

The Geography of the Kandy Region

INTRODUCTION

THE consideration that the Kandy area is a geographical region means, that it should differ from the surrounding areas in significant aspects of its geography, and further, within it, the region should exhibit a uniformity of the geographic elements. This, however, does not mean that there will be an agreement among the totality of geographic phenomena; but, that there should be a correspondence between some of the elements, the greater the correspondence, the greater is the validity of the existence of the region.

Different writers on the island's geography, have recognized the existence of a region around Kandy based on various criteria. These are Relief,¹ Relief and Rainfall,² Temperature and Rainfall,³ Morphology⁴ in terms of flats and slopes, and Human Occupance.⁵ However, in none of these attempts is the Kandy region exactly delineated and boundaries assigned. As in all these works the island, as a whole, has been the subject of study, attention paid to a small unit as the Kandy region is quite meagre.

An analysis of each of the factors in the geography of the area around Kandy shows that a regional demarcation could be established on the basis of four main criteria. These are (1) Relief, an analysis in terms of the degree of slope, (2) the traditional agricultural system, that forms the crux of the region's economy and the innovations introduced into this system, as a result of Western influence, (3) the pattern of Rural Settlement, resulting from the prevalence of this agricultural system, and (4) Human History in the matter of settlement.

A delimitation with respect to the first three criteria is proposed. The fourth criterion cannot be used to establish a delimitation. This region, being the main nucleus of Kandyan Civilisation, was the heart of the

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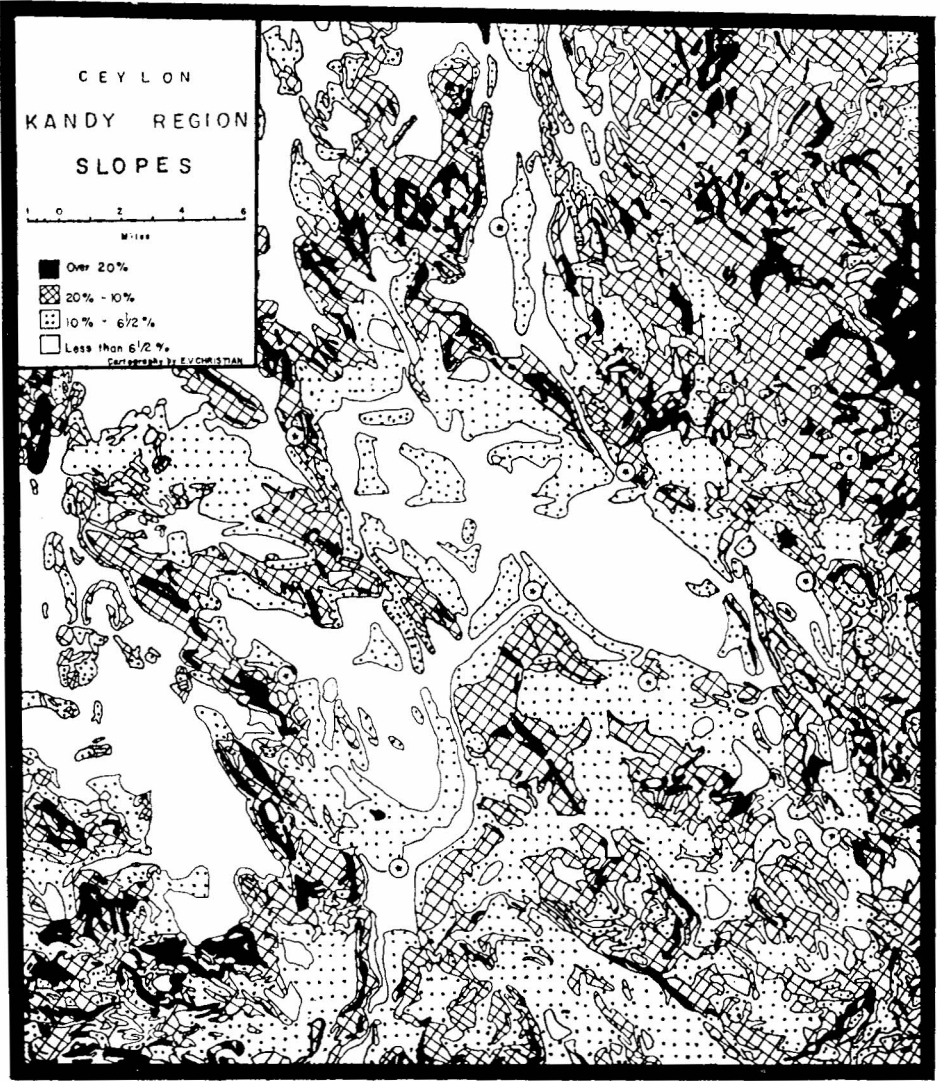


FIG. 1

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Kandyan Kingdom, the boundaries of which were quite ill defined, and varied considerably with the relative strength and weakness of the ruling Kings. The general coincidence of the three delimitations (though of course variations do exist, which could easily be explained) justifies the recognition of this area, as a geographical region. Within this unity of the region, however, there is diversity in both the physical and human geography. These diversities are minor and explainable, and do not detract from the essential unity of the region.

