Remembered Histories and Forgotten Societies: Some Perceptions on the Portuguese legacy in Sri Lanka

Anura Manatunga
University of Kelaniya
Sri Lanka
The Known History

- The Arrival of Portuguese.
- Establishment of Power over the Kingdom of Kotte (Sri Jayawardhanapura).
- Rule of the Maritime belt of the Island.
- Struggle with the Kandyan Kingdom.
- Withdrawal of Power and replacement by the Dutch
Lourenso De Almeida in 1505
Portuguese map of Ceilao [Ceylon]
Kingdom of Kotte
Colombo Port and Fort
Portuguese Emblem & the Kotte Flag
Sitawaka- Sub Kingdom of Kotte
Portuguese Fighter with Sinhalese
Two Fighters

King Rajasingha II

Jeranimo de Azevedo
Kotte Kingdom gifted to Portugal King
Negombo Fort
Mannar Fort
Kandyan King and the Dutch alliance
Social Impacts

• Conversion into Catholic Religion
• Hybrid population
• Mobilization of depressed castes into acceptable social status
• Proliferation of Portuguese names
• New words into Sinhala language
• New social concepts
• New forms of dance & Music
• Architecture & household items
• New dresses & styles
• Trading of Cinnamon, Elephants and Pearls in large scale.
• Food & beverages.........
Impacts of Catholic missionaries
New people, news styles ......
New Life style, Furniture and Dresses
New statues in Social hierarchy

Ethnic groups
• Burgers
• Topaz
• Kaffier

Caste groups
• Karawa
• Salagama
• Durawa
Some names and words

- Perera
- Silva
- De Silva
- Fernando
- Fonseka
- Cooray
- Coorara
- Zoysa
- Pinto
- Don
- Dona
- Singno

- Kamisa
- Kalisam
- Bottam
- Sakku
- Almari
- Weeduru
- Peerisa
- Koopa
- Banku
- Meesa
- Lensu
- Tuwa
Elephant Kraal

CAPTURING OF THE ELEPHANTS
Killing Elephants for Sport and Ivory
Ivory: One of the main items of trade
Pearl Fishery
Cinnamon and Arrack industry
Why History is being remembered and Society has been forgotten?

• Issues related to the Nationalism
• Identity concern
• Anti Missionary feelings
• Natural Indigenization of foreign elements
• Ignorance of the heritage items
• Portugal attitude on World Affairs
Netherland’s Heritage projects
Dutch ‘Period’ Museum, Colombo
British Venture at the National Museum, Colombo
A Legacy of the shared Culture

• What are the Portuguese items?
• What is the Sri Lankan role?
• Why we can not jointly appreciate and manage the common legacy of both countries?