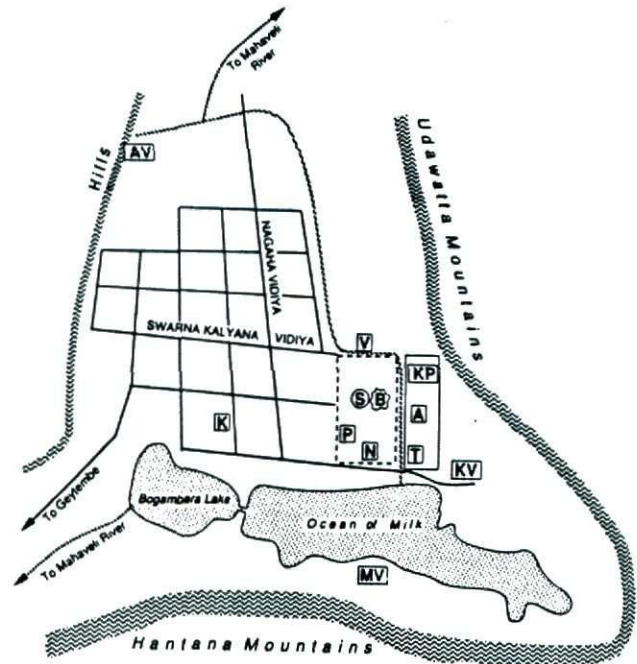
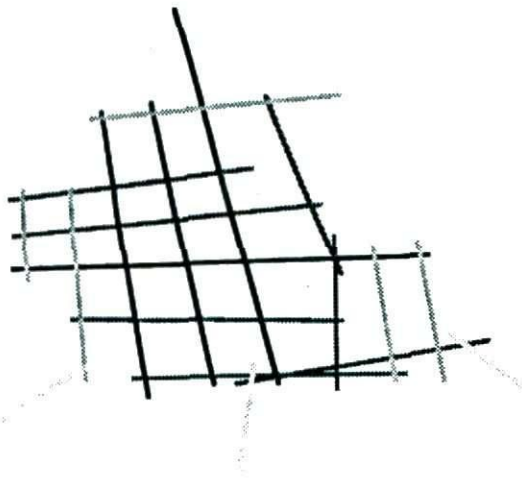


CITY

as a machine:

A SPATIAL ANALYSIS OF KANDY CITY



Syntactic structure of Kandy in 1815.

BY CHANNA DASWATTE

- | | | | |
|----|---------------------|---------|-------------------|
| T | Temple of the Tooth | MV | Malwatte Vihare |
| A | Audience hall | S | Stupa |
| N | Natha Devale | B | Bo tree |
| P | Patini Devale | KV | Kumaruppe Vidiya |
| V | Vishnu Devale | KP | King's palace |
| K | Kataragama Devale | [] | Eastern rectangle |
| AV | Asgiri Vihare | — | Roads |
| | | - - - - | Moats and streams |

Studies in the configurational analysis of space has revealed that a spatial arrangement taken as a whole, has very clear properties of its own – independent of the symbolic attributes that are seen in it. It is suggested that these properties form the basis for the mediation of essential social relationships within a group of people, and forms the framework into which textual and symbolic ideas are attributed. **Space and its configurational properties are seen not as a reflection of certain kinds of social behaviour, but as something that helps mediate at**

least some of these relationships. The creation of spatial sequences are therefore in itself a social behaviour.

The following is an extract from a paper presented to the Unit of architectural studies of the Bartlett School of Architecture, that analyses the City of Kandy using a method of configurational analysis developed by the UAS. It argues that although Kandy is geometrically quite unlike a mandala model, it has the configurational attributes of one. This relates it to the great temple cities of the other parts of

south and south-east Asia. This forms the basic spatial framework into which the textual and symbolic landscape of two different periods that had two types of kingship, as discussed by J. S. Duncan in his book, *The Politics of Landscape interpretation in the Kandyan Kingdom* CUP 1990, are mapped onto.

The method of analysis used is the alpha analysis developed by the Bartlett School of architecture. For the analysis of settlement layouts see the *Social Logic of Space* by Bill Hillier and

Jullienne Hanson (CUP 1984). The Basis of the method is the representation of a settlement by the longest and fewest lines of sight and permeability. Configurational values are then calculated for these lines. Two of those discussed in the paper are integration, which is the depth of each line from every other line given in the matrix and control value, which is the degree of control each line has over movement to and from others that are immediately attached to it. Recent research has shown that configurational properties have an important effect on the distribution of pedestrian movement within urban systems.

