

“Bred up under Our Roofs”: Domestic Slavery in Ceylon, 1760-1834¹

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Introduction: a manumission agenda from 1816.

Early in August 1834, Sir Alexander Johnston, the former Chief Justice of Ceylon (Sri Lanka), tried to interest the British government in helping to erect a monument in Colombo to commemorate “certain numerous slave proprietors” who had agreed in July 1816 to declare all children born to their slaves after August 12th that year as free.² In his reply to Sir Alexander, Thomas Spring Rice, the Secretary of State for War and the Colonies, observed that while “it would be impossible either to forget such an act of benevolence, or to undervalue it as a measure of mercy by which an end was put to the existence of slavery in Ceylon,” the passage of time had rendered the erection of such a monument as unnecessary and inexpedient.³ Had it been constructed, this monument possibly would have recorded the names of the 763 individuals who signed an address to the prince regent, the future George IV, announcing their decision to emancipate all children born to their domestic slaves after the prince regent’s birthday on August 12th, 1816.⁴

Table A: List of [Ceylonese] Subscribers to the Address to His Royal Highness the Prince Regent for Emancipating Children born of Slaves after the 12th of August 1816.

COLOMBO:			JA-ELA:		
Dutch Inhabitants and Burghers	110		Jayelle Cingalese	73	
Vellales	38				
Fisher Caste	17		CHILAW:		
Washer Caste	24		Malabars	3	

¹ This article was originally presented at the international workshop “Slavery in the Indian Ocean World,” Centre for Concurrences and Postcolonial Studies (Växjö-Kalmar) and International Institute for Social History (IISH, Amsterdam), Kalmar, 9 September 2017, hosted by Hans Hägerdal (University of Linnaeus, Sweden) and Matthias van Rossum (IISH).

² “Copy of a letter from Sir Alexander Johnston to Mr. Secretary Spring Rice, 7 August 1834,” in *Return to an address of the Honourable The House of Commons dated 1 March 1838; for copies and abstracts of all communications relating to the subject of slavery in the Island of Ceylon, and to the measures there taken for its abolition* (hereafter *Return*), (London: The House of Commons, 1838), 613-614.

³ “Copy of a letter from Mr. Secretary Spring Rice to Sir Alexander Johnston, 16 September 1834,” *Return*, 615.

⁴ “List of subscribers to the Address to His Royal Highness the Prince Regent for emancipating Children born of Slaves after the 12th of August 1816, c. 31 July 1816,” *Return*, 575-78.

Mahabadde	20		Moors	2	
Malabars	30		<u>total Chilaw</u>		5
Moors	32				
total Colombo		271	MANNAR:		
			Dutch Inhabitants and Burghers	11	
NEGOMBO:			Chitteis	17	
Dutch Inhabitants and Burghers	17		Mooman	1	
Cingalese	74		Total Mannar		29
Negombo Cingalese	57				
Malabars	9		JAFFNA:		
Moors	4		Dutch Inhabitants and Burghers	19	
total Negombo		161	Moors	2	
			total Jaffna		21
KALUTARA:					
Dutch Inhabitants and Burghers	3	3	TRINCOMALEE:		
			Dutch Inhabitants and Burghers	14	
GALLE:			Malabars	102	
Dutch Inhabitants and Burghers	26		Trincomalee Moors	7	
Galle Cingalese	5		Total Trincomalee		123
total Galle		31			
			BATTICALOA:		
MATARA:			Malabars	19	
Dutch Inhabitants and Burghers	4		Moors	10	
Vellales	6		Total Batticaloa		29
Matura Vellales	2				
Moors	1				
total Matara		13			
subtotal row 1		479			
subtotal row 2		280			
GRAND TOTAL		759			

Source: *Return*, 575-578.

The names of social groups and of places as given in the source ‘Returns’ have been kept in the table above. Some of them need clarification. All signatories belonged to the elite of their respective social groups. That was also the case of the group of “Dutch Inhabitants/Burghers,” even though that group did not have a structured social leadership comparable to the other groups. Within the group of these “Dutch” signatories one phenomenon is striking: apparently widows had sufficient social status to also subscribe—seen their family history these women were clearly recognizable as being of Dutch descent, and therefore belonged to the elite of that group. That being said, the second striking feature is the ethnic diversity reflected in the list of signatories. Understandably, in Colombo we come across most different groups, headed by the 110 signatories representing the “Dutch Inhabitants and Burghers” of Colombo—they were the first to be involved by Sir Alexander Johnston (1775-1849) in the development of his initiative. In the capital, or actually greater Colombo, we find “Vellales” or members of the Sinhalese Goyigama caste (38), signatories from the “Washer” or Rada caste (24), representatives from the “Fisher” or Karava caste (17), “subscribers” from the “Mahabadde” or cinnamon peeling caste (20),⁵ 30 “Malabars” (30),⁶ and “Moors” (31).⁷ A striking feature about this address is what it reveals about the geographical distribution of those who signed it. Its “Dutch” subscribers resided not only in Colombo, but also in other urban centers and districts including Kalutara, Galle, Matara (all three places south of Colombo), Negombo (north of Colombo), Mannar and Jaffna in the north, and Trincomalee in the northeast of the island. In addition to Colombo, its Sinhalese signers lived in Matara, Galle, Ja-Ela and Negombo, while those described as Malabars and Moors resided in Chilaw, Mannar, Jaffna, Trincomalee and Batticaloa.

It would go too far to discuss here the developments in the United Kingdom (hereinafter usually referred to as England) that led first to the abolition of the slave trade and then to the abolition of slavery itself. Suffice it to say that the colonial government in Ceylon, as Sri Lanka was called until 1972, tried in vain first to limit the slavery of Covias, Nalluas and Pallas in northern Ceylon. To make any start in this, a system of registration of field and personal slaves was devised, but the regulation of August 14, 1806 was massively sabotaged, and a second regulation of May 27, 1808 met the same fate.

Alexander Johnston, from 1807-1811 Puisne (Junior) Justice of the Supreme Court of Ceylon, was driven by his liberal and humane views towards the Ceylonese people. He tried to do his own to get his liberal ideas

⁵ Also known as Salagama or Chalias.

⁶ Tamils—not referring to the so-called Indian Tamils, who laboured in the nineteenth century in the new tea plantations.

⁷ Then a generic term used to refer to Muslims.

realized. This is how the genius plan arose to start abolition from the bottom up, by taking a soft first step that would not hurt too much the owners of domestic slaves. He seduced them, so to speak, to make a charitable gesture and join the plan as designed by the African Institution in London, to declare free children of domestic slaves born on or after the birthday of the Prince Regent on August 12, 1816, writing:⁸

Many of you are aware of the measure I proposed in 1806 to the principal proprietors of slaves on this island, and of the reason for which its adoption was at that time postponed. Allow me to avail myself of the present opportunity to suggest to you, that should those proprietors, in consequence of the change which has since taken place in the circumstances of this island, now think such a measure advisable, they will, by carrying it into effect, set a bright example to their countrymen, and show themselves worthy of being ranked amongst the benefactors of the human race.

I have, &c.
(signed) *Alexander Johnston*.

Few in the Netherlands at the end of the eighteenth century were aware of the efforts of the Abolitionists. The ex-soldier in Dutch service, John Gabriel Stedman, was perhaps an exception. Nowhere in Dutch VOC documents have I been able to find anything that refers to the political developments in England. Those discussions did not exist in the Netherlands, or hardly so, because a platform like a parliament did not exist there. European VOC personnel, and the Burghers around them, would certainly have been shocked to have heard of the discussion.

It is almost astonishing that the "Dutch Inhabitants and Burgers" agreed so readily to Johnston's proposal. Stood they really behind it? Was it a way to maintain as much of the system as possible by making a gesture that would only have long-term consequences? Governor Robert Brownrigg (1758-1833), then only three years in office, was aware of the limited impact in the short term. Thus he wrote:

"The immediate sacrifice appears trifling on the part of the proprietors; but the result of the measure, if it can be made general, will eventually be the positive abolition of slavery in the island".⁹ Acceptance of the 1816 proposal was not limited to the group of "Dutch Inhabitants and Burgers". Leaders of other groups have followed suit. Therefore we can now look back on an important first step in the Abolition process.

⁸ *Return*, Enclosure 1 in Extract of a despatch from Lieutenant-general Sir R. Brownrigg [Governor of Ceylon] to Earl Bathurst [Secretary of War and Colonies], Colombo, 16 September 1816, in: *Return*, 562.

⁹ "Extract of a despatch from Lieutenant-general Sir R. Brownrigg to Earl Bathurst, 16 September 1816, *Return*, 561-562.



Map 1. South India and Ceylon (Armand Haye, 2020)

Aims of this study

The case above is illustrative of the process where enslaved labor was wound down in Ceylon, and which will be scrutinized in this chapter. It asks how social changes and shifts in domestic slavery can be traced through a new reading of the sources during a time when a hybrid colonial contact zone was slowly and hesitantly changed with the transition to a liberal colonial governance – in other words, as two rather different colonialisms met in an Indian Ocean context. This transitory process is especially interesting since slavery and abolition in Ceylon remain relatively unstudied.¹⁰ As Richard Allen has noted, the history of abolitionism in the early nineteenth-century Indian Ocean world cannot be written without taking developments in Ceylon, such as the 1816 address to the prince regent, into consideration.¹¹ The address's importance transcends, however, its place in the history of British abolitionism in the Indian Ocean. More specifically, this address and the documentation that surrounds it provides us with a unique opportunity to examine domestic slavery in late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century Ceylon and, by implication, elsewhere in colonial South Asia. While historians have explored aspects of domestic slavery in Dutch Southeast Asia,¹² they have largely ignored the European involvement with domestic slavery elsewhere in the Indian Ocean world, especially in South Asia.¹³

As a matter of fact, that involvement should be seen and understood in a wider perspective, by encapsulating it in the greater whole of the European impact on the respective colonized societies. In that respect it is relevant to refer to the research project of Leiden University and the Radboud University Nijmegen, "Colonialism Inside Out: Everyday Experience and Plural Practice in Dutch Institutions in Sri Lanka (c. 1700-1800)", developed and coordinated by Alicia Schrikker (Leiden). Schrikker has mapped out a few interesting

¹⁰ Exceptions include: Chandima S.M. Wickramasinghe, "Coloured Slavery in Ceylon (Sri Lanka)," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Sri Lanka*, n.s., 54 (2008): 159-78; Chandima S.M. Wickramasinghe, "The Abolition of Colonial and Pre-colonial 'Slavery' from Ceylon (Sri Lanka)," *Cultural and Social History* 7, no. 3 (2010): 315-35. The publication of Nira Wickramasinghe's *Slave in a Palanquin: Colonial Servitude and Resistance in Sri Lanka* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2020) will undoubtedly help to redress this historiographical deficiency.

