverished villages. A central school of training with expert craftsmen as teachers should be organised. The students should be trained not only in the practical side of their work, but also in subjects such as design, colour, etc. When students have completed their training, arrangements should be made to assure them an adequate volume of custom.

Research on and study of the traditional arts and crafts have to be undertaken by this training school and lectures to the public also may be given here. In this connection attention may be drawn to the work done in England by William Morris and his colleagues to preserve the traditional arts and crafts of England. They founded a society, floated a company and established workshops and even a printing press. They studied the mediaeval texts, studied the collections in Museums and by these means set the standard for the traditional arts. In the end, however, their venture failed as a commercial venture but the influence of their efforts were felt even outside the shores of England. Ananda Coomaraswamy, the greatest authority on the traditional arts of the Sinhalese, was himself inspired by the work of William Morris and his colleagues.

Before concluding I may briefly refer to the good work that is being done by the Kandyan Art Association, within its own limitations. It was founded in 1893 with the following as its objects:

(*a*) to preserve the purity and originality of Kandyan Art work

(*b*) to form a medium between the would-be purchaser and the producer of such work.

I am not competent to speak of the service that it rendered in the past, but its present policy seems to me mainly directed to achieving only the second aim, namely to act as an agent between the craftsmen and the buyer. With its meagre resources this society finds

it difficult to direct its attention to the first object of the society, *i.e.* to preserve the purity and originality of Kandyan Art. The articles bought by this Society are not all made according to the traditional techniques. The cotton yarn, the dyes and lacquer used in these articles are obtained in the shops and the Society is not in a position to insist on these materials being prepared by the craftsmen themselves. Another aspect of this society to which I draw your attention is that it is administered as a semi-official organization. The prime movers of this society at its inception were enlightened government Agents like J. F. Dickson and Hugh Nevill who had a genuine interest in the art and literature of the Sinhalese and under their supervision the Society must have rendered very useful service not only as an agent between the craftsmen and the buyer but also as a fixer of the standards pertaining to the different crafts. It was perhaps owing to their interest that this society has developed into a semi-government institution, but what is important to remember is that all revenue officers are not generally interested in the culture of the Sinhalese as were Dickson and Nevill. Thus one feels that this society today is more or less administered as any government department, lacking that informed and enlightened interest on the part of the higher officials which alone made it possible for such a Society as this to be founded.

The Kandy Museum has an extensive collection of the products of our craftsmen but I regret to say that no attempt has been made by those responsible for the administration of this Museum to educated the public as well as the craftsmen themselves. Periodical lectures with illustrations from the exhibits of the Museum can go a long way in creating an interest in the minds of the people in our arts and crafts. Books and pamphlets—with good illustrations—sold at very low prices could stimulate this interest and help the people to distinguish the fraud from the genuine article. Kandy is a large town with a considerable number of schools and the students and the teachers of these schools could be attracted to the rich treasures deposited in the Kandy Museum, if proper publicity is given tc what is available for them to see there. Encouragement can also be given to teachers and students to undertake studies of the different aspects of our arts and crafts.

These criticisms of the Museum and the Kandy Art Association should not be regarded as a reflection on the officials engaged in these institutions. Probably they are doing their best within the limitations set by the resources available to them. But what I urge is that steps should be taken to remedy these defects as soon as possible.

J. Tilakasiri

PUPPETRY AND ITS FUTURE IN CEYLON

The art of puppetry has been known in Ceylon from the very distant past, according to the evidence found in ancient Sinhalese literature. Indian literature too, especially Sanskrit literature, contains many a reference to puppets and other animated figures which were used both as a means of amusement and as a medium of magic in ancient India. It is supposed that like many of the other ancient arts and crafts of Ceylon, puppetry too came from India. Without going into the problems connected with the origin of puppetry in Ceylon, we propose to study in this paper the present state of puppetry in Ceylon, the techniques and methods it employs, and to suggest possible ways and means of developing it in the future as a medium of entertainment and as a method of education.

The practice of puppetry today is entirely confined to an area in the south of Ceylon—Ambalangoḍa—where several rival troupes of puppeteers lay claim to a continued tradition. The puppets used by these troupes are usually carved in a special variety of wood in various sizes, most of which are about three feet in height, but some are even made in life-size proportions. The fact that the kindred folk arts like *kōlam* are also confined to this area speaks for the high artistic and technical skill of these artistes, who display a natural gift for carving in wood (whether for carving masks for the *kōlam* dances, or for carving figures) producing a suggestive likeness to the human face or figure. It may also be mentioned in passing that many of these folk artistes are skilled in the crafts, especially carpentry, which they pursue in their spare time.

In the distant past sporadic puppet shows were probably put up at street corners, junctions, and under trees, in the towns and villages, where passers-by had free entertainment in much the same way as the French village folk showed their appreciation of "marionette" (French term for string puppet) shows. In Ceylon too, from the beginning, only string puppetry, called *rūkaḍa*,

has been in existence. It originated among the folk and remained the art of the poor man who, even though he appreciated it, could do nothing for its propagation. Puppetry as a dramatic art, however, became popular in recent times when it was linked up with the *nādagama*, a variety of folk drama which, though now almost extinct, was highly appreciated in the latter part of the nineteenth century and even a few decades ago. In order to transform the ordinary puppet play to puppet drama, the music and the recitative and dialogue portions of the *nādagama* were entirely grafted on to the former. Although the connection of puppetry with the *nādagama*, in this manner, was intended to raise its status and bring it to a wider and more discriminating public, it also contributed largely to its retarded growth and its failure to develop into a virile and artistic form of folk entertainment. For anyone sitting through over three hours of puppet drama comes away annoyed and obviously disappointed that the immense potentialities of puppetry have been frittered away. Firstly, according to the practice now followed, the troupe of puppeteers are compelled to produce the play conforming to the textual requirements of the *nādagama*, whose traditional style and technique is incapable of bringing out the best of puppet drama. Often the Original play is lengthened by secondary scenes, and more particularly by means of comic scenes which the village audiences prefer even at the expense of their interest in the main story. True, the comic figures, which admirably satirise various human types, have an invigorating effect on the audience, but this alone is insufficient to make the audience educated in the appreciation of puppet drama. It is therefore clear that puppetry, if it is to take its rightful place as an artistic form of entertainment and as a form of drama which can compete with the art of the theatre, must, first be divorced from the *nādagama* and allowed to develop a style and technique more natural to it and more in keeping with modern trends in puppet drama.

It is evident that the art of puppetry is in a very neglected state today, threatened with extinction in the not too distant future. This is indeed regrettable because the puppet troupes mentioned earlier possess undoubted talent in certain aspects of puppetry. Apart from their ability to bring out realistic characters by their puppet figures they have also shown an aptitude for costuming the immense range of nearly 200 puppets, consisting of kings, chieftains, ministers, clowns, officials, policemen, peasants, etc., belonging to different periods in history. Still the troupes have to wait for an Exhibition, Carnival or an Annual Festival of Arts to put up a performance which will hardly bring them anything more than their travelling and other expenses. It so happens that on

account of the competition that prevails among the troupes the more established and experienced puppeteers are not selected for performances while the more recent and mediocre ones cash in—a tendency which will undoubtedly bring the art to a quicker end. No official or private organisation is genuinely interested in improving the art, whose world-wide developments and manifold uses are but little known even to those interested in the propagation of the folk-arts. The attempt made by a cultural organisation, several years ago, to present puppet drama to an urban audience proved a financial loss and a failure because many could not appreciate puppet drama presented in the traditional *nāḍagama* style, and some were reluctant to pay adequately for something which they were used to seeing free or for the payment of a nominal sum.

In order to make puppetry a serious art which can hold its own with the other well-developed arts, as in other countries of the world, a scheme for the popularisation and development of the traditional art should be devised and executed without delay. Considering the many and varied uses to which puppetry is put, especially in European countries, we must employ it not only as a medium of entertainment, but also in its applied uses for educational and social purposes.

The educational value of puppetry is immense and varied, and if we follow the admirable example set by the Educational Puppetry Association of England, we could introduce puppetry to the schools of Ceylon with profit. Educationists have discovered that puppetry is one of the subjects ideally suited to lead students into so many connected subjects in the school curriculum. Art, Drama, Speech Training, History, and similar subjects have been introduced almost effortlessly in some countries, through puppetry as a method of education. Above all, it would promote initiative among the pupils and instil in them the desire to experiment. It has been found that glove puppets are a very convenient type to handle and work with in the school. So it would not be so difficult to introduce this type in the Ceylon schools too. The making, painting, dressing, and manipulation of these puppets can easily stimulate the artistic and creative aptitudes of the young ones. As they advance and show more talent, puppet stagecraft (including the study of scenery and equipment) could be taught. Finally, students who have dramatic ability can devote themselves to the more specialised tasks of puppet-play writing and play production. In all stages of instruction, films and lectures on puppets and puppetry could be used as additional devices to kindle their interest. If the educational authorities could be persuaded to accept a scheme of educational puppetry to be introduced into

both rural and urban schools, it would produce far-reaching changes in the system of education and also serve the cause of puppetry.

Simultaneous with the introduction of educational puppetry, an effort should be made to educate our puppeteers and the craftsmen who work with them, to evolve modern methods and techniques. There is abundant literature on the subject available to us from foreign lands where the art of puppetry has taken vast strides. Even expert knowledge and guidance with regard to the introduction of educational, amateur, or professional puppetry, could be readily obtained from the puppetry organisations of those countries. To this end a Puppetry Association which can organise these activities and carry out an effective programme of work should be set up. This body could also initiate puppet exhibitions for both adults and children annually, where school children may produce playlets, and the amateur groups put on adult shows. A permanent collection of model puppet types of all countries and model puppet stages of the countries where the art is actively practised should be secured and kept on exhibition as is done by the E.P.A. in London.

When puppetry receives its proper status among the folk arts in this manner, professional puppetry such as we find in Ceylon today will certainly be a paying concern. When we read of the vast developments in this field, especially in the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia, we are no doubt surprised that puppetry is able to compete with the art of the theatre on equal terms. Yet it is well known that in these advanced countries also puppetry had to struggle to come into its own, from beginnings as small as ours. In the present circumstances such a future for puppetry in Ceylon cannot be visualised, but under a changed set-up and with proper direction and guidance in play production for the puppet stage, professional puppetry is destined to be an attractive and artistic mode of entertainment and a vital cultural force in our lives.

J. E. Jayasuriya

SOME PSYCHOLOGICAL ASPECTS OF CULTURE REVIVAL

The revival of traditional cultures is a complex process, for cultures are revived not by such static, though undoubtedly useful actions as the passing of a resolution or the holding of a seminar but by a dynamic change in the values, attitudes and activities of a people. It is essentially a problem in psychological engineering and the purpose of this paper is to examine some of its more important implications.

