

Reconstruction of The Historical Landscape of Colombo with Archaeological References.

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Abstract

There are several theories as to how the name 'Colombo' came to be. During the Middle Ages, it was known as 'Kolontota' in Sinhala and 'Calenbo' by the Arabs. The Chinese explorer Chan-ta-yuan referred to Colombo as 'Kolanapu,' a hot swampy city, in the 14th century, and the Arab explorer Ibn Battuta, who visited Ceylon in the same century, described Colombo as a beautiful, large city. Researchers of the present study adopted the mixed approach to accomplish the previously explained research objective which was setting a proper reconstruction of the historical landscape of Colombo with archaeological references. The research was conducted with the support extended by the National Museum and the survey department in Sri Lanka. Researchers went through all the maps and archaeological landscape evidence mentioned in previous archaeological research like Archaeological Geophysics. The results were listed down as periodical landscape changes and how the changes happened vertically from the Colombo prehistoric era until the Kotte period, Colombo during the Portuguese period, Colombo's landscape at the conclusion of the Portuguese period, and Colombo's Dutch period.

Keywords: Archaeology, Dutch, Landscape, Portuguese, Reconstruction

Introduction

There are several theories as to how the name 'Colombo' came to be. During the Middle Ages, it was known as 'Kolontota' in Sinhala and 'Calenbo' by the Arabs. The Chinese explorer Chan-ta-yuan referred to Colombo as 'Kolanapu,' a hot swampy city, in the 14th century, and the Arab explorer Ibn Battuta, who visited Ceylon in the same century, described Colombo as a beautiful, large city. Although there were many Abyssinians in the city, the Arabs had the upper hand in the trade. He was known as 'Kalenpu,' and he traded in timber, silver, gold, and liquor. It appears to have adapted to Persians. The phonetic adjective "Colombo karalu anipan sada piyavi nam" is used as an example of a derivative word derived from the name of Colombo, which is taken from a foreign language, among the earliest expressions of the 14th-century Sidath magazine. As a result, the name 'Colombo' may have been in use since the Dambadeniya Kingdom. Later, 'Colombo Port' may have been referred to colloquially as 'Colombo,' and in Rajavali, it is referred to as 'Kalantota.' The name is thought to have come from the Kolon Oya, which separates the Kelani River. The streams along the Kolom Oya turn the land around Colombo into a swamp, and are located as the water fort on the western side of the Kotte Fort. It also connects with the Kelani River near Colombo. As a result, 'surrounded by the Colombo Oya' might refer to later Colombo. Anyone who examines the origin of Yai Pali terms can explain why Colombo is shattered due to this Colombo Oya. Kolon Oya is also known as 'Colombo River' or 'Colombo Halaka' in Pali history literature. Gokannathota, Mathota, Kalukota, Ambalantota, and Bentota were formed from the island's major rivers. Since ancient times, the sources of business in the Colombo area have been a mingling of various ethnic groups. The words 'Colombo' and 'Colombo' were used by Europeans, especially the Portuguese. According to Robert Knox, a Kandyan prisoner in the 17th century, the name comes from a green mango

tree west of Colombo Fort. He claims that western nations utilize Columbus as a tribute to Columbus. The mango tree at the edge of Colombo Fort was also utilized by the Dutch as a symbol of the flag signifying their Colombo area. Its birds are likewise shut. 'Columba' means 'dove' in Latin. They consider the scorching green mango tree to be. They consider the glowing green mango tree to be a signpost in the distance.

Methodology

Researchers of the present study adopted the mix approach in order to accomplish the previously explained research objective which was setting a proper reconstruction of the historical landscape of Colombo with archaeological references. The research was conducted with the support extended by the national museum and the survey department in Sri Lanka. Researchers went through all the maps and archaeological landscape evidences mentioned in previous archaeological researches like Archaeological Geophysics. The museum curators and survey department were considered as the population of the study from which a sample of 10 members were extracted through convenience sampling technique through questionnaires consisted with both close ended and open- ended questions. Semi-structured interviews were also conducted. Secondary data was collected from reliable websites, articles and previous research. Papers relevant to the key words of this present study. Frequency measurements of descriptive statistics and content analysis method were followed to analyze the collected data to make conclusions.