¹¹ Richard B. Allen, *European Slave Trading in the Indian Ocean* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2014), 190-93.

¹² E.g., Barbara Watson Andaya, "From Temporary Wife to Prostitute: Sexuality and Economic Change in Early Modern Southeast Asia," *Journal of Women's History* 9, no. 4 (1998): 11-34; Eric Jones, *Wives, Slaves, and Concubines: A History of the Female Underclass in Dutch Asia* (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2010).

¹³ Notable exceptions include: Margot Finn, "Slaves out of Context: Domestic Slavery and the Anglo-Indian Family, c. 1780-1830," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 19 (2009): 181-203; Jorge Simón Izquierdo Díaz, "The Trade in Domestic Servants (Morianer) from Tranquebar for Upper Class Danish Homes in the First Half of the Seventeenth Century," *Itinerario* 43, no. 2 (2019): 194-217; Linda Mbeki and Matthias van Rossum (2016): "Private slave trade in the Dutch Indian Ocean world: a study into the networks and backgrounds of the slavers and the enslaved in South Asia and South Africa," *Slavery & Abolition* (2016).

research paths that, studied between 2017 and 2022, will bring us to a greater understanding of the impact on daily life in the territories of Sri Lanka occupied by the Dutch East India Company (*Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie* or VOC). The results cannot be anticipated here, however, this article also deals with the colonial impact visible in a very specific area, namely slavery, and in particular the phenomenon of enslaved household workers, hereinafter referred to simply as domestics.

Much of the daily life of these forced workers eludes us, for so-called *egodocuments* are extremely rare.¹⁴ Although we know from administrative and judicial sources how generally this category of personnel was looked at and appreciated, this does not alter the fact that the sources from the period of the occupation of Sri Lanka by the VOC and of the transition period of British administration are mainly quantitative of character. That makes it difficult to look at the particular situation of enslaved domestics with an empathetic view—that we have to accept. Nevertheless the existing documents do help us to observe social changes and to see how minor kinds of shifts in the system of domestic slavery occurred over time. Therefore, let us first look at some data retrieved from the Slave Registers of Galle and Jaffna, which, like the registers of Colombo and those of a few other places, can be regarded as a direct result of Sir Alexander Johnston's efforts.

TABLE B: *Slave Owners and their domestics registered in Galle and Jaffna, 1818.*

	Male Owner	Female Owner	Domestics Registered in 1818	Male	Average Age	Female	Average Age	Children of Slaves at Registration	Children born after 1818
GALLE									
Burghers/ Europeans	4	3	12	3	35.8	9	46.9	9	-
Sinhalese	2	-	5	1	31	4	43.4	13	2
Muslims	14	-	20	9	35.2	11	35.7	26	-
totals			37					47	
JAFFNA									
Burghers/ Europeans	21	7	64	23	30.8	41	36.5	67	1

Source: Data retrieved from the "Alphabetical register of domestic slaves in and for the province or district of Galle [Ceylon] under the 9th regulation of 1818", *National Archives, Kew, England, inv.nr. T-71-663 [Registers of the Office for the Registry of Colonial Slaves, 1813 to 1834, Ceylon: T-71-663]*.

¹⁴ For the discussion on the regrettable lack of egodocuments of enslaved persons, see Alicia Schrikker and Nira Wickramasinghe, *Being a Slave. Histories and legacies of European Slavery in the Indian Ocean*. (Leiden: Leiden University Press, 2020), and my contribution therein, "Boenga van Johor: 'My forced journey from Batavia to the Cape of Good Hope'": 123-146.

Owners of domestic slaves in Galle, 1818

No census data exist for this period, therefore the "Dutch" owners mentioned in the Slave Registers not necessarily represent all "Dutch" inhabitants of Galle. We know however that before that time many had moved to Colombo, or in 1807/08 were evacuated to Batavia (Jakarta). From Appendix 1 one learns that the domestics sometimes had typical slave names, in addition to the more common names that were in vogue among VOC employees. Renaming enslaved people fulfilled a need to give the domestics a more familiar character. Thus we come across the name October, a classic example of naming after months. In the row *Names of children* we meet "Keetje" (Kate), a typical Dutch name, which may not have been given anymore later in the nineteenth century. An example of a fantasy name is "Harlekyn". Most other names are fairly common, only "Malatie" is exceptional. The Malay name *Melatie* is a girl's name meaning "jasmine flower". Here we may presume that the owner knew the enslaved girl came from the Indonesian Archipelago or from the region of Malacca. For Malatie it must have been comforting that the last thing she owned, her original name, had not been taken away from her. Other domestics however, were stripped from their names, and that act does confirm the phenomenon that Orlando Patterson has labeled "Social Death": The enslaved was cut off from the cultural past and made completely dependent on her or his owner's will.¹⁵ Most slave names in the Slave Registers do not differ from those names traditionally given to domestics. That we learn from the baptismal registers of the Reformed Church in Galle that show names taken from classical antiquity, such as Alexander, Cleopatra, Diana, Helena, Mercury, Victoria, etc; biblical names like Benjamin, David, Rachel and Sarah were quite common too, as also were names of days and months names, such as Friday, etc.¹⁶

We know the age of the registered slaves, but unfortunately this is not the case with their children. Documents from the previous period tell also little about this, but there are exceptions. For example, the heirs of Steven Baade, Master of the Equipment in Galle, reported fifteen slave children between the ages of 2 ½ months to 8 years in the estate of the deceased. They had eight different mothers—nothing is known about the fathers, for Baade had a dozen "slaven jongens" (male slaves).¹⁷

One of the owners, Mrs. Degen, had registered three domestics with six children, altogether eight enslaved domestics in the household, a number that was certainly not exceptional for wealthy residents of Galle in the time of the VOC. The numbers of domestics owned by VOC personnel will be explained in more detail below in the treatment of the northern place Jaffna.

¹⁵ Orlando Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death. Slavery and Social Death: A Comparative Study*. [With a new preface]. (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 2018): 54-58.

¹⁶ Dutch Reformed Church Archives, Christian Reformed Church of Lanka, General Consistory Office, Wellawatta (Colombo 6): Baptism Registers 1677-1807.

¹⁷ Sri Lanka National Archives, Colombo (SLNA), 1/5674, Secretariat Protocol, 26 March 1761.

Interesting in Galle is Don Bastian Jayatilleke, the Atapattu Mudaliyar, in charge of the jurisdiction of the Galle District, and highest Sinhalese *headman* (chieftain). His five enslaved domestics had altogether thirteen children of whom two were freed at the time of registration. Later on, under the new regulation, two grandchildren of his domestic Dingey were born free, the one in 1820, the other in 1823.

The question here is: how common was the system of domestic slavery among the Sinhalese elite? The Sinhalese rural population was ruled by their own chiefs or *headmen*, who all lived outside the urbanized VOC centers. In return for their services they had traditionally received lands, the mightiest of them sometimes got entire villages as lifelong loan. Therefore cash money was not given to them by the Company—that is why they do not appear in the Company books, hence little is known about their households. They certainly had a large clientele consisting of persons born from lower castes, or from impoverished caste equals, who provided services in and around the home. I am not aware of any official VOC list (“rolle”) in which domestic slaves are listed, however, from scattered sources we do know that Sinhalese living in the Dutch territory also owned domestics. That is shown in a secretariat protocol of February 1760, wherein two Sinhalese persons declared that the female domestic Sabina, also called Acka Ammad (Akka meaning “older sister” in Tamil) “had given birth to four children, two boys and two girls, who were named as Gabriel, Pedroe, Citto and Grama”.¹⁸ There was no doubt about the status of Sabina, because from a “transport” protocol, dated November 12, 1737, it could be seen that she was legally sold in the Dutch VOC settlement of Nagapattinam—so she probably was originating from the Coromandel or “Textile” Coast in South India. Other examples have been mentioned by Kate Ekama in her study of slavery in Colombo.¹⁹ It can be assumed that more information can be obtained from VOC sources, for the moment however, the Slave Registers are a unique source.

It is unfortunate that I am not able to look extensively at the Slave Registers of Colombo, but a first look showed me that a lot of Sinhalese registered domestics there. Examples are Paulus Perera, who registered “Ayappa” (a male domestic of 40 years), Don Richard de Silva Mohandiram (“Agusto”, 40 years old) and Matthus Hendrik de Silva (“Adonies”, 35 years old)—these names I chose to refer to the names of subscribers mentioned above, and to the suffix Mohandiram, showing that “Don” Richard de Silva formed part of the elite in the District of Colombo.²⁰

¹⁸ SLNA 1/1/6400, Civil Protocol, dated 13 February 176, quotation retrieved from Wagenaar, Galle, 56.

¹⁹ Kate Ekama, *Slavery in Dutch Colombo: A social history* (Master Thesis Leiden University, 2012), 20.

²⁰ Data retrieved from the “Alphabetical register of domestic slaves in and for the province or district of Colombo [Ceylon] under the 9th regulation of 1818”, National Archives, Kew, England, inv.nr. T-75 [Registers of the Office for the Registry of Colonial Slaves, 1813 to 1834, Ceylon: T-75].