The traditional cultures of this country have gone through a period of obsolescence, if not of a partial disintegration and decay, and an analysis of the psychological conditions that were responsible for this state of affairs should throw light on the problem under discussion. Ceylon has, in its recorded history of two thousand five hundred years, come under the influence of a number of foreign cultures. Some of these foreign cultures satisfied the conditions for integration with indigenous cultures and the resulting process was one of enrichment of the indigenous cultures, while the other foreign cultures not satisfying these conditions failed either to integrate with or to enrich the indigenous cultures. The mere fact of cultural impact gives no indication of the effects of the impact and these must be sought by means of a closer examination of the socio - psychological nature of the impact. The Dravidian-Hindu culture was one of those that successfully integrated with the Aryan-Buddhist culture of the Sinhalese. A number of factors were responsible for this integration.

In the first place, the two cultures had kindred origins and many common elements of form, method and ideal. Although the initial impact of the two cultures was not at the level of the common man, it infiltrated very swiftly to the level of the common man on account of the congeniality of the new culture to the exist-

ing culture. This is a factor of great importance in culture contact. The ultimate custodians and the abiding transmitters of the traditional cultures of a society are not its élite but its common folk and it is through the agency of the common folk that cultural diffusion and cultural integration can take place on an extensive scale. The élite serve the function of sowing the seeds of the new culture but these seeds will bear fruit in the cultural life of the common man only in so far as they are in harmony with the existing culture. When this harmony exists, cultural integration takes place almost imperceptibly and the final result is an acceptable and harmonious blend, notwithstanding its baffling irrationality. A good example of this may be seen in the many Buddhist practices of the present day which though alien to the doctrines of Buddhism and having their roots in Hinduism are nevertheless in the cultural tradition of Buddhism and therefore eminently acceptable to the people.

Secondly the Hindu-Dravidian culture that made its impact on Sinhalese culture did not offer itself as the culture of an overlord exercising an unchallengeable superiority but rather as the culture of a co-existing equal. There was no compelling urge for embracing it; there was no incentive to rush headlong and seek identification with it. What influence it had was the result of a long historical process. It was a selective process, too, in the sense that only those aspects of Hindu-Dravidian culture that were congenial to Sinhalese culture could have entered Sinhalese culture. Its total effect was not one of supplanting but one of supplementing and enriching, and the elements that entered from outside lost their foreignness in the process of entering, so much so that they became an integral part of Sinhalese culture. On occasion the wise in their folly attempt to separate the elements that have synthesised together but the common man is untouched by these attempts and accepts his cultural heritage in its wholeness.

In contrast to the Hindu-Dravidian culture whose elements entered almost imperceptibly into Sinhalese culture and formed a synthesis with it, the European cultures that came with the arrival of the Portuguese, the Dutch and the English failed to satisfy the socio-psychological conditions for integration with the indigenous cultures. In the first place, the impact was not an impact of Western cultures in their wholeness and in their variety. On the contrary, the impact that we in this country (and no doubt those in other Asian countries, too) felt was confined to that insignificant, diluted and false segment of Western culture that was exportable. It has been said of the Englishmen that he ceased to be an Englishman east of Suez. In other words, he ceased to be the ambassador

of his traditional culture. He may not have become entirely cultureless but he certainly did not reflect the culture of the common man of his country. Thus, the indigenous cultures did not come into contact with the undiluted, genuine traditional cultures of the West. Furthermore, the impact could not, at any rate except in its most superficial elements, infiltrate to the level of the common man, for the new culture was entirely out of tune with the existing culture. It was strange and foreign, couched in symbols and forms of expression that were completely alien to the existing culture. At the level of the common man, therefore, there was a total failure in culture communication and it is therefore not surprising that there was no cultural assimilation or integration.

The so called upper class certainly came into contact with those partial and diluted segments of European culture exemplified by the European in Ceylon, and those of the upper classes who read European languages were exposed to other segments of European culture as well but no doubt what was seen had a greater influence than what was merely read. The important fact is that European culture offered itself as the superior culture of a chosen overlord; there was a compelling social and psychological urge for embracing it and rushing headlong to seek identification with it. It was taken over unnaturally and artificially. It was a graft rather than a growth, and often the indigenous was consciously rejected and suppressed in the process. But even in those who were prepared to surrender completely their indigenous culture and take over the new values, the surrender was often an incomplete one, for the indigenous elements were too strong to be completely destroyed. The result was a biculturality in the upper and upper-middle classes that was seldom in harmony for there had been no synthesis. It was superficial and rootless both in its indigenous elements and its foreign elements, for detachment from the indigenous was seldom compensated by a complete entering into of the foreign. If that were the whole story, there should probably have been no need for much concern. But what has placed the traditional cultures in peril is the influence that the superficial bi-culturality of the upper and upper-middle classes has had on the culture of the common man. The common man, in his desire to emulate and identify himself with the upper classes began to neglect and to be ashamed of his traditional culture and to practise it less and less with the passing of years. The real peril to the traditional cultures is therefore essentially an internal one, namely the impact of the upper class on the attitudes, ideals and practices of the common man. The danger is that the common man is becoming culture-less, not that he is becoming westernised. He is abandoning his native heritage and not finding a new heritage.

If this analysis is right, it suggests a psychological strategy for attempting culture revival. The movement for the revival of traditional cultures must first take root among the upper classes—the classes of the socially élite and intellectually élite—derive its momentum from there and gradually infiltrate downwards. Only then can the process of gradual abandonment of the tranditional cultures by the common man be stopped. Therefore, those who must first be restored to the traditional cultures are the élite of the country and with that restoration the impact of the élite on the common man will work in the direction of encouraging traditional cultures. Unless there is evidence that the elité are taking actively to the traditional cultures, a movemet to encourage traditional cultures among the masses will work against the psychological force of upward mobility whereby the masses seek to improve their status and standing by seeking the same values and attitudes as the elité. In fact, whenever a course of action prescribed for the common man is one that is not actively practised among the élite, the common man tends to be suspicious of it and to look upon it as designed to perpetuate his serfdom and prevent him from inproving his status.

It seems to me therefore that our first task is to save our English educated upper class from their artificial bi-culturality and to re-introduce them to the heritage of our traditional cultures. This re-introduction, if it is to be of benefit both to them and to the traditional cultures, must not be a mere verbalisation or a condescending patronage but a dynamic creative process. In other words, what is wanted is not that the upper class should begin speaking glibly of traditional cultures, nor that they should extend a condescending patronage by adorning their drawing rooms with a few specimens of indigenous arts and crafts. What is wanted is that they should be active practitioners of the traditional cultures in the sense that they have actively learned the practice of an art or craft and do creative work in that art and craft. The practice of an art or craft, even as a leisure time activity, is immensely satisfying both to the individual who practises it and to society in general.

It is one of the tragedies of modern times that leisure has been commercialised and ready made entertainment provided, with the result that instead of experiencing the joys of the creative use of leisure, we passively and vicariously enjoy cheap thrills and sensations. The practice of an art or craft could, for most people, elevate their use of leisure, and the entire cultural life of a community chastened by this means. The creative practice of the arts and crafts of a country by its social and intellectual élite will arrest

the tendency on the part of the common folk to abandon them or undervalue them; and this seems to me to be one of the most effective ways of promoting a revival of indigenous arts. I must make it clear that when I use the word "creative" in this context, I mean creative in two senses. In a somewhat narrow and limited sense, I mean that something is made or created. What is made or created may be very ordinary, not the best of its kind, not a model of craftsmanship by any means, and yet the work is useful, satisfying and creative in a sense. By "creative" I also mean something broader and more valuable—the bringing into being of something new, may be a new idea in design, a new standard of craftsmanship, a new use for an old medium, a new interpretation of a theme. The revival of the indigenous arts and crafts does not therefore imply a cultural orthodoxy that builds a fortress round itself and resists the impact of the world outside.

Arts and crafts that live must continually expand in new directions, but this expansion must come as a spontaneous growth of its active practice. The arts and crafts of other lands and even their machine made products may be suggestive for such expansion. This brings me to the next point I want to make about culture revival, namely that while its roots must be traditional, it would be fatal to try to encompass its flowering within traditional limits, without allowing for the spontaneous growth that would come from the creative imagination and width of outlook of those actively practising it with an awareness of the culture of other countries and other ages. From this point of view, it would seem that in so far as the upper classes are concerned, there is some awareness of other cultures and that the pressing need is to open their eyes to local culture; and that as far as the common folk are concerned, there is a need to revitalise their practice of the local culture not only by emphasising it as such but also by opening their eyes to world culture, so that the latter might be suggestive for the richer growth of the former. The essence of culture growth in a nation lies in the imaginative creation of new forms that nevertheless retain a distinctive national flavour.

It is important to recognise that the socio-psychological problems arising in the attempt to revive the traditional arts and crafts depend also on the particular art or craft concerned. The traditional associations of that art or craft and the current attitude of society towards it must be taken into careful consideration. Generally speaking, it would be easier to revive some of the arts rather than the crafts, for the former are considered an embellishment by society whereas the latter are not considered so. Take painting and music, for example. They are considered embellishments

in high society and their practice is looked upon with favour and admiration. They are considered cultural activities. Contrast with this the attitude towards basket making or carpentry. They are not considered embellishments or cultural activities. Even among the arts, some arts are considered by society to be cultural while others are not seen in the same light. If the practice of an art has had and does still have an occupational or caste association, then the tendency is to value it less than other arts. Therefore, the revival of those of the arts which have an occupational or caste association, and the crafts almost every one of which has an occupational or caste association, is sure to be psychologically more difficult than the revival of the arts which do not have such associations. An essential condition for their revival seems to be that they should be up rooted from their caste and occupational associations so that they are no longer attributes of a caste or occupation but become related to life at all levels in the community. This means that the custody and development of such arts and crafts must be shared by segments of society outside the caste or occupation with which there arts and crafts were traditionally associated.

Consider pottery or mat weaving, for example. If the condition for their survival is that those who have traditonally practised these crafts should continue to practise them while the others merely look on and expound to them the virtues of such practice, both pottery and mat weaving are doomed. Nothing can stop the movement of the potter and the mat weaver to get away from his occupational and caste stigma. With the extension of educational opportunities and the gathering momentum of social mobility, mat weaving and pottery are the last occupations that children of mat weavers and potters would want to enter. This is a stark reality that must be faced. What then is the prospect for mat weaving and pottery? It is that other segments of society should take it on as a cultural activity and develop it and when this is being done the children of those who have traditionally practised it as an occupation will perhaps practise it as a cultural activity, if not as an occupational activity. The best prospect for the survival and development of some of the arts and most of the crafts is that practice on an exclusively occupational or caste basis should be replaced by practice on a wider basis by all segments of society. The school is the natural institution in which such practice should be encouraged. Possibly, a transitional period may have to be gone through in which the practice of crafts on an exclusively occupational or caste basis is temporarily boosted by the offering of special incentives to the members of the occupations or castes

concerned. Such a procedure is unlikely to succeed in the long run, and there seems to be no alternative but to have as our ultimate objective the creation of a class of craftsmen who are brought together by common interests and common aptitudes rather than by a common caste.

