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# INTERPRETING THE SUBALTERN VOICE

by

D. G. P. Seneviratne

## Introductory

It is a truism that as the demands on them expand and become multi-faceted, the processes of social organization tend to become more complex. It becomes more difficult, for example, to make decisions that affect the health or well-being of a community through a process of consultation in which each voice is weighed on the same scale: the popular notion of such a process is often expressed in Abraham Lincoln's "government of the people, by the people, for the people".

In most human societies, as in others, hierarchical structures have developed from the beginning primarily that the knowledge and practices of the elders could be passed on for the prosperity of the community and for a life in harmony with each other and with their universe. Such systems were "sufficient unto themselves": no more could reasonably be expected of any form of social organization. But once the production of necessities for the maintenance of human life came to be translated into or to be affected by forms of exchange that became progressively remote from such primary objects, the form and content of social organizations underwent a radical change. They were increasingly organized within structures that gave rise to and reflected an imperative, or an anxiety, to maximize the return from those endeavors. The pursuit of such objectives and of others, such as the transmutation of needs into wants, affected the decision making process ever more markedly. The life-chances of those who had no wish or omitted to enter such systems, or were excluded from them, have always been a matter of concern to philosophers and religious pathfinders.



The academic enterprise, which I take to be a life of inquiry in which one may speak only to the facts as known and, is informed by a particular concern for accessing what, following the work of Ranajith Guha and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, has come to be enshrined, if not fossilized, in “subaltern studies”, the umbrella term to which I was introduced by Arjuna Parakrama. It is a term which, like ‘class’, ‘gender’, ‘ethnicity’, ‘free enterprise’ and ‘Democracy’ - ‘the big capital-letter word’ that, as Spivak put it, is being used to ‘re-territorialize capitalism’<sup>1</sup> -, has come to shelter many sins.

This paper<sup>2</sup> examines features of such studies that merit remark, primarily on the evidence of their dependence, for the most part, on interpretations of what the subalterns may wish to say. A further premise refers to the subservience of such interpretations, and of their documentation, to trends in the management of academic inquiry towards silencing the voices of the subaltern or the dis-privileged everywhere.<sup>3</sup> This unsavory task is carried out by the kind of ‘intellectual worker’<sup>4</sup> who figure in this essay.

## Subalterns

‘Subaltern’, as we shall see, is, like other such terms, employable as a self-designated classification under cover of which ‘special interest groups’ that are usually among dominant segments of society, pressurize the State to adopt policies favorable to them, - and is so employed. It is one of the tenets of current analyses of ‘the State’ that it represents no more than the dominant ‘special interest’ groups that succeed in capturing its decision-making apparatus at a given time. This process has achieved a high degree of visibility, though not of sophistication, in the USA, where lobbyists operate in swarms among Presidents and their aides, Congressmen and Senators. In a dictatorial administration, whether backed by numbers (as counted under a ‘Constitution’ drafted by and for dominant groups) or simply underwritten by goons in or out of uniform, such groups need capture only the one individual or his / her close advisors.



In offering illustrative examples of how the subaltern voice is interpreted, the language prescribed for themselves by most academics (who would classify such material as ‘anecdotal’ and therefore below par in ‘academic discourse’), is not adopted here. Nevertheless, I have chosen to employ, for their guidance, their preferred system of ‘referencing’ what they say or regurgitate. It has long been known, especially by its users, that the preferred dialect is designed to shield the academic enterprise from the real world, to obfuscate the language of the money-market, and to conceal from public view the whys and wherefores of the exercise of State power.

An example that bears immediately on the major theme of this paper, one that, given the reach of the mass media, few could have missed, is the call for a ‘level playing field’ by the proponents of ‘free enterprise’ a.k.a. ‘marketeters’. What that means, in the language to which ‘subalterns’ do have access, is that monster transnational corporations should be given ‘equal access’, across national boundaries, to the land, water, mineral and human resources of ‘third world’ nations. Those are nations that have been systemically rendered poor through pillage in its various forms. And, as, for example, at the present time in Sri Lanka, those who command State power, however briefly, make such access not ‘equal’ but ‘privileged’ and designed to facilitate further pillage.

Shakespeare had a word on this in *The Tempest*:

*“I’ll show thee every fertile inch of this island: and I will kiss thy foot. Prithee, be my God”*

*“Here, bear my bottle”*

Who are the subaltern in this country? They are many. They constitute the majority, as everywhere else. Each such group defines itself in a certain way, and is defined in the language of the dominant, in another. By way of illustration, the Sinhalese define themselves by their language, which belongs in the Indo-Aryan family of languages and is the oldest literary language of that group in current use.<sup>5</sup>



The thirst for 'ethnic' and other identities tends to fragment human beings, not only the societies in which they live out their lives; but the impetus given to such impulses has long been a primary instrument for achieving domination on a global scale<sup>6</sup>. Thus, today, various communities are being induced to either construct territorial boundaries as a prelude to constructing a communal identity or to construct identities, mainly economic or 'religious', also in the sense of 'denominational', that are dependent on allegiance to forces controlled from beyond national boundaries. This perhaps is another manifestation of 'globalization', the short answer to which might be that the most global of all currencies is that of being 'human' in relation to all forms of life.