Results and Discussion

01. From the Colombo prehistoric era until the Kotte period

Colombo's antiquity stretches back to about BC, according to archeological and historical sources. It has been shown that it extends into and beyond the era. The Asmadalagala cave complex near Akarawita, Hanwella, has been recognized as an ancient human village, according to excavations conducted in 1997. Cry in Pilapitiya, a community on the banks of the Kelani River about 4 kilometers from Colombo. BC There have been prehistoric settlements discovered dating back to the sixth century. Clay pots from this era have also been discovered at Dharmapala Mawatha in Colombo 07. Furthermore, investigations at the Rarana and Alawala caves near Colombo have yielded a variety of significant archaeological relics, including prehistoric and prehistoric human bones. The trawler discovered at the bottom of the Kelani River dating from the 4th - 2nd centuries BC is a monument to the trade that took place along the rivers from the interior of the country to Colombo. As a result, it is obvious that the early settlements in Sri Lanka were extended to the suburbs of Colombo. That town may have gradually extended upstream from Colombo through the Kaduwela Hanwella in the Kelani River valley.

In such a case, BC. The famous 'Taprobane' map made by the Greek Claudius Ptolemy reveals that Colombo was well-known by the 2nd century. Its Colombo neighborhood is known as 'Zeus Point.' The ancient religious places of worship around Colombo include the Kaduwela Korathota Cave Temple (2nd century BC) and the Hanwella Ambulgama Temple (2nd century BC). The Korathota Vihara, which also has two stone inscriptions in Brahmi script, is significant as a site from the oldest historical period. Cave Cree Hanwella Akarawita Alagala Hanwella Akarawita Alagala Hanwella Akarawita Alagala

Hanwella in the third century, it was converted into a Buddhist monastery. At the same period, the Warana and Pilikuttu areas near Colombo were converted into Buddhist monasteries. According to legend, the Kelaniya Rajamaha Vihara near Colombo dates back to the reign of the Buddha. According to legend, there was a significant population of Naga tribes in Kelaniya during the Lord Buddha's third visit to Ceylon. There is also Cree. BC The Mahavamsa also cites a kingdom founded in Kelaniya in the second century that was controlled by King Kelanitissa, the father of Goddess Vihara Maha Devi. With the expansion of Islam in the 8th and 9th centuries, the city of Colombo became increasingly popular in the Arab trade world, and the number of Arabs who arrived here expanded tremendously. Cry when an Arab priest is laid to rest. ☺. In Colombo, a 10th century tombstone inscribed with the letter 'Kufit' has been discovered. The Muslims in this country brought the cleric 'Ibn Abu Bakr' from the Caliph of Baghdad to perform their religious responsibilities. Muslims known as 'Marakkala' and 'Hamban' had arrived in Colombo by the 14th century to trade in textiles, cinnamon, ivory, gold, silver, pearls, and stones. Colombo became an important port in the South Indian region as Arab-related operations expanded.

By the 14th century, Colombo had become such an important port during the Gampola period that the Aryan monarchs who were controlling Jaffna at the time switched their attention to this area and invaded the western shore. Colombo fell under the control of the Aryan monarchs as a result of this. It is stated that the Aryan emperors took over the revenue of the western ports, including Colombo, which had previously belonged to King Gampola, since they kept a navy here to collect taxes. To repel the invasion of Jaffna, Alagakkonara alias Nissanka Alakeshwara, a nobleman of King Wickramabahu III who controlled Gampola, established the fort at Kotte.

Colombo's port, which was significant for foreign trade, was around six miles long and could be traded across the river from Kotte. One of the key motivations in the selection of Kotte for the construction of the fort was the ease of defending the port of Colombo, which was regularly taken by pirates. As a result, Colombo was the largest fort in use in Sri Lanka at the time.