Artist-craftsmen drawn from all sectors of society should replace the existing caste associated artisan-craftsmen, if there is to be a revival of the indigenous crafts on an enduring basis. In other words the right psychological environment must be created by the removal of social stigma and the enhancement of social status, and both these have to be effected not by mere lip-service but at a complex psychological level. The traditional apprenticeship basis for the training of craftsmen, though it may have produced good craftsmen in the past, is inadequate in our present social context. Under that scheme, learners will be often drawn from a narrow caste group and often exclusively from the lower socio-economic groups. Besides, the apprenticeship method of training concentrates too narrowly on a mere technique on traditional lines and leaves out entirely the concept of a general education. The product of apprenticeship training is invariably an artisan crafsman with a low status on the socio economic scale. Apprenticeship training must therefore be replaced by education and training at schools of arts and crafts, where those specially gifted in the arts and crafts (as evinced by the competence shown in these during ordinary schooling) could pursue to an advanced stage the studies of arts and crafts in the setting of a wider cultural education. Thus recruitment to these schools would be from all strata of society. This scheme also visualises the coming into being of a body of arts and crafts teachers, drawn from all sectors of society, and possessing in addition to technical competence a broad foundation of general education. It is important that the emoluments paid to them and the status accorded to them should in no way be inferior to the emoluments paid or status accorded to them should in no way be inferior to the emoluments paid or status accorded to teachers of other subjects.

An expansion in the scope of adult education is one of the most pressing needs of the country. The concept has taken root in other countries that education is co-terminous with life, and that the education of an individual is a continuing process extending from the cradle to the grave. In other words, at no stage is an individual's education complete. When we in this country think of adult education, it is in terms of making the illiterate literate, and only the uneducated are thought to require adult education. While it is true that the illiterate and the uneducated are in need

of education, it is also true that the educated—University educated men, for example—are themselves in need of further education. There is the pursuit of their specialities which, of course, they can very well look after. But there is also a need to acquire new interests and new skills outside the fields of specialisation and it is here that a wide variety of adult education provision can be of great value. What provision that exists is often in the exotic—there are places where one can learn ballroom dancing and modern European languages, for example—but seldom the indigenous. Where in Colombo can a University educated man learn, as a leisure time activity, carpentry, mat weaving, basket making or lacquer work? A factor of very great importance in the revival of indigenous arts is the establishment, on a voluntary or governmental basis, of institutes of adult education where the indigenous arts and crafts are taught, and the enrolment of a pioneer set of learners drawn from among the social and intellectual élite.

A return to the religious tradition of the country must necessarily mean a return to some of our traditional cultures. Although adherence to the principles of a religion is more in line with the concept of the good life than the practice of the rituals of religion, yet the latter serve the useful purpose of making religion a group activity with an essentially emotional content as one of its elements. When there is both practice of principles and observance of ritual, the position of religion in the life of the community is strengthened. In as much as ritual without principles nullifies religion, the practice of principles without the observance of ritual emaciates religion and destroys its group appeal. The dangers of a too rationalistic or a too intellectual approach to religion must be recognised and a conscious effort must be made to retain the traditional rituals associated with religion. These rituals tend to perpetuate many elements in our indigenous cultures. Does not, for example, the Kandy Perahära provide a panorama of our indigenous cultures and will it not be cultural suicide if a too intellectual approach to religion makes us abolish the Perahära? From this point of view, it is important that the social and intellectual elite of the community must be persuaded to participate actively in religious ritual. If this does not happen, the common man may himself may give up ritual, thinking that it is debasing in the modern context. A return to religion, and this includes the ritual of religion, can be a most powerful factor in the revival of indigenous cultures, and the opportunity offered by Buddha Jayanthi must not be lost.

There is a group of arts whose practice is based on myth and superstition. *Bali* ceremonies and *tovil* are examples of these.

The prospects of their survival, assuming that they are desirable for cultural purposes, are bleak as they are threatened on the one hand by diminishing numbers practising them as an occupation and on the other hand by the extension of scientific education which is making people increasingly critical of these practices and sceptical of their usefulness. It would be psychologically unsound to encourage the serious practice of superstition and the survival or revival of these has surely to assume a different complexion from the survival or revival of other arts and crafts. It seems to me that their continued existence at the cultural level can be encouraged by the staging of annual festivals at which prizes could be awarded for the best staged ones. Such national festivals could, of course, embrace the whole field of the indigenous arts and crafts and would be an extended form of the national Eisteddfod of Wales.

This brings us to the question of patronage. Patronage of the right kind can play an important part in the revival of traditional cultures. What is wanted is not the condescending patronage born of a feeling of superiority; nor even the patronage of the connoisseur. What is most needed is the active patronage of the participant. The socially or intellectually élite must become patrons of the arts and the crafts by actively and creatively practising these arts and crafts. Resistance to the mass produced foreign article is best developed through the discrimination and sensitivity born of the active practice of arts and crafts. It is only in this way that the problem of finding a market for local products that bear the hallmark of individual craftsmanship can be solved. A class of buyers prepared to pay the most deserving prices for local products can be created not by multiplying the ranks of condescending patrons but by increasing the number of those who actively practise the local arts and crafts and develop discrimination and sensitivity as a result. And when these are drawn from the leaders of society, the future of the traditional arts and crafts can be assured for their psychological influence will be felt all along the social gamut.

The cultural revival of many countries has often coincided with the gaining of political independence, and certainly the climate of Ceylon in the present day is most congenial for a cultural renaissance. Manpower of the right sort, imbued with a missionary zeal for the revival of traditional cultures and able to plan its strategy and mobilise public opinion, must come from voluntary organisations. The state should actively co-operate with voluntary organisations, firstly by the rehabilitation of the arts and crafts in the schools of Ceylon (and in this respect, the best known urban schools of

the country—those which set standards for the others—are in greater need of reform than small rural schools which did not any time get completely cut off from the stream of tradition), secondly by an adult education movement that is rich in its provision and includes the traditional arts and crafts, thirdly, by arranging on an extensive scale to make visual or auditory records as the case may be, of existing paintings, dances, folk songs etc., which are in danger of being lost, fourthly by the organisation of national festivals of arts and crafts and the taking of other steps to ensure their continued existence and development, and fifthly by the exercise of a measure of control over the influx of machine made foreign articles that threaten local products.

I may conclude with a quotation from Thomas Munro, "By contributing the best of its cultural products to world civilization, each people can help to build a rich and diversified cultural heritage for posterity.....It would be a dull world if all nations or all individuals were the same. Each people can and should remain true to its own main, cherished traditions, acting as their custodian and representative to the outside world."

Christopher Sower

RURAL DEVELOPMENT SOCIETIES AS CULTURAL AGENCIES

In considering this subject the first problem which comes to mind is a definition of concepts. While there will not be time to go into detail, and no attempt will be made to imply what the planners of this conference mean by their terms, two of the concepts, traditional cultures and cultural agencies, do raise some interesting problems.

It needs to be made clear first that the concept culture will be used only as it is used in the social sciences, as there is considerable difference between this definition and the way the term generally is used in the English language. Customarily, it means a certain set of extras, so to speak, such as art, music and dancing, which have developed in the more creative traditions of a society. The social science definition includes these elements, but also bring in a great deal more. Culture, in this discipline, means the total accumulation of material objects, ideas, symbols, beliefs, sentiments, values and social forms which are passed on from one generation to another in any given society. The social meanings related to the objects within the common definition of the term, such as a dance, are really of more importance to the social scientist than is the object itself.

The concept traditional culture is a new one, and seems to be a very tricky term. It seems to have a value loading to the effect that there are cultures which have more traditions than others, with the implications that these traditions need for some reason or other to be preserved, conserved, and even revived. There appears to be the assumption that such revival will have an integrating result for the larger social system.

It probably is difficult for especially an American to appreciate at least the extremist kinds of sentiments and actions which become

associated with this pattern, because probably as a people we are less interested than most societies in maintaining traditional forms and more interested in developing new forms. The remark of a British woman some years ago is recalled in a discussion of the pros and cons of trying to maintian ancient traditions. She remarked, almost in disgust, "You Americans aren't interested in maintaining traditions because you have none to maintain." Generally speaking, one of the most difficult cross cultural achievements is first to gain a perception and then an appreciation of the reasons why any given society, other than one's own, seems so intent upon maintaining cultural forms, especially when it is attempting to revive traditions which appear to the outsider to have no particular significance to the functioning of the present society.

But we still have not solved the problem of what is a traditional culture. There would seem to be three possible definitions. The first is the length of time which any given society has been in continuous existence: merely how long historical or other records show the society to have existed with any degree of continuity. For instance, Ceylon can trace its present history to 543 B.C. Even though there is evidence that the Sinhalese borrowed much from earlier cultures, it can hardly be claimed that their history goes back further, any more than the American can claim a history beyond the first European settlers at Plymouth Rock just because they have borrowed much from the American Indian.

Another possible definition of the concept "traditional" is to base it on the extent to which any given society has had a continuity of cultural elements over a long extended period of time. For instance, if it continues types of cultural forms which are old, it can make claim to being a traditional culture. The most traditional in this case, probably would be the culture which made the most utilization of stone tools, irrespective of whether it had invented these tools or had borrowed them from other cultures. An illustration of this is the problem of determining the relation of the Sinhalese to the practice of irrigation. All the historians seem to agree that the pattern of irrigation was an important part of the Sinhalese tradition, and that its origin was probably some place in the middle east, coming to Ceylon by way of India. Also the Sinhalese appear to have made certain inventions in relation to irrigation which give them claim to engineering inventiveness. According to this definition the Sinhalese can make claim to being a traditional culture because of using an ancient cultural form, in this instance, irrigation. But does this mean that all societies which use such ancient forms are also traditional?

A third possible definition is the extent to which specific elements within a cultural pattern have changed. In this manner a

traditional culture could be defined as one with the least amount of change over a given period of time, and a non-traditional culture as one which has undergone the most change. The difficulty of definition leads to the problems faced by most dichotomous classifications. Such a classification of traditional cultures on one hand and presumably non-traditional ones on the other raises more questions than the concept solves. Like most dichotomous classifications, it probably leaves more items in the vast middle categories which find no place in the extremes. There is also the very great problem of sufficiency of evidence, as well as accuracy and completeness of records. Without the *Mahāvaṃsa*, for instance, the history of the Sinhalese would be very sketchy. Even with this very interesting historical document, there still is much of the history of the Sinhalese which must be left to implication. While the preference of the writer is for social scientists to expend their efforts on present day societies, it still is legitimate to suggest that a careful analysis of the *Māhavaṃsa* by a social scientist might reveal evidence of cultural elements and cultural change which have been overlooked by the historians. Dr. Ralph Pieris has provided a most useful illustration of the kinds of social evidence which can be derived from historical records in his paper on "Title to land in Kandyan Law."*

This paper will be interested primarily in selected patterns of change within the villages of Ceylon. It is being assumed that the Ceylon village, even impacted with many elements of modern change, still contains many components of traditional culture.

