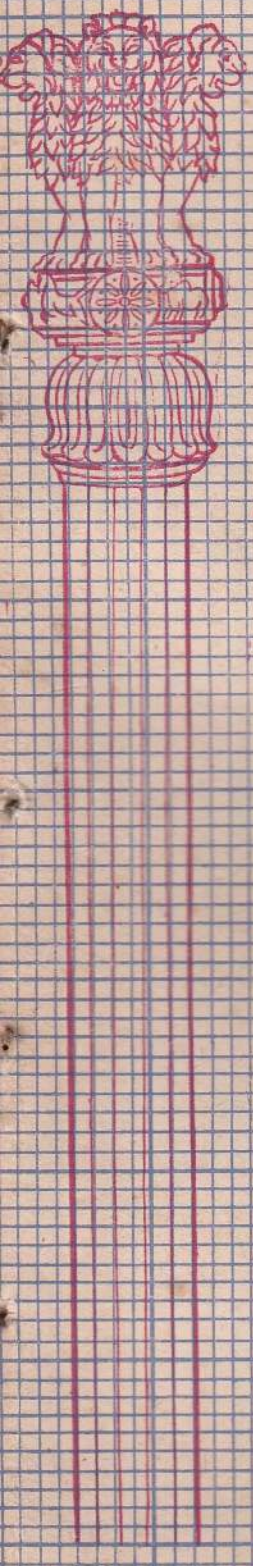
THE SRI LANKA JOURNAL OF SOUTH ASIAN STUDIES



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SOME PORTUGUESE ATTITUDES TO THE TAMILS OF SRI LANKA 1550—1658

C. R. BOXER

While greatly flattered at being asked to contribute an artice to this Volume in honour of my old friend and colleague, Rev. Xavier S. Thani Nayagam, I am also considerably embarrassed, since I know no Tamil and have never been in Tamilnad. My woeful ignorance of Tamil studies has compelled me to chose a theme of only marginal relevance, and one which I cannot develop in any depth owing to lack of time and of several obvious sources, such as Fr. Josef Wicki S. J., **Documenta Indica** (10 vols. Rome, 1948 - in progress), which are not available to me at the time of writing. If the subject is worth pursuing, it would best be developed either by a Tamil scholar who knows Portuguese, or by a Portuguese who knows Tamil. This contribution does not purport to be anything more than a few preliminary soundings and tentative indications. Obviously, any discussion of the Tamils of Sri Lanka cannot be divorced from a consideration of those of Travancore and Madura, but the emphasis here will be on the former.

The differences between Tamils and Sinhalese must have been obvious to those Portuguese who spent any length of time in Sri Lanka; but those without personal knowledge of the island were apt to lump them together under the term **gentio**, "heathen", making no distinction between Buddhists and Hindus. Fernao Lopes de Castanheda (c. 1500-1559), the chronicler who lived for about ten years in India (1528-38), and who may have visited Sri Lanka, still made no clear-cut distinction between them when he published his account of the island in 1551-54.[1] "And all these other cities, save only that of Colombo, are ruled by some lords who call themselves kings: and they maintain a regal estate after their manner. However, they all render vassalage and obedience to the chief king, who is in Colombo, and whom they acknoledge as their lord. And they are all of them heathen (**"E todos sam gentios"**) and so are the inhabitants of the whole island, save only in all the seaports, where there are many Muslim merchants who render obedience to the lords of the soil. The language (s) of the heathen are Canara and Malabar. They are men who are rather unwarlike,[2] because apart from being merchants they are much addicted to good living and are effeminate

They are well formed and almost white, and most of them have big bellies, and they consider a big belly as honourable. They go naked above the waist, and below the waist they wear garments of silk and cotton which they call **patolas.**[3] In their ears they wear very rich earrings of gold, jewelry and coarse mother-of-pearl, so heavy that they stretch the lobes of the ears downwards as far as the chest. The poor people of this island often sell themselves (as slaves), and a man usually fetches some 200 or 300 reis,"

Joao de Barros, whose **Decadas** appeared at about the same time as Castanheda's **Historia**, similarly made no distinction between Tamils and Sinhalese in his classic description of Sri Lanka; although, unlike Castanheda, he does make a specific , if passing, reference to the kingdom of Jaffnapatnam.[4]

"And along the sea-coast of this island are these kingdoms: Batecalou, which is the easternmost in it; and between it and that of Cande (Kandy), which lies to the west thereof, is another called Vilacem (Wellassa). And going along the coast of the island towards the north above Batecalou is the kingdom of Trinquinamale, which by the coast upward comes to adjoin another called Iafnapatam, which is at the point of the island towards the north, the which kingdoms adjoin one another in the interior."

Barros goes on to explain that the extent and boundaries of these kingdoms constantly fluctuated according to the power of their respective rulers and the vicissitudes of the wars in which they were continually engaged. He does not state that Jaffnapatam was a Hindu Tamil kingdom; but, on the contrary, obsessed by his interest in and his admiration for China, he tries to prove that the islanders were partly of Chinese origin. "The Chijs were masters of the Choromandel coast, part of Malabar, and of this island of Ceilam, and of those called Maldiva." Misled by this conviction, Barros fantastically derives Sinhalese (Chingalla) from " Chinese of Galle" (**como se dissessem lingua ou gente do Chijs de Galle**).

Barros, usually so careful and discriminating an ethno-historian, has compounded his confusion between Tamils, Sinhalese and Chinese, in his earlier description of Malabar and its peoples (**Decada** I, Book 9, ch .iii), where he writes:

....."the native heathen (**gentio**) and proper indigenous inhabitants of the country are those people whom we call Malabares. There is another, which came thither from the coast of Choromandel by reason of the trade, whom they call Chingalas, who have their own language, whom our people commonly call Chatijs. These are men who are such born traders and so sharp in their dealings that our people, whenever they want to blame or praise a man for his subtelty and skill in merchandising, they say of him '**he is a Chatim**; and they use the word **chatinar** for ' to trade '. These words are already very common usage among us." As several commentators have pointed out, Barros has evidently confused **Chingala** with **Chelim**, or Kling, and with the Chetti from Coromandel.[5]

Diogo do Couto (c. 1542-1616), the first resident official chronicler of Portuguese India and keeper of the Archives at Goa, who continued the **Decadas** of Joao de Barros, likewise tried his hand at a description of Sri Lanka and its inhabitants (**Decada** V, Livro I, cap, v) Couto claims that he got much of his information on the traditional history of the island from several Christianised Sinhalese princes who were refugees or captives at Goa. He does give a meagre and rather inaccurate summary of the **Rajavaliya;** but from recently published documents it would seem that his principal informant was in reality an Augustinian missionary-friar, Fr. Agostinho de Azevedo, of whom he says nothing.[6] Whatever the explanation for this deliberate omission may be, Couto's account in **Decada** V is still a very interesting, if at times a very confused one.

Like Barros, and presumably following him, Couto (or his Augustinian informant) derived the origin of the Sinhalese from the intermarriage of Chinese sailors, traders and colonisers, with the Aryan and Dravidian inhabitants, whose first ancestors had been banished from Northern India and intermarried with women from Malabar and Coromandel. Unlike Barros, however, Couto (or, rather, his Augustinian informant) disliked the Chinese, whose defects he claimed that the Sinhalese had inherited; "And so, as they proceed from the Chins, who are the falsest heathens of the East, and from the banished men who had been expelled from their own country as wicked and cruel: so all those of this island are the most cowardly, false and deceitful that there are in the whole of India, because never up to this day has there been found in a Chingalla faith or truth."

Whether Couto included the Tamils of Jaffna in this sweeping and palpably unfair assertion is not apparent, but elsewhere in this same chapter of Decada V, he makes two statements, which can be taken as including both Sinhalese and Tamils, or as he calls the latter "Malavares". After recounting that when the Portuguese first reached the island, their artillery and firearms greatly astonished and impressed the inhabitants, since they had never seen them before,[7] he proceeds: "after we had entered it, with the continual use of the war that we made on them, they became as dexterous as they are today, being able to cast the best and handsomest artillery in the world, and to make the finest firelocks, and better than ours, of which there are in the island today more than twenty thousand. This was the reason why Scipio was of opinion that one should never make war continuously on one same nation, lest they should become dexterous, as we have done to the Chingalas and Malavares, who by continual use are today more skilful than all the nations of the East, and so have given us more trouble to the State (of India) than all the others."[8]

I may add here that among the presents sent by King Philip III of Spain (II of Portugal) to Shah Abbas the Great of Persia, by his ambassador Don Garcia de Silva y Figueroa in 1617, were several pikes and firearms made in Ceylon which were very richly inlaid and decorated. These were of Sinhalese manufacture; but the Tamils may have been equally expert, for all I know (**Commentarios de Don Garcia de Silva y Figueroa,** 2 vols., Madrid 1905, Vol. II, p. 83).

Couto's immediate successors have left nothing in writing on Sri Lanka that has come down to us; but Antonio Bocarro, who was the official chronicler and keeper of the archives at Goa from 1631 to 1643, has a valuable account of the island and its inhabitants in the famous **Livro do Estado da India Oriental,** which he compiled together with his colleague, the viceregal secretary, Pedro Barreto de Rezende.[9] Writing of the island of Mannar and its inhabitants, he observes: "All the people of the island, who are of the so-called Careas and Balas castes[10] are Christians and they are ,very good men-at-arms. Some of them have firelocks and others have bows and arrows; and armed with these, they assemble under their own captains whenever they are called up for service. They are always obedient, and they muster between 2,000 and 2,200 armed men altogether.....On the land (opposite Mannar) which is called Mantota, there are some ten leagues of land on the island of Ceilao, containing villages which have been granted to the Portuguese inhabitants of Mannar, but remaining largely depopulated. The remaining inhabitants are all Christians, very good men-at-arms, amounting to about one thousand. Most of them are armed chiefly with firelocks, in the use of which they are very skilful, and they all obey the summons of the captain of Mannar. The reason why there are so few of them in such a large extent of land, is partly because of the continual wars which have diminished their number, but not least because of the tyrannies of the captains of Mannar, who oppress them so much that they oblige them to leave their lands, and hence a great part thereof is depopulated. Yet these people are better Christians and more obedient than the Chingalas on the other side, for they rarely join with the king (of Kandy) who is always trying to stir up everyone against the Portuguese.[11]" Bocarro also noted that most of the "Balalas, Carias, Chandos" in the kingdom of Jaffnapatnam had by now been converted to Christianity; but he adds that the Portuguese had disarmed them (....."os mais sao gente de armas mas nos Ihas tiramos nao consentindo que as tenhao"). And thus there are in the whole of this kingdom forty-two churches, of which the Franciscan friars administer twenty-five, and the Paulistas[12] fifteen. These are all parish churches with a large number of Christians, although they are not such perfect Christians as there are in many parts of Europe. Yet withal, since we can here use the secular arm to enforce compliance, they are very respectful to the Fathers; and they serve and obey them so well, that some of the lay Portuguese who have been granted villages in fief by the Crown complain that the said Fathers usurp all the jurisdiction and control from them.")[13]

It is interesting to contrast Antonio Bocarro's praise of the martial qualities of the **Balalas** and **Carias** of Mannar and Jaffnapatnam with the scornful dismissal of them by Padre Fernao de Queiroz S. J., writing in 1687. Neither Queiroz nor (in all likelihood) Bocarro, had ever been in Sri Lanka; but they were both relying on the reports and writings of people who had, so the discrepancy is rather curious. In the course of his lengthy description of the kingdom of Jaffnapatnam, one of the fullest and best which we have from a Portuguese source, father Queiroz affirms [14] "It was well peopled in the time of the native kings; in that of the Portuguese, leaving out women and children, there would be about 20,000men. They are very poor people and extremely weak, because they are Balalas, a race (casta)

different from that of the Chingalas, and they are said to originate from Bramanes (Brahmans) of the continent, a people who never fared well at arms, because they never professed them; and the kings were obliged to keep a garison and a guard of Badagas from the opposite coast. And they are commonly held to be Malavares, not of the Muslim pirates who settled on this coast, but of the heathen inhabitants of the land, and neither in language nor in religion are they at all like the Chingalas, though they are equally superstitious, and they hold tenets so extremely bestial that only men who deliberately wish or err can accept the nonsense they practice."

The conversion of the kingdom of Jaffnapatnam to Christianity is recounted in detail by the Franciscan chronicler, Fr. Paulo da Trindade, in his **Spiritual Conquest of the East,** compiled at Goa in 1630-36[15] After listing the disribution of the parish churches and their communicants, he proceeds: "And according to this account, the Christians which we have in the kingdom of Jaffnapatao and its neighbouring islands amount to 71,438, all, or nearly all, of whom were converted to the faith and baptized by our Religious during the last ten years, excluding 400 who were baptized in the month of August of the year 1634, which is when we are writing this chapter, and as many more who are ready to be baptized soon, according to what the Commissary of that kingdom writes, to whom I assigned, by reason of my charge of Commissary-General in these regions, the task of computing this number with great accuracy and diligence. This total does not include the Christians which we have in the churches of Mantota, whom we will deal with later, who also belong to the district of this kingdom, nor those who have died during the past ten years, who amount to a great number."[16]

From the two aptly-named **Conquistas** of Fr. Paulo da Trindade O.F.M., and Fr. Fernao de Queiroz S. J., as well as from Bocarro's **Livro do Estado da India Oriental** and from all other Portuguese sources, it is perfectly clear that the great bulk of these mass-conversions were made by a mixture of carrot-and-stick methods during the years when the famous (or infamous, according to taste) Felipe de Oliveira was the **conquistador**, governor and captain-general of the kingdom of Jaffnapatnam, 1619-27. As Fr. Paulo himself noted at the end of his chapter 51: "I conclude this chapter by stating that if there had been a viceroy, who, as regards the conversion of the unbelievers, had had the zeal which Felipe de Oliveira showed when governing the kingdom of Jaffnapatao, there would now be very few heathen in Goa, Salsete, Bardes and in the other regions of this State."[17] Temple-bashing was one of his favourite occupations, and he boasted that he had destroyed some 500 Hindu temples by the end of his life.

Fr. Paulo da Trindade, O.F.M., assures us that the Franciscan friars in Sri Lanka were very diligent in learning the language spoken by their converts and parishoners, whether Sinhalese or Tamil. He makes particular mention of a Fr. Mateus de Cristo in Jaffnapatnam, whose Tamil was so excellent that "if they heard him speak and did not see his face, he would have been taken for a native." Another friar, Francisco de Santo Antonio had translated into Tamil the **Symbol of the Faith** by Cardinal Robert

Bellarmine, and was then (in 1634) engaged on translating the Franciscan chronicles into that language. The Jesuit[18] missionaries also included a number of men who made a diligent study of Tamil, both on the Malabar coast and in Sri Lanka, beginning with the **Doctrina Christam en Lingua Malavar Tamul** of Henrique Henriques S. J. (1520—1600) in 1578, and including the posthumously published **Vocabulario Tamulico com a significacam portugueza** (1679) of Antao Proenca (1625-1666). These works are well-known and have been intensively studied. [19] Naturally enough, they did not reflect an interest in Tamil culture for its own sake, but rather the need to use the language for Christian propaganda. As Donald Lach has observed: the missionaries working in Tamilnad showed almost no understanding of Hinduism and remained completely untouched by the higher elements of Hindu thought, with the exception of Roberto de Nobili (1577-1656)[20]. They never bothered to acquire and translate Tamil writings into European languages for the information and benefit of the Western World; unlike their colleagues of the China mission, who often had such an appreciation of some aspects of Chinese culture that they became enthusiastic propagandists thereof. The missionaries also varied, naturally enough perhaps, in their evaluation of Tamil as a language. Those, like Henrique Henriques and Proenca, who made a thorough study of either Tamil or of Malayalam, or of both, were rightly appreciative of their respective qualities. The same can be said of Diogo Goncalves S. J. (1561—1640), who wrote in his **Historia do Malavar**, (c. 1615):[21] "There is a language current throughout the whole of Malavar which they call **maleame,** because of the **Malavares** who speak it. It is different from the other Indian languages, although it has much in common with the **Tamul** language, rather like the connection between portuguese and spanish; so that whoever knows one language well can more or less understand the other. They are methodical languages and extremely copious in their vocabularies; the nouns with every variety of cases, and the verbs with every variety of tenses, conjugations and different persons. In short, they express themselves very elegantly, using some expressions when talking with the common people, others with the upper classes, and others for kings and princes. They are so respectful when speaking of these last, that they even call them by no lesser name than that of God." Padre Goncalves was also very complimentary about the Tamil alphabet and writing; although he noted that it was necessary to speak it well, as a reading knowledge would often not enable the reader to distinguish between consonants and vowels.

