

# A Study of the Exclusion of Devendra Mulacharya, the Royal Artist of Kandy Kingdom from Historical Monuments.

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## 1. Introduction

According to the reports, the temple of the sacred tooth relic in Kandy has now reached the first place among the most attractive places to visit in the world. *Devendra Mulacharya* is the architect of the entire Kandy kingdom, (Karunarathna 2015:3) including The *Paththirippuwa*, (also known as the Octagonal Pavilion, is a magnificent architectural structure) of this palace complex, *Walakulu Bemma* (Cloud wall), Bogambamara lake, *Diyarella Bemma* (water wave wall), *Mangul Maduwa* (assembly Hall) and frescoes. *Moolacharya* means a scholar of professional and academic value with higher competence in more than five subjects of higher value than the current 'Phd'. The five major industrial departments and other artisans of the Kingdom of Kandy worked under this *Mulacharya*. Kandy, which was one of the best cities designs in South Asia at that time, was a concept of this person. Even today, there is no memos for the designer of this building complex, which is considered as a Buddhist heritage, a tourist attraction and the crown jewel of the nation. A large group of artisans including Devendra Mulacharya built the creations of this kingdom. (Wijesundara 2004). The descendants of all these people are questioning why there is no monument even for this master craftsman. This royal artist is a special figure in the history of Kandy Kingdom as a royal engineer as well as a painter who performed a huge mission under the three kings Keerthi Sri Rajasingha (1747-1782 AD), Rajadhi Rajasingha (1782-1798 AD) and Sri Wickrama Rajasingha. All these three kings had given this royal creator the appropriate positions, power, recognition, privileges and gifts. These kings have given the most powers among all the ministers to Devendra Mulacharya who represented those royal councils. All this changed after the surrender of the Kingdom of Kandy to the British and the people of Sri Lanka who gained independence have forgotten these figures. Relatives of that generation and the common people have pointed out to the Kandy city authorities for a long time that these people who gave great value to the Kingdom of Kandy and to Sri Lanka today have been neglected. According to legend, the other officers who were jealous of Devendra slandered before the king and put him to death. (Arunasiri 2018) After his death, King Sri Wicikmara Rajasingha, who realized the reality, gave the honorable names and surnames for his family. The relatives say that there is a need for a present monument in the name of Devendra in the city of Kandy or inside the temple of the tooth relics premises where there are many monuments in the name of the English who destroyed everything in this kingdom. This study shows about this artist as well as his followers, their immortal creations, the use of them by Sri Lankans today and the damage caused to our national heritage by forgetting the artists. By adding the details of the artisans related to these historical places and the gratitude to be done to the artisans by building a commemorative plaque, the value increase and the programs to be done for that are suggested at the end of this study.

## 2. Materials and Methods

The aim of this research is to find out why Devendra Mulacharya, the royal artist of the Kandy Kingdom, has been removed from historical monuments.

This study was conducted as qualitative research that collects data through mixed methods of interviews, participant observation, field observations and content analysis. Interviews were conducted as a random sample from the current people of the Kandy art and industry generation, including the Devendra generation. There were 20 interviewees. Also, the information of the folk tales among the people was also used. After tabulating this data, the obtained information was grouped and analyzed by identifying the peculiarities. The Kandy Museum, the Dambulla Temple Museum and the villages that were given as gifts to artisans were also observed as field observations.

## 3. Results and Discussion

It is no secret that the last kings of the Kandy kingdom of Sri Lanka built a lot of temples to create great religious disturbances. There they have received the contribution of industrialists and artists. According to the caste system of the old Indian society, the kings who are recognized as three descendants of the Brahmin family (*Vishva Brahman*) who originated as the sons of *Vishwakarma*, (a craftsman deity and the divine architect of the devas in contemporary Hinduism) the craftsman generation (*Navandanna*) of this country, (Kalupahana 1930:5) have been divided into five industries in parallel. The five sons of *Vishva Karma* are Manu, Maya, Thvasthra, Shilpee and Vishvajna and their respective industries are iron, wood, brass and copper, stone and gold jewellery. (Amarasinghe 2018:46) Accordingly, the departments established by the king are called Pattals(workshops). These pattals can be identified as jewelery pattals, crown pattals, goldsmith pattals and throne pattals.(Waidyasekara 2017:4) An expert who has studied more than five subjects related to these lathes is a principal. Devendra is an expert in a wide range of disciplines such as painting, engraving, architecture and home design etc. Therefore he was appointed as the head of all the other artisans in the kingdom of Kandy. The study of Devendra's biography is also important to know what was inherited by the artistic generation of the entire Kandy state, which built Degaldoruva Vihara and other works. (Wijesundara 2002) Gifts such as Elephants, elephants, houses, lands, official residences and gifts of gold had been offered him by the kings for his great services.

Offices, uniforms, positions, tools related to the position, power, right to royal assembly etc. were the other privileges received by Devendra from the kings. In addition to these privileges there were awards, permission to build valuable houses, favor with the king, neglect in the event of a mistake, high recognition, tributes, representation in royal ceremonies, being high in caste and class. In addition to that, positions such as advisor, secretary, royal positions such as *Mohottala* of the district, *Gamlath* positions, *Muhandiram*, *Kottalbadda*, *Pattalam* stewardship could be obtained by that generation with the approval of Devendra. (Amarasinghe 2018:46) As other special privileges, the royal engineer had the right to keep the sword straight on his waist, only Devendra *Mulachari* had the opportunity to create the shape of the top of the thuppapottiya or waist-cloth of an upcountry chief, the crown designers had the opportunity to look at the king's crown head on, and the king had the ability to wear crowns and crown the royals during the coronation. With this privilege, Devendra has created many wonderful works (Jayawardena 2017:55). At the end, Devendra was killed immersing in the lake he created in a

conspiracy by the officials of the royal council (Arunasiri 2018). The need of the colonial rulers was to destroy such outstanding people in the country, so these opportunities were lost to this generation after the rule of the British Empire. The main reason for all this happening is the bureaucracy that has taken root in this country. Because of this, even today there is a big gap in the description of the Kandy Palace of the Tooth, which is one of the most valuable historical centers for the existence of this country. It also reveals the evil nature of our society.

#### 4. Conclusion

Devendra Mulacharya has rendered unique service to the Kingdom of Kandy. There is enough evidence in that regard. Devendra Mulacharya and other artisans were highly regarded by the Sinhalese kings. However, there is no mention of this designer in the city of Kandy and the temple of sacred tooth relics. There are only factors in the museums. Not because of the request of the family of Devendra but as a nation it is a duty to maintain the memorial of this royal artist. People are of the opinion that there will be no opportunity to build the memorial for Devendra due to bureaucracy even in today. It can be suggested that the attention of the public sector, non-governmental organizations, artists associations, Kandy city authorities, researchers and the UNESCO organization to justify the name of this great person. This situation deserves to be recognized as an important part of intangible cultural heritage. Insults caused by articles written by some people without knowing the proper facts about this person should be avoided. (Karunarathna 2018)

#### 5. Keywords

Bureaucracy, Devendra, Mulacharya, Relics

#### 6. References

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