In 1409, the then-chief of the Kotte, Weera Alakeshwara, was arrested and brought to China from Colombo after a disagreement with the Chinese general Wen Ho, who had arrived in Ceylon. Beginning in 1415 AD, Colombo was the primary port of the Kingdom of Kotte, and the taxes collected from it were a key source of money for the Kingdom of Kotte. Swamps and jungle villages surrounded the densely populated port city. Even as the Portuguese reached me in the early 16th century, the Outer Fort area was still a jungle. Elephants can also be found here. According to historical records, there were marshes in some areas, as well as broken rings in the middle. There was only one route in the Pettah area by 1505. It is also reported that the road is narrow and frequently muddy. According to legend, elephants used to travel long distances by digging big holes in the path.

02. Colombo during the Portuguese period

The arrival of the Portuguese had the greatest impact on Colombo's contemporary history. When Lorenzo de Almeida, the son of Goa's Portuguese lord, arrived in Ceylon in November 1505, Colombo was a popular port and market. At the Colombo Fort ceremony, the Portuguese symbol and cross were carved on a rock in the bay to commemorate the historic trip that began after the then-heroic King Parakramabahu VIII of Kotte committed to trade and defend Colombo. For protection, the bay's tip was named after a saint, St. Lawrence. To celebrate the capture of Colombo, a special ceremony was organized in Rome under the patronage of the then Pope. The Portuguese

designed Kolonnawa's original city plan. The initial fort was a modest wooden building covered in paint. St. Lawrence was the name of the first church established there. It also housed a warehouse. They also hired to protect the cinnamon trade in Kolonnawa from there. There were coconut groves and marshes outside the fort, as well as dwellings, roadways, and storehouses. Outside the fort, the Portuguese's usual commercial adversaries, the Arabs and the conflicted Sinhalese monarch, could not take sides for long. This was exacerbated by the fact that the Portuguese, who had established power in India, required control of the island's ports to preserve that status, protect themselves, and pursue commercial goals.

Thus, in 1517, the Portuguese commander arrived in Colombo with 17 ships and met with King Vijayabahu VII of Kotte in order to capture Gerry's advantage and let him to build a storehouse on the area. When Gerry received the skin cover and claimed ownership of it. The next deceptive strategy was to construct an artillery fortification of kabok and limestone at the mouth of the Colombo harbor overlooking the Gulf, rather than a storehouse where products, including cinnamon, might be tasted. This was known as 'St. Barbara' or 'Black Fort.' The first church in Ceylon built by a western nation was built in this fort. They dubbed it the Yanka Lawrence Church. Because of frequent skirmishes with Islamic merchants, the Portuguese launched artillery fire from this location, destroying many of their markets, homes, and lives. In this context, Colombo Fort was rebuilt between 1521 and 1524, and the defensive line was enlarged. Lapo de Buto and his forefathers, carpenters and soldiers, landed in Ceylon in 1521. Brito's goal was to build a fort wall to divide the area that is now used as a fort and a fortress. The wall was constructed of granite and was protected by a moat and a wall. When the Parangis were constructing the fort previously, they had difficulty obtaining

lime mortar. As a solution to this difficulty, the shells gathered on the shores of Arippu were transported to Kolomiko by 'Sampan' ships and burned, while lime was acquired on the ship itself.

