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A SHORT HISTORY
OF HINDUISM
IN CEYLON



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C. S. NAVARATNAM

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IN
CEYLON



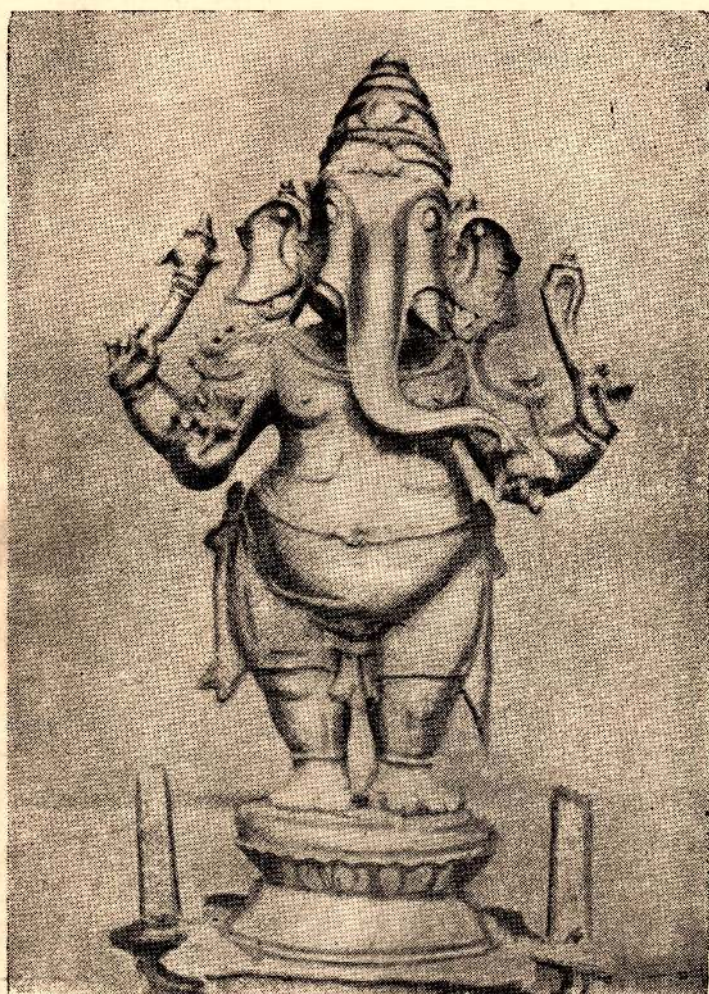
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A SHORT HISTORY OF HINDUISM
IN
CEYLON
AND
THREE ESSAYS ON THE TAMILS



BY

C. S. NAVARATNAM,

Late of the Tutorial Staff of Manipal Hindu College

AUTHOR OF

"TAMILS AND CEYLON"

"VANNI AND THE VANNIYAS"



1964

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JAFFNA

DEDICATED TO THE MEMORY
OF MY BELOVED SON-IN-LAW

A. NAGENDRA ESQ.

ADVOCATE

AND

MEMBER OF THE BAR COUNCIL

23-7-1914—22-9-1960

FOREWORD

A history of Hinduism in Ceylon is a long felt need. Historian Navaratnam has made my head reel in two hours of concentrated reading of the first seven chapters of his all - too "short history". Not that he had missed anything; but there is too much in too little word space and I wish he had dwelt a little more at length under most of his headings. "Aattupadai" (ஆற்றுப்படை) is a form of Tamil literary composition in which the author acts as a guide to a god, a great personage or some worthwhile objective. Navaratnam appears to have endeavoured just to do that and if that were his mission, I must say, he has succeeded in it magnificently. In the short two hours I had followed him through three thousand years of world events and over a thousand miles of zig-zagging through Ceylon by-ways and highways and jungles too. His bibliography is stunning. How he kept track of all his references is a marvel. I must read the book again. This, I feel, would be the honest opinion of every student of History of Ceylon and South India. The rest of the book is light reading. South Indian Inscriptions have been generally a closed book to Ceylon authors and for these references alone the author deserves our thanks and our congratulations. The contribution of Cholas, Cheras, and Pandyan to Buddhist shrines and institutions in Ceylon is worth a whole chapter, in place of the few scattered sentences penned here and there. He has also stimulated much fresh thinking about Thiruketheeswaram, Koneswaram, the Siva and Vishnu shrines at Dondra, the unusual Arthanariswara figure found at

Kahatagasdiliya and Berendi (Bairavar-Andi) Kovil at Sitawaka. I have no doubt that research students of Ceylon history would develop these short sketches into a book for each.

This is a historian's history which the ordinary reader and students of history should welcome with open arms.

"Koddil"

Thiruketheeswaram.

12-10-64.

K. Vaithianathan

P R E F A C E

In the last few decades many new facts have come to light with regard to the history of the ancient Tamils who inhabited the southern part of the Indian peninsula. They were a great maritime race and had trade relations with distant countries before the Christian era. It has been found that similar iron age finds were discovered in Philippines as those discovered in South India. The Assyrian and Babylonian empires traded with India by sea, and every article brought into Babylon before the fifth century B. C. bore Dravidian names. Trade by sea between India and Egypt of South Indian products is attested by records. Maritime trade of South India with the countries of the Eastern Mediterranean dates so far back as 1200 B. C. *

A branch of this enterprising Tamils settled in Ceylon centuries before Vijaya and his followers visited these shores. The influence which they exerted on the history of Ceylon is tremendous. Although today they number a little more than a million people, yet they have already produced great men who could compare favourably with those of any other land, and the number of great men which this community had produced in proportion to its population is truly remarkable.

HSI ;, pp. 75, 76 & 77 ; SIH. pp. 59, 60, 61.

A great line of Hindu mystics of both sexes lived in this land from time to time. Many Tamils from this Island have left their names in South India. There were those that renounced the world and spent the rest of their lives in the services of "Sivaperuman" like Gnanapiragasa Munivar, Thillainatha Thambiran, Illakana Muttukumara Thambiran and Swami Vipulananda. There were those pioneer scholars like Kanagasabaipillai, Thamotharampillai, Visuvanathapillai and others. Then we had men renowned in Siddhanta lore and great scholars like Sabapathy Navalar, Kasi Senthilnatha Aiyar and S. Sivapathasundaram; Yalpana Arumuga Navalar stands in a class by himself. He is a unique personality. The Tamils of Ceylon have also produced great poets like Sinnathamby Pulavar, Sivasambu Pulavar and Somasundara Pulavar.

There was another class of great men who were well-versed in the learning of the East and the West. Sir Muttu Coomaraswamy was a master of many European and Oriental languages. His lectures in Europe were well attended. He was the first Asiatic to receive a Knighthood, and was the first non-Christian to be admitted to the Bar at Lincoln's Inn. He did useful service, in the Legislative Council. His illustrious nephew Sir Ponnampalam Ramanathan stands on a pedestal of his own, a great legislator, a brilliant lawyer and a devoted votary of philosophical studies. In England (then) Mr. Ramanathan was called to the English Bar 'honoris causa' a concession which was granted previously only to the Prince of Wales and to Mr. Benjamin, the great American lawyer. His learned commentaries on the Christian Gospels of St. Matthew and St. John proved a harmonious interpretation

of the teachings of Jesus in the light of the doctrines of the Vedanta philosophy of India. Sir P. Ramanathan's scholastic brother Sir P. Arunachalam, the founder of the Ceylon National Congress, was a famous administrator. His Census Report of 1901 is a monument for all time. For a full lifetime Dr. Ananda Coomaraswamy has been interpreting the art, religion, philosophy and civilization of the East to Western audiences. He was also the great apostle of Indian nationalism in its cultural aspect as that of Rabindranath Tagore, and may be considered as one of the powerful forces in the Cultural Renaissance of India.

Besides these galaxy of famous men the Tamils have produced distinguished educationists, eminent men of science, reputed mathematicians, renowned athletes and outstanding sportsmen. In the last hundred years enterprising Tamils have gone out to Malaya to develop and enrich that country. To write the story of this royal race is, I consider, a proud privilege.

An attempt has been made in this small volume to present a short survey of Hinduism in Ceylon. The book does not claim to be an exhaustive or a full complete history of Hinduism in our Island. Like the history of the Tamils, the history of Hinduism in Ceylon has to be culled from many sources. A large number of historical sites in the traditional Tamil areas of the North and the East of the Island have not yet been excavated. A considerable number of Tamil inscriptions lie in the corners of museums unedited and unpublished. The archaeological finds relating to the history of the Tamils and their culture are not housed in one place. Some of the Polonnaruwa Saiva Bronzes are in the Colombo Museum and some in the Anu-

radhapura Museum. Similarly the Tirukketiswaram finds are not in one museum. No expert has so far made use of these materials to draw conclusions about this ancient emporium. Though the influence of the Tamils on the history of Ceylon for more than two millenniums was tremendous, yet the History of Ceylon published by the University of Ceylon has given only a few pages to their history. In the last few years some writers have attempted to belittle the history of the Tamils. Truth should not be suppressed and Truth cannot be suppressed for long. For the last thirty years the Ceylon University has done very little assistance to resurrect and develop the history of the Tamils. Under these circumstances writers of my category would find it extremely difficult to write even a small book of this type.

On the other hand the Tamils are greatly indebted to the impartial researches done in the field of Ceylon History by eminent Government officers: Messrs Bertolucci, Hugh Nevill, George Turnour, Simon Casie Chetty, J. P. Lewis, H. Parker, Frank Modder, R. W. Ievers and H. W. Codrington. Sir Paul E. Pieris and Sir Emerson Tennent have also distinguished themselves by their researches. The unbiased investigations made by Archaeological Commissioners like Messrs H. C. P. Bell, E. R. Ayrton and A. M. Hocart deserve great praise. Mr. M. D. Raghavan has done a good piece of job in the field of sociology.

It should be remembered that the Tamil inhabitants of the Island in ancient times were mostly Saivites who worshipped Siva, Murukan, Ganesha etc. Side by side with these deities there were also temples dedicated to Vishnu. Tirumular who lived before the

eighth century calls Ceylon as "Sivapumi" and this fact is further endorsed in the thirteenth century by Umaphy Sivam, one of the spiritual patriarchs of the Saivite Church, in his Kovil Puranam.* Arunagiri Swamihal who lived in the fifteenth century has extolled the glories of four Murukan temples in Ceylon.‡

There is ample evidence to show that most of our celebrated temples in Ceylon followed the injunctions of the Agamas in the performance of all religious ceremonies, and in the construction of sacred edifices. The ruins of the Padawiya temple reveal the ground plan. Here the "Suttupirakaram" seems to be in accordance with Agama Shastras. The Berendi Kovil near Sitawaka built in the sixteenth century has a gutter in the main shrine like that of a cow's head (Komukai) for the escape of the "Apisheka" waters. The excavations of Polonnaruwa has brought to light many utensils and lamps used in Saiva worship. The lithic records of Munneswaram reveal gifts given by Parakrama Bahu VI for the daily offerings of rice and curry etc. for the Lord of Munneswaram. A Kantalai

* "வலங்கைமான் மழுவோன் போற்றும் வாளர்
வரசை நோக்கி,

யலைந்திடும பிண்ட மண்ட மவைசம மாதலாலே,

யிலங்கைநே ரிடைபோ மற்றை யிலங்குபிங்

கலையா நாடி,

நலங்கிள ரிமய நேர்போ நடுவபோஞ் சுழளை நாடி."

—Umaphy Sivam—Kovil Puranam.

‡ IMS. pp. 45, 80. They are Kathiramalai, Tirikonamalai, Senkadanagari and Nallur. [The author M. K. Veluppillai was a student of Sri la Sri Arumuga Navalar and was the Head Master of the Navalar School at Chidambaram for several years. He was well-versed in Saivite lore.] He says Tirikonamalai in Tirupugal refers to Kanchatiri at Tiriyay today known as Kandaswamy Malai (See infra p. 88) Tiriyay was associated with early Pallava culture.

inscription of the twelfth century mentions donations made to the temple of Then Kailasam for maintaining an evening lamp, flower garden and dancing girls. A wooden chariot that was in front of the Vishnu temple at Dondra was destroyed by the Portuguese. Sir Alexander Johnston while describing his visit to Tirukovil in 1806 speaks of a temple car which was made three years earlier. All these facts indicate that most of our temples followed the canons of the Agamas.

Another noteworthy fact that should be remembered is that most of our ancient temples to Lord Siva are in close proximity to ancient tank settlements. It only denotes that these areas were colonized at a very early date by a people who understood rice cultivation most probably by people from South India. It is also interesting to note that most of our illustrious temples to Lord Murukan are in the eastern coastal areas.

The three historical articles in this book, "The Contribution of the Tamils to Buddhism," "Tamil Settlements in Sinhalese Areas" and "The Status of the Tamil Language in Ancient Ceylon," were written much earlier, but as they consisted of a few pages they were not published. Now with the publication of this book I thought of annexing them to this new work. It is my hope that this book will be a useful supplement to my earlier publications "Tamils and Ceylon" and "Vanni and the Vanniyas."

I am greatly indebted to Mr. V. Veerasingam, J. P., M. B. E. for having been good enough to go through my manuscripts with patience and for his valuable suggestions.

I am also greatly obliged to Mr. C. Saravananpavan of the Tutorial Staff of Manipay Hindu College

for the English translations of the Tamil quotations in Chapters II and V.

I am also greatly indebted to Sir. Kanthiah Vaithianathan Kt., C. B. E. President of the Tirukketiswaram Restoration Society and President of the All Ceylon Hindu Congress, for giving me a valuable foreword for this book.

Lastly I wish to express my thanks to my kinsman Mr. V. Arunachalam for getting me the photographs of Hindu temples especially those of the Eastern Province.

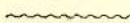
Navaly
Manipay
Oct., 1964

C. S. Navaratnam.

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BIBLIOGRAPHY

ABBREVIATIONS

- AC. Account of Ceylon, by Bertolacci
- AIWC. Ancient Irrigation Works of Ceylon I, II, III,
by R. L. Brohier
- AJ. Ancient Jaffna, by Mudaliyar C. Rasanaya-
gam
- ALTSRC. Ancient Land Tenure System and Revenue
in Ceylon, by H. W. Codrington
- ARKD. Archaeological Report of the Kegalle District
by H. C. P. Bell
- ASCAR. } Archaeological Survey of Ceylon
or } Annual Report
ASC.
- ASCM. Archaeological Survey of Ceylon Memoirs
- ASSI. Archaeological Survey of South India
- Bald. A Description of the Great and Famous Isle
of Ceylon, by Philip Baldeus
- BT. Buddhism and Tamil (Tamil), by Mylai Seeni
Venkatasamy.
- C. Ceylon, by Sir Emerson Tennent
- CAS (ASCAR).
- CCR. (1911) Ceylon Census Report 1911, E. B. Denham
- Ceilao }
Cl. } Ceilao, by Captain Ribeiro—Sir Paul E. Pieris
- CHJ. Ceylon Historical Journal

- CH. Ceylon and the Hollanders, by Sir Paul E. Pieris
- CJS. Ceylon Journal of Science
- CLR. Ceylon Literary Register
- CNR. Ceylon National Review
- CPE. Ceylon Portuguese Era I, II, by Sir Paul E. Pieris
- CV. Culavamsa I, II (Geiger)
- do Couto The History of Ceylon, JCBRAS. Vol. XX, No. 40
- DDE. Are Dravidians Dynastic Egyptians, by Dr. J. T. Cornelius
- DKM. Daksina Kailasa Manmiam (Sanskrit) Transl. by Vathiry, S. Nagalingampillai
- DKP. Daksina Kailasa Puranam (Tamil), by Panditharasar
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- EHC. Early History of Ceylon (1948), by G. C. Mendis
- EZ. Epigraphia Zeylanica I—V
- GA. Guide to Anuradhapura, by D. T. Devendra
- GAP. God of the Adam's Peak, by Dr. S. Parnavitana
- HB. History of Buddhism, by Rahula Walpola
- HC. History of Ceylon, by Father S. G. Perera
- HCIP. History and Culture of the Indian People, Vols. I, II & III
- HIIA History of Indian and Indonesian Art, by Dr. Ananda K. Coomaraswamy
- HJ. History of Jaffna (Tamil), by A. Mootothamby
- HM. History of Malaya, by Swami Satyananda

- HPSAC. A Historical, Political and Statistical Account of Ceylon, by Pridam
- HRC. A Historical Relation of Ceylon, by Robert Knox (Ceylon Historical Journal)
- HSI. History of South India, by Nilakanta Sastri
- IMS. Ila Mandala Sathakam (Tamil), by M. K. Veluppillai
- JCBRAS. Journal of the Ceylon Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society
- KC. The Karava of Ceylon, by M. D. Raghavan
- KK. Konesar Kalveddu (Tamil), by Kavy Raja Varotayan
- KM. Kailaya Malai (Tamil), by Mutturasar
- KP. Kathiramalai Pallu (Tamil), Edited by V. Coomaraswamy
- KPM. Konasala Puraṇam (Tamil)
- KS. Kokila Sandesa, Edited by P. S. Perera
- LCTC. Laws and Customs of the Tamils of Ceylon, by Dr. H. W. Thambiah
- MBD. Monograph of the Batticaloa District, by S. O. Canagaretnam
- MM. Munneswara Manmiam (Tamil)
- MNCP. Manual of the North Central Province, by R. W. Ievers
- MPD. Manual of the Puttalam District, by Frank Modder
- MV. Mahavamsa (Wilhelm Geiger)
- PLC. Pali Literature of Ceylon, by Dr. G. P. Malakasegara
- PVP. Paralai Vinayagar Pallu (Tamil) by Sinnathamby Pulavar
- RAS. (ASCAR) Reports of the Archaeological Surveys
- RV. Rajavaliya, translated by B. Gunasekara
- SCS. Sinhalese Caste System, by W. H. Gilbert
- SHC. A Short History of Ceylon, by H. W. Codrington

- SIH. A Survey of Indian History, by K. M. Panikkar
- SII. South Indian Inscriptions
- SM. Segarajasekara Malai (Tamil), by Soman
- SZ. Studies in Zen, by Dr. D. T. Suzuki
- TA. Tamilian Antiquity, by A. Mootoothamby Pillai
- TAC. Tamils and Ceylon, by C. S. Navaratnam
- TAP. Taprobane, by Hugh Nevill
- TC. Tamil Culture volumes
- TC. (1700—1800) Travels in Ceylon (1700—1800)
Translated and edited by Raven Hart
- TM. Tirumantiram (Tamil), by St. Tirumular
- TPS. Tamil Pulavar Sarithiram (Tamil),
by Kumaraswamy Pulavar
- TSC. Traditional Sinhalese Culture, by Ralph Pieris
- TV. Tirukonasala Vaipavam (Tamil), by
V. Akilasapillai
- UHC. University of Ceylon—History of Ceylon
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- Upham. Upham I, II & III
- VS. Voices in Stones, by E. H. Weerasooriya
- VP. (Preface) Vaikia Panchangkam (Hindu Calendar)
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- VV. Vanni and the Vanniyas, by C. S. Navaratnam
- YVK. Yalpana Vaipava Kammuthy, by K. Velupillai
- YVM. } Yalpana Vaipava Malai, by Mailvagana
VM. } Pulavar. Second Edition, Mudaliyar Kula
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CHAPTER I

Hinduism in the Pre-Vijayan Period

Hinduism is a social and religious organization in India. It is a league of religions which accept the authority of the Vedas. It is a synthesis of all types of religious experience. It is a whole and complete view of life. After all it is a growing tradition and not a fixed revelation.

Modern Hinduism is based on the Puranas and is divided into a number of groups as Saivism, Vaishnavism and Shaktism. In spite of their akinness, they differ widely in their philosophy and ceremonials. Shaktism is mainly prevalent in Bengal. Saivism in its orthodox form is mostly found in South India, Ceylon, Nepal and Kashmir. Many of the elements of Saivism were found in the religious beliefs of the people who once inhabited Mohenjo Daro and Harappa in the third millennium B.C. Thus Saivism lays claim to be the most ancient living faith in the world.

When we examine the legends, traditions and the beliefs relating to the pre-Vijayan period in such Indian works as the Ramayana, the Mahabharata and the Skanda Purana, we are led to infer that Saivism was prevalent in Ceylon at a very early period. The epic king Ravana was a great devotee of the Lord of Koneswaram, and his devotion to Siva is immortalized in the

hymns of the Tamil Saivite saints. His mother and his wife Vandothari * were ardent devotees of Lord Siva. Ravana's father-in-law Mayan built the temple at Tirukketiswaram in Mannar Prince Rama, the founder of the temple of Rameswaram, seems to have worshipped Lord Siva at Tirukketiswaram on his return to India after the release of his wife Sita.

The story of the Ramayana is too firmly rooted in the traditions of the Island that it cannot be lightly glossed over. Vibhisana, the brother of Ravana, is still worshipped at Kelaniya. Kalyani which was the ancient name of Kelaniya was reputed to have been the capital of King Ravana, and perhaps later to have been

* வண்டம ரோதி மடந்தை பேணின
பண்டையி ராவணன் பாடி யுய்ந்தன
தொண்டர்கள் கொண்டு துதித்த பின்னவர்க்
கண்டம எரிப்பன வஞ்செழுத்துமே.

Panchahakkara Thirupathikam V. 8. St. Sambandar.

The Letters Five were used and preserved
By Uma herself of the fragrant locks ;
Ravana of yore saved himself by their use
And the Servants of God rose to power and wealth by their help.

ஏந்தரும் ஏழுலகேத்த எவ்வுரு வுந்தன் னுருவாய்
ஆர்கலிசும் தென்னிலங்கை அழகமர் வண்டோதரிக்குப்
பேரரு ளின்ப மளித்த பெருத்துறை மேயபிராணைச்
சீரிய வாயாற் குயிலே தென்பாண்டி நாடனைக் கூவாய்.

—*Thiruvagam Koelpathu V. 2. St. Manickavasgar.*

To the praise of the seven worlds
He showed that every form is His ;
And to Vandothari of Lanka South
He granted divine bliss revealing
This truth in grace supreme.
He in Perunthurai doth reside
He, the Lord of Pandya Nad South.
Sing thou to Him O ! Koel !
In thy tune melodious.

the capital of a Naga Kingdom. Lakshmana, the brother of Rama, is worshipped in Sabaragamuwa. Negombo, according to Simon Casie Chetty, is derived from Nihumba, the son of Kumbakarna, the brother of Ravana. There is an ancient temple for Sita Amman in Nuwara-Eliya* District. Kumbhakaragama was a potter's village to south of Anuradhapura.† There are place names like Ruvana-alla, Ravana-guhava (Ravana's cave) Sita Eliya,‡ Sitawaka and Sita Wewa. Hakgalla Gardens are mentioned by a number of writers as the famous Asoka Gardens of Ravana's time.

There is an interesting legend that Buona Vista a beauty spot in Galle was part of the great Himalayas. Hanuman the divine monkey rushed to the Himalayas in search of a herb which was an antidote to poison of the arrows. To save time he uprooted the rock of the Himalayas where the herb grew, brought it to Galle and dropped it in the sea.

The Eastern Province has many traditions connected with the Ramayana. A cleft in the great rock at Konamalai is attributed to Ravana's great strength. Ravana is said to have worshipped Lord Siva at Koneswaram, and performed the last funeral rites of his mother at the hot springs of Kanniya. Little Basses and Great Basses are called the forts of Ravana.

Near Mannar is an island known as Thallaady where Hanuman is said to have staggered while bringing the Sanjeevi Parvata to the rescue of Lakshmana. Thallaady in Tamil means staggering. Rama is said to have planted his valiant bow at Villundy near Jaffna,

* The glade of (Ravana's) city.

† JCBRAS (1959) Vol. VI p. 157.

‡ Sita's glade.

and from thence there was a perennial spring. All these lend support to the historical visit of Rama to Ceylon. They also support the fact that Hinduism was prevalent in Ceylon during the Ramayana period

In the Tamil classics the Tamil speaking areas are divided into Cheramandalam, Cholamandalam, Pandymandalam, Thondamandalam and Ilamandalam (Ceylon). This only shows that Ceylon and South India were under one cultural orbit.

It is not surprising that from the remotest period similar gods and goddesses were worshipped in South India and Ceylon. The primitive Tamils worshipped Murukan and Siva on the tops of hills and mountains. So we find Kalastri, Tiruvannamalai, Palani, Swami-malai, Tiruthany and Tirupparankuntram as ancient places of worship. In Ceylon too, ancient places of Hindu worship are on the hills and mountains as Konamalai, Kathiramalai, Uganthamalai, Kandaswami-malai, Keerimalai, Sivanolipadam and Kudiramalai, (Asuvagiri ?). Some of these sacred abodes of the gods are attested by Sanskrit works like the Siva Puranam and Daksina Kailasa Manmiam.

Murukan worship was prevalent among the Tamils even in the second millennium B. C. This is attested by the urn-burials of Adichanallur that were discovered some decades ago. The discovery of such urn burials in the Puttalam District in 1955 speaks of a Tamil culture in Ceylon in the pre-Vijayan period. The poems of "Purananuru" a Sangam work say that such burials were an extant custom.

The worship of the seven goddesses (Nachchimar or Saptamatrikas *) was also prevalent in ancient Ceylon.

-
- | | |
|----------------------------|---|
| * 1. Brahma (Bramani) | 2. Maheswara (Maheswari) |
| 3. Kumara (Kumari) | 4. Vishnu (Vaishnavi) |
| 5. Varaha (Varahi) | 6. Indra (Indrani) |
| 7. Yama (Yami or Chamunda) | Nos. 3 and 6 were found in Mihintale. No. 5 in Mahakandarawa, |

The energetic female principle of the Vedic gods constituted the Saptamatrikas. Temples dedicated to these goddesses were at Mannakandal between Odduchuddan and Putukkudiyiruppu. There were also temples dedicated to these goddesses in the Jaffna Peninsula.

In India sectarian religions like Saivism, Vaishnavism, Jainism and Buddhism all originated before the Christian era. With their coming, the older gods of the Vedic pantheon receded to the background. In the Puranic period (320 — 650 A. C.) the religious movement definitely swung from the abstract to the concrete. The ceremonial worship of the images of Vishnu, Siva and other gods installed, took the place of sacrificial offerings. Vishnu and Siva gained undisputed supremacy.

Thus the worship of the Saptamatrikas in ancient Ceylon indicates the cultural link between India and Ceylon before the Puranic period. This cult bears evidence for the antiquity of Hinduism in this Island. Some of the images of these goddesses are today in the Anuradhapura museum. These images might be of a later period, but the cult is pre-puranic.

The Vaipava Malai, a record of the historical traditions of Jaffna written by Mailvagana Pulavar for the Dutch Governor in 1736, makes a positive statement that Prince Vijaya before assuming the kingship of the land built the Koneswaram temple at Konamalai in the East, Santhirasegaram at Dondra Head in the South, Naguleswaram in the North and rebuilt Tirukketiswaram in the West which had long been in ruins. All these indicate the presence of Hindu settlements in the Island. Besides, the Nagas one of the ancient inhabitants of Ceylon worshipped the "Siva Lingam" as did those in the mainland of India. The celebrated temple of Tirukketiswaram and Nagarcoil in the eastern coasts of the Jaffna Peninsula appear to be closely associated with the Nagas.

In the early period of Anuradhapura we read of the presence of Brahmans in large numbers. When the uncles of Pandukabhaya sought to put him to death, Pandula, a rich and learned Brahman, not only taught him every accomplishment necessary for a king but also provided him enough money and soldiers to gain his kingdom.* When Pandukabhaya founded the city of Anuradhapura, he constructed residences for the different classes of people and assigned them their quarters. Special buildings were set apart for the recital of 'mantras'†. Pandula's son Canda also helped him in his wars. Subsequently when he became king he made Canda his royal chaplain in grateful return for his services. Mention is also made of a Brahman chief engineer Jotiya in Anuradhapura.¹ The ancient inscriptions at Sasseruva in the Kurunegala District and at Yangala in the Nuwara-kalawiya District mention caves belonging to Brahmans.² In the Piccandiya rock inscription, one of the oldest, mention is made of a Brahman, Gobuti as the teacher and physician of Devanampiya Tissa.³ When King Tissa marked the boundaries of Anuradhapura, he had to pass a shrine belonging to a Brahman named Diyavasa.⁴ Devanampiya Tissa's purohita (family priest) accompanied his nephew Arittha on an embassy to Asoka.⁵ The Brahmans mentioned in the chronicles and in the inscriptions were naturally those who were in sympathy with Buddhism. Under these circumstances it is probable that Brahmans must have been living in pre-Vijayan period too.

* Mv (Geiger) Chap. X, V. 20—24.

† do do do V. 102

1 Mv (Turnour) Chap. X

2 JCBRAS Vol. XXXI No. 82 p. 322, 323.

3 JCBRAS Vol. VI (1959) p. 88.

4 JCBRAS Vol. XXXI No. 82 p. 322

5 Mv (Geiger) Chap. XI V. 20—26.

Some of the early kings of Anuradhapura had names like Siva, Mahasiva, Mutasiva etc. Even in the earliest of Brahmi inscriptions found at Valaellugodakanda⁶ and at Erupotana⁷ names like Sivaguta and Siva are mentioned. One of the inscriptions of the early Christian era discovered in the Ruhuna National Park mentions a place name, Siva Nakara.⁸ These facts clearly indicate the antiquity of Hinduism in Ceylon.

The prevalence of a Hindu cult among the Veddas of Ceylon, an aboriginal tribe clearly shows that these people continued their old faith in the secluded jungles unaffected by the advent of Buddhism. Those who have made a special study of the Veddas state that they worship 'Kande Yaka' most probably Kandaswamy, a protector of the hill tribes. Another deity worshipped by them is 'Bilinda Yaka', brother of 'Kanda Yaka'. Bilinda in Sinhalese means child. Ganesha among the Hindus is known as Pillaiyar (child). He is known as the brother of Kandaswamy. Valli is a common name found among Vedda women. One of the consorts of Lord Kandasamy is known by the same name. The long continued association of the Veddas with the temple of Kataragama also supports the prevalence of a Hindu cult among the Veddas.

The internal evidence furnished by the Skanda Purana, the Sangam works and even the Pali chronicles go to show that Hinduism was in Ceylon centuries before the advent of Buddha.

St. Tirumular who belongs to the early Siddha school in his great philosophical work Tirumantiram mentions

6 JCBRAS Vol. V Part II p. 141.

7 JCBRAS Vol. XIII No. 45 p. 178.

8 JCBRAS Vol. VI (1959) p. 63.

Ceylon as Sivabhumi * — a land hallowed by the temples dedicated to Siva.

Sir William Jones, a reputed scholar of the nineteenth century, after having an investigation of the various monuments of Hindu antiquity found in Ceylon expressed the opinion: “ This island was peopled time out of memory by the Hindu race ”. †

* Tm verse 2747. The author St. Tirumular must have lived before the seventh century A. C. He is mentioned by St. Sundarar in his Tiruttondattokai’.

† CLR Part I. p. 63.

CHAPTER II

Hinduism in the Anuradhapura Period.

Ceylon from the beginnings of its history has been influenced by the waves of culture that originated in India. Every great cultural movement of the continent has left its impression on Ceylon.

When Buddhism and Jainism were first introduced into Tamilakam about two centuries after the time of their illustrious founders, they were considered merely as systems of thought and were received with open arms. The ferment introduced by Jainism and Buddhism stirred men's minds. It was an age when Heroism was exalted to the status of a cult in the Tamil country. The war-god Murukan was worshipped from the earliest times. Siva was venerated as an embodiment of Truth and Mayon, the blue-complexioned one, adored as an embodiment of Fame or Prosperity.

A similar reception was given to Buddhism when it was first introduced into the Island in the third century B. C. The basic culture of the people was Hinduism and the new faith was built on the old religious beliefs and practices. From that time onwards Hinduism and Buddhism thrived in the Island without opposition. Hence we find in Ceylon viharas in close proximity to Hindu temples. In certain centres of worship Buddhists and Hindus offer prayers to the same deity in unison.

The Buddhists often worship Hindu gods in their deva-layas with appropriate offerings and salutations. They adore them not for spiritual enlightenment as the Hindus, but to gain material ends. The popular Hindu gods among them are Vishnu, Murukan or Subramaniya, Aiyandar and Ganesha. Vishnu is the chief guardian deity of the Island, and the protector of the religion of the Buddha. Murukan is the patron deity of the people of Ruhuna. Aiyandar (Aiyana) is the presiding deity over tanks, lakes and forests. Ganesha is the guardian god of the city of Anuradhapura and the Bo-Tree. Pattini is the goddess of chastity and the protector from epidemics.

The Tamils who are mostly Hindus worship these deities in their 'Kovils'. In addition they have temples to Lord Siva and his consort Parvati. Some of the oldest Hindu temples in Ceylon are those dedicated to Lord Siva.

The kings from Vijaya to Devanampiya Tissa were Hindus, and the prevailing religion of the country at that time was Hinduism. Folk cult and the worship of spirits were also current among the masses. During the time of King Elala Hinduism was very popular, though Buddhism was the state religion. Later whenever Tamil kings ruled the Island Hinduism received full patronage.

The palm-leaves manuscripts of Ridi Vihara give in detail the first state visit of King Dutugemunu (101—77 B. C.) to the new vihara. The king was accompanied by five hundred Bhikkus and one thousand five hundred Brahmans.* According to a Sinhalese tradition and the Sinhalese poem "Kanda Upata" Dutugemunu went to Kataragama on pilgrimage, invoked the aid of the Lord

* JCBRAS. Vol. XXIX No. 76 p. 139

and received his help. Thereafter, when he became king, he built and endowed the temple in fulfilment of his vow. A temple dedicated to Lord Skanda existed at Katarama long before Dutugemunu rebuilt it. It is possible the Veddas would have had only a "Paranasalai" (a hut made of leaves) for their shrine.

The Mahavamsa which glorifies Dutugemunu as a zealous champion of Buddhism had found it prudent to omit all references to his building the temple for the war-god. According to certain Buddhist texts constructing shrines on behalf of Lord Buddha alone is considered a meritorious act, and constructing one to a 'deva' is of minor importance.

From all what has been said it is clear that by the beginning of the Christian era Hinduism had established a firm footing in Ceylon. Gaja Bahu I (174—196) who was invited by the great Chera monarch Senguttuvan to be present at the inauguration of the temple built by him for the worship of Kannakai, introduced this South Indian cult into Ceylon under the name Kannakai Amman (Tamil) or Pattini Deviyo (Sinh). Many festivals and sacrifices accompanied with great rituals and ceremonies began to be performed in honour of this goddess. Though Pattini was a deified Hindu, her worship has been introduced into Buddhist Ceylon, and her cult is more popular and alive in this Island than in her own country India.

The destruction of Hindu temples in the eastern coasts by Mahasena (334—362) and the building of viharas instead did not deter Hindus in the Island from following their traditional faith. On the other hand these oppressions only tended to strengthen Hindu learning and culture.

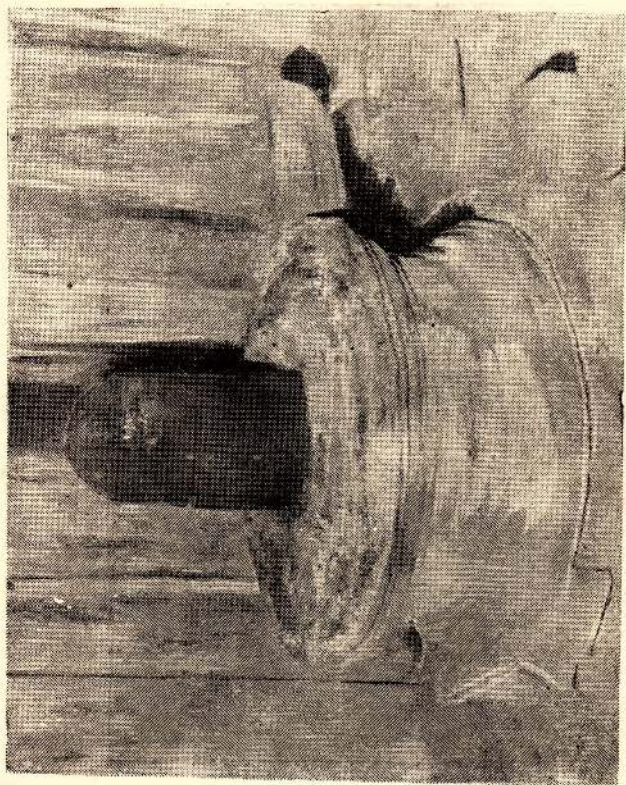
At this time the ascendancy of the Kalabhras to power in South India over the Chera, Chola and Pandya kingdoms retarded the cultural influence of the Tamils on Ceylon. The Kalabhras were considered as enemies of civilization by the Tamils, for they upset the established political order. They seem to have been Buddhists and Buddhism flourished under them. This period between the third and sixth centuries is considered a dark period in South Indian history.

Concerning Mahatittha or Matota H. W. Codrington says: "About A. C. 500 it was in the hands of an independent prince just as Colombo was in the fourteenth century." * Because it was the port of South India, there was a strong Tamil settlement and as its inhabitants were totally different from the rest of the population in race and religion they seem to have had an independent ruler. Even in the fourth century Mahasena did not attempt to demolish the shrine at Tiruketiswaram, though he destroyed Hindu temples in the eastern coasts. Probably Matota was not under the jurisdiction of the rulers of Anuradhapura then.

In the early fifth century when the Pandyas were rulers in Anuradhapura, Kulakodan a celebrated Chola prince repaired to Trincomalee and built the temple of Koneswaram. His visit was a source of encouragement to the Hindus and to Hindu institutions. According to Konesar Kalveddu and the Tirukonasala Puranam, Kulakodan first got down the Vanniyas as custodians of the temple at Trincomalee. Perhaps the descendants of these Vanniyas became later the chieftains of the different principalities of the Vauni Districts. It was these chieftains who refused the payment of tributes to King Agbo I † (568—601).

* SHC p. 32

† Vm. p. 12.



SIVA LINGAM

Tirukarasai in Muthur Pattu



Isurumuniya "The Two Lovers"
Indicate the influence of Gupta Art.
Probably Siva and his consort Parvati.

The piece of sculpture depicting a man and a woman at Isurumuniya commonly known as 'The Two Lovers' indicate the influence of Gupta art. It appears to be an Ajanta fresco in stone. The sacred thread worn on the left shoulder of the male figure, the circular 'Tiruvasi' in the rear an emblem of benign grace all go to show the images to be Hindu deities. The woman while being seated on the lap of her lover performs a 'mutra' with her right hand. There is an air of divinity in her look. Such expressions in monuments of art are indications of gods and goddesses and not of human beings. Probably the figures are representations of Siva and his consort Parvati. She being a mountain maid seems to have preferred Isurumuniya rock in Anuradhapura as her sacred abode. The quiver hung on the back of the male figure possibly denotes Siva's assumption of the hunter's form anticipating a bout of archery with Arujuna before blessing him at the end by presenting him a war weapon, (the pasupata); we are led to infer that Isurumuniya or (Iswara-Muni)* was the sacred abode of Iswara and his consort, Parvati, before it was turned to a Buddhist vihara. This piece of art must have been executed for the worship of Hindu devotees on the orders of the early kings of Anuradhapura.

When Hindus worship a personal god, their god has always a consort. They do not worship a bachelor or a virgin. Siva is male and female and his image Arthanariswara signifies the masculine and feminine functions of the supreme being. A bronze figure of Arthanariswara holds an esteemed place among the bronzes of the Anuradhapura museum. The most striking feature of this work of art is that there are two standing figures —one male and the other female—

* Iswara yogi or sage.

facing opposite directions. On viewing this figure from the front it cannot be noticed that there is another figure in the rear, and likewise it does not reveal the presence of a figure in the front when looked at from the rear. In this special feature lies the genius of the sculptor.

Now to return to events in South India, the Pallava period is important, for it represents the impact of an Aryan civilization on Dravidian culture. It was during this period that the civilization of the Tamils spread to distant lands of South-East Asia. Under the Pallavas Astronomy, Philosophy, Music, Art and Literature flourished. The Pallava kings fostered the spread of Sanskrit learning. The Bhakti movement a fervid emotional surrender to God found expression in the Bhagavata Purana and the Thevaram hymns. The Vedic gods were relegated to the background and the worship of Siva and Vishnu became popular. Once again Hinduism became the living faith of South India, and as a result Jainism and Buddhism disappeared from the Tamil country.

All these changes in South India had its own repercussion on the cultural history of the Island. At Isurumuniya, carved in the rock, is the relief of a dignified personage seated in a royal pose. This is the figure of Aiyandar (Aiyana) considered as a deity presiding over tanks and lakes. This cult seems to have been introduced into Ceylon from South India at a very early date. The figure at Isurumuniya and the elephants carved below on the rock are executed in the Pallava style of architecture. The elephants resemble those of Mamallapuram in stateliness strength and dignity. The Aiyandar cult soon replaced the worship of the spirits that was also current in early Ceylon.



ARTHANARISWARA (male representation)

Holds a lotus bud in its right hand. The left hand is grasping a pole with nodules. (sugar-cane or bamboo). A dagger hangs from the waist. On close examination the crescent on the head-dress is noticeable. Kahatagasdigiliya Find. Bronze,

Ht. 12 ins., 6th cent. A. C.

By Courtesy of the Dept. of Archaeology.



ARTHANARISWARA
(female representation)

Wears a conical head-dress. On her left hand is a bird perhaps a parrot. She seems to wear the sacred wedlock. The right hand clenches the pole. She is Uma the Divine Mother.

By Courtesy of the Dept. of Archaeology.

A granite pillar of exquisite workmanship stands at the entrance of one of the caves in the Trincomalee fort. It shows great Pallava influence. Most probably it is one of the pillars of the shrine destroyed by the Portuguese. The Pallavas must have built this shrine in their most flourishing period. (300—900 A.C.)

The Kuccuveli Sanskrit inscription unearthed in Trincomalee District is in the Grantha script of old Pallava style. It indicates the connections of the Pallavas with Ceylon. The Gedige at Nalanda near Matale is Pallava in inspiration. The Triyay guardstones have the Pallava influence. They are earlier than those of Thuparama and Ratnapasada in Anuradhapura.