Thus we have, in the guise of the 'subaltern', the propagation of the claims, 'aspirations', however designated, of minority groups, mostly economic and always backed by financial and military force that are, in concert with academic exertions towards that end, increasingly provided by foreign organizations<sup>7</sup>. That what exist in Sri Lanka, in a view frequently expressed by Doric de Souza, (himself a member of several minority groups - the English-speaking, the left-wing intellectuals / activists, the Roman Catholic and so on), are dominant rather than oppressed minorities, it would be difficult to dispute.

Although the dominant are a minority in any given society, 'subalternity' changes over time. The minorities that de Souza referred to were communal, religious, caste groups or combinations of them. These groups are composed of sub-groups, some of which have suffered subaltern status at times: for example, the 'Portuguese' vis a vis the 'Dutch' Burghers. (Most Portuguese who lived here were of the soldiery, uniformed or not defrocked, while most of the Dutch were traders, city people, not Boers / farmers, nevertheless as violent<sup>8</sup>). So were Roman Catholics vis a vis Dutch Protestantism and the Church of England, the Mukkuvars of Batticaloa, whose settlements, some 1000 years ago, pre-date by three or four centuries those of the 'Jaffna Tamils' who have sought to dominate them, the Malays vis a vis the Moors among whom, too, 'status' is often measured by location or *mul-gama*, and so on.



The definition of 'the subaltern', as given by the 'Subaltern Collective' is, as might be expected, 'different'. In his *Language and Rebellion: Discursive Unities and the Possibility of Protest*<sup>9</sup>, based on a chapter in the initial draft of his doctoral thesis, Parakrama refers to Guha's *The Prose of Counter-insurgency*, (1981?), which he calls 'the statement of the subaltern collective's theoretical principles', and to *Subaltern Studies: Deconstructing Historiography*, (1985) published as Spivak's introduction to *Selected Subaltern Studies*, OUP, New York, 1988.

The 'concept' of the 'subaltern' in this academic literature has been derived from Gramsci; a Marxist who applied it to 'non-elite' or subordinate groups. Guha's definition is, academically, 'fail-safe' (as in a lift backed by electrical brakes as well as heavy chains) or excessively indulgent towards one's safety: it is known that when the electrical brakes failed such chains have crushed the lift and its occupants. "The social groups and elements included in this category represent the demographic difference" (i.e. the numbers) "between the total Indian population and all those whom we have described as the 'elite'." That is an easy 'out'<sup>10</sup>.

### Subaltern Speech

It is been made clear already that the enterprise here reviewed is based in or largely derived from the globally dominant societies in the west. In an essay titled, "*Can the Subaltern Speak?*", Spivak had adopted Guha's definition of the 'space' available to the subaltern in a colonized country, "the space that is cut off from mobility". She had also understood the 'Subalternists' to have fastened onto moments of insurgency when subalternity has been brought to a point of crisis. The fact that she has continued to revise that essay<sup>11</sup>, suggests the difficulties encountered even by a clear-headed scholar in speaking of the subaltern.

As I pointed out in my paper under reference, Shakespeare himself has demonstrated, almost definitively, the manner in which the subaltern, as well as the 'conspiratorial' voice, to which the former is often transmuted at the point at which the subaltern



approaches the act of revolt, are articulated. It is done *sotto voce* or in asides addressed to 'the pit' or via mechanisms associated with the 'jester'. Shakespeare's plays and entertainments, whether based on 'historical works' or not, are full of examples of the subaltern voice expressing itself within the limits imposed on it by its masters.

Spivak's rhetorical question may be answered thus:

When mention is made of the 'subaltern', and we might note that the 'subaltern' is most often spoken of rather than spoken for, it is assumed that the 'subaltern' is the dispossessed, the deprived, the disinherited, the 'under-privileged', a term that assumes a world in which 'privilege' is the sought for or the norm, and as though 'privilege' can exist without a corresponding systemic enforcement of 'disprivilege'. That is, of denying or shutting off access, or even of the possibility of acquiring access, to the kind of life that the 'disprivileged' themselves value. These 'disprivileged' are those who have been rendered 'voiceless' in Lincoln's sense or whose voices have been 'included out' of the dominant discourse of the time (which is translated into acts, usually of public policy, that affect their lives). And who could presume to speak for those who have their own voice, and do speak for themselves in a language that international or national news agencies have no use for?

Evidently following Guha's view of the matter, and that of his fellow workers, it would seem that we have to 'depend' on literary 'texts' for an account of events that have led to where we are if we were to set out to record them - what 'academics' classify as "oral histories". All living things have a span of life that is finite – and their speech dies with them. As Ludowyk observed, in an early definition of the subaltern, "The British regarded the Sinhala peasant with an unfriendly eye .. Independence at the time was a word of sinister import; it betrayed a spirit inappropriate to the poor"<sup>12</sup> Parakrama's account follows the Subaltern Collective's thesis that the Official versions of events needs to be challenged but finds himself relying on them.<sup>13</sup>

The primary character of language as speech has been eloquently explicated by Godfrey Gunatilleke in his essay,



*Ludowyke as Teacher: Some Reflections on Literature as Knowledge.*<sup>14</sup> However Gunatilleke proceeds to express in it his belief that

“In all other uses of language” (other than in literature), “including the social sciences, philosophy and law, the structure of language seeks to create a vocabulary in which words have a fixed content of meaning and clearly identified contexts for their use.”

