

An Analysis on Cosmopolitanism in Colonial Sri Lanka with Special Reference to Kandyan Period

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The concept of cosmopolitanism helps us to have a better understanding about the complex identities of communities lived in the past. The external relations of Sri Lanka essentially blended cultures and people together. She was colonized with the arrival of the Portuguese in 1505 AD, after which the country was also colonized by the Dutch and the British respectively. Due to the geographical location Sri Lanka attracted special attention from the Western States. Even before colonization, Sri Lanka was exposed to many Eastern and Western cultures due to trade relations with other countries and foreign invasions also brought considerable cultural and political change towards the island. The trade relations which held a very special place among them. With the advent of colonialism, many cultural, socio-political change leading to cosmopolitanism, incorporating European traditions took place in Sri Lanka. However, much of the analysis on Sri Lanka's historical record does not reflect this cosmopolitan nature. The Kandyan period, which was the last kingdom prior to total surrender of sovereignty to British, would have witnessed the most rigorous cultural blend of Sri Lanka's history. This research study is an attempt to find out those hidden evidence of cosmopolitanism in Sri Lankan history during the colonial period with special focus on Kandyan Kingdom. The main Objective of the study is to find out the historical evidence to show how positive or negative Sri Lankan communities were to adopt, tolerate and respect different cultures. This research will be done majorly based on historical records both primary and secondary. A handful of interviews will also be conducted to get the opinions of expert historians on the subject matter. The aim is to build an environment in which all religions, all races, can coexist in the country by carrying forward only the name of Sri Lanka.

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