However, it is not entirely clear whether the large-scale possession of domestics under the Sinhalese elite only started after the arrival of the English. The previously mentioned 'Return' shows that at various places in the coastal area Sinhalese had come forward to support the petition as subscriber. We are most likely looking at something very differencing from slavery in the Kandyan provinces, as mentioned in the Census of 1837. There a total of 687 males and 694 females was given, but those were not really functioning as domestics, but were especially used during burial ceremonies.²¹ The slavery we come across in the 'Return' and in the Slave Registers has most likely been a phenomenon that only existed for a short time, possibly only from the departure of the Dutch in 1796 to the abolition of slavery in 1843. But again, this is difficult to prove.

Anyway, the names of the two Sinhalese who registered in 1818 show that these Sinhalese officials lived in two worlds. The group to which they belonged had been used to this for quite a long time, for in the period of colonial administration that was the way to have their social positions maintained. Therefore, adaptation and collaboration was the outcome of the colonial *impact* on Sri Lankan society.

Slavery in the Muslim communities of Sri Lanka has clearly left its marks in the sources. Here again data from the 1760s help us to understand how domestic slavery in the several groups in Galle and the Galle district looked like. To start with Galle proper, the fortified city itself had in 1760 a population of 1841 inhabitants "so of the feminine as the masculine sex, old and young, free and slaves".²² Among them we count 518 Company servants (in majority consisting of military men), 66 Burghers, 96 Company slaves or *lijfeijgenen*, 40 prisoners condemned to do forced labor, and 112 local servants. On this list about a thousand inhabitants are not specified, but the not described persons will have consisted of the families—housewives and children—of the higher and middle echelons, such as administrators, accountants, clerks, artisans, officers and non commissioned officers, and of course a great number of private slaves, their domestics, on average about 4.5 persons per household.

Outside Galle Fort lived the families of the Muslim community, most of whom were engaged in retail trade. Their registered total was 478, of whom 22 men did not have to perform *Ulyam* service (which was a kind of substitute corvée for Muslims and Chetties, who were officially regarded as foreigners by the VOC). Most owners of the 52 registered domestics will have belonged

²¹ [Anonymous,] *Slavery and the Slave Trade in British India; with Notices of the Existence of these Evils in the Islands of Ceylon, Malacca, and Penang*. London: Thomas Ward and Co., 1841, 60. The author however doubts whether these numbers are correct, since the Census of 1829 and 1824 gave much higher numbers, namely more than double that amount.

²² SLNA, 1/2740, Day register of the inspection tour by the Dutch Governor Jan Schreuder, 23-24.

to this group.²³ The Muslims of the Galle District were well connected with family and colleagues in South India, so it was not difficult for them to obtain slaves. Matthias van Rossum and his group of researchers in the International Institute for Social History (IISH), Amsterdam, recently has published interesting information on the slave trade from South India).²⁴ One may assume that little will have changed after the British takeover, therefore it seems that the data from the Slave Registers of 1818 correspond quite well with the situation that existed at the time of the VOC.



J.W. Heydt, *Ein Prospect des Castells Jaffnapatnam, wie sich dasselbe von innen praesentiret*, c. 1735-1744. Plate LXXXVI in: J.W. Heydt, *Geographisch- und topographischer Schau-Platz von Africa und Ost-Indien... Wilhermsdorf: J.C. Tetscher, 1744, p. 256. Amsterdam Museum, inv.nr. LA 1905.*

²³ SLNA, 1/2766: Galle Compendium 1758/1759, attachment No 27, Moore Tombo ("List of Muslims"). Attachment No 28, List of Chetties, sums up 123 persons, among whom 13 men were free of Ulyam Service—most of the 26 slaves will have been owned by the latter.

²⁴ Alexander Geelen, Bram van den Hout, Merve Tosun and Matthias van Rossum, "Between Markets and Chains: An Exploration of the Experiences, Mobility and Control of Enslaved Persons in the Eighteenth-Century South-West India," in Alicia Schrikker and Nira Wickramasinghe, *Being a Slave, Histories and Legacies of European Slavery in the Indian Ocean*. (Leiden: Leiden University Press, 2020): 75-97. See also note 43.

No sketches by Heydt have survived, so we do not know to what extent he 'upholstered' his drawings afterwards. He must have done so realistically, for VOC officials, and more generally Europeans and Eurasians, were accompanied by slaves carrying umbrellas to keep their masters out of the hot sunshine. Bottom right one sees two ladies sitting in a palanquin. They are protected against the hot sun by a slave wearing a talipat leaf. The slaves in this (and other prints by Heydt) can be read as giving expression to status of the white VOC men – all of whom would have felt a sense of absolute superiority over these enslaved servants. However, their relative positions were so taken for granted that we should not assume that Heydt added in these servants in order to express his superiority. It was simply the everyday reality that could be seen everywhere and at all times.

The young servant behind the Company officer at the right is holding a fold-up talipat leaf, when opened used as traditional protection against the hot sun. The slave in this watercolour can be read as giving expression to status of the white VIC men – all of whom would have felt a sense of absolute superiority over this servant. However, their relative positions were so taken for granted that we should not assume that Steiger added in the young boy in order to express this superiority. It was simply the everyday reality that could be seen everywhere and at all times. Therefore, in this kind of images we always see servants wear a sun-shade to protect their master.

Owners of domestic slaves in Jaffna, 1818

To start with: the several Jaffna Slave Registers of 1818 consist of two separate units. One concerns the registration of slave casts that only existed in the northern province, formerly the VOC Commandment of Jaffna, namely the registers of the *Covia*, *Nallua* and *Palla*. The situation of the members of these groups was complex, but, to keep it short here, one can say that there was a mixture of serfdom and slavery. We will come back to that later, now we will only delve into the other register, namely that of domestics in the households registered by the "Dutch Inhabitants and Burghers", residing in Jaffna proper—the so-called *Castle* of Jaffnapatnam—and the adjoining modest urban area. There the situation differed from other places: No members of other social groups (such as Muslims, Chetties or Sinhalese) had registered domestics—the Tamils or *Malabars*, as said above, had their own system of slavery.

In Jaffna, 28 "Dutch" owners registered their domestics and respective children: 41 female slaves, 23 male slaves and 67 children—of these 61 were not free at the time of registration, 6 children had been freed. Only one child was born free after the new ordinance. The enslaved domestics and their non-free children counted together 125, therefore the average of enslaved persons in the households was 4.5 slaves. The number of persons in the Jaffna register is such that not all details can be shown in a table. All data however is contained in Appendix 1.

The names given by the owners are not much different from what we have seen in Galle. We come across names like May and November, Abraham,

Jacob, Joseph and Benjamin, Alexander, Minerva and Pandora, etc, and further the usual names in Western style. In Jaffna too a fantasy name was given, not very respectful, namely Onverwagt ('Unexpected').²⁵ A few non-Western names are striking. We find Soentien and Sontee, Nagy Natjie and her child Deogoe ('Deogu').²⁶ One given name is quite mysterious, namely Vanderkruys, a son of Lena, a domestic owned by John Stutzer. The website with names of eighteenth-century crew members and other personnel on board VOC ships, maintained by the National Archives in The Hague,²⁷ lists a number of persons with the name Van der Kruijs, but a descendant of one of them in Jaffna is not easily traceable. It may be someone who had fathered Lena with her fourth child.

As is also the case with the Slave register of Galle, column 8 indicates whether the children of registered domestics are free or not (Non Free / Free). That is the case with six of these children, all of the female sex. After sixteen children we read in column 12 ("Additional Remarks") the addition "Emancipated," four registered domestics got the same remark.

"Emancipated" did not mean that the persons concerned were actually freed. Members of the group "Dutch Inhabitants and Burghers", namely those who sat on the Special Jury of the province of Colombo, wrote to Sir Alexander Johnston on July 14, 1816 that they wholeheartedly supported his proposal, saying it was their "earnest desire, if possible, to disencumber ourselves of that unnatural character of being proprietors of human beings," but they also wrote that they could not agree with "a sudden and total abolition of slavery," that would not only harm the owners but also the slaves themselves. Even more, they argue, "[T]he slaves of the Dutch inhabitants are generally emancipated at their [owners] death, and therefore we are confident that those who are still in a state of slavery have likewise the same chance of obtaining their freedom".²⁸ That comment was unrealistic, because emancipation was usually linked to certain conditions, such as, indeed, serving the owner till her/his death, but often there was an additional condition, namely the serving of a particular daughter or son for as long as they lived, or until a certain point in time. Kate Ekama has brought such to our attention in her excellent study on slavery in Colombo in the eighteenth century. She writes extensively about conditional emancipation and her conclusion is clear: "In Colombo, it is more likely that slaves who were freed under conditions of service exchanged one form of bondage for another and experienced little change in their circumstances".²⁹ That some actually did receive their emancipation deeds and were freed, we also learn from the Slave Register of Jaffna. That was the case with thirty of the domestics registered

²⁵ Such fantasy names were also given to foundlings in the Netherlands.

²⁶ In Jaffna is a Deogu Lane.

²⁷ Website *VOC Opvarenden*:

(<https://www.nationaalarchief.nl/onderzoeken/index/nt00444?searchTerm=>).

²⁸ *Return*, 562.

²⁹ Kate Ekama, *Slavery in Dutch Colombo*, 29.

in 1818. In addition, in five cases we read "Mother and Child Free" or "Mother and Children Free." In one case we read "Mother and Child not free"—the background to this is not yet clear. However, as said above, absolute manumission often did not occur when the proprietor or her/his heirs believed that the emancipated slave had violated the conditions—then the emancipation could be reversed in court.

One remark in column 12 still requires attention, that is the remark "died" or "dead". We read this in eleven cases with registered domestics, sometimes with the addition "Mother died". It is striking that one case concerns the death of the male slave Achalus who, together with four other slaves in 1818 was registered by Anna Henrietta Vanderspar. In column 7 ("Names of Children of Female Slaves") the name Benjamin is listed after his name in column 3 ("names of slaves"), but it is not clear from this source whether his mother had died earlier. Neither we learn about the age of Benjamin. In case he would still had been a young child, there were three female domestics in the household, and also a male one, to care for him.