State Patronage

Sinhalese kings with the exception of Mahasena gave equal support to Buddhism and Hinduism, and a few evinced unlimited interest in Hindu institutions and affairs. Gaja Bahu I according to Konesar Kalveddu made cash endowments to the temple at Konamalai.¹ Agbo IV built the temple of Vishnu at Dondra in the middle of the seventh century.² Kassapa III (717—724) compelled the Brahmans to observe their religious customs.³ Mahinda II (772—792) is said to have restored many temples of the gods and to have entertained the Brahmans with delicious food.⁴ Sena II (851—885) presented gold and other ornaments to Brahmans.⁵

At a time when Sinhalese monarchs were rearing temples to Hindu gods in the South, Ugra Singan and

1 KK

2 SHC p. 37

3 Cv. Chap. 48. V. 23.

4 Cv. Chap. 48. V. 143, 144.

5 Cv. Chap. 51. V. 65.

his queen Marutappiravikavali, according to the Vaipava Malai founded the Kandaswamy temple at Mavittapuram in the North. At the queen's request her father (a Chola king ?) sent a Brahman Periyamanathular of Chidambaram to officiate at the temple together with all the necessary images.

Ruins of Hindu Temples

In 1890 H. C. P. Bell found the basement (18 feet square) of a Pillaiyar temple close to the Basawakkulam sluice. He also found a stone 'lingam' with images of Ganesha and Kali standing on a bull's head.* In 1884 a fine stone figure of Bhadara Kali was found half way between Jetawanarama and Vijayarama ruins.† To the latter period of Anuradhapura belong the Hindu temples that were discovered by H. C. P. Bell in 1893. The scattered ruins of these temples lay in the jungle between Jetawanarama and the Vijayarama monastery. Under excavation there was revealed a number of Hindu shrines and appurtenances. In two Siva temples the granite 'lingams' were unearthed "in situ".‡ All these ruins speak of the status of Hinduism during the Anuradhapura period.

Two Sanskrit dramas of the ninth century refer to a shrine of Agastiya on or near Adam's Peak.§ How long this shrine to Agastiya was in existence is not known. The Velvikkudi grant (South India) gives the earliest reference to Agastiya as presiding over the destinies of Tamils. When colonists went from the Pandya country to the Eastern Indian Archipelago in the early Christian era, the cult of Agastiya spread there and temples were

* ASCAR Sept. 1890 p. 2.

† ASCAR Ap.—June 1891 p. 1.

‡ JCBRAS Vol. XIII No. 45 p. 121.

§ GAP pp. 18, 19.

built in his honour. In Central Java a Saivite inscription dated 732 A. C. mentions about an 'ashrama' of sage Agastiya. Another inscription deals with the descendants of Agastiya who had settled in Central Java.°

The Puranic story of Agastiya as drinking the waters of the oceans is as follows: The people on the seacoast of South India were subjected in early days by pirates who attacked and laid waste the coastal areas. They complained to Agastiya and he drank up the waters of the sea and the people were able to carry on the war with the pirates. This is one of the explanation for the prevalence of the Agastiya cult. The existence of such a cult near Adam's Peak in the eighth and ninth centuries strongly indicate Tamil settlements in that area. Kotmale and Gilimale (malai in Tamil means a hill) are small villages near Adam's Peak. During Magha's occupation of the Island the sacred Tooth and Bowl Relics were concealed at Kotmale. Vijaya Bahu I set apart the revenue of the village Gilimale for the supply of food to the pilgrims of Adam's Peak.* Thereafter we find kings themselves making trips to the shrine. All these are vestiges of Tamil settlements † in the Hill country before the eighth century.

° HM p. 70

* The Polonnaruwa Period CHJ p. 124.

† There is good room for resarch for the origin of the word Senkadagala — a section of Kandy. Vikrama Bahu III (1357—1374) refers to Senkadagala in an inscription * as an ancient seat of Natha. One of the names of Siva is Nathan and another is Senkadan§ [* EZ. Vol. IV p. 27]

§ வரிந்தசிகை

வேடர்குல மாதுபுணர் வேலாயுதகரன் செந்
காடன் புதல்வன் கதிர்காமன்

Kadiramalai sacred to the "Carrier of the Lance", the husband of bow armed Veddah maid, the son of Senkadan.—Km,

Nikaya Sangrakwa, a Sinhalese chronicle records that Sena I (831—851) was made a convert to the Saivite faith by an ascetic clad in the robes of a priest. In the story of the Saiva Saint Manickkavasagar it was said that a Ceylon king went with his dumb daughter to Chidambaram to witness a religious controversy between the Buddhist priests of Ceylon and St. Manickkavasagar, and that the latter performed a miracle and made the dumb princess to speak. Thereafter, the king's retinue embraced the Hindu faith. From stanzas 306 and 307 of Tirukoviyar we learn that the saint was a contemporary of Varaguna, a Pandyan king. Two Varagunas were rulers in Madura in the ninth century. As Sena I lived in the ninth century, the saint too must have lived then. The conversion of the Sinhalese king with his retinue had its repercussions on the cultural life of Ceylon. To the Tamil Saivites of the Island, St. Manickkavasagar and the great temple of Chidambaram became more important. Thiruvathavuradigal Puranam which contains the life history of the saint began to be recited annually in all Hindu temples of the North and the East. Many rich Saivites made liberal grants of lands to the temple of Chidambaram and founded trusts for the maintenance of 'pilgrims' rests' in the vicinity of the great temple. A large number of pilgrims annually began to leave Ceylon to this great temple. One of the big bells in this temple was the gift of a Jaffna gentleman.*

* T. Sinnappah of Moolai was a great figure in the public life of Jaffna between 1896—1910. He was a good type of Jaffna Tamil who by his adventurous spirit carved his own career in life as a contractor of Public Works. He was one of the pioneers to Malaya from Jaffna. He was a close friend of H. E. Sir Henry McCullum. The Moolai Kandaswamy temple was founded by him. As a contractor he built the old wards of the Inuvil Hospital and the Ridgeway Memorial Hall. He interested himself in the movement for the opening of the railways to the North.

In short the influence which Hinduism exerted on the Island in the period under review can best be gauged from the common endings of lithic records of the ninth and tenth centuries which reads: "May he who violates this edict incur the sins of a killer of cows at Mahavutu (Matota)."

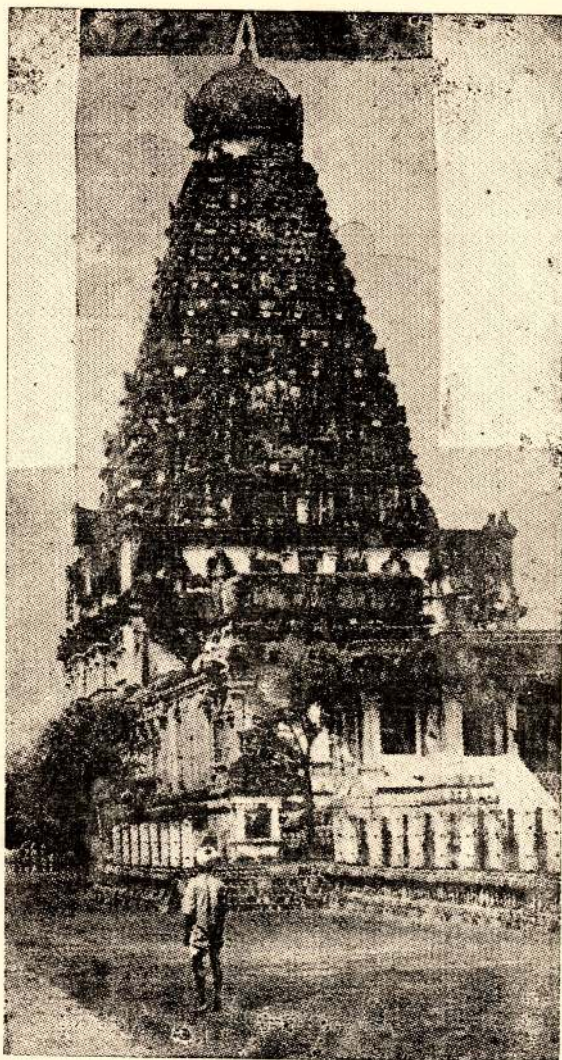
CHAPTER III

Hinduism in The Polonnaruwa Period

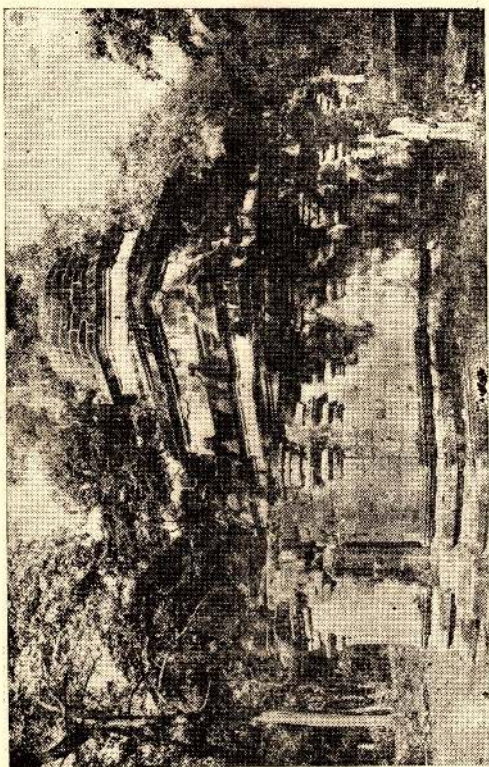
The Polonnaruwa period in Ceylon history really begins with the conquest and occupation of Ceylon by the Cholas in 993 A. C. Soon after they became masters of Ceylon, they made Polonnaruwa their capital and named it Jananatha Mangalam. The Kalinga princes who ruled Ceylon after them also maintained it as their capital.

Before we proceed to know the status of Hinduism in Ceylon in the above period we must have a general idea of the Cholas. The real ascendancy of the Cholas in South India begins by the middle of the ninth century. Under Rajaraja I (985—1016) the foundations of the Chola empire was laid and under Rajendra I (1012—1044) its power reached its zenith.

The Chola period is the Augustan age of Tamilakam. It was the golden period in Tamil history. In literature it was the period of celebrated poets like Puhalendi, Ottakuttar and Kambar of Ramayana fame. In the field of architecture the Cholas built huge edifices like the Rajeswara temple of Tanjore which is the finest example of Dravidian architecture in South India. The bronze statues of this period are the best of their kind in the world.



Effective Dravidian Architecture.
Rajeswara temple of Tanjore built by
Rajaraja I (985—1016). Ht. 216 ft.
The Cupola is one stone weighing 80 tons.



Siva Devale No. 2 is the only structure of Polonnaruwa entirely of stone.—Eleventh century.

They evolved an excellent system of central and local administration and it was the best of the age. They maintained a powerful army and navy to protect their empire which was the greatest in Indian history since the empire of Chandragupta. They were the greatest naval power in the history of India.

During their occupation of Ceylon the Island came to imbibe and assimilate the civilization of South India. They built numerous Hindu shrines in Matota, Polonnaruwa and in other districts. At the same time they made donations to Buddhist institutions and encouraged Buddhism, the national faith of the Sinhalese. Unfortunately some Ceylonese historians have described them as bitter enemies of Buddhism. But inscriptions that were recently unearthed in the Trincomalee District reveal donations made by Tamils to a Buddhist sanctuary. This shrine was known as Velgam Vihara in Sinhalese and was renamed Rajaraja Perumpalli after the Chola monarch Rajaraja I¹. This is a notable instance of a Buddhist temple built by the Cholas.

The Siva Devale No. 2 whose presiding deity called Vanavan Madevi Iswaram Udaiyar after Rajaraja's queen is the only monument at Polonnaruwa constructed entirely of stones, and is now in a satisfactory state of preservation. The temple in Matota was built by a Chola officer named Tali Kumaran, and later it was called Rajaraja Isvarattu Mahadevan Kovil². There was another temple in Matota (Rajarajapura) called Tiruvirameswaran Udaiyar Mahadevan Kovil³.

1 CJS. Vol. II pp. 185 and 199.

2 SII. Vol. IV No. 1412.

3 do do No. 1414.

A Saiva shrine called 'Then Kailasam' was founded by Vijaya Bahu I (1070—1114) at Kantalai⁴ (Vijayaraja Iswaram). A Tamil inscription of the temple records grants of gold by a Brahman lady to the said temple for the performance of the daily 'poojas' at this place of worship, for maintaining a flower garden, for lighting the evening lamp and for the upkeep of dancing girls⁵. This indicates the organization of Hindu temples in Ceylon in the middle ages. In Vijaya Bahu's time Hindu temples were maintained as in the days of the Cholas.⁶

Vikrama Bahu II (1116—1137), son of Vijaya Bahu I was a great devotee of Siva. He gave considerable support and patronage to Hinduism. He founded a Saivite shrine Vikrama-cala-mega-iswara in Magala (Vikrama-cala-mega-puram). A Tamil inscription of the eighth year of Jeya Bahu I records the grant made by a princess of a royal family for maintaining a perpetual lamp to Lord Vikrama-cala-mega-iswara.⁷ The names of the temple and town show that both were founded by Vikrama Bahu. Several "Linga" stones are lying about the Buddhist temple at Budumuttava⁸ (Magala).

Manabharana, the father of Parakrama Bahu, when he was desirous of a son went to Devinuvara and prayed to Lord Vishnu.⁹

Gaja Bahu II (1137—1153) son of Vikrama Bahu, founded Siva Devale I in Polonnaruwa.¹⁰ In 1908 many bronze images of Siva worship were discovered near this shrine by H. C. P. Bell the Archaeological Commissioner at that time.

4 EZ. Vol. p. 191.

5 EZ. Vol. IV p. 191.

6 CV. Chap. 60. V. 78.

7 EZ. Vol. III p. 308.

8 EZ. Vol. III p. 312.

9 CV. Chap. 62. V. 11.

10 JCBRAS. Vol. XXIV. No. 68. p. 191.

Parakrama Bahu I erected buildings intended purely for Brahmanic rituals. The Culavamsa mentions a Hemamandira and a Dharanighara built by him for the Brahmans to perform their ceremonies¹¹. He also built thirteen Hindu temples and restored and rededicated seventy nine ruined temples to the gods¹². From the time of Parakrama Bahu I the worship of Vibhisana (a traditional cult) became more popular. It is said that Queen Ratnavali, mother of Parakrama Bahu I, fervently prayed to god Vibhisana to be blessed with a talented son, and as her prayers were satisfactorily answered the cult of Vibhisana became popular ever afterwards.

Nissanka Malla (1186—1197) built the Parvati Alms Hall at Kantaia¹³. For the congregation of Brahman priests and scholars in Polonnaruwa, he built many alms-houses¹⁴. He also built Nissamakeswara in Rameswaram and repaired the great temple of Rameswaram¹⁵. This king who left inscriptions in almost every part of the Island failed to put up some in the Jaffna District. Probably it had a separate ruler and Nissanka Malla had no vested interests there.

About 1215 twenty nine years after the death of Parakrama Bahu the Great, Kalinga Magha known as Kalinga Vijaya Bahu, descended on Polonnaruwa with an army of 24,000 Malabars and seized the throne. His rule was very unpopular, because he persecuted the Buddhist faith. The monarch forced the people to adopt Hinduism¹⁶. After ruling for twentynine years he abandoned Polonnaruwa, in 1244.

11 Cv. Chap. 73 V. 71.

12 Cv. Chap. 79 V. 19, 22.

13 JCBRAS. (1959) p. 46.

14 EZ. Vol. II pp. 171, 284.

15 UHC. Vol. 1 Part II p. 515

16 Cv. Chap. 80. V. 75

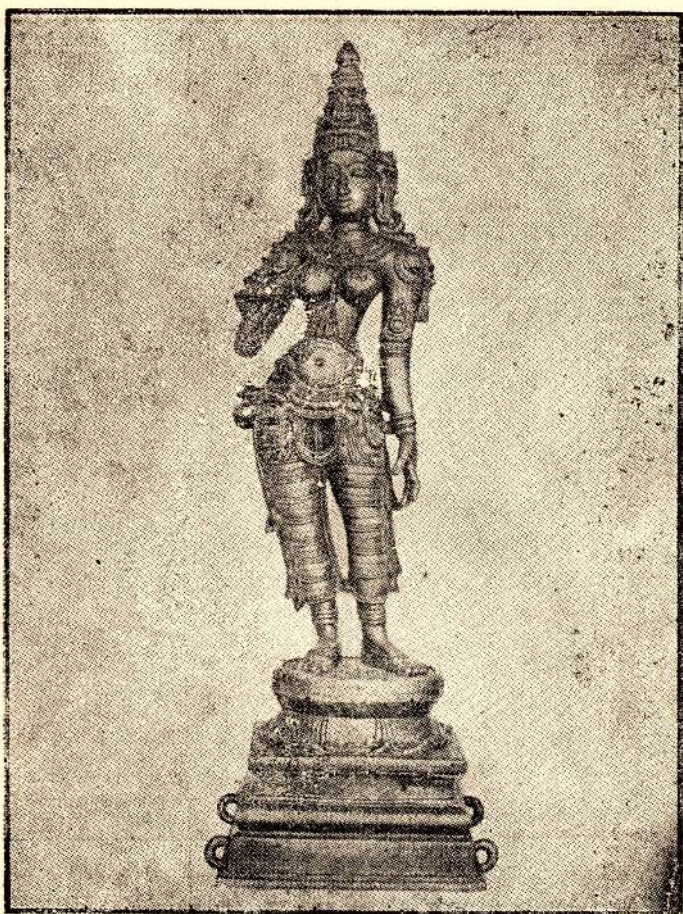
The presence of a great number of Brahmans in this period had greatly helped the dissemination of Sanskrit learning. Buddhist and Hindu learning were very earnestly pursued. At this time a knowledge of Sanskrit was the hall-mark of culture. This new revival of Sanskrit learning had a profound effect on Sinhalese literature and Buddhism. The kings of Polonnaruwa who followed the Cholas continued to extend the same patronage to Brahmans and their temples as in the days of the Cholas.

From the time of Mahindra IV (956—972) the kings of Ceylon mostly took their brides from South India or married South Indian princesses who were scions of South Indian royal families that had settled down in Ceylon. Vijaya Bahu I married a Kalinga princess. He gave his sister Mitta in marriage to a Pandu prince. In this manner Hindu influence grew in the courts of the kings of Ceylon. We learn that king Parakrama Bahu I as a prince had to undergo a series of Hindu ceremonies. Brahmanic rituals according to the Culavamsa occupied a prominent place in the life of the court. The Homa sacrifice was practised. There were attached to the royal courts, family priests and Brahmans versed in the Vedas and Vedangas. In this manner Hindu influence grew in the court, and the members of the royal family always kept up its distinct origin. Most of the kings of this period for all their cult of Buddhism and its ancient monuments never swerved from the faith of their ancestors. People usually follow the court and we find lay life and learning were dominated by Brahmanic rituals and ceremonies.

The existence of a Hindu kingdom in the north helped to promote Hindu influence in the Island. The



Polonnaruwa Finds 1908
Somaskanda Murthi—Siva and his consort Parvati.
Skanda is missing.



Polonnaruwa Find 1908
Siva-kami—The Divine Energy represented
as a consort of Siva.

Tamil soldiers who settled down after their wars influenced the religious development of the Sinhalese.

Ruins of Hindu Temples

In 1886 S. M. Burrows in his report of the excavations of Polonnaruwa says as follows: "At an angle of the city moat a small temple of Vishnu built entirely of granite was discovered and was later excavated. In its inner shrine there was a good statue of Vishnu. Several excellently carved figures were found here.

In the immediate neighbourhood of this temple were found a broken statue of the familiar Pillaiyar or Gan-
esha, a broken statue of Subramaniya with his peacock¹⁷ and a statue of Iswara.

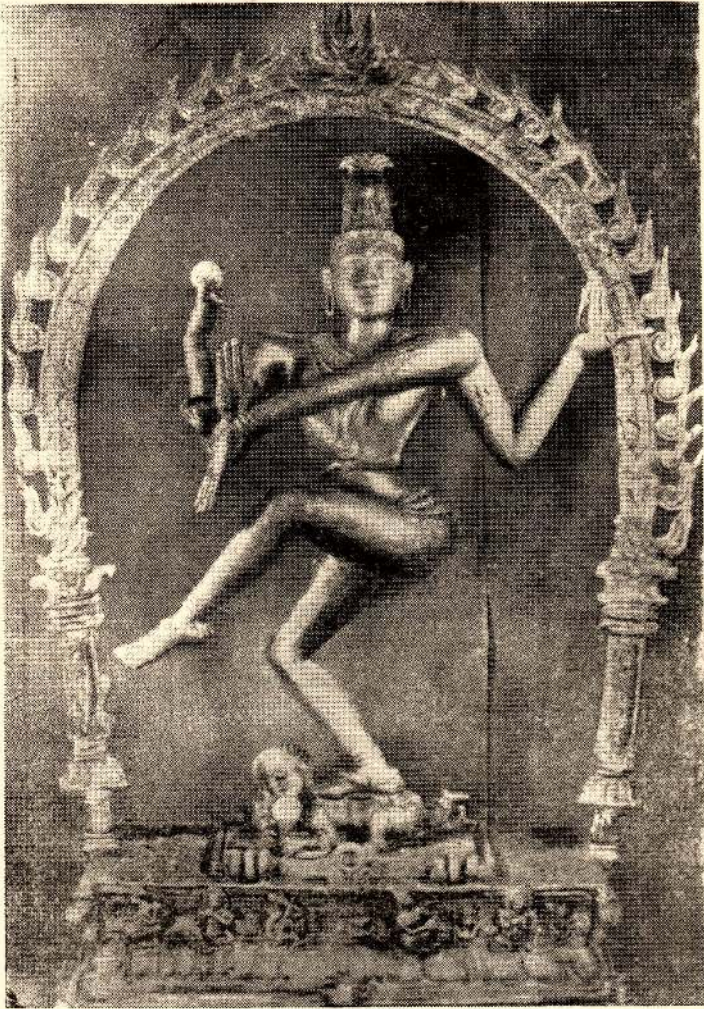
To the left or west of the road leading from Thuparama to the Rankot Vihara are the ruins of no less than four Hindu temples all close together. One of these contained a perfect statue of Vishnu and another statue of a goddess with eight hands standing on the head of a buffalo which is probably a representation of Kali. These temples are mostly of brickwork with stone doorways and pillars."

In 1907 and 1908 Sir H. C. P. Bell discovered Saiva Bronzes at Siva Devale No 1 and Siva Devale No. 5. It was perhaps the most important Hindu find in Ceylon. At that time Sir. P. Arunachalam wrote for the then Director of the Museum a short paper identifying the bronzes. It was published with illustrations in the *Spolia Zeylanica* of September, 1909. Another description by Dr. A. K. Coomaraswamy about these bronzes appeared in the memoirs of the Colombo Museum Series A No. 1 published in 1914.

17 A Subramaniya stone statue from Polonnaruwa is housed in the Museum at Anuradhapura.

In 1960, C. E. Godakumbura discovered a brilliant collection of Saiva bronzes and a few other objects used in Saiva worship near the Siva Devale No. 5. This shrine stands by the Vishnu Devale designated No. 4. All matters connected with these finds are published in the journal of the Ceylon Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society 1961.

The burial of these Saiva images must have taken place about 1244 when Kalinga Magha finally abandoned Polonnaruwa after defending it for eight years. Even after Chola rulers left Polonnaruwa in 1070, the Tamils did not abandon the city. For we find the Velaikaras in the reign of Vijaya Bahu I accepting the custodianship of the Tooth Relic. Further, King Gaja Bahu II (1137—1153) caused the Siva Devale No. 1 to be erected in Polonnaruwa. There were Agambadi soldiers in the standing armies of Parakrama Bahu I and Nissanka Malia. Hence, the burial of these images could not have been earlier than 1244. Hinduism during the Polonnaruwa period was not a secondary religion, it was patronized alike by king and peasant as at no time in its history.

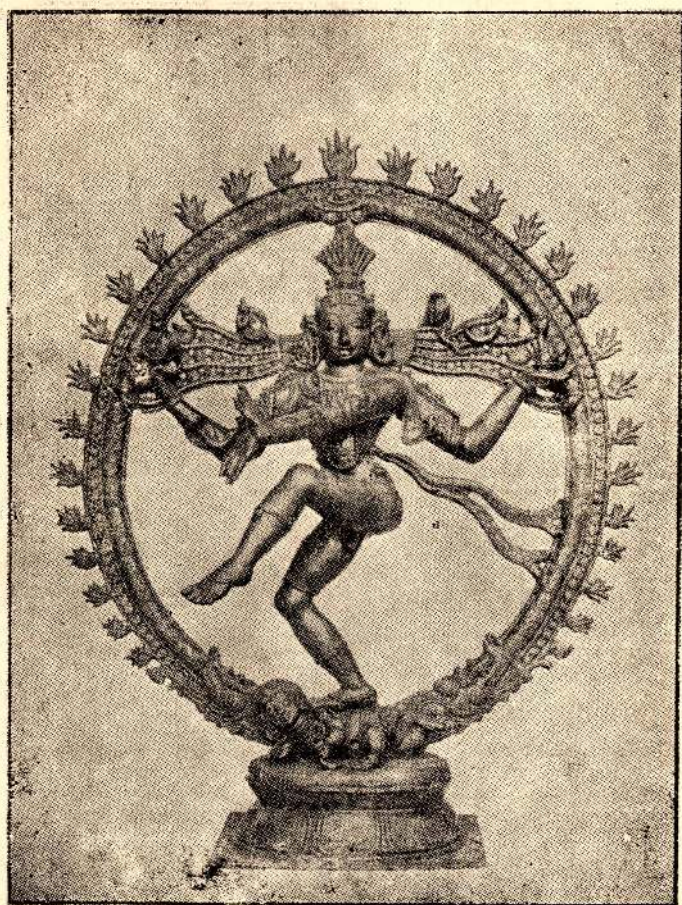


NATARAJAH.

The Tiruvasi is not circular. No locks of hair. No ear ornaments. A noteworthy feature is the pouch suspended under the left arm-pit.

Polonnaruwa Find, 1960. Bronze. Ht. 55 $\frac{3}{4}$ ins. with Tiruvasi.

By Courtesy of the Dept. of Archaeology,



Polonnaruwa Finds 1908
Natarajah is a favourite symbol of Siva worship
in South India and Ceylon.

CHAPTER IV

Hinduism in the Post-Polonnaruwa Period.

We have already read of the influence of Hinduism during the Polonnaruwa period, and now we shall examine its status after the decline of Polonnaruwa. While Kalinga Magha was ruling at Polonnaruwa, a Sinhalese prince Vijaya Bahu (1232-1236) was ruling at Dambadeniya. His illustrious son, Parakrama Bahu II (1236-1271), though he was devoted to the Buddhist church, yet did not neglect the Hindu deities in his kingdom. He renovated the Vishnu temple at Dondra and ordered an annual celebration of the Asalhi festival for the god.¹ He also caused to be constructed the Kali Kovila at Bentota.² He built a 'mandapa' over the footprint on Adam's Peak.³ Prince Vira Bahu, after defeating Candabhanu and his Javakas, betook himself to Devanagara and celebrated a divine sacrifice.⁴ He erected there a parivena for the Buddhist Order, and even today a Hindu devalaya and a Buddhist vihara stand side by side at Dondra. It only indicates the government's attitude of parity in those days towards the two sections of the king's subjects. Parakrama

1. Cv. Chap. 85 VV. 87, 88, 89.

2. JCBRAS Vol. VIII No. 29 p. 340.

3. Cv. Chap. 86 V. 30

4. " " 83 V. 49

Bahu's son, Vijaya Bahu IV provided temples to the gods at Polonnaruwa which had fallen in decay.⁵

At Alutnuvara Parakrama Bahu IV (1325—) had a temple erected with lofty towers and spires to Lord Vishnu.⁶ He celebrated there a great sacrificial festival.

The Ammadu Devale in Sabragamuwa was erected to Lord Kandaswamy in the reign of Parakrama Bahu V⁷ (1344—1359). The king later endowed this temple.

The Vigiriya Devale is said to have been built in the reign of Bhuvaneka Bahu IV⁸ (1344—1354). Raja Senalankadhikara, a famous minister of the Gampola kings, built a three-storied image-house at Devinuvara.⁹ Lankatilaka and Gadaladeniya viharas were built in this reign. In the former, images of Hindu gods were placed between the inner and outer wall of the building. They were also installed at the Gadaladeniya temple. In the period under review Hindu gods began to be worshipped in devalayas attached to viharas or in the viharas themselves. It became the practice for Sinhalese writers after due salutations to Buddha, Dhamma, and the Sangha to beg the blessings of the Hindu gods before they began their writings.

Alagakkonara, when he had built the fort of Jeyawardana Kotte, built four temples for the protection of the four quarters of the city, and dedicated them to the

5. Cv. Chap 88 V. 93

6. „ „ 90 V. 102

7. JCBRAS. XXXII No. 86 p. 271.

8. JCBRAS. do do p. 267.

9. do do do p. 266.

gods Vishnu, Vibhisana, Subramaniya and Lakshmana, and ordained that daily services be performed with music and drums of every sort. ¹⁰

King Vikrama Bahu III (1357—1374) caused the Embekke Devale at Gampola to be built and dedicated it to god Kandaswamy. ¹¹ Here can be seen one of the best woodwork in Ceylon. The Audience Hall in Kandy is a development of the woodwork of this temple. This period is also noted for many beautiful buildings.

The temple to god Kandaswamy at Madagama in Sabaragamuwa was erected in the reign of Bhuvaneka Bahu V ¹² (1372—1406). Uggal Alutnuwara Devale to god Skanda was also built in this period. ¹³

Parakrama Bahu VI (1412—1468) had strong leanings towards Hinduism and often strove to give equal support to Hinduism and Buddhism. The Munneswaram temple at Chilaw was given an enormous grant by the king for its maintenance. ¹⁴ He caused a Pattini temple three-stories high to be built at Kotte. ¹⁵ The king did many acts of piety. He gave alms to Buddhist monks as well as to Brahmans who flocked to his court. The influence of the Sangha during this period began to wane and that of the Hindus increased. The upper strata of Sinhalese society was fast becoming Hindu in outlook.

Like Parakrama Bahu VI Parakrama Bahu IX (1506—1528) in 1527 executed land grants for the maintenance of Munneswaram temple. ¹⁶

10. JCBRAS. XXVIII No. 74 p. 115.

11. do XXXII No. 86 p. 273.

12. JCBRAS. XXXII No. 86 p. 279.

13. do do do p. 279.

14. do Vol. X No. 35 p. 118.

15. KS.

16. MM.

Rajasinha I (1581—1593), at first, gave his patronage to Buddhist priesthood, but there came an open cleavage between the clergy and the king when he found that some Buddhist priests had joined in a conspiracy against him by the Portuguese. Hence, the allegation in the Mahavamsa that Rajasinha was his father's murderer, and to atone his sins he became a Hindu and built the famous Berendi Kovil (a temple to Parameswara). This accusation is untenable, for it should be remembered that Mayadunne died in 1581, but the temple was in existence in 1551 when it was robbed of its wealth and destroyed by the Portuguese Viceroy and his soldiers ¹⁷

According to a Tamil work 'Kathiramalai Pallu' Rajasinha I built the present Hindu shrine of Katarama. He was a great devotee of the Pattini goddess. It is said that before he began to rule, he made a thanksgiving ceremony to the Pattini Devala at Medagoda. ¹⁸ He erected 48 Pattini devalayas during his time. ¹⁹

He handed the management of Sivanolipadam (Sri Pada) to Hindu ascetics. ²⁰ It remained in the hands of the Hindus for nearly 150 years and in the reign of Kirti Sri Rajasinha it was restored to the Buddhists. ²¹

As the Portuguese had destroyed the temple of Konamalai in 1624, Rajasinha II (1635—1687) built a shrine to the god of Konamalai at Thambalagamam. ²² He made vows for all his victories. After the rout of the Portuguese at Randani Wele in Uva, he built the

17. See Chapter VI Berendi Kovil, also de Queyroz Book III p. 301.

18. CPE. I.

19. CPE. I. p. 530.

20. Cv. Chap. 93 V. 12.

21. HC. p. 277.

22. KPM.

Kataragama Devale in Badulla. After the rout of the Portuguese at Gannoruwa, he built the Dodanwela Kataragama Devale. He gave lands as gifts to the devalayas in his kingdom.²³

King Kirti Sri Rajasinha (1747—1782) executed land grants to Munneswaram.²⁴ He rebuilt the temple that was once destroyed by the Portuguese. He restored the Majjhapalli Vihara and inside the cave he erected the statues of Vishnu by the side of the seated Buddha. The Mahāvamsa says of him: "He made the gods and men beam with joy."²⁵ The same chronicle bemoans the oppression of the people by the Dutch, and attributes it to the neglect of the deities.²⁶

Many other devalayas were built by the kings of Gampola, Kotte and Kandy in various periods. Right through the middle ages the devalayas preserved the fine arts. These abodes of the gods played a great part in the development of fine arts. Each devalaya had its own team of dancers who were supported from the produce of the temple lands. Even today the Saman Devale in Ratnapura has its own team of dancers. Buddhist temples that were built in this period had each an image of Vishnu who was always venerated as the Protector of Lanka.

The Arya kings of Jaffna were the custodians of Tamil learning and Saivite culture in Ceylon for more than four hundred years²⁷ After their marriage alliances with the Sethupathis of Rameswaram, they assumed

23. Cv. Chap. 96. V. 39.

24. MM.

25. Cv. Chap. 99. V. 107.

26. do do do V. 113.

27. சைவந் தோன்றிடத் தோன்றினான். DKP.

the title of Sethukavalar—Protector of the Shrine of Rameswaram. Hence the name 'Sethu' appears in the coins of Jaffna and in the books of that period.

In the fourteenth and the latter part of the thirteenth centuries Mohammedan power had reached the city of Madura and many of the Hindu kingdoms in South India had ceased to exist. The extensive power of the Jaffna kings both on land and on the sea had checked the growth of Muslim expansion, and preserved the independence of the Island. The kings of Jaffna, at least, for a century after the landing of the Portuguese in the Island tried to preserve Saivism in spite of the most bigoted of their enemies.

From the fall of Polonnaruwa to the death of Bhuvaneka Bahu VII in 1551, Hinduism in Ceylon was growing in influence and popularity. In the thirteenth century the Saiva shrine of Tirukonamalai was held in high esteem for it was patronized by the Pandyas who invaded Ceylon in the middle of that century. From the stones available at the temple site of Tirukketiswaram we are led to conclude that the Pandyas had rebuilt this temple in late Pandyan style.

The status of Hinduism in the fourteenth century can best be gauged from the great temple of Vishnu at Dondra. "Its great roof of copper gilt," says Dr. P. E. Pieris, "flashing from out at sea served as a landmark for the mariners of every nation who sailed the Indian waters and who acknowledged the protecting influence of the divinity by many pious offerings. Nearly two hundred and fifty years before Ibn Batuta had visited the shrine where a thousand Brahmans served as the ministers of the god; kings had vied with each other in beautifying the place and adding to its wealth, and its

Annual Fair ranked one of the most important in the East. A great establishment attached to the temple occupied the eighteen vidiyas; the silversmiths a special colony imported from the continent shed lustre on the art of the entire Disawani, and every night five hundred women danced and sang before the image." About this temple dance Sri Rahula, the best of the Sinhalese poets and one well-versed in Tamil says: "With flowers entwined in the tresses of their hair and garlands pendent from their necks, the women dance, as dances the budding leaf of the mango twig to the music of the breeze."

It was customary during this period for Hindu pilgrims to visit Sivanolipadam (Sri Pada.) For we are told that Arya Chakravarti treated Ibn Batuta as an honoured guest and furnished him with an escort of four yogis, four Brahmans, palanquin-bearers and provision-carriers to accompany him to Sivanolipadam. At this time there was a Hindu 'Pilgrims' Rest' near Negombo and it was destroyed by the Portuguese in the wars with Rajasinha I.²⁸ The place where this building stood was later known as Andi Ambalama (a rest for ascetics)

Bhuvaneka Bahu otherwise known as Senpahap Perumal soon after the conquest of Jaffna in 1450, founded a new capital at Nallur and there built a shrine to god Subramaniya. From Kokila Sandesa we learn that in the fifteenth century there were many Hindu temples in the western coasts of Ceylon.

The Arya kings of Jaffna always gave their full support for the propagation of Saivism. They took great interest in Koneswaram and Rameswaram temples. One of the Arya kings of this period caused the Keppakiragam (main shrine) of Rameswaram to be built with

28. CPE. I p. 242.

stones which material was taken from Trincomalee by sea to the Indian coast.²⁹ The kings of Jaffna even ordered religious books to be written extolling the greatness of the Saiva shrines.³⁰

The sixteenth century was a turning point in the history of Hinduism in Ceylon. The Portuguese had begun to establish themselves in the coastal districts, and little by little the popular temples were razed to the ground. With the fall of the Jaffna kingdom in 1620, all traces of Hinduism were exterminated in the Tamil districts which came under their rule. The first Portuguese Governor of the Jaffna kingdom de Oliveira destroyed five hundred Hindu temples in his districts.³¹ This alone indicates the status of Hinduism in Jaffna before the coming of the Portuguese. It should be noted that the Hindu shrines in the Vanni districts and those in the Kandyan territories were left untouched, as they were not under their jurisdiction.

The Dutch after assuming supreme power over the Island in 1658 tried at least to win converts to Protestantism. Those priests and school-masters who embraced the Reformed religion were reappointed to the Dutch congregations. The laity were not so much persecuted as the clergy, on account of their intrigues. They therefore, appointed missionaries in the principal towns to preach their new faith. It was at this time Father Joseph Vaz, a Konkani Brahman whose ancestors had embraced Christianity came in disguise to Silalai, a coastal village in Jaffna. Here he secretly ministered to his scattered and neglected flock. But on Christmas

29. ASSI. Vol. IV pp. 56, 57 Shrines.

30. DKP., KPM.

31. CPE. II p. 149.

night 1690, his private house was raided by Dutch officers and eight prominent catholics were scourged and imprisoned for harbouring a priest. Father Vaz eluded the guards and stealthily left Jaffna and sought the protection of Vimala Dharma Suriya II, king of Kandy. He later continued his work in Ceylon for nine years.

In the low country and in Jaffna the Dutch Government opposed all religious practices of the Buddhists and Hindus. In Jaffna the people were not allowed to build Hindu temples. Once in 1767, a large temple was destroyed by a cannon. On another occasion Rajasinha wanted to build a Hindu temple in the Dutch territory in the low country, but the Government forbade it. This stern action of the Government was much praised by the authorities in Holland.

From this incident as well as from the following particulars we can gauge the spirit of the times. In the church at Varany, Jaffna, a master was caught teaching the youth from Hindu books. At the instance of the preacher, Philippus de Vriest the teacher was brought as a prisoner to the Fort, where the books were openly burnt, and the native master chastised and banished.

For nearly two hundred years, the Tamils had no freedom of worship. During these periods they surreptitiously created Bhairava shrines in their compounds or had miniature images of their gods in their houses and worshipped them in secret. The Saiva priests of the non-Brahman class went round the villages secretly and ministered to their flock. They did what they had been doing during the time of their native rulers. Whenever they were detected, they suffered persecution in the hands of the Dutch. The Hindus of Ceylon owe a deep

debt of gratitude to these non-Brahman priests for keeping the flame of spirituality burning in those dark periods of our history.

In the long period of the history of the Hindus whenever they underwent great trials and tribulations, there appeared in the country great seers and mystics to counsel, enliven and console the people. Such a line of prophets have continued to live in this country from time to time and even down to the present day. They were, in fact, the sheet-anchors of Hindu society.

The Dutch Government in their latter period had become more liberal that they permitted non-Christians freedom of public worship. With the coming of the British in 1796, full freedom of worship was established in Ceylon.

CHAPTER V.

Ancient Temples to Iswara.

The excavations of Mohenjo Daro and Harappa have proved that Siva worship was in existence among the ancient Dravidians. Siva as Pasupathy seems to have been worshipped by them. In the Tamil country the upper classes of the people worshipped Siva as their favourite deity. Siva and Kali were the most popular deities of the non-Aryans.

Tirukketiswaram

This temple in ancient times was known as Maha Thuvaddapuri. Matota later became Mantota. Mantai or Matota was known as Mahatittha among the Sinhalese. The antiquity of this port is shrouded in mystery. The earliest of Ceylon records mentions that in the fifth century B. C. Vijaya's queen and the wives of his followers landed at this great port. According to the Mahavamsa, Mantota, in commemoration of the event received the name Mahatittha. This would imply that traders and settlers from India were accustomed to land even in pre-Vijayan days. Its strategic position, its nearness to the Tamil country and its extensive ruins make us believe that it must have been a port used by the Tamils even before the coming of the first founder of the Sinhalese race.

The shrines, Tirukketiswaram and Koneswaram are of particular interest for they have been sanctified in the hymns of the Nayanmars. St. Sambandhar who lived in the seventh century has sung the glories of these two temples,¹ but St. Sundarar who lived in the eighth century has sung only of Tirukketiswaram.² St. Appar who was a contemporary of St. Sambandhar has referred to Tirukketiswaram in one of his inimitable Tiruthandakams.³ Sekkilar in his immortal work the Periyapuranam has given a description of these two historic

1. வாழை அம்பொழில் மந்திகள் களிப்புற மருவிய மாதோட்டம்

The groves of plantain trees in Mantota gave delight to the monkeys therein. — *St. Sambandhar.*

குடிதனை நெருங்கிப் பெருக்கமாய்த் தோன்றுங் கோணமாமலையமர்ந்தா
[ரே

The sea doth seem to harass the people;
But in fact it gives them wealth.
In Koneswaram such our Lord doth dwell. — *St. Sambandhar.*

2. சிறையார் பொழில் வண்டு யாழ் செய்யும் கேதிச்சரத்தானை.

The Lord of Ketiswaram great
Where the bee doth music make
In the fertile groves that lie therein. — *St. Sundarar.*

3. பூதியணி பொன்னிறத் பூணூலர்
பொங்குரவர் சங்கரர் வெண்குழையோர் காதர்
கேதிச்சர மேவினார் கேதாரத்தார்
கெடில வடவதிசை வீரட்டதார்

The Holy Ash shines on His golden hue;
He doth wear the Sacred Thread;
The fiery serpent adorns His form;
He our Lord, Shankar by name;
In one ear He wears the earring white
He dwells in Ketiswaram there,
He of Ketharam and Veeraddanam in the North. — *St. Appar.*

temples.⁴ Daksina Kailasa Manmiam⁵ and Manthai Pallu are other works that speak about Tirukketiswaram.