Others were not so complimentary. The remarkably industrious but rather narrow-minded Fernao de Quiroz S. J. (1617—1688), wrote in his previously quoted **Temporal and Spiritual Conquest of Ceylon:** [22]

"Among them are the teachers of reading and writing, and they teach the Malavar language, which they call Tamul, esteemed by the nations who sail to the Cape of Comory (Comorim) and the coast of Choromandel, just as here in Hindustan (the language) which they call Marasetta (Marathi), although it is barbarous not only in comparison with Greek and Latin, but even with the other languages of Europe. A general defect of these languages is that, although they abound in nouns, they are very poor in verbs. They are still more barbarous in orthography and in pronounciation, because

they neither separate the words nor the periods by fullstops and commas, and only in the beginning of their words do they use a vowel, for in the middle of the words they supply it by different characters which the Chingalas call **combas, espilas, alapilas, papilas,** [23] and they use only eleven characters, though they are more beautiful than those of other Asian nations, whose languages generally are very difficult to pronounce..... Wherefore the best way is to learn first their letters and their pronounciation, for he who speaks them properly will also be able to pronounce the languages. And this is one of the difficulties in refuting their errors, and in composing books for that purpose, because the European printed works are not understood by them by reason of the different characters; and we do not understand their languages without making a special study of them. And although in our other Provinces such as in that of Malavar, or of China, it is enough to learn the Tamul or the Chinese language, in that of Japan, which includes many kingdoms and in this of Goa, which extends over much of Asia and Africa, it is necessary to learn many languages;[24] or else the Superiors must make up their minds not to transfer personnel, and the subordinates must be prepared to spend their lives in the same missions. For a grown man cannot alwayss behave like a little child and be learning barbarous languages."

Queiroz goes on to exemplify his argument by listing the languages which were most commonly spoken in the far-flung Jesuit Province of Goa. He also emphasized the importance of distinguishing between Hinduism and Buddhism, which many missionaries of his own day and generation were still failing to do. Despite his sweeping denunciation of all Oriental languages as "barbarous", he did go on to admit that some of their poetry sounded well enough; although he hastened to add that the contents of Asian prose and verse could not measure up to those of Europe, with the partial exception of China. "But incredible is the energy which the Asians display in their verses, in which they repeat their Veddos (Vedas), their Puranas, which means their Scriptures and the Doctrines of their Sciencies, such as they are; but as they have achieved perfection in no faculty outside China, neither their prose nor their verse can be compared with the Greek and Latin works or with modern European ones.[25]"

This Eurocentric approach was regrettable but not in the least surprising, considering the Counter-Reformation educational background of the missionaries, and the fact that their conviction of the superiority of the superiority of European civilization and the Christian religion was, after all, the main, if not the sole reason for their chosen vocation. "Blind heathen" were "blind heathen", and only a few very exceptional missionaries, such as Ricci in China, Nobili in Madura and Joao Rodrigues Tcuzzu in Japan, were able to form a deep understanding and appreciation of the indigenous cultures to which they were exposed.[26] Many of the missionaries displayed no interest whatever in the religion, literature and historical traditions of those people they were trying to convert, limiting themselves to acquiring a knowledge of the requisite vernacular. Others, as we have seen, were more intelligent, even if they would not, or could not, penetrate very far below the surface. Among these latter we may cite the Augustinian informant of Diogo do Couto, and an anonymous friar who told the Inquisitors at Goa in 1620:

"That in all the regions where he had been, he tried to obtain information about all heathen practices, both because this was his duty on account of the indigenous christian communities, as because he himself had an inquiring mind and was always wont to study things pertaining to the said heathendom."[27]

If only there had been more like him in Sri Lanka, we might well have more satisfactory accounts of Tamil culture and civilization in the kingdom of Jaffnapatnam than we actually possess. But in a day of small mercies the heart is thankful for scraps; and long-term research in the Portuguese archives may well disclose other and fuller accounts than those which are now available in print.

NOTES

1. *Historia do descobrimento & conquista da India pelos Portugueses*, first published in 8 volumes at Coimbra in 1551—1561. The reference here is to Vol. I of the third edition by Pedro de Azevedo (4 vols., Coimbra, 1924—33), Livro II, cap. 22, p. 261.

2. That is, Konkani (*Canara*), and Tamil, and/or Malayalam. Castanheda has confused *Canara* with *Ching la* (Sinhalese). For the etymology of of *C nara* and *Malabar* see H. Yule and A. C. Burnell, *Hobson-Jobson* (ed. Wm. Crooke, London, 1903), and S. R. Dalgado, *Glossario Luso-Asiatico* (2 vols. Coimbra, 1919—21) , *in voce.*

3. *Pattuda*, "a silk cloth" See *Hobson-Jobson* and *Glossario Luso-Asiatico*, *in voce.*

4. *Apud* Donald Ferguson (trans. and ed.), *The History of Ceylon from the earliest times to* 1600 *A.D., as related by Joao de Barros and Diogo do Couto* (forming Vol..... XX, No. 60 of the *Journal of the Ceylon Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 1908 (Colombo, 1909), p. 37. Barros' description of the island of *Ceilam* and its identification with the classical Graeco-Roman Taprobana is in *Decade* III. BK. 2, ch. i. Here as elsewhere, I have checked Ferguson's translation with the Portuguese-originals, and my versions occasionally differ very slightly in the wording.

5. Cf. D. Ferguson in *JCBRAS*, XX (1908—09, p. 34 note (I).

6. For Couto's apparently inexplicable plagiarism of Fr. Agostinho de Azevedo, O.E.S.A., see the documented expose by Georg Schurhammer S. J. , *Franz Xaver, Sein Leben und seine Zeit*, II, *Asien*, 1541—1549, (2), *Indien und Indonesien* **1547—1549** (Freiburg, 1971) pp. 448—453. All the citations from Couto's *Decade* V which are given here are like wise to be found in the earlier text of Fr.Agostinho de Axevedo O.E.S.A.

7. For the first contacts between Portuguese and Sinhalese and the impression made by European firearms, see Donald Ferguson "Discovery of

Ceylon by the Portuguese in 1506", in *JCBRASI*, Vol. XIX, No. 59 (Colombo 1907) and Genevieve Bouchon, "Les Rois de gotte au debut du XVI siecle," in J. Aubin (ed.), *Mare Luso-Indicum*, Vol. I, pp. 65-96 (Paris, 1971).

8. Cf. D. Ferguson in *JCBRAS*, XX (1908—09), pp. 62—73, especially p. 72. At the beginning of this chapter, Couto states:".....that island has always been to the State of India as Carthage was to Rome; because, little by little, it has gone on consuming in expenses, men and artillery, so much, that it alone has swallowed up with its wars more than all the other conquests sf this East."

9. Cf. C. R. Boxer, "Antonio Bocarro and the Libro do Estado da India Oriental", in *Garcia de Orta, Revista da Junta das Missoes Geograficas e de Investigacoes do Ultramar, Numero Especial* (Lisboa,1956)pp.203-219

10. For *Balalas*, or *Belalas*, *Vellales*, etc., deriving from the Tamil *velalar*, agricultural caste sf Southern India, see S. R. Dalgado, *Glossario Luso-Asiatico*, Vol. I, p. 84; and for *Carea*, *Caria*, etc., Ibidem, *op.cit.*, p. 216, deriving from the sub-caste of fishermen and divers (*kareiyan* in Tamil, *karava* in Sinhalese).

11. Unfortunately, the only text available to me at the time of writing is the very defective one (taken in the first place from an unreliable copy) published in the *Arquivo Portugues Oriental* (Nova Edicao) Tomo IV, Vol. II, Parte I, (Bastora, 1937—38), pp. 366—68, for the shortcomings of which see my article quoted in note (9) above, p. 210.

12. By "Paulistas" Bocarro means the Jesuits, whom he clearly did not like and whom he ventured to criticize in his *Livro do Estado da India Oriental* and in his *Decada* XIII (first published in 1876) whenever he could. By "Chandos", Bocarro may mean either *chardo* (*charodo*, etc.) (*Glossario Luso-Asiatico*, I, 263-64), or else *chaudarim* (*Glossario Luso Asiatico*, I, 268), although these are agricultural sub-castes in Goa. For Bocarro's description of Jaffnapatnam, see *APO* (2a serie), *op. cit.*, pp. 416—21. Bocarro more than once severely criticized the tyranny and misbehavior of the Portuguese captains and governors of Jaffna as well as those of Sri Lanka.

13. This was a perennial source of complaint, with both laymen and clergy accusing each other of oppressing the villagers, while themselves claiming to be model or paternal landlords. Cf. T. Abeyasinghe, *Portuguese Rule in Ceylon*, **1594—1612** (Colombo, 1966), pp. 100—34, for the distribution of land in Ceylon to lay Portuguese and the Religious Orders. There is in the British Museum Library a curious MS dossier (to which I have unfortunately mislaid the reference) concerning the dispute between laymen and Religious over some villages in Jaffna, dating from 1645, with supporting documents.

14. *The Conquista Temporal e Spiritual de Ceilao*, which was ready for the press at Goa in 1687, was first published integrally at Colombo in 1916.

With all its faults, it remains an indispensable source for the history of 17th century Sri Lanka, and it is most conveniently consulted in the reliable and painstaking translation made by S. G. Perera S. J., *The Temporal and Spiritual Conquest of Ceylon* (3 vols., Colombo, 1930). I have made occasional and insignificant changes in the wording.

15. Paulo da Trindade, O.F.M., *Conquista Espiritual do Oriente* (ed. Fr. Felix Lopes, O.F.M., 3 vols, Lisboa, 1962—67). The author was born at Macao c. 1570, and died at Goa, 25 Jan. 1651. He has a great deal to say about the Franciscan missions in Sri Lanka, and he devotes much space to the Tamil kingdom of Jaffna. See especially Vol. I, pp. 333—359, and Vol. III, pp. 198—269.

16. Paulo da Traindade, O.F.M. *Conquista Espiritual do Oriente*, III, 243-48.

17. Paulo da Traindade, O.F.M. *Conquista Espiritual do Oriente*, III, 242.

18. Paulo da Trindade, O.F.M., *Conquista Espiritual do Oriente*, III, 247-48.

19. G. Schurhammer, S. J. "The first printing in Indic characters", in his *Gesammelte Studien*, II, *Orientalia* (Rome, 1963), pp. 317—331; Xavier S. Thani Nayagam, *Antao de Proenca's Tamil-Portuguese Dictionary A.D.* **1679** (Kuala Lumpur and Leiden, 1966).

20. Donald F. Lach, *Asia in the making of Europe*, I, *The Century of Discovery* (University of Chicago Press, 1965), pp. 436—440.

21. Diogo Goncalves S. J. *Historia do Malavar* (ed. Josef Wicki, S. J., Meunster in Westfalen, 1955), pp. 29—30.

22. *Temporal and Spiritual Conquest of Ceylon* (ed. S. G. Perera S. J., 1930), Vol. I, pp. 116—117.

23. For the identification of these Tamil and Sinhalese terms see *op. et loc. cit*, p. 116 *n.*

24. The Jesuit Province of Japan at this period included Indochina, Macao, and the two southern Chinese provinces of Kwangtung and Kwangsi: The Province of Goa included most of Hindustan and East Africa, although the Vice-Province of Malabar was constituted as a Province independent of Goa since 1605.

25. *Temporal and Spiritual Conquest of Ceylon* (ed. 1930), Vol. I, pp. 117-118.

26. For Joao Rodrigues Tcuzzu S. J., see Michael Cooper, S.J. *This Island of Japon. Joao Rodrigues' Account of* **16***th century Japan* (Kodansha, Tokyo and New York, 1973); Ibidem, *Rodrigues the Interpreter. An Early Jesuit in Japan and China* (New York, 1974).

27. "Em todas as partes por onde andou teve noticia de toda a gentilidade assi por isto lhe comprir por resao das christandades e da sua religiao

e oficio como tambem por ele testemunha ser curioso e andar sempre estudando as cousas da dita gentilidade" (Antonio Baiao ed., A *Inquisicao de Goa. Tentative de Historia da sua origem, establecimento, evolucao e extincao, I, Introducao a correspondencia dos Inquisidores da India* **1569—1630**, Lisboa, 1945, p. 320.) Unfortunately, Baiao, a slapdash editor if ever there was one, does not give us the name of this intelligent deponent, whom he merely terms "um guardiao de um convento." I suspect that he may have been Fr. Joao de Sao Matheus O.F.M. (flourished, 1595—1636), who was a good linguist. For a good objective evaluation of Portuguese missonary activity in both Jaffna and Kotte prior to the arrival of the Dutch in 1638, see C. R. de Silva, *The Portuguese in Ceylon* **1617—1638** (Colombo, 1972) pp. 236—46.

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SRI LANKA'S COMMERICAL RELATIONS WITH THE OUTSIDE WORLD FROM EARLIEST TIMES TO 8TH CENTUARY A. D.

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SRI Lanka is an island in the Indian ocean and naturally the sea played an important role in her history. The numerous bays, anchorages and roadsteads offered adequate shelter for the sailing ships of ancient and medieval times and her situation in the Indian ocean astride the great sea routes between the east and the west gave an advantage of a port of call and an emporium of sea-borne trade between these two worlds. Moreover, is situation, halfway between these sea routes made it a stepping stone for the ships which were sailing between the west and east. Furthermore, the natural wealth of the island such as pearls, precious stones and forest products naturally attracted the merchants who in olden days were carrying on trade in luxury commodities. Thus Sri Lanka was important with regard to 'transit trade' due to her strategical situation and aso with regard to 'terminal trade' due to her natural resources.

The proximity of Sri Lanka to the sub-continent of India paved the way for trade relations between the two counries before Sri Lanka had contacts with any other country. The discovery of the island and its Aryanization would have been a result of the trade relations that Sri Lanka had with the mainland for centuries and the stories which have faint memories of the Indian colonization show that at the beginning this island was considered as a sort of 'El-Dorado', inhabited by man-eating *yaksas* and *raksasas*. [8] It has been explained that this view would have been due to the desire of the traders who knew the wealth of the country to keep the trade a monopoly by discouraging others from visiting it.

It was many centuries before the Christian era that the people of India started venturing into the sea in search of fortune in other lands. The spread of Indian cultural influence outside the sub-continent shows the nature and extent of their relations and such contacts started due tc their

interest in commerce. Sri Lanka too would have attracted these people for trade purposes and the adventurous Indian traders, having found that this was suitable for their enterprise, evidently established trading posts which was the beginning of Aryan settlements in Sri Lanka.[5]

Some ancient traditions suggest that there were trade relations between India and Sri Lanka from the dawn of the history of trade. The *Valahassa Jataka* has a story which shows that Sri Lanka was frequented by traders. According to this story, *yakkhinis* of Sri Lanka were in the practice of turning into their city Sirisavatthu, the merchants who got stranded by ship wrecks, promising marriages and eating them.5 Though this story is mixed with myth and legend, it may be important as showing that the shores of Sri Lanka were frequented by foreign ships and merchants. The *Divyavadana* also contains a story of merchants from India who came in search of precious stones and their contacts with the *raksasas* of Sri Lanka, which was then known as Ratnadipa, "the island of gems".[6]

The popularity of Sri Lanka among the foreign merchants in early times is also preserved in a tradition recorded by Fa-hsien, a Chinese pilgrim in the fifth century A.D. He says:

> (Sri Lanka) had originally no inhabitants but only demons and dragons dwelt in it. Merchants of different countries came here to trade. At the time of traffic the demons did not appear in person, but only exposed their commodities with the value affixed. Thus the merchants made their purchases according to the price; and took things away. Through the coming and going of merchants in this way the people of their various countries heard how pleasant the land was, and flocked to it in numbers till it became a great nation.[7]

These stories and the foreign accounts would suggest that the intrinsic resources offered by the island attracted many Indians and these were obtained through its indigenous folk. The foreign merchants, therefore, had only to establish entrepots on the coast. The Indians who thus visited Sri Lanka in pursuit of trade realising the advantages settled in various parts of the country. Indian sea-faring merchants would have continued to frequent the shores of the island even after their predecessors founded permanent settlements.[8]

The people who settled in Sri Lanka as a result of such commerce continued their activities with the mainland as well as other foreign countries. The early Sinhalese literature has various references which show the nature and extent of trade relations of people of Sri Lanka of the early days and epigraphy provides us with meagre evidence for trade and traders of ancient Sri Lanka.

Merchants figure among the donors in early Brahmi inscriptions and these records show that sea-faring was known among the people of Sri Lanka They also have allusions to corporations of merchants. The Ganekanda inscription mentions *Puka Jeta* and *Anu Jeta* which means guild or alterman.[9] However, it is difficult to decide whether this means a trade guild or an industrial guild.[10] The 'Tamil house-holder's terrace' inscription at Anuradhapura mentions a *navika* who was given a seat of eminence among the Tamil house-holders.[11] It is possible to suggest that they were merchants and perhaps organised into a guild which took part in commercial activities. Tiriyay rock inscription records a very early tradition of the foundation of the *Girikandu cetiya. Though paleographically* the inscription could be dated in the seventh century the tradition istelf could be fairly old. According to this inscription the *cetiya* was founded by "companies of merchants named Trapussaka and Vallika". About these companies of merchants, the inscription says that they "were skilful in navigating the sea, engaged in buying and selling and who (possessed) a display of goods laden in sailing vessels of diverse sorts." Further it says that they came having crossed the ocean.[12] Since the inscription is fragmentary, it is difficult to say whether these merchants were foreigners or natives of Sri Lanka.[13] However, the fact remains that there were trade activities going on in the shores of Sri Lanka. Setthi, who was the chief of the merchants, was included in the mission sent by Devanampiyatissa to Asoka and the trade negotiations between the two countries would have been one of the aims of the mission.[14] The Godavaya inscription shows that as early as the first century A.D. custom duties were charged in the port called Godavaya in the south. This would suggest that the rulers also were interested in the income received from commerce.[15] The use of coins in ancient Sri Lanka would have been with regard to trade and the Indian influence in the early coinage of the island may be due to the trade relations between the two countries.[16]

This meagre evidence would suggest that trade had aroused the interests of the people of Sri Lanka from the early centuries and their first contacts were with the immediate neighbour, the Indian sub-continent. Since then this island became a centre of trade, although the volume and the nature of trade activities varied at different times due to various factors. Although the trade that went along the overland routes between the east and the west had very little to do with Sri Lanka, she had a role to play in the trade which was carried along the sea routes between these two worlds.