The present research problem in Ceylon is a part of a larger development, much of which is fairly new in terms of world history. This is the practice primarily of governments, especially since the end of Word War II, to develop extensive programs in an attempt to instigate patterns of change into the villages. Most of the changes are based on the findings of modern science. While recognizing that many efforts of this nature are historical, and that many of the accepted principles and practices of the movement have been developed, for instance, by private foundations, religious missionaries, and other governments prior to 1945, still there has been a resurgent movement since that time in many countries whose governments previously had not been engaged in village development work.

Three conditions appear to have encouraged this movement. The first is the availability of tested scientific knowledge in many fields which now provides for all governments the means to achieve

* Sir Paul Pieris Felicitation Volume (Colombo 1956).

many goals which they consider desirable. The second is a real desire on the part of governments to improve the lot of the villager. Also they have received assistance and encouragement from the United Nations and from other countries. The third may be based on a fear in some countries that the existing government might lose the support of its village citizens either for other forms of government or for other parties with new and different appeals. Along with these, many villagers appear to have developed opinions that ill health and hunger are no longer a mere part of a fatalistic existance, but that they are preventable.

The Rural Development scheme in Ceylon has many similarities, but some important differences, from those which are being conducted in many countries especially in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. In reality, however, these later attempts since 1945, also have many features similar to the programs and problems which have developed in the United States, as for instance in the TVA program and the Co-operative Extension Service, and in Europe, since about the turn of the century.

We need to recognize, without going into the statistics, that most of the people in the world live in villages. At the same time, the social scientist has given less attention to the village than to almost any other unit of social organization. The social anthropologist has tended to study tribal society, and the sociologist has concentrated primarily on either urban societies or upon rural areas which have had extensive influence from urban centres. The social sciences at this point have insufficient data on the village, and particularly inadequate comparative theory or empirical data to understand the village within any given cultural tradition or geographic area. Consequently at the very time when the importance of the village to world affairs has gained new heights, and at a time when the social sciences are being requested to make a contribution to applied problems of giving assistance to planning and to the evaluation of such programs, we find that these disciplines do not have adequate empirical data upon which to base their work.

Likewise, we do not have an adequate theory of social change. Most theories of social change which have been proposed in the past, such as those pertaining to cultural lag, and the wide variety of deterministic theories such as biological, cyclycal, geographic, as well as the Marxian concept of the dialectic, have been found either inadequate or have been disproven. Today we have only partially developed sets of ideas to guide research in the area of social change. Several general theoretical formulations probably eventually will provide the basis for a more adequate theory of

change, but today these are still only in the stage of being very general formulation of ideas, not a comprehensive body of theory. Among these are functional theory, reference group theory, boundary maintenance theory and mechanisms of social and cultural change of invention, acceptance, and diffusion. By and large the old concepts of evolutionism have been rather thoroughly disproven. We do have, however, some newer concepts, which as they develop will be of assistance in formulating a more adequate theoretical framework for understanding change. Among these are the social system, the social role, the social personality, acculturation, act. Yet, to date these are in such unprecise stages of formulation that we must admit major weaknesses in conceptual tools for either applied or pure theory problems of research in these fields.

We are in a somewhat more fortunate position in relation to research methods, in that methodological developments in related fields probably are usable here. It is likely also that a major transfer of concepts such as those mentioned above will be possible and useful, but to this point we do not have the evidence as to the types of social situation where the transfer of usage can be made.

Now to the empirical situation. In general these programs of instigated change into the villages have certain elements in common among the different countries.

(1) There is the recognition of available scientifically demonstrated knowledge, which, if adopted by the villager, will achieve the accomplishment of certain goals some of which are considered desirable by the villager himself and others as such by the governmental planners. For instance, there are but very few cultural situations in which physical illness and pain from illness are defined as desirable. To avoid pain and illness seems to be one of the most universal values.

(2) If the villager will adopt certain practices in his agricultural production, it will be possible to vastly increase his yields. It seems likely also that most Ceylonese villager's value system considers high yields as desirable, especially if the necessary practices to produce such yields do not interfere or come into conflict with other established practices, values or beliefs.

(3) A third discovery of such programs is that the practices are much more likely to be adopted, and if once accepted to remain in effect, if members of the village can be involved in the program of instigation. There is a correlary

element here in that most village dwellers have what is frequently called a "fund of good will" for their village. They identify themselves with the village, and usually hold positive and favourable beliefs and sentiments about the village. Frequently such beliefs and sentiments are accompanied by felt obligations at certain times to work for the welfare of the village. Such obligations on the part of the individual, like in most social systems, will always be mandatory in times of crisis when the welfare of the whole will be placed above the welfare or advantage of any given individual member. It has been found in instigated change programs that it frequently is possible to so organize the actions that members of the village will give voluntary effort, frequently called self help, in working for the welfare of the whole village.

There are several different patterns which governments have used in organizing such village development schemes. The first is the plan where government or some government related agency furnishes subject matter specialists in particular fields such as health, agriculture, adult education etc. The customary tasks of such workers are to instruct individual villagers and to encourage them to adopt new methods. The Ceylon government follows this pattern in both health and agriculture.

The second is to use compulsion in and attempt to enforce upon the villager the adoption of selected practices. While Ceylon has not followed this practice, there is some evidence that elsewhere it has produced some results. It would appear to have worked best in a cultural setting, something like Japan, where more of the social organization is patterned on authoritation lines. In some respects such change by authority is seen on estates and rubber allotment schemes. Because of the authority of the bureaucratic "head" the Superintendent, the village dwellers or allottees must adopt new practices. The rubber re-planting scheme in Ceylon is a case in point, where definite rules most be followed in order to gain eligiblity for a subsidy.

The third pattern of organization is to set up new social forms in the village which then take on new tasks related to the achievement of the objectives of government. This is the primary scheme of organization followed by the Rural Development program in Ceylon. In this program the government, through its official departments, has set about to organize a formal organization called a Rural Development Society in each village of the country. In these Societies, the decision to organize, the selection of the office

bearers, as well as the program planning, is done at open meetings of the village residents on a parliamentary basis. According to the official reports, by the end of 1954 there were 5,869 Rural Development Societies and 2,068 Women's Rural Development Societies. While these essentially are new social forms, it is of interest to note that these Societies appear to have similarities to traditional customs such as the Panchayat system, where selected individuals took responsibility for organizing for the village welfare.

A brief description of the organization of the Rural Development Societies is necessary in order to understand the program. There is an official Department in the Ministry of Home Affairs called the Department of Rural Development and Cottage Industries. (These were two different departments until October 1955.) The chief administrative officers of the Ministry are the Government Agents in 20 districts and the Divisional Revenue Officers who function under the Government Agents in 107 Divisions. In the Ceylon pattern of governmental organization, the British concept of a Civil Service has been followed. This provides for carefully selected career Civil Servants who maintain a long tradition of high integrity. In this organizational structure, all major policy determining and decision making positions are filled by Civil Servants; in this instance the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Home Affairs, the Director of the Department of Rural Development and Cottage Industries, and the Government Agents. The Divisional Revenue Officers, while not Civil Servants, are a part of the government Administrative Service, and by and large are defined as positions of high respect and integrity. In the writer's work in Ceylon, he never has heard a charge of lack of integrity made against a Government Agent, and only by rumour in districts other than those in which he has worked has he heard any incriminating charges against a Divisional Revenue Officer. The men in these positions with whom he has come into contact have given every evidence of being men of high integrity, ability, and sincerity. The government organization is important in understanding the program because it does provide major points of high integrity from which the rural development program is administered.

The immediate structure of the Rural Development program is to have a Divisional Officer under the Government Agent, then a Supervisor of Rural Development at the District level, and a Rural Development Officer working under the direction of the Divisional Revenue Officer in each of the 107 Divisions. The task of the R.D.O. is to work in all of the villages in the Division in the organization and supervision of Rural Development Societies. While

these officers generally speaking are younger, less educated and less experienced than the D. R. Os, they appear to work closely with the D. R. O. as an integral part of his whole program. This program appears to maintain a close working relationship with the agricultural and health officers, who do not function under the D. R. O. There appears to be a less close working relationship with the Community Centres program of the Ministry of Local Government, but from limited observation, the Community Centres appear to function more effectively in the villages where there is a working Rural Development Society. (This may be a biased opinion, as the primary point of operation in the village has been the rural development program).

The Rural Development Officer has certain resources at his disposal to assist in the organization of the Societies. The government provides special funds to be given to individual Rural Development Societies for the achievement of selected, usually construction projects. In this plan, the government provides funds to cover from one third to one half of the total cost of the project, providing that the Society furnishes the remainder, usually in the form of voluntary labour. Under this scheme, the villagers work for the good of the village with their voluntary efforts. According to the official reports, there were constructed in 1954:

364 village halls or community centres
135 school buildings
116 other buildings
286 miles of new roads
283 miles of roads improved
1,773 approved type wells
10,931 approved type latrines

In addition, 1,754 village conciliation boards reported to have settled 26,378 cases of village disputes, there were over 6,727 law enforcement volunteer squads with 47,928 members to give assistance to the police, the Societies supervised 1,791 of the 3,019 Milk Feeding Centres, and almost 40,000 persons attended some type of rural development leadership training program.

Through the assistance of the R. D. O, a local Society is helped to plan and carry out a given program. Many of the Societies operate according to fairly definite rules, and many keep quite complete and detailed records of their achievements.

There are two comments which a sociologist might make about this pattern of organization. First is that the Ceylonese villager seems to like a formal type organization like these Societies. He seems quite different from the American villager in this respect, who generally does not take such formal organization too seriously.

To my knowledge, no similar pattern of organization has ever worked successfully in the American scene, and it is doubtful if it could be made to function.

The second observation is to note that this formal type of organization makes legitimate, in the village social structure, a group which is granted the socially defined right to consider the whole of the village welfare and to organize voluntary efforts of others in the village to further such goals.

There are a number of elements of the Ceylonese village structure into which such a pattern of organization seems to fit rather uniquely. First there is a unique factor of the Ceylon village which provides a working base for such a program. This is high confidence in central government, which incidentally does not exist in many other areas of the world, including the United States. There has not been time to study it further, but it appears that this rather unique relationship to government has a long history here. One has only to observe the dry zone village in order to understand how, despite the long history of court intrigue, the traditional society of Ceylon, especially in the Anuradhapura era, was closely integrated with and dependent upon Central government in the most central concern to the villager, that of irrigation. Life itself was dependent upon the continued operation of the elaborate system of irrigation which had to be planned and operated from a central source. Likewise, the pattern of land ownership, in which the King at least theoretically owned all the land, appears to have built a crucial relationship between central government and the village. It has been noted also that one king inaugurated a medical service with one medical unit for each 10 villages, and another did some extensive work in veterinary medicine. Here the historic dry zone village was highly dependent upon government. This confidence seems to have carried over into selected other areas of Ceylonese life, including the giving of the control of education over to central government, a condition for instance which would be unthinkable in my country. In contrast, the early American government almost denied any inherent rights to central government. In revolting from the authoritarianism of European central government, the early American community saw few if any needs for central government, believing implicitly in the almost complete right of state and local government to rule. Our most fierce issues, even today, are still about this state of belief and affairs. It should be noted however that the Ceylon villager clearly separates the "government" from the politician. In one village, for instance, the research interviewing had been confused with the coming elections. At a village meeting, the

suspicions were allayed quickly when it was firmly established that the work was by and for "government" and not for any other purpose.