Geology

(a) *Lithology*

The rocks of the Kandy area belong to the Archean era. The three chief types are the Khondalites, Charnockites and the Gneisses. The lack of sufficient detail in the existing geological maps and the absence of an established geological succession, prevent the recognition of criteria, sufficient to facilitate the regional demarcation of this area.

(b) *Structure*

The Kandy area forms a part of the central synclinorium of the island. Evidence of Archean folding is seen in a well marked system of anticlines and synclines. The structural affinities and differences of the various parts of this synclinorium are not known with any degree of certainty. Hence this element is of little use in an attempt to establish a geographical region.

Relief

An analysis of the land forms of the Central Highlands, on a more detailed scale than had hitherto been done could be attempted by a consideration of the degree of slope. The application of this method to the area around Kandy, shows significant differences in pattern, which could be utilised to facilitate regional demarcation.

Figure (1) shows the relative degree of slope of the area around Kandy. The slope categories used 20%, 10% and $6\frac{1}{2}\%$ were chosen as much for convenience as for any other reason. Since the primary purpose of this work is to demarcate a specific slope region around Kandy, slopes steeper than 20% have not been distinguished.

Slopes of less than $6\frac{1}{2}\%$ extend for considerable distances around Kandy, stretching north, east and southwestwards. This area of relatively gentle

slopes is bounded by declivities ranging from 10% to 6½% which in turn give place to much steeper slopes, 20%—10% and over 20%.

This analysis facilitates the recognition of an area of relatively gentle slopes extending for fairly wide stretches around Kandy, corresponding to variations from 10% to 6½% and less than 6½%. This area seems to be broadest north of Kandy. It extends southwards and southeastwards in two limbs of irregular outline. The south-eastern limb constitutes the largest stretch of area with a uniform declivity of less than 6½%, elsewhere over the region, areas between 10% to 6½% alternate with those less than 6½%, with the only exception of a narrow area west of Kandy, with a higher degree of slope, between 20% to 10%, corresponding to a steep ridge, the Gannoruwa ridge. This area of relatively gentle slopes corresponds in a general way to the Kandy Plateau.

The relatively steep slopes (those ranging from 20% to 10% and over 20%) to be found around this region of gentle slopes, are quite extensive over a broad stretch to the south and north-east of Kandy. South of Kandy, is found an area of irregular relief, consisting of a series of spurs and ridges jutting outwards from the main Piduru ridges, and towards the north-east is the Knuckles range. Uniformly steep slopes are more continuous over the Knuckles range, whilst in the Piduru ridges area, stretches of river basins with a lower degree of slope are found interspersed within the spurs and ridges. North of Kandy, steep slopes are of limited development, confined to those over the Guruluhela ridge, beyond which once again is seen an area similar in degree of slope to that around Kandy, the Matala Valley. Further west, these steep declivities are of wider extent in the Matala hills region. Westwards, areas with a high degree of slope are of quite a narrow extent, though showing the development of an outward facing escarpment, which is quite well marked in the south-west, that of the Kadugannawa-Alagalla range. Beyond this escarpment, gentle slopes characteristic of the lowlands are seen. In the extreme south-west the belt of steep slopes expands into a fairly extensive area, the Dolosbage hills region. Southwards the slopes increase in steepness towards the Nawalapitiya-Hatton area.

The nature of the slopes is an indication of the evolutionary sequence of landscape. Gentle slopes generally indicate mature stages in land form development, whereas steep slopes depict the early phases. Thus on this basis, it is possible to establish an area of relatively mature topography

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around Kandy. The boundary of this region could be tentatively fixed where slopes of the order of 10% to 6½% give place to those varying from 20% to 10% (Fig. 8).

The present relief of this area of mature topography could aptly be described as one of the "deniya-duwa" type, representing closely compact hills separated by a grid-iron valley system. Structural characteristics and differences in rock resistivity may have played a significant part in the evolution of this landscape. The "duwas" represent the residual features, being either products of differential erosion or accidents of circum-denudation. Practically most of these hills owe their prominence to the relatively resistant rocks that constitute them, being either intrusive Charnokites or the more resistant members of the Khondalite system, as the quartzites. The valleys occupy the more argillaceous and calcareous bands of the Khondalites. The tops of these "duwas" ascend to a general level of about 1,500—1,800 ft. from which rise the residual peaks and crests to an altitude of about 2,000 ft. A feature that interrupts the above pattern, though, however only to a small extent, is the sharp ridges rising out of the general surface level, almost in steep sides. Quite prominent among which are the NW-SE trending Gannoruwa and Ankumbura ridges, amidst the many more unnamed ones.

This characteristic relief however, is not uniformly well developed everywhere, regional variations being present. It is best seen in the northern part of this region, the area drained by the Ping Oya and its tributaries. This area depicts the pattern at its best in the small closely packed hills separated by narrow and deep defiles. The eastern and south-eastern parts reveal this only to a small extent, as the dissection of the landscape is limited, as is seen by the presence of considerable tracts of gently sloping stretches. In the western and south-western parts, this dissection is much more pronounced than in the east and south-east. These variations could be attributed among other causes to differences in the character of the bed rock, since the forces of erosion seem to work with equal efficiency everywhere.