INTRODUCTION

The idea of the city as a 'ruling machine' is not a new one. Various manifestations of this are found in different parts of the world from different times. Some scholars have described the palace itself as a:

'device to emphasise the king's power and to enhance his rule by creating a feeling of awe in the minds of the subjects through a series of architectural illusions. Much of this is purely theatrical in nature and shows how a feeling of subservience was created psychologically by remarkable stage management.'¹

However this does not seem to be the whole story. In as much it is reasonable to suggest that palaces do use architectural illusion to reinforce the means to their end, which however may not be a matter of creating a 'feeling of awe'. It is likely that these devices were used to set up the spatial framework of a field of kingship within which the ruler appears as privileged – in fact in many cases a sacred or liminal – figure. Liminality meaning a state of being outside the given circumstances, an 'in between' position between two given states. In this

particular case that between the human world and the world of the gods. This liminality is what seemed to be the legitimacy for them to rule.

The Subject of this paper is the City of Kandy, the last precolonial capital of the Sinhalese Kingdoms of Sri Lanka. According to a study (Duncan, 1990) the city is seen as embodying a symbolic landscape that was set up as a device to reinforce the legitimacy of the Kings rule. Like many of the South and South-East Asian cities of the so called traditional type, the symbolism is allegedly based on the mythical abode of Sakra (Indra of the Hindu pantheon), the king of the gods on the top of mount Meru the centre of the Universe. Duncan elaborates the argument about Kandy, by contrasting the city at two different times, 1765 and the early 19th century, as embodying two contestary discourses of kingship.

'One the Asokan, was based on the story of Asoka, the great Indian monarch of the 3rd Century B.C. This discourse included a set of beliefs that defined a proper king as pious riteous, and devoted to fostering the Buddhist religion and to the welfare of his people. The other model, the Sakran, was potentially, a competing discourse composed of a set of beliefs, the central idea of which is the king should model himself on Sakra the king of the gods and in doing so become a divine ruler, a god King.'²

His argument centres on the idea that the landscape in Kandy was a text which embodied the respective discourses of kingship in the form of allegory, synecdoche and metonym associated with particular objects, relationship of objects and behaviour patterns.³ While this is indeed a convincing interpretation of the landscape of Kandy, the approach is very similar to the line of study taken

by most interpreters of traditional urbanism where the only part the urban object plays, is to act as the symbol into which is built the textual meaning. The purely geometric relationships the city embodies is seen as based on ideal types that in turn acted to legitimise the discourse of kingship.

For instance Wheatley refers,

'to the cosmo-magical symbolism which informed the ideal type traditional city in both the new and the old worlds, which brought it into being, sustained and was imprinted in its physiognomy'.⁴

Many of the ancient city plans were seen as 'nothing less than the translation into stone of the cosmological myths of India'.⁵ Wheatley in particular interprets the attitude of the creators of these seemingly geometrical objects almost as if it was bordering on the superstitious, which required them to make these correspondences with the cosmic order in order to ensure the prosperity of the people.⁶ This is seen as being particularly true in the establishment of capital cities and are seen to have been achieved by the reproduction in stone of geometric diagrams that represented the cosmic order. The urban systems were seen as 'diagrammes magique traces sur le parchemin de platne'⁷ which fulfilled the requirements of delimitation and orientation as sacred territory within the continuum of a profane space.⁸ This argument of the relation of cities to the cosmic order and *sacrality is embodied* in the work of other scholars who also take the ideas behind rituals that are associated with the city and its plan especially at its foundation as a ritualistic connection with the cosmos.

'The origin of the city plan is in primitive man's notion of the universe and his explanation for it – his reconciliation to his fate through ritual'.⁹

¹ Uphill E. The concept of the Egyptian palace as a 'ruling machine'.

² Uphill E. Ibid p. 723.

³ Duncan J. S. The politics of landscape interpretation in the Kandyan Kingdom, Cambridge University Press (1990) p. 5.

⁴ Duncan J. S. (1990) p. 16-18.

⁵ Wheatley P. The city as a Symbol, University College London, 1969, p. 9.

⁶ Wheatley P. (1969) p. 10.

⁷ Wheatley P. (1969) p. 10.

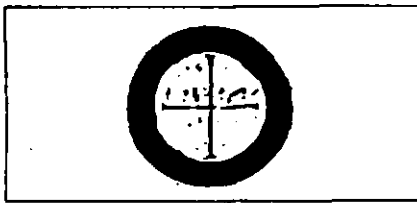
⁸ Groslier B. P. Ankor Homme et Pierres (Paris 1956), p. 11.

⁹ Wheatley P. (1969) p. 10.

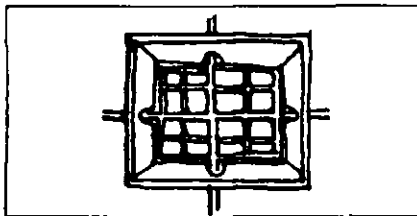
¹⁰ Rykwert J. The idea of the Town (?) p. 43.