Secondly, there do not appear to be any other established roles in the Ceylon village social structure to which are granted the task of planning for the whole of the life of the village, and for organizing voluntary work toward the accomplishment of these and related goals. There are several roles however which do perform limited tasks in this direction. First there are the persons with high respect, frequently consisting of individuals who have more wealth and/or have a history of working for the welfare of the village. These people are crucial to the village organization, in that they are obligated to help people out in time of need. Yet the responsibilities of such persons frequently are limited in scope mostly to that of helping individuals when they have crises, and do not usually include looking far ahead for the total welfare of the whole village.

The role of the Village Headman also is circumscribed with limitations, likewise the member of the Village Committee and the *vel vidāne*. Each of these roles has similar characteristics.

(1) Each has a somewhat limited definition of duties. Within none of these roles, for instance, is there the obligation or even the right for that matter to think and work for the long time planning for the total village welfare.

(2) Yet each position carries with it certain rights and obligations to carry out selected projects for the benefit of the village.

(3) In so far as can be observed probably each of these positions by definition and tradition carry the implicit right to accept personal payment in the form of cash or a gift for performing selected services for individuals. While in the present context, these gifts may have the appearance of bribes, people have explained that traditionally these did not have such a connotation.

(4) It appears also that each of these positions exercises the informal power to withold privileges and benefits from individuals who are held in disfavour and/or to carry out policies which benefit the office holder or his friends.

(5) Again within limited experience, none of these positions have been observed expressing a socially defined right to organize the volunteer services of the villagers to work for the total welfare.

While it is not being claimed that the R. D. Societies have worked according to plan in even a majority of the villages, it is being pointed out that in theory at least the idea does provide a social structure which can be legitimized to work for the welfare of the whole village and to involve others in the task. (It should be noted that no systematic attempt has been made to determine the percentage of the Societies which work successfully, or the percent which are failures.) While by and large the Societies probably do not distribute advantages evenly, such as equally across all caste lines, at least some have been able to mobilize the efforts of large numbers of the villagers to work for the achievement of some project which when completed makes an important contribution to what the people define as something highly beneficial to better living for the whole village.

There appear to be several advantages to such a social structure as R. D. Societies. First it provides a point of contact with the village for a regular and persistent relationship with the instigating government department. Keeping the society supervised provides for a continuing relationship between the D. R. O. and the R.D.O. and the village. It gives village persons, the office bearers, the legitimate right to speak for the village. The society provides a point of orientation for other programs which may come through the D. R. O.'s office. Likewise, it obligates the office bearers to work for the welfare of the village. In most of the successful programs which have been seen, the Village Headman is likely to be involved. Also the health and agricultural programs tend to use the Society as an instrumentality within the village through which to gain contact and carry out their programs. Through this structure also, the Rural Development Department can move a wide variety of specific ideas. For instance, through what is called the five point sanitation program, the villager is encouraged to boil his drinking water, take proper care of elimination, etc.

The task of conducting an adequate evaluative study of such a program in the short 10 months of a Fulbright research appointment obviously was an impossible task, even for a two man team consisting of an economist and a sociologist. Yet as the Department was willing to give every assistance, it was decided possible to conduct sociological field studies in a selected number of villages. Deviating from the customary social anthropological pattern in doing cross cultural field studies where research personnel live in the village for 6 months to a year, a more limited frame of reference for study was designed. In this we have concentrated on studying selected changes which have been adopted in the village, and upon the involvement patterns of social relationships which are related

to these changes. It was decided that carefully selected school teachers and others employed on a part time basis could do a satisfactory job of interviewing in obtaining the necessary data.

To this point field studies have been completed in 10 villages, and in one irrigation colony, covering all parts of the country except the Muslim east coast zone. When the field work is finished between 1,500 and 2,000 families will have been interviewed with a regular schedule of information. In six of the villages, observers have conducted interviews with a sample of women in the families. In some instances this is in additon to a systematic interview with the male heads of the households. By and large, the plan has worked quite satisfactorily, in fact better than was expected. The teachers have done an excellent and serious job of interviewing, and have shown extensive knowledge of their villages. The schedules are being coded for card punching. These will be processed by the Census Department. This amount of work has been possible only because of an excellent and extensive co-operation from the various government departments, as well as the District, Division, and village officials.

While obviously it is not possible to provide the detailed findings before they are completed, several observations about the change patterns in the villages can be presented here for discussion.

(1) It seems clear, as could be predicted from extensive research elsewhere, that the pattern of change in the village social organization is directly related to the patterns of influence which exist in the village. The people who have respect and who have influence in other affairs, apparently are of very great significance in the functioning of the Society as well as in determining which of the approved practices will be adopted into the village. There is great need here for a much better conceptualization of the concept of influence as it pertains to village organization, also for much more detailed empirical data. One observation may be of interest now when so many people are saying that the primary village influentials are the teachers, the priests,* and the ayurvedic physicians. In discussing with the villagers as to who are the influentials of their villages frequently these official positions are not mentioned. As can be anticipated from sociometric research, it is probable that the real influentials in village decision making are persons who hold positions

* Buddhist

of respect much deeper within the village structure than these highly observable positions. It appears that one factor in determining who exerts influence in the village is the extent to which one is willing to give time and other resources for the good of the village. Also, several have been listed because they are good agriculturalists.

(2) There is the problem also of who are the innovators. This is the social psychological problem of the social personality and conception of self, as well as being of interest to the sociologist. Again, as gleaned from other research, it is not always the innovator who is the influential. Frequently some innovators are attempting to seek influence which they do not otherwise have. There is one innovator, for example, who apparently is not now an influential. If the present data are correct, it can be anticipated that others will not follow his lead in Japanese paddy method, for instance, at least until still other people who are more influential are willing to try out the new method.

(3) There is also the very interesting problem of attempting to trace the channels of influence from the various government departments to the village. It now appears that the government official position itself is not sufficient to become a point of effective introduction of new practices. The villager apparently must have confidence in the person who occupies the government position before this position can be effective in instigating action in the village acceptance of change in practices. When the villager has confidence in the person of the agricultural officer, the health inspector, the R.D.O., the D.R.O., or the G.A. then he is willing to try out the ideas which are being presented. Confidence in the person seems to be crucial in this nexus of relationships. This confidence in the person seems to be related to such factors as extent of knowledge and competence of the official, the extent of his real interest in the welfare of the village, and the extent of his willingness to work for the welfare of the village, even beyond the call of duty or office hours.

(4) There is a very interesting situation also regarding the specific details of the nature of the changes being introduced, and some difficulties related to the culture of the village. There appears to be one important difference between the new and the old practice. By and large, many cultural practices of the villager are not highly

specific, either in detail of having to do many things in a definite manner, or in rigid timing. At the same time, many of the practices which government is recommending imply a fairly high degree of specificity in following detailed instructions and rules. As a tentative observation, it appears that an inherent factor in the adoption of many new practices enforces upon the villager a much higher degree of specificity than he is accustomed to in his cultural tradition. The most highly observable illustrations of this are related to agriculture. Paddy cultivation by the Japanese method means a high degree of specificity in relation to the seed bed, the nursery, the planting process, such as careful planting in rows, fertilizing, cultivation, etc. A similar observation can be made about the villager's tea plot, which usually is so unspecifically done that he may get only one tenth the yield as compared to the neighbouring estate. In boiling and cooling his drinking water, it is important that it be properly done. Similar comments can be made for other areas such as sickness prevention, animal husbandry, nutrition and food preparation, fertilising, soil conservation, crop planting and plant and animal disease. Putting the findings of science into practice seems to imply a much higher degree of specific kinds of actions than the villager is used to in his traditional manner of doing things.

(5) There is still another segment of the problem of getting the villager to adopt the practices of modern science which appears to create more difficulty than the more one of specificity. This is that each recommended practice has behind it a great deal of detailed subject matter information which is necessary to know before a potential user of the practice can understand the reasons for adopting the practice. Implicit in the approved practices mentioned above are highly complex subject matter fields of knowledge. For instance within a villager's seemingly simple life there are such highly specialized fields as plant and animal chemistry, nutrition, soil science, animal husbandry, animal and human disease including the germ theory of disease, plant science, entomology, horticulture, as well as the social sciences.

(6) Yet one does not need to observe the curriculum of the fine new village schools very long to know that the school is not providing either to the present, or to the future

village dweller, much, if any, of the necessary knowledge which is needed to understand the reasons behind the recommendations being advocted by his government. About the best which is being given the villager today is to say to him, "You do this and this, because the government or the specialist says it is good for you." One wonders how soon upper limits of adoption of practices will be reached until the villager has the necessary knowledge to understand the new practices on any basis except blind faith. Such lack of basic knowledge may account for the relatively slow rate at which the villager has adopted many practices which has government has been recommending for at least one full generation.

An interesting illustration of this kind of problem can be observed in relation to the village woman and her pot of boiled water. Many village women will say that they now boil their drinking water, but when one asks to see the pot it is possible to see the lack of necessary information. As likely as not the woman will bring out the water pot with her fingers down on the inside of the lip of the pot, probably recontaminating the water with the practice. Also as likely as not she will handle the drinking glass with her fingers inside the glass. Without some understanding of the germ theory of disease, it is difficult for her to understand the dangers to health in such simple practices.

In the United States, we have found ways around a similar dilemma of a highly academic school system. We think it works satisfactorily. First about a century ago, with the organization of the land grant universities dealing with applied sciences, it was found that the university tradition could deal with applied as well as highly theoretical problems. Likewise it was found that a single school system, whether at the University or secondary level, need not be either completely academic or completely applied in order to be good in either or both. In fact, one of the important findings of applied research is that frequently it is necessary to go into highly theoretical formulations in order to solve applied problems. An illustration of this is in cancer research, where it has been mandatory to go far into the theory to cell structure itself. We have found that the applied and the theoretical complement each other very well even in the same institutional settings.

Consequently for fully two generations we have quite successfully combined university entrance education along with applied science and even strictly vocational education in the same secondary schools. As a result, the American farmer essentially has been

transferred from a folk farmer to a scientific farmer in less than two generations, and the urban worker receives the knowledge which is basic to urban occupation. A fundamental part of this result can be credited to the secondary school system which provides the necessary background of scientific knowledge for basic occupations to some, and university entrance to others. At the university level, we now have very few if any universities which attempt to deal only with purely theoretical knowledge. Even the great private universities of Harvard, Yale and Columbia have made some outstanding contributions to applied knowledge. We take for granted that the secondary schools and the universities play important roles in meeting the needs of a complex society. At the same time, the American Universities appear to have held their own in the development of theoretical knowledge.

In a final comment about the rural development idea as related to the cultural form of the Ceylon village, it seems that this type of organizational pattern has a peculiar way of fitting many of the cultural traditions and present day definitions of what is defined as good and desirable by the villager. It has a peculiar kind of genius in fact, in the way in which many villagers take the idea seriously and work to make it a success.