Drainage

The Kandy area is drained by the upper reaches of the Mahaweli Ganga and its tributaries. Over the greater part of the area with the "deniya-duwa" relief, particularly in the north, the drainage pattern is rectangular or trellis. This drainage pattern seems to be determined by the underlying structure. It has been observed in the field, that the general align-

ment of the rocks is NNW-SSE. The joint planes of the granitic intrusions (that are widespread in this region) being at right angles to this direction, the drainage assumes a trellis pattern. Elsewhere the impermeable character of the crystalline rocks and the heavy run-off due to the high rainfall and steep slopes, have led to the development of a dendritic drainage pattern.

Differences in texture or in pattern of drainage, if manifested over sufficiently large areas could profitably be used for regional demarcation. The lack of emphasis of these features in this area, sets limitations on their use as criteria for the recognition of natural regions.

Climate

In the absence of recorded temperature statistics for a network of stations in the area around Kandy there is no possibility of recognising any patterns in the distribution of this element. Hence temperature cannot be used as a factor in the regional demarcation of this area.

The study of the distribution of average annual rainfall of this area, brings out patterns based on which a rainfall region cannot be recognised as the run of the isoheights is NW-SE throughout the area. Nor does an analysis of the rainfall regimes of the recording stations of the area permit the use of this factor as a possible criterion.

Thus, climate cannot be considered a useful factor in an attempt to establish a regional entity.

Natural Vegetation

The Kandy area falls within the Wet Evergreen Forest Climax.⁶ The presence of only the relicts of the original cover of natural vegetation found in this area prevents the use of this factor as a criterion in regional demarcation.

Soils

On the basis of the existing classification,⁷ the soils of the Kandy area fall within four types :

- (1) Reddish to Yellow Red Lateritic Loams, (2) Brownish Red Loams,
- (3) Paddy Soils and (4) Patana soils.

6. De Rosayro, R. A. "The Soils and Ecology of the Wet Evergreen Forests of Ceylon." *Tropical Agriculturist*, Vol. XCVIII Jan.-Decem. 1942).

7. Joachim, A. W. R. "A Review of Progress in the study of the Soils of Ceylon." *Proceedings of the First Annual Session of the Ceylon Association for the Advancement of Science*. Pt. 3, (1945).

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From recent information obtained from the Government Department of Agriculture, and observations in the field, a simplified classification of the soils of this region is proposed (Vide Table). This is primarily intended to show the influence of such factors as lithology and topography on soil formation and also to show the significance of soils to human land use.

CLASSIFICATION OF THE SOILS IN THE KANDY REGION

<i>History</i>	<i>Parent Materials</i>	<i>Slope</i>	<i>Cultural Modifications</i>	<i>Use</i>
A. Residual	1. Quartzitic and associated rocks Khondalite Series	(a) High	Erosion	Tea
		(b) Medium	Addition of humus	Cocoa
(c) Medium to Low		Long Cultivation	Coconut and Rubber	
(d) Low		Long Cultivation	Village Gardens	
	2. Crystalline Limestones	Low	Long Cultivation	Village Gardens
B. Transported	Varies	Flat	Aswedumized	Paddy

These studies reveal that the soils of this region are known only in general terms and in major types, which reveal insufficient detail to discern patterns of distribution, on the basis of which, regional demarcation could be made. Hence a region based on differences of soil types cannot be established at present.

Settlement and History

Of the three original nuclei of settlement that were established in the Central Highlands with the decline of the Dry Zone, the one around Kandy grew in course of time to be the most populous. This area thus was the chief centre of the distinctive Kandyan Civilization, that evolved in this mountain environment.

This nucleus of settlement around Kandy was the core of the Kandyan Kingdom, which grew up with the break up of the Dry Zone Kingdoms. The extent of this Kingdom varied with the times and depended on the strength and weakness of its rulers. There is very little evidence with regard to the historical boundaries of this Kingdom. These, even if they existed were ill defined.