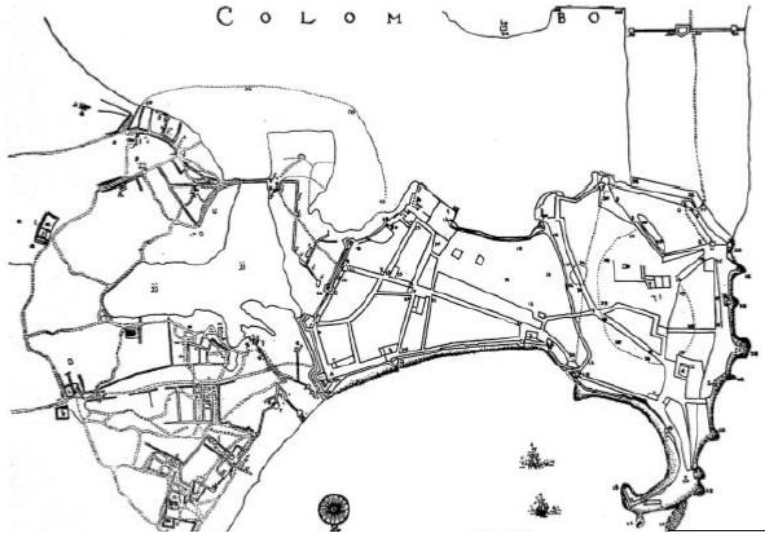


Figure 01 - Portuguese-era Colombo

The rampart was three miles long and made of stone, mud, and wood. It was triangular in shape and stretched from the Cayman Gate to the Face of Time. After a period, artillery was stationed on several sides of the fort. On the wall was also the ammo depot. Houses, stores, hospitals, churches, and a prison were built within the fort. The 'St. John' River was utilized to redirect water from the reservoir generated by the flow of water eastwards towards the sea. This was utilized to create a deep moat. As a result, the river aided in the prevention of land invasions. It ran through the location where Gaspaha Street now runs. Many conflicts had place in the Colombo area between the Portuguese and the Kingdom of Kotte. The first battle took place in Modara, Colombo, between King Mayadunne of Seethawaka and the Portuguese. The Portuguese were completely beaten after a violent battle between King

Seethawaka Rajasinghe and the Portuguese at Mulleriyawa in 1561, and approximately 125 of the 1600 Parangi warriors departing Colombo returned to the fort. From 1565, when the Portuguese abandoned Kotte due to constant raids on the fort and came to Colombo Fort with King Dharmapala for security, Colombo Fort was designated the capital. King Dharmapala's body, which died in 1595, was buried at St. Francis Church in Fort.

From 1587 to 1588, King Rajasinghe of Seethawaka encamped with a 50,000-man army in the Rajgeri and Maligawatte hills in order to capture Colombo Fort. Even after 22 months of combat, with the army and troops draining a canal from the Colombo tank, the fort could not be conquered. The Portuguese defended the fort with 237 external assault weapons, 12 forts, and six gates. King Senarath's troops besieged the Colombo Fort once more in 1630. They came through Malwana Biyagama and established camps at Kaduwela, Nakolagama, and Kotalanga. Dom Almeida's army beat the Kandyan army and drove the Portuguese out of Colombo with the support of Goa.

03. Colombo's landscape at the conclusion of the Portuguese period

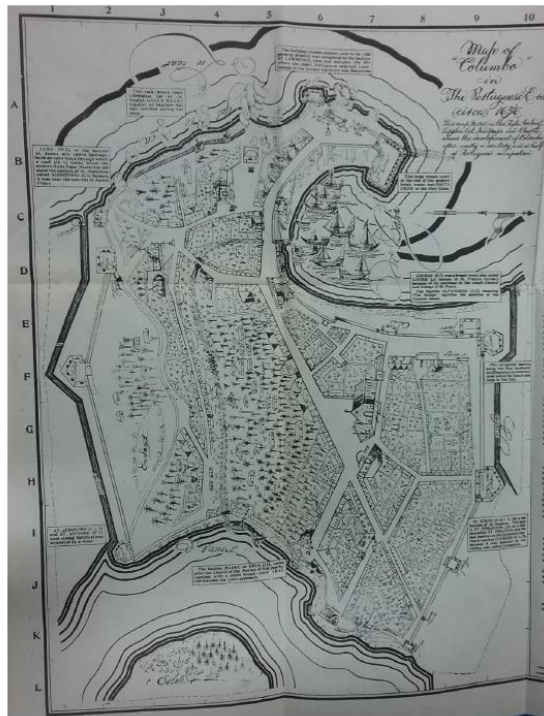


Figure 02 - 1656 Map showing the peak of the city of Colombo under the Portuguese

The paintings of 1656, which depict the peak of the city of Colombo under the Portuguese, provide a good understanding of the landscape of the time. A dozen war towers surrounded the fort at the time, each with its own rampart. It was surrounded by 10 moats. Colombo Fort was bounded on the east by a kibbutz-filled tavern and on the west by rocky rocks known as Gal Bokka. When looking at this map, the first thing that comes to mind is the large number of churches and other religious structures that are crammed into this small space. This building complex, together with the long-standing policy, is a strong monument to the Portuguese policy of spreading Catholicism.