Rykwert argues that the prototypes for the urban grid were sacred geometric figures. In the case of the Roman grid it was the *Templum*¹¹ and in Indian temples and towns the *vastupurusamandala*.¹²

Figure 1:

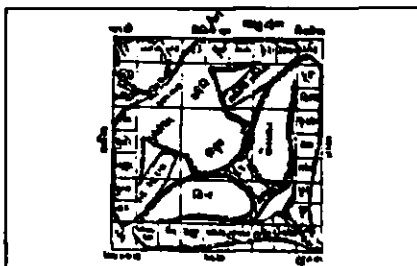


The templum of the sky

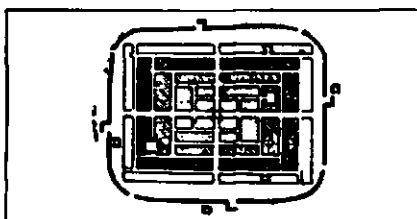


Ideal Roman town plan

Figure 2:



The Vastupurusamandala



Ideal Indian town plan

The Geometric similarities of these ritual symbols and the urban grids are quite striking. Rykwert carries the argument much further than pure symbolism and asserts that an extended function of these grids was to make the inhabitant aware of his position within the Universe.

¹¹ Rykwert J. (1976) p. 5-6.

¹² Rykwert J. (1976) p. 38-39

¹³ Rykwert J. (1976) p. 39-40.

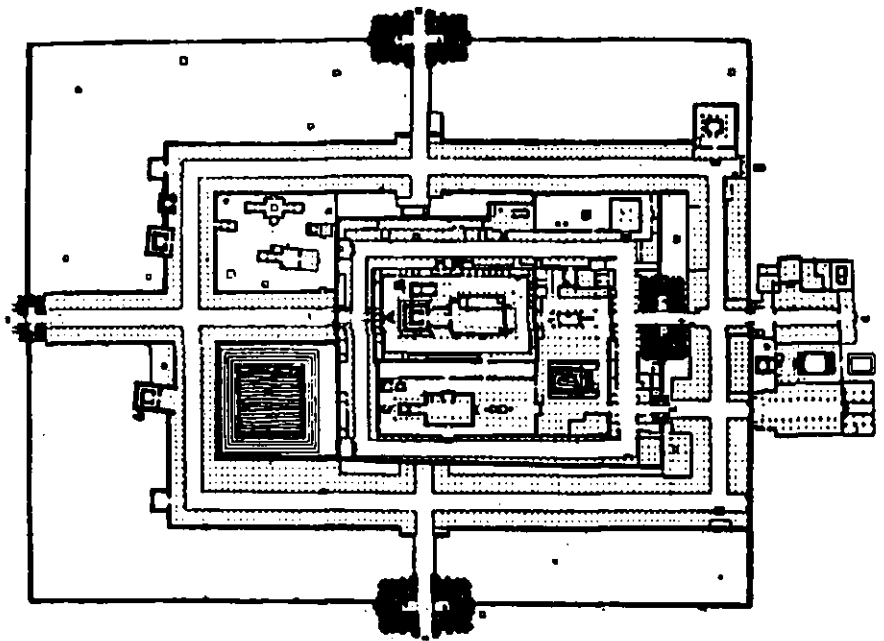


Figure 3: Plan of Indian Temple town

'A reflecting Indian, even obscurely aware of the terminology of the yoga, can, by looking at a temple, infer the vastupurusamandala from it, and identify his body, limb by limb, with its different parts and so with the whole universe which it represents . . .

In a similar way a Roman, however cursorily acquainted with the traditional cosmology – certainly without going into any of the finer points discussed by philosophers – should have been able to infer the Templum from the layout of the town and so situated himself securely in the world'.¹³

The problem with this approach arises when one considers that the 'reflecting Indian' and the Roman are both inside the grid, and in this argument based on geometric congruence to ideal plan forms there seems very little reference to how exactly this symbolic geometry is to be perceived by him who does not have the privilege of seeing a plan from above. In the case of the Roman there is the assumption that he will be able to perceive one of the streets in the city as decumanus and another as the cardo. The contradictions lie in the real examples, for while in the ideal these are at right angles to each other and start at the four gates to the city and divides it into quarters, this is