Do Couto, a reputed Portuguese historian, says about an incident in 1575 as follows: "And whilst some workmen were engaged in taking out stones they came upon the lowest part of a foundation and on turning it over, they found an iron chain of such strange fashion

4. திருத்தொண்டர் புராணத்தில் திருக்கேதீச்சரம்
அந்நகரி லமர்ந்தங்க ணினிது மேவி
யாழி புடை சூழ்ந் தொலிக்கு மீழ்ந் தன்னின்
மன்னு திருக் கோணமலை மகிழ்ந்து செங்கண்
மழவிடையார் தமைப்போற்றி வணங்கிப் பாடிச்
சென்னிமதி புனைமாட மாதோட்டத்திற்
றிருக் கேதீச்சரத் தண்ணல் செய்யபாத
முன்னிமிகப் பணிந்தேத்தி யன்பரோடு
முலவாத கிழிபெற்றார் உவகை யுற்றார்.
மன்னுமிரா மேச்சரத்து மாமணியை முன்வணங்கிப்
பன்னுதமிழ்த் தொடைசாத்திப் பயில்கின்றார் பாம்பணிந்த
சென்னியர்மா தோட்டத்துத் திருக்கேதீச்சரஞ் சார்ந்து
சொன்மலர்மா லைகள் சாத்தித் தூரத்தே தொழு தெழுந்தார்.

He reached that town and dwelt in comfort
In Ilam surrounded by the raging sea
He enjoyed the sight of the Konesar Hill
And praised and worshipped and sang
The glories of the Lord of the bull.
In Matotam famous for its sky-scrapers
He worshipped the Lord of Thirukketiswaram
There in the presence of the devotees
He received with joy a present of boundless wealth.
In Rameswaram he prayed to the glorious Lord
And offered in song in Tamilian tongue
The praise of Him that dwells therein.
And again he goes to Tirukketiswaram in Matotam
The domain of the Lord whose crest the serpent adorns;
He offers the deity garlands of words
And rises after prostration and prayer
From a distance quite afar.

—Sekkilar Swamihal.

5. This Manmiam is a section of the Sanskrit Skanda Purana of the fifth century A. C.

that there was not in the whole of India a craftsman who would undertake to make another like it”⁶ Sir Alexander Johnstone an eminent Chief Justice of the early nineteenth century states that in Mantai a great number of Roman coins of different periods and some specimens of pottery, gold chains and silver chains were discovered.

In 1887 W. J. S. Boake read a paper on, “The excavations of Mantai,” to the Royal Asiatic Society. He speaks of the great antiquity of this port. The original site of the temple which had been razed to the ground was traced in 1894. The “Siva Lingam” of the old shrine together with several other finds were also unearthed.

A few decades ago A. M. Hocart, the late Archeological Commissioner of Ceylon, conducted excavations at Mantai (1925–28) and made some important discoveries. In 1950 further excavations were carried on and they revealed interesting pottery types and fauna bones. The types of pottery found were from Rome, Arabia and China. Among them were Arretine pottery which would be a source for dating the strata. Beads of considerable variety have also been found.⁷ So far no scholar has made use of these materials to develop and draw conclusions of note with regard to this remarkable entrepot of olden time.

Inscriptions found in Matota reveal the existence of another temple Tiruvirameswara Udaiya Mahadevan Kovil. In the reign of Rajendra II an endowment was made to the temple by an officer of state.⁸ Tirukketiswaram was named Rajarajeswaram Mahadevan Kovil⁹

6. JCBRAS. Vol. 20 No. 60 p. 83.

7. ASCAR. 1950. Appendix.

8. SII. Vol. IV No. 1414.

9. SII. Vol. IV No. 1412.

by the Cholas, and Mantota as Rajarajeswaram. The city had two moats all round for its defence. In those days coastal towns were always in danger of being raided by pirates. The temple of Kanniya Kumari (Cape Comorin) was once robbed of its valuables. Even so late as 1847 Javanese pirates plundered the temple of Tambalagamam.

In the fourth century when the Tooth Relic was brought from Kalinga to prevent its falling into the hands of a hostile king, the bearer of the sacred palladium landed at Mantota and took shelter for the night in a Hindu temple, probably it was Tirukketiswaram. The Pali Dathavamsa does not mention the port by name but merely calls it Lankapattuna. The author probably did not want the first landing of the sacred relic of the Buddha to be associated with a Hindu centre.

When the Cholas were occupying Ceylon in the tenth and eleventh centuries Mantota was a beautiful city and the temple was in its best form. In the thirteenth century Sundara Pandyan I, according to a Chidambaram inscription seems to have rebuilt Tirukketiswaram in late Pandyan architectural style.¹⁰

According to Visuvanatha Sastriyar's 'Sambavakkurippu' ¹¹ the sea engulfed the temple premises in

10. From the stones now available at the temple site.
11. Sastriyar was a reputed astrologer of Jaffna in the early nineteenth century. His Tamil Calendar (Panchangkam) which was published yearly until his death was preferred to all others. Sir Alexander Johnstone while he was Chief Justice helped him to regain the honorary distinction of Almanac-Maker to His Majesty George IV. He belonged to a family of astrologers in Jaffna who had cultivated that science for nine generations. Sastriyar possessed a 'Diary of Events' (Sambavakkurippu) in which was recorded the important events of Jaffna. A. Mootoothambypillai had access to this diary. Vide his 'Jaffna History' p. 54.

1540,¹² and caused damage to the temple buildings. It also records that the "poojas" in the temple continued till 1589. This date seems to be correct for the Portuguese captured the island of Mannar in 1561 and soon built a fort there. But the conquest of the Jaffna kingdom was completed in 1591, and the demolition of the temple might have taken place about that date.

Soon after, the friars got the broken images and the inscriptions buried in the foundations of their new church at Mantota.¹³ When they had built their new church, they were in need of a bell and they had no metal to make it with. They told the young cowherds that if they found even a piece of metal at the foot of trees they should come and tell them promising a cloth for each one. In a few days one of them informed the friars of a metal finger above the ground and that he was unable to pull it out. When the place was dug out twenty images of diverse sizes were unearthed and soon a bell was made.¹⁴

12. Similar floods occurred many times in North Ceylon. In 1480, the isthmus of Pamban was breached and the channel thus formed was deepened by the Portuguese in 1549. (JCBRAS Vol. XX No. 60 p. 96). In 1627, there was a great cyclone in Jaffna which caused great loss of life and property. (CPE II pp. 141—144). In many places the sea engulfed the land. Again in 1658, there was a very destructive storm (Bald). Then in 1726 there was a great flood followed by two years of famine. (CPE II p. 522). A few years later in 1765 there was a violent storm (CPE II p. 522). Similarly a furious storm raged in 1802. (CPE II p. 522). In 1814, a cyclone made a breach in the Pamban reef. (CPE II p. 522). In 1884 the bridge between Punnalai and Karaitivu (Jaffna) was destroyed by a cyclone. In the floods of 1918 many thousands of sheep and cattle perished in Jaffna. In 1957 the all-island floods caused immense loss of life and property.

13. CLR. part I p. 336.

14. de Queyroz Book 4 p. 665.

Since the subjugation of Jaffna, for a period of three centuries, Tirukketiswaram was a buried city until its consecration in 1903. The fortunes of Tirukketiswaram is closely linked with the fortunes of the Tamil people.

Koneswaram

From very ancient times Konamalai was known by several names Machcheswaram, Dakshina Kailasam, Tirikudam, Tirikonasalam, Tirikoneswaram, Tirikonamamalai, Tirikonamalai and Tirukonamalai.

Mahasen (275 - 301) was one of the few kings of Ceylon who was opposed to Theravada Buddhism. When he destroyed the Maha Vihara at Anuradhapura he became very unpopular. Thereupon he destroyed temples dedicated to Lord Siva at Gokhana (Tirukonamalai) at Kalanda and at Erakavilla (Eravil) all in the eastern coasts and founded viharas instead.¹⁵ He is also said to have demolished a similar temple, at Brahmanagama, an ancient village between Pottuvil and Panama in the Ruhuna District.¹⁶ From these it is clear that the eastern coasts from very early times were inhabited by Tamil Hindus.

The books which deal with the story of this ancient shrine are Dakshina Kailasa Puranam, (Tamil) Konesar Kalvettu, Tirukonasala Puranam, Tirukonasala Venpa. Machcha Puranam, Dakshina Kailasa Manmiam (Sanskrit) Tirukonamalai Anthathy etc. St. Sambandhar¹⁷ of the

15. Mv. (Geiger) Chap. XXXVII V. 41.

16. JCBRAS. 1959 Special Number p. 23.

17. “கரைகெழு சந்துங் காரகிற் பிளவும்

மளப்பருங் கனமணி வரன்றிக்

குரைகடல் லோத நித்திலங் கொழிக்குங்

கோணமா மலையமிந் தாரே.”

Konamalai is the abode of our Lord where the raging waters of the sea scatter on the shore sandalwood, ahil, precious stones and pearls—all of value high.

ahil = a fragrant wood.

St. Sambandhar,

seventh century and Arunagiri Swamihal ¹⁸ of the fifteenth century have sung the praises of this holy shrine. Kathiramalai Pallu ¹⁹ says about it, and Paralai Venayagar Pallu ²⁰ also refers to it. Besides, references have been made of the shrine in many other works.

de Queyroz the eminent Portuguese historian says that the temple was the "Rome of the Orient," and was more frequented by pilgrims than Rameswaram or Jegannath in Orissa. ²¹

18. அறத்தில் வாழமை சிறக்க வேயறு
முகத்தி னோடணி குறத்தியானையொ
டருக் கோணுமலை தருக்குலாவிய பெருமானே.
To the glory of Uma the perfect one
Lord Skanda with faces six,
In the company of His spouses two
Walked in majesty in Konesar Hills.

Arunagiri Swamihal.

19. காசில் பொற்சிலம் பிச்சிக ரத்தைக்
கால் பறித்தே யெறிந்திட வந்த
மாசில் தென்கோண மாமலையைச் சூழும்
மாவலி கங்கை நாடெங்கள் நாடே.

The crest of the golden mount
The raging wind did wrench and hurl;
It landed in the South and eventually
Came to be known as Konamamalai
Mahaveli Ganga surrounds this mount,
And this river flows in our land.

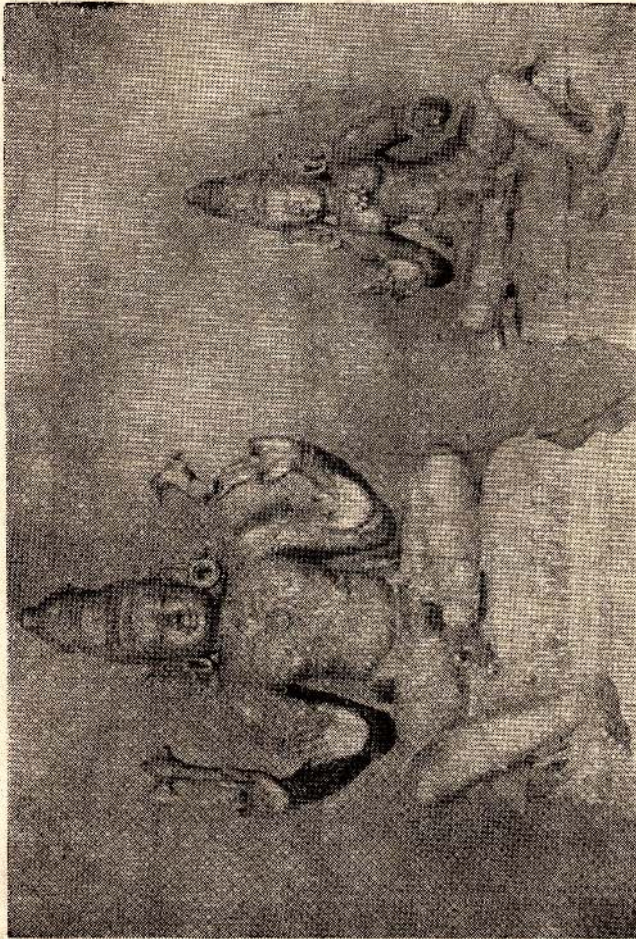
Kathiramalai Pallu V. 8.

20. பொருவில் கோணச் சிகரத் தருகிற
பொழிந்து வெள்ளம் வழிந்து போய்ப்
பூந்தண் குறிஞ்சி வளைந்துவேடிச்சி
காந்தன் சேவடி வணங்கியே.

The shower that fell near the crest of Konamalai flowed down and encircled the fertile mountain region, at the same time worshipped the feet of Skanda, Lord of the Vedda damsel.

Paralai Venayagar Pallu V. 74.

21. de Queyroz Book 2. p. 236



SOMASKANDA MURTHI

Siva and his consort Sivakami and child. Skanda is missing. Trincomalee

Finds, Bronze Ht. 1—8½ ins. Wt. 70 lbs., Consort

Ht. 1—4 ins. Wt. 30 lbs.



One of the pillars of the ancient temple of Koneswaram

The Portuguese before the destruction of the temple found a Tamil inscription on its walls. It was translated by the most learned Tamil and sent to His Majesty the king of Portugal. The translation reads as follows: "Manica Raja Bau Emperor of this Lancaue erected this Pagoda to the God Vidi-Mal-Manda in the year (according to reckoning it comes to be 1300 years before the coming of Christ.) There will come a nation called the Franks who will destroy it and there will be no king in this Island to rebuild it once more." ²² The Portuguese themselves were impressed by this prophecy.

During the reign of king Pandu in the Saka era 358 (436 A. C.) Kulakodan a Chola prince, son of Vararamadevan repaired to Trincomalee and restored the Koneswaram temple. He built the terraced halls and made the sin-dispelling well (Pavanasam). This is supported by the lithic record that is now at the entrance to the fort at Trincomalee. There are traces of Chola rule in the names of places in the Trincomalee District. viz. Chembianpattu, Chembianmalai etc. The Pallavas too seem to have taken great interest in the temple, for some of the Sanskrit inscriptions unearthed in the district are in the Pallava Grantha script. From the pillars and decorated stones that were found in the fort area we have to infer that the temple must have been rebuilt by the Pallavas. A fragmentary Sanskrit inscription discovered in the same premises reveal that a prince Coda Ganga in 1223 had something to do at Trincomalee. ²³

22. JCBRAS. Vol. XXX No. 80 p. 449.

There is an error in translation into Portuguese. 'Vidi-Mal-Manda' according to V. Cumaraswamy seems to stand for 'விதியும் மேற்றளியும் மண்டபமும்,' premises, edifices and halls the builder dedicated unto the Lord.

23. JCBRAS. (1961) P. 179,

Vira Pandyan invaded Ceylon about 1263 and after his victory he left his ensign the two fishes at the main entrance of the sacred building.²⁴ With the beginning of the fourteenth century Pandyan influence was on the decline and the Arya Chakravartis of Jaffna began to take greater interest in the temple. About this great shrine Queyroz says: "Over that large harbour there juts out from the land into the sea a rock on which the kings of Ceylon erected three pagodes, two at the extremities of the hill overhanging the sea and one in the middle and the highest point which was the principal one and one of the most venerated in India."²⁵.....

This temple was under the direct management of the Vanniya chieftains of Trincomalee until the advent of the Portuguese.²⁶ These Vanniya were at one time under the overlordship of the kings of Jaffna, and at another time under the kings of Kandy.

The Konesar Kalvettu gives in detail the duties allotted to the administrators of the temple who were mostly chosen from among the Vellalas and given the dignified title of 'Pandarithar.' A governor was placed over these and invested with the title of Vanniya. The book further gives the duties and services to be performed by the inhabitants of the neighbouring villages towards the maintenance of the temple. The five types of town servants as smiths, potters, barbers, washers and pariahs were allotted lands for their maintenance. At Thambalagamam and Kantalai immense tracts of rice-fields were dedicated to the shrine. According to the temple chronicles several princes have given endowments to the temple, and among them special mention is made

24. UHC. Vol. I Part II p. 685.

25. de Queyroz Book I p. 66

26 YVM. p. 11

of Gaja Bahu I, Jeyaveera Singai Aryan and Parararajasekaran V. The Vanniya chieftains of the North gave each a portion of their revenue to the temple.²⁷

The Trincomalee District has been an ancient seat of Hindu learning and Tamil culture. As mentioned in a previous chapter it was famous for temples dedicated to Lord Siva, and in the eleventh and twelfth centuries there were also Brahman villages. Ruins of Hindu temples can still be seen at Agastiyar Isthapanam close to Mahaveli Ganga. Many Hindu images have been unearthed in the district. It has many traditions connected with the Ramayana.

Constantine de Sa in 1624 demolished the temple of a 'Thousand Columns' in order to employ its material in fortifying the heights on which it stood. It would have been a venerable relic of Hindu antiquity in this Island, had not the Portuguese destroyed it. Some of the images were rescued from this desecration and taken to Thambalagamam where later a temple was erected by Rajasinha II to the Lord of Koneswaram.²⁸ The other images were probably buried in the ground. Fortunately in 1914 two of these images a Vishnu and a Maha Lakshmi were unearthed inside the fort by some soldiers. Later two bronze images one of Ganesha and the other of Parvati were discovered accidentally while digging a well in a private garden. The image of Ganesha found in this place is one of the best of its kind in Ceylon or even in India. Again in 1950 three other images of Siva, Parvati and Chandrasegaram came to light just in time to satisfy the long persistent and widespread yearning of Ceylon Saivites to rebuild the historic temple.

27. YVM. p. 12

28. KPM.

Munneswaram

The five great 'Iswarams' that existed centuries before the birth of Christ are Rameswaram, Tirukketiswaram, Koneswaram, Munneswaram and Naguleswaram. Of these Rameswaram²⁹ is in South India and all the rest are in Ceylon. The name Munneswaram suggests that it was the oldest of the 'Iswarams.'³⁰ The temple 'Manmiam' states that the shrine Lankeswara mentioned in the Siva Puranam and in other writings refers to Munneswaram and to no other.

Many lithic records and Daksina Kailasa Manmiam have extolled the greatness of this shrine. During the last hundred years many have sung the praises of the Lord of Munneswaram and his consort Sri Vadivambikai.

The kings of Ceylon took a keen interest in the maintenance of the temple, Parakrama Bahu VI by a grant of 1448 A. C. endowed the temple with lands and other necessaries.³¹ In 1517 Parakrama Bahu IX made a similar grant to the temple.³² The temple lands comprised the whole of Kalpitiya Peninsula and the whole stretch from Uddappuwa twelve miles from Chilaw up to Dutch Bay as far as Karadiva.³³ The citizens of these

29. All the four Iswarams were destroyed by the Portuguese, but Rameswaram was saved mainly by Thaiumanaswamiyal who rallied the Maravas and made a fierce onslaught against the Portuguese assailants. [Sun. Madras Hindu]

30. de Queyroz "the ancient Pagode of Munucarao" Book III p. 427.

31. JCBRAS. Vol. X No. 35, p. 118. This inscription is on the present wall of the main temple.

32. Temple Manmiam.

33. There were 64 villages consisting of artisans, dummies, oil-makers and priests dedicated to the Lord of Munneswaram, probably the 64 villages were gifts for the 64 'Mukuthams' or aspects of Lord Siva [Temple Manmiam]

villages had to perform various duties and services towards the maintenance of the temple. The high priest of the shrine governed this principality in the name of the Lord of Munneswaram. He had a separate coinage of his own known as Andu Marsa (Sinh) Kuruddu Kasu (Tamil).³⁴

About 1576 the Portuguese demolished this sacred shrine in retaliation for the burning of churches and took away many of its valuables. By an edict of 1608 A. C. the Portuguese authorities directed the entire revenue of the temple villages to the Jesuits to be utilized for the Catholic College in Colombo.³⁵

Kirti Sri Rajasinha, the greatest of the Kandyan kings, realizing the damage caused to Saivism by the destruction of this ancient house of God rebuilt it with the help of special workmen brought from the continent. It should be noted that at this time a large section of the people in the Chilaw and the Puttalam districts consisted of Tamils belonging to the Saivite faith. By a grant of 1753 Kirti Sri Rajasinha bequeathed to the temple, lands situated at Munneswaram for the purpose of carrying out its customary services.³⁶

Naguleswaram or Tiruthambaleswaram

The name and origin of Keerimalai is wonderfully preserved to us in numerous legends. The curative value of its waters is the theme around which many legends

34. JCBRAS. Vol. XXIV p. 186.

35. CPE. II p. 476.

36. Temple Manmiam.

have emanated. It is usual in India and Ceylon for great places or 'Stalas' to have a 'thirtha' or a sheet of water where devotees may perform their ablutions and purify themselves before they attend services in a temple. Tirukketiswaram has its Palavi, Rameswaram its Sethu; Katirkamam its Manica Ganga and Naguleswaram its Keerimalai Springs.

Vaipava Malai states Vijaya founded Tiruthambaleswaram or Naguleswaram at Keerimalai. It further narrates that in the fifth century A. C. the Pandu king of Anuradhapura drove away the Tamil fishermen of Keerimalai from those coasts for desecrating the Naguleswara temple wells.³⁷

The Suta Smhita, a Sanskrit work on Saivism, has referred to Naguleswaram (Keerimalai) among the most ancient places of pilgrimage.³⁸ This book is a part of the great Skanda Purana. This is an indication of the antiquity of Saivism in the Jaffna Peninsula.

There is a great tradition in Jaffna that Bhuvaneka Bahu VI, the founder of the Nallur Kandaswamy temple, paid a state visit to Keerimalai, and after a bath in the sacred waters worshipped the Lord of Naguleswaram. Thereafter the king gave instructions to his ministers for the state take-over of this holy shrine.

At Mavittapuram the king was received with due honours by Sinnamanaththular, the chief priest of the Kandaswamy temple, who entertained him with various

37. YVM. (1953) p. 33

38. S. Natesan : "Glimpses of the Early History of Jaffna."
Mahajana College Golden Jubilee Number 1960
p. 45'

delicacies. The king was so very pleased with the reception that he recited verses impromptu on its praise.³⁹

In the early seventeenth century when the Portuguese became the rulers of the Jaffna kingdom, one of their first act was to raze out all places of Hindu worship and temples like Naguleswaram also met the same end.

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39. சின்ன மனத்தான் செய்யும் விருந்திற் சாற்றுருசி
அன்னதனை விண்ணோரறிந்திருந்தால்—முன்னலைவாய்
வெற்பதனைக் காவியுய்த்து வேலை கடைந்தேயுலைதல்
அற்பமெனத் தள்ளுவரே யாம்.
The feast of Sinnamanathan
Is so grand and delicious
That if the Devas had known it then
They would have shunned the idea
Of churning the sea for heavenly Ambrosia.

CHAPTER VI.

Temples to Iswara (contd.)

Santhirasegaram I

As mentioned earlier Vijaya founded a temple to Lord Santhirasegaram (he who wears the crescent on the crown) at Dondra Head, though later we hear nothing about it in the Ceylon chronicles. Ptolemy in the second century A. C. in his map of Ceylon has marked a plain near Dondra Head as 'Plain of the Moon.' Probably the plain was close to the said temple.

In the reign of Vijaya Bahu VI¹ (1388—1392) (1397—1409) endowments were made to a Saivite temple Nagarisa situated at Dondra Head by one named Vendarasa-kondaperumal, a captain of the body-guard.² This temple seems to have stood close to the celebrated Vishnu Devale at Dondra Head. Unfortunately these sacred abodes of the gods, after being robbed of their wealth, were razed to the ground by the Portuguese.

In course of time the Vishnu Devale was rebuilt, but not the Saivite shrine Nagarisa. All traces of this historic temple have been lost, except a few icons that are now housed in the adjacent Vishnu devale. A

1. Vijayabahu VI was otherwise known as Vira Alageswara. He was of Tamil descent and a Hindu. He and his family were taken as captives by the Chinese to Peking.
2. ASCM. VI p. 74—78.

photograph of the Nandhi (bull-a vehicle of Lord Siva) a very beautiful one appeared in Sri Lanka of February, 1956.

De Jonville, a French traveller of the eighteenth century describes the ruins of the temples at Dondra. "This pagoda is dedicated to Vishnu..... What little remains of the ancient edifice clearly shows its plan, a long rectangle, to which corresponds a gallery of three or four hundred pillars. The new temple is insignificant. Among other debris on the ground is a lingam $2\frac{1}{2}$ feet long, which the priest of the place called "Isvare roupe", Figure of Isvara, a temple to Boudhou was being built near this pagoda." ³

In this connection it is good to note that Santhirasegaram a purely Saivite name is popular among the Sinhalese Buddhists. It may be attributed to temples of this type. Inter-racial marriage alliances especially during the time of the Kandyan kings may be another cause for the wide prevalence of this name among Sinhalese.

Santhirasegaram II

J. P. Lewis in his travels through the Vanni Districts came across some important Tamil manuscripts. Basing his facts on one of these he states that one Viravarayan Chetty, a merchant of Madura, together with some Paravas were wrecked off the western coasts of the Mannar District about A. C. 247. He and his followers later settled in Cheddikulam and constructed a "kerni" known as "Vavalai" and erected a temple to Lord Santhirasegaram about A. C. 289.

Nagathambiran

In the eastern coasts of the Jaffna Peninsula is Nagarcoil, a village noted for its reputed Nagathambiran

3. TC. (1700—1800) p. 87.

Kovil. The antiquity of this shrine perhaps goes to the period when the Peninsula was peopled by the Nagas, an ancient non-Aryan race.

Even before the advent of Vijaya the ancient Nagas worshipped the "Siva Lingam" and the serpent. Tiruketiswaram, Nagapooshany Amman Kovil in Nainativu and Nagathambiran Kovil, all these seem to be associated with the Nagas. The vestiges of their culture and settlements linger in such places of worship.

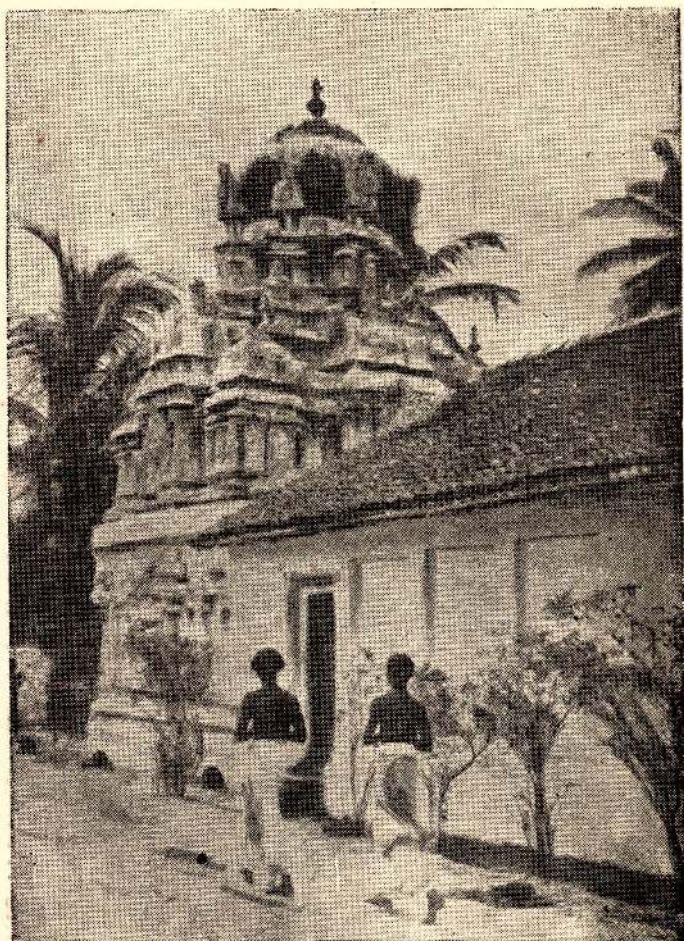
Thambiran is another name for Iswara. In this temple the "Siva Lingam" is canopied by the hood of a five-headed cobra. The people in the neighbouring districts hold this shrine in high esteem, and in all their trials and tribulations they look up to Nagathambiran to solve their ills and grant their boons.

Thanthonryeswaram I

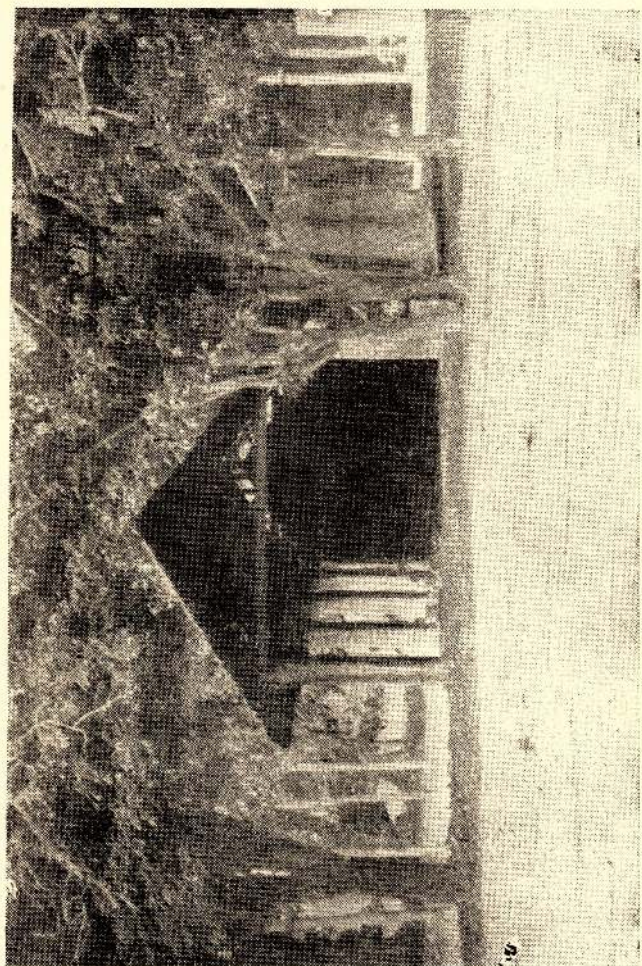
This is an ancient temple dedicated to Lord Siva at Odduchuddan in the Mullaitivu District. According to tradition this "Siva Lingam" in times gone by was found by a peasant who cleared the jungle and cultivated maize. After harvest he collected the stubble and set fire to them. Failing to ignite the heap of straw, he dug into the heap, when to his surprise he found a "Lingam." The Vanniya chieftain of that principality soon founded a temple to Thanthonryeswarar at the site where the "Lingam" was first discovered. Later on some enterprising Government officers who served in the district and other well-wishers rebuilt this venerable house of god.

Thanthonryeswaram II

Among the historic shrines dedicated to Iswara in the Eastern Province Kokkaddyholai is a celebrated



THANTHONRYESWARAM—Kokkaddyholai



NAGATHAMBIRAN KOVIL—Nagarcoil

temple whose presiding deity is known as Thanthontryeswarar. The Vanniya princes who were the rulers of these districts took great interest in the welfare of this ancient shrine.

Asuvagiri

A Saiva temple existed at Kallar $7\frac{1}{2}$ miles from Marichchukaddi. This was seen in a ruined condition by J. Haffner, a Dutchman who travelled on foot from Jaffna to Colombo.⁴ This temple was so famous that even the priests who officiated in it were given a share of the pearl-fishing. Hugh Neville in his 'Taprobanian' refers to pilgrims from India visiting this shrine till recent times. This may possibly be the one known as Asuvagiri (Horse mountain) referred to in Daksina Kailasa Manmiam.

Uruthirapurieswaram

This is an old shrine that was discovered in the jungle on 2nd September 1882, by Sir William Twynam the then Government Agent of Jaffna. The tank near the holy place was known as Uruthiraperumkulam and the village as Uruthirapuram. Close to this village was Kunchuparantan which is noted for its time-honoured 'Amman temple.' Some years ago the villagers of this locality on finding the base of a "Siva Lingam" near Uruthirapurieswaram removed it to their "Amman temple." This "Lingam" is rectangular in shape unlike others which are usually circular. It only indicates that the shrine which housed the "Lingam" belonged to the Chola period of Ceylon history or even earlier. From

4. He was an officer of the Dutch East India Company. He translated a Tamil work into English for Sir William Jones. He published graphic accounts of his travels in India and Ceylon. One of his books is "Journey on Foot Through the Island of Ceylon." [CLR. V p. 82]

the time of Sir William Twynam's discovery the members of the Hindu public took no interest in this ruined temple until colonists from Jaffna moved to that area in the middle of this century. A new edifice was soon built near the old site and in August, 1958 the old "Siva Lingam" was installed with appropriate ceremonies.

Varivanaeswaram

Variappar temple in Chavakachcheri was a sacred shrine in former times. Its greatness has been praised in the Daksina Kailasa Manmiam. This place of worship like many other temples was razed to the ground by the Portuguese. Today a small shrine stands near that ancient site to remind us of the sacredness of the spot.

Siva Devale No. 2 at Polonnaruwa.

It is one of the oldest of monuments in Polonnaruwa and is a shrine built entirely of stone. This edifice is in a satisfactory state of preservation. Three Grantha Tamil inscriptions were cut in the walls of the temple and all of them record donations to the temple. The inscription of Rajendra Chola (1012 - 1044) reveals that the temple was one of the oldest of Chola buildings. Another inscription belong to Adhirajendra (1068 - 1070). The presiding deity of this sacred building was called Vanavan Madevi Iswaram Udaiyar.

Siva Devale No. 1 at Polonnaruwa.

Gaja Bahu II (1137—1153) caused the Siva Devale No. 1 to be constructed at Polonnaruwa. An inscription in Grantha Tamil records that it was set up by Lanka Vijaya Senevirat, a Sinhalese general on the orders of the king.

It is a typical example of Pandyan architecture of the twelfth century, and the best temple found in Polon-

narūwa. It is more ornate and elegant than the Siva Devale No. 2. It may be compared to the Subramaniya shrine at Tanjore. Some of the principal images of the Polonnaruwa bronze finds of 1907 and 1908 were discovered near this shrine.

Kailaya Nathar

In the latter part of the fifteenth century a temple to Kailaya Nathar or Parameswara was built in Nallur, the capital of the Jaffna kingdom. The kings of Jaffna took a good deal of interest in the welfare of the temple and its maintenance. Soon after the conquest of Jaffna in 1620, the Portuguese began destroying Hindu temples and wiping out all traces of Hinduism.

The chief priest of the temple on hearing the misdeeds of the Portuguese decided to save at least the sacred icons from desecration. He, therefore, thought of transporting the images of Iswara and his consort Parvati to his native village Madduvil. It was winter and the roads were muddy and impassable. The bullocks could not draw the cart laden with such heavy images. Thereupon, to lighten the freight the image of the Devi was dropped into one of the temple wells. The other icon was taken by the priest to his village where it was dumped into another well. He waited for better days, and no better days ever came during his lifetime, and he died without leaving a word about the prize he had hidden.

The Portuguese rule over Jaffna ended after thirty eight years. The Dutch who succeeded them followed more or less the same policy as the Portuguese in their relations towards the native religions. There was no freedom of public worship for those who professed the native faiths. But towards the end of their rule of

hundred and thirty eight years, the Dutch relaxed some of their laws relating to public worship. It was during this period a peasant of Madduvil was directed in a dream by some unknown force to unearth the image from the silted well and to make use of it for worship. Today that image of Kailaya Nathar is housed in Madduvil Sivan temple.

Nanchundan or Iswara.

Before the first Portuguese Catholic Mission arrived in Negombo the Tamil inhabitants of that district were Hindus.⁵ To satisfy their spiritual needs they seem to have erected sumptuous temples to Lord Iswara and his consort Parvati. A certain part of Negombo is known as Nanchundan Karai and another is called Kamachy Odai (Devi channel). Close to the latter is the village Pamunugama. Bamunu in Sinhalese means Brahmans. If place names reveal the history of a country then we are led to infer that there was a temple to Iswara in Nanchundan Karai and another to his consort in Kamachy Odai. This fact is further endorsed by Queyroz, the Portuguese historian, who says that about 1575 the Portuguese destroyed two great temples in Negombo much venerated by the natives.⁶ In addition to these facts, Saiva images were unearthed from time to time in Munnakarai. All these confirm the existence of Hindu temples in Negombo before the coming of the Portuguese. The Kandaswamy stone statue in the temple at Silversmith Street, Colombo was unearthed in Negombo.⁷

Berendi Kovil

One of the most beautiful of Hindu temples in the Island in the sixteenth century is the exquisite edifice

5. de Queyroz—Book I p. 46.

6. „ „ Book III p. 425.

7. History of the Temple.

of granite dedicated to Lord Parameswara.⁸ This was built at Sitawaka on the northern side of the city. It was asserted that 2000 workmen were employed for twenty years to complete this structure.⁹

Soon after the death of Bhuvaneka Bahu VII in 1551 the Viceroy of Goa, Noronha set sail to Colombo on the plea of inquiring into the murder of the king, but in reality to seize the treasure of the king of which he had heard much. After taking all what he could take in the palace of the king, the Viceroy and his soldiers marched to Sitawaka. There on finding it abandoned by Mayadunne, he sacked the palace and Berindi Kovil. This illustrious temple was robbed of all its valuables. The images of gold and silver and jewels with precious stones were some of the prizes taken by the Viceroy.¹⁰ Some of the remains of this excellent shrine still exist to remind us of the great status given to Hinduism in times past.

Tambalagamam Konainayagar

As the Portuguese destroyed Koneswaram about 1624, Rajasinha II (1635—1687) took this opportunity of erecting a shrine to the god of Konamalai at Tambalagamam. One image of Lord Koneswaram and the other Mathumai Ammai which were rescued just before the destruction of the temple were installed in the new buildings. For the maintenance of the temple various duties were allotted to the neighbouring tribes like Thanathar, Varippaththar and Adapanmar. The continued wise administration of the temple endowments gave good profits, and in course of time the temple

8. The Sinhalese call it Bhairava Kovil. See Bell's Kegalle p. 63.

9. do Couto. JCBRAS. Vol. XX No. 60 p. 139.

10. de Queyroz Book II p. 301. Berindi i. e. Bhairava Andi, one of the names of Siva.

has grown to be one of the richest of temples in the Island.

Tirukarasai

There was a hallowed temple to Siva at Karasai on the banks of the Mahaveli Ganga.¹¹ This holy abode was about eight miles from Kankuvely of the Muthur Pattu. Here, according to Daksina Kailasa Manmiam, sage Agastiya after performing Tapasya at Vetharaniyam in South India repaired to this sacred spot and continued his penance. Being pleased with his prayers, Lord Siva with his consort Parvati appeared to him in a vision. Thereafter a temple was soon erected to Parameswara on this lovely site, and it is today known as Agastiyar Isthapanam. At present it is a heap of ruins with pillars standing here and there and reminding us of its ancient spiritual halo. In times gone by some of the relics of this great temple were removed to the Sivan temple at Kankuvely, and some to the Pattini temple at Neela Mangalam. The greatness of this temple is extolled in the Karasai Puranam.

Tirumangkalai

Lord Siva was also worshipped at Tirumangkalai near Kottiyar and later the images of this temple were removed to Kankuvely,¹² and a temple was soon founded there.

In the eleventh and twelfth centuries there was a temple to Siva at Kantalai known as "Then Kailasam".¹³ In ancient times Kantalai was known as Saturvedabrahmapuram—the city inhabited by Brahmans who were proficient in all the four Vedas.

11. DKM.

12. TV. p. 88.

13. EZ. Vol. IV. p. 191.

Sambeswaram

In the northern coasts of the Jaffna Peninsula to the west of Keerimalai is Sambuturai. Tradition says that it was so named, because of the landing of the image of Sambu¹⁴ (Siva). In ancient times a temple Sambeswaram stood close to this port. In the Sinhalese chronicles it is called Jambukola. The Bo-Tree was first landed at this port. A little to the east of Sambuturai (Jambukovalam T) was once landed the stone image of Parvati, the consort of Siva, and from thence that place was called Matha-kal (stone mother) and later as Mathagal.

Padawita Iswaran Kovil.

A Karava of the Varnakulasuriya clan who lived at Ratalavava in Matale South, and who was graciously honoured by the king of Kandy for valorous deeds in war founded the Padawita Iswara temple in the reign of King Rajadhi Raja Sinha¹⁵ (1782—1798). Today the temple is abandoned and the image is removed to the vihara of the place.

Vikrama-cala-mega-Iswaram.

In the twelfth century there was a shrine to Lord Parameswara at Magala founded by King Vikrama Bahu, son of Vijaya Bahu I as mentioned earlier.¹⁶

Other Temples to Iswara.

There was a temple to Siva at Padawiya whose design and mouldings recall Berindi Kovil. A "Lingam" was taken "in situ" from this place. The shrine was enclosed with walls all around forming an inner courtyard, and in this enclosure there were four sites of buildings.¹⁷

14. He who grants boons.

15. KC. p. 72.

16. EZ. Vol. III Page 308 ;

17. CAS (1891) p. 10.

In the fifteenth century there was a temple to Iswara just outside the city of Jeyawardana Kotte where sacred hymns from Tamil religious texts were sung daily during service time.¹⁸ This seems to be the singing of Thevarams to 'pann' by "othuvar" (professional singers of religious songs). This indicates the type of religious services in a Hindu temple in the fifteenth century.

Besides these, there were several ancient places of worship to Lord Parameswara in the Vanni districts. H. Neville found a "Siva Lingam" at Kovil Kadu among the ruins north-west of Vavunikulam.¹⁹ There were other shrines to Iswara at Kachchilai Madu and Panangamam. "A Siva Lingam" that was discovered in the jungles near Anuradhapura by a Tamil gentleman about a few decades ago was placed for worship in the Kathiresan temple at Anuradhapura.

In a previous chapter mention has already been made of temples to Iswara in Anuradhapura. Daksina Kailasa Manmiam though not a critical Sanskrit work mentions that a temple to Siva was constructed when the city of Anuradhapura was founded, and that the name of the deity was Anurasapurasar and of the goddess Vijayampikai. This fact is further supported by the discovery of an ancient Tamil house-holder's terrace in Anuradhapura bearing an inscription in the oldest type of Brahmi alphabet: "The terrace of the Tamil house-holders caused to be made by the Tamil Samana (residing) in Ilubarata."²⁰ Probable age of the record is about the third century B. C.

18. UHC. Vol. I Part II p. 768.

19. JCBRAS. Vol XIII No. 45 p. 155.

20. JCBRAS. Vol. XXXV No. 93 p. 55.

We shall now examine the evolution of "Siva Linga" worship as reflected in the contemporary sources namely the Thevaram and the inscriptions. The ancient Saivites represented their God in the form of "Siva Lingam" a symbol of the formless state of the Absolute.

'Standing by itself propless and formless.

For all things 'Tis this mainstay, Eternal Bliss!

Transcending word, deed, thought and wisdom's flight

'Tis Pure Stainless Light "

There is unmistakable evidence to show that "Linga" worship originated for the first time in the Tamil country. The original name for the "Siva Lingam" in Tamil was "Kanthali" ²¹. "Kanthali" consists of two words "Kanthu" and "Ali". "Kanthu" means the stump of a tree. The primitive Tamils like many other ancient peoples worshipped trees. After the death of the sacred tree the stump of the trunk was looked upon with veneration. When this too disappeared a stone pillar which was more permanent was installed in its place. "Ali" in Tamil means destroy and 'Kanthali" means a substitute for the "Kanthu". Hence we find many of the great temples dedicated to Siva in South India have a "Sthala Virisha."