The evidence from the early literary and epigraphical sources shows that there were trade relations between Sri Lanka and South India. The Brahmi inscriptions of South India have references to merchants of Sri Lanka.[17] The Pattinapalai a work of the second century refers to boats laden

with merchandise coming from Sri Lanka to the ports of Kaveripattanam. [18] Sri Lanka also provides us with similar evidence. We have already referred to the Tamil House-Holders' Terrace inscription where we have reference to Tamil merchants. This inscription which belongs to the third century B.C. refers to a *navika*.[19] Some of the early invasions by the South Indian rulers would have been partly motivated by the commercial interest as this island was well-known for trade.[20] Sena and Guttika who invaded Sri Lanka for the first time from South India were two Tamil horse dealers. They captured the kingdom of Anuradhapura and ruled for twenty two years according to the *Mahavamsa*.[21] It is also possible that Elara who invaded in the third century B.C. had some interest in trade although we have no definite evidence. In a Tamil literary work there is a reference to a Elelasingham who was a naval pilot and who belonged to a royal family. He was a friend of Tiruvalluvar, the author of a Tamil work known as the *Kural*.[22] St. Ambrose and Paladev records how some Indians came in a small ship to Sri Lanka for trade.[23] The commodities from Sr Lanka were taken first to South Indian ports and from there to the west. The Roman emporium at Arikamedu near Pondicherry would suggest that the centres of Roman trade in this part of the world were South Indian ports.[24]

The international trade that was carried on westwards to Egypt and Mesopotamia and eastwards towards South-east Asia and China covered very long distances and, as can be imagined, direct trade was not at al possible in those early days. These trade routes ran from port town to por town over many stages and important stopovers developed along these routes. Every coastal principality, with an independent, monarchical, or aristrocratic regime along these routes had a share in the trade either participating directly with its own fleet of ships or in the form of levying tolls and compulsory stapling.[25] Furthermore, since this trade was carried on through stages, every port town was frequented by foreign merchants who sometimes settled in those towns. Normally these merchants did not cover the whole journey but they sailed between two ports and another batch continued it from there. Therefore settlements were necessary at the stages in foreign lands because of the long duration of these voyages.[26] Furthermore, the commodities involved in this trade were luxury products and though the amount of merchandise exchanged or traded was limited, the value of the turnover was very high.[27] Thus, inspite of the dangers and risks involved in these long and time-consuming voyages, high profits would have attracted many merchants. This was the nature of the international trade prevailing in the then civilized world and Sri Lanka, too, like similar nations on the sea routes, naturally participated in this trade.

When one surveys the history of Sri Lanka's foreign trade, it appears that apart from her trade relations with India, the island even had an indirect trade with the western world. However, before the discovery of the monsoons in the first century A.D., western merchants who were trading with India had little direct contacts with Sri Lanka. India was known to the Greeks from fairly early times and it was the interest of the westerners in that fascinating land with so much natural resources that led them to look for an easy mode of transport to reach it. From the days of Alexander the Great the Greeks came to know of India better and in his last year Alexander had been busy surveying the possibilities of navigating the Persian Gulf and further towards India.[28] According to Arrian, Alexander at the time of his death, was involved in further examining the explorations of Nearchus to proceed from the south of the Euphrates to the head of the Red Sea to divert the profits which came from maritime trade between India and Egypt from the Sabeans to the Greeks.[29] Even before the discovery of the monsoons there was regular commerce by sea from the Persian Gulf to the mouth of the Narbada and the towns of South Arabia and Socotra were main entrepots of this trade.[30] Futhermore, the kings of Egypt were keen in supervising this Indian trade.[31]

Even before the discovery of the monsoons, Sri Lanka was known to the western world, although their knowledge was very limited and vague. Moreover, we are not sure of direct trade relations between Sri Lanka and the west since this island did not fall on their trade routes. However, the accounts of early Greek writers show that products of Sri Lanka were reaching them in a direct way. Onesicritos of the 4th century B.C. knew about Sri Lanka's elephants.[32] Megasthenes of the same period also says that Tabrobane produced gold and larger pearls than India. He says that elephants were exported to India by boats.[33] Eratosthenes of the 3rd century B.C. knew that Sri Lanka was in between the East and the West.[34] According to Hipparachus of the 2nd century B.C. no one sailed round Sri Lanka and further he says that it was not an island but a part of a continent.[35] Strabo says that Sri Lanka was known or her elephants[36] It was the home of Asian elephants says Duonysius Periegestes of the 1st century A.D.[37] Furthermore, Solinus Polyhistor of the 1st century A.D. listed elephants and pearls among the products of Sri Lanka and according to him this island was situated between the east and the west.[38]

All these writers show that they had a limited knowledge of Sri Lanka and there was no direct sailing between this island and the west. The knowledge of Sri Lanka appears to have reached them through Indians and even the trade may have been indirectly via the sub-continent. These writers

themselves support such a suggestion. Onesicritos says that it was twenty days sail from the mainland.[39] Megasthenes says that elephants were exported to India.[40] It was seven days journey from the mainland to Sri Lanka says Eratosthenes.[41] Strabo supports Eratosthenes in this respect.[42].

There are few references to direct contacts between Sri Lanka and the west. According to Diodoros one Iambulos, who was engaged in spice trade of the Somali coast was carried away by winds to Sri Lanka. Having spent some time in this island he went to Palibothra and returned by land.[43] Pliny records of a freedman of Annius Plocamus who was a collector of the Red Sea dues during Emperor Claudius's reign, carried away helplessly by winds until he reached Sri Lanka. There he was received by the ruler of that country who much admired the constant weight of the Roman dinarri. Furthermore, he says that as a result of this visit the Sinhalese king sent back to Claudius four ambassadors led by a raja.[44] There is a mention of a Pubulius Annius Plocamus in an inscription beside the old road from Coptos to Berenice at a distance of about 68 miles from Coptos.[45] According to the date in the inscription it has been suggested that this Plocamus was in the reign of Augustus and therefore if he was the freedman who came to Sri Lanka, his visit took place even earlier than the reign of Claudius.[46]. The *Mahavamsa tika* says that envoys were sent by King Bhatika Abhaya (B.C.22-A.D.7) to the country of Romanukkha from where he obtained large quantities of coral to make a net to adorn the *mahatupa* at Anuradhapura.[47] If we identify the country mentioned in the *Mahavamsa tika* to be the Roman empire, this reference could be to the same mission mentioned by Pliny in his work.[48]

The discovery of the monsoons by a Greek called Hippalus in the first century A.D. had far reaching results. This discovery enabled the sailing vessels to make a quick trip instead of the slow coastal voyage directly from the Red Sea to the Malabar coast. Thus these regions became closer and there was a boost for trade activities between India and the west.[49] However, Sri Lanka was yet to become a centre of this trade and it took place in the following centuries.

There developed a profitable trade between India and the west during the first two centuries of the Roman empire.[50] The effect of the discovery of the monsoon was strongly felt and the demand for the luxury commodities encouraged the merchants to enter into such trade activities.[51] The Periplus of the first century A.D. shows that there were direct sailings from the west to the river Indus and also shows that the South Indian kingdoms and the Roman empire were linked by active trade between the two regions.[52]

However, Sri Lanka's position in this trade is not very clear because we do not get much information. Probably there were no direct sailings to this island by the western merchants but they were content to find products of Sri Lanka in the markets of the western coast of India. [53] Strabo says that in the olden days Sri Lankans sent ivory, tortoise-shell and other ware in quantities to the Indian markets.[54] However, we do not know who were directly engaged in this trade — whether the merchants of Sri Lanka or those of India. Pliny's account shows that merchants of Sri Lanka were sailing in the Indian ocean.
He says:

> In making sea-voyages, the Taprobane mariners make no observation of the stars, and indeed the Greater Bear is not visible to them, but they take birds out to sea with them which they let loose from time to time and follow the direction of their flights as they make for land.[55]

This account suggests that the people of Sri Lanka too were navigating in the Indian Ocean and perhaps they also were participating in this trade, With the Indian merchants they would have taken the products of Sri Lanka to the Indian ports where they had western ships waiting for these merchandise.

Though the knowledge of Sri Lanka in the Roman empire would have increased as a result of the embassy sent in the first century A.D. this mission does not seem to have opened the way for direct commerce because we do not have evidence for such contacts in the first and the second centuries A.d. this would have been partly due to the desire of the Indians to control the foreign trade. They probably discouraged direct contacts between Greek and Roman merchants and Sri Lanka. According to Palladius, at Muziris on inquiry, the Greek merchants were told that the Sinhalese channel was dangerous.[56] Strabo says that around the shores of Sri Lanka lived Cetaceous which were amphibious and who were in appearance like oxen, horses and other land animals.[57] The same information is given by Onesicritos.[58] These writers who did not visit the islandn seem to have recived this information from Indians.

Fvom the description of Sri Lanka by Ptolemy it appears that shortly before he wrote certain merchants had traded directly with Sri Lanka and had coasted round the whole island.[59] With the increase of the tempo of maritime trade and the expansion of navigation in the Indian ocean, the western merchants ultimately included Sri Lanka within the range of their activity and from Ptolemy we gather that it had come about, not very far from his times.

The Roman coins found in Sri Lanka could be taken as evidence of Sri Lanka's trade relations with the Roman empire. The finds of these coins and their classification would reveal the nature and extent of their trade. The coins have been found in almost every important place in Sri Lanka.[60] The coins that belong to the period before the discovery of monsoons in the reign of Claudius are very few. From the first century to the third century A.D. the number of coins is limited. Only a few coins of Nero, Vespasian Trajan, Harian and Antonius were found. And moreover, these were coins not struck at Rome but debased tetradrachms struck at Alexandria. The occurrence of coins dating to the first two centuries A.D. in India as compared with that in Sri Lanka would suggest that there was direct trade between Indian ports and the Roman empire. Further, as Tamils controlled Sri Lanka's foreign trade during this early century, it appears that they did not allow the high quality of Roman Dinarii to pour into Sri Lanka but that the commodities of Sri Lanka were bought for debased tetradrachms.[61] That is probably why we do not get Roman gold and silver coins of the early centuries in Sri Lanka.[62]

In the 4th century the Roman empire was divided into two parts. From the time of Marcus Aurelius, one could see the decline and breakup of the Western empire. Barbarians conquered the western empire and the centre of the empire and consequently trade shifted to the near east; Constantinople, the capital of the Byzantine empire, became an important trade centre. The trade relations with India increased and it had its effect on Sri Lanka as well.

The Roman coins belonging to the fourth and fifth centuries are found in larger numbers in Sri Lanka and this may be due to the shifting of trade from Malabar coast southwards to Sri Lanka. Furthermore the Roman coins of this period were brought not only by Roman merchants but also by middlemen like the Persians. The discovery of many small bronze coins which are worn out would further suggest that they formed the currency of the island during that time.[63]

Both Sri Lanka and Southeast Asia lying on the major maritime trade routes between east and west naturally came into contact with each other through international trade. The situation of Sri Lanka is such that a direct sailing eastward from Sri Lanka would reach Malay Peninsula and Indonesia, having passed Andaman islands. Similarly a sailing westward from Malay Peninsula or Sumatra would touch Sri Lanka.

The early literary works provide evidence relating to the commercial relations between Sri Lanka and the countries of South-east Asia Pali and Sinhalese literature contains references to Suvannabhumi and stories

about people having trade relations with that region.[64] In the Vinaya commentary known as the *Samantapasadika*, the commentator Buddhaghosa refers to voyages between Mahatittha in Sri Lanka, Tambalitti in India and Suvannabhumi.[65] According to the *Manorathapurani*, the distance from Sri Lanka to Suvannabhumi was seven hundred *yojanas*, and it took seven days for a vessel to reach this land sailing day and night under favourable wind.[66] The *Sihalavatthuppakarana*, a Pali work, which seems to have been written even before Buddhaghosa's works speaks of a lay devotee named Mahadeva who went to Suvannabhumi in search of gold to build a golden stupa.[67] In the same work there is an interesting story about a goldsmith named Kunta of Mahagama who wanted to go to Suvannabhumi to fetch gold in order to repay King Saddhatissa (137-119 B.C.), the gold given to him for a vessel to be fashined out of it but which he had spent on drinking.[68] The *Rasavahini* has also allusions to Sinhalese people sailing to Suvannabhumi in search of gold.[69] Whatever the truth may be regarding the details, these stories suggest that Sri Lanka was already having contacts with South-east Asia, when the Persians started their maritime trade. By that time the Island had become a well-known centre of maritime trade.

Indonesians also were probably visiting this Island by the fifth and the sixth century A.D. Wolters has shown that the shippers of the Persian cargoes were mostly Indonesians and that their ships were sailing to India and Sri Lanka during this period.[70] However, we have no direct evidence for such a conclusion. It appears that in the 7th century Itsing and other pilgrims travelled to India on vessels sent by the ruler of Srivijaya. This Indonesian seafaring was evidently the result of a long experience of sailing and trading activities in the Indian ocean. The great antiquity of Indonesian voyaging is an assumption familiar to scholars who were aware of the extension of the Austronesian languages to Madagascar.[71] Perhaps trans-Asian maritime trade began to be a permanent and important feature of Asian trade only with the intervention of the Indonesians.[72]

Earlier the trade voyage from west to east and *vice versa* followed the coastline as much as possible and reached the Malay Peninsula where goods could be trans-shipped across the narrowest part of Isthmus of Kra.[73] This was mainly because the journey across the Isthmus was very much shorter than the voyage round the Malay Peninsula.[74] But it appears that most of the seamen proceeding from South India and Sri Lanka crossed the high seas and sailed direct to Takuapa or Kedah. The archaeological evidence shows that Kedah and Takuapa are two places with many archaeological sites belonging to the early centuries. From these centres it was easy for the merchants to go to Ligor and Chaiya crossing the Isthmus. The importance and the antiquity of these routes have been revealed by

archaeological research.[75] There is no reason to think that the people of Sri Lanka who traded with South-east Asia and China used routes different from these.

The early contacts between Sri Lanka and South-east Asia is attested by some Buddha images of the Amaravati—Sinhalese style found in different parts of South — east Asia. These images show certain features of the Amaravati school in the broad sense of the term but they also portray some peculiar features of the Buddha images belonging to the Anuradhapura period in Sri Lanka.[76] It has been assumed therefore that some of these could be the images that were taken from Sri Lanka. These images, constituting some of the early evidence for the prevalence of Buddhism in South-east Asia, have been identified as those of the Dipankara Buddha who enjoyed great favour with the seamen frequenting the southern islands[77] The name Dipankara, which means island-maker, has led the sea-faring merchants to have special devotion to this Buddha.[78]

Some of these early Buddha images in South-east Asia would have reached this part of the world through trade activities. Therefore the images of Dipankara of Amaravati-Sinhalese style may have reached there through Sinhalese merchants who had trade relations with those countries. We have already seen the evidence of early Sinhalese and Pali literature for trade relations between Sri Lanka and Suvannabhumi, which was a vague termed used for South-east Asia. Such trade activities of the early centuries would have continued and the people of Sri Lanka would have participated in this trade from the fifth century onwards.

The Chinese evidence also would suggest that by the 6th century Sinhalese merchants had sailed as far as even China. The following passage in the *T'ai p'ing yu lan* of Y' ang tzu provides an indication regarding the international trade that was carried on via Sri Lanka in the 3rd century A.D.

> Shi-tsu country (Ceylon) produces cinnabar, mercury, hsun-lun, tumeric, slorax, costus, and such perfumes.[79]

The author Y' ang tzu lived under the Wu dynasty (222-280). According to Wolters some of these products associated with Sri Lanka were from the Middle east and these articles must have been some of the imports of Sri Lanka 'known by hearsay to the Southern Chinese in the first half of the third century A.D.[80] This evidence would suggest that the maritime routes between western Asia and China in which the Wu government was interested "could not fail to involve Ceylon (Sri Lanka) and already by that time Southern China would have been receiving goods which passed through Ceylon (Sri Lanka).[81]

Furthermore the Chinese sources contain references to Sinhalese missions sent to China in A.D.405, 429, 435 which show the close relationship between the two countries and the importance assumed by Sri Lanka during this period.[82] The importance of Sri Lanka on the maritime route between the east and the west was clearly demonstrated when Fa-Hsien and Gunavarman came to Sri Lanka to embark on a ship to go to South-east Asia and China.[83]

Fa-hsien's account shows that Sri Lanka was a great trading centre. According to him many merchants gethered here to trade and to buy pearls and precious stones of this island. However, he does not mention the presence of Chinese merchants. The Chinese merhants were probably not among those who visited Sri Lanka during the 3rd, 4th and 5th centuries. It was the merchants of Sri Lanka and India who brought the Chinese goods there.[84]

Thus by the 6th century A.D. Sri Lanka had established contacts with the west and her eastern trade with South-east Asia and China had become important. This background helped the Persians to make this island one of their centres of activity and they made this a great emporium of their trade between the east and the west.