The literature gives an interesting reference to the origin of a few domestic slaves, namely in a late eighteenth-century document wherein also the name of Thomas Nagel (1740-1823) was mentioned, the one we meet thirty years later as owner who registered in Jaffna in 1818 two domestics, Thesdorus and Sontee, and with the daughter of the latter, Alexes. (see Appendix 2). Nagel was the former Land Regent of the Wannu, and he had envisioned a great future for this area to the government in Colombo.³⁰ He was a great connoisseur of the northern provinces. He had started his career with the VOC as *vuurwerker*, a function just below that of lieutenant.

About some of his slaves we have interesting data from the Secretariat of Jaffna, namely a deposition in support of the lawful property in a slave, dated 27th march 1782.³¹ Two witnesses, both from the Nallua caste declared that they could confirm that two slave children, one Eliza and Frans, had as mother the domestic Regina, and another child, Joseph, Ragel, as mother. They could bear witness to this, "because they had consistently frequented" the houses of the Artillery Officer Thomas Nagel and of the Artillery Cadet Gerrit Engelbert Vos. The aforementioned slave children in the house of the two VOC soldiers will therefore almost certainly have belonged to the caste of the Nalluas. This is one of the rare evidence that VOC staff in Jaffna had domestic slaves who had not been brought in from South India, but came from the province of Jaffna itself.

The above-commented data from the Slave Records from 1818 cannot lead to meaningful discussions without a firm comparison with the situation

³⁰ See about Thomas Nagel and the Wannu: Alicia Schrikker, *Dutch and British colonial intervention in Sri Lanka, 1780-1815: Expansion and Reform*. (Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2007), 86-89, 103-107.

³¹ R.G. Anthonisz, *Report on the Dutch Archives at Colombo* (Colombo: H.C. Cottle, Government Printer, 1907), 67-68.

at the time of the occupation of the coastal area by the VOC, a starting around 1640 and running to 1796 when the British took over. Such a comparison should certainly not be limited to quantitative aspects, but should also address questions about the treatment and appreciation of the domestic slaves. In addition, the current discourses about slavery and the slave trade, the share of Europeans in this, and in particular the role of the Dutch East India Company in this should also be addressed. Therefore, first some information will be presented on the use of slaves by the Company itself and by its European and Eurasian personnel, and by Eurasians not engaged by the Company, but who lived in a close relationship with the VOC, and were even highly dependent on it.

Domestic Slavery in Dutch Colonial Ceylon

The VOC was not just a trading company, it was an institution facilitated by the Dutch state, aiming at a maximum economic exploitation of the coastal area against minimal costs. To this end, it was essential that all existing social and economic structures were used and developed to achieve that goal. This meant that statute labour in the occupied territories of Sri Lanka, the so-called *rayakariya*, and other forms of forced labor, continued to exist and, if possible, were adapted to the needs of the VOC. Slavery, here mainly explored in the field of domestic slavery, was essential for the Company because, by keeping and expanding that system, its personnel, Europeans and Eurasians, were greatly facilitated to perform their duties optimally.

The economic exploitation was accompanied by the development and strengthening of close relations with the upper classes of the several social groups, such as the Sinhalese (who formed the majority in the southwestern part of the island), the Tamils (making up the majority in the northern province and in the coastal belt of the northeast), and of Muslims and Chetties—above it has already been stated that these two groups got a special treatment by the VOC, because they were considered as foreigners who were guests in Ceylon.

The close relations with the respective elites was not only in the interest of the Company, for the various elites in turn also benefited from this collaboration: It enabled them to maintain and even strengthen their position amidst their respective social groups. This is evident from the fact that they used and copied instruments of colonial society. The figures from early nineteenth-century sources show that the upper layer of the social groups mentioned above, had followed the Dutch colonial legal system in the use of domestic slaves—as a matter of fact, they had no other legal options open (and again, in the northern provinces of Sri Lanka the situation was different). Although sometimes under protest, they followed suit when the colonial rulers were taking the first steps of abolishing the system. The data retrieved from VOC records and from the Slave Registers discussed above, show sufficiently how parallel in this respect the interests of the various local elites

in the colonial structure were. Therefore, research on domestic slavery should not be limited to Europeans' share of slavery in their own social and economic environment, but must also be turned to the impact of colonial rule on the different communities—bearing in mind the persistent existence of unequal relationships among the communities.

Slave ownership was quite common during the one and a half century that the Dutch East India Company controlled parts of coastal Ceylon. The Company's Dutch personnel, those who the British would subsequently describe as "Dutch Inhabitants and Burghers" (the latter being persons of mixed European and Asian origin), and other of the island's inhabitants including Chetties, Moors, and Sinhalese and Tamil *mudaliyars*³² and lower chiefs owned slaves.³³ The 1816 address reflects both the ethnic diversity and the elite status of its signatories. Twenty-three signers in Ja-Ela, for example, had the honorific title "Don" which dated from the period of Portuguese rule in the coastal area, starting around 1550 (depending of the place) and ending in 1658 with the loss of the northern province. Many of these persons shared the same last name (Perera) which likewise attests to their descent from families who had maintained close ties with the Portuguese. The same holds true in Colombo and Negombo where signatories from the Vellale, Fisher, and Washer communities included numerous individuals with Portuguese surnames such as Perera, Fernando, and (de) Silva. This elitist character also applies to the signatories of the group "Mahabadde". To give a clue, four owners of those represented as subscribers in the section of Mahabadde bore the surname "Rajepakse", a family which produced many chiefs who collaborated with the VOC.

Unfortunately, it is difficult to exactly determine the extent of domestic slavery in colonial Ceylon. The information at our disposal suggests that Dutch governors and other top officials owned fifteen and often more such slaves, while other senior staff with the rank of merchant, also serving on the councils in places such as Colombo, Galle and Jaffna each owned at least five to ten domestic slaves. Such a number was also kept in the household of the pastors of the Reformed Church, a figure substantiated by the fact that Abraham Anthony Engelbrecht, who served as minister to the Company's employees in Galle, had to leave five of his seven slaves behind when he left Ceylon in 1807.³⁴ Slaves accounted for 159 (27 percent) of the 581 persons who embarked on two of the four ships which carried Dutch personnel from

³² Also spelled *mudaliar*, *muthaliar*, *mudali*, *muthali*, or *moodley*. A Tamil title indicating a person of the first rank. The Portuguese created the position to serve as a link between colonial authorities and the local population. *Mudaliyars* were paid in the form of land grants and the right to service from local communities.

³³ Alicia Schrikker and Kate J. Ekama, "Through the Lens of Slavery: Dutch Sri Lanka in the Eighteenth Century," Zoltán Biedermann and Alan Strathern, eds, *Sri Lanka at the Crossroads of History* (London: UCL Press, 2017), 188.

³⁴ Alicia Schrikker, "Caught Between Empires," 134. Engelbrecht died in Batavia, 23 September 1808.

Ceylon to Batavia that year. Overall, there is reason to believe that one-third of the approximately 1,000 passengers on these four vessels were enslaved domestics.³⁵

Back to Jaffna

The first question to answer is how common the use of enslaved domestics actually was. The literature on the phenomenon of slavery during the VOC era in Sri Lanka is confined in amount and not all periods and locations are covered. The studies by Remco Raben and Kate Ekama should certainly be mentioned here, although both works are limited to the capital Colombo.³⁶ The situation in other urbanized places however, though most of them were quite small, was not essentially differencing from that in Colombo. It is no surprise that most European and Eurasian servants of the Company could dispose of domestics, the European common soldiers stationed in their barracks being the great exception. We know however, that many a soldier stayed behind in the East Indies and settled after fulfillment of the usual contract period of five years. The VOC records contain a lot of requests by such soldiers asking permission to marry a local housewife. From the records one learns that many of them had started a family, and even more, the documents show that even such modest employees could afford to have domestics in their dwellings. In Jaffna (and likewise in Mannar) so-called *Tupasses*, mostly descendants of Eurasians who had served the Portuguese, served as soldier, and they also were allowed to marry, and had domestics in their modest homes, called in Dutch a *kamer* or *woning* ('room' or 'house'), That we learn from data compiled in 1690, showing the situation of all Company servants, from top to bottom. The survey 'List of all families, their children and slaves, males and females, residing in the Kingdom of Jaffanapatnam with indication of the status of all children's mothers' sums up all members of the 126 households of the Company servants: 92 men, 118 women, 115 sons, 113 daughters, 284 male slaves and 284 female slaves, altogether 1,006 persons.³⁷ So on average there were 4,5 domestics per household, but if the extremes are not taken into account, it can be said that many families had much more domestics at their disposal. That can clearly be seen from Table C.

³⁵ *Ibid*, 140.

³⁶ Kate Ekama, *Slavery in Dutch Colombo*; Remco Raben, *Batavia and Colombo. The Ethnic and Spatial Order of Two Colonial Cities 1600-1800* (PhD thesis Leiden University, 1996).

³⁷ National Archives, The Hague, VOC 1469, Brieven en Papieren overgekomen van Ceylon in 1691, 557r-559r: Rolle der familien, derselver kinderen, slaven en slavinnen, remoreerende [verblijvende] in 't koninckrijck Jaffanapatnam met aenwijsinge uijt wat moeders de kinderen sijn geteelt, Jaffna, 7 november 1690.

TABLE C: Jaffna Company Slave Owners and their domestics registered in 1690.