Naturally certain problems have developed. The most important one from a sociological viewpoint is that of obtaining the proper persons for office bearers; those who have influence and who place the welfare of the village ahead of working for personal gain or power. Another problem is that by and large the D. R. Os and R. D. Os do not have adequate training in social organization and in social psychology. They appear to work hard, but their lack of adequate training is evident. Again it is difficult to see how such people can be trained adequately for such professional work outside of a University setting, where they get the necessary basic knowledge, trained instruction, and library and other facilities to understand the applied situations with which they are dealing. In general, it appears that a similer conclusion can be made for most professional positions in the work of the Ceylon government. It seems to me that more than anything else the work of the Ceylon government is seriously needing the assistance from University level training and applied research done by University standards. It is almost impossible to substitute government for a University in many kinds of endeavour, especially in training and research, where such elements as time to think, the right to publish, access to theory and to library, and freedom from government red tape are of vital importance.

There are other problems at the village level, where the Rural Development Society sometimes is structured into the village in such a manner as to bring antagonism or even opposition from persons holding important positions of power in the village social structure. The Village Headman has at times been circumvented. In one instance, where in studying in some detail a situation where the R. D. Society had always been a failure, it was found that the office bearers of the Society have always been trouser wearing professionals, while the majority of the villagers are casual labourers. To them, the R. D. Society in mostly an attempt to further fasten the power of the rich over the poor. Interestingly enough, even though the village is leftist, the poor do not necessarily dislike the rich, nor do they appear to want to deny them their wealth. Their only complaint is that the rich are no longer willing to help the poor. It is rather obvious in this urbanized kind of village that the rich no longer see it as their duty to give much of their wealth to the poor. Within this type of office bearer pattern, it is quite understandable how the R. D. Society has not been a success. One of the most frequent situations in which the Societies run into organizational difficulty is when their office bearers become involved on different sides of issues such as local government elections. On the other hand there are many instances where teachers, Village Headmen, *vel vidānes*, and many ordinary villagers give large amounts of time working for the welfare of their villages. The R. D. Society seems to be, in these instances, a fairly unique social invention which is accomplishing many of the goals of its founders.

A few concluding comments seem in order about what has been observed as one of the objectives of certain members of this conference; that of how Rural Development Societies can be used to preserve the traditional arts of the nation and to lead in the development of new arts and crafts. First it is clear that already the present rural development and cottage industry program merges well with such a goal. There is an extensive development in cottage industries, and the Department is now in a major effort of building up to 1,000 weaving centres. It would appear feasible to use the Societies in the fostering of any new ideas, provided that the idea is presented first by persons who are defined as having a legitimate right to make such initiation, and secondly providing the villager will consider the idea as an important part of the future life of the village. The villager's perception of any new idea and his evaluation of its importance to the life of his village would appear to be crucial to the use of the Societies as the media for the presentation of any new programs.

At the same time, there are definite potential social and cultural barriers to such an endeavour in the Ceylon village. Several possibilities come to mind. Generally speaking, it has been observed that the villager does not seem to engage in art for art's sake. He generally does not decorate his water pot or his tools, and his house has only the minimum of relationship to the use of art. Also much art and music traditionally has been directly related to the cross-caste obligations of the lower to the upper castes. Weaving and basket making appear to be exceptions to this. These traditional patterns of associating the arts with the occupations of the lower castes could be real potential barriers to the introduction of art forms into the whole of the village structure. Many present day art skills still seem to be residing in the lower castes. Such questions as the following can be asked. Do upper castes persons desire to learn now on an interest basis skills which formerly were narrowly defined as lower caste occupations? Will it be possible to cross even the present day caste barriers, which still are firmly existent, in getting lower caste persons to teach their skills to upper caste persons? Probably the answers to such questions can only be gained by experience.

A final question from the viewpoint of sociological theory is the extent to which any given social system, in this instance the Ceylon village, can adopt changes such as those implicit in the adoption of the findings of science, and at the same time maintain an effective integration of the various elements of the total village social system. This essentially is the heart of what has come to be known as functional theory. Without taking the time to go into any more detail, it appears that the Rural Development Society is a device through which selected findings of science can be taken to the villager and at the same time introduce the least amount of disintegrating elements within the village social system. In these respects, the Societies appear to be playing important roles as cultural agencies, and as an integrating elements within many villages.

T. L. Green

CULTURE AND EDUCATION IN CEYLON

Although there are few fields of study in which opinions differ more widely than those devoted to the study of culture there is, as Brameld (1) has pointed out, one point of agreement. This is that people of all cultures have at all times practised education. The significance of this point of agreement, in relation to the Ceylon setting, is that it demonstrates a widely accepted understanding of education as a social process, though, as I shall show later, this has not had much influence on education here in Ceylon.

In discussions and activities devoted to the revival of culture in countries where political independence has been followed by a resurgent nationalism, there is a marked tendency to interpret "culture" as meaning the plastic, graphic and dramatic folk arts and skills and their accompanying musical and eurythmical effects. Such an interpretation is too narrow for many reasons, especially because it fails to take into account the motivating factors behind such culture forms—and all such material cultural forms are built upon a background of non-material culture, the values, beliefs and attitudes of the people.

Similarly there is a marked tendency to interpret "education" in terms which are too restrictive, for it has become equated with the gaining of information and skills and the obtaining of a qualification in processes confined to the school. Such an interpretation is too narrow because it also ignores the functional motivating factors which are operative.

There was perhaps a time when education, whether thought of as a wide process involving information, skills and values, or only as a process of training in skills, could be the sole concern of the home and the family unit. Such a condition would, however, appear only to be possible where the calls on the individual were generalized and limited and where life was a matter of mere existence and survival. When the pattern of life become more complex,

and particularly when specialization of function became an unavoidable consequence of an increasing degree of social complexity education became too wide and too complex a process to be encompassed in the home. At that moment there came into being a device which has become what today we call "the school", a formalized institutional process charged with doing for the individual what his home could no longer do. Education was a process of preparation for participation in the community life, a process directed not only by parents, but by others such as "medicine man" and warrior-brave and culminating in ceremonial initiation into adulthood. We may have replaced the warrior's war paint by the academic gown, the trial of endurance by the examination system and initiation by the "coming-out party", yet essentially we are involved in the age old process of helping childhood to mature through youth to adulthood. In brief, education is a process of socialization and part of the whole social process.

In Ceylon this social aspect of education has yet fully to be realised, for it is seen largely as a process of training and status-seeking (1). One of the many results of this is the neglect of some of the folk arts and many aspects of school life which elsewhere would be looked upon as part of the social education of the individual.

References to some aspects of the relation between education and culture have already been made by other speakers in this Conference, so much so that I may be forgiven perhaps for feeling that what I would have said has already been said! There remain however one or two points to which I may perhaps draw attention.

It is essential to appreciate that even though we agree that "education is scocial philosophy in action", and even come to terms on the proposition that education is one of the few agents of social change over which we have some degree of control, we are not clear of difficulties. Simply because education, in fulfilling its main function, is faced with the need to operate along two lines. On the one hand it is involved with the preservation of existing values which are based on the experiences of the past on the other hand it is concerned with the formulation of new values which are a response to the present and a preparation for the future. In brief there is, in education something of a dichotomy. This dual role, of conservation and creation, appears to be characteristic of education in all places and at all times.

In Ceylon however it is reinforced, as it were, by a series of other dichotomies. To some of these, though reference has already been made by other speakers, it is necessary to refer again. The

conflict of roles, so characteristic of the educational scene is in Ceylon associated with a conflict of values. Not merely the time honoured conflict between age and youth, one looking at a past youth and the other anticipating an adulthood yet to come. What I mean will be clear to any who looks around at the social scene in Ceylon today—Ceylon is the seat of a series of inter-cultural contacts, and therefore of cultural conflicts and tensions. We have been told of the rise of the English speaking western educated, often Christian and sometimes scientific sector of society. In evitably it finds itself if not opposed to, at least out of sympathy with, ideas which are traditional in Ceylon. Education, like those who bring it about, is forced to look East and West, forward and backward, to science and to tradition—simultaneously.

There are indeed a series of dichotomies—between Buddhism or Hinduism and Christianity: between the mechanical world sought by the west and the manual culture supposedly admired by the east: between the experimental world of the west and the experiential world of the east: between the science of the west and the intuition of the east: between western causality and eastern determinism—and between western preoccupation with shaping the physical world of the present and eastern concern with choosing the spiritual world yet to come. These, and other dichotomies, which in Ceylon spread through the spheres of material and non-material culture, of social theory and economic fact, have brought about a dichotomy in the schools which is simple and immediate in relation to the problem of this conference.

The conference speakers have, in the past two days, made constant reference to the need to develop the manual arts and crafts of Ceylon in the schools of Ceylon, to the need to foster skills to perpetuate these arts and crafts, to the need to develop the manual arts and crafts and to the need to develop a public taste for such arts and crafts. In broad outline the schools have refused such responsibility, except under a series of lip-serving coverages! Not however as the result of a conscious policy, but through a series of social and economic pressures which determine attitudes towards occupational prestige and condition the vocational choices of school leavers (2,3). Some aspects of this have already been referred to by other speakers and it will have been seen that the sociologist is confronted with a series of intriguing problems. One such is to determine why Kandyan dancing and, (to a lesser extent) weaving, has been accepted into the schools while other arts and crafts, such as pottery and carpentry are either rejected, or little accepted.

The differences which can be discerned between the opinion expressed here as to the causal factor in this selective response are indications that this is a problem of no little complexity. Certainly they denote the fact that none without special study, and least of all a foreigner, could hope to unravel the threads of caste, status and economies. Yet it seems very probable that the position must be understood before it can be overcome.

Those who have preceded me have contributed both to understanding the problem and to overcoming it. Thus we have had philosophical, psychological and organisational analyses, together with historical descriptions of the traditional arts and crafts; and also, on a wider front, a study of the social dynamics of culture change. I take it that the terms of reference which are offered to me are practical, in the sense that you wish to know what could be done in schools to further your aim—the revival of a traditional culture.

First let me point out that the cultures of Ceylon have several phases and that, in restricting attention to that which is not merely Sinhalese, but Kandyan, you are neglecting much of your own culture. Secondly let me say that the problem about which you have asked me to speak has not gone without notice in my Department,[1] even though this is the first time on which an inter-departmental symposium has been devoted to it in the University. I am equally sure that it has not gone without notice in other Departments.

I turn now to answer the question of what can education do to foster the cultures of Ceylon? My answer must, of necessity be brief, but it must contain reference not only to what I would suggest could be done, but also to what has in fact been done, at least in my own Department.

Firstly, as I have noted, it is essential to understand the nature of the problem. Within my Department we have sought understanding along a number of lines—as you will realize having heard the paper read by my colleague, Mr. J. E. Jayasuriya. We have attempted studies of the vocational attitudes which are relevant (4) and the editorship and mainsprings of activity of two journals, closely associated with Ceylonese culture, also lie in the Department.