The tendency for some western scholars to connect this sacred form with Phallic worship is monstrous, and if Hindus view the worship of the "Siva Lingam" as the worship of the Phallus it is a heinous sin.

Mt. Kailas is in the form of a "Linga" in shape, and is supposed to be the abode of Siva and Parvati. Similarly Lord Siva according to a Puranic story revealed Himself in the form a pillar of flame to Brahma and Vishnu

21. Prof. G. Subramania Pillai: Lecture at the Benares Hindu University Feb. 1947.

Sivanolipadam (Adam's Peak) was considered sacred by the Hindus because it is "Linga" in shape. The sun-worship at the Peak is the traditional sun-Siva worship of the Hindus.

The "Linga" worship in India began many thousands of years ago. The most celebrated "Siva Lingam" is at Gaudimallam and is known by the name of Parasurameswara.²² This "Lingam" which is assigned to the early centuries B. C. or A. C. is still in "pooja." The face of Lord Siva in that "Lingam" is Mongoloid in its features, with high cheeks, narrow forehead, oblique eyes and a snub nose.

St. Sambandhar sings of a tall 'madakovil'²³ which must have been a brick structure. He also mentions other types of temples.²⁴ The Pallava kings were the first in the Tamil country to found stone temples. There are innumerable inscriptions to attest this fact. In the cave temples of Mahendravarman I (600-630) there is generally no evidence of an image in the sanctum for worship.²⁵ There seems to have been either a wall-painting in the sanctum or stucco images from the plastered wall. There is no water-outlet in the form of a projecting spout on the northern side of the shrine.²⁶ Hence worship with "Abhisheka" was not prevalent in the period of Mahendra.

For the first time a sculptured Somaskanda panel appears in the temple of Parameswara I (670-680) and

22. K. A. Nilakanta Sastri : Mahendravarman.

23. Tirumurai 2. Pathikam 276.

24. do 2. do 277.

do 1. do 59.

25. K. A. Nilakanta Sastri : Mahendravarman.

26. do do Somaskanda in Pallava Sculptures.

ever afterwards numerous other similar structures followed. The "Siva Lingam" was placed before this panel and worship was performed with "abhisheka." These facts are attested by the inscriptions of Parameshwara I.²⁷ One of the Thevarams of St. Appar (7th century) may be rendered thus: "With the body as the temple, the worshipful will as the slave, truth as ceremonial purity, and the mind as the "Linga" of ruby, with love as the ghee and milk for bathing Him profusely. I performed "pooja" to the Lord with praise as offerings."²⁸

The technique followed in the construction of the monolithic temples of Mamallapuram dating from the time of Narasimhavarman I (630 - 668) seems to furnish proof of the observance of the Agama rules. In the monoliths the "stupis" are not integral with the rest of the temple. This can only be in the case of temples based on the canons of the Saivite Agamas. From these we are led to infer that the Agamas which are only second to the Vedas in importance had begun to influence the daily life of the Saivite in such an early period. Most of the ancient rulers of Ceylon seems to have followed the injunctions of the Agamas as in the construction of Hindu temples. They also seem to have ordained that all rites and ceremonies in these holy centres should be in accordance with the precepts of the Agamas.

The Lingam in the temple at Odduchuddan has no "pedam" (pedestal) and so is the "Lingam" in the Anuradhapura museum.²⁹ The "Siva Lingam" that is

27. K. A. Nilakanta Sastri: Some Pallava Inscriptions.

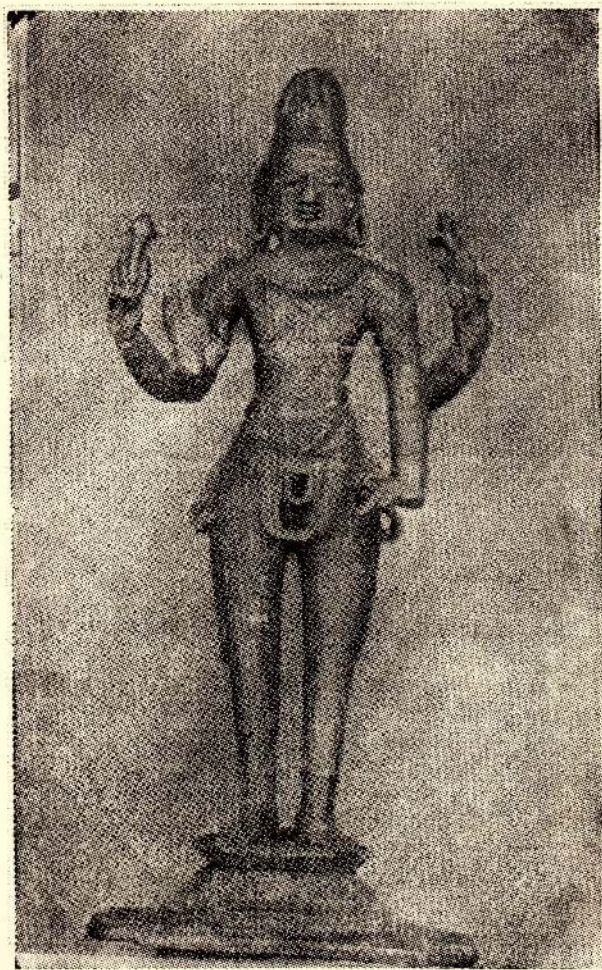
28. காயமே கோயிலாகக் கடிமனம் அடிமையாக
வாய்மையே தூய்மையாக மனமணி இலிங்கமாக
நேயமே நெய்யும் பாலாநிறையநீ ரமைய ஆட்டிப்
பூசனை ஈசனார்க்குப் போற்றவிக் காட்டினோமே.

— St. Appar. 4—76—4.

29. Vide Supra page 16.

in the Kathiresan temple at Anuradhapura was also without a "pedam" when it was first discovered in the jungle. The stone column that was salvaged from the sea off Trincomalee by the famous divers Wilson and Rodney about two years ago, and which is supposed to be the "Lingam" of the old Koneswaram temple has also no "pedam". The old "Lingam" at Munneswaram has no "pedam". All these indicate that these "Lingams" belong to a period when the "pedam" was not a part of the "Siva Lingam". Further we have to note that Anuradhapura ceased to be the capital in the tenth century and therefore the edifices that housed these "Lingams" must have been founded long before that period.

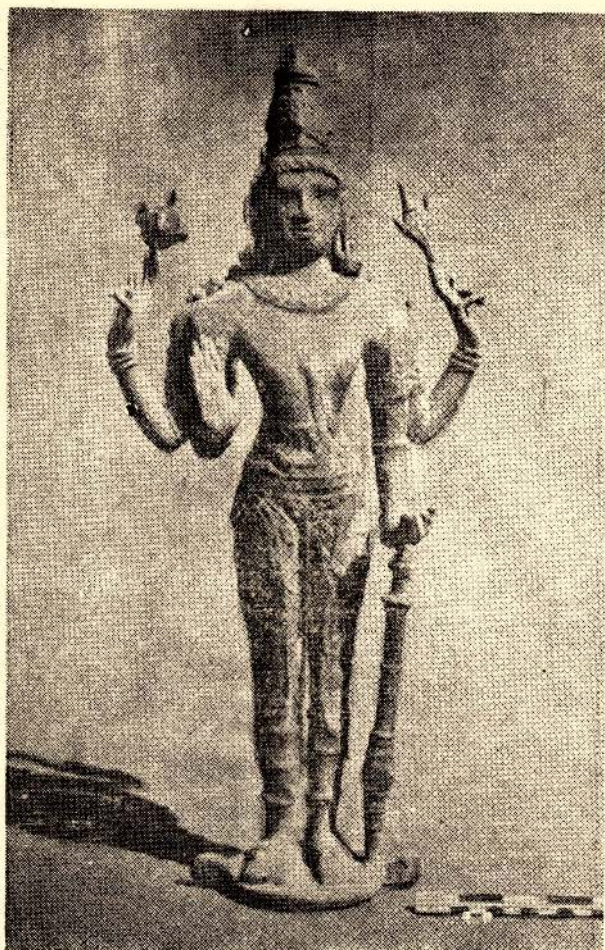
The "nalam" the projecting part of the "Siva Lingam" also serves as an outlet for the "apisheka" liquids. This might have been a part of the "Siva Lingam" only after the introduction of the "apisheka" namely the seventh century. There are some miniature bronze "Siva Lingams" of Polonnaruwa in the Anuradhapura museum. They might have been used for private worship. In these the "pedam" is square in shape and there is no "nalam". The "Lingam" with the "pedam" and the "nalam" seems to have been in vogue in the period of the Cholas. At Uruthirapuram the "pedam" of the "Lingam" is rectangular in shape, but the "Lingam" is small. At Munneswaram the main "Lingam" is fairly big unlike the "Siva Lingams" of modern times. All what have been said reveal the antiquity of Hinduism in the Island and the main features of its development.



CHANDRASAGARAR

Trincomalee Find. 1950. Bronze.

Ht. 1-8 x 7 ins. Wt. 25 lbs.



VISHNU

Polonnaruwa Find, 1960. Bronze. Ht. 24 ins.

By Courtesy of the Dept. of Archaeology

CHAPTER VII.

Ancient Temples to Other Deities

Temples to Vishnu

The shepherd races of India, at first, worshipped their hero Krishna and his elder brother Balarama. Krishna was popularly known as "Mayavan" or "the dissembler"¹ a title very appropriate to his character as portrayed in the Mahabharata. In later times Krishna was looked upon as an incarnation of Vishnu.

Temples to Vishnu were erected in the Anuradhapura period. According to tradition a temple to Lord Vishnu was built by Agbo IV in the middle of the seventh century² at Dondra (Devi Nuvara).³ "The headland," says Sir Emerson Tennent, "has been the resort of pilgrims from the most remote age, Buddhists constructed there one of the earliest dagobas. The most important shrine was in honour of Vishnu." The temple before its destruction by the Portuguese in 1588 was so vast that from the sea it had the appearance of a city. About the destruction of this venerable shrine of god,

1. Deduru Oya is known as Mayavan Aru in Tamil, because of its sudden floods.
2. SHC. p. 37.
3. The Tamils called Dondra as Thennavanturai or Devundrai, The Portuguese unable to get their tongue round called—Tanavare, the Dutch corrupted it to Deandere, and later the English to Dondra.

do Couto, a Portuguese historian says: "Our people proceeded to enter it without encountering any resistance and reaching the Pagode broke open the gates, and entered it without meeting with anyone to resist them, and went all round it to see if they found any people, and seeing all was deserted, Thome de Sousa delivered over to the soldiers that they might do their duty; and the first thing in which they employed themselves was to destroy the idols, of which there were more than a thousand divers forms, some of clay, others of wood, others of copper and many of them gilt. Having done this, they demolished the whole of the infernal structure of pagodes, destroying their vaults and cloisters, knocking them all to pieces, and then proceeded to sack the store-houses, in which they found much ivory, fine clothes, copper, pepper, sandalwood, jewels, precious stones and ornaments of the pagodes and of everything they took what they liked, and to the rest they set fire, by which the whole was consumed. And for greater insult to the pagode they slaughtered inside several cows which is the most unclean thing that can be, and for the purification of which are required very great ceremonies. And they also set fire to a wooden car made after the manner of a towered house of seven stories, all large and most beautiful, lackered in divers colours, and gilt in many parts, a costly and sumptuous work, which served to convey the principal idol on a ride through the city to which likewise they set fire, by which the whole was consumed."⁴ The ruins of Devinuvara lie beside the modern village of Dondra. One handsome gate still survives to speak of its ancient glory.

Mention has already been made of some ancient Vishnu devalayas and of viharas that house Vishnu

4. JCBRA.S. Vol. XX No. 60 p. 375.

images. We shall here further examine a few others. At the picturesque Isurumuniya shrine inside the granite chamber there is a carving of the Buddha in stone and beside it stands an image of Vishnu. In the relic-chamber of Mahiyangana Vihara ascribed to the eleventh century were found the paintings of Vishnu with four hands and Siva holding a trident. There were also four tridents (Bhairava ensigns) for the four quarters of the chamber.⁵ Below the rock-cut image of the Buddha at Avukana was discovered a small enclosure and in it had been placed five exquisite bronze images of gods. The image in the centre of the enclosure was that of Brahma (the creator). Four other images of gods were also placed on the four sides of the enclosure.⁶ In the rock temple at Dambulla in cave No 1 is found the wooden image of Vishnu which was held so sacred that litigants took the oath before it in olden days. The recumbent image of Buddha in this cave is 47 feet long. In the second cave there are forty eight images of the Buddha and statues of Vishnu, Natha, Pattini and Saman. In a cave called Ganehenekanda at Alpitiya in Kiravali pattuva is a sedent Buddha image placed on a high pedestal surmounted by a "makara-torana." Above this "torana" are the figures of gods like Vishnu, Siva and Brahma.⁷ They probably belong to the Kandyan period. Thus in all periods of our history the images of Hindu gods along with those of Lord Buddha were worshipped by kings and peasants.

In 1890 Sir H. C. P. Bell found the ruins of a Vishnu Devale at Etakada in Kadawat Korale.⁸ In the

5. A. S. C. 1951 G. 17 & 18.

6. Dr. S. Paranavitana "Rock-cut Image at Avukuna."

7. ASCAR. 1952 C. 35.

8. do Oct.—Dec. 1890. p. 7.

following year he discovered another Vishnu Devale at Tambala-gollewa with a curious image of Vishnu having snakes entwined round the neck and waist.⁹ In Polonnaruwa, there were several temples dedicated to Vishnu and one was entirely built of granite.¹⁰ Of the several Hindu images discovered in 1960 at Polonnaruwa two were bronze images of Vishnu and Balakrishna.¹¹ A Vishnu Maha Devale was discovered among the ruins of Panduwas Nuwara.¹² In the old dilapidated city of Yapahu there was a Vishnu shrine on the east of the main hall. The Kurunegala Vistaraya says that there was a temple to Vishnu in Kurunegala in the fourteenth century.¹³ Some years ago a stone image of Vishnu was unearthed at Kantalai. In 1944 an image of Vishnu and his consort Lakshmi were discovered inside the fort at Trincomalee. To the north-west of Vavunikulam there are some ruins in the forest. It is known as "Kovil Kadu" (temple jungle) here H. Nevill discovered the statue of Vishnu along with other images of Hindu deities.¹⁴ In 1824 a Vishnu image was discovered while some workmen were digging the church at Puttur.¹⁵ The Vishnu temples of Punnalai and Valli-

9. ASCAR. Jan.—March. 1891 pp. 9, 10.

10. do 1886 p. 9.

11. JCBRAS. 1961 p. 253.

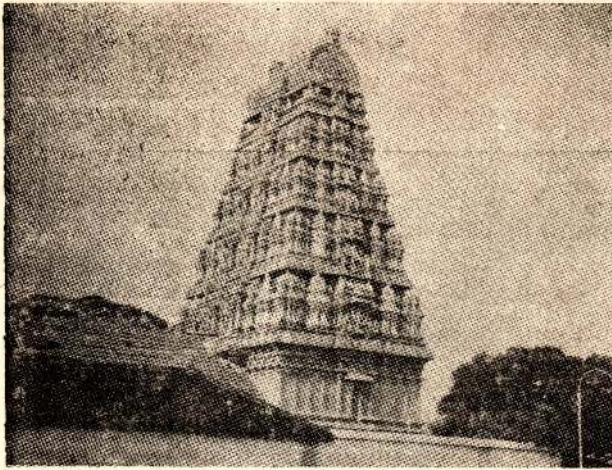
12. do Vol. XIV No. 47 p. 139.

13. do Vol. XIII No. 44 p. 39.

14. JCBRAS Vol. XIII No. 45 p. 155.

15. JCBRAS Vol. XXIII.

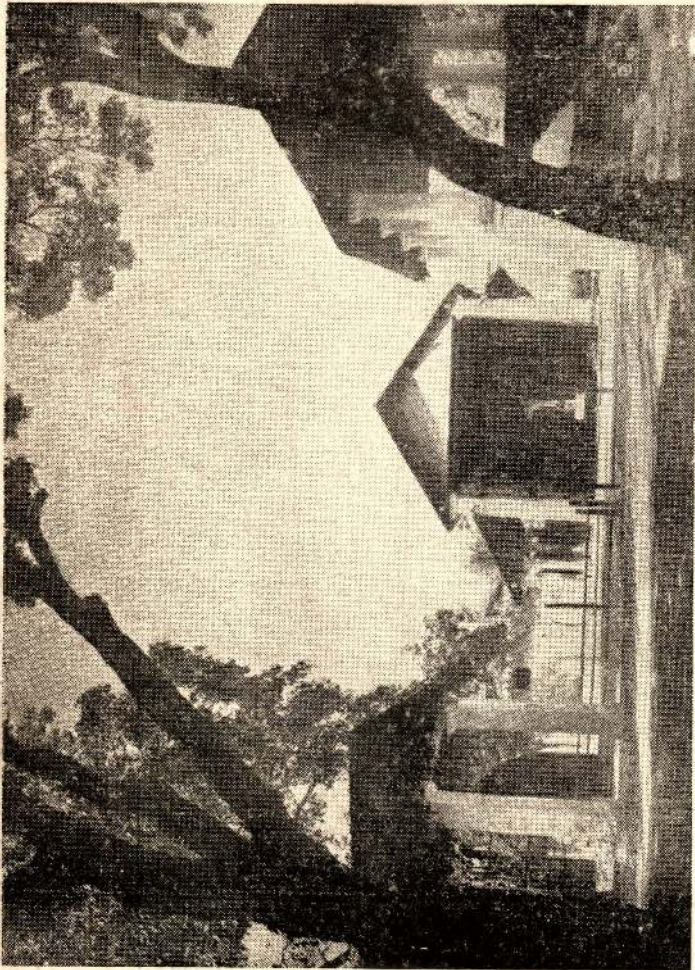
It was the practice of the Portuguese to bury Hindu icons from demolished temples in the foundations of their churches. This might probably be the reason for the presence of a Hindu image in the premises of a church. The Puttur Vishnu image was under a tree for a long time in the Wesleyan Girls' School at Vembadi, Jaffna,



Konainayagar—Tambalagamam.



Kandaswamy Temple—Mandur.



VISHNU TEMPLE--Punnalai.

puram are mentioned in "Kokila Sandesa", a Sinhalese poem of the fifteenth century. Perumal kovil in Van-narponnai was built in the latter part of the fourteenth or early fifteenth century for the Vaishnavite weavers who were brought from India by the kings of Jaffna.

Temples to Ganesha.

Ganesha worship seems to have gained popularity in India and Ceylon after the sixth century. This cult seems to have been in existence even earlier. Elephant was the totem of the agricultural Vellalas¹⁶ and elephant-headed Ganesha is very popular among the Vellalas. There seems to be some linguistic connection between the clan name "pillai" (Vellalas) and the elephant-faced God Pillaiyar. Wherever the Vellalas lived they mostly erected temples to Lord Ganesha in the vicinity of their fields for he is the guardian of their crops. He is also the god of the merchants. He is the bestower of happiness. He is the patron of learning. He is to be worshipped at the beginning of all worships. In Japan he is known as the god of the villages.

He is venerated by Sinhalese Buddhists who worship him more for material success than for spiritual light. Until 1938 there was an image of Lord Ganesha in front of the Bo-Tree at Anuradhapura to which it has been the practice of Sinhalese Buddhists to pay their homage with the offerings of milk-rice as the Tamil Hindus still do.

Ruins of temples dedicated to this god are found in almost all parts of the Vanni and Maha Vanni districts. In ancient Anuradhapura there was a Pillaiyar temple close to Basawakkulam sluice.¹⁷ An old temple dedicated to Lord Ganesha stands adjacent to the Nu-

16. DDE. p. 110.

17. RAS. A'pura Sept. 1890. p. 2.

wara Wewa bund and at a short distance from the Pillaiyar junction. The Ganesha image in this shrine is a very beautiful one and differs in many ways from those found in other districts. Similar temples were discovered in Polonnaruwa.¹⁸ At Devinuvara a temple dedicated to Ganesha was erected by a famous merchant Ramachandra in the fifteenth century.¹⁹ In the same period there was a Pillaiyar temple to the north of Kalutra.²⁰

Pararajasekaran VI, king of Jaffna founded temples to different deities in his kingdom, of these Vailukantha Pillaiyar temple is one.²¹ Karunakara Tondaiman, a general of Kulottunga I, while being engaged in collecting salt from Karanavai, lived at Inuvil and there built a temple to Lord Ganesha. This is still called Karunakara Pillaiyar temple. An inscription of 1567 that is in the temple mentions its name as Karunakara Pillaiyar temple.²² The Arasakesari Pillaiyar temple at Neervely seems to have been founded by Arasakesari, the author who translated the great classic 'Raguvamsam' into Tamil.²³ The Pillaiyar temple at Chulipuram known as Kannai Kothy Kakkai Pillaiyar (the Pillaiyar who caused the crow to peck the eyes) seems to have been in existence before the Portuguese period. The Portuguese superintendent who was directing the demolition works of this temple was badly attacked by crows which resulted in the loss of his eyesight.²⁴ This divine punishment had enhanced the pres-

18. RAS. Pol. 1886. p. 9.

19. UHC. Vol. I Part II. p. 768.

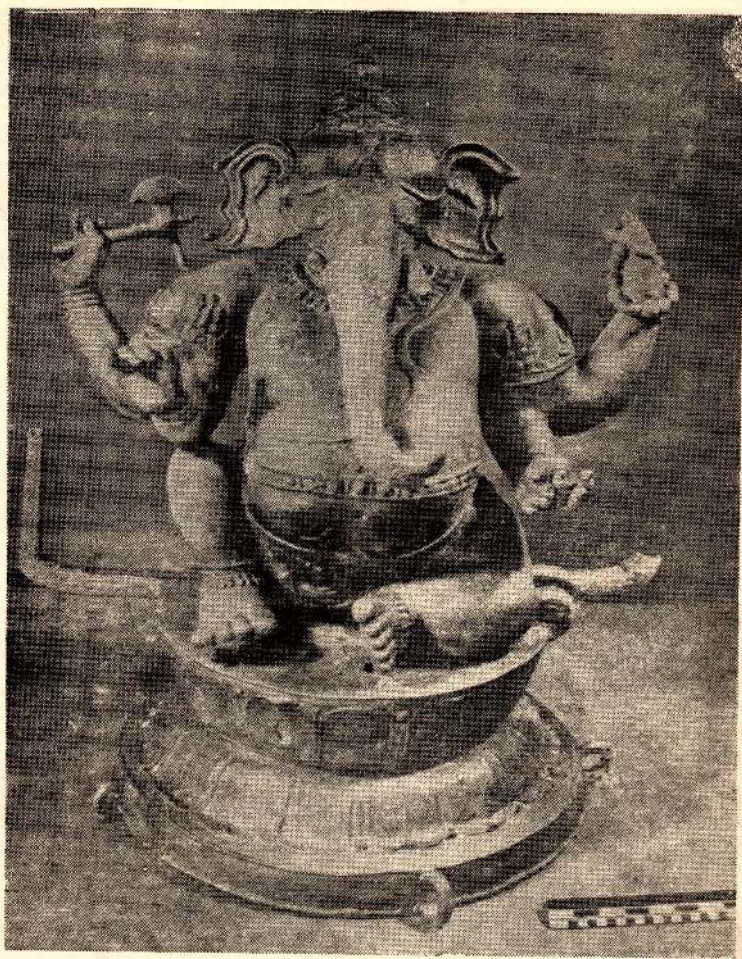
20. KS.

21. YVM. p. 26.

22. AJ. pp. 266, 267.

23. YS. p. 77.

24. PVP. Introduction.



GANAPATI.

He is holding a mango. Though the image is impressive yet it lacks beauty of form.

Polonnaruwa Find, 1960. Bronze. Ht. 23 ins. Wt. 280 lbs.

By Courtesy of the Dept. of Archaeology.



KARAIKKAL - AMMAIYAR

She prayed to Lord Siva to take away her beauty as it was a hindrance for her spiritual progress. Holds two cymbals in her hands.

Polonnaruwa Find, 1960. Bronze. Ht. 11½ ins.

By Courtesy of the Dept. of Archaeology.

tige and sanctity of this ancient shrine. Sinnathamby Pulavar ²⁵ who probably lived in the eighteenth century has immortalized this shrine in his "Paralai Vinayagar Pallu."

When the Portuguese founded churches after the demolition of Hindu temples, they mostly erected them on the old building sites of Hindu temples. This shrewd step was taken to win the mass mind to the Catholic faith. The Chavakachcheri church was built on the old site of the Variappar temple. Similarly the Nallur church was built on the ancient site of the Nallur Kandaswamy temple. Likewise the Manipay church was built on the site of the old Maruthady Vinayagar temple. This clearly shows that the Maruthady temple existed long before the coming of the Portuguese.

Temples to Murukan.

Murukan the patron deity of the hunting tribes of South India and Ceylon was adored as the son of Siva. The god is also known as Kartikeya and Subramaniya. Amongst his other names, he bears the appellation Kathiraman "the Lord of the Rays," in consequence of his having proceeded from the middle or frontal eye of Siva.

The Tamils regard him as the guardian of their race, language and literature. Tirumurukattupaddai, a Sangam work extolls the greatness of Murukan. His story is told in the Skanda Purana, a Sanskrit work of the fifth century. Kandapuramam is a Tamil religious epic which narrates the story of Murukan.

25. Sinnathamby Pulavar is also the author of 'Kalvalai Anthathy.' In this work he has extolled the glories of Lord Ganesha at Kalvalai. This is also another ancient Pillaiyar temple. Just as Uyarapulam or Uyarvupulam is the old name for Annaicottai so Kalvalai is the old name for Sandilipay.

No one knows when the temple of Kataragama was founded. According to Rajavaliya, Kande Kumara of Kataragama and other gods saved the life of King Vijaya when Kuveni made secret attempts to kill him. There is a tradition that King Dutugemunu underwent secret penances and implored Skanda's intervention to liberate the country from the Tamils. After the defeat of King Elala, Dutugemunu went to Kataragama and conducted a thanksgiving ceremony. This is confirmed by a Sinhalese poem, 'Kanda Upatha'—Birth of Skanda.

Therefore, the very traditions and the poem show unmistakably that there was a shrine to Lord Skanda at Kataragama, long before the time of King Dutugemunu. The name Valli and Valliamma are Tamil names. A temple dedicated to her would not have taken place after the Sinhalese had become Buddhists. Further the use of Tamil names for the neighbouring places like Kathiramalai, Sella Kathirgamam, Veputhy Malai, Vinayagar Malai all confirm that the Kataragama shrine is pre-Buddhist.

Dr. P. E. Pieris the greatest of Ceylon historians of modern times says as follows: "Not far off buried in the depths of the fever-haunted forest, was the devale of the terrible war-god of Kataragama claiming an antiquity more remote than the Sinhalese race itself. Exaggerated rumours of the immense wealth of gold and gems which were stored therein roused the cupidity of the Portuguese, but some secret power appeared to shield the mystic spot and in spite of all their efforts no hostile expedition ever crossed its sacred threshold"²⁶

In the year 1642 a Portuguese detachment of 150 men and 2000 Lascarins attempted to sack the shrine

26. CPE. I. p. 324.

under the command of Gasper Figueira de Cerpe who was held in high respect among the Portuguese. When they went close to the spot where the temple stood, they took captive a native of that area and inquired from him where the shrine was. He replied that he knew it and said that it was close by and acted as their guide. They wandered round and re-crossed many times but failed to reach the shrine. For, out of the five guides they took with them, three were put to death, because they thought that they were deceiving them. The guides acted like mad men and spoke all kinds of nonsense. The last two guides also behaved in the same manner, and so the company were forced to turn back without effecting anything and without even seeing the temple.²⁷ Such are the miracles of the Lord of Kataragama.

Dr. John Davy, the Governor's Physician, paid a visit to Kataragama in 1819. Hubert White has described him as "a man of accurate observations". He states in his account of Ceylon as follows: "Kataragama had been a place of considerable celebrity on account of its devale which attracted pilgrims, not only from every part of Ceylon, but even from remote parts of the continent of India. Besides the temple of Kataragama God, there are many others. In the largest square are the Kataragama Devale and devale of his brother Ganna (Lord Ganesha), and a vihara dedicated to Buddha in a state of great neglect. In the small square are contained a little Karanduva sacred to Iswara and Kalana-maduma, a kovila dedicated to the demon Byro, rest-house to pilgrims and some officers. Opposite the principal devale both in front and rear there are two avenues of considerable length, one terminated by a small devale (Valliamma Devale), and the other by a large dagoba (Kiri Vihara)."

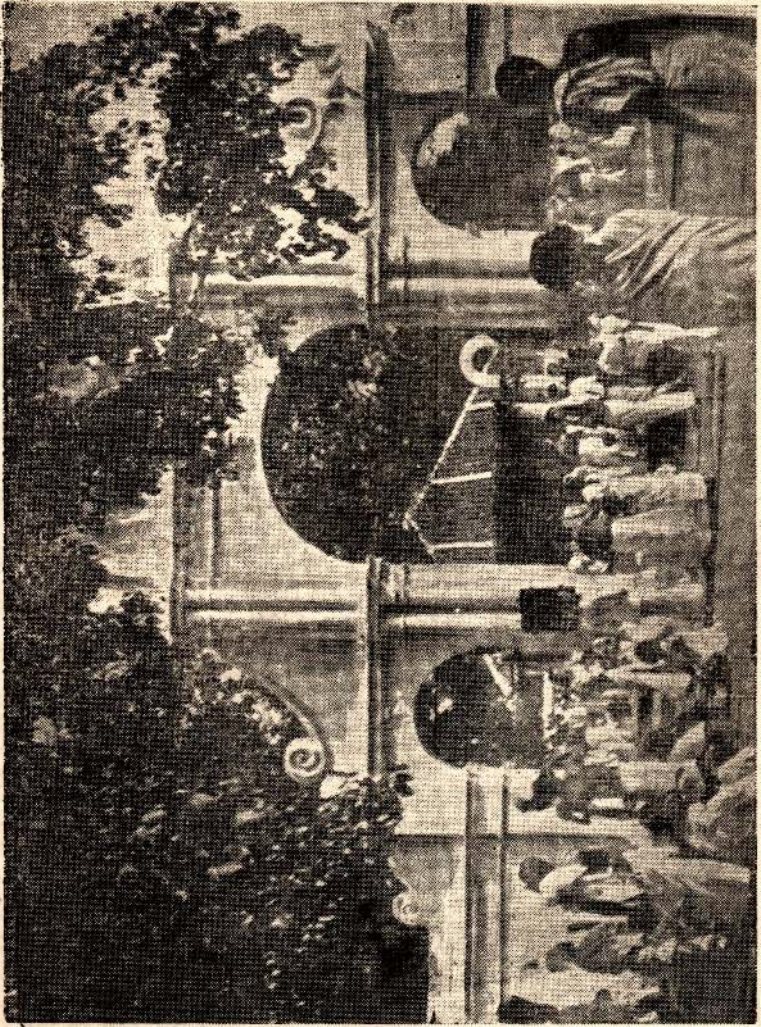
27. Ceilao p. 87.

Viharas standing side by side with Hindu kovils are not peculiar only to Ceylon. Gaya is equally sacred to both Hindus and Buddhists. A temple to Mahadeva is close to the stupa at Sanchi. Likewise viharas stand side by side with Hindu temples in Java and Cambodia.

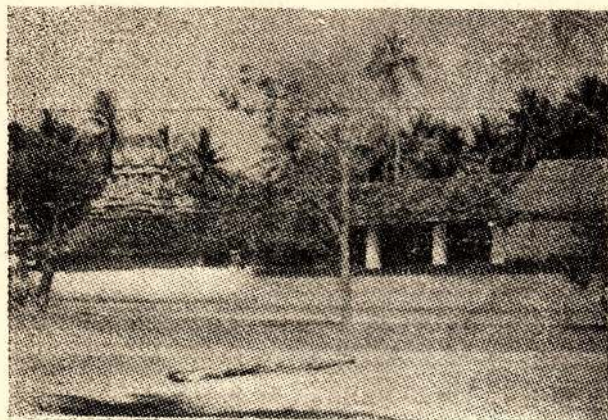
Claim of the Hindus to Kataragama Hindu temple was first made by the Ceylon Saiva Paripalana Sabhai in 1908 under the leadership of the great patriot Sir P. Arunachalam. Then, on March 18, 1938 an all Ceylon Hindu meeting convened by the Hindu members of the State Council and by representative Hindus and Hindu institutions in all parts of Ceylon was held at the Vivekananda Society Hall, Colombo, under the chairmanship of Sir A. Mahadeva and resolutions that steps should be taken to secure for the Hindus an effective share in the management of the ancient shrine of Lord Skanda "with a view to have their religious sentiments respected and to see that the unstinted offerings of the Hindu worshippers are utilized for the purpose of the temple" was unanimously passed. Then with the declaration of war against Germany the question was shelved and nothing was arrived at.

Sir Ponnampalam Arunachalam has said that King Dutugemunu handed the management of the temple to the Veddas, and from that time they have continued to retain it except for a short time after 1818. The present Kapuralas of the temple claim descent from the Veddas. Several endowments were added to the previous ones by later kings. The present main shrine seems to have been built by Rajasinha I (1581—1593).²⁸ Such was the devotion of Sinhalese kings to the God of Kataragama in ancient and medieval times.

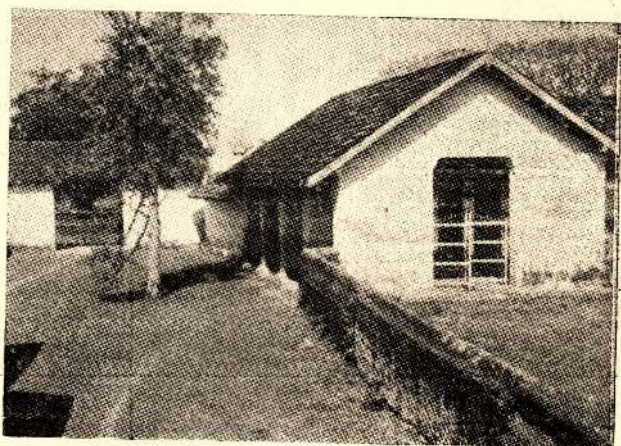
28. KP. p. 39. stanzas 77 and 72.



KATARAGAMA TEMPLE



Temple to Skanda—Tirukovil.



Chitra Velauthaswamy—Verugal.

Tirukovil

There are many places in South Ceylon besides Kataragama associated with Skanda or Velan. South Kalutra is known as Velapura. It only means that the people who were living south of Kalu Ganga were great devotees of Lord Kataragama. Tirukovil, a coastal town south of Batticaloa lies in the ancient province of Ruhuna. The old name for Tirukovil is Kandapanandurai (Kandan's arrow port). Here there is an ancient temple to Skanda.

When Chief Justice Alexander Johnston went on circuit to the Batticaloa District in 1806 he went to Tirukovil. He says that the water there was the best in the locality and the best he ever drank. The temple was in charge of a young Tanjore Brahman. The door of the shrine faced the sea, but formerly it had faced the land. The Brahman said that it changed by some miracle in one night. He allowed him to go within the first door but not into the 'Sanctum Sanctorum' before which a cloth was hung which prevented him from seeing in. He speaks of a temple car which was made three years earlier. There were attached to the temple 18 dancing girls descendants from the slaves brought from India.²⁹

According to the 'Monograph of the Batticaloa District' about 436 A. C. an invasion by a Chola prince was successful and for many centuries the district was a Tamil kingdom tributary to the Sinhalese kings. It was this prince who brought over from India the Vanniyas who later ruled those districts.

Tirukovil is traditionally claimed to be one of the temples of Ravana. A Tamil inscription of this shrine

29. JCBRAS. Vol. XXXVI p. No. 98. p. 74.

was discovered by Hugh Nevill in the Amman Kovil at Tampiluvil. At his instance it was fixed in the portico of the shrine to which it relates. It records a grant of land by Sri Sangabodi Vijaya Bahu Devar Chakravarti's tenth year January 20, donation to Sivagnana Sankaran Kovil. "Those who destroy this charity will accumulate the sin of killing the Karampasu on the banks of Ganges". The extent of the land is 350 acres.

This venerable house of God like most other shrines was destroyed by De Azavedo.³⁰ It was rebuilt later after the coming of the British.

Verugal Chitravelauthaswamy.

In days of yore a Vel, the insignia of Lord Subramaniya was worshipped at Verugal in the Trincomalee District. On one occasion Nalainatha Chettiyar of Tirunelvely who had settled in Trincomalee was on a pilgrimage to Kataragama. As this shrine was on the main route to Kataragama, he stayed there for the night. The Lord of Verugal appeared to him in a dream and requested him to build the temple. Nalainathar was at first reluctant as he had not the required funds, but the Lord gave him the directions to a buried treasure. The next morning he sought out the spot and unearthed the treasure. Subsequently a temple was built to Lord Subramaniya. The king of Kandy on hearing the greatness of the shrine, made endowments to the temple. Later Nalainathar furnished the temple with the necessary images and all necessary articles for Saiva worship.³¹

In 1887 Hugh Nevill brought to light a Tamil inscription of the temple. It records; "Salutations to

30. CPE. I. p. 323.

31. TV.

Sri Subramaniya! The wall on the south is the gift of Kailaya Vanniyar, the western side the gift of Simmapillai of Palai, son of Tamasamakan, the northern side (the gift) of the Karaiyar of Maddakalappur and the Karaiyar of Negombo, and the gift of Chetties (the eastern side)".³²

Nallur Kandaswamy Temple.

As mentioned earlier Bhuvaneka Bahu VI founded the Kandaswamy temple at Nallur about 1450. When Jaffna for the first time was occupied by the Portuguese in 1560, they plundered the temple of all its valuables. Then, after the deportation of Sankily Kumara and his family to Goa, de Oliveira destroyed the Nallur Kandaswamy temple in 1621. Thereafter for nearly 170 years there were no temples for worship for the Hindus in that locality. When the Dutch in their latter period became more liberal, some pious people applied to the Government for permission to build a temple and in 1793 permission was granted. Soon a new temple to Lord Subramaniya was erected in a piece of land that belonged to the old Kandaswamy temple.³³ There is a strong tradition in Jaffna that the old temple stood near the present Protestant church. Today Nallur Kandaswamy temple is the best administered Hindu temple in the Island, and in its popularity it is only second to Kataragama.

Kumarapuram.

A little shrine was dedicated to Lord Skanda in ancient times at Thaniootu in the Mullaitivu District.

32. Tap. Part VI. Vol. II. Dec. 1887. p. 163.

33. Thombo records; "Ambalavanar Kandappachetty" as the owner of the said piece of land. It was then the practice to register temple lands under personal names lest they might be noticed by Dutch officers. According to the Puranas, Skanda was the son of Siva (Ambalavanar).

Fortunately as the temple was in the mainland, it was not destroyed by the Portuguese. The bricks that were used for its construction seem to be very ancient. Parker, a great authority on irrigation in Ceylon says: "The bigger the brick the older is the building." The bricks used in this edifice, according to Parker, are about 428 cubic inches each. Definitely this temple seems to be older than the Hindu temples of Polonnaruwa.

Once when the devotees of this temple feared that it might be destroyed by the Portuguese, they instantly removed the main deity to the Peninsula and hid it at Kandavanam near Point Pedro. This beautiful icon can still be seen at Kandavanam temple.

Kumarapuram was lucky to have had a line of devoted priests to carry on the services of the temple and to look after its properties.

Near Huruluwewa Tank off Horowupotana is an ancient shrine dedicated to Lord Kandaswamy. The people in the area hold the deity in great veneration. He is supposed to be the guardian deity of Ruwanweli Dagona, Isurumuniya and Jetawanarama of Anuradhapura.

Similarly Mandur Kandaswamy temple is also a sacred shrine in the Batticaloa District. Mention has already been made of Mavittapuram Kandaswamy temple in a previous chapter. Sacred places of worship dedicated to Murukan are found in all parts of the Island. In spite of social and political forces in the past twenty centuries the worship of Murukan has suffered no decline in any part of the Island.

The worship of the Devi.

The one noticeable thing about the Siva - Sakti cult is that both Siva and Sakti were worshipped in



PARVATI AS SIVAKAMASUNDARI.
Polonnaruwa Find, 1960. Bronze. Ht. 38 ins.
By Courtesy of the Dept. of Archaeology.



PARVATI?

A parrot is seated on her left hand. She seems to wear the sacred wedlock.

Polonnaruwa Find, 1960. Bronze. Ht. $32\frac{1}{2}$ ins.

By Courtesy of the Dept. of Archaeology.

benign (Saumya) as well as terrible forms (Ugra). The Devi's images depicted as Uma, Parvati and Bhavani are of gentle mien, while the other of her aspects Durga, Kali and Bhairavi belong to an earlier period and are of opposite nature. Images of Kali have been discovered in Anuradhapura, Polonnaruwa, Pariahnur and Cheddikulam. One of these figures from Cheddikulam is in the Anuradhapura museum. Kali is principally the destroyer of the buffalo-demon Mahishasuramardini. She is four-armed and engaged in a combat with the demon in the shape of a buffalo with a lion beneath her about to maul the Asura, coming out of the decapitated trunk of a buffalo. There is another animal on the other side of the figure. She is depicted as driving the trident into the neck of the buffalo, pressed down by one of her legs. Several reliefs in Mamallapuram illustrate the struggle between the Devi and the Asura.

In Trincomalee, adjoining the Hindu College there is a Kali temple known as Nagara Kali. Tradition states that it was founded by Kulakodan. Its name signifies that it was the guardian deity of the city from ancient times.

Veerakali Amman temple, at Nallur comes into prominence, when in the 16th century Sangily after making an agreement with Vidiya Bandara to fight the Portuguese, agreed to take a solemn oath at the said temple. Accidentally there was an explosion in an ammunition stores, and Vidiya Bandara suspecting foul play drew out his sword. In the commotion that followed the Sinhalese leader and his retinue were killed.

From the thirteenth century there was a temple to Kali at Bentota. Besides, there were temples to this goddess in the Northern and Eastern Provinces. Kali has been a favourite deity of the artisan class and wherever they lived they had temples dedicated to this goddess.

The 'Devi' is worshipped in the Tamil provinces under various names: Durkai Amman, Mari Amman etc. The Nagapooshani Amman temple in Nainativu is one of the popular temples in the north. This shrine has traditions that connect it with the ancient Nagas of Nagadipa. Its festivals in July attracts lakhs of Hindu devotees.