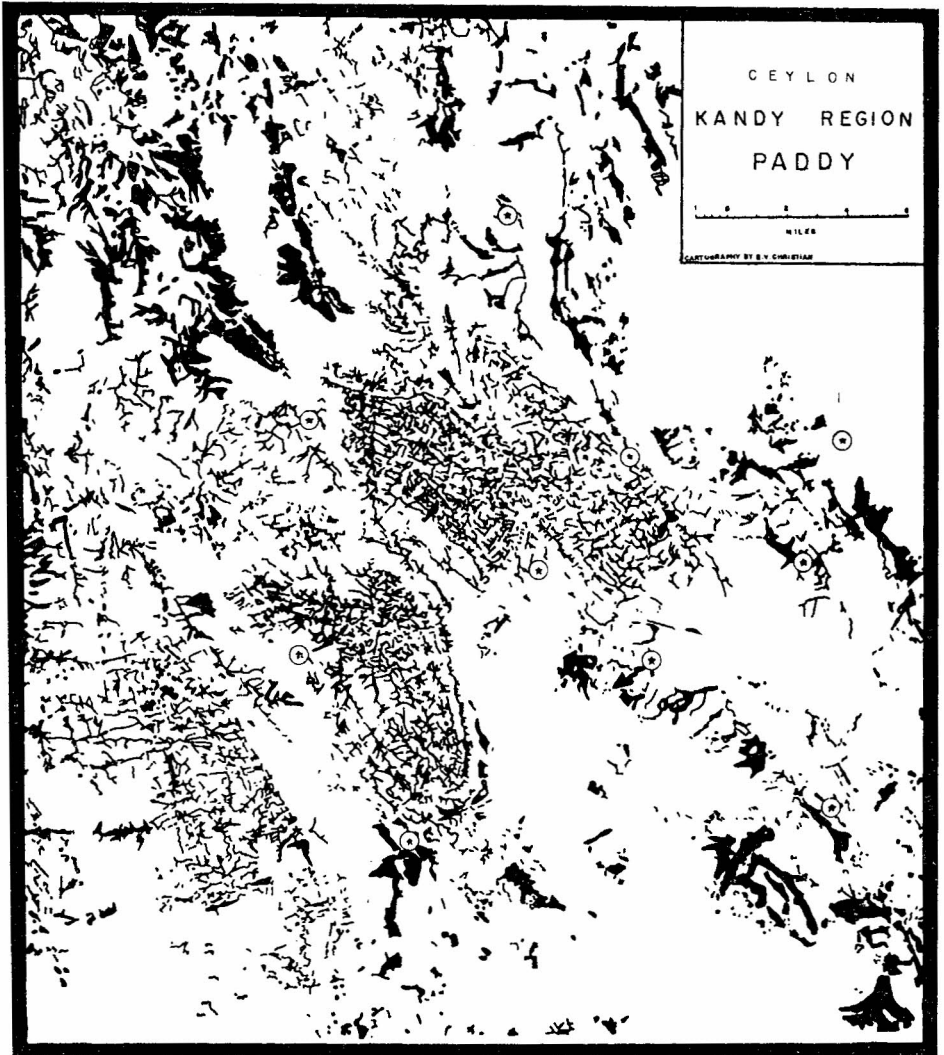


FIG. 2

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The long resistance that this part of the island offered to foreign conquest, delayed considerably the impact of Western Civilization and helped to maintain intact the traditional Kandyan Civilization. Even after the conquest in 1815, the Kandyans still remain distinct from the other communities of the island, clinging tenaciously to their traditional civilization and culture.

It is apparent that the area around Kandy is distinctive both as the nucleus of Kandyan Civilization as well as that of the Kandyan Kingdom. Although history has differentiated the Kandyans from the rest of the Sinhalese, the area encompassed by the Kandyan Kingdom is larger than the Kandy region.

Much that is distinctive in Kandyan agriculture⁸ marks the Kandy region. Yet too many extraneous elements have been introduced to make historical differences wholly satisfactory criteria.

Agriculture

During the Kandyan period a well developed agricultural system was prevalent in the settled parts of the highlands. Since the population was organised in small, independent and practically self-sufficing units, "gama" or village, agriculture too was carried on, on this basis.

The central and most valuable nucleus of the village was considered to be the area cultivated with paddy, the "mada-bima" or the "deniya." The fields usually occupied the alluvial bottoms of the valleys that run between the mountain ranges, ridges and hills. Since the availability of such land was limited, fields were also carved out of the highland declivities, arranged in terraces.

An appurtenance, "aduttu deval" was attached to the paddy area of every village, which consisted of highland tracts, the "duwas", above the areas devoted to paddy. The highlands consisted of gardens, "vatu" and chenas, "hen." The gardens were situated on the lower slopes, adjacent to the paddy areas and were mainly used for the cultivation of a few coconut trees, vegetables, betel and arecanut trees. On the higher slopes above the gardens were the chena or the "hen" region. These were forested areas where shifting cultivation was practised. Usually a mixed crop consisting of hill paddy or "alvi," mustard, "meneri," "mun" etc. were sown together. The highland forests also supplied the village needs of firewood, pasture, honey and game.

8. This aspect is considered in the following section.



FIG. 3

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Thus the fundamental characteristic of the Kandyan agricultural system was the cultivation of both lowland, "deniya" and highland, "duwa," which was considered complementary and inseparable as it supplied the needs of a self-sufficing village economy in everything except a few items, as salt and clothing.

On to this basic pattern was superimposed plantation agriculture, after the British occupation of the Kandyan Kingdom in 1815.

More recently due to the growth of population, the development of communications and the rise of urban centres, commercial vegetable and tobacco cultivation is being practised by the peasants on a fairly extensive scale in certain parts.

Paddy cultivation which is the chief agricultural pursuit of the Kandyan peasantry is widely distributed in the area around Kandy. (Fig. 2). The area devoted to paddy in the Kandy region is generally found to fall within the slope categories of 10-6½% and less than 6½%. There is a general absence of paddy in the areas of relatively steep slopes, from 20-10% and beyond 20%. These areas characterised by a lack of level land, do not at the same time provide facilities for terracing.

The general pattern of the distribution of paddy land reveals two striking features. Over the larger part of the region, in the central tracts and the western and south-western parts, the paddy fields are of small areal extent and tend to follow a general rectangular pattern. Elsewhere over the region they occupy much larger areas, in fairly continuous and broad stretches, with no regular alignment, as in the former areas. These features could be explained with reference to the dissection of the country by streams, with a trellis and a dendritic pattern, over the two sets of regions respectively.

Commercial cultivation of vegetables, as a rotational crop in paddy fields, is a recent development in the Kandy area. It is generally confined to the east and south-east of Kandy, as far as about Teldeniya and Hangu-ranketa, including the Talatu Oya region.

Fig. 3 shows the distribution of village gardens and other cultivations in the Kandy area. The areal distribution of these show a marked correspondence in pattern to the distribution of paddy.