rarely true of real examples. It is either that they were the broadest streets, once again not readily perceptible unless one is fully aware of the whole city or there is an assumption that it is somehow conveyed as an a priori social knowledge. The nature of geometrical objects which have similar parts in similar relations to each other makes perception from within even more difficult. Then there is also the problem that it does not set up the criteria to understand traditional urban settlements that are not exactly 'magic diagrams', even in the case of grid forms like Kandy. Duncan, in his argument, overcomes this by basing it purely on interpreting the semantic aspects of the objects within the grid the geometrical relations to each other and to the cardinal directions of the compass. It is elaborated to a complex textual interpretation through certain identified tropes – concrete, linguistic and behavioural. However, the basis for perception of the city is knowledge of the direction from which the sun rises. While it may be plausible to base an argument of symbolism on this, it can be pointed out that the city grid and the other objects on their own right sets up a basis for the discourse of legitimation – in this particular case one of the liminal nature of the king – even if the sun were not in the habit of rising from the same direction each day! It may be that textually acts at

best, to emphasise and reinforce, and at worst to justify or cover up, for the discursive field created by the object.

With the particular situation of Kandy this paper will address this issue of the creation of liminality and legitimation as two issues, raised by the grid of the city. In the first part it will be shown that the particular grid of Kandy is in fact what can be called a 'privileging grid' which could be a genotype for most south and south-east Asian cities, and have very little to do with geometric ideals. The second part will investigate the deformations of the grid during two periods, 1765 and 1815, representing the contending discourses of kingship pointed out by Duncan.

THE PRIVILEGING GRID

The other commonality associated with the allusion to symbolism in the arguments that were discussed above is the idea of Scrality. The function of the symbolic form and the associated rituals of installing it seen as instituting a sacred area within the continuum of profane space.¹⁴ This by its very act is one of segregation – or exclusion. In most of the geometric forms that constitute traditional city forms in south and south east Asia, usually a *mandala* (fig. 2), the centre is interpreted as most sacred.

'the central point, the focus of creative force, was the place where communication was achieved most easily between cosmic planes, between earth and heaven on the one hand and earth and the underworld on the other. It was through this point of ontological transition that there passed the axis of the world. In the cities of the ancient Middle East, South India, Ceylon and most of Hindu and Mahayana South-East Asia, it is a temple that occupies this most sacred site at the axis of the kingdom'.¹⁵

In other words it was considered a liminal spot. Even without going into the textual philosophy of the form, it seems obvious that the *mandala* form excludes or segregates the centre from the surrounding area. Its physical reproduction on the ground seems the obvious way to create a sacred centre on a profane surface (fig. 3). However, an observer of an Indian temple town, such as Madurai, will see that the central axial approach to the temple proper is also a busy market street. There is direct accessibility to the sacred centre.

A syntactic analysis of an idealised *mandala* (fig. 4) as it may be used in the case of one of these traditional

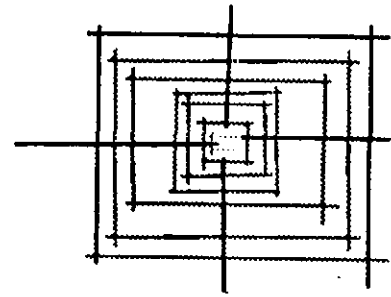


Figure 4: The ideal mandala grid

cities bring the axial approach to the temple as being most integrated and also having the highest control value.¹⁶ Research at the unit for architectural studies at the Bartlett have shown strong correlations between highly integrated lines in a system and the numbers of people moving on them. This gives these lines a high probability of becoming market streets.¹⁷ The results of the analysis of the *mandala* also show that the centre itself comes out as being highly segregated.

The basic analysis of one of the most dramatic real examples, Ankor Thom from the classical Khmer period of Cambodia comes out with such a segregated centre (fig. 5 & 6). But even though the axial approaches are not the most integrated those lines directly connected to an adjacent to this sacred centre of temple and palace are.

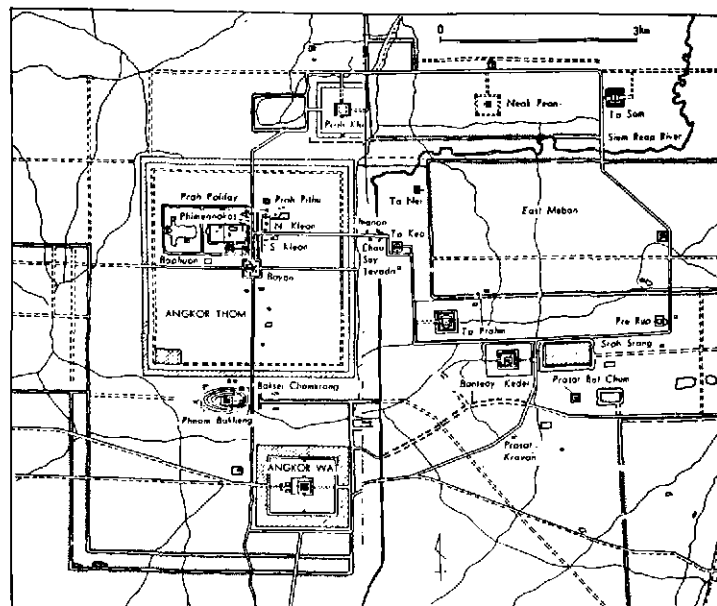


Figure 5: Plan of Ankor Thom

¹⁴ Wheatley P. (1969) p. 17, Rykwert (?) p.