Pattini Cult

The purity, love and devotion of Kannakai won for her divine attributes and when Senguttuvan and other kings of Tamilakam raised her as the goddess of Chastity they only wanted to present an ideal wife to the womanhood of South India. For it should be remembered that the education of ancient India was accomplished deliberately through the worship of ideal heroes and heroines. The statesmen of old were of opinion that this worship would help to produce a better class of citizens and a better society.

According to Silappadikaram or the story of the "Silambu" or anklet, Gaja Bahu I of Ceylon, hearing the prosperity of other countries by the inauguration of the cult of Pattini, erected edifices for the performance of daily sacrifice to the goddess. He built temples and carried on festivals in her honour with processions along the streets of his city on Mondays in the month of Adi (July—August)³⁴ under the belief that she would dispel

34. Ievers in his "Manual of the North Central Province," says as follows: "St. Mary's Church at Madhu is considered by the Buddhists and a great many of the Tamil pilgrims who resort there as the Temple of Pattini-Amma (Amman Kovil)". It is interesting to note that the festivals of Kannakai and those of Madhu are in the month of July.

all evils and grant all prayers. In consequence seasonal rains fell and the land became prosperous by abundant harvests.

The account of the Rajavaliya confirms the statement of the Silappadikaram that Gaja Bahu I introduced the worship of Kannakai or Pattini devi to Ceylon. The devalayas in Ceylon and the Pattini ceremonies now current among the Kapuwas of Ceylon can be traced to this time. The anklet and not an image is still the only emblem which is worshipped in many Pattini temples in the Island. Many legends grew round the original legends. Horn-play or the game of horn-pulling has for ages found favour with Sinhalese villagers. Among the form of ceremonies practised to propitiate Pattini are the Pol-Keliya or the game of smashing coconuts, alms-giving to women and Aila-Padinava or the swinging ritual. Fire-walking is another important ceremony in a Pattini temple especially in the Tamil areas. All these ceremonies are very dramatic and spread throughout the night.

A temple for Kannakai was built at Anganamaikadavai (Angana - a goddess) near Kanterodai most probably by King Gaja Bahu I.³⁵ He also seems to have caused a colossal statue of his to be erected before the temple in order to impress the public of his edict. The statue was found by Dr. Paul E. Pieris in a broken state in the premises of the temple and was later removed to the Jaffna Museum. This seems to be one of the earliest of temples dedicated to her worship. A celebrated temple for Kannakai is at Vattapalai in the Mullaitivu

35. The author of the Mahavamsa has given a defective treatment of Gaja Bahu's reign although he contributed much to the welfare of his country in many ways. Jaffna was his queen's country. He gave equal support to Buddhism and Hinduism.

District. Pilgrims from all parts of Ceylon assemble at this centre for its annual festival in May. In the Sinhalese districts there are many Pattini devalayas i. e. Piliyandala, Navagamuwa near Hanwella etc.

In addition to the worship of Kannakai our ancestors founded temples to Duropada and Sita. It only indicates the high regard and honour they had for virtuous women. Duropada Amman temple at Udappu attracts many thousands of pilgrims during the festival season. Many non-Hindus from all parts of the Island flock there to see the fire-walking ceremony. Another temple was dedicated to Duropada in Batticaloa. Besides, a shrine to Sita, the heroine of the Ramayana is in Nuwara Eliya.

Aiyanar (Tamil) Aiyana (Sinh.)

Throughout the interior of Ceylon, Aiyanar is considered a forest God who guards travellers in the forests. He is propitiated by the villagers on all occasions of sickness, drought and agricultural operations. He is supposed to be the guardian god of the tanks and lakes. His proper name Kai-yanar so called because he sprung from the hand of Vishnu. He is known as Aiyappan in Travancore.³⁶ Just as we adore the God of Katarama with awe and respect so also the people of Malabar worship Aiyappan. His emblem is the shepherd's crook. His seat is in the Western Ghats.

Temples dedicated to this deity are popular in the Northern and North-central Provinces. In the Vanni Districts his shrine is close to the tanks. One famous Aiyanar temple was between Mannar and Jaffna.³⁷ At Madampe there is an ancient Aiyanar temple by the side of the tank. His vehicle the horse is very prominent.

36. DDE. p. 91.

37. KS.

Maha Tabbowa is a great pre-Christian tank near Puttalam. Hugh Nevill furnishes ground for speculation if not for inquiry by identifying the edge of the bank as the site of the ancient city of Tavarikiya Nagara which is recorded in an inscription at Paramakanda. Tavarikiya is a form of Tawagiriya (penance rock). To this day pious devotees come from as far as Kurunegala, Anuradhapura and Dambulla to worship and do penance at a shrine on the bund, where before the tank was reconstructed there stood a ruined devale which was dedicated to Aiyandar.³⁸

Ruins of Hindu Temples

Dilapidated shrines which in times past were dedicated to Ganesha are common sights near tank bunds in the the Northern and North-central Provinces.

Near the mouth of the Kal Oya are the ruins of a Hindu temple. It is usual for great places or "stalas" to be near river mouths, and to have the advantage of a "tirtha". This temple was so renowned that its incumbents were allowed among other important privileges a portion of the pearl-oysters fished on the banks off Condachy.³⁹

Karaitivu is a small island in the gulf of Mannar 12 miles north-west of Kalpitiya. In ancient times the inhabitants of the neighbouring coasts were in the habit of going on a pilgrimage to a Hindu temple in this Island.⁴⁰

In the peninsula of Kalpitiya to the north of Pallivasathurai is a ruined tank with granite steps all around. The perimeter of this tank is about four miles. Ruined buildings are on all sides of the tank. The ruins

38. AIWC. Part II. p. 32.

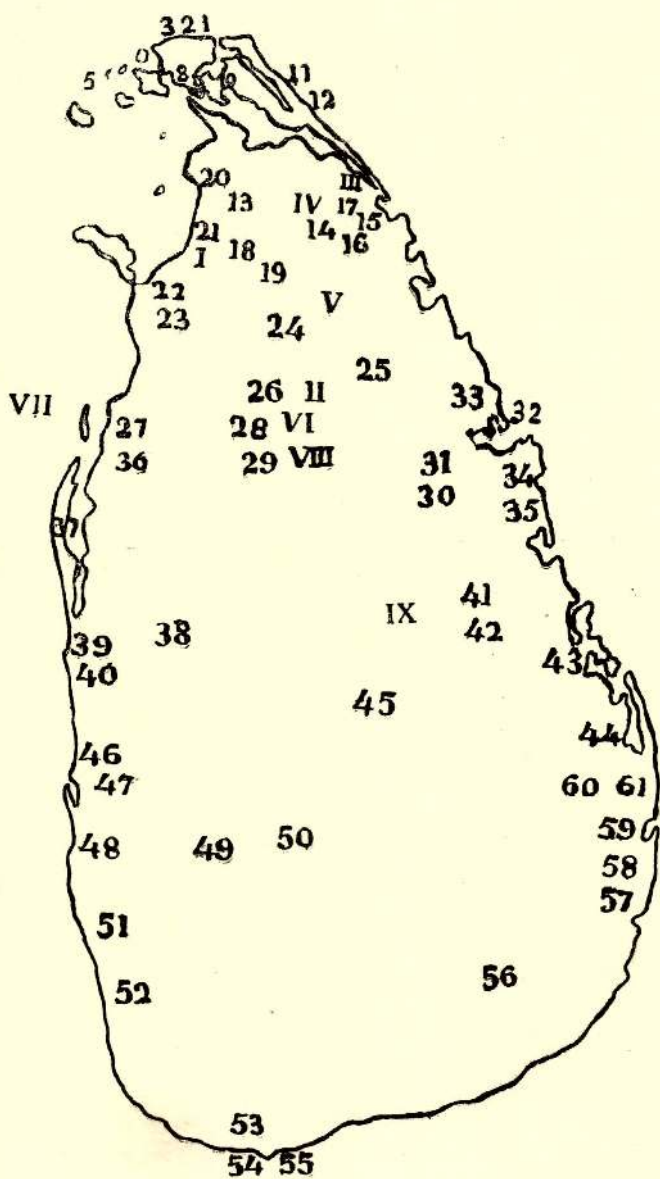
39. MPD. pp. 11, 12.

40. MPD. p. 15.

on the western side look like those of a Hindu temple. A few icons still remain to remind us of its gloried past. The tank is called Nachchiamman Gangai and the temple is called Nachchiamman kovil. There are many hallowed traditions about this temple and its "thirtham". The Puttalam District in days of yore was a great seat of Hindu learning and Tamil culture. There are archaeological records of this district to show that Tamils colonized this area long before the arrival of the first founder of the Sinhalese race. In former times the Kalpitiya Peninsula was inhabited by Hindu Tamils who had close social ties with the people of the Jaffna Peninsula. Even the Yalpana Vaipava Malai records that a Vanniya chief of Kalpitiya came with his band of followers and settled in Jaffna. Unfortunately, our Archaeological Department has done very little research work in places like Arasapuram, Karaitivu, Kallar, Nanattan Kudiramalai etc.

A few miles to the north of Chilaw and to the west of Chilaw—Puttalam road stands an old tottering temple dedicated to Parameswara known to our ancients as "Manavary". The principal deity is called Ramalingam. The traditions of the temple are linked with Rama and his conquest of the Island. Today few patronize this venerable shrine, and hence it is in a neglected state. A "poosary" (a non-Brahman Hindu priest) of the locality twice a week opens its doors to perform his traditional ceremonies to the god. Age sits heavily on this monument. The "Siva Lingam" in the sanctum appears half sunk in the floor. All these relics of a bygone age only remind us that before the arrival of the Portuguese many of the people who inhabited the coasts from Kalpitiya to Negombo were Tamils professing the Hindu faith.

SITES OF ANCIENT HINDU TEMPLES
IN CEYLON



Ancient Hindu Temples in Ceylon

For lack of space many old temples of Jaffna have not been marked in the map. Besides there may be several other temples in Ceylon that ought to find a place in the map, but only those whose antiquity is definitely known are mentioned. Except No. 45 all the rest in the list are more than four hundred years old or shrines once flourished and later went to ruin.

There are innumerable devales in Sinhalese areas dedicated to Vishnu, Skanda, Aiyanar and Pattini. They are not included in this list. Each village has its devale and therefore it is impossible to mark all of them in map of this size. As the Vishnu temple at Dondra is a popular one, and as the rites and ceremonies at the temple until its destruction by the Portuguese were in accordance with Hindu Agamic principles, it has been included in the list.

1. Kandaswamy Temple — Mavittapuram.
2. Naguleswaram or Thiruthambaleswaram — Keeri.
3. Sambeswaram — Mathagal (Little trace) [malai.
4. Vishnu Temple — Punnalai.
5. Nagapooshany Amman Temple — Nainativu.
6. Arasakesari Pillaiyar Temple — Neervely.
7. Anganamai Kadavai — Kanterodai.
8. Kailaya Nathar Temple — Nallur.
9. Kandaswamy Temple — Nallur.
10. Varivanaeswaram — Chavakachcheri.
11. Vishnu Temple — Vallipuram.
12. Nagathambiran — Nagarcoil.
13. Uruthirapurieswaram — Urithirapuram.
14. Thanthontrieswaram I — Odduchuddan.
15. Kannakai Amman Temple — Vattapalai.
16. Kumarapuram — Mullativu.
17. Temple to Iswara — Kachchilai Madu.

18. Kovil Kadu — Vavunikulam (Ruins).
19. Temple to Iswara — Panangamam (Ruins).
20. Temple to Ganesha — South of Kalmunai.
21. Aiyandar Temple — Vellankulam.
22. Rajaraja Isvarattu Mahadevan Kovil — Matota.
23. Tiruvirameswaran Udaiyar Mahadevan Kovil —
Matota (No trace).
- * Kandaswamy Malai (Girikanda Cetiya)—Tiriyay.
24. Pillaiyar Temple — Omantai.
25. Temple to Iswara — Padawiya (Ruins).
26. Santhirasegaram II — Cheddikulam.
27. Asuvagiri — Kudiramalai (Ruins).
28. Temple to Iswara — Anuradhapura (Ruins).
29. do do do (Ruins).
30. Thenkailasam — Kantalai.
31. Temple to Lord Konesar — Tambalagamam.
32. Koneswaram Temple — Trincomalee.
33. Nagara Kali — Trincomalee.
34. Temple to Parameswara — Tirukarasai (Ruins).
35. Chitra-Velauthaswamy — Verugal.
36. Temple to Vishnu — Pomparippoo (Ruins).
37. Nachchiamman Kovil — Kalpitiya (Ruins).
38. Vikrama-cala-mega-Iswara—Budumuttava (Ruins).
39. "Manavari"—Temple to Iswara — northern bank.
of the Deduru Oya (Tottering state).
40. Munneswaram — Chilaw.
41. Siva Devale No. 1 — Polonnaruwa (Ruins).
42. do do No. 2 do
43. Temple to Lord Siva — Erakavilla (Eravur).
Destroyed by Mahasen.
44. Thanthontrieswaram II — Kokkaddycholai.

* Perhaps this is one of the Hindu temples destroyed by Mahasen in the fourth century. On the temple sites he built viharas. Hence this confusion.

45. Iswara Temple — Padawita, Matale South (Ruins).
46. Nanchundan (Iswara) — Negombo (No trace).
47. Kamachchy (Iswary) — Negombo (No trace).
48. Temple to Lord Siva — Kotte (No trace).
49. Berindi Kovil (To Lord Parameswara) — Sitawaka
50. Sivanolipadam (Sri Pada)—(Adam's Peak) [(Ruins)
51. Temple to Lord Ganesha — North of Kalutara (No
52. Shrine to goddess Kali — Bentota. [trace).
53. Temple to Pillaiyar — Devinuvara (No trace).
54. Temple to Vishnu — Devinuvara.
55. Temple to Lord Santhirasegaram I. In later times it
was known as Nagarisa — Dondra Head (Ruins).
56. Kathirgamam — (Kataragama)
57. Temple to Lord Skanda — Okanda (Okandamalai).
58. Temple to Iswara (Brahmanagama of ancient times),
destroyed by Mahasen in the fourth century.
59. Temple to Skanda — Tirukovil.
60. Temple to Lord Siva* — Amparai (No trace).
61. Kandaswamy Temple — Mandur.

Ruins of Hindu Temples

- I. Komputukki
- II. Mara-iluppai
- III. Kuravil Kovil (Near Putukkudiyiruppu)
- IV. Kanniya Kovil (Saptamarikas) Mannakandal
- V. Pandarakulam
- VI. Madukanda
- VII. Karaitivu (Puttalam District)
- VIII. Anuradhapura
- IX. Polonnaruwa

* The Pillar inscription that is in the Amparai Kachcheri reveals the existence of a temple to Siva before 700 A. C. Some derive the word Amparai from "Ambal" (consort of Siva).

CHAPTER VIII

Hindu Festivals

No other race in the world were as much influenced by astronomy and for so many centuries as the Hindus that inhabited Hindustan. The natural phenomena of New Moon, the entering of the sun into each sign of the zodiac, the eclipses, the equinoxes, the solstices, the "Ardhodaya", the "Mahodaya", and the "Mahamakham" are all considered "Punnyakalams" (holy days). The national festivals of the Hindus were so fixed as to coincide with the natural phenomena. The Hindu National Calendar is the result of ages of human thought and experience fortified by accurate astronomical observation and calculation.

At a time when there were no clocks the Hindus reckoned the month from one New Moon to the next or from one Full Moon to the next. They were the first to recognize the moon as a time-measurer. They gave names to the twenty-seven asterisms (nachetras) that were on or near the track of the moon in its sidereal revolution. This division of the heavens by the Hindus into twenty-seven equal parts was a great advance in astronomy. They found the moon becomes full at different constellations at different times and they named each month after the lunar mansion. Thus we have "Vaishaka" for May, "Kartika" for November, "Chaitra"

for April and "Phalguna" for March. All taking the names from the asterisms in which the moon is full. These lunar mansions became holy days and were observed by Hindus as days of religious festivals.

The ancients further divided the month into two parts or "pakshas" called the 'Sukla Paksha' (bright half) and "Krishna Paksa" (dark half). Each part or paksha was regarded as consisting of fifteen lunar days. Thus a lunar day was called "Tithi" it being the time taken by the moon in describing twelve degrees. This "Tithi" is also taken into consideration when religious festivals are fixed.

The Hindus divided the year into "Uttarayanam" the first six months after the winter solstice and "Dhadshanyam" the second six months after the summer solstice. The former was considered health-giving bright period for man and animals for during that period the days became longer and longer. Thus "Uttarayanam" was celebrated by the Thaipongal and the "Paddipongal" (cattle festival). Most of the temple festivals in the Tamil country were also fixed for this bright period. Similarly, the beginning of the "Dhadshanayam" was celebrated by the 'Adipirapoo' (July 1—Hindu calendar) These six months were considered not very bright period for men and animals because the days became shorter and shorter.

The Hindus in Ceylon who are mostly Tamils celebrate their national festivals in the same manner as the people in Tamil Nadu. The ancient Tamils lived in close touch with nature. Astronomy and astrology very much influenced their lives. With regard to the year the Tamils started it with the Vernal Equinox. In ancient days the sun entering Aries and the Vernal Equi-

nox that is the day when the sun rose exactly in the east coincided. Unfortunately with the lapse of centuries the New Year falls about three weeks after the Vernal Equinox. The Hindu solar year is sidereal, and since it is in excess of the tropical year by twenty four minutes, it does not keep step with the seasons. The seasons fall back one and a half days for every hundred years. As there had been no reforms for more than a thousand years a reform is necessary in this direction.

New Year (April 13 or 14)

The ancient Tamils like the Romans of old were a nation of yeomen, they had their temple festivals their marriages and other celebrations in the bright summer months after their harvest in February and March. The Tamil New Year is also the Sinhalese New Year. Several old customs are observed on these occasions. It is the time of great rejoicing and feasting, but above all of family re-union. The house and surroundings are cleaned several days before the event so that everything looks neat and pleasant. The elders of the family read the forecasts for the ensuing year with the help of the Panchangam (Hindu Calendar). They also note the auspicious days and hours for social visits, for "Arpudu" (the first ploughing) and "Kaiveshasham" (the giving of cash presents).

In the morning on New Year day, the householder and his family have their ceremonial baths and attend the "poojas" at the nearest temple. On returning home the whole family partakes of meals consisting of milk-rice, delicious cakes and fruits. Then the head of the family gives cash presents to his juniors and dependants. As a sort of pastime men play cards and boys play national games like "Thadchy" and "Kiddy".

The girls in the villages go up and down the “Anna unchal” to the rhythm of the “Kappalpaddu”. There is much fun and frolic throughout the month of Chitra (April—May).

Today, “Adipirapoo” (July 1, Hindu Calendar) is immortalized by the popular poems of Somasundara Pulavar. On this day Hindu schools usually close early to enable children to partake in domestic festivities. The traditional menu on this occasion is sweet porridge and this is supplemented with “Kolukodai” and other dainties. Friends and relations make exchanges of their delicacies.

The Saraswathy Pooja or “Ayudha Pooja” is celebrated in September—October in honour of Saraswathy, the goddess of learning. It is the period when children are first initiated into the mysteries of letters. It is also a festival of the artisans.

Deepavali

Another festival on a national scale is the “Deepavali” or the Festival of Lights. It signifies the triumph of goodness over evil, light over darkness. The festival brings forth a universal spirit of gaiety and rejoicings among the Hindus. At a time when the cold winter season sets in with the North-east monsoon in October—November the Tamils celebrate this festival with the wearing of new clothes. They attend to the special services in temples. Children have a lot of fun throughout the day. “Deepavali” is also the beginning of the new financial year to Hindu business men. Merchants and shop-keepers open new account-books with religious ceremonies.

Thaipongal (January 13 or 14).

The annual festival the "Thaipongal" is also the time for the householder to cast away his pots and pans and to get new ones. After the wet months of October, November and December, the householder renovates his house. It is similar to the spring cleaning of some temperate countries. The farmer, after seeing the first ears of corn in his fields, celebrates a thanks-giving ceremony in honour of the sun-god. He as the priest and his wife as the priestess, prepare their offerings of milk-rice amidst the din of lighted crackers. They offer their salutations to the sun-god for giving them the rains and for ripening their corn. A spirit of genial comradeship prevails among the whole community. The following day is the Paddipongal in honour of the cattle which has helped the farmer and his family throughout the year. On this occasion the cows and bulls get a holiday.

The Maha Sivarathiri is the most auspicious of the "Punnyakalams". It mostly falls in the month of Masi (February - March). The day is dedicated to fasting and prayer throughout the night in honour of Lord Siva. Special "poojas" and services are conducted in temples right through the night. Sacred scriptures are read and interpreted. Devotional songs are sung to music. The devotees end their vigil by bathing in a sacred river or spring.

In ancient Ceylon the temple was the pivot of the social life of the people. Religion, education and art had their main inspiration from these centres. Hindu temples in Ceylon as in South India are the expression in stone and brick of the profound thoughts embodied in the Saiva Siddhanta philosophy. The ceremonies and festi-

vals at these centres of worship demonstrate the unfolding of this philosophy. In the West the study of philosophy is regarded as an end, but in India and Ceylon on the contrary, it is regarded with deep religious conviction as our salvation from the ignorance which for ever hides from our eyes the vision of reality. All rights and all modes of worship serve one purpose that is to help the individual to lead a "Divine Life" and attain salvation. (moksha).

The annual festival in Hindu temples mostly takes place between March and August. The festival usually lasts for ten days from the hoisting of the flag to the lowering of the flag on the metal-plated flag-staff. The principal deity, decorated with flowers and jewels is taken out in procession with dances and music right round the temple on mounts (vahams) that are specially related to the deity. The most pleasant day of the season is the car festival which comes off usually on the last day when the presiding deity is taken out in procession in a gaily decorated wooden chariot with music provided by the traditional nageswaram through the main thoroughfares of the town or village. Nobody fails to attend this grand occasion.

Kataragama Festival

Among the Hindu festivals of Ceylon the Kataragama festival is looked upon with great veneration. The annual festive season takes place on the New Moon of June and lasts a fortnight. Hindus and Buddhists gather there in thousands either to fulfil their vows or to seek knowledge and guidance from the Lord of Kataragama.

Soon after the evening "pooja" to the god by the Kapurāla, the festival procession takes place at night from 7 p. m. to 10 p. m. Long before the appointed hour the premises are full with devotees carrying on their heads earthen vessels containing holy ash and burning camphor. With clothes just enough to cover their nakedness the men in hundreds roll on the ground. Besides, there are the thundering of drums and the playing of flutes. At the same time the shouts of "Haro Hara" drown the chorus of "Bajana" parties. In this din and confusion the Basanayake Nilame and Kapuralas with other temple officials take the casket of the god in procession on the back of an elephant with chamera, lamps and flambeaux. First the procession proceeds at a slow space round the three temples within the walls, then it proceeds to Valliamma temple. Thereafter, the procession goes by Medda Vithiya and back to the main temple.

On the last day at the precise hour of the Full Moon the water-cutting ceremony is enacted. The holy casket is taken in the usual manner to the Manica Ganga. Here placed in a palanquin and covered with a cloth it is dipped in the sacred waters. Then amidst the shouts of "Haro Hara" and the beating of drums thousands of pilgrims with upraised hands bathe in the consecrated waters of the river.

The highlight of the festivities, however, is the exciting fire-walking ceremony. This is usually done on the last day of the festival in front of the main temple. Before the appointed hour a large area is overspread with a few cart loads of tamarind firewood and set ablaze. The red-hot cinders keep on glowing in a



SWAMI VIVEKANANDA



Polonnaruwa Find 1908
Sundara Murthi—a devotee of Siva,
struck with wonder at the unexpected vision of Siva.

trench along a course some twenty feet long by fifteen feet broad. At about 4 a. m. the performers, after finishing their religious ablutions in the waters of the sacred river, walk with wet garments towards the temple for worship. Having had the divine blessings, they stand with joined palms before the fire, making a last entreaty for additional strength of mind. The spectators become intensely excited. Then with the shouts of "Haro Hara" they walk bare-footed over the red-hot cinders not once but many times without even the faintest trace of a burn. Some years ago a padre to belittle the performance attempted to do the same but got himself severely burnt. It is best to state in this connection that victories are won not only by science, but also by faith.

In the Kavaddy dance at Kataragama one may see how the dancer in his dance forgets himself. This spiritual ecstasy is one of the finest feelings of man which few could experience. It was in this ecstasy that Swami Rama Thitha, one of the foremost disciples of Swami Vivekananda met his end in a stream in California. Thus the soul of India and Ceylon chose the art of dance as a medium to express their eternal craving—the search for Truth. The art of dance in the West is a companion of manhood, in the East like all other arts it helps man in his spiritual ascent.

Vel Festival.

Kandy has its Perehera and Colombo has its Vel Festival. The latter is held in honour of Lord Murukan popularly known among the Sinhalese as Kataragama deviyo.

A day or two before the water-cutting festival of Kataragama a gaily decorated silver-plated chariot

drawn by a pair of snow-white bulls carrying the statue of Lord Murukan leaves the Pettah Kathiresan temple to the shrine at Bambalapitiya. This is the beginning of the Vel Festival which is held every year to commemorate the victory of Sri Murukan over the forces of Evil.

The procession proceeds along the accustomed route with multi-coloured umbrellas, caprisoned elephants, dancers and oriental musicians through a mass of worshippers and sightseers. It moves slowly while the drums throb, the bells tinkle and the Tanjore band plays till it reaches its destination. A "Bajana" party singing divine songs follow the chariot. After a journey of six miles the pageant enters the temple where thousands of devotees flock to pay their homage to Lord Murukan by breaking coconuts, lighting joss-sticks and burning camphor. The temple with its pageantry and panorama of twinkling illuminations attracts the religious and non-believer alike.

In the temple precincts and along both sides of the Galle road traders of all races sell their merchandise—food-stuffs, clothes, brass-utensils, camphor, beads, bangles, toys, earthenware, sweet-meats, pictures etc. The juicy sugar-cane dealers have brisk business.

When the illuminated Vel car returns on the evening of the third or fourth day along the accustomed route the crowd swells to immeasurable proportions. The Galle road for many miles is a sea of heads, and when the Vel car arrives at Galle Face the pageant becomes grand and imposing. First-class fireworks specially made for the occasion continue to illuminate the night sky with their multi-coloured lights. There is much fun and excitement. For now

bullock carts of all sizes and shapes line the roads, for the occupants have come from distant villages to see their war-god taking a drive through the city. The roads become impassable for vehicles, but everybody is happy and smiling. With the deafening shouts of "Haro Hara" the Vel car moves slowly to its destination. Today the Vel Festival has become a National Festival of the Island. Man does not live by bread alone, happiness is also a necessary attribute for the health and development of the mind.

Adi Amavasai (July—August New Moon)

The New Moon in the month of 'Adi' is also the last day of the festival at Mavittapuram Kandaswamy temple. In the early hours before sunrise an insignia of the presiding deity is taken in procession with the beating of drums and the playing of music to the shores of Keerimalai for the water-cutting ceremony.

Throughout the night preceding the festival and the New Moon day streams of pilgrims come pouring in from all parts of the peninsula to this holy centre to partake in the ceremonial ablutions and to make religious offerings to their dead. Year after year for hundreds of years the pilgrims had marched in this manner to Keerimalai. It is fascinating to think how the tradition is preserved by the power of faith.

Society according to Hinduism includes not only living men but also those who have gone before us, those who will come after us, all beings above us and all beings below us as birds and animals. We have our duties not only to our neighbours, but also to our ancestors. The conception of society is not limited by space nor is it confined to men. Hence, Hinduism is called a universal religion.

Among this great concourse of people we can see the family priests who have assembled here from distant places occupying advantageous positions on the sandy beach to help the pilgrims in their offerings and salutations. When at an auspicious hour the image of the deity is given a dip in the consecrated waters, thousands of men and women uttering mystic "mantras" immerse themselves in the rolling waters. There is an intense religious atmosphere pervading this holy place. For the time being these pious pilgrims become saintly characters. There is no privacy for the bathers in the beach. For here man looks upon woman as a mother or a sister, nay, as the Divine Mother Herself. The vast crowd of pilgrims disperses soon after attending the "poojas" to the gods. In the evening the festival ends and Keerimalai assumes its calm for another year.

In this manner most of the Hindu festivals became popular. These special days were like shade trees for the weary traveller in life's common pathway. Right through the centuries these festivals were reminders of the moral and spiritual laws that were embodied in the sacred Vedas.

CHAPTER IX

Brahmans and Their Influence.

“The Brahmans were a body of men who in an early stage of the world’s history bound themselves by a rule of life, the essential precepts of which were self-culture and self-restraint. As they married within their own caste, begot children only during their prime, and were not liable to lose the finest of their youth in war, they transmitted their best qualities in an ever increasing measure to their descendants.” — *Sir W. Hunter.*

In South India, Sangam literature before 300 A. C. mentions the presence of Brahmans in the Tamil country. It is said that they regularly worshipped “the three fires” in their homes. They recited the Veda and performed sacrifices. They had images of Siva and Vishnu for worship and were fond of public debates. Their houses were neat and simple. When hostilities broke out between kings it was always a Brahman messenger who was despatched to announce the declaration of war. The mark of a good king was the respect paid to the feelings of Brahmans.

In Ceylon there were Brahmans from very early times and their presence in the Courts had a profound cultural influence on Buddhism and its votaries, Where-

ever they lived they swayed the minds of men and received their homage not by force of arms but by the vigour of their hereditary culture and temperance in all matters.

Officers of State

After the death of Vijaya, the Island was without a ruler and the people waited for the arrival of a prince from India. In the meantime Upatissa, a Brahman and the chief of ministers, wielded the sceptre for an year. He founded a settlement on the Gambhira river, north of Anuradhapura known as Upatissagama. This was the capital of the kingdom for about fifty years till the accession of Pandukabhaya.

Sri Naga (249—268 A. C.) a Brahman by birth succeeded his brother-in-law Kunca Naga as king.¹ His son Voharika Tissa (269—291 A. C.) so called from his knowledge of law was the first in Lanka who made a law forbidding bodily injury as penalty for crime. He suppressed the Vaituliya heresy the northern form of Buddhism which had appeared at Abhayagiri. This Brahman dynasty lasted fifty years.

In 607 A. C. the king of Ceylon sent a Brahman with thirty vessels to receive an embassy from China.² In 746 A. C. a Brahman envoy left Ceylon to the Emperor of China bearing as offerings a copy of the great Prajana Sutra and forty webs of fine cotton cloth.³

Bhuvaneka Bahu VII (1521—1551) king of Kotte, desired to make the throne safe to his grandson Dharmapala. He, therefore, sent a small statue of his heir

1 HB. p. XL.

2. C. Part 4 Chap. 4. p. 453

3. JCBRAS XXIV, No. 68. p. 109,

to the Court of Lisbon in charge of a Brahman minister ⁴ and Sellappu Arachchi ⁵ to be formally crowned by the king of Portugal.

An interesting sanna was left by Rajasinha I granting lands to Ramanada Brahmana, a Batticaloa chief in 1581.⁶ After mentioning the date it runs as follows: "The conqueror of foreign kings, who is like Indra the god of the golden regions the destroyer of Sura, the great father, the Lord Rajasinha Maharajah has been graciously pleased to grant Ramanada Brahmana the lands are mentioned Any one obstructing this shall make himself liable to the sin of polluting Banaras, Rameswaram, Kathirgamam and the Manica Ganga."

The influence of Brahmans in the Courts of the kings of Ceylon is seen in the following quotation: Writing about Rajasinha's Court and capital Sitawaka a literary star of the day Algaiawanna Mukeweti in his Sewul Sandesaya says:

"Like a being Divine he sits on his regal throne
On either side fair damsels fan him
Around are royal princes victors in many a fight
Bowed in obeisance at his royal feet.
With the dazzled lords Soli, Pandi and Kerala
There stand the Brahmans learned in all
Sacred lore to murmur blessings on his head."

About 1640 Rajasinha II sent a Brahman minister as ambassador to Batavia.⁷ During the Dutch period

4. de Queyroz Book 2. p. 234.

5. RV. p. 66.

6. MBD. p. 31.

7. CPE. II. p. 301.

many descendants of the old Brahman families distinguished themselves by winning scholarships for higher education in Holland. They later became important officers of state.⁸

Cultural Leaders.

Brahman Tivakka was second after the king to receive the Bo-Tree when it was first landed at Jambukola (Sambuturai-Tamil) in the northern coasts of the Jaffna Peninsula. At the festival of the planting of the Bodhi Tree besides the great Thera Mahinda and Bhikkuni Sangamitta prominence is given to Tivakka.⁹ Of the eight Bodhi saplings that were planted in Ceylon at that time one was in the village of Brahman Tivakka.¹⁰

In Bhatiya's reign there arose a dispute among the monks of Anuradhapura over the interpretations of some rules, in the Vinaya. To settle this dispute the king appointed a Brahman well-versed in all branches of learning. His decision finally put an end to the dispute.

Sarajoti Malai, a Tamil astrological work was recited in 1310 at the Court of Parakrama Bahu III by Posa Rajah, a Brahman from Devinuvara.¹¹ Even today this is a standard work for Tamil astrologers. Later a similar work Segarajasekara Malai was composed by a Brahman Soman under the patronage of a Jaffna king.¹² Vaiyapuri Iyer of Jaffna composed the Vaiya Padal which speaks of the historical traditions of the peaceful colonization of the Northern Vanni.

8. Cl.

9. Mv. Chap. XIX V. 37.

10. Mv. Chap. XIX V. 61.

11. UHC. Vol. I. Part II. p. 766.

12. SM. Sirappu Aieram V. 12.

An Indian Brahman scholar Sri Ramachandra Kavibharati who lived in Ceylon in the period of Parakrama Bahu VI composed in Sanskrit Bhaktisataka, a century of devotional stanzas dedicated to the Buddha.¹³

The first version of the Jaffna Vaikia Panchangam, the Tamil national calendar was issued by Ramalinga Aiyar of Araly in 1667 and later from 1779 the printed version was issued yearly.¹⁴ There were Brahman writers in Jaffna as Gnapathy Aiyar (1709—1784) of Vaddukoddai and Nadarasa Aiyar (1854—1905) of Inuvil. Periyathamby Aiyar, a saint and mystic lived at Vannarponnai to a ripe old age of 120 years.

In the early nineteenth century the services of Visuvanatha Sastriyar (Brahman) an astronomer of no small rank, was of immense value to the State at a time when there was no Observatory in Colombo and communications with England was round the Cape of Good Hope in slow-moving sailing vessels.¹⁵

Palace Priests.

Anula (12—16 A. C.) queen of Chora Naga was noted for her wickedness. She killed her husband by administering poison. Later of the several men she married in succession one was a palace priest named Neliya.¹⁶

The Kokila Sandesa says that there were seats set apart for Brahmans in the Court of Parakrama Bahu VI at Kotte. In the same period Brahmans had received lands for services rendered to the king,

13. UHC. Vol. I. Part II pp. 777 & 778.

14. VP. Preface.

15. Vide Supra p. 41.

16. Mv. Chap. XXXIV V. 24.

Oruvela is an example of a village given to two Brahmans.¹⁷

The Kudumurissa inscription gives a list of Brahmans who had received gifts of lands from Parakrama Bahu VI.¹⁸ Their names indicate that they came from the Tamil country.

Brahmanical rituals sustained the peoples' belief in the divinity of their kings. The Brahmans always performed the domestic rituals of the king. The last funeral rites of Parakrama Bahu VI were performed by Brahmans.¹⁹

Eminent Brahmans.

In the reign of Elala there lived a Brahman named Kundali near the Cetiya mountain in the village of Dwaramandala. Prince Dutugemunu sent him a messenger and obtained from him goods that were brought from overseas.²⁰ Brahmans in those days were not only priests but also took to other vocations.

In the first year of Valagamba (29—17 B. C.) a Brahman named Tissa raised a revolt at Mahagama. At first the rebels were very successful and soon marched to the city of Anuradhapura. Taking advantage of the situation, seven Tamil chiefs with a large force landed in the Island and took the capital. Valagamba saved himself by fleeing to the interior.²¹

Mahasena once built a vihara in the village of a Brahman Kalanda.²²

17. EZ. III. pp. 51—70.

18. JCBRAS. Vol. X No. 34. p. 101.

19. EZ. III. p. 68.

20. Mv. Chap. XXIII. V. 24.

21. Mv. Chap. XXXIII VV. 38—41.

22. Mv. Chap. XXXVII V. 41.

Arya Kama Deva a Brahman founded the Saman Devale in Sabaragamuwa.²³

A palm-leaf manuscript bound up with the Colombo Museum Ragavamsa (M₄) states on the Ava Amavasa day of Asala in Saka 1304 (1382) being a Saturday night a Brahman staying at Madagama in Sabaragamuwa had a vision of the Lord Kandaswamy.²⁴ A shrine was soon put up and reported to Bhuvaneka Bahu V of Gampola.

Similarly the Ammadu Devale in Sabaragamuwa owes its origin to a pious Brahman Ramagiri.²⁵ Later a wealthy gentleman of the area built the temple.

Brahman Villages.

Hinduism in Ceylon from very ancient times had its votaries in all parts of the Island. Hence we find Brahman settlements in all parts of the country. This only indicates that Hindus have been an integral part of the population from time immemorial.

Mahasena is credited with the building of a vihara at Brahmanagama in Panama Pattu in Ruhuna.²⁶ In a pre-Christian inscription in the Hiriya Hatpattu in the Kurunegala District occurs a village name Bamanagama.²⁷ Kantalai in the eleventh, twelfth and thirteenth centuries was a seat of Brahmans.²⁸ Brahmanayagama is a village four miles from Parangiya-wadiya. From Ibn Batuta we learn that there were a

23. UHC. Vol. I Part II p. 764.

24. JCBRAS. Vol. XXXII No. 86. p. 279.

25. do do do p. 271.

26. JCBRAS. (1959) p. 23.

27. JCBRAS (1959) p. 98.

28. EZ. Vol. IV p. 191.

thousand Brahmans attached to the temple of Vishnu at Dondra. An area in Negombo is known as Pamunugama. Probably it was the residence of officiating Hindu priests. In the fourteenth century Kurunegala was the capital of the Sinhalese kingdom. In describing the city and its people the Kurunegala Vistaraya says that there were 500 houses belonging to Brahmans. A Brahman street and a Brahman village are also mentioned. Tamil colonists consisting of artisans, drummers, oil-makers, priests, etc. were settled in the sixty four villages belonging to the temple of Munneswaram. One of these Ekalabramanathaluvai was the residence of Brahmans.²⁹ There are two villages, Pampodai (residence of Brahmans) and Maligaithidal (palace highland) about a few miles from Tirukketiswaram. This latter name endorses the statement of H. W. Codrington and Bertolucci that Matota in the sixth century was ruled by an independent ruler.

Paravi Sandesa says that Weligama Patuna was once a port of great importance than Galle. The place teemed with Brahmans and Vaisyas decked with gold.

There was a great migration of Brahmans from South India to Ceylon in the Chola period. A similar influx of Brahmans took place in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.

Finally it should be said that Brahmans in Ceylon were not only attached to Hindu temples but they were also active members in the society they lived. They were ambassadors, officers of state, merchants, poets and men of culture who swayed the minds of kings and peasants and influenced the histories of the two peoples who inhabited the Island from the dim past.

29. Temple Manmiam.

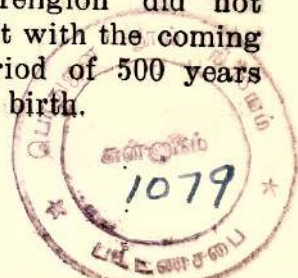
CHAPTER X

Hindu Revival.

Before we survey the outlines of Hindu revival in Ceylon, we have to examine the factors that helped the development of this movement in the continent. Culturally Ceylon is a part of India and all waves of culture that originated in India had their own repercussions on our Island.

In the eighteenth century India was a country divided into innumerable independent states and each state had an autocratic ruler. The country was administered by archaic laws. The people were divided into numerous castes and tribes. They were highly superstitious and illiterate. Infectious diseases and famine were of common occurrence. This was the India when the British East India Company took over the administration.

The most notable achievement of British rule was the unification of India. The provinces that were directly ruled by the British, and the states that were governed by native princes were all brought under one central government. This important change in the administration was a great landmark in the history of India. Under the Muslims Hindu religion did not enjoy the atmosphere of freedom, but with the coming of the British, Hinduism after a period of 500 years regained its position in the land of its birth.



The next radical step taken by the government of India was the adoption of English as the medium of instruction in schools. British administrators who were in charge of education in India fondly believed that education through an English medium would help to dissolve the Hindu faith, but the English education imparted in the high schools and universities helped India to rediscover her lost spirit. By the study of English, India joined the world community. Indians began to think on western lines. Native scholars in collaboration with English scholars rediscovered Indian history from inscriptions and from foreign sources. Historical societies like the Royal Asiatic Society of Calcutta made researches in history. This knowledge of the past gave the literate Indian a pride in the brilliant achievements of his ancestors.

Besides, the impact of western thought and Christianity on India early in the 19th century had a profound effect on Hindu religion and on Hindu institutions. Christian missionary activity resulted in large number of conversions and soon Hindus began to feel the danger of Christian missionary propaganda. Pious Hindus began to set their house in order and to revive their religion.

An attempt to reform Hinduism was led by Raja Ram Mohan Roy (1772 - 1833) a great scholar and social-reformer and he may be called the father of Hindu revival. He was a Brahman by birth and knew Persian, Sanskrit, Arabi and English. He thought that radical reforms were necessary in Hinduism, if the ancient religion is to emerge from the rut into which it had fallen. He succeeded in his agitation for the abolition of 'Sati' (the immolation of Hindu widows on the funeral pyres of their husbands). The society he

founded was Brahma Samaj. It had considerable influence on the life of Bengal, but failed to develop as a separate religious sect.

Later another religious reformer known as Dayanand Saraswati, a sanyasi from Gujerat was the first to spread an aggressive reformed Hinduism. The movement he founded was known as Arya Samaj. It tried to re-establish the Vedic religion in its ancient form. It rejected the Puranic mythology and the worship of images. It discarded all sacred books except the Vedas. Hence its influence on the people was restricted. Nevertheless this mission has done some exceptional good work in the Punjab. As a proselytizing sect it is still an important Hindu movement in North India.