'Rio Directo,' or Main Street, was the name of the main street in this Portuguese city. This street is the starting point for the straight street that connects the forts. It gradually grew to include a slew of stores erected around it, connecting it to the North Green Network. Today, St. Paul's Church is a short walk down this street. It is based on Corinthian architecture from the 16th century. The City Hall stood in front of this chapel. St. Dominic's Church, located near the end of the spiral to the open bay, is nearby and built-in significant Gothic style. This church was next to the Dominican convent. Adjacent to the Portuguese Governor's or Captain General's office. Near these houses, there was also a promenade. It is now known as Republic Square. The Austin Priests' Church was nearby.

St. Francis Church, dedicated to St. Francis, is located at the city's highest point, on the promenade known now as Gordon's Park. A Portuguese-era prison was eventually demolished to make way for the Police Hospital. Vidye Bandara was also imprisoned in the same facility. He escaped at the request of his son, Prince Dharmapala, by excavating a tunnel with the assistance of church priests and the deity Samudra. The oldest church in the Portuguese, St. Lawrence's Church, was positioned near the beginning of the new breakwater. The churches in the area are as follows. One of these is St. Augustine's Church. Madre de Dios, the current location of St. Philip Neri's Church, will become another church dedicated to Jesus' Mother tomorrow. The parish church and Bishop Covinci's house were also nearby. This is close to the canal leading to the Colombo Lake harbor. The convent was situated on the lake's edge.

A vast battleground was located in the eastern fort's corner. It was named St. John because it rose above the harbor. A path was indicated by the little gate next to it. It is the road that connects Kolokota to Negombo. There were two

more entrances. Putare Mapane, or Mapane Gate, was one of them. This gate also leads to a trail in the suburbs. That's the route that connects Colombo to Galle and the other forts in the south. The Put Water was the name given to the last surviving gate. It was open to the sand. It could only be penetrated by water. It stood on the site of the former passenger jetty. Even after all the other doors had been closed and the keys had been locked, this door was used. This was a unique feature of the network site. That is, only one person at a time may enter. It can also be found in the pelvic girdle. It is a technique employed to keep intruders out of the box. Furthermore, the Aroya Hall, which is located opposite to the fort wall near the network entrance, is an important remaining institution to be mentioned. The ammo stockpile was another crucial place. This warehouse was the location of the current Lake House, which was built on ground protected by a lake. According to the records, two quintals of ammunition are made here every day from lake water. The Portuguese had built a series of tiny regional units named Paris in Modara, Aduruppu Vidiya, and Grand Pass, north and east of the Kelani River, beyond the defenses, by this time. With the progressive creation of estates in these areas, retired Portuguese commanders and warlords settled. In the region now known as Jawatte, there was a well-known chapel and farm belonging to the St. Augustine cult, complete with large cottages. In the Hulftsdorp region outside the fort, a church was also built on a hill near Aduruppu Video.