¹⁵ Wheatley P. (1969) p. 12.

¹⁶ For an explanation of the Methodology and the terms used see Appendix 1.

¹⁷ Hillier et al. Natural Movement paper.

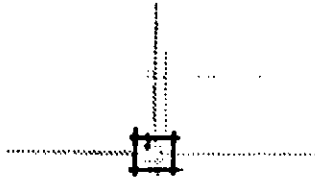


Figure 6: Ankor Thom Integration map

The segregation of the centre confirms Wheatley's assertion, but not only through a textual symbolism attached to the geometry of the object but because of certain configurational properties of the object itself. The other property of note in these grids is that the segregated zone is directly related to the most integrated. In this light it seems topical to examine the spatial manifestation of sacrality in religious buildings. The basis for the creation of a discursive field of sacredness seems again to come from a configurational property of such buildings. These are the 'twin themes of synchronised interior and sacred deepest space'.¹⁸ Buildings that were used in institutionalised worship constitutes of this pattern of a series of spaces strung in a row to make the end space relatively segregated from the outside, but directly visible and also in a way in control of the other spaces before it. This model as pointed out by Hillier and Hanson is an almost standard adaptation across cultures (fig. 7) and seems to be the spatial basis of mediating between the sacred and the profane. The similarity in the basic syntax – segregated directly connected to the integrated – to the *mandala* urban grid is striking.

Considering Kandy as an ideal grid (fig. 8), it is obvious that there is no relationship whatsoever to the mandala form with its sacred centre. In fact contrary to the claims of some geographers, none of the ceremonial

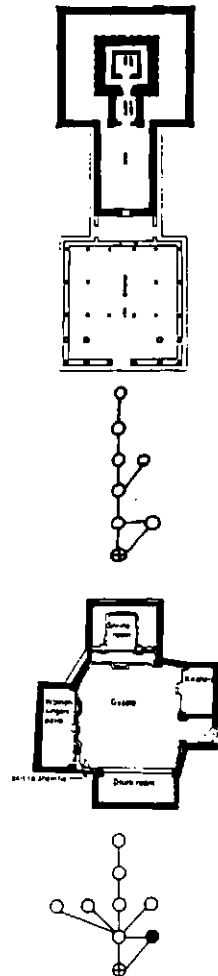


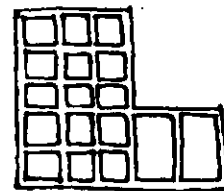
Figure 7: The syntax of sacrality Sri Lankan shrine, Ashanthe shrine

capitals of Sri Lanka, with the possible exception of the 5th C Sigiriya, which is a special case anyway, have a classic mandala model. However, the entire textual basis of kingship is based on notions of sacred and profane and the ideal cosmic grid. It is Duncan's observation that the king's right to rule is a privilege of his liminal status.¹⁹ The location of the buildings in the landscape is determined by the division between the sacred and the profane. The sacred according to the usual approach is determined by the East. The argument can be conveniently put to rest by considering that the sacred buildings are all in the eastern sector of the city, thus the population considered the East and consequently those buildings and objects situated in that sector as being associated with sacrality. However, mere directions does not seem at all to determine sacrality even in the case of Kandy. The exceptions to the rule are many,

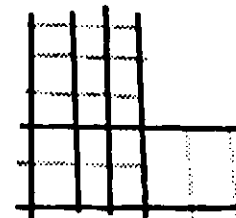
especially if the shrines to the guardian deities are considered. None of them actually have the inner shrine on the eastern side. It seems then that even in the city as much as in the temples the syntactic structure is what makes the division of sacred and profane.

Kandy as an ideal grid is geometrically constituted of two halves, a smaller eastern rectangle and a larger western one.

Figure 8:



Kandy – the ideal grid



Kandy – syntactic structure of ideal grid

According to the textual evidence, the spatial positioning of the various objects was determined by this division with the eastern rectangle considered the sacred one. The only sacred object in the western rectangle is the shrine to the deity *Kataragama*, the god of war associated with death and destruction and thus in a Sinhalese Buddhist point of view, relatively unclean and profane.