Secondly, we have carried on a campaign to provide within the University, those services which are essential for the study and preservation of cultural records I have personally written very many memoranda in this campaign and, after six years of agitation we at last have a photographic unit which is well equipped,

though within narrow confines. This was a gift under the Colombo Plan, from the Government of Australia. With the aid of the British Council and of the Smith Mundt Fund a member of the Staff visited Europe, England and U.S.A. and was trained in the methods of visual education. We have then some at least of the amenities and skill needed for the visual and sound recording to which Dr. Fernando, Dr. Gunesinghe and others have referred Alas. I was allowed to accept the offer from the Colombo Plan. only on the understanding that the University would provide no budgetary support. We have no money, though I have made some of the colour slides now being used by Dr. Saratchandra on his cultural study tour. We have plans for production and recording, but none can be put into operation. Meanwhile, as I have so often pointed out some of Ceylon's cultural forms are dying under the impact of modern social changes.

Thirdly, we have tried to make some contribution to those changes of attitude which are so important in regard to the content and method of education. In practical terms we have sought to do this in the training of teachers where, despite difficulties, we have introduced modelling and encouraged an interest in art and craft. The theoretical aspect has been considered from three angles. In the belief that public opinion and public attitudes must change we have been concerned with writing articles to those ends in the Ceylon Press and in broadcasting to parents in particular. Attempts have been made to alter the attitudes of of teachers towards practical subjects and manual activities, as a step in altering their attitudes to the place and desirability of arts and crafts in the schools. This has been done both in the training courses offered and by the writing of special articles in teachers journals (5,6,7). Nor has the need to deal with the pupil been overlooked. In this connection Staff members have lectured to School Societies and have also written articles in School Magazines (8).

From what I have said you may feel that our attack on your problem is indirect. That indeed is so yet I believe our approach to be of fundamental importance. The significance of the traditional arts and crafts, in relation to the well being of your society have already been argued, particularly by Dr. Wijesekera. Something of the psychological significance has been argued by Mr. Jayasuriya. I should like to add a little to that by stressing the fact that just as creative work is characteristic of all societies, so it is satisfying to all individuals. The excitements of creation, the satisfaction of achievements, the pleasures of performance are known to all, and needed by all. Where education is formal and abstract, and where social values are denied to manual work,

there social unbalance may be a result of unsatisfied deep-seated individual needs. Though your society has its arts and crafts and creative workers it has, nevertheless drawn and hierarchic distinction between the manually and mentally employed. Moreover, it enforces this distinction by differential sanctions towards school subjects. Thus many are prevented from participation in creative experiences and are thus left with unfulfilled needs—the bases of individual maladjustment. May I, at this moment, point out that your culture pattern includes not only the arts and crafts of which we have talked—but also the highest murder rate in the world. May it not be that the latter is an index of the individual maladjustment which is, to some extent, contingent upon insufficient participation in satisfying creative experiences? You will note that I am neither diagnosing the causes of, nor offering a cure for murder! I am saying that murder is a sign of maladjustment.

If practical work of many kinds is to find increased acceptance we must alter attitudes towards it—for the greatest barrier to its development lies in the attitudes of the people of Ceylon. It is those which have determined the status and economic reward of the manual worker in these spheres, which have conditioned what is done in schools and which direct the vocational attitudes of pupils into non-practical work. Before the people of Ceylon will accept the manual worker, the craftsman, the artist, the textile weaver and potter as an equal, before manual work reaps a fitting reward and before manual work makes a vocational appeal, attitudes have to be changed.

The problem of changing attitudes lies in the sphere of psychology and can be attempted only by educational procedures. It is for these reasons that our work has been on the lines I have mentioned, with youth which is plastic, with teachers who direct youth and with parents who determine public opinion.

Lastly, may I be allowed to make a few final and practical comments. Our facilities for photography and electronic tape recording offer an excellent device for capturing culture for study and demonstration—they are at the disposal of the University as a whole—though money has to be found for the work. We have not only cameras for use in the field, but apparatus for printing on paper and film strip and we can work in black and white or colour. My views on the place of visual techniques in social and cultural education have been often expressed in the past seven years—I hope that at long last they are to be accepted in principle and applied in practice.

I would like to see the rich culture of Ceylon made available in brochures, photographs, guides, books, film strips and the like prepared for various levels of study, so that not only should the savant have what he needs, but so that every boy and girl should have an extensive practical acquaintance with the culture of his country.

These are some of the ways in which I see a relationship between education and culture in Ceylon. These are indeed the simpler and more direct relations. There are others more complex and deeper I know—but I think we have to make a start as a basis for developing and theorising. I hope that out of previous papers you will have got ideas, and from this paper a few practical suggestions as to how those ideas might be worked out in the basic step of altering attitudes—for on that everything else rests.

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THE TRADITIONAL CULTURE OF CEYLON AND ITS PRESENT POSITION

One of the effects of colonialism in Ceylon was the creation of a new upper class who adopted the English language as its home language, took English names, and followed English manners to as nice a degree of perfection as they were capable of, and in every possible way tried not to identify themselves with the people of the country. They patterned their lives and their interests on those of their rulers, and would know about the latest happenings in England in the field of art or music or literature. The upper classes (including the higher stratum of the middle class) constituted, therefore, a cultural and linguistic group forming a minority within the wider group of the Sinhalese people with whom they were related only by blood. The cultural situation in Ceylon within the past fifty odd years could be best understood in the light of this social phenomenon.

The extent of the rift between the upper classes and the rest of the people appears to have been greater in Ceylon than in any Asian country including those that came under the rule of Western powers. In India the upper classes still had their roots in the traditional culture although they learned the English language, read English literature, and became aware of new values and new ideals of life and art through their contact with the West. Particularly in Bengal, the contact with Western culture proved a stimulus to the native culture and produced a flowering of it, and the leadership came from the upper and middle classes who, not being so cut off from their traditional roots as the Sinhalese upper classes, were able to incorporate whatever they wished to of Western culture into the pattern of the indigenous culture so as to make it more vital in the context of present day industrial civilisation, and make it more acceptable to the modern mind.

As a result of this rift, literature and art lost its patronage in Ceylon. The new upper classes, constituting the big businessmen, owners of tea, rubber and coconut plantations, and the professional people with higher incomes had no interest whatsoever in the literature or the arts of Ceylon. Hence, although there has been a revival in literature, drama, and music, brought about by contact with the West and by new contacts with India made possible by modern methods of communication, this revival had for its patrons only those of the lower middle class and part of the city working class, and people of the upper classes have remained completely unaware of the fact that around them there is being created a new literature, a new music, and a new drama which is striving to take a place in the national life. In fact, the revival often had for its theme the satirising of the upper classes for their wholesale imitation of the English.

The above remarks apply mostly to Colombo and the coastal suburbs. The village culture continued, to some extent, in those villages, particularly where there was a fairly wealthy landed class who had not adopted Western tastes, and in those surburban towns like Ambalangoda, Matara and certain parts of Galle, where the wealthy small-businessmen arose in place of the landed gentry of the village. In the Kandyan Provinces, the survival of the feudal aristocracy, and the retention by some of the big temples of the old system of service tenure for annual ceremonies like *perahāras*, gave the arts continued patronage, and hence arts like Kandyan dancing still possess something of their old vitality. Although the Kandyan aristocracy became as anglicised as the upper classes of Colombo, their official position as chieftains made it necessary to retain something of the traditional culture at least for ceremonial purposes, and hence they have preserved their dress, and a few of their customs and continue to patronise dancers and musicians for festive occasions.

Of the dances and varieties of drama now surviving among the people (some of these are on a higher level of sophistication than arts that would fall under the general category of "folk arts") may be mentioned the following:

(1) *Kōlam*, the masked dance and drama of the Southern coastal regions.

(2) *Nāḍagam*, the traditional stylised operatic play which survives still, mainly in the Southern parts of Ceylon, with its own system of music and dance.

(3) *Sandakinduru*, *Maname*, and such folk plays which survive now in the Kandyan Provinces, around Peradeniya and Kandy, but which appears to have originated in the South from *kōlam*.

(4) *Sokari*, a village play confined to the Kandyan Provinces, truly rustic or "folk" in character.

(5) The Kandyan Dance.

(6) Several extremely interesting folk dances, like the Sword Dance, the Pot Dance, Stick Dance, and the Pole Dance, of which no proper survey or record has yet been made.

The Role of the University

The moving of the University from Colombo to Peradeniya has had the immediate effect of isolating the students and staff from the rest of the community and of placing them in a kind of ivory tower which was regarded as the ideal of academic life, preserving the exclusiveness of the upper classes and enabling them to continue undisturbed their prayers and rituals at the sanctum of Western culture. However, between the conception of the University and its actualisation, certain democratic forces began to be at work, and free education was given to the people, so that it became difficult for the makers of the new University to establish in it such "traditions" as High Table Dinner, Don't-Wear-Sarong, and Speak-only-English, although attempts were made to make such customs the basis of residential life in the Halls. Students came from village homes and from middle-class families, and not only from upper class families, and they protested against what they called "foreign traditions." The result now is that in addition to the isolation brought about by the move to Peradeniya, the University finds itself in a vacuum.

Some of the obvious ways of establishing communication between the University and the community at large would be the production of plays in Sinhalese and Tamil (and not only in English), by the organisation of music and dance concerts, and by the encouragement of the folk-arts in the surrounding villages, not merely by academic studies or research, but by actively fostering their growth through the organisation of festivals, exhibitions, etc. By such means, some uses could be made of the present adversity in which the University finds itself. If the governing bodies of the University are aware of the need for such activities, it might be expected that they would at least provide the minimum facilities to enable such activities to take place. No theatre is envisaged in the near future, and rehearsals have to be conducted in a temporary shed. After the rehearsal of a play, those concerned with the dramatic activities have to go round begging for contributions from members of the staff who refuse to make such

contributions "on principle." Plays have to be produced in Trinity College Hall, which charges Rs. 250/- per night and it is almost impossible to organise shows in Colombo. There is no music room for the activities of the Gandharva Sabha (still referred to as the society of "Oriental" music) and it has no funds for the organisation of dancing and instrumental classes or for the purchase of minimum instruments. In Colombo these societies could obtain help from outside artists, and patronage from the public at large, so that both dramatic and musical activities were organised much more successfully before the move to Peradeniya. Both the Dramatic Society and the Music and Dance Society approached the authorities for financial help, explaining the present situation, but help was refused, although the authorities readily spent a large sum of money for the purchase of a piano for a handful of people interested in Western music, and were prepared to finance the production of three plays in English, with one Sinhalese translation thrown in, by a producer from abroad.