The early history of the maritime activities of the Sassanids is not very clear. The political position of the Sassanids enabled them to control the trade between China and Western Asia that was carried on along overland trade routes. However, their interests in navigation show that they were aiming at taking an active part in maritime trade as well. The Sassanid dynastic traditions narrate that the first ruler Ardashir I (A.D.226-242) improved some of the ports of the gulf.[85] The Arabs who were used to navigation and who had trade relations with Indian ports continued their activities even under the Sassanids.[86] Furthermore the political developments in China compelled the Persians to use the maritime trade routes rather than the overland routes. The early fourth century saw the subjugation of northern China to the barbarians and the massive flight of Chinese to the south. The depression among Sogdian middleman as a result of the sack of Lo-yang by the Huns in 311 made the Sassanids to turn to sea routes for trade with China. Thus the Southern dynasties of China, having lost their links with the overland routes, began to attract sea borne trade to meet the demand for foreign produce.[87]

Furthermore the conditions in Central Asia also forced the Sassanids to use the maritime trade routes more than the age-old continental silk routes. In the 5th century the Hephthalites overan Western Turkistan, Sogdiana and Bactria. In 484 they defeated the Sassanid ruler and killed him. Their attacks contributed towards the downfall of the Gupta empire

in India. Thus by the end of the 5th century they had the control of Sogdiana, Khotan, Kashgar and also Bukhara, as a result of which the Persians were cut off from the trade centres of the east which were linked by the overland rountes.[88] Thus the Hepthelites soon became a big menace to the Sassanids who stopped all trade with them.[89] In this manner the changes that took place in China and Central Asia led to the blockade of the trade carried on through land traffic and compelled the Persians to look for other routes to continue their trade with the east. All these changes helped to increase the tempo of maritime trade in the 5th and 6th centuries A.D. and the centres, such as Sri Lanka, which were along these trade routes benefitted much out of this trade.

Moreover the central position of Sri Lanka in the Indian Ocean and her relations with India, South-east Asia and China prior to the 6th century A.D. probably led the Persians to choose this island as their centre as against any place on the massive sub-continent adjoining her. We have already seen the trade relations of Sri Lanka with India, South-east Asia and China.

Before the middle of the 6th century A.D. Persians had not penetrated beyond Sri Lanka.[90] It is in Cosmas' account written in the middle of the 6th century, that we get a clear idea of their trade activities in the Indian ocean and it is Cosmas who gives a vivid picture of ports of Sri Lanka where the international trade had developed and where the Persian merchants played a considerable role. He says:

> The island being, as it is, in a central position, is much frequented by ships from all parts of India and from Persia and Ethiopia, and it likewise sends out many of its own. And from the remotest countries, I mean Tzinista and other trading places, it receives silk, aloes, cloves, sandalwood and other products, and these again are passed on to marts on this side, such as Male, where pepper grows, and to Calliana which exports copper and Sesame-logs, and cloth for making dresses for it is also a great place for business. And to Sindu also where musk and casto is procured and andris and to Persia and Homerite country, and to Adule and the island received importance from all these marts which we have mentioned and passes them on to the remoter parts, while, at the same time, exporting its own produce in both directions.'[91]

This account of Cosmos illustrates the role of Sri Lanka in the international trade when he wrote his account. In the 6th century A.D. merchants from different countries far and near, came here with their merchandise and exchanged them for commodities.

The account given by Cosmas is corroborated by that of Procopius who wrote in A.D. 530-31. According to this writer, the Roman emperor Justinian wanted to enter into an economic agreement with Hellestheaeus,

the ruler of Aethiopians, against the Persians. Justinian sent an ambassador to the Aethiopian ruler and suggested that their religious ties should bring them together against the Persians. Further he 'proposed that the Aethiopians by purchasing silk from India and selling it among the Romans might themselves gain much money while causing the Romans to profit in only one way, namely, that they be no longer compelled to pay over their money to their enemy.[92] This account shows that the silk trade between the east and the west was in the hands of the Persians resulting in a drain of Roman money.

However, we learn from Procopius that this agreement could not be put into practice because the Persians who were in the adjoining country (Sri Lanka) came immediately to the Indian harbours when the ships laden with milk arrived and bought the entire load of cargoes leaving nothing for the Aethopians, who took a longer time to reach India due to the distance of the journey and the difficulties of communication across the desert.[93] We thus find that the Persians used Sri Lanka as their base for trading activities in the Indian ocean.

The conditions in Central Asia seem to have contributed much towards the increase of the tempo of Persian maritime trade and it was these conditions, coupled with her situation that helped Sri Lanka to become an emporium of international trade in the 6th century A.D. The conquest of the commercial centres of Sogdiana and Bactria by the Hephthelites and their control of those regions together with Khotan, Kashgar and Bukhara prevented the Persians from depending on trading centres used by the Seras (Chinese).[94] Therefore, in the fifth century A.D., they turned away from their normal source of silk, namely Northern China, towards the trade centres of Southern China, depending greatly on the maritime trade routes [95]. As a result of the Hepthelite occupation of Central Asia in the first half of the 5th century A.D. Southern China provided the access to the outside world, and by the same time Persians had established in Sri Lanka in order to receive the Far Eastern trade which was arriving at this island. A close contact between Sri Lanka and Persia is reflected in a vague reference in a 4th century Chinese work which says that 'the Possu (Persian) king asked for the hand of a daughter of the king of Sau-t'iac (Sri Lanka) and sent a gold bracelet as a present.[96]

The Persians are known in the Chinese sources as Po-ssu which is believed to be derived from *Parsa* name used for Southern Persia. They were handling the western produce as far as Sri Lanka from where those were trans-shipped to China to meet the demand of the Southern Chinese. These commodities were known as Po-ssu products and Persia was considered to

be the sources of wealth of the western regions, either as the producer of these luxury products or because its merchants handled western Asian merchandise in general.[97]

Recent researches have shown that these Po-ssu products were not carried by Persians as far as China and that by the 6th century the Chinese had not come as far as this island to take these precious cargoes brought by the Persians to Sri Lanka.[98] Sri Lanka was the entrepot where trans-shipment of the goods from the east and the west took place. If the Chinese had not come as far as Sri Lanka by the 6th century it would mean that the western goods were taken to China from Sri Lanka by middlemen Indians were probably among the middlemen, for they were no doubt sailing as far as China in this period. Being familiar with the international trade from the early centuries, merchants of Sri Lanka, too, would have had a share, in the eastern trade. A number of considerations lead us to support such a conclusion. We learn from Cosman that at the beginning of the 6th century Sri Lanka sent out here own ships and had trade relations with, among other countires, China. Already in the 5th century A.D.Sri Lanka had diplomatic relations with the Eastern Tsiu.[99] The Chinese sources show that tribute missions went to the Liu Sung court from Sri Lanka and India and that one such mission west from Sri Lanka in A.D 527 during the reign of Liang Wu-ti.[100] Although it is difficult to say which ships were in use in the trade with China during the 5th and 6th. centuries A.D., the Chinese sources support the suggestion that these were mostly foreign ships.[101] In the middle of the T'ang period, aomong the ships that sailed to China, Sinhalese ships had a reputation for being large. According to the Chinese sources these ships were about 200 feet long and could carry seven to eight hundred men.[102] China-bound Indian pilgrims of this period such as Gunawarman from Kashmir selected the maritime route via Sri Lanka because it was well established during this period. The foregoing evidence indicates that there were regular sailings between Sri Lanka and the Far East in this period.

Activities of Persians in Sri Lanka are attested by their settlements in this island. According to Cosmas, to look after the religious needs of the Persians who had settled in Sri Lanka, a Presbyter had to be appointed.[103] Writing in the 7th century Vajrabodhi states that he saw 35 Persian ships arriving in this island to trade in precious stones. The association of the Persians with Sri Lanka was so close that Persian works claim that Persians invaded Sri Lanka and that Sri Lanka was included in the territories of the Persian emperor Chosroes Nushirwan.[104] The Arab histories *Tabari Hamza* and *al Thaulabi* narrate the invasion of Sri Lanka by the Persians

in the reign of Chosroes Mushirwan who ascended the throne in A.D. 531 and attribute it to the wrong done to some Persian traders settled in Sri Lanka.[105] Hui-Ch'an , a Chinese writing in A.D. 727 about Persians says

> The inhabitants (of Persia) being by nature bent on commerce, they are in the habit of sailing in big crafts on the western sea, and they enter the southern sea to the country of the lions (Sri Lanka), where they got precious stones, for which reason it is said of the country that it produces precious stones. They also go to the K'un-lun country to fetch gold. [106]

This account shows that the Persians continued to have close contacts with Sri Lanka in the 8th century. The foreign quarter at Anuradhapura would have been the settlement of Persians who were engaged in foreign trade.[107] A cross unearthed at the citadel at Anuradhapura similar to a Persian cross found in the Madras presidency, could be one used by these Persian merchants[108]

Thus during Persian monopoly of international trade Sri Lanka was on the map of trade routes between the east and the west. People of Sri Lanka also participated in this trade by carrying a part of the cargo as far as China via South-east Asia. On the other hand so many other merchants such as Indians, indonesians and Malays who were participants of this trade would have visited Sri Lanka in relation to these trade activities.

NOTES

1. Cook, E.K. *A Geography of Ceylon* (London, 1931), p.1; Cressy, G.B., *Asia's Lands and Peoples* (New York, 1944) p. 487; University of Ceylon History of Ceylon (UHC), ed. Ray, H.C.(Colombo, 1959) Vol.1, Pt. I, pp. 8—9.
2. The goods produced in other countries were brought to Ceylon and then trans-shipped. There were trade of local products also. The former could be called 'transit trade' and the latter 'terminal trade'.
3. Perera, B.J. 'Foreign Trade and Commerce of Ancient Ceylon -2- Ancient Ceylon and its Trade with India', *Ceylon Historical Journal* (CHJ) Vol. I, pt. 3, (1952), p. 193.
4. *UHC*, Vol. I, pt. I, p. 84. The habit and behaviour of the primitive people of the island also would have contributed for the foreigners to use these terms such as *Yaksas* and *Raksasas* to the early inhabitants of Ceylon.
5. *The Jataka*, Vol. II, ed., Fausboll, V. (Pali Text Society, London, 1879 , Reprint, 1963), pp. 127—130.

6. *Divyavadana*, ed., Cowell, E.B. and Neill, R.A. (Cambridge University Press, 1886), p. 523.
7. Fa—hsien, *A record of Buddhist Kingdoms, being an account of the Chinese monk Fa-hien of his travels in India and Ceylon* (Oxford, 1886), pp.101-102.
8. *Cambridge History of India*, Vol. I (1922), p. 424.
9. *Epigraphia Zeylanica* (EZ), Vol. V, pp. 234 ff; Paranavitana, S,, *Archaeological Survey of Ceylon Inscriptions of Ceylon*, Vol. I (Department of Archaeology, Ceylon, 1970), pp. xcviii, 28, nos. 356 and 357.
10. *Archaeological Survey of Ceylon Annual Report* (ASCAR) (1934), p. 21; Paranavitana, *op. cit.*, pp. xcviii, 45, nos. 585 and 591.
11. Nicholas, C.W. 'Texts of the Brahmi inscriptions in the Ruhunu National Park', *Journal of the Ceylon Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* (JCBRAS), New Series, Vol. II (1952), p. 132; Paranavitana, *op. cit.*, pp. xcviii, 49, no. 660.
12. *Ceylon Journal of Science Section G* (CJSG), Vol. II (1928—33), p. 212, no. 661; Paranavitana, *op. cit.*, pp. xcviii, 70, no. 897.
13. *EZ*, Vol. V, pp. 410—412; Paranavitana, *op. cit.*, pp. xcviii, 97, no.1205.
14. *ASCAR* (1911—12), p. 107; Paranavitana, *op. cit.*, pp. xcviii, 95, no.1186
15. Paranavitana, *op. cit.*, p. xcviii
16. *Ibid*
17. Narayana Rao, C. 'The Brahmi Inscriptions of South India', *New Indian Antiquary*, Vol. I (1938—39), pp. 367—368. The Asittapatti inscription says"———sift on the Sresthins or chiefs of the wandering traders of Ceylon (Sri Lanka) who have camped here." *Ibid.*, *p.* 368
18. Pattinapalai, (Madras, 1962), line 220.
19. *JCBRAS*, Vol. XXXV (1940), no. 93, pp. 54—56; Paranavitana, *op. citl* p. xc.
20. Liyanagamage and R. A. L. H. Gunawardane, ed. *Anuradhapura Yugaya* (Kelaniya, 19), p. 114.
21. *Mv.*, tr. Geiger, W. (P. T. S. London, 1954), XXI, 2.
22. Paranavitana, S., 'The Cholas and Ceylon', *The Ceylon Antiquary and Literary Register* (CALR), Vol. X (1924), p. 115; Although we have no evidence to identify Elara of the Sinhalese chronicles with Elela Singam of the South Indian tradition it is not impossible that 'both refer' to the same person. If it is so, Elara would have been first interested in trade activities.
23. Tennent, *op. cit.*, p. 538.
24. *Ancient India*, no. 2 (Delhi, 1946), pp. 17 ff.; Wheeler, M. *Rome Beyond Imperial Frontiers*, (Penguin, 1955),pp. 173 ff.

25. Van Leur, J.C., *Indonesian Trade and Society: Essays in Asian Social and Economic History* (The Hague, 1955), pp. 65—67.
26. *Ibid.*, p. 66.
27. *Ibid.*, p. 67.
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30. Haurani, *op. cit., pp.* 17—24
31. *Ibid.*, p. 24.
32. McCrindle, J. W.., *Ancient India as Described in Classical* Literature (Contable 1901) p. 20; Nilakanta Sastri, *Foreign Notices of South India* (University of Madras, 1939) p. 20.
33. McCrindle, J. W., *Ancient India as Described by Megasthenes and Arrian* (Calcutta, 1926), pp. 60—61; Nilakanta Sastri, *op. cit., p.* 41
34. Tennent, Sir James Emerson, *Ceylon*, 2nd ed. (Longmans, 1859). Vol. I, p. 529.
35. *Ibid.*, p. 526
36. Nilakanta Sastri, *op. cit.*, p. 47
37. Pridham, C., *Ceylon and its Dependencies*, (London, 1849) Vol. I, p.6.
38. *Ibid.*, p. 7
39. McCrindle, *Ancient India as Described in Classical Literature*, p. 20
40. Nilakanta Sastri, *op. cit., p.* 41
41. Tennent, *op. cit.*, p. 529
42. *Ibid., p.* 526
43. Warmington, E. H., *The Commerce Between the Roman Empire and India* (Cambridge, 1928), p. 43.
44. *Ibid*
45. Meredith, David. 'Annius Plocamus: Two inscriptions from the Bermice Road', *Journal of Roman Studies*, Vol. XLIII, pts. 1—2, (1953), pp. 38—40.
46. Wheeler, M., *Rome beyond the Imperial Frontiers* (Penguin, 1955 pp. 155—56. The actual date of this inscription is A.D. 6.
47. *Vamsatthappakasini*, ed. Malalasekera, G.P. (P. T. S. London, 1935) p. 630.
48. About this identification Paranavitana says; 'Coral was, and is, a well-known product of the mediterranean and the name Ronanukkha can easily be explained as formed by the addition of the pleonastic suffix *ka* to the Latin Romanus', *UHC, op. cit.*, p. 225

49. Warmington, *op. cit.*, pp. 35 ff; Hourani, *op. cit.*, pp. 25 ff.
50. Warmington, *op. cit.*, p.l.
51. *Ibid.*, p. 5; *Periplus of the Erythrean Sea*, tr. W. H. Schoff (London, 1912), p. 5.
52. *Periplus of the Erythrean Sea*, pp. 36ff.
53. Tennent, *op. cit.*, pp. 549ff.; Warmington, *op. cit.*, p. 63
54. Nilakanta Sastri, *op. cit.*, p. 47
55. *Ibid.*, p. 49. The Kevaddha Sutta of the *Dighanikaya* has a reference to birds being used by mariners for discovering the proximity of the land. *Dighanikaya* (P. T. S. London, 1932), XI, 85.
56. Tennent, *op. cit., pp.* 562—563.
57. Nilakanta Sastri, *op. cit., p.* 48
58. *Ibid.*,
59. McCrindle, J.W., *Ancient India as Described by Ptolemy* (Calcutta, 1927), pp. 255 ff
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61. Warmington, *op. cit.*, pp. 121ff.
62. Codrington, *Ceylon Coins and Currency, pp.* 31—32.
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66. *Manaorathapurani*, II (P. T. S. 1930), p. 36
67. *Sihalavattuppakaranan* (Colombo, 1959), pp, 91—94.
68. *Ibid.*, p. 107
69. This Pali work was written in the 12th century A.D. but the stories seem to have existed several centuries in old Sinhalese before they were translated and written in Pali. Therefore some of these stories may belong to the early centuries of the Christian era. *Rasavahini* (Jinalankara Press, Colombo, 1899), pp. 190ff.
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71. *Ibid.*, pp. 154-55
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91. Cosmas, *The Christian Topography*, tr. and ed. McCrindle (London 1897), pp. 363—373.
92. Procopius, *History of the Wars*, tr. Dewing, H.B. (London, 1954) I, XX, 9—12, pp. 193—94
93. *Ibid.*,
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95. Wolters, *Early Indonesian Commerce*, p. 74
96. Ibid., p. 81.
97. *Ibid.*, p. 133
98. *Ibid.*, pp. 135 ff.
99. *Cosmas*, op. cit., p. 365
100. Wang Gungwu, *op. cit.*, p 57
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103. Cosmas, *op. cit.*, p. 365
104. Perera, B.J. 'The foreign Trade Commerce of Ancient Ceylon *Ceylon Historial Journal*, Vol. I, pt. 4 (1952)) pp. 303-4.
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106. Cited by Tibbetts, *op. cit.*, p. 27.
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POLITICAL ASSOCIATIONS AND POLITICAL PARTIES OF SRI LANKA (CEYLON)

AN ASPECT OF POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT

W. A. WISWA WARNAPALA

The political development of the island has deen examined largely from the point of view of the nature of the change in the arena of constitutional government. The characteristics of political participation form an integral aspect of the process of political modernisation. In the traditional societies, political participation usually becomes the concern of a limited elite. It was this elite which, in course of time, came to be associated with the changes in the constitutional structure of the island,. The emphasis on this aspect of the political system by scholars resulted in the failure to examine the instruments of political participation. In other words, the political associations and parties which came into existence in close association with constitutional development need to be studied in order to properly comprehend the process of political development in the island. The aim of this essay is, therefore to examine the growth of political associations and parties with their relevance to the process of political modernisation.