A configurational analysis of this ideal grid (fig. 8), shows this division in terms of integration and segregation, relative into the whole grid, the streets that side the sacred eastern rectangle are segregated. However, two highly integrated lines penetrate this and connect it to the rest of the grid. While these two lines are equally integrated as the four other lines in the north-south direction, they alone have the highest control values in the system. The model gets more clarified when adjustments are made to accommodate a notional carrier (fig. 9). The division is maintained and the emphasis shifts to one line that penetrates the eastern

¹⁸ Hillier & Hanson. *The Social Logic of space* (CUP 1984) p. 180.

¹⁹ Duncan J. S. *The City as Text: the politics of landscape interpretation in the Kandy Kingdom* CUP 1990 p. 21.

rectangle. This line has the highest control value as well. This model seems to suggest that the idealised grid of Kandy sets up a background to the discourse of sacred and profane in a similar manner to the mandala forms and the buildings of institutionalised worship, discussed earlier – a segregated area penetrated by a strong line of integration and control that connects it the rest of the system.

It follows then that the background for the discursive of the legitimization of the King's right to rule as a divine representative on earth, occupying the liminal or sacred area of the city, was not set by simply alluding to a geometric relationship of the town grid to where the sun rose from and specifying that as sacred. The concepts of sacrality and profanity was built into the particular grid structure of the city of Kandy in a similar way to that of other examples that do this. Thus the object itself, without allusion to symbolic notions for it to become intelligible formed the basis for the symbolic and semantic textual discourse to be built into.

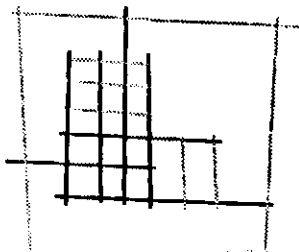


Figure 9: Kandy – idealised grid

THE DEFORMED GRID, 1765 AND 1815: CONTESTARY DISCOURSES

In relation to the kingdom as a whole Kandy was both symbolically and effectively a centre with the twenty one provinces radiating out in two concentric rings²⁰ (fig. 10). The city itself however, as it was seen above, does not connote centrality. Duncan's argument for the Kandyan landscape as being a textual one is based on the division of the sacred and the profane, and it was shown above that this was created by the city grid itself. In fact the way it did this, related the Kandyan grid to a wider genotype that seemed

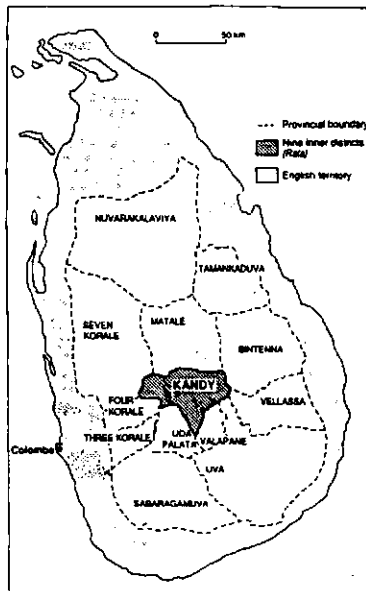


Figure 10: The Kandyan kingdom in the late 18th C.

to include traditional urban grids at least across south and south-east Asia. Within this context it seems topical to examine the real grid of the city with its many deformations and attempt to understand how it embodied the different discourses of kingship described by Duncan in the two periods of Kandyan history.

In all the arguments about the symbolism of the city discussed above, association with the sacred is implied as privileging. Along with the textual evidence of literature and patterns of behaviour, it seems that in many cultures, association with the sacred was a legitimization of a right to rule. Thus by placing himself in a relative position of sacrality as established by the urban grid, the king in Kandy seems to have asserted his divinity in the eyes of the rest of the citizenry. This is further reinforced by his close physical association with the tooth relic of the Buddha that was enshrined in the temple, which by then then had become the national palladium. This association with sacred is the thing that is spatialised in both periods and is thus the common factor in the 'two major discourses within the larger discursive field pertaining to kingship – the Sakran and the Asokan'.²¹ It is indeed noteworthy that much of the deformation from the ideal grid is

related to the peripheries (figs. 11 & 12). In the light of syntactic research done on the deformation of Roman grids, this shows a pattern that tends towards confirming the structure of the orthogonal grid.²² In the case of Kandy, a differentiation of the sacred and the profane. It is within this pre-established socio-spatial pattern – of association with the sacred being a legitimization of a right to rule – that the rest of the textual discourse described by Duncan works. Consequently, it would seem that the deformations carried out to the grid particularly by in the early 19th C are more significantly socially and symbolically that what the usual interpretation gives credit for.

A feature of the streets of Kandy is that it lacks any convex articulation of space, except in one case, and if contemporary writers are to be taken for granted, very little in the three dimensional either. Every street is morphologically similar to every other and consists of a single convex space traversed by a single axial line from end to end. In other words none of them have a privileged geometrical morphology which could suggest symbolic importance. In the Kandy grid lines are privileged only by the syntactic properties they have in relation to the others in it.