FIG. 4

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Of late, tobacco cultivation is being practised by the peasants in certain parts of the area around Kandy. It is confined to parts of the Dumbara valley, (the most important region being around Mailapitiya) and to the Hanguranketa and Matala areas. This crop thrives on the gentle highland slopes of the above mentioned areas, where the heavy loamy soils associated with the crystalline limestones, favour their growth.

Another aspect of peasant agriculture in this region is the cultivation of plantation crops, tea, rubber and cocoa in small holdings, varying in size, usually from 1 to 20 acres.

Cultivation of tea in the area around Kandy is confined to the relatively steep slopes, ranging from 20-10% and over 20%. (Fig. 4). These areas are situated usually over about 2,000 ft. and the best areas are above 3,000 ft.

The most important tea growing areas in this region, thus, are the Dolosbage hills region, the Nawalapitiya-Ulapanne area and the Knuckles range region. In the Kadugannawa, Gampola, Wattagama and Matala areas, small holdings cultivated by the peasants are widespread.

In the Kandy area, the outer slopes on the north, west and south-west are the regions which show a wide distribution of rubber as indicated in Fig. 5. Elsewhere cultivation is sporadic. In general, the rubber plant is cultivated on slopes gentler than those devoted to tea, 10-6½% and on the upper parts of those with less than 6½%. Rubber production in many estates has been found to be uneconomic and large stretches of derelict rubber are a frequent sight. Many of the rubber estates, in this area have, hence, been converted into mixed plantations with cocoa, coconut, kapok and pepper, with only a few stretches of replanted budded rubber. In the extreme south-west of the area, where conditions are similar to those of the south-western lowlands, replanting of budded rubber alone, has met with success.

Cocoa cultivation in the Kandy area is confined to the sheltered Dumbara, Ping Oya and Matala valleys. Here large estates where cocoa is usually interplanted with coconut and less frequently with rubber, are to be found. The peasants too have devoted a considerable part of their gardens and small highland holdings in these areas, to the cultivation of cocoa.

The coconut palm, which constituted an essential ingredient of village garden cultivation since the early Kandyan times, has more recently been



FIG. 5

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planted systematically in estates in this region. Two distinct areas could be recognised here. (Fig. 6). The area to the extreme north-west is an outer part of the much wider south-western coastal belt. The second area is to the east and south-east of Kandy encompassed, though not completely, by Kandy, Talatu Oya, Hanguranketa and Teldeniya. Coconut cultivation is practised on the medium to gentle slopes of these regions with their light loamy gravels and sandy soils.

The above study of the agriculture of the Kandy area, based chiefly on the crop patterns, reveals the existence of a region around Kandy, possessing a distinct agricultural system and at the same time offering a contrast to the surrounding areas.

The essential basis of the agricultural system of this region, is the traditional Kandyan agriculture, with its dominant characteristic, the cultivation of both lowland and highland, "deniya and duwa." Though alien elements as plantation agriculture and the commercialisation of peasant agriculture have been superimposed on this basic framework, and to a certain extent, have even modified it, yet its essential trait, the closely associated "deniya-duwa" cultivation, stands out. This region which is quite broad north of Kandy, stretches out in two limbs, towards the southwest and southeast.

On the south and south-east of the Kandy region, is an area with a different agricultural system, one dominated by the monoculture of tea. On the south-west, the crop pattern is one of paddy, village gardens and rubber. Though this pattern affords a certain similarity to the agriculture of the Kandy region, it is essentially related to the agricultural set up of the lowlands, to the south-west of the island, into which it grades. Similarly, the area to the north-west of the Kandy region shows the same pattern, as that of the south-west, with the addition of coconut and thus reveals a kinship to the agriculture of the north-western lowlands of the island. In the north, an area dominated by rubber and cocoa, paddy and village gardens being of lesser importance, is to be found. This is the Matale Valley, a distinct nucleus of early settlement of the hill country. The Knuckles area to the north-east constituting one vast tea garden, provides an entirely different picture. On the east the change over is gradual, Kandyan agriculture showing signs of deterioration, and gradually giving an important place to chena cultivation. This feature is due chiefly to the influence of diminishing rainfall.