	Origin of Wife	Children	Male	Female	Slaves	Male	Female
Commander	Hollantse	3	2	1	33	25	8
Dessave	Hollantse	1	-	1	21	13	8
Minister	Hollantse	8	4	4	22	10	12
Minister	Hollantse	3	2	1	10	5	5
Administrator	Hollantse	-	-	-	18	10	8
Fiscal	Hollantse	2	1	1	10	5	5
Cashier	Hollantse	2	1	1	14	7	5
Captain	Hollantse	2	1	1	10	6	4
Surgeon	Hollantse	6	4	2	11	5	6
Ass. Surgeon	Misties	1	-	1	4	2	2
Ass. Surgeon	Misties	-	-	-	3	2	1
Ass. Surgeon	Misties	-	-	-	1	-	1
Usher	Misties	1	-	1	2	1	1
Assistent	Mixties	2	2	-	5	2	3
Ensign	Casties	3	2	1	10	5	5
Ensign	Misties	4	1	3	6	3	3
Ensign	Misties	2	1	1	7	2	5
Sergeant	Misties	7	6	1	1	1	-
Sergeant	Misties	2	1	1	9	4	5
Sergeant	Toepasie	2	2	-	1	-	1
Soldier	Toepasie	-	-	-	1	-	1
Soldier	Misties	1	1	-	2	-	2
Carpenter	Misties	6	3	3	4	1	3
Carpenter	Misties	1	-	1	1	1	-
Carpenter	Misties	1	-	1	1	1	-
Schoolmaster	Toepasie	4	2	2	3	1	2
Cooper	Misties	-	-	-	1	1	-

Source: National Archives, The Hague, VOC 1469, *Brieven en Papieren overgekomen van Ceylon in 1691, 557r-559r: Rolle der familien, derselver kinderen, slaven en slavinnen, remoteerende [verblijvende] in 't koninckrijck Jaffnapatnam met aenwijsinge uijt wat moeders de kinderen sijn geteelt, Jaffna, 7 november 1690*

The table with 25 of the 126 families of VOC staff in Jaffna (including the single-person households) shows the major differences between the Europeans and those of Eurasian origin. As mentioned earlier, the senior members or *gequalificeerden* (qualified officers) had fifteen, twenty or more domestics at their disposal. This was already known about various senior officers and from different periods, but it is special to see these amount brought together in one source. From this we learn that almost 65 percent of the VOC servants were involved in the system of slavery at home. One third

(44 households) had no domestics at all, while twelve households had only one slave.

The number of Eurasians in the secretaries and other departments holding simple jobs, below the rank of accountant, in Jaffna is comparable to what I had found in previous research on Galle for the year 1760, about sixty percent. This fact is important, because it is precisely members of this group who stayed behind after the change of power in 1796: they had become Sri Lankan through the VOC.

The number of Eurasians occupying the modest jobs in the secretaries and other departments of Jaffna, below the rank of bookkeeper, was comparable to what I had found in previous research on Galle for the year 1760: About sixty percent. This fact is relevant, because members of this group had remained after the change of power in 1796. Not all members of this group will have been able to maintain their economic and social position, others however will have been able to keep their status over the years, and those are the ones we meet in the list of subscribers in 1816.

After the date of the composition of the report of 1690 nothing had changed with regard to slavery, therefore the number of domestics in the last years of the VOC administration must have been comparable to that of a century before.

In 1796 the international situation had completely changed, the British had taken over, and the contacts with the Netherlands had been broken due to the Napoleonic Wars. VOC personnel that had remained behind had no longer a grip on the slave trade with South India. Before 1796 inhabitants of Galle could easily acquire new domestics at the auctions held after arrival of East Indiamen from South India. VOC documents kept in Colombo inform us in detail about the existence of a private slave trade involving skippers and officers of such VOC ships, but that supply line had ceased to exist.³⁸ Then in 1807/08 the last part of VOC personnel had left, leaving behind mostly individuals and families with an Eurasian background who were not eligible for transfer to Batavia or who wanted to stay and try the new masters. There are no suitable sources to inform us who had domestics around 1796, and how many.

The extent of domestic slavery following the imposition of British rule in 1800 is equally difficult to determine. There is good reason to believe, however, that the number of domestic slaves declined for reasons other than just the Dutch evacuation of the island. In 1800, the British administration issued a proclamation regulating domestic slavery and banning slave imports and exports, while the 1820s witnessed additional abolitionist measures

³⁸ SLNA 1/5775, Ordinary Secretariat Protocols 1 January 1760-28 January 1761. See for more about private (domestic) and Company slaves in Galle: Lodewijk Wagenaar, *Galle. VOC-vestiging in Ceylon. Beschrijving van een koloniale samenleving aan de vooravond van de Singalese opstand tegen het Nederlandse gezag, 1760*. Amsterdam: De Bataafse Leeuw, 1994, 51-59.

including the passage in 1821 of an ordinance freeing all female slave children of Covia, Nallua, and Palla caste status born on or after 24 April 1821 and governmental allocation in 1822 and 1824 of the monies needed to purchase the freedom of 900 Nallua and Palla slaves and their families.³⁹ The 1824 census recorded the presence of 221 "descendants of slaves," 1,115 freed slaves, and 17,538 slaves in the colony, including 18 described as "slaves of the Burghers" and 78 as "formerly slaves of the Dutch Government," but failed to distinguish domestic or urban slaves from those who lived elsewhere.⁴⁰ According to a report submitted to a commission of inquiry in 1831, the number of domestic slaves in the colony's maritime provinces did not exceed 1,000, most of whom were the property of the Dutch inhabitants who had signed the 1816 address or their descendants. The same report reveals that only 96 children (50 boys, 46 girls) had been born to slave mothers and freed since then.⁴¹ The number of domestic slaves continued to decline with the passage of time, and had become no more than a marginal group by the time slavery was formally abolished in Ceylon in 1843.

Domestic Slave Ownership

In 1818, the colonial administration ordered the establishment of a slavery registry to ensure that the slave owners who had vowed in 1816 to free the children born of their female slaves had kept their promise to do so. The register of domestic slaves in Colombo, Galle, Matara, Jaffna and Mannar, which continued to be maintained until 1832, in connection with the compensation schemes to be implemented, provides an unique opportunity to view this otherwise obscure slave population.⁴² The registers recorded domestic slaves' names alphabetically in each town or district and were intended to record kinds of information about individual slaves including their number within each alphabetical list; the date of their registration; their name, sex, and age; the name of their owner; the names of children born to female slaves; whether these children were free or not; the name and sex of slave children born after the first registry and number and letter under which they were registered as slaves; the number and letter under which a slave was registered on a change of property; and, lastly, any additional remarks. It should be noted that registers usually recorded information for only the first eight of these categories.

³⁹ Allen, *European Slave Trading in the Indian Ocean* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2014), 190-91, 193.

⁴⁰ Reported in E.B. Denham (ed.), *Census Report. Ceylon at the Census of 1911, Being the Review of the Results of the Census of 1911* (Colombo: H.C. Cottle, Government Printer, 1912), 11.

⁴¹ "Extract from a report of Lieutenant-colonel Colebrooke, one of his Majesty's Commissioners of Inquiry, upon the administration of the Government of Ceylon, dated 24 December 1831," *Return*, 597-98.

⁴² National Archives of the United Kingdom (hereafter NAUK), Kew: T 71/663, Ceylon: Domestic slaves [registered in] Colombo, Galle, Matura, Jaffna and Manar, 1818-1832.

The information in these registers provides us with an opportunity to see if there had been any shifts in the system of domestic slavery after the ending of the VOC regime, or to the extent to which it was applied.

Domestic Slaves and Their Masters

The relationships between domestic slaves and their masters in colonial Ceylon often remain hidden from our view. Unlike other European colonies in the Indian Ocean world such as Mauritius and South Africa where slaves' voices can sometimes be heard, albeit perhaps only indirectly,⁴³ such voices are largely absent from the Ceylonese archival record. Last wills and testaments provide some insight into the relationships between domestic slaves and their owners. The will of Steven Baade, for example, confirm that some owners had special, if not affectionate, relationships with their enslaved domestics. More specifically, the will reveals that Baade, the Company's Master of Equipment in Galle, had adopted Johannes Baade, the child he had undoubtedly fathered with his manumitted enslaved domestic Regina.⁴⁴ Such relationships are certainly more common, but they are not easily traceable in the sources. Sometimes, as discussed above with the slave name Vanderkruys, one can have suspicions about fatherhood. And what about "Mr. Johannes Anthonisz" from Galle (see Appendix 1)? His domestic Selphia, aged 45 in 1818, had a daughter Johana ('Joan'), a name that does not appear in the various lists of slaves—but of course, one has to be careful with such speculations.

If the relationships that domestic slaves had with their masters often remains hidden, it is clear that for many Europeans, domestic slaves were crucial components of their lives. While the signatories to the 1816 address to the prince regent expressed their sympathy with the sentiments that had moved Parliament to look favorably upon "that unfortunate class of beings

⁴³ See, for example, the complaints that Mauritian slaves filed with the colony's Protector of Slaves during the late 1820s and early 1830s, some of which printed in the British Parliament Sessional Papers. Surviving correspondence has also made it possible to reconstruct at least some aspects of the lives of Southeast Asian slaves who reached the Cape Colony. See Gerald Groenewald, "Panaij van Boegies: Slave–Bandiet–Caffer," *Quarterly Bulletin of the National Library of South Africa* 59, no. 2 (2005): 50-62; Sirtjo Koolhof and Robert Ross, "Upas, September and the Bugis at the Cape of Good Hope: The Context of a Slave's Letter," *Archipel* 70 (2005): 281-308. Recent publications shed additional light on the lives of European-owned slaves in the Indian Ocean world. See Alicia Schrikker and Nira Wickramasinghe, eds., *Being a Slave. Histories and Legacies of European Slavery in the Indian Ocean* (Leiden: Leiden University Press, 2020); Matthias van Rossum, Alexander Geelen, Bram van der Hout, and Merve Tosun, *Testimonies of Enslavement: Sources on Slavery from the Indian Ocean World* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2020).