In both of the grids discussed below the line that is thus privileged, does not strike any symbolically important building either, making it a device to emphasise it. On the contrary the north-south axis simply enters the city and ends in an open space of paddy field which was eventually to be made into a lake. It is the next most integrated line, which is also the one with the highest control value, in both of the cases, that strikes the temple in the 1765 version and the palace in 1815. In this sense, they seem to be embodying a symbolic axiality making Kandy a landscape in which the 'state is using the urban surface in order to create . . . a realisation of its own power'²³ in a syntactic way. In the particular case of Kandy, the favoured discourses of kingship of a particular time.

²⁰ Duncan J.S. (1990) p. 36.

²¹ Duncan J.S. (1990) p. 38.

²² Hanson J. unpublished Ph.D. thesis, p. 178.

²³ Hiller, *The Axis as Symbol and as Instrument* p.5.

THE ASOKAN DISCOURSE

'The Asokan model (of kingship) was based on the Mauryan emperor Asoka (third century B.C.) who was looked upon as the ideal Buddhist king. According to this view the king should be mild-mannered, righteous, and unfailingly protective of Buddhism and responsible for the welfare of his people.

... .. he was required to pursue the Asokan ideals and continue to do good deeds during his present lifetime. The environmental evidence of these good deeds was a distinctively Asokan landscape which embodied and exemplified these values.

... .. religious structures, such as monasteries, dagabos and viharas, which would enrich the religion, as well as public works such as irrigation tanks which would benefit the people. The landscape model of Asokan kingship was therefore simultaneously religious and utilitarian'.²⁴

The emphasis here is then on religion and the association with it giving one privilege and authority. The analysis of the city grid as recorded by the Dutch when they sacked the city in 1765 shows that the deformations at the time in fact emphasises the temple in its syntactic structure (fig 13). The most integrated line in the city is the north south axis which is the northern approach to the city. This is picked up in later deformations and in 19th C British maps as one of the more constituted streets and presumably the market street. The next most integrated is the one crossing the *mabamaluwa* or great square, a public esplanade in front of the temple hitting its facade axially. This line however is the one with the highest control value. The most segregated lines are those that form the western and then the eastern approaches to the city, while the sacred rectangle come next. This is confirmed even with the notional carrier attached and thus seems to embody the model that was proposed in chapter 2. The segregation of the western approach could be both

strategic as well proposed in chapter 2. The segregation of the western approach could be both strategic as well as symbolic. For this was the direction of Colombo the stronghold of the western powers that then controlled the coastal lowlands. It was also from this direction that most of the foreign embassies arrived in the city. This could then have been the spatial emphasis laid on the textual notion of the difficulty of reaching the abode of Sakra. This segregation of the western approach remains even with the later deformations of the 19th C.

The geometry of the most integrated axis do not seem to embody anything that is consciously symbolic. It is only through the syntactic relation to the rest of the grid that they are seen as axes at all. However, the one that hits the temple while being picked up as an important one in the syntactic structure, is also emphasised symbolically by being the only one invested with a great deal of convex space in the form of the *mabamaluwa*. Although the first axis is syntactically important, the greater investment of space and high control value emphasises the importance of the second as the symbolic axis that mediates between the sacred and the profane. The fact that it works to highlight the temple seems to be a feature of the Asokan view.

THE SAKRAN DISCOURSE

'In the Sakran, as in the Asokan discourse on kingship, the king was expected to be just, pious, caring and attentive to the needs of the citizens. However the former view stressed the glorious and divine quality of kingship'.²⁵

The syncretion between the two discourses had always been the basis of Sinhalese kingship, with emphasis on the latter. However the kings of the Nanyaker dynasty who ruled the kingdom from 1739 onward, being foreign and basically Hindu tended to favour the more Hindu Sakran view, although most of them managed to

achieve a balance between the two. Not so the last one. 'The last king, Sri Wickrama, however created an unbalance through self agradizement – a misjudgment which ultimately cost him his crown and the Kandyans their political independence'.²⁶ Duncan notes the changes made to the landscape to abide by the textual descriptions of the cosmic cities, and seems justified in that in the case of the last king, these were extremely significant additions to the city. The two most important projects, the *pattiripuwa*, the octagonal pavilion that was added to the temple for his personal use, and the lake, symbolically the cosmic sea of milk, are even today the most conspicuous monuments.