The University has a much greater role to perform in fostering active movements in literature and art than perhaps its members realise. Hence, our duties cannot be limited to those of mere teachers (teaching in English to the few who can understand this language) or researchers writing in English for a so-called "international" public. The country expects leadership from the University, but the tragedy is that the large section of the University cannot communicate with their countrymen, and some of those who can do not realise the need to do so. In most Universities in the United States a great deal of creative writing and active dramatics is done by members of the staff. Of course, these Universities have Departments of Dramatic Art and Music, and at present it is advisable that we do not establish such departments in our University because they will inevitably become departments teaching English Drama and Western Music. Most leading writers in the Philippines are members of the academic staff of the University of the Philippines, and this is true of some Universities in India. For example, Gujerat's leading poet, critic, playwright, and man of letters, Umashankar Joshi, is the head of the Department of Gujerati Studies in the University of Ahamedabad. Academic aloofness may be an ideal to be followed by University men in countries like England, where they are not faced with the task of giving vitality to an ancient culture and of creating new forms out of it.

Since it is doubtful whether leadership in any cultural movements could come from the English-educated who still hold positions of authority and influence, much encouragement could be

provided by international agencies working through bona fide individuals or institutions. The present language problem, and the democratic move to give Sinhalese its proper place in the national life, has created among the English-educated minority a psychology of self-defence, and their attitude to the national culture has turned from being a negative and cynical one, to an attitude of active antagonism. Strange though it may seem, therefore, a foreign organisation or individual is, at the moment, capable of viewing things in a more impartial light. The Rockefeller Foundation has been interested in attempts made to revive the Sinhalese theatre, and has given an opportunity for a member of the staff to study the theatre in the Orient and in the West, and it is likely that more help would be forthcoming from this Foundation for the purchase of equipment for theatrical activities. Recognition by a foreign body also has, in the psychology of the Ceylonese mind, a stamp of authority which no native could ever hope to give. All that can be hoped on the "national" level is that there will be a little more than armchair response to whatever activities may be started through the generosity of foreign bodies.

APPENDIX

SINHALESE MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS *

1. *berē*, a drum tapering at both ends, hung from the waist in a horizontal position and beaten with the palms of both hands. The right hand end is louder and higher in pitch than the left, which is lower in pitch. The *berē* used at festivals is known as the *magul berē* (length approx 28"). The latter, when made a little shorter, with the hide faces proportionately smaller, becomes the *yak berē*, employed in *bali* and other ceremonies. In the low country this tapering drum is used in *nādagam* and is known as *maddala* (vulgarly, *demala berē*)
2. *davula*, a cylindrical drum hung from the waist in a horizontal position and beaten in slow time with a curved stick in the right hand, this beat being punctuated at intervals by a blow with the palm of the left hand (length approx. 16").
3. *tammāṭṭama*, a double kettledrum beaten with two sticks, the extremities of which are bent back into loops. The left hand drum is taut and beaten in quick time with both sticks; the right hand drum is less taut, has a weak and muffled sound, and is used to punctuate the other (diameter approx 7").
4. *uḍākkiya*, a small hand drum shaped like an hour-glass, beaten with the fingers, the pitch being varied by the exercise of digital pressure on a band around the strings connecting the extremities of the drum faces (length approx 7").
5. *tallaya*, a gong, beaten with a stick. Used by *kapurālas* in *kumburu tahanam* (ceremony connected with agriculture).
6. *horanāva* or pipe: mouth-piece of *tala* (palm) leaf, the middle of wood, the rest of brass. The fusiform piece of wood attached is to separate the bits of leaf forming the mouth-piece, and enlarge the orifice. The Kandyan pipe has between 5 to 7 holes, but only 3 notes are usually produced.
7. *vīnāva* violin, "has two strings of different kinds, one made of a species of flax and the other of horse-hair, which is the material also of the string of the bow, which with bells attached

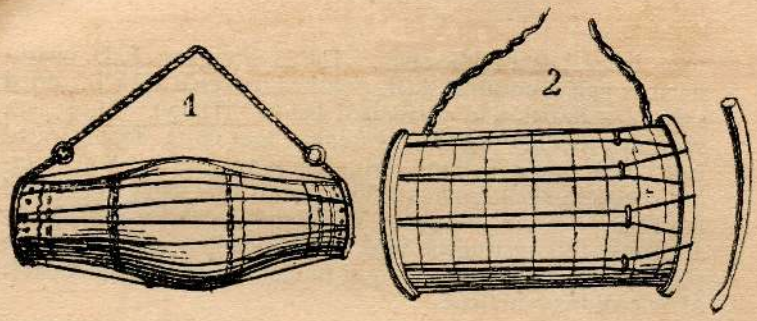
*Of the accompanying illustrations nos. 1 to 7 are from Davy's Ceylon (1821). The rest were prepared for this volume

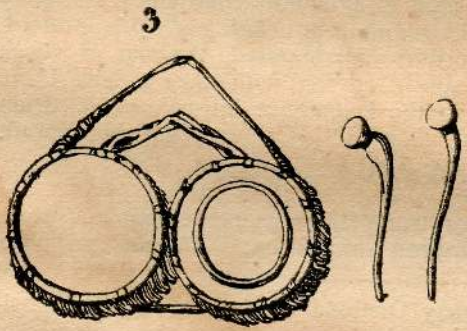
to it, is used as a fiddle stick. The hollow part of the instrument is half a cocanut shell, polished, covered with the dried skin of a lizard, and perforated below" (Davy). There is a specimen in the Kandy Museum; the more sophisticated instrument in the Colombo Museum is very rare. A degenerate cocoanut-shell (*polkaṭu*) fiddle, with two strings of thread is still hawked in Colombo. The Kandyan *vīnā* was evidently a simple folk-instrument on which one-line melodies were played, unlike the many stringed Indian art-instrument capable of microtonic subtleties.

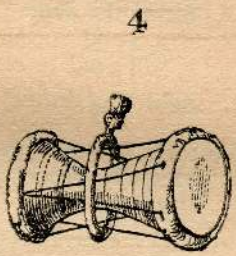
8. *kombuva*, a curved horn. There is a large S-shaped specimen in Lankatilaka temple.
9. *pantēruva*, similar to the tambourine except that the centre is bare.
10. *bummāḍiya*, a drum used in agricultural festivities, the body made of pottery. The common pot (*kala geḍiya*) is inverted, and a cylindrical portion superimposed, the top of which forms the drum face and is covered with *talagoya* skin. There is a good specimen in the Ratnapura Museum. This drum is still used in certain villages in Uḍunuvara (Kandy District).
11. *saka* (*hakgeḍiya*) conch-shell.

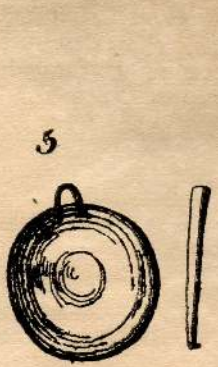
Note: the *purampeṭṭuva* or trumpet, as its name implies, was a relatively recent European innovation. *Sinnam* are types of trumpet.

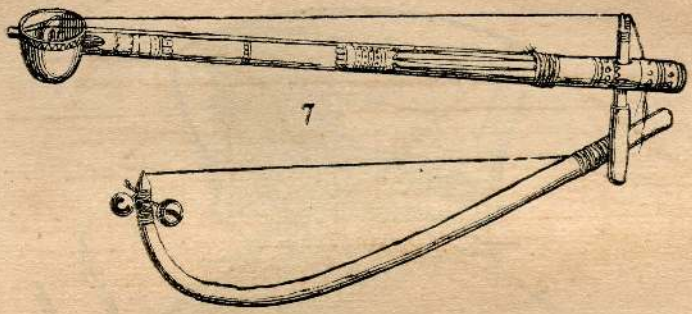
The Pali Text Society Dictionary definitions of the classificatory terms differ from those suggested by Mr. Dolapihilla. *ātata* is the generic name for durms covered with leather on one side; *vitata* is a drum with leather on both sides; *ātata-vitata* refers to instruments in which strings are stretched across the face and tightened on pegs (*e.g. vina*); *ghana* describes instruments played by striking; *susira* meaning perforated, full of holes, hollow, refers to wind instruments.











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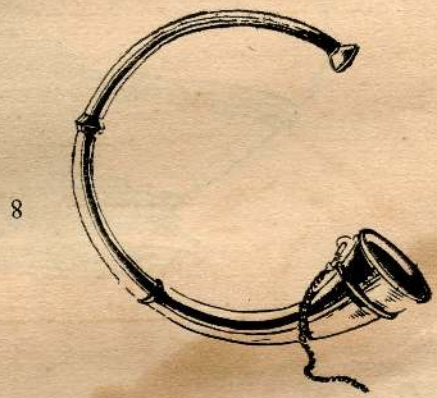

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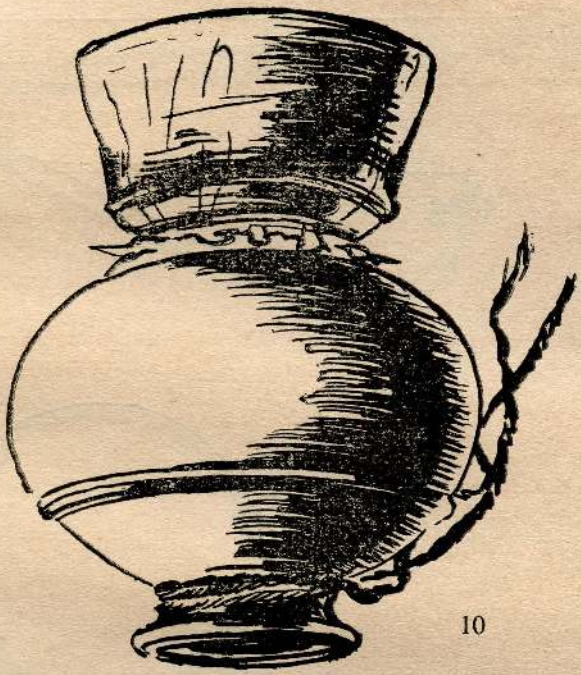

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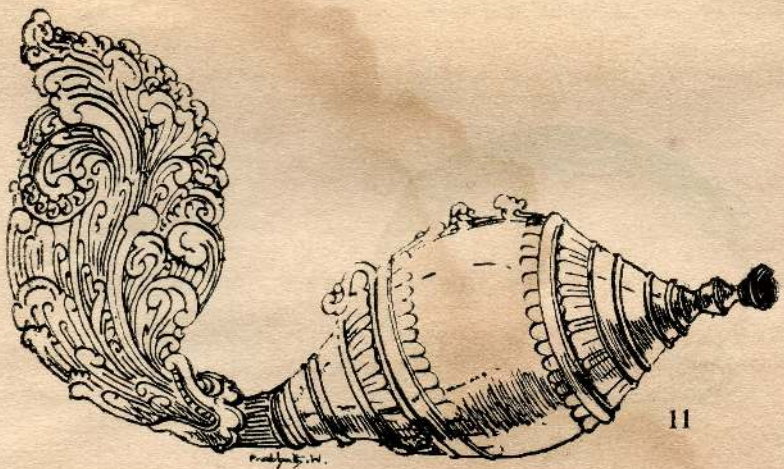

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* Abbreviations: CNR—*Ceylon National Review;* CT—*Ceylon Today;* JCBRAS—*Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, Ceylon Branch;* MLR—*Monthly Literary Register;* SZ—*Spolia Zeylanica.*

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