⁴⁴ Lodewijk Wagenaar, "The Cultural Dimension of the Dutch East India Company Settlements in Dutch-Period Ceylon, 1700-1800," in Thomas Da Costa Kauffmann and Michael North, eds., *Mediating Netherlandish Art and Material Culture in Asia* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2014), 141-176, esp. 152-54. The case is based on the last will of Steven Baade of February 1760, Sri Lanka National Archives (SLNA), 1/5731.

placed in the degraded condition of slavery," they urged the gradual abolition in the colony on the grounds that,

In families long settled in this island, of whatever class, the Household establishment is usually so much dependent on the service of slaves, that a general discharge of those persons would subject the inhabitants to privations, losses and expense, such as ordinary prudence forbids us to encounter; at the same time we have reason to know, that to great numbers of persons now in our houses in the character of slaves, bred up under our roofs, many of them far advanced in life, the greater part established in habits and attachment, a general emancipation would withdraw the source of their support without advancing their happiness or improving their condition.⁴⁵

The signatories claim that they had supported their household slaves "for a course of years with kind and considerate treatment and comfortable subsistence" is of particular interest because it invariably raises the question of whether domestic slavery in colonial Ceylon was really as mild as these memorialists claimed. Evidence from elsewhere in the Indian Ocean world suggests there is good reason to believe otherwise. Robert Ross, for example, notes that while slave owners in Cape Town may, at times, have considered their domestic slaves "to be part of the family," it is unlikely that many or, indeed, any household slaves thought of themselves as such. Ross demonstrates, moreover, that Cape Town's emancipated domestics did not hesitate to leave the houses of their former masters to find their own accommodations, even when these dwellings were modest and far away.⁴⁶ Evidence from Mauritius likewise indicates that some 9,000 slaves purchased their freedom following the abolition of slavery in the colony on 1 February 1835, and that a great majority of the colony's new freedmen abandoned their masters when the post-emancipation apprenticeship system came to an end in 1838.⁴⁷

The sentiments expressed in the 1816 must accordingly be viewed in the context of the day and age in which they were articulated, a period which witnessed the winds of abolitionism blowing with increasing intensity in the British Indian Ocean world. Ceylon did not remain untouched by these winds which made themselves felt for the first time in the second half of the 1780s when British East India Company officials sought not only to abolish slave trading to and from India, but even the institution of slavery itself.⁴⁸ These developments invariably raise the question of what were the realities of the

⁴⁵ Enclosure 11 in Extract of a Despatch from Lieutenant-general Sir R. Brownrigg to Earl Bathurst, Colombo, 16 September 1816, in: *Return*, 567.

⁴⁶ Robert Ross, "Accommodation and the Ironies of Resistance: The Housing of Cape Town's Enslaved and Freed Population Before and After Emancipation," paper presented at the Workshop on "Being a Slave," Leiden University, 29-30 May 2017.

⁴⁷ Richard B. Allen, *Slaves, Freedmen, and Indentured Laborers in Colonial Mauritius* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 105-35.

⁴⁸ See Allen, *European Slave Trading*, 179-220.

slave experience in Dutch Ceylon, realities that were invariably shaped in part by the legal framework within which slavery in VOC possessions in general and slavery in Ceylon in particular. In his *History of Java*, Stamford Raffles observed that,

... although they [the Dutch] adopted principles that admitted of the most cruel and wanton treatment of slaves, I would not be understood to say, that they carried these principles into common practice. The contrary was almost universally the case, and the condition of slaves on Java, where they were employed principally in domestic offices, formed a complete contrast to the state of those employed in the West-India plantations.⁴⁹

It is possible that Raffles witnessed conditions in Ceylon similar to these he observed during his tour of duty in Batavia (1811-16).

The treatment of slaves in VOC possessions was governed by two sets of laws, the Statutes of Batavia (1642) and the New Statutes of Batavia (1766). Article 11 of the section of the 1642 Statutes that dealt with slaves and freed persons (*Lijf-eigenen en vrij gemaakten*) stipulated that slave owners were not permitted to chain, torture, or maltreat their slaves; they were, however, allowed to chastise them “domestically after merit” when they misbehaved.⁵⁰ Cases from Batavia and other VOC settlements attest that slaves were often subject to various forms of corporal “correction.” In 1713, for example, a slave girl named Martha ran away from her owner, Jacob Keijl, the blacksmith's boss of Galle. Several testimonies of the incident and what happened afterwards have been passed down. For example, we read the statement of two surgeons who had diagnosed that Martha had serious ulcers

⁴⁹ Thomas Stamford Raffles, *The History of Java*, 2 vols. (London: Black, Purbury and Allen, and John Murray, 1817), vol. 1, 76. Raffles continued: “The grounds on which the Dutch justified the practice of making slaves, was not that they could not command the services of the natives with a sway sufficiently absolute, and that they were compelled to seek, beyond the limits of the island, for unfortunate agents to perform what the natives shewed a reluctance to undertake, but that they found the class of foreigners more adroit and docile than the Javans in the conduct of household affairs, and that having reduced them to the state of property, they remained in the family for life, and saved the trouble of a new training.”

⁵⁰ J.A. van der Chijs, ed., *Nederlands-Indisch Plakaatboek, 1602-1811. Uitgegeven door het Bataviaansche genootschap van kunsten en wetenschappen met medewerking van de Nederlandsch-Indische regering*. Negende deel: Nieuwe Statuten van Batavia [1766]. Batavia: Landsdrukkerij/ 's Gravenhage: M. Nijhoff, 1891, 575. The Dutch text is as follows: “En, schoon 't den lyfheeren toegelaten is, wanneer hunne slaven eenige fauten komen te begaan, deselve huysselijk, naar verdienste te castyden, zoo zullen zy deselve egter niet vermogen in de yzers ofte boeyen te slaan, ten zy met kennis en consent van den regter of den officier van justitie, onder wier jurisdictie zy sorteeren, veel min deselve te tortureeren of andersints grofelyk te mishandelen (...).” This article was taken over literally from the ‘Old Statutes’, the so-called *Statuten van Batavia* (1642). We know that this ordinance was also law in Dutch Ceylon for in 1659 that particular article was copied from the Batavian Statute Book and issued separately in Colombo (see Ordinance No. 49 in the edition of all Dutch Ceylonese ordinances in: L. Hovy, *Ceylonees Plakaatboek. Plakkaten en andere wetten uitgevaardigd door het Nederlands bestuur op Ceylon, 1638-1796*. 2 Vols. (Hilversum: Verloren, 1991), I, 47.

on her body that needed acute care. We read Martha's own statement, translated by the interpreter of the Council of Justice in Galle, Joan Alvis. In 1711, we read, Martha had been bought with a couple of other slaves by the skipper of the yacht *Wateringen*, Jacob de Jong, and taken from Bengal to Ceylon. On the way the skipper died, and his belongings were auctioned upon arrival in Galle in May 1712. This is how Martha came to work in the house of Jacob Keijl, where she performed household tasks such as sewing shirts, she said. However, Keijl's housewife was never satisfied with her job, so she was regularly beaten by her, "and having been burned with firewood in various places on her body."⁵¹ One day in March 1713, she couldn't stand it anymore and ran out of the house in a panic. On the street she met the Fiscal, Jacobus van Oudshoorn van Sonneveld, and begged to be allowed to be sold in order to be released from further chastisement. After medical examination, Martha was placed with the Master-of-Arms to recover in peace. She stated that she was not tied there, but that she had been allowed to roam frankly and freely in the prison house.

From another document we know that Jacob Keijl turned to the governor to get his "slave maid" Martha back. How that ended is not known to me. More important here is the fact that enslaved persons were normally heard and given testimony. Certainly, we do not know exactly how the deposition came about, Martha may have been helped here and there to refresh her memory, for example in the case of the name of the yacht, *Wateringen*. It is also not known whether she actually remembered the name of the skipper, or whether this was known on the secretary from other documents—because everything related to an auction was carefully recorded, including checks on whether someone indeed had the legal status of a slave. Be that as it may, it is remarkable that we hear from such a judicial document the voice of a slave.

There are virtually no documented stories showing extremely bad treatment of domestics in Ceylon. One case, however, has gained notoriety because it is mentioned by François Valentijn in connection with the death of Ceylon's Governor Isaak Augustin Rumph on June 11, 1723. He is said to have had a heart attack when he learned that the fiscal of Colombo, Barent van der Swaan, and his wife had been murdered by their slaves—he was literally shocked to death. It is assumed that the murder was a result of ill-treatment, but details are not known from written documents.⁵²

⁵¹ NA, VOC 9787, Missives and Papers (Overgekomen Brieven en Papieren [OBP] from Ceylon, received in 1715, part II, Attachments, p. 163-166 (the pagination was recently added in pencil by an employee of the archive). From the Dutch text it is clear that the housewife herself executed the 'corporal correction': "(...) dat zij attestant door de huisvrouw van voorsz. baas ["by the housewife of the said boss", mine underlining, LW] verscheijde male zeer strengelijk geslagen en hier en daar op 't lichaam met brandhoud is gebrand geworden, ter zaake de attestant dagelijx niet genoeg na de zin van haar juffrouw aff deed".

⁵² Reference to the story from François Valentijn, *Oud en Nieuw Oost-Indiën* [the description of the VOC and its history in Asia], Volume 5A [1726], 359, retrieved from Wagenaar, *Galle*, 59.