Political participation in the developing countries takes many different forms, and the involvement of organisations is one aspect of the process. The association with a political organisation constitutes in itself a form of political participation,. Such organisations have been formed primarily to influence government decision-making and it was this form of involvement which resulted in things affecting political modernisation. The involvement of the elite in the economic and political organisation of the island gave birth to political associations and parties. The growth of political aspirations in terms of the demands of various ethnic communities assisted in the emergence of special interest groups. The early descendents of the colonisers, with a view to maintain some exclusiveness, formed organisations as their own bases of political influence.

The struggle for independence became a source of inspiration for the emergence of certain types of associations. The examination of these structures will explain the extent to which they were influenced by local in-

interests; European interests and communal divisions in the country too played a significant role. The formation of the Ceylon Agricultural Society (1904) with Sir Henry Blake as its President was certainly a landmark in the field of agriculture in the island, and it, with a membership of 1500 and 50 branch societies, became an instrument through which an attempt was made to influence both the planting community and the rural population of the island. The inauguration of this society led to the establishment of the Department of Agriculture. The entry of Ceylonese members into the Legislative Council resulted in the creation of certain organisations and it was during this period that the Ceylon Reform Society, the Malay Young Progressive Union and the Sinhalese Young Mens Associations came into being.[1] The educated young, with their associations with professions, took an active interest in the formation of such societies; H. L. Dassanaike, Dr. G. Rockwood, Abdul Rahaman, K. Balasingham and C. H. De Mel, in fact, played the key role in providing leadership to these associations.

The need to protect the European interests, in direct association with the aspirations of the planter community, resulted in the emergence of such institutions as the European Association of Ceylon (1918) the Ceylon Association in London (1888) and the Chamber of Mines for Ceylon (1899). The Ceylon Association in London, in fact, displayed an explicit committment to the protection of planting interests in the island. The Planters Labour Federation was formed in 1898 to check the growing expenses on the importation of plantation labour.

The minority interests, primarily those involving the Tamil, Muslim and Malay communities, in the context of a competition for limited political power in the changing constitutional structure, needed organisations to channel their grievances. In other words, the committment to the advancement of group interests of the minority communities gave birth to a large variety of associations and societies. Some of them succeeded in getting themselves absorbed into the main political organisations whereas others, despite the demands on such institutions during the period of political struggle, maintained an identity of their own in the political system of the island. The Malay community, because of its acculturation into certain aspects of the colonial society, gave birth to a number of associations, some of which were of strictly political character. The Malay Political Association (1896) was the first of its kind and the other associations, committed to same aspirations, were All Ceylon Malay Asociation (1922) and the All Ceylon Malay Congress (1944). The former, in fact, came to be converted into to All Ceylon Malay Political Union in order to safeguard and protect the rights of the Malay community, including the demand to obtain special representation to Malays in the legislature. The immediate provocation for the creation of the All Ceylon Malay Congress was the opposition of the Muslim members in the State Council to the issue of special representation to the Malay community. The divisions within the community of Malays on political demands resulted in splits in the ranks of their associations and it was this development which led to the formation of Malay Progressive Union (1934). The associational activity of the Malays, though small a community, demonstrated the desire on the part of the educated Malays to participate in the political

process. The Muslim community, despite its attachment to traditional ways of life, displayed no lethargy in relation to their participation in the limited political struggle of the period. The All Ceylon Moors Association, formed in 1921, seemed to have had 270 branch associations, and this, if true, demonstrated the fact that its activities were not confined to a tiny minority of the educated in the community. The next important association of the community to follow this was the All Ceylon Muslim League (1924) which declared its cooperation to achieve a stable government in the island. Another aim of this association was the promotion and the preservation of Muslim solidarity with a view to assist the realisation of communal harmony The changes in the political system, primarily those related to the aspirations and demands of political parties interfered with the interests of the Muslim community, resulted in the formation of such associations as Ceylon Muslim Association and the Muslim Progressive Union. Indian Muslims, with a view to distinguish between the origins of the two Muslim communities, formed their own organisation called the Indian Muslim Association in 1928. These associations of the Muslim community, with the exception of such organisations as Ceylon Moslem Educational Society (1918), appeared in the political scene largely in the nature of organisations interested in constitutional reforms, and the involvement of this community in the political process could be attributed to these associations.

The Tamil community, in contrast to the Muslim community, was a conscious minority which exploited certain aspects of colonial rule to their own advantage. This was very conspicuous in areas such as education, the professions and the public bureaucracy. The growth of an educated elite, therefore, demanded certain associations for the purpose of political participation, without which aspirations of the community could not be realised. The participation of the Tamil community, from the very inception of politics of constitutional reform in the island, was in the area of political associations, which in course of time, came to be identified with certain national trends in the island's political scene. This trend was represented in the formation of the Ceylon National Congress in 1919, 'uniting the major Sinhalese and Tamil organisations'.[2] Jaffna Association (1905) Tamil Union (1905) Kandy Tamils Association (1909) Kurunegala Tamil Association, the All Ceylon Tamil Mahajana Sabha (1921) the Electoral Association for West Jaffna (1922) the Central Province Tamil Union (1923) Ghandi Sangam (1924) Tamil Sangam of Uva (1926) East Ceylon Labour Union (1927) and the Jaffna Depressed Tamil Service League (1927) were some of the associations which, as the names indicated, represented diverse interests, and they, in addition, were not totally confined to the Jaffna peninsula. The formation of the All Ceylon Tamil Mahajana Sabha was a turning point in the history of the nationalist movement in the country. Sir Ponnambalam Arunachalam, who functioned as the first President of the Ceylon National Congress, disagreed with the leadership of the Congress on the issue of the Colombo seat in the Legislative Council. Sir James Pieris was asked to contest this seat and the Ceylon National Congress opposed the creation of a spceial seat for Tamils in the Western Province. The failure to obtain a special communal seat for the Tamils in the Western Province led to Sir Ponnambalam Arunachalam's departure from the Ceylon

National Congress, a constituent organisation of which was the Jaffna Association formed in 1905. It was in this background that the All Ceylon Tamil Mahajana Sabha came to be formed as 'an articulate organisation' 'which gave' forceful expression to their demands as a minority community'.[3] The Tamil Mahajana Sabha, concentrating its activities in Jaffna, openly advocated communal representation which became a vital issue in the competition for political power.

Though no political party of importance came to be organised around the interests of the Indian Tamil community, series of organisations committed to the welfare of the community came into being. The Indian Association of Ceylon (1912) the Ceylon Indian Association (1916) Indian Electoral Association (1923) the Ceylon Rural Indian Association (1923) the All Ceylon Indian Youth League (1932) and the Ceylon Indian Congress (1939) constituted the organisational base from which the community made an attempt to integrate itself into the political life of the country. The Indian Association of Ceylon was first known as South Indian United Association of Ceylon. The Ceylon Indian Congress, which became the most important vehicle of Indian interests, derived support from the other organisaiions of the community and they, in the context of the emergence of this, disappeared from the scene. The Ceylon Indian Congress was formed on the 26th July, 1939 by Jawaharlal Nehru who succeeded in bringing together a group of leading Indians for the purpose of establishing an organisation representative of all sections of the Indian community. It stood for 'Purna Swaraj' (complete independence) for India and Ceylon and advocated political, social and economic amelioration of the Indian community. The first formal session of the Congress was held at Gampola in 1940 and V. V. Giri attended this session with messages from the Indian National Congress.[4] The Ceylon Indian Congress Labour Union, at its 10th sessions held at Matale in 1950, decided to call itself the Ceylon Workers Congress, and its basic platform constituted the protection of the rights of the Indian workers in the plantation areas in the hill country of the island and the promotion of the civic interests of the working class. The emergence of trade union activity as the most prominent aspect of its work generated fissures within the ranks of the Ceylon workers Congress, a section of which led by A. Azeez, who functioned as its Secretary, broke away in 1955 to form the Ceylon Democratic Workers Congress. Though both these organisations are committed to the protection of the interests of the Indian working class community in the plantation sector and derived support from the same base to legitimise their role in the political system of the country, they operate primarily in the nature of a trade union cum political party. This trend became visible in the sixties and the entry of the Ceylon Workers Congress into the Coalition Government of Dudley Senanayake in 1965 partially demonstrated the lines of their political behaviour in the future. The two organisations, therefore, have acted more in the form of two pressure groups in associating themselves with the two major political parties of the island, and this by experience, has given them the status of a component of the political system with their own methods of political legitimisation.

The Burghers—the descendents of the Dutch colonists—who, according to the Soulbury Report, 'formed a necessary and valuable link' between the

British and the natives, played a leading role in the social and political development of the island.[6] Though the involvement of natives in the political process diminished the importance of the Burgher community, they maintained an identity on the basis of organisation-derived participation in the political process. The Dutch Burghers Union of Ceylon (1907) the Burgher political Association of Ceylon (1938) Burgher Electoral Association, Burgher Association of Ceylon and the Ceylon Burgher Association (1960), though formed primarily to promote the interests of the community, did not develop into action-oriented organisations in the field of politics. They, despite the small numbers and its urban character, maintained the profile of a pressure group, the involvement of which in the national issues had been very limited. The involvement of this community in constitutional issues, on the other hand, was prominent.

The Kandyan Sinhalese, though displayed characteristics of social and economic backwardness largely as a result of the impact of colonial rule, demonstrated no inclination to be modernised and this in fact affected their participation in the early political life of the country The domination of the nationalist movement by the low country Sinhalese could be partially attributed to the position of the Kandyans, and the realisation that they need their own organisations to channel the grievances led to the formation of several political associations.[6] The breakaway of the Tamil organisations affiliated to the Ceylon National Congress encouraged the Kandyans to take a similar step and the issue, like in the case of the Tamils, was the question of separate representation for Kandyans. The growth of the Ceylon National Congress as a political organisation dominated by the low country Sinhalese oligarchy conditioned the attitude of the Kandyans who now thought in terms of their own political organisation. The Kandyan National Assembly, an organisation communal in character, was formed in 1925, and its main demand was self-government of the Kandyan provinces.[7] According to the Donough more Commissioners, the Kandyan National Assembly expressed 'the views and apprehensions mainly of the feudal chiefs and headmen.'[8] The attitude of the Ceylon National Congress to the role of the Kandyan National Assembly and the development of political competition between the two organisations resulted in the growth of a variety of political associations in the Kandyan provinces.[9] The associations formed in the Kandyan provinces could be divided into two types: (1) the organisations formed by the Kandyans and (2) those formed by the low country Sinhalese resident in the Kandyan provinces. The latter, in large measure, derived inspiration from the organisations in the low country areas. The Mahajana Sabhas, which formed the local constituent organisations of the Ceylon National Congress, were formed at the initiative of F. R. Senanayake, who in fact organised the Lanka Mahajana Sabha in 1919. The aim, it could be surmised, would have been to organise a political machine around his personality. Such organisations, as noted by L. A. Wickremaratne, sprang up in the Kandyan areas and they displayed no genuine Kandyan characteristics.[10] The Kandy Mahajana Sabha, founded by George E. de Silva, represented an important example. Similar organisations have been formed in Tumpane, Pata Hewaheta, Uda Dumbara, Pata Dumbara and Dandegamuwa. Polgahawela Mahajana Sabha was formed in 1924 by a low countryman

and the Rambukkana Mahajana Sabha, formed around this period, had a committee of forty members. The Mahajana Sabhas represented an attempt by the low country elements in the Kandyan areas to politically mobilise their own kith and kin while the Sangamayas, which came to be formed during this period, articulated the interests of certain depressed communities in the Kandyan region.[11] Udarata Jatika Sangamaya of N. H. Keerthiratna, the Madhyama Lanka Mahajana Sangamaya and Lanka Sinhala Jatika Sangamaya were some of the notable examples. The Wahumpura caste community formed a number of such societies. The genuine Kandyan elements, those directly related to the Kandyan aristocracy, formed associations for the purpose of obtaining means of political participation, and the Kandyan Association, established in 1906, was the first of its kind, followed by such associations as Kandy Association (1917), the Kandyan Electoral Association (1923) and the Kandyan political Association (1924). There were regional associations committed to the interests of the Kandyans; three examples were the Gampola Progressive Union (1923) the Kandyan Association of Uva (1924) and the Matale Kandyan Association.[12] The Kandy Congress Constituent Association, the Udarata Mahajana Mandalaya, the Kandyan Union of Colombo (1924) the Sabaragamuwa Association, the Udarata Mandalaya of Uda Dumbara of M. B. Galagoda, and the Udarata Sinhala Mahajana Samitiya of L. B. Ranaraja, which had its branches in all the Kandyan provinces, were the other important political associations. Matale Udarata Mandalaya of T. B. Aluvihare and the Kurunegala Kandyan Association of G. E. Madawala (1920) too fell into this category of associations dominated by the Kandyans. The Kandyan Youth League appeared in the scene in the thirties and it published a weekly called 'Udarata Tharunaya' from September, 1934. The other Kandyan political association to publish a weeekly was the Mahanuwara Udarata Mandalaya, which started the weekly 'Rajadhaniya' in 1927.[13] The Udarata Sinhala Mahajana Mandalaya started publishing a monthly newspaper called 'Udarata' in February, 1925, and it was edited by H. B. Kirimetiyawa.[14] All this indicated that the parochialism of the Kandyan Sinhalese influenced the nature and organisarion of the political activities of the group. It was this character which prevented the growth of a national political association with a preponderance of Kandyan interests. The Report of the Kandyan Peasantry commission referred to a Kandyan People and Peasants Progressive Party and this, though appeared before the Commission to give evidence, was an unknown political organisation. A loose combination of moderate socialists, nationalists and liberals in Kandy, at the initiative of T. B. Ilangaratne and H. Sri Nissanka formed the United Socialist Front (1949) which, in its initial stages, remained the platform of the leftist parties in Kandy. The Udarata Peramuna, born out of the remnants of the Kandyan Youth League, appeared in the political scene in 1959 under the leadership of T. B. Godamune, who wanted to create a Kandyan bloc. These developments in the politics of the Kandyans indicated their efforts to get themselves integrated into the national political associations and the process came to be almost completed with the appearance of national political parties. The delay in their involvement was due to the slow process of socialisation, and their late entry into the bureaucraey was yet another reason. The political participation of the Kandyans, as explained by the political associations was primarily organisa-

tion-derived participation with a strong committment to a form of Kandyan nationalism.

The political activities of the Low Country Sinhalese were confined to 'periodic campaigns on behalf of aspirants to nomination to the Sinhalese seat in the Legislative Council'.[15] The need to protect the Ceylonese planting interests motivated the Sinhalese entrepreneurs to form the Ceylon Agricultural Association in 1882, and it became the Ceylon National Association in 1888. The next important political organisation, though of a regional character, was the Chilaw Association (1896) which displayed certain characteristics of political articulation. The Temperance Movement, which became an agent of political mobilisation in the first decade of this century, gave birth to such associations as Colombo Total Abstinence Union (1912) and the Kandy Temperance League (1919). The rapid growth of temperance societies was viewed with suspicion by the Government because they constituted a form of political participation. The ineffectiveness of the Ceylon National Association and the need for an effective political organisation capable of using the mobilisation process occurred under the temperance movement led to the Ceylon Reform League in 1917, and this, as noted by Professsr K. M. de Silva, was not a complete national political organisation.[16] The Ceylon Reform League and the Ceylon National Association organised a joint political conference in 1918, from which emerged the most significant political association of the English educatied elite—the Ceylon National Congress in 1919. The Chilaw Association became one of the important components of this national political organisation which dominated the organisation-oriented political participation process till the arrival of political parties. The political bases of the Ceylon National Congress came to be strengthened with the formation of the Mahajana Sabhas and the Political Associations in different towns of the island. There were Mahajana Sabhas in places such as Matara, Moratuwa, Lunugala, Panadura (1923) Gampola, Dodanduwa, Polgahawela, Rambukkana, Ragama (1923), Kalutara, Kandy (1923) Kotagoda, Negombo and Dehiwala (1923). The political associations included Kurunegala Political Association (1920), Ratgama Association (1928) Ambalangoda Association of P. de S.Kularatne (1920),the Anuradhapura Association of P.B. Bulankulame, which constituted the mobilisation process to which the Ceylon National Congress gave leadership. The Ceylon National Congress existed as a political organisation till 1947; George E. de Silva functioned as its President and the joint secretaries were J. R. Jayawardene and Jayantha Weerasekera. The expansion in the political involvement of the elite led to the formation of associations such as the political Study Circle (1927) the All Ceylon Liberal League, the All Ceylon Youth Congress, the Sinhala National Association (1921) and the Young Lanka League (1920), which in course of time, formed the sources of recruitment for certain moderate and radical political parties.