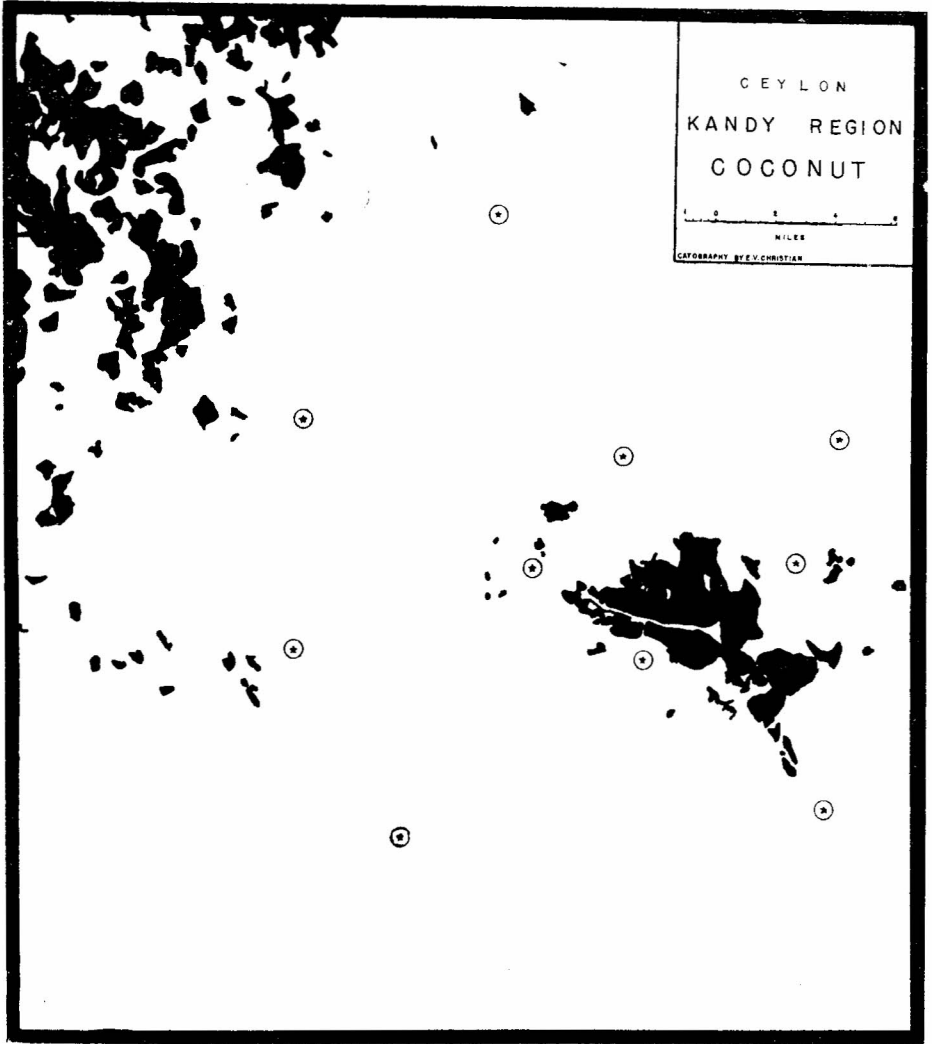


FIG. 6

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A tentative boundary between the Kandyan agricultural region and the surrounding areas could be established on the basis of these differences. (Fig. 8).

Within this unity imposed on this region by the dominance of "deniya-duwa" cultivation, is found a certain amount of diversity, brought about by the introduction of later features and hence a recognition of sub-regions within this major region is possible.

1. West South West "Deniya Duwa," Tea Region.

Kandyan agriculture is dominant in this region. However a considerable extent of tea, in both plantations and in small holdings is to be found. The little rubber found here is in a derelict state.

2. North Central "Deniya-Duwa," Cocoa Region.

3. Northern Tea Region.

On the lower slopes of the Matale hills, tea is more important than village agriculture. This feature may be due to the rather steep slopes of this area.

4. North East "Deniya-Duwa" Region.

5. East Central Coconut, Cocoa, "Deniya-Duwa" Region.

6. South East "Deniya-Duwa," Commercial Vegetable and Tobacco Region.

Though variations from the dominant pattern are found, everywhere the "deniya-duwa" cultivation occupies a fundamentally important position in the agricultural framework; thereby, the unity of the region is not impaired in any way.

Industry

The recent developments of modern industry in the island have not pervaded the Kandy region. However quite distinctive are the traditional cottage industries found in scattered Kandyan villages practised since early times by generations of skilled craftsmen. These crafts represent the