Local ordinances provide additional insight into the ways in which slaves were treated. A *plakkaat* (placard) of 16 November 1759 intended to prevent begging by impoverished manumitted slaves was deemed necessary because of “the inhumane and unmerciful behaviour of Christians as well as Muslims and Heathens who turn out [of] their houses and abandon not only free persons whom they had quasi adopted or otherwise had taken in their houses [as domestics] only for maintenance, but also after many years of service their enslaved domestics when they happened to be contaminated, ill, diseased, infirm or old aged.”⁵³ This was not the first such ordinance; in 1711, a similar ordinance had also forbid masters from getting rid of their slaves and other domestic servants because of illness or other infirmities.⁵⁴

Such acts by slave owners reflected the widespread belief that slaves engaged willingly in acts, such as theft, intended to harm on their masters. A 1786 ordinance attests to the seriousness with which authorities viewed such activity; the ordinance forbid people from buying a wide range of items from slaves including jewels, items made of gold, silver or copper, household furnishings, instruments, cloth, clothing, wine, beer and other alcoholic drinks, “or other items of whatever nature it might be, even not clothes or personnel ornaments of the slaves themselves, since a slave cannot possess anything as private property.”⁵⁵ Such ordinances rarely had the desired effect. Three years later, in 1789, another ordinance forbid people to purchase or take as security from “ordinary natives, *let alone from slaves* [emphasis added] any valuable items, such as clothing, cloth, items made from gold and silver, jewellery, etc., without the foreknowledge and permission of the relevant authorities.”⁵⁶

Conclusion

Policy development and implementation in Sri Lanka by the VOC and the English government in the period 1780-1815 has been discussed extensively by Alicia Schrikker in her book on “Dutch and British colonial intervention”. Action, intervention, planning, even dreaming by administrators and staff.

⁵³ L. Hovy, *Ceylonees Plakkaatboek*, II, 649-651 (Ordinance No. 444). The original text reads: “(.) ontwaard is de waare oorzaak daarvan te zijn dat veele ingeseetenen – zowel christenen als Moren en heydenen – zo onmedogend, ja gantsch onmenselijk zijn om niet alleen vrije menschen die zij quasi geaddopteerd of andersins alleen voor onderhoud in hunnen dienst op- en aangenomen hebben, maar ook haare lijfeigenen na langjaargenot van diensten, wanneer besmet, ziek, zugtig, gebrekkig of oud werden, te verstooten en aan haar eyge voorsorge over te laten.”

⁵⁴ Hovy, *Ceylonees Plakkaatboek*, I, 351-352 (Ordinance No. 228).

⁵⁵ Hovy, *Ceylonees Plakkaatboek*, II, 869 (Ordinance No. 631, Art. 10). The Dutch text reads: “Niemand zal van slaaven iets moogen koopen of in pand neemen, inzonderheid geene klijnodiën, goud-, zilver-, koperwerk, huysraad, gereedschap, lijnwaat, kleedjes of gemaakte kleederen, alsmeede geen wijn, bier of andere dranken of iets anders van wat natuur 't ook moge zijn, al waar't ook kleedingstukken of lijfciraadjes van de slaven zelve, alzoo een slaaf niets eygens kan bezitten”.

⁵⁶ Hovy, *Ceylonees Plakkaatboek*, II, 925-26 (Ordinance No. 631).

Today, there is a new interest in the *impact* of colonial administration and policy on local societies. Not only by a policy of administrative *action*, but also of tacit or not tacit *toleration*, in different degrees: from consciously accepting to letting go. The Company itself had an interest in using slaves to realize work in the form of forced labor in its various departments (yards, warehouses, fortress building, etc.). The VOC also had an interest in maintaining a system of domestic labor, or even expanding it in size, because that's what her personnel needed. Its facilitating activities played a major role in this, in fact, the positive action in the field of slavery by the Company can be seen as decisive for the maintenance of the system.

The Company was able to give a clear outline of the system of slavery with legal tools borrowed from Roman law. Thus the system was rigged with a variety of regulations, including those that must limit the slave owners in their unbridled freedom to punish their enslaved domestics. Other ordinances must prevent emancipated slaves from being thrown out without giving them sufficient means of subsistence. In addition, the Company also guarded the interests of its personnel by, among other things, the provision that Europeans / Christians were not allowed to sell slaves to Muslims. It could be said without hesitation that the administration and the judiciary (at that time not yet separate units) provided the tools for maintaining the system: clerks have drawn up many thousands of documents dealing with (domestic) slavery, sales deeds, proofs, etc. etc, and yes, also acts of emancipation.

British colonial administrators had not arrived in 1796 on the island with a clean slate on the subject of slave trade and slavery in 1796. They were aware of the developments in the UK that had led to the fight against the slave trade, and they had also extensively experienced the various forms of slavery in India—inclusive its many abuses. Intervention in India proved to be extremely difficult, but the first attempts to tackle slavery in Sri Lanka also failed. The "evils" were too deeply rooted.⁵⁷

This article focuses on a first, albeit very hesitant, push towards the abolition of domestic slavery. "1816" was really something new, despite its limitations. Children born free were required to remain in the home of the former owners until the age of twelve (girls) or fourteen (boys). That meant showing themselves as "benefactors of the human race" did not hurt, for the consequences of that "charitable" proposal were pushed far ahead—that delay approached the generic abolition of slavery, in 1832, although the final abolition in Sri Lanka was not implemented until 1843. The other groups spoke in the same terms, such as the Muslims: "We, (...) the Mahomedans (...) being likewise proprietors of slaves, and desirous of extending our voluntary

⁵⁷ See the anonymous pamphlet *Slavery and the Slave Trade in British India; with Notices of the Existence of these Evils in the Islands of Ceylon, Malacca, and Penang* (London: Thomas Ward and Co., 1841).

aid towards the eventual extinction of slavery on this island...”⁵⁸. And the Sinhalese: “[W]e, being desirous to grant our aid for the eventual extinction of slavery, most willingly coincide in that benevolent and humane act of declaring all children born (..) free...”⁵⁹ “We the undersigned Chitties”, etc, etc. The implementation of Johnston's proposal was laid down by the representatives of the Dutch Inhabitants and Burghers in eleven articles: Article 4 concerned the continued service at home of the boys and girls in question, who would subsequently receive their letter of manumission when they reached the age of 14 and 12 respectively (art. 5). At the end of that resolution an additional article was proposed, though not consented to unanimously, with the provision however that it would be inserted at the end of the foregoing resolutions, namely: “That the freeborn children shall, as a token of their freedom, be brought up in the habit of their native ancestors, and not wear any European dress (my underlining, LW), and be further taught, by such as may be capable of affording it, to read and write some native language”.⁶⁰

That would take a while, and by then, in the majority of cases, domestic slavery in the country had already ended naturally, due to lack of supply, and due to old age and death. That actually proved not to be problematic, for the society could provide many other opportunities to recruit domestic service personnel. That development, and the treatment of those domestics is beyond the scope of this article, but is relevant enough to study—inside and outside Sri Lanka.

Appendix 1: List of owners of three social groups [Dutch Inhabitant/Burghers, Sinhalese and Muslims] who in 1818 registered their domestic slaves in Galle.

The order of names in the Slave Registers of Galle is based upon the names of their domestics, who are registered in alphabetical order after their (given) names. Hence the order of their owners in the registers is arbitrary, and, in case they owned more slaves, they are mentioned several times. In this appendix, the owners are listed only once, with their domestics placed in alphabetical order after their owners' names. For practical reasons in this appendix the names of the owners are listed per social group: Dutch Inhabitants / Burghers, Sinhalese, and Muslims.

⁵⁸ Enclosure 2 in Extract of a despatch from Lieutenant-general Sir R. Brownrigg to Earl Bathurst, Colombo, 16 September 1816: meeting of 20 July 1816, *Return* 563..

⁵⁹ Enclosure 3 in Extract of a despatch from Lieutenant-general Sir R. Brownrigg to Earl Bathurst, Colombo, 16 September 1816: meeting of 22 July 1816, *Return*, 563-564.

⁶⁰ Enclosure 7 in Extract of a despatch from Lieutenant-general Sir R. Brownrigg to Earl Bathurst, Colombo, 16 September 1816: meeting of 15 July 1816, *Return*, 565-566.

Name of owner	Social group	Name of slave	Date of registr.	Age	Sex	Names of children	Free / Non Free	Children born after first registry, with sex and date of birth
Mrs Degen	DI/B	Jasmina	27/10	40	F	Adrina Jacoba Keetje Sofia	NF NF NF F	
		Sophia	17/10	68	F	Rosina	NF	
		October	17/10	40	M			
Mr Digen	DI/B	Malatie	17/10	36	F	Helena Catharina	NF NF	
Mrs J.J. Engelbregt [subscriber]	DI/B	Cannega	26/10	35	F			
Mr Van Hek	DI/B	Marques	28/10	40	M			
Mrs Ludevice	DI/B	Falentina	22/12	35	F	Harlekyn	NF	
		July	22/12	47	M			
Mr De Vos	DI/B	Rosina	17/10	83	F			
		Selvia	27/10	58	F			
		Philida	27/10	22	F			
Mr Johannes Anthonisz	DI/B	Selphia	09/09	45	F	Johana	NF	
<i>Registered by 7 owners: 9 female slaves, 3 male slaves, 9 children of these, of whom one free at the time of registration.</i>								
Don Abraham Dias <i>Guard Modliar</i> [subscriber]	S	Anthony Libina	14/12 14/12	35 60	M F			
Don Bastian Jayetilleke <i>Attepatte Modliar</i>	S	Casandra	14/12	45	F	Pinrehyi Abeya Inwema	NF NF NF	
		Dingey	14/12	28	F	Watowey Nonetey Rosina	NF NF F	Juan M – b. 8/7/1820 Cullo Appo M 29/9/1823
		Loesa	14/12	27	M			
		Samelie	14/12	44	F	Maleya Juanie Jubeya Justina Christina	NF NF NF NF NF	