The development of political organisations among the educated women need to be examined in order to assess their political participation. The women political associations appeared largely on the eve of the Donoughmore Commission and they, in effect, gave expression to the demand for adult

suffrage. The Ceylon Women Citizens Association (1929), the Ceylon Women Federation and Ceylon Women Association emerged largely as Colombo-based associations.[17] The Ceylon Women Franchise Union (1927) which later became the Women Political Union of Ceylon, included the wives of the leaders of the nationalist movement.[18] There was another association called the Ceylon Women Political Union (1927) and its Presidents included Mrs. F. B. de Mel, Mrs. M. S. Rockwood, Mrs. Alice Kotalawala and Mrs. A. F. Molamure. The activities of the women associations, because of the need to obtain a consensus on the question of franchise, were extended to other towns and such associations as the Kandy Women Franchise Association (1928) and the Kalutara Women Political Association came into being. The former was subsequently transformed into the Kandy Women League. The introduction of the adult franchise, though expected an increased involvement of women in the political process, gave birth to no special political organisations of the women and it was partly due to the emergence of national political organisations. The womens' associations, therefore, invested their energies on social welfare activities. The most important political association of the women in the mid forties was the Socialist Women Organisation committed to the promotion of the aims of socialism among the women of Ceylon.[19] The political involvement of the women, though began in a very limited form, vitally affected the process of political development in the island.

A large variety of functional political groups constituted the process of political modernisation and it was in the context of this phenomenon that the political party, which, according to David E. Apter, has become an instrument of modernisation in the developing areas, appeared in the political landscape of the island.[20] The political party, though appeared as an agent of political development under the parliamentary system of government, appeared in the political scene nearly two decades before 1947. The Unionist Association of Ceylon (1927) came to be converted into the Unionist Party the aim of which was to train the people of the country in the science and, practice of responsible government. They were of the view that an enlarged Legislative Council will provide the opportunity for the gradual evolution of a system of party government. The Unionist Association of Ceylon, which had as its President Solomon Dias Bandaranaike, and H. Marcus Fernando and Felix Dias as its Vice-Presidents, advocated extension of the communal principle in order to provide special representation for the christian community of Ceylon. The Unionist Party, in fact, contested one seat at the 1931 elections to the State Council.[21] The party organisations, though existed during this period, operated more in the nature of loose organisations and they, therefore, deviated from the characteristics of the modern political party. In fact, the candidates were not nominated and the leaders did not restrict support to members of their own political organisations. Several members of the party contested the same constituency and this, in effect demonstrated the extent to which they were loose organisations without the discipline of the modern political party.

The All Ceylon Liberal League, the Ceylon Labour Party (1928) the Independent Labour Party, the Progressive Nationalist Party (1923) of

S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike and the Socialist Party of Ceylon of P. Givendrasinghe existed before the introduction of the Donoughmore Constitution. Both the Labour Party and the Independent Labour Party contested the 1931 elections and succeeded in obtaining three seats and one seat respectively in the State Council. The growth of a number of labour organisations, for instance, the Ceylon Labour Union (1923) Ceylon Workers Federation (1921) All Ceylon Trade Union Congress (1928) and the Kandy Labour Union, provided an impetus to the development of these political parties. These parties, along with the loose political associations which assumed the role of political parties, constituted the instruments of political participation in the context of a constitution, the vital aspect of which was the adult suffrage. The introduction of the adult suffrage, though envisaged an increased political participation, did not immediately result in the establishment of political parties. There was a complete absence of political parties at the 1936 elections to the State Council, and even the existed ill-defined party lines were obliterated.[22] The same loose nature of the party organisation was demonstrated by instances where 'party chiefs threw in their weight against members of their own party'.[23] All this indicated that the associations still remained the instruments of political participation, and it was only with the next stage of the constitutional development that political parties came to be formed as agents of political modernisation.

It was during this period that 'the coalition stage in the development of political parties' of Ceylon came to be established. The main political parties emerged largely as coalitions of political associations and this feature dominated the political system in the period since independence. The United National Party, which was formed in 1946, was a coalition of political organisations with different ideological orientations. The Ceylon National Congress, the Moors Association, the Ceylon Muslim League and the Sinhala Maha Sabha entered the party as separate organisations which, even after the formaiion of the United National Party, were allowed to retain their individual identity. The Sinhala Maha Sabha (1934) was organised by S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike with a 'view to unite the Sinhalese and to work in cooperation with the other communities'. The failure of the Progressive Nationalist Party (1927) to make headway influenced the formation of this association. Language, religion and culture stood at the forefront of its platform, and it, in this form, functioned as the political rival of the Ceylon National Congress. The Sinhala Maha Sabha, though entered the United National Party in 1946, maintained an individual identity, the legitimisation of which was achieved with its nationalist platform. The committment to the same platform resulted in the formation of the Sri Lanka Freedom Party in 1951. The Sinhala Maha Sabha, displaying its ability to transform itself into a political party, appointed a National Committee in 1941 consisting of delegates of various political associations and the same base was used when it got itself converted into a political party. The All Ceylon Village Committees Conference (1928), the Urban District Councils of Ceylon Association (1932) and the Ayurveda Sammelanaya (1933), which were associated with the Sinhala Maha Sabha, constituted an important source of political mobilisation for the Sri Lanka Freedom Party. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike functioned as the President of the All Ceylon Village Committees Conference,

and this, in his capacity as the Minister of Local Government, afforded him the opportunity to provide leadership for a significant segment of the politically motivated people.[24] 'The Young Ceylon' protested very strongly at the inauguration of the Sinhala Maha Sabha which, it described, as 'the latest attempt of S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike to find for himself a pedestal from which to air his queer views on religion, politics and himself'.[25] It saw no justification for the Sinhala Maha Sabha in the context of a situation where there were organisations such as the Ceylon National Congress, which was predominantly Sinhalese and with the Lanka Mahajana Sabha (1919) with an essentially Sinhalese outlook.[26] The formation of the United National Party in 1946, Sir Ivor Jennings pointed out, reduced the political importance of the Sinhala Maha Sabha.[27] The opposite of this was proved by the establishment ot the Sri Lanka Freedom Party in 1951 and it could not be denied that the base of the Sinhala Maha Sabha was used to establish legitimacy for the new political party.

The consensus of this base, which came to be solidified in the period 1951—56, began to disintegrate in the first decade after 1956. Sinhala Nationalism took a more explicitly ideological form and the impact of which was seen in the nature of political mobilisation. The division in the ranks ot the nationalists, orginated as a result of the attitude of the 1956 regime to its own forms of legitimisation, led to the establishment of organisations such as the Sri Lanka Jatika Peramuna, Udarata Peramuna, the Sinhala Jatika Sangamaya, the Samajavadi Mahajana Peramuna, Bosat Bandaranaike Peramuna, the Dharma Samaja Party and the Jatika Vimukti Peramuna. They were formed by the same personalities who joined the nationalist platform of S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike in 1956.[28] This indicated how the mobilisation process, in the context of nationalism, underwent an expansion during this period. They, though assumed the nature of political parties, were primarily pressure groups which operated with a very limited clientele. The political uncertainty that followed the assasination of S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike and the diffusion in the nationalist forces allowed the emergence of a large number of political parties. The Commissioner of Elections, in terms of election law, recognised eight parties and eighteen new parties applied for recognition.[29] The growth in the number of parties, though with limited electoral appeal, demonstrated the extent to which political participation had improved in the context of a national upsurge.

The groups 'mutually antagonistic' to these manifestations of Sinhala Nationalism influenced the establishment of similar organisations among the minorities. The section, which broke away from the Ceylon Tamil Congress, formed the Federal Party in December, 1949, and these two political organisations, though dominated politics in the Tamil speaking areas, could not prevent the emergence of certain other organisations. The All Ceylon Tamil Conference, the Tamil Speaking Front, Elathamilar Ottumai Munani (C. Sundaralingam's Tamil Front), the Fundamental Rights Democratic Front, the Tamil Resistance Front, the Ilankai Dravida Munnetra Kazagam (DMK of Sri Lanka), the Ceylon Human Rights Party and the International

Tamil League appeared as organisations committed to the defence of the rights of the Tamil community. Some of these groups-the Tamil Speaking Front and the Tamil Resistance Front—contested parliamentary elections in 1960. Such groups, on the basis of the communal loyalties mobilised the support of the Tamil community and articulated political demands which hitherto remained within the ranks of the main political organisations. The impact of this development was the adjustment of political demands to the changing forms of political organisation.

It has been already mentioned that the main parties emerged in response to the demands in the constitutional structure. In other words, it was at this stage that such political parties made an attempt to 'integrate the different types of political organisations' into a party system.[30] The failure of this attempt could be illustrated by an examination of the different political organisations which appeared in 1946 and after the inauguration of the Soulbury Constitution. The Ceylon National Congress Party (1941), for instance, legitimised its formation by claiming that it stood for the attainment of Dominion Status for the island within the Commonwealth of Natinos. C. E. C. Bulathsinhala formed the Swaraj Party (1945) and the independents who were returned at the 1947 elections, formed the Lanka Swadhina Party (1947) with a view to operate as a solid bloc in the House of Representatives. The existence of parties such as the United Lanka Congress (1945), Lanka Republican Party (1952) the Republican Party (1952) of Wilmot Perera ,the Mahajana Peramuna and the Radical Democratic Party demonstrated the failure to integrate the political forces into two major coalition systems. The role of the Marxist parties interfered with this process of integration of the political organisations.[31] The appearance of minor parties, though continued as a trend in the island's political system, represented yet another aspect of political participation.

The political organisations, which emerged during the colonial period were primarily pressure groups interested in the constitutional advancement of the country. They were not well defined pressure groups and their interest were not expressed in a stable manner. The issues affecting their interests articulated these political associations and thereby they constituted the main form of political participation. The conversion of these associations into the political parties changed the basic pattern and the process of both articulation and participation underwent an expansion. This pattern of development demonstrated the different levels of articulation and participation in the political system of Sri Lanka.

1. See Abeysooriya, Samson. *Whos Who of Ceylon.* Gerad's Press, Colombo.
2. Arsaratnam, S. *Ceylon.* Prentice—Hall, 1964, p. 167.
3. De Silva, K. M. *History of Ceylon* Vol. III. University of Ceylon Press Board, 1973, p. 406.
4. It was stated that the Ceylon Indian Congress had a membership of 104, 948. Vide *Fergusons Directory,* Colombo, 1948.

5. Tambiah, S. J. 'Ethnic Representation in Ceylon's Higher Administrative Servicess, 1870—1946' in *University of Ceylon Review*, Vol. XIII, Nos. 2 & 3, 1955, p. 113.

6. See Wickremaratne, L.A. 'Kandyans and Nationalism in Sri Lanka', in *The Ceylon Journal of Historical and Social Studies*, Vol. V. Nos. I & 2 June—Dec 1975, pp 49—67 for a discussion of Kandyan associations.

7. Report of the Special Commission on the Constitution (Donoughmore Report) Colombo, 1928, p. 103.

8. *Ibid;*, p. 103.

9. Wicremaratne L. A. *op.cit;*, pp. 56—59.

10. *Ibid;*, p. 56.

11. *Ibid;*, p. 56.

12. The names of the Kandyans who were asociated with these organisations were as follows: T. B. Yatawara, M.B. Navaratna, T. B. Kadurugamuwa, J. C. Rambukpotha, W. M. S. Hapugoda and W. B. Talagahagoda.

13. Pannasekera, Kalukondiyawe. *Sinhala Puwath Path Ithihasaya* (Sinhala) Vol. III, Gunasena, 1971, p. 322

14. *Ibid;*,p. 340.

15. De Silva, K. M. *op. cit;* p. 260.

16. 'The Formation and Character of the Ceylon National Congress 1917—1919',on *Ceylon Journal of Historical and Social Studies* Vol. 10, Nos. I & 2, 1967, p. 82.

17. The names associated with these organisations were Mrs. Lionel de Fonseka, Mrs. D. M. Gunasekera and Lady Dias Bandaranaike.

18. The wives of almost all the leaders were included in this organisation.

19. Mrs. Edith Ludowyke, Mrs. Vimala Wijewardene, Mrs. P. Kandiah and Mrs. H. Gunasekera were associated with this organisation.

20. Apter, David E. *The Politics of Modernisation.* Chicago, 1965, p. 179.

21. Ceylon State Council, 1931. Daily News Publication, p. 5.

22. *State Council of Ceylon*, 1936. Ceylon Daily News, 1936, p. 13.

23. *Ibid;* p. 13.

24. *Young Ceylon.* Vol. VII, No. I, 1938, p. 6.

25. *Ibid;*, p. 6.

26. *Ibid;*, p. 6 and also see 'Bandaranaike and the Sinhala Maha Sabha' by Spectator, in *Young Ceylon* Vol. VII, No. 5, 1938, pp. 74—75.

27. Jennings, Ivor. 'Constitution After One Year' in *Independent Ceylon* (First Year). Independence Day Souvenir. Department of Information, 1949, p. 1.

28. They included Somaweera Chandrasiri, I. M. I. R. A. Iriyagolla, S. D. Bandaranaike, C. R. Beligammana, P. B. Godamune, L. H. Mettananda and K. M. P. Rajaratna; they were language enthusiasts.

29. Report of the Sixth Parliamentary General Election of Ceylon. Sessional Paper XX, 1966, p. 20.

30. Lapalombara, J. ed. *Bureaucracy and Political Development*. Princton University Press, 1967, p. 103.

31. The Marxist parties have not been discussed because their relationship with the process of development merits a separate study.

THE HIERARCHY OF CENTRAL PLACES IN THE TRINCOMALEE DISTRICT, SRI LANKA.

P. Balasundrampillai

THE Trincomalee district at present extends from Verugal in the South to Yan Oya in the north. The land north of Yan Oya, consisting of three Grama Sevaka divisions, Pulmoddai, Paranamadawachiya and Tennamaravady, an area approximately 95 square miles, is attached to the DRO division of Padaviya in Anuradhapura district with effect from 1-8-1972.[1] But the area is still under Trincomalee for certain functions such as education, judiciary etc. The Trincomalee district is a part of the eastern coastal plain of Sri Lanka. The district is flat towards the north, hilly towards the middle and the southern part is a low lying delta area and is subject to floods from the Mahaveli. It is traversed by Mahaveli Ganga, Kantalai, Palam Poddaru, Panna Oya, Pankulam Aru, Yan Oya and several other small streams. Primary activities such as agriculature and fishing are dominant in the economic structure of the district. Tertiary activities and the port functions are important elements in the economic functioning of the Trincomalee town. The road network is not developed and there are about ten ferries on the coastal roads. Except the Trincomalee-Kandy and Trincomalee-Anuradhapura roads, the majority are impassable and not open to traffic at certain times of the year. A large number of settlements on the district are not served by roads.

In 1971 there were 191989 inhabitants in the district and this represents. 1.5 per cent of the total population of Sri Lanka. The total population of

the district between 1871-1971 and intercensal numerical increases and percentage increases are shown in Table 1.

Year	Population	Numerical increase	Percentage increase
1871	19449	—	—
1881	22197	2748	14.1
1891	25745	3548	16.0
1901	28441	2696	10.5
1911	29755	1314	4.6
1921	34112	4357	14.6
1931	37492	3380	9.9
1946	75926	38434	102.5
1953	83917	7991	10.5
1963	138553	54636	65.1
1971	191989	53436	38.6

Source: Census Reports of Sri Lanka.

The absolute population growth was very small before 1931 due to high mortality and small in-migration. The phenomenal increase of population during 1931-1946 was largely due to inflow of migrants into the district during the war years. During this period, the population of the Trincomalee town increased from 10160 to 32507. But between 1946-53, the population of the town decreased from 32507 to 26356. The development of the town has been associated with port and naval dockyard activities. Since the 1950's agricultural colonization schemes such as Allai, Kantalai, Galmetiya, Morawewa schemes attracted a large number of immigrants to the district. Between 1953-71, the district experienced a high growth due to these colonization schemes and this trend is still continuing.

In 1971, the average density of population for the district was 183 persons per square mile and in 1963 it was 136 persons per square mile. A great concentration of population is found along the coastal areas of the district. In the interior area, there is a scattered population distribution, although in some areas a marked concentration of population exists, as for example, the Kantalai colonization area, Pankulam, Galmetiya and Mullipothana. The population density varies within the district and one can identify this at divisional level. Table II shows the population density of the district by divisions.

Table II - Density of Population by Division - 1971

Division	Population	Area	Density (sq.mile)
Town and Gravets	59915	99	605
Kaddukulampattu East	7539	204 7/8	37
Kaddukulampattu West	8620	179	48
Kinniya	26807	82	327
Thampalakamam	13726	101	136
Kantalai	25207	130	194
Mutur	29486	81	364
Seruvila	13255	134	99

Source: Census Report of Sri Lanka, 1971. (see Fig. 1)

The Town and Gravets division had the highest density. The coastal divisions have a higher density per square mile than divisions in the interior.