There has been a fine flowering of Indian monasticism in the 19th and 20th centuries. Swami Ramakrishna, saint and mystic harmonized in him all faiths. He was a towering personality of the latter nineteenth century who influenced all those who came in contact with him. After his passing away in 1885, his illustrious disciple Swami Vivekananda (1861—1902) spread the gospel of Vedanta all over India. He tried to revive the greatness of Hinduism by the preaching of nationalism. This god-intoxicated emissary took the wisdom of the Vedas on a pilgrimage to the learned centres of the East and the West. He was called the "Cyclonic Hindu". His call was for action and fearlessness. "Weakness is sin, weakness is death. Realize God or better be an atheist." The messages of this great prophet deeply influenced western thinkers and western thought. His successes in America and Europe gave Hindus a sense of pride in their own religion. The Ramakrishna Mission which he founded, is today doing yeoman service as centres of culture and learning in all parts of the world.

Besides, the movement for Hindu revival was given an impetus by the writings of great savants like Max Muller. His famous work the "Sacred Books of the East" created an interest among western scholars in Hindu philosophy and religion. This was further strengthened by the founding of the Indian National Congress in 1885. This institution brought together all those who worked for the progress of India.

Madame Blavatsky, a Russian Lady founded the Theosophical Society in New York in 1875. India owes a deep debt of gratitude to this revered lady, for at a time when India was politically a subject country, and when Indians were ridiculed everywhere it was this lady who told the world the past spiritual heritage of India and what she had been and what she might be. In fact, to Madame Blavatsky, Indians were the chosen people, the teachers and mentors of the world from all time to all time. Her distinguished pupil and follower was Mrs. Annie Besant, the greatest orator of her time. This lady for nearly thirty years strove successfully to wake up India from her lethargy. She founded a National University at Adiyar, near Madras. She kindled the inner spirit of India by her brilliant speeches and writings.

The partition of Bengal by Lord Curzon early in the twentieth century created an intense national feeling throughout the length and breadth of India. It was aimed at destroying the Indian National Congress. But the Congress emerged triumphant, for at the time it produced great leaders like B. G. Tilak a staunch orthodox Hindu learned in Sanskrit. He wanted full freedom for India and based his national movement on Hindu Dharma. Then there was Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya a great scholar who founded the Banaras

Hindu University in order that the ancient Vedic religion of our ancestors might live and inspire from generation to generation.

The school founded by Rabindranath Tagore in 1904 at Santiniketan, Bolpur Bengal later developed into an International University called Visva Bharata. Tagore's books were well appreciated by scholars of the East and the West. He won the Nobel Prize for literature in 1913 and became world famous. His national songs in Bengali and Bharathi's national songs in Tamil inspired and stirred up the masses. For the first time the discoveries of Ramanujam in the field of pure mathematics gained world recognition for New India. Sir P. C. Ray's volumes of the "History of Hindu Chemistry", a monumental work, was acclaimed by science historians. It only showed to the world that besides metaphysics, India had developed in several spheres. Later, Sir Jagadis Chandra Bose for the first time after laborious experiments in plants demonstrated with his crescograph the essential identity of the vital mechanism of animals and plants. Briefly it may be said that during the second and third decades of the present century India was pulsating with life for the birth of New India.

The heroism and valour displayed by Indian soldiers in the various battle fronts of World War I (1914—1918) had raised Indians high in the estimation of the world. In addition to these, new light on the ancient civilization of India was shed by the discoveries of Mohenjo Daro in Sind and Harappa in Punjab in 1924. In a bound the knowledge of Indian civilization was taken back three millenniums before Christ. After these discoveries every Indian

began to feel proud of the antiquity of his civilization. Sir John Marshall and other veteran archaeologists came to the conclusion that Saivism had a history going back to the Chalcolithic age and that it takes its place as the most ancient faith in the world.

In the third decade of this century the Indian National Congress came under the influence of Mahatma Gandhi. He roused the nation from its age-old slumber. His call was in the words of the Gita, "Therefore, son of Kunti, arise and fight." For thirty years he carried on various campaigns for the removal of untouchability, for the opening of temples to the depressed classes, for the propagation of Khadi etc. Above all he agitated for the independence of India so that an ancient people might live with honour and self-respect. He wanted to relieve the burdens of the Indian people and of humanity, at large, by his sufferings and love.

The history of Hindu revival would be incomplete if we fail to note two spiritual giants who were contemporaries of Mahatma Gandhi. Sri Aurobindo, a nationalist revolutionary, turned a dynamic yogi and seer. When a warrant was issued for his arrest in 1919, he entered the town of Pondicherry where he devoted the rest of his days in "Tapasya." He felt that it was necessary for India's liberation and on his seventy sixth birthday India attained independence. The philosophy of his work the "Life Divine" is attracting world-wide attention.

While the father of the nation was fighting his political battles in Yerwada gaol, in a retreat near the sacred Annamalai Hills of South India,

Sri Ramana Maharishi was attracting world-wide attention by seekers of Truth both from the East and the West. His call was introspection and the destruction of the Self. His life was a continuous trance. The spirit of inquiry has come down to us through the ages, and Maharishi was only a modern version of the ancient sages and seers of India.

Great are the services rendered by Dr. Radakrishnan to the cause of Hindu revival. He drank deep the wisdom of the Upanishads and the Gita, the epics and the Puranas, the great teachings of the religions and the philosophies of the East and the West. Inspired by the work and eloquence of Swami Vivekananda he cleared the cobwebs of prejudice foreigners gathered about Hindu beliefs. He interpreted the East and carried the greatness of the Vedanta to the West. His mind is a fine flower of culture, a synthesis of all that is true and beautiful.

Briefly it may be said that after a long winter of centuries we are today in one of the creative periods of Hinduism.

Now to return to events in Ceylon, two successive foreign governments the Portuguese and the Dutch during the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries had smothered the vestiges of our national life and culture. The former had demolished all Hindu temples and robbed them of their wealth. During their period they abolished all forms of Hindu worship in public, and compelled all Hindus to attend their churches. Every "pagan" was looked upon as an enemy of Portugal and Jesus. Their barbarity, their cruelty and their rapacity prejudiced the people against all Europeans who came to rule Ceylon after

them. Had not the Portuguese destroyed the temple of Berendi Kovil near Sitawaka it would have been a venerable piece of Dravidian architecture in Ceylon. The wanton destruction and desecration of the temple of Vishnu at Dondra can only be compared to the senseless vandalism of the early Huns. Though externals of religion were ruthlessly suppressed by a government with new ideologies, yet as religion is a thing of the spirit it had to go underground for a time. It lived in the innermost hearts of men. The light in the jewel-chamber of the heart can never be extinguished. Such was the case in Ceylon when the Portuguese ruled over this country. There was a spiritual blackout in the regions they governed yet Hinduism survived. Luckily their rule lasted for a short time and ended in 1658.

The Dutch who followed the Portuguese more or less followed the same policy of their predecessors with regard to the native religions. They made use of education for purposes of proselytism. Education and Christianity went hand in hand during their period. While children received elementary education, the adults were taught the doctrines of Christianity. Under them nobody was given employment, unless he professed the Christian faith. Though this was the general policy in Ceylon their latter period saw little tolerance towards the native faiths. The mental sufferings of our people during this period can best be gauged from the lives of two of our most distinguished citizens who lived during this period. The first was Gnanapiragasa Munivar of Tirunelvely a highly cultured gentleman of no mean order. He was one of the forbears of Sri la Sri Arumuga Navalar. The Dutch Government in those days enforced that men of

means should supply cattle to their slaughter-houses in turns. But Gnanapiragasar was not a man who would do things against his conscience and the tenets of his religion. Before he got his turn for the supplying of cattle, he left Jaffna his native country for good and settled at Chidambaram. Then he joined the Sanskrit College at Gour in Bengal for his higher studies. There he finished the study of Vedagamas, before he was invested with his robes of a Sannyasin at Banaras. Later he became the Head of the Tiruvannamalai Athenam, and wrote many commentaries in Sanskrit and Tamil for many Saiva Siddhananta works. He also built a Tirukulam for the Chidambaram temple and it is today known as Gnanapiragasam.¹

The other eminent gentleman was Shanmuganayaga Mudaliyar of Navaly a descendant of the royal house of Jaffna, and held the highest native rank and appointment at that time under the Dutch Government in North Ceylon. He was once called upon to sign a licence for the slaughtering of cattle. This he stoutly declined to do. He did not want to do a mean and irreligious act to please his superiors. He, therefore, tendered his resignation thereby sacrificing his position and all emoluments.² Such were the type of men Jaffna produced in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

In 1787, Vaithilinga Chettiyar, a wealthy gentleman and one who commanded great influence with the government, dedicated a temple to Lord Siva at Vannarponnai. Soon after, the Nallur Kandaswamy temple

1 TPS. (1951) p. 161.

2 CNR (1908) p. 296.

was built. When the British became the rulers of the Island in 1796, they allowed full freedom of public worship. Many Tamil leaders took this opportunity to found temples to various deities in many parts of the country. It was only the coming of the British that saved the native religions and gave new life to their culture. Everything in this world can decay but not religious faith, for when it decays all other life-giving creative instincts in man also die. The body becomes the grave of the soul. Life becomes a lost stream in the desert.

The British government while professing neutrality in religious matters entrusted the education of the country to missionary societies in spite of the fact that governments were also the custodians of the native cultures of a people. For at that time the Church helped the Empire in its expansion, and the Empire helped the Church in its development. In the early British period a portion of the government revenue was allocated to the Church and its activities. One was dependent on the other. Moreover, it becomes easy for imperial governments to administer their colonies, when the natives adopt the faith of their masters. Proselytizing non-Christian children in schools by holding out to them the bait of secular education was part of the system of evangelization of some missions. As regards his own mission, Jesus Christ said: "I am not come to destroy but to fulfil." But Bishop Copleston one of the foremost divines who lived in Ceylon said in a Christian conference in Calcutta, referring to Buddhist children who attended his schools in Ceylon: "I cannot guarantee they will all be genuine Christians but I can guarantee they will never be genuine Buddhists." Should Jesus, the Prince of Peace, come

back he would persuade Buddhists to be better Buddhists and Hindus to be better Hindus for his purpose is to fulfil and not to destroy. If Christian missions find filth and dirt in the house of non-Christians let them if they wish, help the owner to cleanse them; let them not pull down the house without the owner's consent. They little understand what pain of mind they cause to patriotic Buddhists and Hindus.

Tamils in Ceylon in the nineteenth century had already drifted from their traditional moorings. There were at that time many impediments for Hindus to provide themselves with schools of their own. The non-Christian children had no other choice but to attend Christian schools for their education. Thus generally speaking English and vernacular education throughout the nineteenth century were in the hands of foreign missionaries. The Tamil provinces became the seat of intense educational and missionary activity and the Tamils were quick to take advantage of these facilities. As a result the Tamil provinces during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries produced eminent men in all branches of learning. Just as in India English education opened the eyes of the Hindus, it made the Hindus of Ceylon to set their house in order.

Freedom of thought, freedom of worship and freedom of expression had gone a great way to quicken the development of the Tamil language. This was given an impetus by the introduction of the printing press into Jaffna. Poetry had always been considered as the best medium for the creative works of great Tamil writers, but in the nineteenth century, prose became a powerful medium to make attacks on Christianity and Christian activity. Writers of this category

were Sri la Sri Arumuga Navalar (1822—1879) Sankara-pandithar (1821—1891), Muttukumara Kavirayar (1780 — 1851), V. Thamotharampillai (1832—1901) and Sabapathy Navalar (1843—1903).

When irreligion and denationalization were fast becoming the order of the day Sri la Sri Arumuga Navalar, scholar, patriot, social-reformer, a born fighter and a consummate master of debate appeared on the scene and by his clarion call summoned his people back to their national way of life. For more than thirty years he carried on a vigorous campaign for the growth and development of Saivism both in India and Ceylon. He criticized the proselytizing work of Christian missionaries and extolled the greatness of Saivism. Societies for the propagation of Saivism were started. Newspapers, tracts and pamphlets were published and schools were also established. He declared that education without the religious and cultural background of the child was not worthy of the name education. The movement he set afoot rapidly began to spread throughout the length and breadth of the Tamil country, and it reached its peak after his death in 1879.

Navalar not only established schools in Jaffna and Chidambaram, but also put up printing presses to carry on his work in Jaffna and Madras. His two prose renderings of Periyapuram and Tiruvilaiyadalpuram are excellent books for all time. Besides, Sri la Sri Arumuga Navalar was an editor of Tamil classics. His works are marked for their accuracy. He was a great Sanskrit scholar and his commentaries on religious works are famous throughout the Tamil country. His graded "Pa'apadams" are a treasury of our religious traditions. He was the greatest prose

writer of the nineteenth century and is rightly called the father of Tamil prose. He set afoot a movement which had for its objective the revival of Hindu culture.

Once in 1884, Sir Ponnampalam Ramanathan then Hon. Mr. P. Ramanathan spoke in the Legislative Council on the religious intolerance of certain Christian missionary managers of grant-in-aid schools in the Northern Province as follows: "Hindu boys who for want of their own English schools, resort to the missionary schools, have learnt to make mental reservations and are getting skilled in the art of dodging. The holy ashes put on at home during worship are carefully rubbed off as they approach the Christian schools and they affect the methods of Christian boys while at school. I know of many cases in which even baptized boys and teachers when they cease to be connected with such schools appear in their true colours with broad stripes of consecrated ashes and rosaries to the great merriment of the people and the deep chagrin of the missionaries. There is a great deal too much of hypocrisy in Jaffna in the matter of religion, owing to the fact that the love of the missionaries for proselytes is as boundless as the love of the Jaffnese to obtain some knowledge of English at any cost."

Nations become great when people's minds are rich and fertile; when these become feeble and barren their creative instinct declines. We have paid homage to the culture of our rulers and realized that the elemental necessities of life cannot be procured without some degree of cultural subservience. The price we have paid is stupendous. Many of us have become followers of western ideals and western thoughts. It is not our fault for we are the products of alien institutions.

CHAPTER XI

Hindu Revival (Contd.)

Hindus of the present generation have no idea of the indignities to which Hindu boys were subjected in mission schools, before the establishment of the Jaffna Hindu College and other sister institutions. Hindu students had to attend Christian Sunday meetings and Bible classes. Sometimes in these classes there were open vilification of Hindu deities, and distorted versions of Hindu doctrines.

Under these circumstances, the educated Hindus of the country could not stand aloof and see unmoved our youths getting demoralized by such hypocritical feeling. One of the few men who came under the influence of Navalar was S. Nagalingam an eminent lawyer, patriot and benefactor of his people. His name deserves to be remembered by all Hindus of Ceylon, for he delivered his countrymen from the helpless condition of servility to foreign Christian missions in the matter of education. The other was S. T. M. Pasupathy Chettiyar, a dynamic personality and a force to reckon with in his day. These two men led and directed the movements which have brought about the establishment of the Saiva Paripalana Sabai, the Hindu Organ and the Jaffna Hindu College.

The Saiva Paripalana Sabai was started in 1888 about 81½ years after the demise of Sri la Sri Arumuga Navalar by his nephews N. S. Ponnampalampillai and T. Kailasapillai to continue the great educational and religious work commenced by the illustrious Navalar. In the second year of the Sabai's existence Pasupathy Chettiyar, Advocate Nagalingam, Proctor Casipillai and T. Chellappahpillai, retired Chief Justice of Travancore began to take an abiding interest in the activities of the Sabai.

The leader of this galaxy of patriots was Chellappahpillai, an erudite scholar, author, an eminent jurist and a gentleman of high culture and vast information. He was a mathematician and his favourite study was Astronomy. He was of great service to Hindu calendar-makers. His contribution to the cause of Hindu revival in Ceylon is worthy of special mention. For nine years he was the president of the Saiva Paripalana Sabai from its very inception until his death in 1902. His was the first name in the Hindu College Board of Directors. He it was who wanted a paper to be established to watch the interests of the Hindus. He was the first editor of the Hindu Organ. He was the president for the reception given to Swami Vivekananda in Jaffna on his visit in 1897.

The Jaffna Hindu College was established by the Saiva Paripalana Sabai in 1890. The founding of the College was the fulfilment of the literary and religious revival started by Navalar. Its purpose was to preach the gospel of Saiva Bhakti, love and service. Mudaliyar P. Kumaraswamy, the illustrious elder brother of Sir Ponnampalam Ramanathan, was an active participant in the movement that gave birth to the

Jaffna Hindu College. He was mainly instrumental in overcoming barriers which then appeared insurmountable and which stood in the path of the school's registration for a grant. Nevins Selvadurai was the first principal of the College and under him it developed into a first grade institution in the North. Soon other Hindu schools were established in all parts of the country by patriotic men and women.

In 1889 the Hindu Organ was started and it was soon followed by the Tamil paper "Inthusathanam". Both were started as weekly papers. These two papers wielded tremendous influence in the past. Hon. A. Sabapathy was the honorary co-editor of the Hindu Organ from 1891—1913, and was its honorary chief editor from 1913—1924. In no part of Ceylon was there a man like him who performed an honorary job continuously for thirty four years. He sacrificed his time and energy for the sake of his religion. After the death of V. Casipillai, he was made the manager of the Jaffna Hindu College. He espoused many public causes and did things without much fuss. He belongs to the great band of Tamil patriots who worked ceaselessly for Hindu revival in Ceylon.

While these changes were taking place in the field of education, a great Jaffna savant, V. Thamo-tharampillai was trying to revive the Tamil language. He strove to bring out in print some of the most ancient Tamil classics. His works preceded those of U. V. Swaminatha Aiyar.

Another distinguished son of Jaffna V. Kanagasabaipillai (1855—1906) was the Post-Master-General of the Madras Presidency and the chief examiner in Tamil to the University of Madras. Finding that Eng-

lish historians of India have all along been negligent about the Tamil element in their history, Kanagasabai-pillai directed his mind to the authentic publications of the history of the Tamils and their language. He, therefore, delved deep into Tamil literature and checked their chronicles of events with contemporary writings in other countries. In this way he collected materials for his Magnum Opus, "Tamils Eighteen Hundred Years Ago." He has endeavoured to give an elaborate correct account of the early history and civilization of the Tamils. It became a valuable book of reference to future research scholars. The excellence of his work is appreciated when we find that many historians who came after him has freely drawn the early history of the Tamils from the conclusions drawn by the learned author. It may truly be said of him that he was the father of Tamil research. His books have made the Tamils feel proud of their past achievements and civilization.

The great Navalar was followed by a galaxy of scholars like N. S. Ponnampalampillai (1836—1902), N. Kathiravetpillai (1844—1907), S. Sangarapandithar and S. Sabapathy Navalar. These learned men through lectures, writings and discourses carried on the message of Saivism with vigour throughout the length and breadth of the Tamil country. Though there was some literary stagnation soon after the Navalar school of writers, yet there was no inactivity in the propagation of Saivism.

Moreover, the propaganda carried on by Christian missions to win converts to their faith and the mass conversions carried on by Father S. Gnanapiragasar in the second and third decades of this century hastened the movement for Hindu revival in Ceylon.

The movement was greatly helped by the economic prosperity of the Tamils. At this time it should be remembered there was a good opening for employment in the Government services in Malaya, and many English-educated young men sought employment there. Tamils had been in the Malayan services as far back as 1880. Ceylon Tamils were in fact the pioneers in the development of Malaya. Their numbers in the various services increased with the beginning of the century, and later they became so great that between 1910 and 1930 almost all government departments were manned by them. Their prosperity brought an inflow of wealth into the Tamil districts. Temples, schools and other public institutions received their attention and patronage. The second and third decades of this century was the period when most of our Hindu schools were established i. e. Manipay Hindu College (1910), Mahajana College (1910), Vaidyeshwara Vidyalaya (1913), Ramanathan College (1913), Parameshwara College (1921), Shivananda Vidyalaya, Batticaloa (1925), Sri Somaskanda College (1931) etc.

Sir Ponnampalam Ramanathan (1851—1930) while he was Solicitor-General of Ceylon was invited by the Theosophical Society of New York on a 'Lecturing Tour' of the continent. He accepted the invitation and was away from the Island for about an year. Before he left for America, he was given a farewell by the members of the Bar at a meeting held in the Masonic Hall with that brilliant lawyer Dornhorst in the chair. In America wherever he went he received great ovations. His illuminating lectures on Indian philosophy proved that he was a great spiritual teacher. He thus placed Ceylon in the cultural map of the world. The honours showered on their leader at the



Koneswaram Temple.



Sivan Temple—Kochchikade, Colombo

cultural centres of America filled the Tamils with a sense of pride in the greatness of their culture and civilization.

Education was one of the prime concerns of Sir Ponnampalam Ramanathan. He served in the old Board of Education for several years. Inside the council chamber he fought for the cause of education. In 1913, he established a first grade College for Hindu girls at Chunnakam known as Ramanathan College. Eight years later he founded Parameshwara College at Tirunelvely. Further, he was the prime mover for the founding of several Hindu institutions in various parts of the Island. His greatest cultural achievement is the renovation of the Colombo Kochchikade Sivan Temple as the finest representation of Dravidian architecture in Ceylon. It is an excellent Jewel in stone.

In 1924 Sir Ponnampalam inaugurated the Hindu Board for the promotion of education. In this great task he was greatly assisted by Sir Waithilingam Duraiswamy and Hon. S. Rajaretnam. In 1960 this Board had 161 schools with 40,000 children under its management. Besides, it has been administering a well-established orphanage and Training College for teachers. Though today Government has taken over all these schools under its direct management, yet the inestimable services done by these institutions for the last thirty eight years cannot be forgotten by posterity.

The diligent and unostentatious services rendered by Hon. S. Rajaretnam to the cause of Hindu education in the North will ever live in the annals of our history. After the demise of Sir Ponnampalam Ramanathan, Sir Waithilingam Duraiswamy, being the

foremost leader of the Tamils at that time became the guardian of Hindu education and Hindu institutions, and after two decades withdrew himself from public activities.

The story of Hindu revival will be incomplete if we fail to mention the valuable services rendered by Sir Ambalavanar Kanagasabai (1856—1927) and S. Sivapathasundaram (1878—1953). The former was the president of the Saiva Paripalana Sabai from (1903—1906). He was one of the original founders of the Hindu College and the Hindu Organ. He was the president of the Board of Directors of the Jaffna Hindu College ever since the Board was incorporated. He succeeded Dr. Rockwood in the Legislative Council and was in Council for eleven years (1906—1917). When the Reform Constitution came in 1921, he was nominated to the Executive Council. He was popular among the various communities of the Island. He was a gentleman with profound commonsense and possessed moderate views.

The other patriot was Sivapathasundaram a great Tamil and Sanskrit scholar, a good mathematician and a great master of logic. He was an authority on Saivism and practised it in daily life. He spoke and wrote with incontrovertible logic. Clarity of thought and expression was his forte. He usually routed the pseudo-scholars in religion. His aim in life was service to his fellow men and service to his religion. Sivapathasundaram felt very sorry that many of the ancient books on Saiva philosophy had through long neglect disappeared. As a teacher and principal few have influenced the inner lives of their pupils as Sivapathasundaram. He belongs to the great line of Saiva scholars like Sabapathy Navalar and Sankara Pandithar.

He published a graded series of text books on Saiva religion to be used in schools. His "Magnum Opus," "Saiva School of Hinduism," was published in England and is a rare book of its kind. It earned him praise from scholars of England, India and America. As president of the Hindu Board for the promotion of education he has rendered valuable service to his country. He carried on the campaign for the abolition of animal sacrifice in Hindu temples. His discourses on comparative religion are illuminating. In addition to these he wrote many Tamil works. He was instrumental in opening many Saiva schools in the Island.

We shall now deal with a great soul who tried to reform our people from within. Throughout history men of courage, compassion and conviction have ignored worldly life to seek Truth and goodness. This hankering is not the index of inferior minds, but is the lofty searching of enlightened souls about the nature of God and his kingdom.

Our revered Yogar Swamihal (1872—1964) came in an unbroken line of prophets and mystics of Jaffna who exerted an abiding and ennobling influence on the lives of the people of this country for more than fifty years. Mysticism comprises an elaborate technique and strict discipline. A mystic leads an illuminative life. He is in God and acts with him. Swamihal was one such great mystic. He began his religious life very early. Renouncing the pleasures of the world he practised his Tapasya with great austerity. In his deep wisdom he saw God in everything. Even in this space age a knowledge of the lives of such enlightened souls is itself a great education.

An intimate and illuminating talk with Swami-hal had all the glow and warmth of life. Through his illuminating discourses he gave strength and hope to those who sought his assistance. He bestowed comfort on the suffering and hope for the dying. On his advice the "Sivathondan" was established to keep the flame of spirituality alive in this country. His great mission was to bring men from falsehood unto rectitude, from darkness into light of knowledge, and from death and disease to immortality and inner happiness.

He was a twentieth century mystic in the authentic tradition of the Nayanmars and Siddhas of the Tamil country. Though Sivaperuman has called him to rest, yet he lives in the hearts of his countrymen.

We shall now see how the Ramakrishna Mission played a great part in the Hindu regeneration movement of Ceylon. Swami Vivekananda visited us in 1897 on his return from America. When he visited Jaffna he was given an enthusiastic welcome by the Hindu public. From that time the disciples of the Swami have been visiting Ceylon frequently, and as a result societies to study and assimilate the great truths taught by Swami Ramakrishna and by his illustrious disciple Swami Vivekananda were started in various parts of the Island. On July 17, 1902 was inaugurated the Colombo Vivekananda Society by a band of sincere devotees of the Swami. Many other societies were founded in Jaffna, Batticaloa, Trincomalee, Matale and Manipay. The work of these societies were consolidated by the repeated visits of Swami Sharvananda between 1915—1925. The public lectures he delivered in Colombo and in Jaffna during his stay in the Island stirred our young men to greater acti-

vity. Young Men's Hindu Associations were started almost in every village and at the end of the year in December a Hindu Students' Camp was held at Keerimalai. Great scholars in Saiva religion like Swami Vedachalam, Swami Nagalingam, Sankarasuppaiyar etc. were invited to address these conferences. These public lectures were always very instructive. The livewire of these Hindu conferences was M. S. Eliyathamby, a reputed lawyer, who devoted his full time for Hindu regeneration in this country. He was also the editor of the Hindu Organ for some years. Thus the fire of spirituality was kept burning by the good work of Hindu associations in this period.

Later the Ramakrishna Mission under Swami Vipulananda heralded a new era in the history of Hindu education in the Eastern Province. He devoted his remarkable talents to the task of organizing the educational activities of the mission. Mudaliyar K. V. Markandan of Batticaloa and Mudaliyar V. Vallipurampillai of Trincomalee handed to the mission the schools under their care. Many girls' schools were opened in the Batticaloa District. Later two orphanages for girls were also started. Trincomalee Hindu College was established on a sound basis. In Jaffna, Vaidyeshwara Vidyalaya which was under the mission since 1917 was enlarged with additional buildings.

The Ramakrishna Mission Madam (Pilgrims' Rest House) at Kataragama started in 1953 is continuing its humanitarian service to the needs of the pilgrims of all denominations. The Madam daily gives free meals to pilgrims and during festival days it supplies meals even to 5000 pilgrims a day. An International Cultural Centre has been opened at Wellawatte.

The Ramakrishna Mission wherever it may be has done the best work possible with a spirit of truth and integrity. They have brought home to those whom they serve the value of our culture and philosophy.

In the last sixty years the Vivekananda Society, Colombo has done useful work for the propagation of Hinduism.¹ Today when we are passing through a period of cultural renaissance the society has built up a virile body of young men who have contributed much to the cultural life of the Tamils.

December 13, 1893 is a red letter day in the history of the Ceylon Hindus for on that day the jungle lands in extent about 40 acres, the old site of the temple of Tirukketiswaram was bought in public auction by the Nagarathar of Jaffna in spite of the opposition of the Catholics. The Saiva Paripalana Sabai through their treasurer S. M. Pasupathy Chettiyar spent large sums of money in 1894 to trace the old site of the temple and its premises. In 1903 a temple was built and the images were installed. From thence the temple was managed by the Nagarathar of Matota, and from 1919 by the Nagarathar of Jaffna. Subsequently the temple came under the management of the Old and New Kathiresan temples of Colombo.

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1. The following gentlemen have done useful work to the above institution in the early decades of this century: Messrs Hallock Tiruvilangam, C. Perumalpillai (Proctor), A. Chellappah (Accountant), R. Dharmalingam, (Proctor), V. Karalapillai (Moolai), K. C. Nathan (Proctor) and S. Periyathamby. There were also in this category men like Mudaliyar C. Rasanayagam, Mudaliyar Kailasapillai and Dr. M. M. Cumaraswamy.

The present shrines at Tirukketiswaram were renovated (without any additions) in August 1952 at the instance of Tirukketiswaram Restoration Society which was formed at a meeting of the Hindus in Colombo in October 1948. At present it is under the management of a Panchayat of the Tirukketiswaram Restoration Society on which by a rule of the Society the two Colombo temples will always have representation. The Society's undertaking is one of the most important and far-reaching revival movements started in modern times by Hindus. The Restoration Society has achieved much in the last fifteen years. Mention should be made of Sir Kanthiah Vaitthianathan who is an active participant in the Restoration Movement.

A Gurukulam (Training School for Temple priests) and a Theological College for higher religious studies have been given places in the Restoration Plan. The Gurukulam has materialized and is giving instructions to a large number of students.

Another important event in recent years is the erection of a beautiful new shrine to the Lord of Koneswaram. After Ceylon became independent, many patriotic Hindus in the Eastern Province and other leading members of the Hindu public greatly longed for the restoration of this ancient shrine, and so in July 1950 these well-wishers met and resolved to collect the necessary funds for its restoration. Thereafter, a splendid temple was erected to Lord Koneswara at the ancient site, and on 3-rd March, 1963 the sacred images were installed with appropriate ceremonies. Once again after a lapse of 340 years Lord Koneswara and his consort Mathummai Ammai have begun to bestow benign grace upon their devotees.

A great blot that has been handed to us by our forefathers is untouchability. Empires may change in a day, but social customs take some time to adjust themselves. Any society that denies spiritual and social justice to a large section of its people cannot endure. No society is static; it must either go forward or backward. Customs and conventions must change with the progress of society. Wrong has no prescriptive right to exist merely because it has stood for long. Thanks to some of our enterprising leaders, in 1956 some of our big temples were opened to the depressed classes.

Lastly mention should be made of a great Educational Society that came to the rescue of the Hindus in the Colombo District. After the introduction of Free Education and the changes brought about in the educational system by the rule that the primary education of every child should be in his mother tongue—thus gave rise to separate Tamil, Sinhalese and English departments in Primary school—completely changed the situation as far as the Tamil children were concerned especially Hindu children who lived outside the Northern and Eastern Provinces, and more particularly those in the Western Province. In point of fact the educational institutions in Colombo were unable to cope with the rush for admissions due to the Free Education scheme and the increase of population in the areas served by them. For more reasons than one the Hindu children found the doors of most of the colleges barred against them. It was in this situation that in Feb, 1951 some patriotic Hindus in the the Colombo District formed themselves into a society under the name of “The Hindu Educational Society” with the object of establishing and maintaining Hindu schools and colleges in the Colombo District. The immediate

aim was to establish a Hindu College with a primary school attached to it.

Soon the Colombo Hindu College was founded in February 1951, by this band of sincere men of whom Hon. C. Nagalingam was the Founder-President, and S. Mahadavan was the Founder-Secretary. As secretary for the Colombo Hindu College, Mahadavan gave name and form to this magnificent institution. There were also in this galaxy of patriots men like Sir Kanthiah Vaithianathan, Senator S. Nadesan and K. C. Thangarajah who took special interest in the Hindu educational movement. Today the College is a first grade institution serving the needs of the Hindus in South Ceylon.

Our language, our country and our religion are sacred to us as for any other race. Is it not a travesty of religion to uproot the belief of the unsophisticated men and women in their ancestral faith, a faith that has served them best in the past? When any religion tries to impose its doctrines on all mankind it becomes a form of imperialism. It is high time that there be an International Organization for the protection of the various cultures of the world. Man may himself suffer but should not allow a great Truth to suffer. Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty.

CHAPTER XII

Hindu Influence on Buddhism.

To understand the influence of Hinduism on Buddhism in Ceylon we have to look back to India and record the influence on Buddhism in the land of its birth. It should be noted that Buddhism first originated as a reaction to certain features of Hinduism. It opposed all forms of sacrifices, rituals and worship of images. It also opposed the division of society into castes. Its doctrines were solely directed to save the individual from the fire of his own desires. Buddhism assumed that to escape from rebirth was not merely the 'summum bonum', but the whole purpose of life. The wisest was he who devoted himself solely to this end and was most loving, he who devoted himself to the enlightenment of others.

In the age of the Upanishads (800—600) B. C. Hinduism was replete with rituals and ceremonies to obtain the favour of the gods. Kings and peasants sought the blessings of their favourite deities. For all these the Brahmans became indispensable. Vedic sacrifices were best performed by them. Thus the Brahmans were considered a highly privileged class. This ascendancy of the Brahmans was resisted by the kingly class—the Kshatriyas.

This period was also noted for the upsurge of new ideas when attempts were made to understand the origin and destiny of man. There were many schools of thought at this time. Each tried to find a solution for the salvation of man from bondage—self-realization or 'Moksha.' Many of the religious systems that arose during this period were short-lived, and gradually faded away. Of these four alone played important parts in subsequent history.

Jainism, Buddhism and Vaishnavism were founded by Kshatriyas. Saivism had a non-Vedic probably a pre-Vedic origin and developed as a sectarian religion. There were fundamental differences among them. The first two had no veneration for Vedic gods or for that matter any god at all. While the last two were theistic and centred round two Vedic deities Vishnu and Siva.

Jainism and Buddhism both imply a system of philosophy of the Upanishads, though in varying degrees. Early Buddhists tacitly accepted the teachings of the Upanishads, but were hostile to Brahmanism. The theory of Karma and rebirth was adopted by them from the Hindu scriptures. The ascetic life of a Sannyasin, one of the four stages of Hindu life was absorbed by Buddhism. The doctrine of Ahimsa one of the important tenets of Hinduism was re-emphasized in Buddhism. The Vedas had been repeatedly referred in the 'Nikayas' as compositions of sages, but the belief of union with Brahman by means of good works was rejected by the followers of Buddha as misleading and baseless. Some Buddhist 'Suttas' preached that one can attain rebirth in Brahmaloaka by practising the four excellent practices viz. maitri

(love), Karuna (compassion), mudita (rejoicing at other's success), upeksha (equanimity). The Brahmanic claim of superiority in caste was challenged by Buddhists, but the caste system was tacitly accepted with the Kshatriyas as the highest caste. The cult of images and symbols were current among a large section of the population of Hindustan, practices that were handed down by the pre-Aryan settlers of India of whose culture and civilization we know from the excavations of Mohenjo Daro and Harappa. Hence the early Buddhists represented the Buddha by means of symbols such as the Footprint, the Stupa and the Bo-Tree.

The cardinal virtues, like purity (sattva suddhi), self-control, detachment (vairagya), truth (satyam) and non-violence (ahimsa) are common to Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism and may be regarded as the distinctive mark of the religious spirit of India. After all Buddhism is an offshoot of Hinduism. Many of its doctrines and ideals are the same as those of Hinduism. Buddha lived and died a Hindu. He looked upon himself more as a reformer than an innovator. Yet Buddhism is not looked upon by orthodox Saivites and Vaishnavites as part of Hinduism because Buddhists do not recognize the validity of the Vedas, but there are indications that Buddha was looked upon as an avatar. Shortly, it may be said that Buddhism adopted the golden mean in all its doctrines and observances.

Buddhism at first originated as an ethical system and was essentially a monastic religion, but from its very inception it developed in an environment of Hinduism. Early Buddhist converts were mostly Hindus and they could not forget the gods they worshipped and their traditional beliefs. Hence Mahayanism a

form of Buddhism originated in India in the first century A. C. under the direct influence of Hinduism. This system was known as the Vaitulya Vada and the other school prevalent in Ceylon was known as the Theravada system, or the Southern school. The first was called the 'higher vehicle' and took Sanskrit as the language of its exposition. The latter, Hinayana or the 'smaller vehicle' betook itself to Prakrit.

Christianity like Buddhism was intended to bring hope to suffering humanity. When Jesus was first introduced into Greece the new faith could not thrive until an alliance had been effected with the philosophy of Plato and Aristotle. Similarly Buddhism made an alliance with Brahmanical thinkers to compete with them. The first sign of this adaptation is seen in the growth of Mahayanism. Thus a worship and a ritual gradually developed in Buddhism. Buddha himself came to be treated as a Divine Being.

In Ceylon in the early Christian era the Abhayagiri monks came under the influence of Mahayanism. Those who followed this new learning continued to disturb the orthodox faction time and again. Even the kings of Ceylon began to take sides and Mahasena began to persecute the orthodox school. This rivalry between the two schools of thought continued for many centuries, and later Parakrama Bahu I reconciled the two sects and put an end to all disputes.

In the middle ages Hinduism in its universality of outlook was absorbing Buddhism. Buddha was admitted as an incarnation of Vishnu. The cult of Bhakti was emphasized by Hindu reformers and reli-

gion with its rituals, and festivals was brought down to the masses.

Likewise the Mahayanists probably influenced by the emotional attitude of Hinduism extolled the benefits of worshipping Bodhisattvas. Literally meaning beings whose essence is knowledge, "the Bodhisattvas" take high place immediately below the stage of Buddhahood. Kindness and knowledge are the main attributes of Bodhisattvas. This new attitude introduced by Hinduism resulted in greater worship being paid to images and relics of the Buddha. Images gradually became a feature of viharas and later every vihara had a statue of Buddha and its shrine room. Images of Natha were introduced into Buddhist temples. In course of time Hindu Gods began to be worshipped in viharas themselves. In the Lankatilaka Vihara near Gampola images of Hindu gods were placed in the interior of the buildings. Even in the Anuradhapura period images of Hindu gods were buried at the four portals of the holy square—Vijayarama.¹

In the mode of worship of the Gods the Buddhists generally follow the practice prevalent among the Hindus. Going round a shrine, the mode of genuflections before the image of the deity and worshipping by joining the palms are common methods of respect prevalent among the Buddhists and Hindus. The method of worship, "pooja" as the offerings of flowers, milk-rice, incense and the lighting of lamps are other common practices of the followers of the two sects.

Elaborate ceremonies, festivals and Peraheras under the patronage of kings later became popular.

1. VS. p. 77.

The chanting of "prit" gained much popularity after the Chola period. Many shrines became the centres of pilgrimage. Though Sri Pada was a centre of pilgrimage from very early times, great importance was attached to it after the Chola period. The office of "purohita" was practised down to the late period.

The successive waves of South Indian invasions and the long continued South Indian migrations brought a strong Hindu element to Ceylon. The Pallava, Chola and Pandya civilizations that animated the people of this country greatly influenced Buddhism and its votaries. The marriages of Ceylon kings to Hindu princesses in South India had a profound effect on the Sihalese Court. The king and his courtiers encouraged Hindu practices and rituals. Sir P. Arunachalam says: "Throughout Ceylon history the Court religion was Hinduism and its ritual and worship largely alloyed and affected the popular Buddhism and made it very unlike the religion of Buddha". Thus Buddhism in Ceylon as in India grew in an environment of Hinduism.

The first part of the report deals with the general situation of the country and the progress of the work of the Commission. It then goes on to discuss the various departments and the work of the different branches of the service. The report concludes with a summary of the work done during the year and a statement of the Commission's views on the future of the country.

The second part of the report deals with the work of the different departments and branches of the service. It discusses the work of the various departments and the progress of the work of the different branches of the service. It also discusses the work of the various departments and the progress of the work of the different branches of the service. The report concludes with a summary of the work done during the year and a statement of the Commission's views on the future of the country.

**The Contribution of the Tamils
to
Buddhism**

The Constitution of the State
of
Alabama

The Contribution of the Tamils To Buddhism

In the early Christian era Buddhism and Hinduism flourished side by side in Tamilakam. Kanchipuram and Amaravati were great centres of Buddhist learning and culture. South India was then a great civilized country with an enormous sea-borne trade. Their ports like Musiri, Kavirippumpattinam, Kotkai and Mantai in North Ceylon were in the highway for all trade between the Far East and the Near East. In Kanchi the capital of the Pallavas there was a Chinese embassy in the second century B. C.

Tamil Buddhist monks went out from these learned centres in all directions as missionaries of Buddhism. Dinnaga¹, a celebrated Buddhist logician, was a student of Nalanda, and later lived at Kanchi. Bodhidharma who went to China to preach the doctrine of the Buddha was also a monk from Kanchi.

The South Indian history before 300 A. C. is known as the Sangam age. Most of the works are lyrics of love and heroism. The faith in full living that animated the people of the Sangam age, gradually gave way to a Puritanic outlook of life greatly due to Buddhism and its philosophy. It was in this setting that 'Manimekalai', the sublime Theravada Buddhist epic, tells the life story of Manimekalai, the daughter of Madhavi by Kovalan. This grand epic is the work of Sattanar, a grain merchant of Madura. The poetry

1. TC. Vol. IV No. 4. Oct. 1955. p. 345.

of Manimekalai is one of the finest of jewels in Tamil literature.

In this remarkable work mention is made of a celebrated Buddhist teacher Ara vana Adigal. He is the hero of the epic as much as his disciple Bhikshuni Manimekalai is the heroine. The force of this hero's personality gained many adherents to the path of Buddhism in South India. It is strange that he has not been mentioned by Asoka.

The Coming of Mahayanism

In the reign of Voharika Tissa (A. C. 269—291) some Vaituliyans came to Ceylon, and their new doctrine Mahayanism became popular with the monks of the Abhayagiri. The king tried to suppress their doctrine and their activities. Again during the reign of Gothabhaya (A. C. 309—322) the monks of the Abhayagiri began to assert themselves. The king became angry and got their books burnt and exiled sixty of their leaders from the Island.

At the time there lived a learned Buddhist monk, Sangamitta² in the Chola country. He was greatly moved by the sufferings of those exiled monks that he decided to conquer the Island for Mahayanism.

When king Gothabhaya met this learned monk, he was so much taken up by his scholarship that he appointed him tutor to his two sons. The younger Mahasena became his favourite pupil. On the death of the king, Jettha Tissa the elder prince succeeded to the throne and ruled for ten years. During this period Sangamitta was out of the Island, but returned when Mahasena ascended the throne. He became one

2. MV. Chap. XXXVI V. 113.

of the chief advisers of the king, and soon established the new doctrine. It is regrettable that the methods adopted by Mahasena and his chief adviser were most abominable and shocking.

There was a good deal of cultural intercourse between South India and countries outside India. Great Buddhist teachers visited other Buddhist countries to learn and to teach. Many such teachers lived in the Maha Vihara at Anuradhapura.