The other significant additions that he made were a number of streets which made some radical changes to the structure of the urban grid. These additions have been variously interpreted as an attempt by an anesthetically minded king to beautify his capital²⁷ and a systematic attempt to reinforce his power by 'attempting a magical solution to the problems besetting his kingdom when he reshaped his city into a more perfect rectangle so that it could partake in the potency of the heavenly city'.²⁸ This does seem a plausible argument considering the textual evidence of the symbolic importance of the number of the resulting square blocks and the idea of each block representing one of the 21 provinces of the kingdom. However, equally if not more significant, is the effect of these changes on the syntactic structure of the grid (Fig. 14). While the general model of sacred and profane remains the same, with the new additions the most integrated line becomes the one that hits the palace end of the Temple/palace complex on axis with its west door. This also has the highest control value. This seems to embody the change in emphasis in the Sakran model of kingship, of the importance of the divinity of the king. With a notional carrier attached however the integration shifts to the northern approach, with the kings axis taking

²⁴ Duncan J.S. (1990) p.38.

²⁵ Duncan J.S. (1990) p.40.

²⁶ Duncan J.S. (1990) p.41.

²⁷ Davy (1921), Devaraja (1972) p.134.

²⁸ Duncan J.S. (1990) p.93.

second place but still with the highest control value.

Considering segregation, the western approach is still the most segregated, but there is a dramatic increase in the segregation of the eastern approach, which was also the street on which most of the kings relatives lived. This seems to establish the marked alienation of the king from his people which was a feature of the last years of Sri Wickrama's reign and the cause of his eventual downfall.

This seems to confirm the argument put forward above, for the role of the city grid as object in its own right, that creates a syntactic framework into which the textual discourses are built,

either as a reinforcement or a cover up of the underlying relationship of the king, his right to rule through his special status of liminality, and his people.

CONCLUSION

It seems that Kandy does depend on symbolism to quite a large extent in embodying the different discourses of kingship. However the basis of this symbolism is not a simple matter of geometrical relationships of objects to each other and to the cardinal directions. It seems to be a spatial one. Although in the Kandyan case the argument of direction seems to hold and be a plausible explanation, a spatial analysis of the urban grid as an

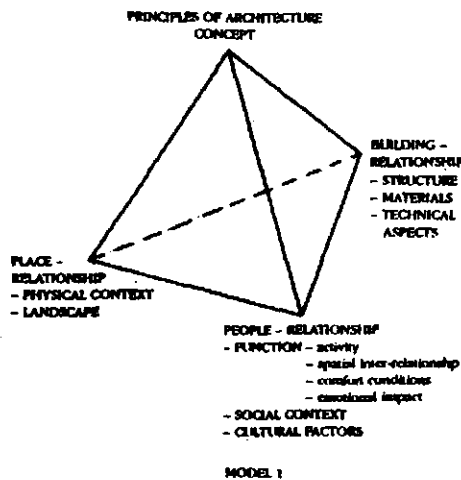
object in its own right bring out certain properties that cannot be merely accidental. Its similarity to the syntactic differentiation of space into sacred and profane created by other allegedly symbolic more geometric grids in south and south-east Asia, suggest that it may be following a genotype of city forms that emphasises the sacred as being privileged. It is suggested that Kandy although completely geometrically unrelated, is indeed a variation of a genotype. The configurational deformations, during the two periods discussed by Duncan, while retaining the above genotype, in fact embody the spatial realisation of the privileging mechanism that is peculiar to each discourse of kingship.

It seems that as much as the city could be read as a text by those initiated to the particular textual meanings of the different relationships and object, the spatial configuration within which these were embedded provided a discursive field which in effect seemed to naturalise them. However, since the syntax itself, without the textual meanings attached to it forms a kind of subtext which is open to independent perception and subsequent interpretation, this could have been the basis for the contestary readings discussed by Duncan that led to the downfall of Sri Wickrama and eventually the Kandyan Kingdom.

CORRECTION

Due to a printing error, one of the diagrams 'A model for Architectural Design' appearing in the Article Titled "A conceptual framework for Architectural Design – an Ecological Standpoint" written by Archt. Shereen Amendra in the Architect Journal Vol. 101 – No. 15 has been misprinted.

We apologise for this error and would like our readers to make the correction as printed below.



This diagram was the cornerstone of the Article and we regret if the readers had any inconvenience in reading the Article.

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

ILLUSTRATION CREDITS

Fig. 11 and 12 are taken from

J. S. Duncan: The Politics of landscape interpretation in the Kandyan Kingdom – Cup 1990.

Fig. 7 Features extracts from

Anurudhe Senevirathne – Kandy CCF 1983 Bill Hillier Juanhien Hanson – The Social Logic of Space – Cup 1984

Fig 5

Fyioka M – Ankor Wat Kodausha International Ltd. 1972

Fig. 1 & 2

Rykwat J. The Idea of the town Faber and Father 1976.