

Foreign Influences in Costumes of Ancient Sri Lankan Kandyan Era.

Nimal de Silva ¹, G.M. Ranathunga²

Kandyan era is the period during which most foreign influences came to Sri Lanka within a short period of time, namely Tamil, Western (Portuguese, Dutch, British) and Indonesian. This has caused a huge impact on Sri Lankan society in every aspect. The changes that occurred on Sri Lankan dress by these influences is not small. Although the evolution of Sri Lankan dress is not prominent during other kingdoms there was a drastic change of evolution in costume in this period because of this ample foreign influences. This drastic change in costume denotes the radical changes occurring in Sri Lankan society.

Plenty of foreign influences are reflected in the costume of the king because of the abundance of direct communication through diplomats.

This paper is based on a study of the foreign influences of the dress of the Sri Lankan King in wall paintings, statues, inscriptions, and a review of ancient literature. Studying the above elements gives a good reflection of ancient costumes and their changes.

Keywords: costumes, Kandyan era, foreign influences

¹ Faculty of Architecture, University of Moratuwa

² Dept. of Textile and Clothing, University of Moratuwa

Email: gayathri@textile.mrt.ac.lk