Buddha-datta Maha Thero³ was a Tamil from the Chola country and lived during the fifth century. He joined the Maha Vihara fraternity and wrote many religious books which are held in high esteem. In India he seems to have written the Vinaya-*vinicchaya* and other works. In Ceylon he wrote *Jinalankara*, *Danta-dhatu-bodhi-vamsa*.

Dinnaga was a distinguished disciple of Vasubandhu. He came of a Brahman family of Kanchi and became a Buddhist monk.⁴ He specialized in logical science on which he wrote a number of treatises. He spent the best part of his life in intellectual disputations and was the first who formulated a systematic science of logic. His works were translated into Chinese. He probably lived at the end of the fifth or the beginning of the sixth century.

Acariya Dhammapala, author of *Sasana Vamsa* was from Badaratittha (Kadalur), just south of Madras. According to Hiuen Tsang he was the son of a high official of the king of Kanchi.⁵ While another author says that he belonged to a family of chanters and when

3. PLC. pp. 106. 107.

4. HCIP. Vol. III p. 385.

5. HCIP. Vol. III p. 386.

quite young he could recite from memory one hundred large 'sutras.' He went to Madhydesa and became a disciple of Dinnaga. He composed many 'stotras' and 'stavas'. For some time he preached the religion at Gaya. Later he became the abbot of Nalanda and composed a few works on philosophy. Much of Dhammapala's work is a recast and recompilation in scholastic Pali of the older Tamil commentaries.⁶ A list of his works may be found in the Gandavamsa. When the famous Chinese traveller Hiuen Tsang visited Kanchi in 640 A. C. the monks there told him of the famous Dhammapala's life.

In the reign of Mahanama there arrived in Ceylon an Indian Buddhist monk who may be called the second founder of Buddhism in Ceylon, for besides translating the sacred books into Pali, he wrote other books in explanation of them. He is Acariya Buddhaghosa, known as the 'Voice of Buddha', so called on account of his great eloquence and learning. In one of his works he refers to his close connections with South India and mentions Kanchi as one of the places he resided, but his nationality is not definitely known. In Anuradhapura he compiled the Visuddhimagga or the 'Path of Purity' in which the teachings of the Tipitaka were briefly summarized. He translated into Pali the existing six earlier commentaries of which one was from Kanchi and another from South India.⁷ Most probably they were in Tamil. He is undoubtedly the greatest Theravada Buddhist commentator, and his commentaries are the authorities

6. PLC. p. 116.

7. PLC. pp. 91, 92.

on the doctrine of Buddhism. He stayed in Ceylon for three years and returned to India.

Abhidhammartha Sangraha written by Anuruddha Thera of South India is a religious work popular in Ceylon and Burma.⁸

The author of the Pali grammar Rupa Siddhi appears to be a Tamil from the following passage from Rupa Siddhi.⁹ "A certain disciple of Anando, a preceptor who was a (rallying point unto eminent preceptors like unto a standard in Tambapanni named Dipankaro, renowned in the Damila kingdom of Chola and the resident superior of two fraternities there, the Baladichcha and the Chudamaniyako, caused the religion of Buddho to shine forth. He was the priest who obtained the appellation of the Buddhabyo (the delight of the Buddho) and compiled this perfect Rupa Siddhi." He seems to have lived in the early twelfth century.

Ananda Thera of Kanchi while residing in Ceylon was invited to Burma to preach the doctrines of Buddhism. He died in Burma in 1245 after giving his best to the cause of Buddhism.¹⁰

When king Parakrama Bahu II (1236—1271) found that there were only a few learned Theras in the Island, he brought learned teachers from other countries especially from the Chola kingdom to Ceylon.¹¹

8. BT.

9. JCBRAS. Vol. XIV No. 46. p. 38; also BT.

10. BT.

11. CV. Chap. 84 VV. 9—12; 26—29.

King Parakrama Bahu IV (1325) appointed as a royal teacher, a grand Thera from the Chola country, a self-controlled man versed in various tongues and intimate with philosophic works.¹² “Ever and again he heard from him continuously all the Jatakas, learned them (by heart) and retained their contents. Then he rendered by degrees these five hundred and fifty beautiful Jatakas from the Pali tongue into the Sihala speech.” The existing Sinhalese version called the “Pansiyapanasjataka” is a translation of the Pali work compiled by the king himself according to the Mahavamsa.¹³

Greatest Tamil Buddhist.

Hundreds of philosophers, teachers and Buddhist missionaries have gone to the Far East to interpret the great teachings of the Buddha, but the story of Bodhidharma the founder of the Zen or Dhayana Sect of Buddhism is full of interest. The followers of the Zen Sect propose the practice of Dhayana (Zenna in Japanese and Ch’anna in Chinese) that is contemplation or meditation. Hence the name ‘Zen’ which is an abbreviation.

According to Zen Scholars their history is considered to have begun from the time of Buddha. The Zen Sect acknowledges 28 patriarchs after Buddha who successfully transmitted the Spiritual ‘Zeal’ down to Bodhidharma. He, the twentieth patriarch in India, and the first in China, was the third son of a king of Kanchi in South India.¹⁴ He became a monk after he had reached manhood, and studied Bud-

12. CV. Chap. 90 VV. 80—83.

13. PLC. p. 127

14. SZ. p. 13.

dhism under Prajnatarā. After the death of his teacher he assumed the patriarchal authority of the Dhayana school.

In obedience to the instructions of his teacher Dharma sailed for China spending three years on the way. In 520 A. C. he landed at Kuang-chou in Southern China. He was invited by the emperor of Liang dynasty to his capital Chin-liang (modern Nanking). On knowing that his patron was not fit to embrace his faith, he left to the state of Northern Wei. Here he retired into Shao-lin monastery and spent most of his time in silent meditation. For this habit he earned the title of 'the wall-gazing Brahmin.'

It was in this monastery that Dharma met his famous disciple Shen-Kuang who not being satisfied with the teachings of Confucius decided to follow the faith of the new master. This disciple soon attained spiritual enlightenment under his teacher and became the second patriarch of the Zen Sect in China. Bodhidharma came to his end in 528 A. C. Tradition claims his age at death to be about 150.

Shen-Kuang was followed by five other spiritual patriarchs. Hui-neng the sixth patriarch was a great religious teacher and he gave an energetic role to his sect which was tending to ascetic quietism. He was the last of the patriarchs of the Zen Sect. His works are the highest authority on Zen Buddhism. He died in 713 A. C.

Indian Buddhism through the Zen Sect became naturalized in China. It did not oppose the ideals of Confucius. The Zen is so elastic that in the course of centuries it came to contain within itself all that was needed by the Chinese mind. Almost all the im-

portant monasteries in China at present belong to the Zen Sect. The influence of this sect on Chinese culture and civilization is phenomenal.

At present there are two schools of the Zen Sect in Japan, the Rinzi and the Soto schools. The former is more speculative and intellectual and the latter extolls quietism.

Bodhidharma is regarded as a doll of luck in Japan. This doll is found in every Japanese home. It has no legs, but is made in such a way that every time it is knocked down it returns to the upright position due to the weight at its bottom. As Bodhidharma spent nine years in Samadhi, he is said to have lost his legs through long sitting. Hence the doll signifies the undaunted spirit against failures.

Today the message of Bodhidharma has spread to every home in the Far East. After one and a half millenniums since the death of the great founder, it is now spreading in Europe and the Americas. Students from all parts of the world are flocking to the International University of Kyto in Japan to study Zen Buddhism.

This revered teacher of Kanchi has brought about the cultural unification of Asia and paved the way for the free flow of cultural intercourse among the peoples of Asia.

Vajarabodhi (661—730) ¹⁵

He was a famous Buddhist monk who was for long in the Pallava Court of South India. He took the Tantric school of Buddhism to China. Before he set sail to the East he paid a short visit to Ceylon

¹⁵. BT. calls him a Tamil.

and during his stay here he visited a number of holy places in the Island including Adam's Peak. Narasimha Varman II, the Pallava king helped him to travel to China.¹⁶ In China he translated 'sutras' on the Yoga. He was later followed by other great teachers taking more knowledge from India. All these teachers are said to have possessed great spiritual powers. Like Asoka of old some of the Pallava kings helped famous Buddhist missionaries in their cultural conquest of the Far East.

Thus Tamil Buddhist monks contributed in no small measure for the growth of Buddhism. These writers and teachers have enriched Buddhism and Pali literature by their useful works.

16. BT.

The Contribution of the Tamils to Buddhism (Contd.)

Tamil Kings

In the long history of the Island Tamil kings and Tamil subjects have helped the growth and development of Buddhism. The queen of Kudda Parinda, one of the Tamil kings of the fifth century is said to have given donations to a Vihara.¹ Parinda (433 A. C.) a predecessor of Khuddaparinda made donations to a monastery.² Dathiya, son of Tiritara made donations to Kiri Vihara in Kataragama.³ Damiladevi allotted her own revenue to the temple known as Isurumuniya.⁴ The Cholas built the temple of Natanar known as Rajarajaperumpalli at Periyakulam in the division of Kattukulam in the Trincomalee District.⁵

Parakrama Bahu I who was more or less a Tamil did many things for the Buddhist religion. The monks in his time had grown more worldly and led sinful lives. The three sections of the brotherhood—the Maha Vihara, the Abhayagiri Vihara and the Jetawanarama Vihara differed greatly in their rites and doctrines. He, therefore, summoned a great council and with some trouble

1. EZ. IV p. 114.

2. EZ. IV p. 113.

3. EZ. III p. 218.

4. JCBRAS. Vol. XXVI No. 71. p. 145 ; MV. Chap. 35 V. 48.

5. ASCAR (1953) (Tamil) pp. 7, 22.

reconciled the three sects of priests. He purified the Buddhist religion by expelling the monks who had led evil lives. He built for the priests at Polonnaruwa the Jetawanarama including a round Tooth Relic temple. Images of Buddha were set up and viharas were built or repaired in many parts of the country. The principal shrines in Anuradhapura were kept in repairs, but it was Polonnaruwa that the king sought to enlarge and embellish.⁶

Sri Vijaya Rajasinha (1739—1747) became king after the death of Narendra Sinha. He was a prince from Madura and was a Hindu, but later accepted Buddhism. He did a great deal to promote Buddhism during his short reign of eight years. He endeavoured to bring orthodox Buddhist priests from Siam, but died, before the members of the embassy could begin the journey.

At this time Catholic missions who had already won a foothold in the Kandyan territories adopted subtle methods of conversion to win the unsophisticated subjects of the king from their traditional faith. These activities were viewed with disfavour by the king for he was also the custodian of the national faith. The Mahavamsa says in this connection: "The infamous Parangis.....rich in cunning endeavoured by gifts of money and the like to get their creed adopted by others, and led a life without reverence for the doctrine (of the Buddha)".⁷

When the Portuguese tried to destroy the native cultures and implant their own they made the native rulers hostile to their activities. For the first time

6. CV. Chapters 73, 78 and 79.

7. CV. Chap. 98. VV. 80—82.

they introduced religious hatred into the minds of the people who were nurtured in the principles of tolerance and respect for other men's views. They tried to build unity among Christians by assiduously cultivating their hatred for the pagans. Becoming a Catholic in those days was not merely changing one's religion, but transferring one's loyalty as well to those who taught that religion. Hence, Sri Vijaya Rajasinha adopted measures to put a stop to their activities.

The next king, Kirti Sri Rajasinha was one of the greatest of Kandyan rulers. The early part of his reign was distinguished chiefly by a great revival of Buddhism. The year when he began to reign, it is said, "There was not even one priest in the beautiful Island of Lanka." It only means that there were no genuine priests following the tenets of Buddhism. The application for priests to the king of Siam which was made in the previous reign was renewed in 1753. When the king heard of the decay of Buddhism in Ceylon, he felt very sorry and immediately sent learned priests and copies of the sacred texts. On the arrival of the Siamese mission to the approaches of Kandy, the king himself went with his army to receive its members. These monks established themselves in the Island, and they are known as the Siamese sect. They were given the old viharas and temple lands and this sect still flourishes as one of the mainstays of Buddhism in Ceylon.

Much of the Buddhist revival was also due to a learned monk Saranankara — "the last of Lanka's heroes," who lived during this period. This pious monk was appointed the head of the priesthood. He wrote many religious books and helped in a good measure the Buddhist revival.

The king, after restoring the Sangha, turned his attention to revive Buddhism. Pilgrimages and festivals were observed. A number of viharas were built or repaired. The king built the inner part of the Temple of the Tooth, and had the Mahavamsa written down to his reign. Until the reign of Kirti Sri the Perahera was celebrated exclusively in honour of the four deities Natha, Vishnu, Skanda and Pattini. In 1775 on the orders of the king, the sacred Dalada Relic of the Buddha was first carried in procession together with the insignia of the four gods.

Kirti Sri Rajasinha in his dealings with the Catholics followed the same policy of his predecessor Sri Vijaya Rajasinha. When the Dutch proscribed the Catholics in their territories, they fled to the Kandyan districts for refuge. But with the coming of the Nayakkar kings to the throne of Kandy, there too they did not find peace.

The enthusiasm of the king for the revival of Buddhism and the activities of Saranankara had a great influence on the nation. Though the king was a non-Sinhalese he succeeded in reviving Buddhism and put the Sangha on its pristine high pedestal.

Kirti Sri was succeeded by his brother Rajadhi Rajasinha. The new king erected religious buildings for people to worship. He was an eminent Pali and Sanskrit scholar and collected round him a band of brilliant literary men. He wrote the Asadisa Jataka a very beautiful Buddhist legendary poem⁸ Katika-vata is a work written by his brother and was revised by an assembly of monks.

8. CV. Chap. 101. V 13.

The next king who followed Rajadhi Rajasinha was Sri Vickrama Rajasinha (1798—1815) a youthful relative of the late king. He bequeathed many fields and villages to the Dalada Maligawa.⁹ He is said to have got the wall surrounding the upper terrace of the Bo Tree built by one of his officers.¹⁰ In this manner Tamil kings never neglected to attend to the needs of Buddhism in Ceylon.

As the kings of Ceylon mostly took their wives from South India or from Tamil royal families which had made Ceylon their homeland, the Tamils had great influence on the king's Court. Besides, the ministers of the kings of Ceylon were drawn from the learned of South India. Further when the Nayakkar dynasty was ruling in Kandy, the influence of the Tamils on the Kandyan Court was very considerable. The members of this Court hailed from the Courts of Madura and Tanjore, and in India the family of the Nayakkars of Madura had always been very hostile to the Dutch merchants. These experienced Kandyan diplomats did not allow the Dutch to have their own way. Raids were made on Dutch territories, an organized system of smuggling was carried on with the help of the moors, and when protests were lodged by the Dutch, a contemptuous reply was given that smuggling was very profitable to the king. Narenappa Nayakkar, the father-in-law of Vijaya Rajasinha was a veritable firebrand. He was a source of immense trouble to the Dutch. Thus the Tamil members of the Kandyan Court were a power behind the crown. They made every endeavour to preserve the independence of the Kandyan kingdom against a mighty western power like the Dutch.

9. CV. Chap. 101. V. 21.

10. GA. p. 11.

In the latter half of the thirteenth century when Yapahu was sacked by Arya Chakravarti, and when the Tooth Relic, the sacred palladium of the Sinhalese was removed by him and handed over to Kulasekara, the Pandyan king, Parakrama Bahu III went over to Madura in person to get back the Tooth Relic from the Pandyan king. There he successfully won the favour of the king, and returned to the Island with the sacred Relic. Then, he began to rule after placing it safely in Polonnaruwa. No enemy would have returned a valuable prize that was taken in war, but here king Kulasekara was gracious enough to return the sacred palladium. This was only a gesture of goodwill on his part.

Right through the centuries the kings of Ceylon relied mostly on Tamil soldiers to maintain their kingship. It was Tamil soldiers that helped Ila Naga (93—102) to regain his kingdom. When Kassapa treacherously seized his father's kingdom and brutally murdered him, Mugulan (496—513) the rightful heir escaped to India to raise an army to fight against the usurping brother. Returning with a large Tamil force, he defeated his brother and soon became king. Again when Pottha Kuttha the Tamil general proclaimed Datta as king, Manavamma (676 - 711) fled to India, and with the assistance of a Pallava army he defeated Datta and regained the throne of Lanka. Parakrama Bahu I, Vijaya Bahu I, Gaja Bahu II and Vikrama Bahu II had the Tamil Velaikkara armies under them. The Velaikkaras were given the custodianship of the Tooth Relic in the reign of Vijaya Bahu I by the high priest Mugalan, the Raja Guru with the consent of the king and his ministers. In the thirteenth, fourteenth and

fifteenth centuries the kings of Ceylon kept Tamil Agambadis in their standing armies. The kings of Kotte and those of Kandy had Karavas of the Kurukulasuriya, Varnakulasuriya and Arasakulasuriya clans to fight their wars. Likewise Tamil soldiers helped the kings of Ceylon to maintain peace and order and as a result religion, art and literature flourished.

Wealthy Tamils have given donations to Buddhist institutions. Pottha Kuttha who lived during the reign of Agbo IV (658—674) erected a wonderful practising house called Matambiya. He further erected pasadas in many viharas.¹¹ The Tamil Mahakanda, a wealthy official in the same reign built a parivena named after him.¹² The Galapata Vihara near Bentota was founded by a Damila Adhihara with the co-operation of his mother, nephews Kodanavan, Vijayanavan and a kinsman.¹³ A Tamil inscription of the later Anuradhapura period mentions four Tamil chiefs contributing towards the building of a Buddhist vihara.¹⁴ A ninth or tenth century Tamil inscription records Tamils giving donations to a Buddhist institution.¹⁵

Tamil builders and artisans were giving their best for the erection of Buddhist edifices. When the queen of Vijaya came from Madura, she was accompanied by "craftsmen and a thousand families of the eighteen guilds." Ever from that time builders from

11. CV. Chap. 46. V. 19, 21.

12. CV. Chap. 46. V. 24.

13. EZ. Vol. IV. No. 25. p. 200.

14. SII. Vol. IV No. 1405.

15. SII. Vol. IV No. 1403.

South India have continued to help in the construction of religious buildings. In the fourteenth century the Gadaladeniya vihara was built with the aid of a South Indian architect Ganesavaracari.¹⁶ Even recently Tamil craftsmen have helped to beautify the Dalada Maligawa in Kandy.

Recent Tamil Supporters of Buddhism.

In the galaxy of great men who shed brilliance on our public life Sir Muttu Coomaraswamy (1833—1879) occupies a unique place. He achieved success in the Legislative Council and in the field of scholarship. He made translations of works in Pali such as "Dathavansa" and "Suttanipata", Buddhist sacred works. Sir Coomaraswamy also made an English translation of the Hindu drama entitled "Arichandra", the Martyr of Truth, which was published in 1863. It was dedicated to Queen Victoria.

His illustrious nephew Sir Ponnampalam Ramanathan (1851—1930) statesman and philosopher, was a co-trustee with Col. Olcott who had done a world of good to Buddhist education in Ceylon, for the great Buddhist fund which had been collected for the establishment of Buddhist schools in the Island. He assiduously worked in and outside the Legislative Council for the passing of the Buddhist Temporalities Ordinance. In the dark days of 1915, Sir Ponnampalam Ramanathan crossed the submarine-infested oceans of World War I to England and pleaded the cause of the Sinhalese with his accustomed eloquence, and restored justice to the Sinhalese. For fifty long years he was the fearless champion of the rights of the people.

16. EHC. p. 112.

Dr. Ananda K. Coomaraswamy (1877—1949), the Ruskin of Oriental Art—was a great international scholar of repute. The services he rendered to Buddhism are inestimable. Some of his writings in this field are, "Myths of Hindus and Buddhists" (1914), "Buddha and the Gospel of Buddhism" (1916), "The Elements of Buddhist Iconography" (1935), "Hinduism and Buddhism" (1945) and "The Living Thoughts of Gotama Buddha."

Dr. Coomaraswamy through his writings interpreted the fundamentals of early Buddhism in its proper light. He traced early Buddhism as a development of the Vedas and Upanishads. He made clear the growth of Buddhist iconography and expounded the significance of such Buddhist symbols as "Tree of Life," "The Pillar of the World" and "Word-Wheel". Dr. Coomaraswamy saw much meanings in Buddha's epithets and explained that early Buddhism recognizes "two selves". He has clearly interpreted such terms as 'Nibbana', 'Arhat' and "The Footprints of the Law."

When western art critics like Foucher and Fergusson declared that the idea of a Buddha image was first suggested to Indians by the Greeks, it was left to Dr. Coomaraswamy to refute this claim. Through his writings he proved that there existed an independent indigenous plastic ideal for the image of the Buddha and that the Mathura school was a development of the indigenous Indian school. In the 1927 Art Bulletin Volume IX (New York), Dr. Coomaraswamy contributed a brilliant essay on "The Origin of the Buddha Image", and once and for all time settled the vexed controversy which hindered the correct appreciation of the evolution of Indian Art.

Dr. Coomaraswamy returned to Ceylon in 1900 and worked for six years in the fields of mineralogy and geology. Between 1903—1906 he was the Director of the Mineralogical Survey of Ceylon and it was during this period that he collected materials for his inimitable book, "Mediaeval Sinhalese Art". In 1905 he published a pamphlet, "Borrowed Plumes" and it was translated into Sinhalese and widely distributed. In this brochure he appealed to the people to have a national outlook in life and to revive their national arts and literature. He wrote that no nation can become great by imitation and that the people should not ape the West in all things. It was as a result of this pamphlet that the Ceylon Social Reform Society was inaugurated with Dr. Coomaraswamy as its first president. The Ceylon National Review a journal of the society always contained contributions on cultural subjects. Dr. Coomaraswamy wrote regularly to the review. Long before Lokamaniya Tilak and Gokhale, the noteworthy predecessors of Mahatma Gandhi appeared in the Indian national horizon, Dr. Coomaraswamy had sowed the seeds of nationalism in Ceylon. Through his speeches and writings he made the people take pride in their traditional culture and civilization. When Governors and Governor-Generals whose names are inscribed on public buildings are forgotten, Dr. Ananda K. Coomaraswamy will be remembered with veneration in India and Ceylon.

Tamil Settlements
in
Sinhalese Areas

Tamil Settlements in Sinhalese Areas

Three main streams helped to form the Sinhalese race. The first stream was a contingent of seven hundred followers under their leader Vijaya Raja Sinha from Sinhapura of the Kalinga kingdom. The second stream was a contingent of seven hundred Tamil maidens from Madura, who came as brides with a retinue of servants and a thousand families of the eighteen guilds. The third stream was the aboriginal inhabitants of Ceylon the Yakkas and Nagas who were both Dravidian. Another minor stream was the Magadhese Buddhists. According to Yalpana Vaipava Malai, Vijaya invited these Buddhists who were in search of an asylum as a result of Brahmanical persecution and settled them in various parts of the country with full liberty to follow their own faith.

The Tamils who were in close proximity to the northern coasts of Ceylon must have had close connections with the Island centuries before the coming of Vijaya. Ever from the time the Tamils learnt to sail, peaceful immigration to the Island has been taking place. A considerable amount of Tamil blood had been added to the population in the past twenty five centuries.

After the marriage of prince Vijaya with the Pandyan princess the process of amalgamation between the Tamils and the descendants of the followers of

Vijaya continued peacefully as long as both races were of the same religion. The process of blending was interrupted by the advent of Buddhism in 247 B. C. Those who embraced the new faith became Sinhalese Buddhists and those who stuck to their old faith became Tamil Saivites and were looked upon as invaders.

King Elala (145-101 B. C.) could not have held sway over a people different from his own for a period of forty four years if there had not been a permanent Tamil population of sufficient strength to support him. Some of the great tanks of Ceylon have only Tamil names¹ but no corresponding Sinhalese names. This fact denotes that the Tamils from remote antiquity have been permanent inhabitants of those districts.

Tamil place-names remain more or less disguised in Sinhalese areas; this is specially the case in Anuradhapura, Puttalam, Chilaw, Kurunegala and Colombo districts.

Even in the fifth century, there appears to have been a considerable number of Tamils in Anuradhapura. The Tamils to ensure the purification which attends bathing and considering the river to be too remote for that purpose built an embankment across, and brought it near the town². Tradition hails this aqueduct as Halpanu Ela. This canal was in some places ten to twenty feet in depth. It commences its journey some distance up the Malwatu Oya, passes the Mahamega Park of old and rejoins the river well past the town.

The large Tamil element in the population of the Island in the past and their influence can be gauged

1 Pavatkulam and Pandarakulam have no corresponding Sinhalese names.

2 VS. p. 53

from the following facts. In the seventh century when Mana having won over the people tried to expel the Tamils. They therefore, banded themselves together and captured the capital Anuradhapura. After the death of Aggabodhi IV. his Yuvarajah, Dathasiva should have succeeded him, but instead Pothhakuttha a Tamil threw the prince in prison and administered the kingdom himself. He tried to rule through puppets. Datta was the first king and when he died after two years, Hatthadatha ruled for six months. In the tenth century Mahinda's son Sena V foolishly murdered his general's brother and the enraged officer took his revenge by assembling together all the Tamils settled in Ceylon and handed over the country to them.

The employment of Tamil soldiers by the kings of Ceylon in their standing armies, the utilization of Tamils in the civil wars of Ceylon and the results of the periodical Tamil aggressions of the Chola and Pandya kingdoms of the ninth, tenth and eleventh centuries increased the number of Tamils in the Island. This fact is corroborated by the 'Rajaratnakara' which records that in the ninth and tenth centuries the domination of the Tamils was so complete that they were found in large numbers in every town and village throughout the Island.

The Tamil element in the population of Ceylon must have been very great after the Cholas left Ceylon. As a result Tamil became so very popular that even Government notifications in the twelfth century were in Tamil. The minipe inscription states that in the eighth year of Kalyanavati, (1209) a great host of Tamils invaded Ceylon. Soon after, a Pandyan prince invaded the Island with a Tamil army and ruled at Polonnaruwa.

as Parakramapandu II (1211-1214). He was overthrown by Kalinga Magha who with the help of his great Kerala armies ruled for twenty nine years. The Rajavaliya says that Magha settled Tamils in every village in the Island and their number must have been very considerable³. Parakrama Bahu II of Dambadeniya did not drive away Kalinga Magha beyond Anuradhapura for the Kurundi District was then under Tamil domination.⁴ All these invasions must have left behind a predominant Tamil element in the Island.

In the fourteenth century when the Jaffna kingdom expanded southwards the Arya kings settled Tamils in their new territories⁵. When Robert Knox escaped through Anuradhapura in the latter part of the seventeenth century the people there did not understand him when he spoke to them in Sinhalese.⁶

Gradually the lands of the Vanni became covered with dense forests and these forests formed new barriers. The Tamils in the south became isolated from those in the north and all those Tamils in the Sinhalese areas became Sinhalized. Hence we find "Kulama" and "Kuliya" in the Sinhalese districts. The place names in the North-central and the North-western Provinces are of Sinhalese and Tamil origin in the most haphazard fashion.

We shall now examine briefly the other factors that contributed to increase the Tamil element in some of the Sinhalese provinces of the Island.

3 RV-p. 53.

4 JCERAS Special No. Vol. VI. 1959. p. 87.

5 YVM. p. 43.

6 HRC - p. 256.

North-Central Province

The stone canoe in the citadel of Anuradhapura records of lands belonging to Tamils and villages belonging to them⁷.

During the reign of Rajasen there came a large band of Tamil Vanniyas and settled in the districts of Nuwarakalawiya⁸.

According to Simon Casie Chetty the Villi Durai a tribe that is found in the Maha Vanni came as followers of the Vanniyas from the Indian coasts, probably they are the Villiyas of the 'Palai' region of the Tamil Nadu.

Another Tamil tribe are the Wagays who are mostly found in Anuradhapura and Kurunegala Districts. They do not very much encourage intermarriage with the Sinhalese and claim themselves as Agambadi Vellalas⁹.

Marriages very often took place between the members of the Vanniya chieftain families of the Nuwarakalawiya District and those of the Vanniya chieftains of the Northern Province. Whenever a bride was taken from the north apart from her movables and immovables as dowry a retinue of forty or fifty families went as her servants to her new district. These Tamil families took employment under their new chieftains and their descendants later became Sinhalese¹⁰.

In the Tamankaduwa Pattuwa each pattuwa is almost entirely inhabited by one race. In the Sinha-

7 EZ Vol. III. p- 270.

8 JCBRAS. Vol. III. No. 9. p. 149.

9 MNCP. p. 90.

10 YVK. p. 187.

lese pattuwa there are Sinhalese, in the Megoda Pattuwa Muslims and the Egoda Pattuwa Tamils. These Tamils form a distinct group in the province.

In the Jaffna District in 1676 as a consequence of the new land "Thombo" to relieve the poor people of the tyranny and rapacity of the headmen there was such an uproar that most of the headmen from Tenmarachchi and Vadamarachchi went over to Kayila Vanni of the Nuwarakalawiya District and made settlements there¹¹.

In the latter part of the eighteenth century a large number of Tamils from the Jaffna Peninsula especially from the villages of Alaveddy, Udupiddy and Navaly went as peaceful colonists and settled in the Mullaitivu and Kilakkumulai North Districts. Many emigrants from Kachehai went to the Nuwarakalawiya District.¹² Besides these, individual Tamil settlers from time to time have settled in the North-central Province for the cultivation of crops. Most of these Tamil settlers have lost their identity.

Here is an extract from a recognized journal: "Throughout the Sinhalese districts of the North-western and North central regions the great majority of the ancient Sinhalese place-names has been lost and it has been suggested that the present population is not descended from the original Sinhalese inhabitants. These were regions subject to invasion and conquest, and with the downfall of the Sinhalese kingdom and the ruin of the irrigation system followed soon afterwards very probably by the advent of malaria heavy migrations of population into the hills and the wet zone would have taken place."¹³

11 JCBRAS. Vol. XXVIII No. 72 p. 76.

12 YVK. p. 184.

13 JCBRAS. (1959) p. 6.

North-Western Province

Panduwas Nuwara is the most ancient city of Ceylon except Tammana Nuwara. It is older than Anuradhapura. The Kadaim-pota assigns the founding of the city to king Panduwas and supplies interesting particulars. It says that there were in the city men speaking the Tamil, Lada and Grantha languages.¹⁴

In the early period of Anuradhapura Kaka Mukkaras, who occupied the North-western Districts under a leader Nila Mudali gave much trouble to Anuradhapura kings.¹⁵ They could not be dislodged and they became a part of the Sinhalese people

The Tamil Udayas settled in the North-central and North-western Provinces.¹⁶

Several batches of Chaliyas were brought over from the Tamil country to Ceylon at different times. Sir Emerson Tennent says that the Chaliyas came from South India during the time of Devanampiya Tissa.¹⁷ In 1638 a petition was presented by the Chaliyas to Diogo de Melo, the Portuguese Captain-General. A paragraph from the petition runs as follows: We the Chaliyas came to the Island in a 'paguel' of the Moors which transported us to Chilao. We derive our origin from Chale and it is from us that the port of Chale takes the name which it has today. Seven of us started, one escaped and six remained. We married in the Island, at the king's capital. Kalutara was the first 'Paravenia' which was given to us and from there we spread along the coast as is seen today. When our

14 JCBRAS. Vol XIV No. 47. p. 137.

15 do Vol. XXX. No. 80. p. 320.

16 JCBRAS. Vol. XXX No. 80. p. 306.

17 C. Part 4. Chap. 4. p. 453.

numbers increased the kings levied from us a customary payment of two fanams a household. Our profession was the weaving of cloth and therefore, we paid a 'thuppati' a year.¹⁸

Another contingent of Chaliyas was brought in the time of Wathimi and they settled in the Chilaw District.¹⁹ The last batch of Chaliyas arrived at Beruwala.²⁰

The Kurunegala Vistaraya says that in the fourteenth century when Kurunegala (Hastipura) was the capital of the Sinhalese kingdom there were 12,000 Tamils in the city.

During the Kurunegala period Goigama palanquin-bearers refused to do the hereditary 'Rajakariya' as the new king Wathimi was the offspring of an Arab lady. The prince's advisers, therefore, went to South India and inveigled some Brahmans and brought them here as captives to take the place of the Goigama palanquin-bearers. This was done to spite the Goigamas.²¹

In the Kurunegala District there are families of Pallaru (Tamil - Pallar) at Bamunessa and Kinkiniyawa while there are others at Itenwatta in Walagam Pattu. They are sometimes known as Karmenteyo and Kula Hewayo. A portion of the canal from Molligoda to Bolgoda near Panadura is still named Pallaru-kepu-ela.²²

18 CPE. II p. 226.

19 CPE. II. p. 544.

20 CPE. II. p. 542.

21 TSC. p. 38.

22 CPE. I p. 493.

When Vidiya Bandara was imprisoned by the Portuguese in 1552, his wife sent for his hereditary Pallarus to make a tunnel for his escape from prison.

The Demala Hatpattu which was entirely inhabited by Tamils was a part of North-central Province until 1845, when it was included in the North-western Province. Mr. Macready says of the people of the Demala Hatpattu in his Administration Report of 1867 as follows: "The people we now find there call themselves Kandyans but I suspect that not a little Malabar blood runs in their veins. The men of the present day certainly have much in common with the Malabars as well as with the Kandyans and the peculiarity of the Tamil cast of countenances is in some instances strongly developed."²³

Concerning the Mukuwas of Puttalam it is said that they left the coasts of Malabar when they were persecuted by the Mohammedans to compel them to embrace Mohammedanism. They first came to the coasts of Kudiramalai and made settlements in the Puttalam District. Soon after, there was fighting with the Kar-rears of the district. In this skirmish the Mukuwas were supported by the Mohammedans and in gratitude for their services they embraced the faith of their friends. Later when the Portuguese tried to spread their faith many renounced Mohammedanism in favour of Christianity.²⁴

In the Puttalam District there seems to have been another Tamil tribe known as Uppalavar. They were experts in the manufacture of salt from sea water. Many technical terms used in salt manufacture were mainly Tamil. This manufacture was in the hands of the Tamils for a long time.²⁵

23 MPD. p. 57.

24 MPD. p. 29.

25 JCBRAS Vol. I No. 3. (1847—1848) p. 99.

The earliest name of Maha Oya was Caymel or Kaymel Oya which is possibly connected with the landing or settlement of the Kammalans in Ceylon. They belong to the artisan class of the Malabar coasts who seem to have come over to Ceylon.²⁶

The Agambadis, a cultivating class of people from the Tamil country settled between Maha Oya and Kal Oya.²⁷ They found employment in the regular armies of the kings of Ceylon. Under Parakrama Bahu I the name Agambadi first appears. Later on in the reign of Nissanka Malla, they were under provincial governors. Their names are found even in the time of Parakrama Bahu VI of Kotte. A donation of land was given by Parakrama Bahu VI in the presence of ten Agambadis of Dumbra.²⁸

There is a Sinhalese document Mukkara Hatana. It describes the arrival of an army of 7740 persons who came on the invitation of Parakrama Bahu VI from Kanchipuram, Kaveripattanam and Kilakkarai. For the great services rendered by this army in putting down the revolt of the Mukuwas in the Puttalam District the king graciously granted the soldiers 'Paravani' lands Madinnoruwa, Anaovlundava, Munnessarama, Kammala, Tambaravila and Negombo and settled them in these districts. Kurukula, Varnakula and Arasa-kula or Mihindukula are some of the chief names of their clans.²⁹

In the Hiriyala Hatpattu of the Kurunegala District in the Diddeniya palata there are Karavas the

26 CCR. 1911. p. 228.

27 Upham Vol. III.

28 EZ. Vol. III p. 235.

29 KC. pp. 16, 17 & 18.

majority of whom are Hindus and speak Tamil. Their tradition is that their ancestors came from South India and settled first in Negombo. They worship the Kataragama Deiyō. Most of them can read and write Sinhalese but speak Tamil at home. They have ceased to observe Tamil customs but preserve the custom of tying the 'tali' at weddings.³⁰ They retain their Tamil names as Vellappu, Sitappu, Kandappu, Veerappu, Kumarappu etc. Thavamma and Thanganma are some of the names of their women. They have social relations with other Karava villages in Galgamuwa which are partly Buddhist.

For the purpose of carrying out the customary services of the great Munneswaram temple of Chilaw, Tamil colonists consisting of artisans, drummers, oil-makers, priests etc were settled in the sixty four villages that belonged to the temple.³¹ The names of the villages in the Chilaw and Puttalam Districts seem to be generally Tamil. The Census Report of 1911 records about the people in the Chilaw District as follows: "Tamil is as much the language of the Low Country Sinhalese of the sea-coast line from Negombo to Puttalam as is Sinhalese. How far the union of the two races Sinhalese and Tamil may have contributed to the successful development of this district and the general well-being of the inhabitants is a matter for consideration of the student of ethnology and the historian."

The seafaring people of Udappu are Hindus and form a distinct group in the Chilaw District.

During the reign of king Bhuvaneka Bahu of Kotte a number of princes from Malabar District who

30 CCR. 1911. p. 227; KC. p. 74.

31 Temple Manmiam.

were defeated by their neighbours the Maravars came with valuable presents to the king of Ceylon and sought refuge here. They were given the country near Pomparipu and the Vanni where they settled down.³²

During the Dutch period Governor van de Graaf got down weavers from the Madura coasts and settled them in the Chilaw District and encouraged the weavers of the Coromandel coasts to settle in the Colombo District and also in the Matara District.³³

The Oddes (Ottar) another Tamil tribe are found in the North-central and North-western Provinces. They are chiefly engaged in the quarrying of stones, in the sinking of wells and in the construction of tank bunds.³⁴

32 JCBRAS. Vol. XXX No. 80. p. 321.

33 CLR. Part I p. 310.

34 CCR. 1911. p. 229.

Tamil Settlements in Sinhalese Areas (Contd.)

Central Province

We have already in a previous chapter referred to the vestiges of Tamil settlements near Kotmale before the ninth century.

A Sinhalese book "Madura-purena-vittiya" (the account of the arrivals from the city of Madura) mentions the arrivals of Tamils from India during the period of the Kandyan king. King Narendrasinha asked the Pandyan king for the hand of his daughter in marriage. He agreed and sent his daughter Sumitava to be the queen with a large retinue of followers. When he had no issue by this queen he married a second queen Kaikea, daughter of the king of Telugu. During this period a large number of chiefs and others from Madura came and settled down under the protection of the king and obtained places of honour. There also arrived a large number of Wadugas from the Telugu country. All these newcomers intermarried among Sinhalese families and held high offices.³⁵

Kirti Sri Raja Sinha had four queens brought over from the Tamil country and with them came their followers, attendants and relatives.³⁶ All these settled down in the Island.

35 JCBRAS. Vol. XXX No. 80 p. 321.

36 JCBRAS. Vol. XXX No. 80 p. 321.

The Paduwos a tribe of people found in the Hill Districts are said to be the descendants of the Pandyan prisoners of war and the hereditary serfs of the king.³⁷ There is a Paduwa village Hiripitiya near Veyangoda.

Craftsmen from South India made settlements in the Up-Country during the time of the Kandyan kings. Dr. Ananda Coomaraswamy writes: "Such workmen have moved from India to Ceylon in large numbers at various periods; the Mahavamsa mentioned, craftsmen and a thousand families of the eighteen guilds sent by a Pandya king from Madura to Ceylon in the time of Vijaya. Twenty three centuries later the same process was going on in the reign of Kirti Sri; and these eighteenth century Kammalars are already indistinguishable in language and appearance from true Sinhalese. Even at the present day the Sinhalese masons (galwaduwo) and some of the higher craftsmen are of acknowledged Tamil descent."³⁸ "There are certain names", says William H. Gilbert, peculiar to the smith caste and some of their lore bore witness to Tamil families of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The men were frequently called Jewan, Vijendra etc."³⁹

During the Kandyan period there were settlements of Parava merchants in the Hill Districts. A corporation of merchants most probably Tamils named Valenjiyar have left a Tamil inscription in Kandapola Korale.⁴⁰

37 CPE. II p. 486.

38 HIA. pp. 125, 164.

39 SCS.

40 ASCAR. (1911—12) p. 113.

The Tamil Karavas of the Varunakulasuriya lineage inhabit the village of Ratalavava of Matale South. These people were brought from Negombo by king Rajasinha II to serve in time of war.⁴¹ Though today they are Buddhists they retain their old Hindu culture. They worship Hindu gods like Vishnu and Kataragama Deiyo. Some of their names are Arumugam, Sinnathamby, Velati etc.

According to the Vaipava Malai the Dutch brought Tamils as slaves from South India and sold them in the Jaffna Peninsula. Some were sold in the Vanni and the rest were sold in the Kandyan kingdom.⁴²

Furthermore during the Kandyan period, there was a great deal of amity between the Tamils and the Sinhalese both politically and socially. This unity in the state brought about many inter-racial marriages among its citizens. In this manner many Tamils became Sinhalese during the period under review.

Southern Province

In the division of the Girawa Pattuwa there are three main streams, the Kahawatta-Aru, the Kirama-Aru and the Urubokka-Aru. In Girawa Pattuwa West, the Kachchigal Aru is the western boundary of the division. On the eastern boundary of the Magam Pattuwa is the Kumbukkan-Aru, and the Kirinde-Aru cuts across the centre of the Pattuwa. These Tamil terms reveal some ancient Tamil settlements.

Similarly the old name of Valave Ganga is Vana Nadi.⁴³ Almost all its tributaries end in Ara. Pandikulama is an important tank in this river basin.

41 KC. p. 71.

42 YS. pp. 195, 196.

43 JCBRAS. Vol. 6 (1959) pp. 67, 68.

Kataragama in the second century B. C. was the seat of a royal dynasty which has left cave inscriptions at Bovattagala (Batticaloa District) and at Kot-tadamuhela ⁴⁴ (Hambantota District). Its inscriptions carry the symbol of a fish which appears to have been the dynastic emblem of this particular royal family. At Henannegala (Batticaloa District) there is yet another inscription with the fish emblem. ⁴⁵ No royal dynasty at this period had the fish emblem except the Pandyas and it is probable that a branch of the Pandyan royal family might have ruled over South-east Ceylon from Kataragama. The presence of many Tamil terms as pointed out earlier and the antiquity of Murukan cult at Kataragama, Uganthamalai and Tirukovil go to suggest of earlier Tamil settlements in South-east Ceylon.