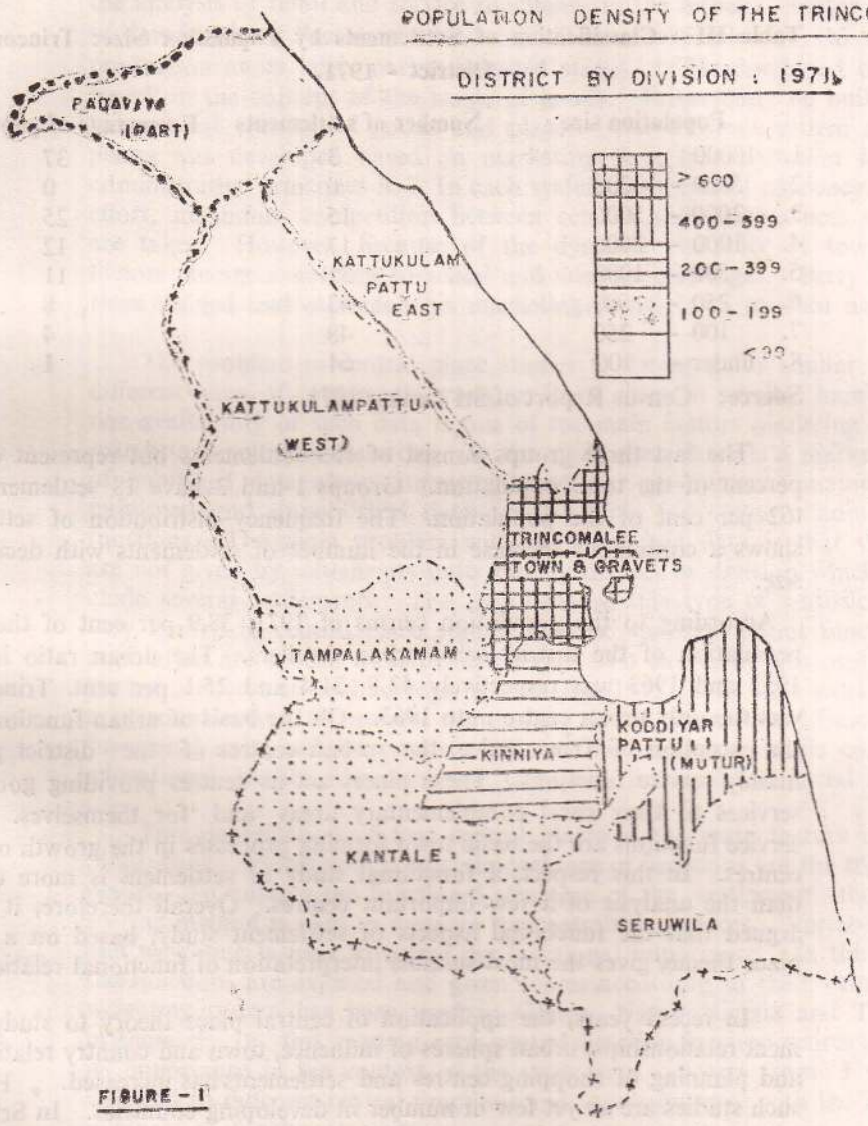

FIGURE - 1

There were 221 settlements in the district in 1971, the largest being the Trincomalee town with a population of 41784 persons. There are other wo towns with a population of more than ten thousand. Eight groups of settlements based on population size may be identified in the district.

Table III - Classification of Settlements by Population Size: Trincomalee District - 1971.

	Population size	Number of settlements	Percentage of population
1.	10000	3	37
2.	5000 - 10000	0	0
3.	2000 - 5000	15	25
4.	1000 - 2000	17	12
5.	500 - 1000	31	11
6.	250 - 500	43	8
7.	100 - 250	48	4
8.	under - 100	64	1

Source: Census Report of Sri Lanka, 1971.

The last three groups consist of 155 settlements but represent only 13 percent of the total population. Groups I and 3 have 18 settlements with t62 per cent of the population. The frequency distribution of settlements shows a continuous increase in the number of settlements with decrease in size.

According to the population census of 1971, 38.9 per cent of the total, population of the district were urban dwellers. The urban ratio in 1946 1953 and 1963 was respectively 42.8, 31.4 and 25.1 per cent. Trincomalee was the only urban centre upto 1963. On the basis of urban functions, with the exception of Trincomalee, the urban centres of the district perform mainly service functions. These places act as centres providing goods and services to their rural complementary areas and for themselves. These service functions are the basic town forming processes in the growth of urban centres. In this respect, a functional study of settlement is more effective than the analysis of a few important centres. Overall therefore, it can be argued that the functional aspects of settlement study, based on a central place theme, gives the most suitable interpretation of functional relationships.

In recent years, the application of central place theory to study settlement relationships, urban spheres of influence, town and country relationships and planning of shopping centres and settlements has increased. , However such studies are as yet few in number in developing countries. In Sri Lanka two studies on this field were carried out in northern and southern parts of the Republic. This study therefore, is an attempt to extend the coverage to a further part of the country.

Christaller (1933) starts his analysis with the question whether there are laws which determine the number, size and distribution of Towns. [4] His central place theory deals with location of trades and institutions. This

theory is similar to Von Thunen's theory of location of agricultural production and Alfred Weber's theory of location of industries. Christaller and Loschs' theories were based on the behaviour of retailers and consumers over time and space. However, Christaller's theory is more suitable for the analysis of retail and service functions in the tertiary sector than that of Losch whose "economic landscapes" are more relevant to secondary production at its later market oriented stages. [5] He developed the theory based on the concept of the range of goods. From this, he built up the hierarchical concept of goods and places. The different system of central places was developed based on marketing K-3, transportation K-4, and administrative principles K-7. In each system, concepts of efficiency minimum effort, maximum competition between centres and compactness of centres are taken. However, because of the dynamic character of towns, these factors change according to social and economic changes. Berry and Garrison refined and expanded his marketing principle to modern needs. [6]

The problem in central place studies is the need for similar data for different sizes of settlements, ranging from cities to smaller hamlets. The non-availability of such data is one of the main factors hindering urban research in developing countries. In the study area, there is a marked paucity of published data about commercial and non-government functions. Some published and unpublished data are available for certain administrative functions. The main problem with the published data is that the details are not given by settlements units but by district or division which may include several settlements. The usefulness of this type of statistical data is very limited in central place studies because the data about functions and population are needed at settlement level.. To overcome this problem, the author carried out field surveys in 1974 and 1975. The field work involved a personal survey of centres, the making of an inventory of functions and functional units and interviews. The central functions include commercial, educational, health, administrative, transport, financial and social functions.

The identification of true central places is the main feature of central place study. Places with relative importance of functions are the true central places. To analyse the functional structure of the settlement the relative scoring method is used to measure the centrality of places. Variable grading and weighting is used to assess the functional importance. In this method, the functions are assessed and given scores according to their values. This weighting system has been used in Ghana, Natal, Nigeria and Tamilnadu in India. [7] In this method each central function is given scores according its importance in the context of the study area. Scores from I to 25 are awarded to different central functions and scores increase with the increasing number of functional units.

Settlements may normally be classified as hamlets, villages, towns and cities. These catagories imply the existence of broad classes of settlements that differ in their functional complexity. The difference between settlements are not only a matter of physical size, but also total population variety and level of central functions and these show the existence of hierarchical patterns. Generally, higher order places with large population have more

central functions, functional units and comman larger complementary areas than the lower order places. The main idea in the concept of a hierarchy, the idea of definite orders of central places, is directly opposed to that of a smooth continuum of urban places.

Based on quantified centrality indices, five grades of central places could be identified in the Trincomalee district. The hierarchical pattern of central places differes from that of Northern Sri Lanka. [3] These central places can conveniently be termed as major towns, towns, townships, villages and hamlets. (see Fig· 2)

Major town:

Trincomalee is the only major town level central place and a regional primate urban centre in population as well as in functional importance. The town is the only place which has most types of central functions recognized in the study. It has 90 functions out of 105 central functions, and the district level functions are found only in Trincomalee.

The town covers three square miles and had a population of 41784 in 1971. Because of its physical size and population, the town possesses a noticeable intra-urban hierarchy of centres. However compated with other large towns in Sri Lanka, this is still a small urban centre. For the analysis of functional hierarchy, the contiguous settlements of Uppuveli, Andankulam Abeyapura and Anuradhapura Junction are included. These sub-urban settlements are closely linked with the town.

There are five major service centres identified within the town. The service centre or central place may be defined here as a group of central functions seperated from any similar group by an open space or residential area in which such functions are absent. The hierarchy of centres have been identified from the comparative analysis of functional structure. The present distribution of intra-urban central places in the town has evolved as an integral part of the overall process of urban growth. In the process of urbanization, the Periyakadai area which is closer to dockyard was important in the European period. The present city centre Sinnakadai has been developed mainly in the last three decades. Fort Federick is the main administrative centre of the district. The Jetty area, where the banks and government administrative offices are found comes next to the Fort in importance.There are 15 local grade centres found in the town. These places mainly contain convenient functions such as retail stores, co-operative stores, tea and coffee boutiques, primary schools, laundry and barber saloon.

Towns

Mutur (11678), Kantalai (4638) and Kinniya (16666) are in this group. Mutur is the main central place for the Koddiyar Pattu and Seruvila area. It has no road link with any other major towns but linked with Trincomalee by sea transport. Kantalai is a small place in terms of population when compared to Kinniya or Mutur, but it has better transportation facilities.

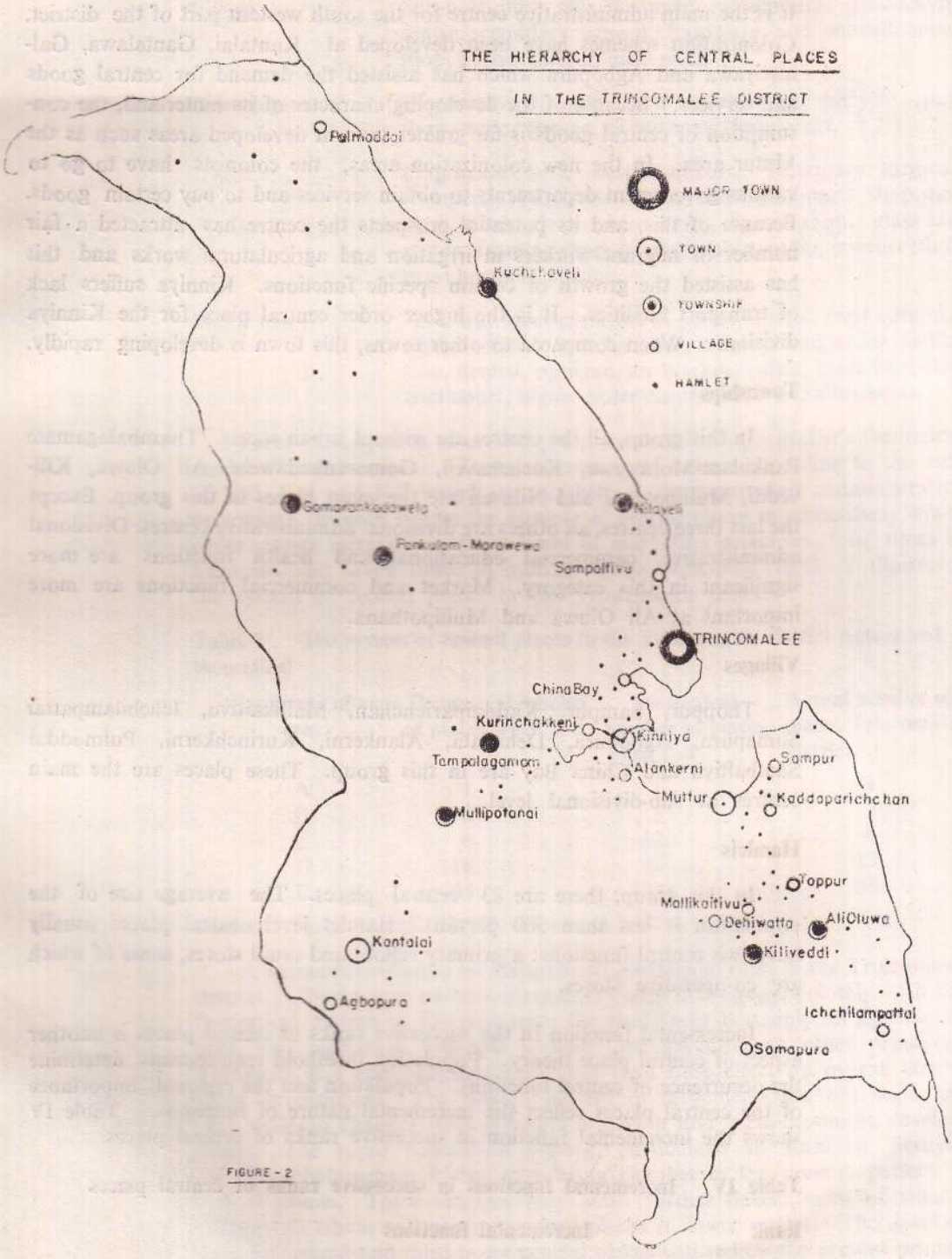

FIGURE - 2

It is the main administrative centre for the south western part of the district. Colonization schemes have been developed at Kantalai, Gantalawa, Galmetiyawa and Agbopura which has assisted the demand for central goods and services. Because of the developing character of its hinterland, the consumption of central goods is far greater than in developed areas such as the Mutur area. In the new colonization areas, the colonists have to go to various government departments to obtain services and to buy certain goods. Because of this, and its potential prospects the centre has attracted a fair number of migrant workers in irrgation and agriculatural works and this has assisted the growth of cetrain specific functions. Kinniya suffers lack of transport facilities. It is the higher order central place for the Kinniya division. When compared to other towns, this town is developing rapidly.

Townships

In this group, all the centres are without urban status. Thambalagamam Pankulam-Morawewa, Kuchchaveli, Gomarankadawela, Ali Oluwa, Kiliveddi, Mullipotanai and Nilaveli are the main places in this group. Except the last three centres, all others are divisional administrative centres. Divisional administrative, commercial educational and health functions are more significant in this category. Market and commercial functions are more important at Ali Oluwa and Mullipothana.

Villages

Thoppur, Sampur, Kaddaiparichchan, Mallikaitivu, Ichchilampattai Somapura, Agbopura, Dehiwata, Alankerni, Kurinchkerni, Pulmoddai Sambaltivu and China Bay are in this group. These places are the main centres at sub-divisional level.

Hamlets

In this group, there are 83 central places. The average size of the population is less than 500 persons. Hamlet level central places usually have two central functions; a primary school and retail stores, some of which are co-operative stores.

Incremental function in the successive ranks of central places is another aspect of central place theory. Population threshold requirements determine the occurrence of central functions. Population and the regional importance of the central places reflect the incremental nature of functions. Table IV shows the incremental function in successive ranks of central places.

Table IV. Incremental functions in successive ranks of central places

Rank	Incremental functions
Hamlet	Primary school, retail stores/co-operative stores.

Village	Sub-post office, village council, agricultural productivity centre, secondary school, hardware and miscellaneous shop, barber saloon, meat stall.
Township	Dispensary, village market, textile shop, biciycle repair shop, motor garage, circuit magistrate court.
Town	Magistrate court, western doctor, Veterinary surgeon, commercial bank, tile store, motor spare parts shop,shoe shop, wholesale provision store, liquor shop, glass and picture framing shop, photographic studio, jewelleryshop rural hospital, cinema.
Major town	Assistant superintendent of police, district level administrative officers, base hospital, religious and social institution, dentist, optician, air booking office, kachcheri, district court, higher order commercial establishments.

Three basic systems of central places resulted from Christaller's theoretical model of central places. These are nesting of centres according to the rule of K-3, K-4 and K-7 based on marketing, transport and administrative principles. In each system the number of central places in successively lower order classes increases by three times in marketing principles, four times in transport and seven times in administrative principles. Table V illustrates the system of central places in the Trincomalee district.

Table V. The system of central places in the Trincomalee district Actual and theoretical

Size-grade of centres	Theoretical number of places when K-3	Theroetical number of places when K-4	Actual number of places Trincomalee district.
A	1	1	1
B	2	3	3
C	6	12	8
D	18	48	13
E	54	192	83

Source: Field survey, 1974/75, calculated.

A numerical pyramid of hierarchical settlements exist in the Trincomalee district. The present pattern of central places corresponds closely with the theoretical pattern of K-3 and since the study area is mainly an agricultural area, this marketing principle is more appropriate than other principles. Transport and administrative principles have little effect on overall central place development. The present pattern of settlements are not static but may undergo changes with population growth and socio-economic developments. The rapid population growth, particularly in Kantalai, Seruvila and Thambalagamam Pattus may bring changes in the present pattern of central places. These changes may assist further development of smaller settlements which will become central places in lower orders. The development of second and third order central places will reduce the present primate character of the Trincomalee town.

The application of central place concepts in the Trincomalee district settlement hierarchy will bring long term benefits. Colonization on the district and in the entire Dry Zone of Sri Lanka is a main feature of the programme of development and is associated with agricultural development and creation of new settlements. The rapid population growth on the district as well as in the Dry Zone is a major factor leading to this policy. Creating more amenities and service facilities are essential for the growth of the settlements. Central place concepts can be used in developing service centres in new areas and rationalizing the distribution of functions in developed areas. Through this, a functional intergration and balanced development to the district could be achieved.