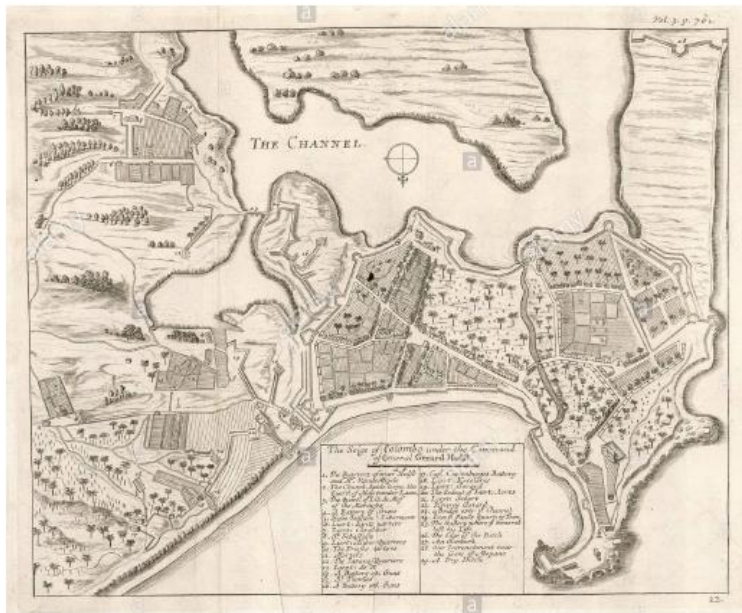


Figure 03 - Colombo under the Portuguese

04. Colombo's Dutch period

After a long and bloody fight, the Portuguese fort at Colombo surrendered to the Dutch in May 1656, thanks to King Rajasinghe II's assistance. During Dutch administration, the Portuguese churches in Colombo were destroyed. One such damaged structure is St. Francis Church. The metal bell that was installed there is supposed to have afterwards been installed on the gantry tower near the Cayman Gate. The Dutch demolished churches, governmental buildings, and dwellings in the Colombo area. The Portuguese fort of Colombo was entirely demolished, and portions of it were removed and used to build a new Dutch fort. It is estimated that it took approximately 20 years. The fort's construction was completed in 1690. This was a massive undertaking. Due to the country's affluence, the Batavian authority only

permitted the construction of the inner fort according to the original plan. Under these conditions, the Dutch fort was only one-third the size of the Portuguese fort at Colombo. It runs parallel to what is now known as Colombo Fort. The Great Sea formed its western and northern limits. The star-shaped Dutch fort had nine watchtowers. Strong fortifications added to the security. Around the fort, trenches were built and filled with water from the Cologne River and the sea.

War forts were given the names of their home cities. Lacedon, Date, and Horn were the names of the battlefields on the eastern boundary. The southern frontier battlefields were known as Rotham, Meilberg, Klippenberg, and Enquisen. Meanwhile, to the west, the battlefields of Dan Braille and Astordam were located. At Battenberg and Waterpass, two rows of cannon were built to launch an onslaught from the sea. An artillery line is a cell in which artillery is positioned against a wall. This construction lacks the distinctive shape of a battlefield. These were located outside the fort but were linked to the main fort by two rows of walled store huts. The Buffalo Plane or Buffalo Building was a desolate plain opposite the fort's eastern perimeter, also known as Carls. It's a coconut beginning. This build was used for security purposes. A sluice installed to drain the water might be used to submerge the tank. In the fort, new streets, houses, warehouses, and hospitals were constructed. The fort was expanded and