When Tamil soldiers were brought from South India for the civil wars in Ceylon and when they were not paid they settled down in the Island. On the other hand when the Tamils were defeated, the prisoners of war were distributed as slaves to viharas. The soldiers of Sri Naga the uncle of Jettha Tissa III. were distributed in like manner. The inscription of the Galapata Vihara near Bentota is the only record that gives a list of the Tamil slaves. ⁴⁶

In the eleventh century when the Cholas were ruling the Island from Polonnaruwa, Vikramapandu, a Pandyan prince who having lost the whole of the southern Tamil country, for fear of the Cholas, had left his own country, came to Ruhuna and established himself as king with Kalutra as his capital. A king

44. JCBRAS. Vol. 6 (1959) p. 21

45. JCBRAS. Vol. 6 (1959) p. 31.

46. EZ. Vol. IV p. 200.

who leaves his native country for good would surely have been followed by his close relatives and a retinue of servants and bodyguards. All these people would have settled in Ruhuna. After the death of this Pandyan prince, Jagatipala ruled for four years and after him another Pandyan prince Parakramapandu ruled for two years in Ruhuna. The followers of these princes must have become a part of the Sinhalese people.

Ibn Batuta on his visit to Ceylon in 1344 went to see the temple at Dondra. He says that there were five hundred dancing girls belonging to the nobility of India, attached to the temple. A great colony of silversmiths and other artisans were brought down from India and attached to the great temple at Dondra.⁴⁷ All these settlements were probably from the Tamil country. With the lapse of centuries these Tamil settlements have lost their identity.

The seafaring people along the western and southern coasts of Ceylon were originally Tamils. There are many Tamil names or Tamil combinations for many coastal towns and villages.⁴⁸ In this connection Dr. H. W. Thambiah says: "New light has been thrown on the subject of caste system by the publication of the third book of the Portuguese Thombo. This gives an account of the social system of the coastal people who occupied the western coast of Ceylon from Puttalam to Dondra..... The names and the castes and their personal names point to South Indian origin illustrating how Ceylon's geographical position has been a deciding factor in a social system."⁴⁹

⁴⁷ CPE. I. p. 240.

⁴⁸ Vide TAC. p. 214.

⁴⁹ LCTC. p. 148.

In this connection H. W. Codrington says: "We may note that at the present day two of the most important castes in the Sinhalese Low Country are undoubtedly of Tamil or at least of South Indian descent."⁵⁰

In the Southern Province some of the villages that were originally Tamil are in the Gangabodde Pattu of the Galle District. viz. Pellagodde, Wallambagalla and Devitura (Demalagama). Some of these villages are thickly populated.⁵¹ Not far from the village of Demalagama there is still a hill called Soedi Demala Kanda. It is a term by which the followers of Elala are always designated by the native historians.

About four miles towards the interior from Bentota are the villages of Kanana, Bondupitiya and Dodampitiya which were also inhabited by Tamils.⁵²

Galganda near Cosgodde had a Tamil population. From here several families emigrated to Kotahena in the Colombo District.⁵³ Today these Tamils of the Southern Province have lost their identity and profess Buddhism, but have little intercourse with the rest of the inhabitants.

One caste group among the Sinhalese is called Demalagattaru or Tamil captives (Those that were taken in war). They are found in a few villages in the Western and Southern Provinces.⁵⁴

In the fifteenth century Galle and Weligama were important ports and a good number of Tamil

50 JCBRAS. (1960) p. 100.

51 CLR. Part I p. 142.

52 CLR. Part I p. 142.

53 CLR. Part I p. 142.

54 HPSAC

merchants gravitated to these centres for purpose of trade.

Kokila Sandesa, a Sinhalese poem of the fifteenth century says : " From thence you go to Weligama where is a market forming a street there are Viscoule (Chetties) selling precious stones."

During the Portuguese period a tax " Xaro-de-Chetivary " Seddivari - a tax of the shop-keepers was collected in Galle).⁵⁵ From these it is clear that all these Tamil settlements in the Southern Province gradually became a part of the Sinhalese people.

Western Province

In the latter part of the 14th century Alagakkonara built Jayawardana Kotte with special workmen brought from Kanchipuram. One of his motives in erecting it was to drive the Tamils out of the Low Country and to obtain a major share in the trade of the Island. For, it must be remembered that in the 14th century the Arya Chakravartis of Jaffna enjoyed a great share of the external trade of the Island. Hence there was a strong settlement of Tamils engaged in trade in Colombo at that time.

Vira Alageswara (Vijaya Bahu VI) (1387 - 1392) (1398 - 1410) was a Hindu like his famous uncle Alagakkonara, but his brother Vira Bahu (1392 - 1398) was a Buddhist. After the death of Alagakkonara there was a good deal of rivalry between the two brothers for political power. Vira Bahu ruled for six years but was soon overpowered by his brother Alageswara and his Tamil supporters. In all, Alageswara's rule lasted seventeen years. This speaks of the strong Tamil faction that was in Kotte during that period.

55 ALTSRC. p. 48.

The Kotte kings who followed the Alageswaras more or less belonged to a Tamil dynasty. Hence there was a preponderating Tamil element in the court. With the lapse of years all these Tamils became Sinhalese.

In 1651 the Portuguese Viceroy of Goa in order to strengthen the Tamil Catholic community of Negombo sent a colony of new converts from Saleste, in South India with their wives and children to the Negombo District.⁵⁶

In the Dutch period the East India Company of Holland brought down Tamil labourers from South India and set them to work at reclaiming and cultivating the paddy fields around Colombo.⁵⁷ All these settlements are being absorbed among the Sinhalese.

We do not know exactly when the Colombo Chetties came to Ceylon. In olden days the Chetty community, for business purposes, lived in the principal provincial capitals and they came to be called Colombo Chetties, Galle Chetties, Batticaloa Chetties and Puttalam Chetties. C. Brito an advocate and translator of the Tamil *Yalpana Vaipava Malai* (1897) says of the Colombo Chetties as follows: "These people are a branch of the Tamil race and are distinguished from the rest of it by their dress and religion. Tradition does not assign a more distant date than the middle of the sixteenth century to their migration into Ceylon. Their original seat was Tennevelly a different district from whence Jaffna was colonized. The name by which they are known is that of their caste namely the "Chetty" one of the sub-divisions of the Vaisiya caste."

⁵⁶ CPE. II. p. 359.

⁵⁷ CH. p. 2.

In the city of Colombo the Chetty community resided in Sea Street, Chekku Street and Gintupitiya Street. When many of them left their ancestral faith Hinduism and embraced Buddhism and Christianity they gradually dropped out of their traditional occupation of money-lending. Some of them married among the Sinhalese and their descendants are known as 'Sinhala Hetties.'

In the past Sea Street was known as Chetty Street, and when the Chetty community increased in numbers, the street where they later lived was called New Chetty Street. Jampetta is a misspelling of Janpetta. The street ran through the lands of a Chetty landowner bearing the name Jan Fernandopulle. Jan is the Dutch form of John.

With the advent of the Natukottai Chetties of South India many of the Colombo Chetties moved into Kotahena. They also ceased using the caste suffix of 'Chetty' after their names. Some of them tacked on the suffix 'pulle' to their family names. Today the members of this community are tri-lingual and are on the brink of extinction.

There are many Tamil place-names in the Colombo District reminding us of its Tamil settlements. The stretch of land from Galle Face to Mount Lavinia was called 'Mapane' by Portuguese writers. 'pane' in Tamil means an agricultural land as in the word Vannarpannai (Jaffna). When the Tamil inhabitants in Colombo called the town adjacent to the Portuguese fort as 'pettai', it was later known as Pettah. Pettai in Tamil means the extra-mural suburb of a fortress or the town attached to and adjacent to a fortress. In Madras we have Royapetta as it was adjacent to fort St. George now known as George Town.

Kelaniya has a similarity with the Tamil word Kalani—a cornfield. The Tamils in Colombo North called the mouth of the river Kelani as “Mukathuvaram” and it was incorrectly applied by the Portuguese as ‘Matual’ river and ‘Matual’ has become Mutwal. It is interesting to note that even before the twelfth century the Pali commentaries mention Mutwal as Mukhadvara.

Besides, there are other place-names in the Colombo District which are derived from Tamil: Mattakuliya, Kochchikade, Mariakadde, Pamankada, Chekku Street etc. Bankshall Street is from the Tamil word “Pandakasalai” (storage buildings). The same name is also given to one of the streets in Jaffna.

There is a close connection between Nallur, the capital of the Jaffna kingdom, and the Nallurawa of the Panadura District. Bhuvaneka Bahu VI alias Sapumal Kumaraya was once the ruler in Nallur. As the scions of this king resided at Nallurawa they in order to commemorate the memory of their distinguished ancestor gave their town the name of the town with which King Bhuvaneka Bahu VI was associated.

Lastly the town of Negombo has many Tamil place names; Munnakarai, Palakaithurai, Alaivaithurai, Kamalthurai etc. For more than half a millenium this town has been a Tamil centre, and still the people have not discarded Tamil customs and traditions.

Thus for twenty five centuries considerable admixture of Tamil blood among the Sinhalese has been prevalent. Great writers of both the races have acknowledged the mixture of Tamil and Sinhalese blood in all sections of our communities. Let us recognize the facts of history and accommodate one another.

**The Status of The Tamil Language
in
Ancient Ceylon**

The Status of The Tamil Language in Ancient Ceylon.

The Tamils from remote antiquity have been permanent inhabitants of the Island. They have been rulers, ministers, teachers, traders and writers and have greatly influenced the history of this country. They lived mostly in the maritime districts and in those parts of Ceylon now known as the Northern and Eastern provinces. If we examine the place-names of the coasts of Ceylon we would find that most of the names are of Tamil origin and even in ancient times it was more or less so.¹

Tamil place-names in the writings of Greek and Roman authors as Ptolemy and Pliny prove that Tamils inhabited North and North-western coasts of Ceylon at an early age as during the time of the first century A. C. Hence the foreigners who came to these coasts heard these names from the lips of Tamil traders and sailors.²

The recent epigraphical discoveries of Dr. S. Karunaratne, the Assistant Archaeological Commissioner, will help to establish that there were Tamil inhabitants in the Northern Province in the second century B. C. The discovery of the Dravidian 'la' with two dots underneath occurs in a word read as Damela (Tamil).

1. TAC. p. 214.

2. TAC. p. 249. Hippuros (Horse) recorded by Pliny referring perhaps to Kudiramalai, etc.

One such symbol was found in a cave in Periyapuliankulam in the Northern Province. This inscription is dated 200 B. C. The same "la" is also found in a cave in the Eastern Province. It was found in pottery specimens in Arrikamadu in Pondicherry.

The Vallipuram gold-plate inscription of the second century A. C. records: ³ "Hail in the reign of the great king Vaha (ba) and when the minister Isigiraya was governing Nakadiva. Piyaguka Tissa caused a vihara to be built at Badakara Atana." The king referred to is Vasabha (127 - 171) A. C. of the Lambakanna clan. Isigiraya does not seem to be a Sinhalese name. "Rayan" or "Rayar," "Devan" or "Devar" are suffixes of ancient Tamil personal names as Villavarayan, Malavarayan etc. "Badakara" is a Sinhalized form of "Vadakarai" (Tamil - northern coasts). Vallipuram lies in the northern coasts of the Jaffna Peninsula.

In the same coasts there are three place-names which are nearly similar: Kovalam in the island of Karaitivu, Sambu Kovalam to the west of Keerimalai and Kal Kovalam in Point Pedro. Kovalam is also the name of a place in South-west Travancore. The Mahavamsa in describing events in the third century B. C. says that the Bodhi Tree was brought to Jambukola (Sambu Kovalam). This indicates that the Tamils were in the peninsula in the third century B. C.

In the centuries preceeding the Christian era and perhaps in the few centuries after, Elu was the spoken dialect of the common people in the interior of the Island, and Tamil was the language of the maritime districts and the literary language of the Island.

3. EZ. Vol. IV. p. 229.

In the Tamil classics the Tamil speaking areas are divided into five mandalams as mentioned earlier and of these Ceylon is one. The island must have been called Ilam, because Elu was spoken there; or perhaps the language was called Elu, because it was spoken in Ilam. This name was given to Ceylon by the Tamils, her neighbours. Another meaning of Ilam in Tamil is gold. In the Tamil anthologies of the Sangam period appear the names of Ceylon poets as authors of several poems. Ilaththu Poothan Devanar was the author of several poems. Mudinagarayar, Ila Nagar, Musiri Asiriyar Neelakandanar are other poets of Ilam who had connections with the Tamil Sangam.”⁴

Then with the advent of Buddhism and Mahayanism, Pali and Sanskrit were introduced into the Island. Vijaya and his small band of followers could not have introduced into the island a new language and imposed it on the people. As a result a new language came into existence with a ground work of Elu and Tamil, and a superstructure of Pali and Sanskrit. With the process of the forming of the Sinhalese nation by the mixture of the races Nagas, Yakkas, Kalingas, Magadhas and Tamils the Sinhalese language was also growing. It took about a thousand years to develop itself into a literary language. The lithic records from the third century B. C. to the ninth and the tenth centuries reveal this growth.

On the other hand in the North and the East of the Island the Nagas were absorbed by the Tamils, but traces of their language continued to remain in the place-names of these areas, this is not the case in the Mannar District there the place-names are purely Tamil. Thus it will be seen that the Sinhalese were not the

4- TA. Vol. II. No I p. 93.

early settlers of the Jaffna Peninsula, but traces of the indigenous language Elu one of the chief components of the Sinhalese language remained in the place-names of the North and East of the Island. Those Tamils in the maritime districts of the South and West of the Island were absorbed by the Sinhalese and traces of the Tamil language continued to remain in the place-names of those districts.

With regard to the colonization of North Ceylon we shall see what a great historian of Ceylon has to say on the matter. "It will be seen," says Dr. Paul E. Pieris, "that the village of Kanterodai has no reason to be ashamed of its contribution towards the increase of our knowledge regarding the ancient history of our Island. It stands to reason that a country which is only thirty miles from India and which would have been seen by the Indian fishermen every morning as they sailed out to catch their fish would have been occupied as soon as the continent was peopled by men who understood how to sail. I suggest that the North of Ceylon was a flourishing settlement centuries before Vijaya was born. I consider it proved that at any rate such was its condition before the commencement of the Christian era." ⁵

W. A. S. Boake an eminent civil servant of the last century writing about the antiquity of Tirukketiswaram says: "Of the great antiquity of this abode of wisdom and beauty there can be no doubt. From its close proximity to the continent and the facility of communication by water in both monsoons with Rameswaram, which at that time was part of the continent of India the colonization of this part of Ceylon must have taken place at a very early date. The Sinhalese refer

5. JCBRAS. Vol. XXVIII No. 72. p. 65.

to it at a very early date as Mahatittha. Tirukketiswaram was. I think, its most ancient name, for it can scarcely be doubted but that Ceylon was first colonized from Southern India and there was built the great temple dedicated to Siva, as the name implies."⁶

In 1892, advocate Louis Nell writing about the "Ethnology of Ceylon" says: "The north of the Island appears to have been colonized by Tamils from an early period and we cannot look elsewhere than to the adjoining Tamil coast for the origin of the northern population. The Tamil settlements were probably Orientally civilized communities, and, like Vijaya and his followers, far removed above the Yakkas, who peopled the lower parts of the Island."⁷

The urn-burials that were unearthed at the 21st mile post on the Puttalam - Marichchukaddi road in 1955 is similar to the urn-burials that were discovered at Adichanallur on the banks of the Tambraparni in the years 1926-1930. They were supposed to be of the twelfth century B. C. These urn-burials are supported by the poems of "Purananuru" of the Sangam period. The discovery of such urn-burials in Ceylon speaks of Tamil settlements and Tamil culture before the coming of Vijaya.

The Konesar Kalvettu gives the antiquity of the Konesar temple. It gives the particulars of the lands belonging to the shrine. The temple is associated with Ravana, Gaja Bahu I and Kulakodan. Because there were early Hindu settlements, a temple was built at Trincomalee.

6. JCBRAS. Vol. X No. 35 p. 108.

7. JCBRAS. Vol. XII No. 43 p. 245.

Similarly the Nayanmars St. Sambandhar and St. Sundarar have sung the praises of Tirukketiswaram in the seventh and eighth centuries. It indicates that there were Hindu Tamil settlements in Mannar in the seventh century.

The Mahavamsa has stated that a kingdom existed in Nagadipa in the sixth century B. C.⁸ Dipa in ancient times meant a country. Nagadipa was a separate geographical division from the remotest period. In the second century A. C. Ptolemy compiled a map of Ceylon and his Nagadiboi is identical with Nagadipa of the Mahavamsa. His Nagadiboi is also identical with the Nagadipa marked by Geiger in his map of Ceylon.

From the death of Devanampiya Tissa 207 B. C. to the beginning of the reign of Vasabha A. C. 127, no mention is made of Nagadipa by the unfriendly author of the Mahavamsa. This reticence might have been due to the independent position enjoyed by the northern kingdom. An extract taken from one of the writings of Simon Casie Chetty seems to give us the clue: "In a Sinhalese tract, which treats of the transportation of the Bo-branch to Ceylon, it is stated that the king Devanampiya Tissa bestowed Trincomalee and Jaffna on Prince Rama one of the ambassadors who escorted the Bo-branch from the continent but no allusion is made to it in the Mahavamsa."⁹ There seems to be some truth in the above statement. The Vaiya Padal states that the Jaffna dynasty was founded in 101 B. C.¹⁰ It is interesting to note that this same year was the recapture of Anuradhapura by the Sinha-

8. MV. Chap. I vv. 46, 47.

9. JCBRAS. Vol. I. No. 3. p. 70.

10. VP—Stanza 14.

lese from Elala. Probably the Tamils, who had fought so valiantly against Dutugemunu under Elala and Bhalluka might have retreated to the peninsula, and with the native population established a principality. The Manimekalai about the second century A. C. has referred to a king of Nagadipa as, "He who rules over the Naga country without fear."

Bertolacci in his "Account of Ceylon" speaking of the ancient town of Mantota says: "It was the capital of a kingdom founded by the Brahmans who had possession of almost all the northern parts of Ceylon including Jaffnapatam."¹¹

In the fourth century Mahasena who destroyed Hindu temples in the eastern coasts did not attempt to destroy those in the North and North-west of the Island as Naguleswaram and Tirukketiswaram probably he had no jurisdiction over them. The fact that there were Hindu temples in the eastern coasts even in Eravur (Erakavilla) at that early period only shows that there were Tamil settlements in those districts.

The fact that there was a kingdom in North Ceylon is attested by a western traveller like Cosmos in the sixth century. "It is", Cosmos says, "a great island of the ocean lying in the Indian Sea called Sielendib by the Indians, but Taprobane by the Greeks. The stone, the hyacinth is found in it; it lies beyond the pepper country. Around it there are a multitude of exceedingly small islets, all containing fresh water and coconut palms; these (islands) lie as close as possible together. The great island itself according to the accounts of its inhabitants is 300 gaudia or 900 miles long and as many as in breadth. There are two kings ruling at opposite ends of the Island one of whom

11. AC. p. 12.

possesses the hyacinth and the other the district in which are the port and emporium for the emporium in that place is the greatest in those parts..... The natives and their kings are of different races. The temples are numerous and in one in particular, situated on an eminence is the great hyacinth as large as a pine-cone, the colour of fire, and flashing from a distance especially when catching the beams of the sun a matchless sight." ¹² From the statement of Cosmos we have to conclude that the two kings mentioned were those of Anuradhapura and the Northern kingdom of the Tamils.

Sir Emerson Tennent after examining many Chinese documents about Ceylon records: "The Chinese were aware of two separate races one occupying the northern and the other the southern extremity of the Island and were struck with the resemblance of the Tamils to the Hoo, a people of Central Asia and the Sinhalese to the Leaou, a mountain tribe of western China. The latter they describe as having "large ears, long eyes, purple faces, black bodies, moist and strong hands and feet and living to one hundred years and upwards. Their hair was worn long and flowing."¹³ These records refer to the seventh century and earlier.

12. Vide "Ceylon" by Emerson Tennent, Part V. Chap. I p. 542, 544. He says that some translators try to translate the Greek original, "As the country producing the hyacinth". He emphatically states that it is against Greek idiom. It refers to one jewel. Cosmos refers to a hyacinth on a temple in the next sentence. Hiuen Tsang, the Chinese traveller, says that in the seventh century a ruby was elevated on a spire surmounting a temple at Anuradhapura. Therefore, the country of the hyacinth was the kingdom of Anuradhapura. The emporium was in the other kingdom of the North. The port mentioned was Matota. The author of the article "The Arya Kingdom in North Ceylon" JCBRAS 1961, p. 184 accepts something that is against Greek idiom.

13. C. Part V Chap. III p. 587.

In the latter part of the eighth century relating to events in Uttaradesa (the Northern Province) the Mahavamsa says: "Then in Uttaradesa the chiefs of the districts together with the dwellers in the province seized the land by force and refused tribute to the king."¹⁴ On hearing this Mahinda advanced and crushed the rebellion, and again the chiefs occupied Anuradhapura and again the northern people were driven out. This rebellion is stated in the Vaipava Malai as follows: "In 795 A. C. Ugra Singan, a prince of the dynasty founded by king Vijaya's brother, made a descent upon Lanka with a numerous force from Vadathasam (India) and after a severe struggle possessed himself of one half of Lanka which had been lost to his dynasty for a long time."¹⁵ Thus a record in the Mahavamsa of a revolt has been corroborated by the Vaipava Malai. Ugra Singan reigned at Kadiramalai (Kanterodai). From these references we learn that from the earliest period there were two races of people in the Island one in the north and the other in the south.

Puhalendi a famous Tamil poet and a contemporary of Ottakuttan lived in the time of Kulottunga II (1133—1150). He came to Ceylon on a pilgrimage to Kataragama. When he had an audience with the king of Jaffna he received him kindly and gave him a bounteous purse. The poet uttered the following verse when the Pandyan king offered a price for the elephant. "He who made crowned heads to attend at the door of the poet, and to beg for his elephant was Singai Arya Sekaran who inscribes (his emblem) "the Bull" on the

14. Cv. Chap. 48. VV. 83—85.

15. YVM. p. 13.

nine continents, on the broad shoulders of his enemies, and on the golden Meru.”¹⁶

Again when the great poet heard of the death of his gracious patron, he uttered the following verse, “Oh is it fate? Curse the day in which the great Arya king was carried away by the messengers of Death! Will fire burn his sacred eyes which were beaming with grace, and were even cooler than the eyes of the young fruit of the palmyra?”¹⁷

These verses testify that Jaffna had its own kings early in the twelfth century.

In the reign of Vikrama Bahu (1116—1137) “A warrior lord of the Arya country, Viradeva by name sole sovereign of Palandipa landed at Matota with a mighty force.”¹⁸ The “Arya” country means the territories of the Arya kings of Jaffna. In the neighbourhood of our Island there was no country or a royal dynasty by the name “Arya,” except for Jaffna and its kings. Palandipa (bridge country) means here Sethu. The kings of Jaffna were also kings of Rameswaram. Hence the statement “Arya” country. This is another evidence to show that Jaffna was ruled by her own kings in the twelfth century.

16. “பாவலன் வாசலில் வந்திபம் வாங்கப் படிபுரக்குங்
காவலர் நிற்கும்படி வைத்த வாகண்டி யொன்பதிலும்
மேவலர் மார்பினுந் திண்டோளினுஞ் செம்பொன் மேருவினுஞ்
சேவெழுதும் பெருமான் சிங்கை யாரிய சேகரனே.”

17. “அஆ விதியோ வடலா ரியர்கோமான்
எஏ வலராலிறந்த நான் — ஒஹ
தருக்கண் ணினுங் குளிர்த தண்ணளிதந் தாண்ட
திருக் கண்ணினுஞ் சுடுமோ தி.”

—Tamil Navalar Saridai.

18. CV. Chap. 61 VV. 36, 37.

The existence of the northern kingdom is further attested by travellers like Marco Polo and Ibn Batuta. Marco Polo, the great Venetian traveller, touched Ceylon about 1293 on his return from China to Europe. Ships in those days used to sail through the Palk Strait to avoid the rough seas of the Indian Ocean. He appears to have come to a port in North Ceylon for he says: "But the north wind there blows with such strength that it has caused the sea to submerge a large part of the Island..... . For you must know that on the side the North wind strikes the Island is very low and flat..... . They have a king there whom they call Sandamain and is tributary to nobody. The people are idolators and go quite naked except that they cover the middle. They have no wheat, but have rice and sesamum of which they make their oil. They live on flesh and milk and have tree-wine such as I have told you of and they have Brazil-wood much the best in the world."¹⁹ The description of the northern coasts are of special interest. He refers to Brazil-wood (aghlila fragrant wood found in the hot dry forests of Ceylon.) Marco Polo touched Ceylon after the death of Bhuvaneka Bahu I (1284) when there was an interregnum. Hence he says that Sandamain was an independent king without paying tribute to any other king. Sesamum (gingelly) is still an important article of food in Jaffna. Palm-wine is of course palmyra toddy. The kings of Jaffna were also kings of Sethu. This would mean in Tamil Sethumanan and Marco Polo has only written what he heard from the people—Sandamain.

In 1344, Ibn Batuta, a Moor traveller from Tangiers, had on account of the inclemency of the weather to seek a port in the kingdom of Jaffna which he called

19. AJ. p. 206.

Buttala. He called the king of Ceylon Arya Chakravarti and described his city of Buttala as small and surrounded by wooden posts. According to him the king had considerable forces by sea. The sea-shore abounded in cinnamon wood and other articles of merchandise, and from this centre they were distributed to other parts of the world. In one day when he was in the Coromandel coast he had seen a hundred ships both small and great belonging to the king arriving in port with merchandise consigned to the port of Yemen. At the interview Ibn Batuta had with the king, his majesty told him that there was an alliance between himself and the Sultan of the Coromandel coast. The king of Jaffna appears to have had a liberal education and that the king understood the Persian tongue. The king showed him large quantities of pearls and offered him some for his acceptance. Batuta then describes his journey graphically and of the route taken by him to Adam's Peak.²⁰

Buttala mentioned by Ibn Batuta seems to be Puttalam. The king might have had that as his second capital to supervise the pearl fisheries and the cinnamon trade. The Arya Chakravarti was very powerful in the sea. Before the coming of the Portuguese the northern kingdom had a good share of the external trade of the Island.

Now we shall examine what the Sinhalese chronicles say about the Jaffna kingdom. The Mahavamsa has purposely omitted all accounts about the kings of Jaffna. On the other hand the Rajavaliya speaking of events in the latter part of the fourteenth century records: "Arya Chakravarti, whose army and wealth

20. JCBRAS. Vol. XXVIII. No. 74 p. 100.

were superior to those of other kings, caused tribute to be brought to him from the hill and low districts and from the nine ports. While matters stood thus Alakeswara, one day viewed his army, and thinking, "It is not fitting to pay tribute to any one while there is an army as large as this," built the fortress of Jayawardana Kotte; constructed dams and moats for the storage of water, collected salt, coconut and paddy sufficient to serve for several years; and hanged the tax-collectors of the said Arya Chakravarti who were stationed in different places. On hearing of this, Arya Chakravarti, kindled with rage like unto a cobra which strikes terror by its poison brought thousands of Tamils from the country of Soli, and sent them forth with instructions to attack Gampola and Jayawardana Kotte on one and the same day." ²¹ No better description can be given of the Jaffna kings in the fourteenth century than this.

In the latter part of the sixteenth century the kings of Jaffna fought ceaselessly against the Portuguese. In 1547 Sangily king of Jaffna sent help to Mayadunne and he himself led the army in the battlefield.^{22a} In 1560 the Portuguese had to retreat from Jaffna with great loss of life. In 1563 when Mayadunne asked for assistance Sangily sent reinforcements.^{22b}

Referring to the Jaffna kingdom, Queyroz the greatest historian of the Portuguese period says: "This modest kingdom is not confined to the little district of Jafanapatao, because to it are also added the neighbouring lands, and those of the Vani which is said to be

21. RV. p. 57.

22. (a) de Queyroz Book II pp. 265, 267 & 268

(b) de Queyroz Book III p. 418.

the name of the Lordship which they held before we obtained possession of them, separated from the preceding by a salty river, and connected only in the extremity or isthmus of Pachalapali within which were the lands of Baligamo, Temerache, Bedamarache and Pachalapali forming that Peninsula and outside it there stretch the lands of Vani crosswise, from the side of Manar to that of Triquilemale, being separated also from the country of Mantota in the jurisdiction of the Captain of Mannar by the river Paragali; which (lands) end in the River of the Cross in the midst of the lands of the Vani and of others which stretch as far as Triquilemale which according to the map appears to be a large tract of country.”²³ These were the territories of the Jaffna kingdom when the Portuguese conquered Jaffna. The Tamils who lived in the Northern and Eastern provinces had no language problem because they were ruled by their own kings and princes. And whenever the kings of the Sinhalese assumed the sovereignty of these provinces, there was no imposition of the Sinhalese language on the Tamil-speaking population. The Nainativu inscription of Parakrama Bahu I is a Tamil inscription in a Tamil area.²⁴ It further testifies that Tamils lived in the Jaffna District in the twelfth century.

We shall examine the description of the Tamils and their territories as written by Governor Rjklof Van Goens the elder on vacating the Governorship of Ceylon for presentation to the Governor-General and council at Batavia and dated September 24, 1675. It runs as follows: “And since all the inhabitants of Batticaloa (both in customs, religion, origin and other

23. de Queyroz Book I p. 51.

24. AJ. p. 208.

characteristics,) together with those of Jaffnapatnam, Cotjaar and on the westward right over to Calpentyn and the northern portion of the Mangul Corle inclusive have been from the remotest times and are still now Malabaars, divided into their tribes, and very unwillingly mix with the Cingaleese, Weddas or others outside their tribes, as also the others are not willing to do with these, they are up till now to be considered no otherwise than that they form with those of Jaffnapatnam, Cotjaar etc a people separate from the Cingaleese, and have up till now remained pretty well in their freedom."²⁵

Cleghorn, who was instrumental in annexing Ceylon to the British Empire in his famous "Cleghorn Minute" records: "Two different nations from a very ancient period, have divided between them the possession of the Island. First the Sinhalese inhabiting the interior of the country in its southern and western parts from the river Wallouve, to that of Chilaw, and secondly the Malabars who possess the northern and eastern districts."²⁶

Sir Robert Brownrigg, Governor of Ceylon, writes on the language question in 1813 thus: "As to the qualification required in the knowledge of the native languages, the Portuguese and Sinhalese only being mentioned excludes one which is fully necessary in the Northern districts as the Sinhalese in the South. I mean the Tamil language, commonly called the Malabar language, which with the mixture of Portuguese in use through all the provinces is the proper native tongue of the inhabitants from Puttalam to Batticaloa northward inclusive of both these districts. Your Lord-

25. JCBRAS. Vol. XXXI. No. 82. p. 368.

26. JCBRAS. (1954) Vol. 3. Part 2. p. 131.

ship will, therefore, I hope have no objection to my putting Tamil on an equal footing of encouragement with the Sinhalese.”²⁷

Sir Emerson Tennent writes: “The peninsula of Jaffna and the extremity of the Island north of Adam’s Bridge owing to its proximity to the Indian coast was at all times the district most infested by the Malabars. The Tamils have a tradition that, prior to the Christian era, Jaffna was colonized by Malabars and that a Cholian prince assumed the Government A. C. 101.—a date which corresponds closely with the second Malabar invasion recorded in the Mahavamsa. Thence they extended their authority over the adjacent country of the Vanni as far south as Mantota and Mannar fortified their fortress and stationed wardens and watchers to protect themselves from invasion those portions of the Island were from a very early period practically abandoned to the Malabars, whose descendants at the present day form the great bulk of its population. The language of the north of the Island from Chilaw on the west coast to Batticaloa on the east, is, chiefly and in the majority of localities exclusively Tamil.”²⁸

All these prove without a shadow of doubt that the present Northern and Eastern provinces and the Puttalam District have in the main continuously been Tamil country for countless generations, and that these were the traditional homelands and have continued to be the native country of the Tamils from time immemorial. The Tamils have also lived in other parts of the Island and have left behind Tamil inscriptions which reveal the language rights they enjoyed under the kings of the Sinhalese.

27. Despatch to the Secretary of State. (Tribune 12th Jan. 1956)

28. C. Vol. I. pp. 413, 415.

Some Tamil inscriptions of the ninth and tenth centuries register donations by the members of the Tamil race to a Buddhist Vihara.²⁹ Besides, there are other Tamil lithic records of this period which have not yet been deciphered.

During the Chola period Tamil was the Court language and as such several Tamil inscriptions were discovered in Matota,³⁰ Polonnaruwa,³¹ Padawiya,³² Periyakulam,³³ Murunkan and Sangili Kandarawa.³⁴ The Chola inscriptions mostly state the donations to Hindu temples and indicate the state of Saivism in Ceylon during their period.

In the reign of Vijaya Bahu I the members of the Tamil Velaikkara army had the civic right to set up a Tamil lithic record by which they agreed to be the custodians of the Tooth-Relic.³⁵

A Tamil inscription of Manabharana, the father of Parakrama Bahu the Great found in the Kurunegala District records the settlement of a dispute between blacksmiths and washermen.³⁶ These peoples seem to be Tamils, if they were so it only indicates the fundamental civic rights enjoyed by a Tamil minority in a Sinhalese area eight hundred years ago.

The Panakadu inscription refers to a register of Tamil clerks.³⁷ This shows that official business was

29. S. I. I. Vol. IV. No. 1405.

30. Vide Supra p. 21.

31. S. I. I. Vol. IV Nos. 1338, 1392.

32. ASCAR 1891. p. 12.

33. ASCAR. (1953) Tamil pp. 7, 22.

34. ASCAR. Oct.—Dec. 1890. p. 7.

35. JCBRAS. Vol. 29. No. 77. pp. 274, 275.

36. EZ. Vol. III. p. 302.

37. EZ. Vol. V. pp. 22, 27.

also conducted in Tamil in the reign of Vijaya Bahu I. His son Vikrama Bahu and his grandson Gaja Bahu II preferred to have Tamil for official business. Most of their public records were in Tamil.

In Siva Devale No. 1 at Polonnaruwa Gaja Bahu II left a lithic record in Grantha Tamil.³⁸

When Gampola was the capital of the Sinhalese kingdom Bhuvaneka Bahu IV caused inscriptions in both Sinhalese and Tamil to be made at Lankatilaka Vihara near Gampola. How statesman-like were the rulers of old!

About 1410 a Chinese mission was sent to Ceylon by His Majesty the Emperor of the great Ming Dynasty. The members of this mission after visiting Adam's Peak and other sacred places left behind a trilingual inscription on a rock in Galle in Chinese, Persian and Tamil recording gifts to deities.³⁹ It should be remembered that the Chinese at that time were trading with Ceylon and that many Tamils resided in Galle for purposes of business. It is interesting to note that even foreigners like the Chinese considered Tamil as an important national language of Ceylon in the early fifteenth century.

H. W. Codrington, an eminent historian says that Tamil was the Court language of the kings of Kotte.⁴⁰

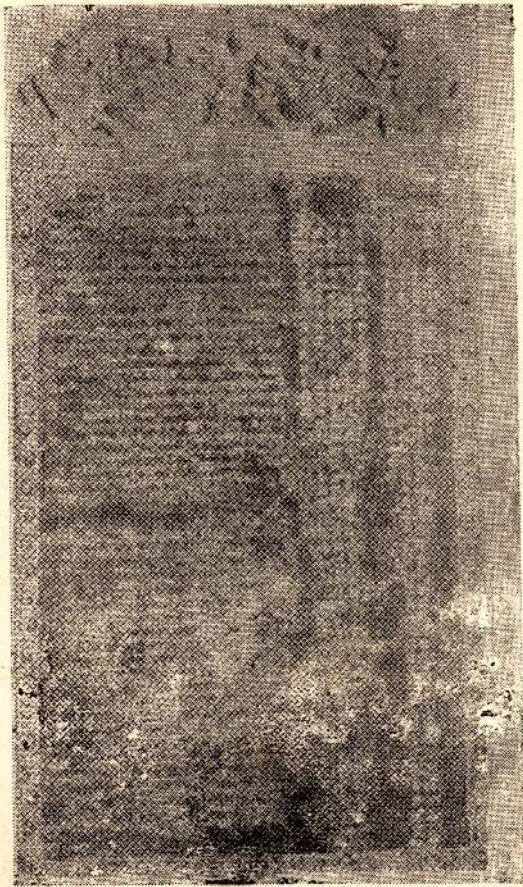
The gifts of lands made to Munneswaram temple at Chilaw by Prakrama Bahu VI (1412—1468) of Kotte were written in Tamil.⁴¹ It should be noted that in

38. JCBRAS. Vol. XXIV. No. 68. p. 191.

39. EZ. Vol. III pp. 331—341.

40. JCBRAS. Vol. XXXI. No. 81. p. 202.

41. JCBRAS. Vol. X No. 35. p. 118.



Galle Tri-lingual inscription
in Chinese, Persian and Tamil.



Tamil Inscription at the entrance
to the Fort at Trincomalee.
The Pandyan emblem the two fishes left by
Vira Pandyan about 1263.

those days Negombo, Chilaw and Puttalam districts were Tamil-speaking areas.⁴²

Bhuvaneka Bahu VII (1521—1550) of Kotte made his attestations in Tamil.⁴³ The Portuguese chronicles call Dharmapala “Periya Pandaram” (Tamil).

Prince Vijayapala wrote letters to his brother Rajasinha II in Tamil.⁴⁴ The Tamil correspondence of the kings of Kandy with foreign governments numbering about sixty six were published in 1937 with English translations as Bulletin No. 3 of the Historical Manuscripts Commission. One of the documents K 64, is a treaty written in Tamil between king Kirti Sri Rajasinha and Louis XVI of France. C. W. Bickmore found the original at Pondicherry. The famous Kandyan Convention of 1815 bears signatures in Tamil and Sinhalese.⁴⁵

Further the Historical Manuscripts Commission Report of 1951 reveals that the Tamils of the Kurunegala District in the 17th and 18th centuries wrote their notarial deeds in Tamil.⁴⁶ It only indicates the rights enjoyed by a minority community under native kings.

The Portuguese in the seventeenth century had a separate administrator known as Captain-Major in Jaffna for the kingdom of Jafnapatam and Vanni. They made all their proclamations in Tamil. The Franciscans and Jesuits managed several Tamil schools in Jaffna.⁴⁷ The Portuguese also founded Tamil schools for the Tamil children in the Western and North-western provinces.⁴⁸ All education was free.

42. de Queyroz Book I. p. 46.

43. Father H. G. Perera, Aloysian. 1940—1941.

44. CPE. II. p. 359.

45. Father H. G. Perera, Aloysian 1940—1941.

46. VV. p. 23.

47. SHC. p. 129.

48. de Queyroz.

During the Dutch period the Dutch too founded Tamil Schools and had a separate board to inspect them. A Jaffna seminary for the training of native ministers was begun and was discontinued after some years.⁴⁹

When printing was first introduced into the Island, the Dutch authorities published Sinhalese and Tamil books for general use. Great Tamil poets and scholars flourished in the Tamil-speaking areas during this period, and contributed much to the growth of Tamil learning and culture.

In 1750 the people of Negombo who were Tamil Roman Catholics presented a mass petition written in Tamil and signed in Tamil to the Dutch Governor protesting against the Dutch educational policy of the government.⁵⁰ Thus it will be seen that even during the period of foreign rule the Tamils enjoyed full language rights.

Besides these, Tamil lithic records of different periods were unearthed in various parts of the Island and some of those places have already been mentioned. The following are those that have not yet been mentioned: Kalutra,⁵¹ Kompanamalai,⁵² Kotagama,⁵³ Mahakanadaravava,⁵⁴ Mangana,⁵⁵ Matale,⁵⁶ Moragahavela,⁵⁷

49. SHC. p. 153.

50. CH. p. 60.

51. CJS. Vol. II. p. 191.

52. JCBRAS. Vol. XIII. No. 45 pp. 172.

53. ARKD. p. 85.

54. ASCAR. (1911—1912) p. 113.

55. ASCAR. (1956) p. 11.

56. CJS. (g) II p. 191.

57. ASCAR. 1891 (Jan.—Mar.) p. 7.

Naimmana,⁵⁸ Panduwas Nuwara,⁵⁹ Parangiyawadia,⁶⁰ Detiyamulla,⁶¹ Etakada,⁶² Sigiriya⁶³ and Vahalakada.⁶⁴

All these facts show that the Tamils were an integral part of the population of the Island from very ancient times and that they were no interlopers. It is also clear that as the northern and eastern parts of the Island were governed by their own kings and princes there was no language problem at that time in those areas. It is also evident that in the Sinhalese provinces there was no imposition of the Sinhalese language on the Tamils who as minorities enjoyed full language rights.

We also learn that in the ancient form of government in Ceylon there was due respect and regard for the human personality. Kings observed the laws of Dharma which is neither individual right nor social duty but a synthesis of both. It is a harmony between the individual self and the social self.

Foreign historians of Ceylon often thought that the acquiescence of the Sinhalese to the rule of the Tamils was due possibly, to the fact that they recognized to some extent the claim of the Tamils, founded as they were on their relationship to the old lawful dynasty that had ruled over the Island.⁶⁵ The people and the government always strove to seek unity not in uniformity, but in harmony.

58. ASCM. Vol. VI pp. 70—74.

59. ASCAR. (1951) p. G. 44.

60. ASCAR. (1911).

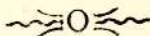
61. ASCAR. (1951) G. 65.

62. ASCAR. 1890 (Oct.—Dec.) p. 7.

63. Sigiriya Graffiti. Vol. I. p. XII.

64. ASCAR. 1891, p. 9.

65. C. Vol. I p. 396.



ERRATA

Page	Line	Error	Correction
1	8	Vaishavism	Vaishnavism
14	11	Mahindra	Mahinda
28	7	Sabragamuwa	Sabaragamuwa
43	4	is	are
44		Footnote read, it worshipped	
47	1	Parararajasekaram V	Pararajasekaram
78	7	of Ganges	of the Ganges
97	26	Perehera	Perahera
117	12	Siddhananta	Siddhanta
119	33	Christinity	Christianity
133	22	ereciton	erection
154	7	monastery	monastery
158	23	moors	Moors
162	5	Myths of Hindus	Myths of the Hindus
188		millenuim	millennium

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P. 66. There is no old "Lingam" at Munneswaram.

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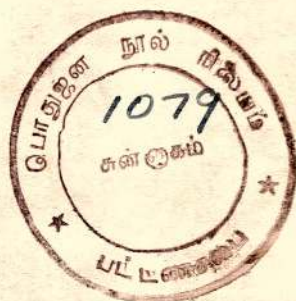
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பொதுசன நூல்நிலையம்

கன்னகம்

இப்புத்தகம், கீழ்க் குறிக்கப்பட்ட
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