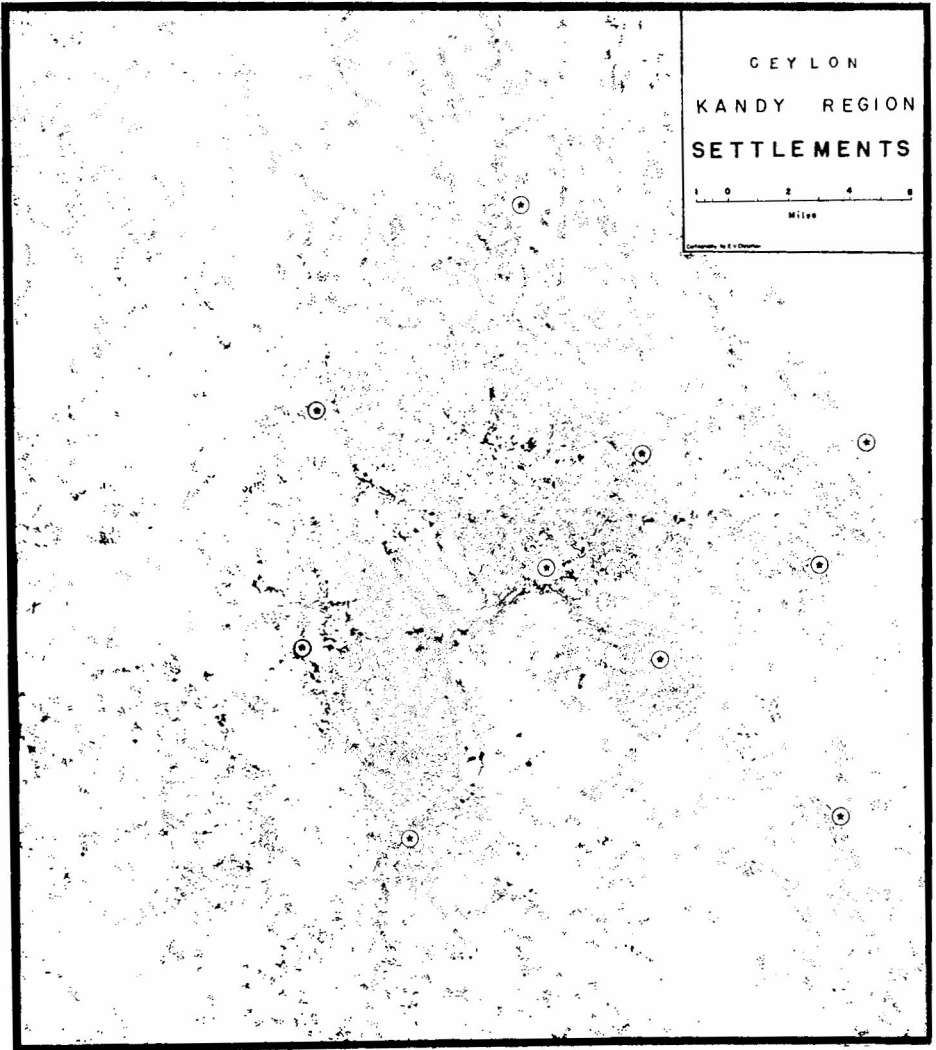


FIG. 7

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surviving remnants of an important aspect of Kandyan culture. Their presence gives a certain amount of distinction to the Kandy area. However, these cottage industries are so few and their distribution so much confined to a few villages, that, they do not constitute a criterion of sufficient importance to facilitate a regional demarcation.

Population

Fig. 7, which shows the distribution of buildings, as plotted on the Ceylon Survey 1 inch to 1 mile maps, facilitates the study of the broad patterns of rural settlement, as each family usually occupies a separate building.

Over an irregular area (almost butterfly-shaped) around Kandy, a close spread of rural settlement could be noticed. This area is quite broad close to Kandy with a considerable west-east extension. It gradually narrows towards the north of Kandy as far as about Matale. South of Kandy this area stretches in two fairly broad wings, the more westerly one extending down as far as about Gampola, the other to the southeast centred around Talatu Oya.

The relatively dense rural settlement of this area, may be due to the longer occupation of this region by man (being the kernel of Kandyan civilization) and to the dominance of Kandyan agriculture (Highland-Lowland agriculture pervades almost the entire region). The settlements are usually situated on dry land above the paddy areas. The area of relatively dense rural settlement is surrounded all round, by regions, where rural settlements are less dense and unevenly spread. A tentative boundary could be set forth to define this region (Fig. 8).

The close spread of rural settlement is not found with equal emphasis everywhere within the Kandy region. Its development is weakened over the areas of relatively steep slopes characteristic of the ridges, rising out of the general level, which have been avoided by the Kandyan peasants. The extreme north of the area constituting the outer slopes of the Matale hills, also provides an exception to the general pattern. This area is devoted largely to tea, with a few large estates and many small holdings. Hence, the pattern of rural settlement is not as closely spread as in the areas further south, on account of this dominance of tea culture over Kandyan agriculture.

However the distinctive pattern of rural settlement of the Kandy area, as opposed to that of the surrounding regions stands out quite prominently. Hence the recognition of the Kandy area as a definite human region is justifiable.