		Sinne	14/12	40	F	Dona Cornelis	F NF	
<i>Registered by 2 owners:</i> 5 female slaves, 2 male slaves, 13 children of these, of whom two free at the time of registration and two born free after the regulation.								
Ahamadoe Lebbe Andoe Lebbe Markan	M	Alalie Miran Pakirel Sinnewel	06/11 06/11 06/11 06/11	39 42 35 37	M M F F	Mira Baney MademBandoo Amadiem Pakier Bando	NF NF NF NF	
Ander Lebbe Sinne Lebbe Markair	M	Bibie Mathem Bandoe Sinnewal Salem	30/10 30/10 30/10 30/10	48 56 45 44	F M F M	Mira Bandoe Pakier Ismael Aussin	NF NF NF NF	
Secadi Marcair Seddie Lebbe Markan	M	Castorie	06/11	35	F			
Alfred Rocoeh Cader Saiboe	M	Chimney Maddey	29/12	26	F	Ausin Bandoe	NF	
Mira Nayna Markan Nooema Lebbe Markan	M	Imnabaro mmoer	27/12	30	M			
Ahamadoe Natchia	M	Karittoo	24/11	35	F	Madun Bandoe	NF NF	
Alema Natcha	M	Mambey	24/10	40	F	Pakiral Kaysa Ausunuma	NF NF NF	
Mianayna Markan Udoema Lebbe Markan	M	Miran Bandoe Pakier Pakirel	07/12 07/12 07/12	12 30 14	M M F			
Ahamadoe Mapulley Ismael Lebbe Markan	M	Miran Pakiral	03/12 28/12	34 35	M F			

Miran Pirkuan	M	Ossenna	28/12	30	M			
Samsie Lebbe Slena Lebbe	M	[no name]		-	-	Palleaden Hadjie Ismael Ranneuwen	NF NF NF NF	
Ismael Lebbe Markan Sultan Sayboe	M	[no name]	29/12	-	-	Palleaden	NF	
Lemtenando Lindo Mihidin Banden	M?	Slematie	02/11	43	F	Pakiral Palley Kaymal Pakier Omoeran	NF NF NF NF NF	
Assen Nayna Camacapoelley Basin Balopla Rajab	M?	[no name]	04/11	-	-	Sinna Aman Paketteo	NF NF	
<i>Registered by 14 owners:</i>								
25 female slaves, 9 male slaves, three boxes without mention of name and sex, 26 children of these, of whom two free at the time of registration and two born free under the new ordinance.								

Source: Data retrieved from the "Alphabetical register of domestic slaves in and for the province or district of Galle [Ceylon] under the 9th regulation of 1818", National Archives, Kew, England, inv.nr. T-71-663 [Registers of the Office for the Registry of Colonial Slaves, 1813 to 1834, Ceylon: T-71-663]. NB: not all names were legible.

Appendix 2: List of owners of "Dutch Inhabitant and Burghers" who in 1818 registered their domestic slaves in Jaffna.

The order of names in the Slave Registers of Jaffna is based upon the names of their domestics, who are registered in alphabetical order after their (given) names. Hence the order of their owners in the registers is arbitrary, and, in case they owned more slaves, they are mentioned several times. In this appendix, the owners are listed only once, with their domestics placed in alphabetical order after their owners' names. In the Slave Register of Jaffna only one group is represented, comprising mostly names of members of the group "Dutch Inhabitants and Burghers", plus a few English names.

Name of owner	Name of slave	Date of registr.	Age	Sex	Names of children of female slave	NF/ F	Additional remarks
John A. Martensz [subscriber]	Andries	25/12	18	M	No name	NF	“Free”
Anna Henrietta Vanderspar	Achalus	31/10	18	M	Benjamin <i>m.</i>	NF	“Achalus died”
	Engeltina	31/10	21	F	Agate <i>f.</i>	F	Daughter of Hausa, Anjalina <i>f.</i> : born after registration
	Jesmena	31/10	38	F	Hausa <i>f.</i>	NF	
	Nasson Soentien	31/10 31/10	19 36	M F	Luwese <i>f.</i> Benjamin <i>m.</i> Andries <i>m.</i> David <i>m.</i> Ambron <i>m.</i>	F NF NF NF NF	“Free”
Salfelt	Albertina	02/11	20	F	No name	NF	“Free”
	Cryton	03/11	40	M			
	Castorie	03/10	50	F	Salmaran <i>m.</i>	NF	“Salmaran emancipated”
	Doretea	03/11	50	F	Castor <i>m.</i>	NF	“Phegelant emancipated”
					Phegelant <i>m.</i>	NF	
					Polcartus <i>m.</i>	NF	
					Rovette <i>f.</i>	NF	
					Castory <i>f.</i>	NF	
	Ormina <i>f.</i>	NF	“Ormina emancipated”				
	Orphus <i>m.</i>	NF	“Orphus emancipated”				
Minerva <i>f.</i>	NF	“Minerva emancipated”					
November Regena	03/11 03/11	55 58	M F	Noresa <i>f.</i>	F	“Mother died”	
Statira	03/11	60	F	Clermont <i>m.</i>	NF	“The Mother and Clermont and Stephanis free”	
				Stephanis <i>m.</i>	NF		
				Jesmie <i>f.</i>	NF		
				Amelie <i>f.</i>	NF		
				Marselena <i>f.</i>	NF		
Juliana Verwyk, widow of Isaac Van Hek [subscriber]	Abraham	03/11	26	M	Joseph <i>m.</i>	NF	“Joseph emancipated”
	Jacob	03/11	23	M			“Free”
	Maria	03/11	29	F	Jacob <i>m.</i>	NF	“Free”
	Orphius	03/11	21	M	Joseph <i>m.</i>	NF	“Free”
C.D. Craft	Alexander	04/11	50	M			“Dead”
E.R. Nagel	Benjamin	03/11	20	M			“Emancipated”
	Joseph	03/11	22	M			“Emancipated”
	Maria	03/11	50	F	Frans <i>m.</i> Ezau <i>m.</i> Anthonia <i>f.</i> David <i>m.</i>	NF NF NF NF	“Emancipated”
	Pamela	03/11	16	F			
John Verwijk [subscriber]	Bastiaan	02/11	45	M			“Died”

Gerrit Frankena [subscriber]	Cezar	02/11	49	M			"Free"
John A. Stutzer [subscriber]	Clementina	31/10	23	F			
	Janiera	31/10	40	F	Pandora <i>f.</i> Lastoor <i>m.</i> Doengo <i>m.</i> Dylla <i>m.</i> Jumat <i>m.</i>	F NF NF NF	"Mother and Children free"
	Lena	31/10	26	F	Lucie <i>f.</i> Daphena <i>f.</i> Benjamin <i>m.</i> Vanderkuys <i>m.</i>	NF NF NF NF	"Mother, Children free"
	Pequet Salman	31/10 31/10	30 30	M M			"Free"
John Vandergeucht	Christina	04/11	40	F			"Dead"
	Clemina	04/11	20	F			"Dead"
	Christoffel	04/11	27	M			"Dead"
	Nagie	04/11	54	F			
J. G. Kock	Cartolina	28/10	25	F			"Dead"
	Dalida	02/10	30	F			"Free"
	Urbanis	28/10	35	M			"Free"
William de Rooy [subscriber]	Danial	24/10	16	M			"Free"
	Silvea	24/10	15	F			"Free"
Rodrigo Frederick	Filida	31/10	40	F			
Levenardus Kroon	Hagar	30/10	60	F	Leontina <i>f.</i> Nepholis <i>m.</i> Phielies <i>m.</i>	NF NF NF	"Levantina emancipated"
	Minerva	30/10	32	F			"Mother and Children free"
	Olimpia	30/10	25	F	Lentiles <i>m.</i> David <i>m.</i> Jelenes <i>m.</i>	NF NF NF	
John Matthysz [subscriber]	Jasmie	28/10	36	F	Sefasina <i>f.</i>	F	"Sefasina emancipated"
Johana Vanderwerf, widow of Kegel	Joan	31/10	40	M			"Free"
	Maria	31/10	35	F	Joseph <i>m.</i>	NF	"Mother and Child not free"
	Ormine	31/10	19	F			"Emancipated"
Is ^a Fredericksz	Livina	02/11	60	F			"Dead"
Gerardina Giffening, widow of Toussaint [subscriber]	May	28/10	25	M			"Free"
	Onverwagt	28/10	23	M			"Died"
Ibrahim Anthonisz	Marial Sandy	02/11	68	F	Sawerie <i>m.</i>	NF	"Mother died"
John Boiteling	Maarte	02/11	31	F	Elisa <i>f.</i> Markes <i>m.</i> Neltjie <i>f.</i>	NF NF NF	"Free"
Debora Honsz	Elvira	02/11	38	F	Alexander <i>m.</i>	NF	"Mother and Child free"
	Maria	02/11	16	F			"Free"
Vandersprenkel	Maria	02/11	30	F			"Free"

John Barendsz	Madelend Nagy Natjie	03/11 03/11	17 62	F F	Amelie <i>f.</i> Deogoe <i>m.</i>	F NF	“Amelie emancipated” “Deogo[e] emancipated”
Johanna Dormieux	Philupus	02/10	26	M			“Free”
David Boot	Ramy	29/10	25	F	Panda <i>f.</i> Amar <i>m.</i> Albena <i>f.</i> Melenda <i>f.</i> Eprasena <i>f.</i>	NF NF NF NF NF	
John Kock	Silvea	28/10	62	F	Urbanus <i>m.</i> Delida <i>f.</i> Castelina <i>f.</i> Fransaeva <i>m.</i>	NF NF NF NF	“Silvea free”
	Selafina	25/10	32	F			“Dead”
Thomas Nagel	Sontee	02/11	55	F	Alexes <i>f.</i>	NF	“Free”
	Thesdorus	02/11	50	M			“Free”
Caterina Jobsford	Statira	02/11	28	F			“Free”
Maria Stol	Thesresia	24/11	25	F	Albertus <i>m.</i>	NF	
<p><i>Registered by 28 owners</i> 41 female slaves, 23 male slaves, 67 children, of whom 61 were not free at the time of registration, 6 children were freed. One child was born free after the new regulation. Non free domestics and their non free children together 125 enslaved persons > average of 4.5 slaves per household.</p>							

Source: Data retrieved from the “Alphabetical register of domestic slaves in and for the province or district of Jaffnapatam [Ceylon] under the 9th regulation of 1818”, National Archives, Kew, England, inv.nr. T-71-663 [Registers of the Office for the Registry of Colonial Slaves, 1813 to 1834, Ceylon: T-71-663].

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