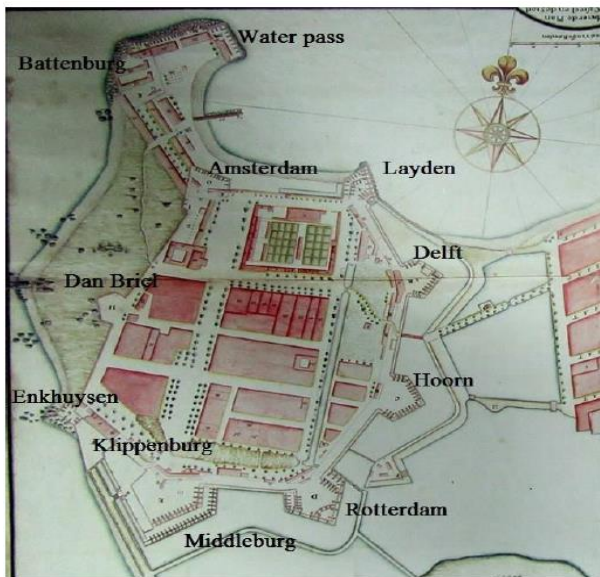


Figure 04 - Dig moats around the box and fill them

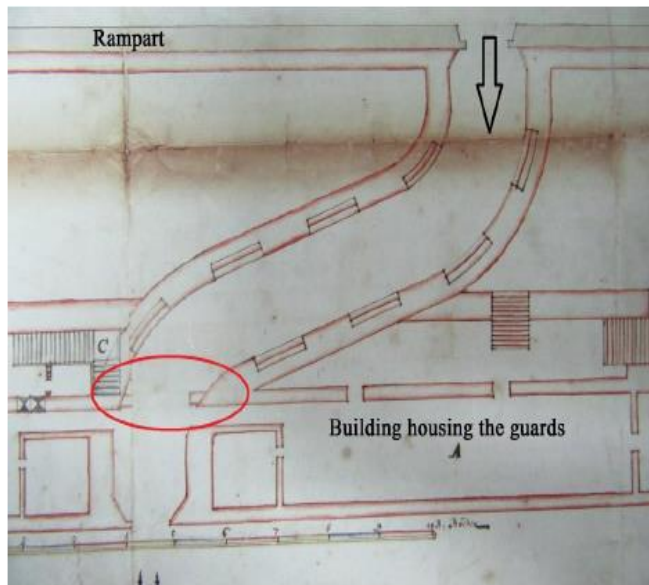
guarded while certain parts of the tank were filled by cutting the canal between Colombo Lake and the new fort. De Beer, a Dutch engineer, later became known as 'Beira Lake.'

The Dutch constructed three gates to allow access to this fort. The Delft Gate, which opens to the east, is one of them. The Galle Gate was to the south, and the Water Gate was to the north. The Deft Gate opened from the eastern ramparts between the Delta and the Horn Fortress to Pettah, the populous region. To get to the fort from Pettah, cross the movable bridge over the moat and enter through the deep gate of the tunnel, which was a tunnel through the Great Wall. In the event of an outside attack, a detour to enter the fort was used to prevent a direct attack on the fort. On either side of the gate, there were watchtowers. The Dutch defensive ring was breached, and no attacker ever entered. But it was once entered by a mysterious stranger. On November 27, 1751, around 2 a.m., a wild elephant with tusks breached the city gates and raced into the city. This episode was so significant that it was included in the official Colombo report, which documented all of the significant events that occurred in the fort. By 5 a.m., a number of persons had been forced out into the sea off Mount Rasa Point, where they had been baptized on land that protruded southwest of the breakwater. This incident also depicts the topography of Colombo at the time. This demonstrates how densely forested the city was to the north, east, and south. There were scattered communities and fields in the heart of the bush. Outside the fort, coconut was grown. Houses were typically built on the fort's edges, known as the Outer Fort. It came to an end at the Cayman Gate. There were routes leading from there to Negombo, the upcountry, and Kotte. During this time, numerous stores in Pettah were built in the Dutch style. The Dutch and Burghers erected their homes in the then-quiet districts of Modara, Mattakkuliya, and Kotahena. The Dutch built

Nfandol Church on the ruins of Francis Church in 1749. At the time, it was a prominent religious center in Colombo. Due of the difficulty of acquiring cinnamon from the uplands, the Dutch began producing cinnamon in the lowlands, and Colombo Cinnamon Hill was one such cinnamon growing region. This cinnamon estate is now distributed not only in Colombo 7, Aswattu Junction, but also in locations such as Borella and Maradana. During the Dutch period, vast coconut estates were also constructed in Colombo. Kollupitiya has a lot of coconut plantations.



*Figure 05 - War
towers in Colombo
Fort*



***Figure 6** - Plan of the Deft Gate drawn in 1690. The black arrow here indicates entry from Pettah. The red circle shows the remnants of this gate today. The curved path is clearly shown here.*

Conclusion

Colombo Fort, which had been finished by 1690, was occupied by the British in 1796 for extensive renovations. They did, however, stick to the original Dutch concept, making the necessary repairs over time. However, as the city grew for commercial interests, it was decided in 1869 to demolish parts of the fort to make way for it. Colombo Fort was completely demolished as a result of the works that took place with it, and today the remains of the fort may be seen in around seven sites. The maps and illustrations below depict these components.

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