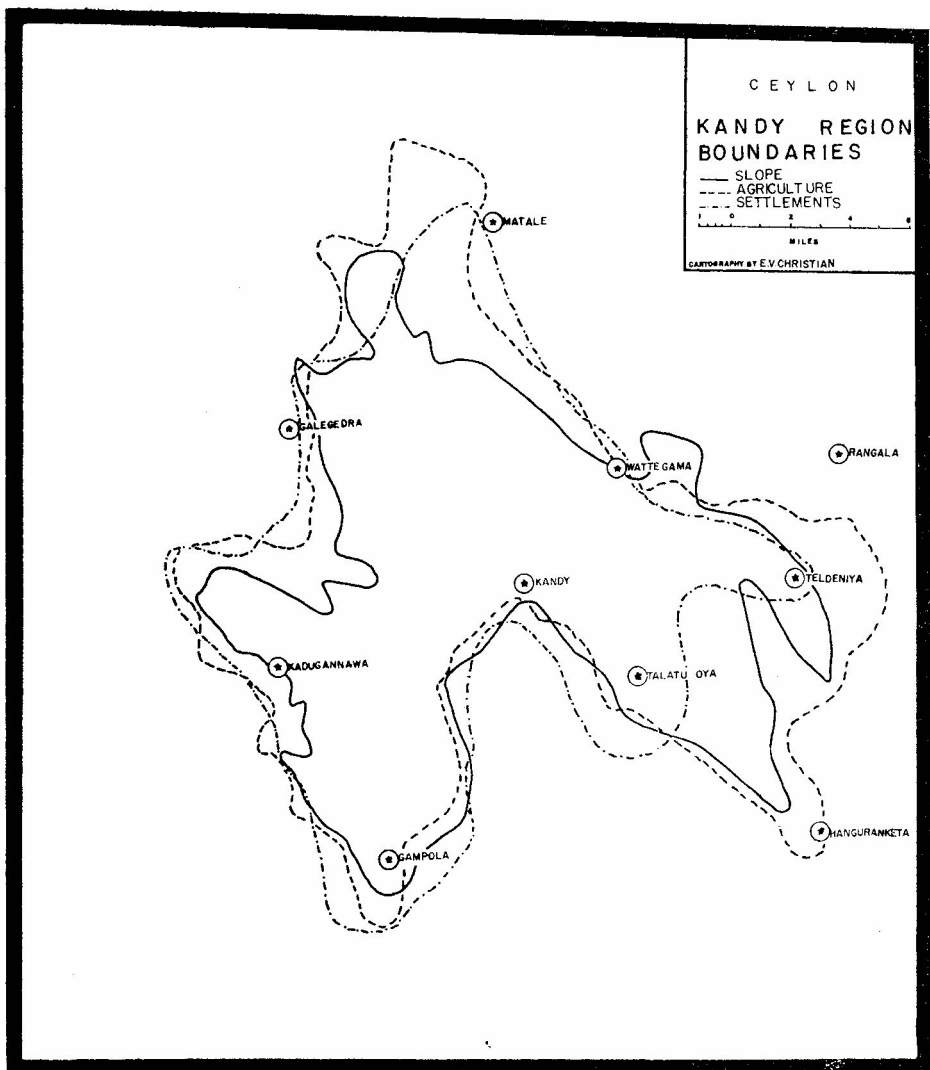


FIG. 8

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Conclusion

The boundaries of the Kandy region on the basis of slope, agriculture and settlement seem to show a general agreement (Fig. 8). However certain variations do exist but satisfactory explanation could be offered to these.

In the north, it is seen that the boundary on the basis of agriculture extends over a larger area than the other two. Further, there is also a discrepancy between the slope and settlement boundaries.

The relatively steeper slopes of the Matale hills region have been devoted to the cultivation of tea, both on an estate and small holdings scale. This tea region as seen earlier, forms a part of the Kandy agricultural region. The occupance of this region has not been much favoured by the Kandyan peasants on account of the little opportunity offered to the practice of traditional agriculture. Hence, rural settlements are not closely spread. The close settlement pattern of the area of gentle slopes on the east, appears to be more a part of the region further to the north-west than of the Kandy region. This settlement pattern spreads over the quite steep slopes of the Guruluhela ridge to the south-western parts of the Matale valley. The slopes and relief of the Guruluhela area, though different from those of the Kandy region, do not set much of an obstacle to human activity.

Near Teldeniya, the agricultural boundary covers a greater area to the north-east and east of the other two boundaries which appear to have a close agreement.

Though the typically Kandyan agriculture extends into this tract, it is a marginal area from where the importance of this agricultural system diminishes outwards. It is an area of relatively steeper slopes, hence, level land available for paddy cultivation is limited, and further, insufficient supplies of water hinder agriculture. Chenas are more widespread here than in any other part of the Kandy region. These features explain the less dense rural settlement of this area and its exclusion from the settlement region.

South of Teldeniya, there appears to be a disparity in the boundaries ; the slope and agricultural regions extend much further outwards than the settlement region.

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The outward extensions of these two boundaries are across a region of gentle slopes, (the continuity of which however is broken by the presence of a steep-sided ridge) devoted to coconut plantations for a considerable time, and close to Hanguranketa, developed of late with commercial vegetable and tobacco cultivation. Hence, in such an area, the typically Kandyan pattern of closely spaced rural settlement is not to be found.

In the vicinity of Talatu Oya and Kandy, it is seen that the settlement region extends further outwards from the limits of the slope and agricultural regions.

The high pressure of population on land in these areas close to the urban centres is forcing the spread of the settlements outwards, to the regions of higher elevation which alone are available for development. The same feature is to be noticed in the area around Gampola.

The only other discrepancy in the boundaries is to be found to the south of Galagedera. In this area, the agricultural and settlement boundaries which run close to each other enclose an area outside the slope region, (i.e. a part of the escarpment to the west of Kandy).

This area devoted to tea, a few estates and quite as many small holdings, the settlement pattern has assumed a dense character, probably on account of the pressure of population in the Udunuwara and Yatinuwara villages, and, hence, the expansion to the outskirts.

Thus, it is seen that the above-considered variations in the boundaries, do not impair the essential unity of the Kandy Region as a geographical entity.

The Kandy region is distinct from the surrounding areas from the point of view of relief. An area of relatively gentle slopes extends for a considerable distance around Kandy. This region is bordered on all sides by relatively steeper declivities. The landscape of this area of gentle slopes is in the mature stages of evolution. An intricate network of streams with a largely trellis-pattern of drainage has dissected this area into a relief of closely compact hills, separated by a grid-iron valley system, "deniya-duwa" topography, which gives a high degree of distinction to this region.

Being an area closely protected by hills and steep slopes on all sides, this region was the kernel of the Kandyan Kingdom. It was also the chief nucleus of Kandyan Civilization, some distinctive features of which are maintained to this day.

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The most remarkable feature of Kandyan Civilization is the Highland-Lowland system of agriculture. Despite the advent of alien influences, this agricultural system is still dominant in this area. This dominance gives a unique distinction to this region.

The predominance of this agricultural system has given rise to a distinct pattern of closely spaced rural settlement, which adds to the regional unity of this area.

Thus the close correspondence and correlation of physical, economic and human factors justify the consideration of the area around Kandy as a distinct Geographical region.

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