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8. Balasundarampillai, P. op. cit., pp. 214-242.

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EPIGRAPHY AND SRI LANKA TAMIL DIALECTS

A. Sanmugadas

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. It has been the practice among the Tamil epigraphists to declare, whenever they come across forms that do not conform to the traditional grammatical rules, that they are orthographic errors. The format of a typical article on Tamil inscription (editions) has always included a paragraph on orthography. We can at least pardon the scribe who was responsible for writing the inscriptions if the errors has occurred accidently. But a student of epigraphy would have noticed that these errors are not accidental but they are consistent in a number of inscriptions and often over several centuries. Now Tamil epigraphists are beginning to think that these so-called errors may actually be the phonological features of the spoken language that was prevailing at the time the particular inscription was inscribed. There is a very good reason why Tamil epigrahists were misled by certain phonological pecularities that have occurred frequently in Tamil inscriptions. Traditional Tamil grammarians seem to have concentrated only on the literary dialect of the Tamil Language. There is a strong tradition, which prevails even up to now, that the Tamil grammar is a description of the grammatical structures units, and functions of the literary language. The earliest Tamil grammarian, Tolkappiyar, in fact, mentions **valakku** (i.e. popular usage); but it is not explicitly stated and examples are very scarce. Thus, available Tamil grammatical treatises describe only the literary or written Tamil. Therefore, the early epigraphists who studied Tamil inscriptions had this grammatical bias. Since they were familiar with the traditional grammatical rules, they treated the peculiar phonological features,that occurred in Tamil insciptions, either as orthographic peculiarities or as orthographic errors. Now, when the present-day epigraphists, who are aware of the principles of modern linguistics which treats both the spoken and the writtenlanguage as equal, have begun to recognize that those phonological features are, in fact, evidence for the type of spoken dialect that was **in vogue** at that time.

An attempt is made in this paper to bring out some phonological features of Sri Lanka Tamil dialects as well as peculiar ones that are found either in Batticoloa Tamil or in Jaffna Tamil through the study of the Tamil inscriptions of Sri Lanka.

1.2. The data for the present analysis are the Sri Lanka Tamil inscriptions collected in the following works:

1. Indrapala, K. (ed)
   Epigraphia Tamilica (ET)

2. Velupillai, A. (ed)
   Ceylon Tamil Inscriptions, Part I, 1971 (CTIi)
   Ceylon Tamil Inscriptions, Part II, 1972 (CTIi)

2. SOME COMMON PHONOLOGICAL FEATURES

2.1. In most of the South Indian Tamil inscriptions, we have found the tap/r/ being written instead of the trill/R/and vice versa.

The following will suffice as examples (cited from **South Indian Inscriptions** henceforth, **SII)**

r		R	
temmuracin	—	temmuRacin	**(SII, VOL. V)**
pirinta	—	piRinta	**(SII, VOL. V)**
irantavatu	—	iRantavatu	**(SII, VOL. VII)**
	r		
aaRankam	—	aarankam	**(SII, VOL. V)**

The scribe does not seem to have considered these two sounds as phonemic. Thus, in one inscription itself we find this habit of writing /r/ for/R/and R/ for / r /. But surprisingly this confusion does not seem to have occurred in most of the Sri Lanka Tamil inscriptions. The consonantal sounds/ r / and / R/ have merged into a single sound in Indian spoken Tamil The presence of /r/-/R/confusion in the South Indian Tamil inscriptions shows the development of this phonological feature. It is probable that in the Indian spoken Tamil, the speakers may not have recognized two/r/sounds. Thus when they write, if they are not careful, the confusion between/r/and/R/ would have occurred. Even now we see many printing errors in connection with /r/ and/ R / in Tamil books printed in South India and in the writings of the Tamils of Indian origin in Sri Lanka. But in Sri Lanka Tamil, /r/and /R/ are phonemic. For instance, consider the following words; /kari/ 'charcoal'/ kaRi/'curry'. The phonetic description of /R/ in kaRi is as follows: The point of the tongue is curled upwards and slightly back and produces a quick succession of short taps. This quick succession of taps is called **trill.** Thus in Sri Lanka Tamil incriptions, we do not find the confusion between /r/ and /R/. For example, the word **tarai** 'land' becomes **taRai** in Sri Lanka spoken Tamil. The word **tarai** occurrs in the inscription from Lankatilake Vihare (**CTLi**: 77) and it has been consistently used eleven times in that inscription.

Kanapathipillai (1936:13). in his study of the Tamil inscriptions of the 7th and 8th centuries A.D...noted that there was a confusion of the dental n and alveolar **n** in those inscriptions that belong to the Northern districts of the Tamil country. Velupillai (1972:4) while observing that during the period of the Second Pandyan Empire, the condusion on n and **n** had become universal in the Tamil areas, tries to justify this deve'opment. According to him:

> "During the age of the imperial Colas, there was political unity in the Tamil country and Tamil Grantha was the script, used in the middle and the northern districts till that time, came to be adapted throughout the Tamil country. Alveolar **n** had no place in the Grantha script while it had a definite status in Vatteluttu. Therefore the Southern districts which adapted the new script were led to confusion as there was only the dental n in Grantha."

Although Velupillai's reason seems to be plausible, the n - **n** confusion can also be explained in terms of the state of affairs prevailing in the Tamil dialects. Spoken Tamil seems to have lost the phonological identity between the dental n and the alveolar **n**. Among the languages that broke off from the Proto-South Dravidian only Malaya'am recognizes **n** and **n** as phonemic even now. The dental n must have been occurring only before its homorganic stop in Tamil. In other instances, in spoken Tamil, it must have been pronounced as an alveolar nasal. Some of the Tamil grammatical rules too suggest this. For example, **Nannul** sutra 237 says that the initial dental n changes into an alveolar **n**. As in Malayalam, the doubling of dental n is not observed in Tamil.

In the present day spoken Tamil. We observe only an alveolar nasal except where the dental homorganic (i.e. [nt]) cluster occurrs. Therefore it may reasonably be assumed that the spoken Tamil must have by then begun to lose the phonemic status of the dental n. This might have been the reason for the n - **n** confusion in the Tamil inscriptions.

2.2 The Sri Lanka Tamil dialects do not consider /ll/, a retroflex, fricative lateral as phonemic. It has merged with the retroflex lateral /L/. Even some of the spoken sub-dialects in South India too have been reported to have lost the distinction between /ll/ and /L/ [4]. Sri Lanka Tamil inscriptions dating from the 12th century have instances where the letter l is written instead of **l**:

e.g	piLaiccaravar	(ET: 17)	instead of pilaiccaravar
	KiLakku	(CTLii: 6)	" " Kilakku
	piLaccaravar	(CTLii:34)	" " pilaccaravar
	KiLamai	(CTLii:62)	" " Kilamai

These instsnces suggest that the present state regarding l - **l** distinction in the spoken dialects of Sri Lanka must have started as early as the 12th century A.D.

2.3. The past tense suffix /-tt-/or/-nt-/of the literary Tamil becomes /-cc-/ or /-nc-/ respectively before /i-/or/y-/ in all the Tamil dialects. Sri Lanka Tamil inscriptions exhibit this feature:

e.g	pitittu	piticcu	(ET: 12)
	pilaittaravar	pilaiccaravar	(ET: 17)
	vaitta	vaicca	(ET: 27)
	arintu	arinci	(CTI ii: 53)

In one instance it is interesting to note that the dental cluster/tt/which is not a past tense suffix changing into/cc/. The word virru ' having sold' of the literary Tamil is normally rendered in the spoken Tamil as **vittu** (this lexical item occurs in Sri Lanka Tamil inscriptions; (cf. CTIi:35) But this form, in analogy with the palatalization of the past tense suffix/-tt/before/i-/,has changed into viccu (ET: 17)

3. BATTICALOA DIALECT

3.1. Batticaloa Tamil possesses many unique linguistic features that are not found in other dialects of Tamil and has a different pattern of intonation and stress (see, for further details Zvelebil 1966; Suseendirarajah, 1973; Sanmugadas, 1976). Tamil inscriptions that are connected with the Eastern Province of Sri Lanka, for which Batticaloa is the capital, show a number of linguistic features of the Batticaloa Tamil.

3.2. An interesting phonetic feature in Batticaloa Tamil is the elison of the final vowel in certain words. The normal Sandhi rule in Tamil is that if two vowels co-occur in Sandhi, then either /y/or/v/ is inserted in between those two vowels in order to prevent hiatus. The only exception is the deletion of the shortened/u/ before any vowel. But in Batticaloa Tamil a unique feature in connection with these Sandhi rules is found. Consider, for example, the following expressions:

arici — ellaam
aacci — enka

In Jaffna Tamil, an insertion of an approximant /y/ is needed in the expressions just cited above:

arici — ellaam — ariciyellaam
aacci — enka — aacciyenka

But in Batticaloa Tamil, the hiatus filler /y/ is not found in such expressions. Instead, the final vowel is dropped:

arici — ellaam — aricellaam
aacci — enka — aaccenka

This is a unique feature that is found only in the Batticaloa Tamil and not in other dialects. The epigraphical record too confirms this linguistic feature. Campanturai Copper Plates((CTLi: 63) has the following interesting expression, namely, kacile 'at Kasi' The structural pattern of this expression in written Tamil will be:

kaci — il —e

In Jaffna Tamil, the anove expression will emerge as:

kaci — il — e kaciyile

Thus the above mentioned epigraphical record, which is being dated in the mid - 17th century, seems to have preserved a linguistic feature which is present even now in the Batticaloa Tamil.

3.3 In the villages along the Western coast of the Batticaloa lagoon, the Tamils speak a sub-variety of the Batticaloa Tamil. Certain peculiarities are found in this **patuvan karait tamil** (The Tamil of the sun-setting coast). For instance, /a/ and / i / in the first syllable changes to [e] in almost all the words in this sub-variety:

tayir	—	teyiru	'curd'
kallu	—	kellu	'stone'
cilay	—	sele	'statuee'
narai	—	nere	'become gray'
vilay	—	vele	'price'

The change of /a/ or / i / to [e], though restricted to the Western coast at present, must have been universal in the whole of Batticaloa region at one time. A Pillar inscreption from Tirukkovil of the 14th or 15th century (CTLi:2) and Campanturai Copper plates of the 17th century give a number of instances of / a / or/ i / changing into [e]

kankai	—	kenkai	(CTli: 26)
natcattiram	—	natcettiram	(CTli: 62)
kitaitta	—	ketaitta	(CTli: 63)
kankaiyile	—	kenkaiyile	(CTli: 63)

4. CONCLUSION

If this study is completed, it may be possible to draw many inferences and conclusions in relations to the linguistic features of the Sri Lanka Tamil dialects preserved in epigraphy and it may even be possible to fix the period when the principal dialects of Sri Lanka. i.e. Batticaloa Tamil and Jaffna Tamil) separated from the continental Tamil.

NOTES

1. A version of the revised paper presented at the Fourth Annual seminar on South Asian Epigraphy, 'Jaffna, March 1976, organised by the Jaffna Archaeological Society.

2. *Nalla Tamil Elutunkal* is a text book written for teaching grammar to Collegiate students. In their opening sentence, the authors of the book say "ilakkiyamum atanai iyakkum moliyum amaintirukka ventiya amaippu muraiyinai varaiyaruttuk kurum nule ilakkanam." According to them the grammar defines the language of the literature.

3. See, Sanmugadas (1972: 391-92) for details about *tap* and *trill*.

4. Meenakshisundaran, T. P., *Tamil*, Series Three, Monographs on Indian Languages, Indian Council for Cultural Relations, p.2.

5. *Nannul*, sutra, 162.

6. *Ibid*, sutra, 164.

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REVIEW

MODERN SRI LANKA
A SOCIETY IN TRANSITION

(eds: Tissa Fernando and Robert N. Kearney)
Foreign and Comparative Studies / South Asian Se ies No. 1
Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs,
Syracuse University, U. S. A. (pp viii +297)

I

This is a study on Sri Lanka emanating from the Foreign and Comparative Studies Programme of the Syracuse University U.S.A., reflecting "the Maxwell School's continuing awareness of the imperative for attention to developments and circumstances outside the United States".

The work designed as it is to provide an introduction to the island, its contemporary problems and their historical roots, has, besides the introduction by the editors, twelve chapters (papers) dealing with the historical, social, economic, political and cultural developments and circumstances, most of them written by eminent scholars on Sri Lankan States (the editors themselves are respected scholars in this field) like Gananath Obeysekere, Sri Gunasinghe, N. Balakrishnan and Swarna Jayaweera.

It is true that in a relatively slim and introductory volume like this "it is not possible to treat all facets of a complex, dynamic, pluralistic nation". Also each of the contributions, as they are written by eminent specilists in the respective field could and do stand "independently" as in-depth contributions.

The main value of the work as a volume would therefore depend on how the independent research pieces are brought together, that is, on the main theoretical framework within which these writings are presented.

It is the main aim of the authors to depict the contemporary scene- "also for the most part, the emphasis is on developments and circumstances of the nation today and in the immediate past, although certain contributions of necessity lead the reader back to the more distant past and even to antiquity" (p iii). Charaterising the nation as a "pluralistic" one, the editors see Sri Lanka as a "society in transition", the changes being evident in "rising rates of literacy and levels of eduational attainment, ... shift from subsistence agriculture to wage labour, ... soaring levels of popular participation in vigorouzly competitive election results and in many subtle alterations of aspirations and values" (p 22).

A close reading of the book reveals that the main theoretical framework that provides a perspectivity to the volume as a whole is manifest oniy in the writings of both the editors, in how they tend to characterise the transition in concepetual terms.

Tissa Fernando, one of the editors, in "Aspects of Social Stratification' sees as a sociologist, the transition as only from a caste based stratification system, adding that it must not be thought the transition is "either total or clear cut" (p 39). He concludes by saying "class had been superimposed on caste resulting in the highly complex stratification system of contemporary Sri Lanka" (p 40)

Robert N. Kearney views the change "as a cluster of interrelated societal transformations shared with many nations of Asia and elsewhere often termed "modernization". And modernization, he defines as "a complex web of changes in the way people live and work, in the values and beliefs they hold and in the wants and needs they feel". Modernization, as he himself accepts further down, is based on a tradition / modernity split.

No attempt has been made within the work to formulate in theoretical terms the identifying character of the transition and to relate the caste/class concept to the "modernization" concept. This seems to be in the main an editorial flaw. The very acceptance of the idea of the superimposition of "class" on "caste" would necessarilly demand an analysis in terms of the socio-economic formations within the country. Such an analysis would have thrown some light on the modes of productions and thereby on the internal causes for those stresses and strains which the country is undergoing now. The absence of such an analysis of the underlying forces makes the work descriptive and not analytical.

As is now generally accepted the concept of modernization too cannot be of great assistance, for, the concept of modernization denotes a "total" trasformation of a traditional or pre-modern society into the types of technology and associated organization that characterizes the "advanced", economically prosperous and relatively politically stable nations of the western world and **"is predicated on the assumption that one can describe the general features of both 'traditional' and "advanced" or modern societies and thus treat development as the transformation of the one type into another"**. (Norman Long. 1977 emphasis added). It is a Euro-Centric view which very often ignores the historical circumstances of the Third World countries to which it is applied.

A comprehensive editorial focus would have enabled a more meaningful reading of 'A Review of the Economy' for, though in cold objective terms,

it gives the facts relating to the conflicts the social and welfare and distribution policies of the consecutive governments had with the objectives of faster economic growth.

The absence of well defined theoretical framwork leaves the reader with no clue to the socio-political reasons for adoption in and after 1977 (and this period is not covered in the book except for a reference to its constitutional framework by Kearney p. 69) an economic strategy based on export led growth, a strategy that relies mainly on foreign investment and liberalization of imports. In fact with the many changes that have occured in each of the important sectors of social political and economic life of the country since 1977 this work reads more like a work of past history than on contemporary events.

The book also fails to give a true picture of the pluralistic character of the island. Having admitted that "ethnic and religious divisions continue to be of considerable social, political and cultural importance in Sri Lanka" (p 5), the editors have not gone for writings that would have fully reflected the nationality question that bedevils Sri Lanka now. The references to the non-Sinhala communities in the Introduction and to the political activities of the TULF are not enough to provide a comprehensive picture of the inter-nationality tensions that exist within Sri Lanka today. The editors cannot be blamed too much for this omission as there is paucity of real research work on these aspects of Sri Lankan political life. However, they could have provided the reader with some material on the culture and social life of the minorities - the Muslims and the Tamils. In fact such a provision would have thrown light on the basic socio-cultural inter-relationships that exist between the Tamil and the Sinhala peoples, wnich have been never highlighted.

The sociology of research in the Social Sciences in Sri Lanka reveals that most of the studies have been made on the basic assumption of communal conflicts and on the exclusiveness of groups. And such studies in turn have sharpened the existing conflicts.

Nevertheless the volume has very illuminating studies on various aspects of Sinhala life, culture and consciousness. It is not within the compass of a short review like this to go into the details of each of those studies, but, it should be stated that they do contribute to our knowledge in those fields. Special mention should be made of the contributions of Swarna Jayaweera, Donald E. Smith, John Ross Carter and Gananath Obeysekere.

The work is of academ c significance and deserves to be read by all interested in Sri Lankan studies.

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