With that, we are already in the world of make-believe, the meanings so prescribed being value-loaded in every sense in which one might choose to construe that term. Such a view inevitably leads to this:

“In obtaining knowledge through such language we have to respond with the cerebral and analytical part of our being. We have to deal with a reality into which our inner states of being, the experience of our human relationships, our loves and hates, joys and sufferings, are not allowed to enter.”

Well, that was precisely the kind of distinction –making that Ludowyk strongly opposed as in his note on *Getting off the Fence*.<sup>15</sup>

‘Subaltern voices’, even when (as rarely) they have been accurately accessed, have almost invariably been interpreted in the service of the ruling classes. This would seem to have happened, ironically once more, even more intensively, more insidiously, and more viciously, as ‘subaltern studies’ have come to be institutionalized through the last two decades. The ‘students’ of ‘subaltern voices’ may be said to have taken their place among the interpreters of ‘development’ in the interests of dominant groups.

These questions have all been subsumed today within debates, so called, on development, so called, which carefully skirt questions of “morality, justice, guilt”. The “ethical dilemma” that development experts face usually has to do with fashioning a language for weeping for the poor in the service of those who create and perpetuate poverty. In fact, they only need to adopt a dialect



developed, let us for convenience say, by 'the World Bank'. Such experts must, to begin with, accept 'a suitable remuneration package'; as they become proficient in the art of defining 'ethical dilemmas' in more liquid terms, they could move on to 'negotiating' such 'packages'.

### Interpreters

In Sri Lanka, as Vijaya Samaraweera<sup>16</sup> has demonstrated, the British proved unable to honour their undertaking to 'preserve inviolate' the customary laws of the land. For instance, they overturned, through their Courts the operation of the Sinhala law over all persons resident in this country.<sup>17</sup> Their intent on domination was compounded by their reliance on 'interpreters'. Samaraweera reports that "the interpreters were drawn from that strata of the local society which was to establish the quickest and easiest linkages with the new rulers". In the Maritime Provinces they were drawn from among the Burghers, the descendents of the Portuguese and the Dutch who had previously acquired domicile and who proved to be, after an initial hesitation, the strongest supporters of the British in the island.

The interpreters for the vast mass of the island, the Kandyan Provinces, on the other hand, were recruited from among the Sinhalese in the littoral who had come to be associated with British rule through their early acquisition of a knowledge of the language of the English. Apart from the possibility of a lack of rapport between the interpreters and the interpreted because of a diversity in their respective backgrounds, the evidence reveals also an inadequacy in the language education of the interpreters. Dialectal forms of Sinhala that then prevailed in different parts of the island were misunderstood by interpreters from around Colombo.

The shackles on our interpreters had another dimension as well. Drawn from the class that was rapidly moving towards anglicization, they tended to devalue their own culture. That particular ailment has surfaced again and in a more virulent form, and we are faced by "marginal men" (and women), as they were



referred to by the Director of Public Instruction in Colombo over a hundred years ago, who attempt to set themselves up as interpreters in a “post-modernist” world or non-world.

I have shown elsewhere the dominant role that language plays in the administration of all colonized societies.<sup>18</sup>

They have all confronted the colonized as well as the colonizers with the problem of the medium through which the bases of their relationship might be mutually understood and the affairs of the colony conducted. While that relationship is determined essentially by the brute force of the colonizer, the conversion of that element of force into a benefit more sustained and extensive than looting and pillage of the movable and extant goods produced by the colonized people, as was the practice of the Portuguese in Sri Lanka, requires the establishment of a system for the continued exploitation of the potential wealth of the colony. An organization must necessarily be set up for that purpose and lines of communication established from the colonizer to the colonized in order to facilitate the use of the colony’s resources of land, labour and capital in such a way as to maximize / optimize profit to the party that commands the superior force.

The administration of a country therefore requires that the administrators either themselves know the language of the people or obtain access to it through interpreters. The wise ruler, vide Isabella below, prefers to know the people at first hand, and would rather not depend on an interpreter even if a trustworthy one were available.”

The problem of interpreting is vividly illustrated by two resolutions moved by Philip Gunawardena in the State Council. In 1937, despite the objections of the Legal Secretary, the State Council adopted the following motion by Gunawardena:



“In view of the grave hardships and injustices attending the loss of accuracy in interpretation and re-interpretation of questions and answers in Court proceedings, this Council is of opinion that in the Municipal and Police Courts of the Island the proceedings should be conducted in the vernacular.”

Two years later, the State Council accepted yet another motion moved by Gunawardena, who had traveled backwards from the Courts to the police station:

“In view of the frequent defeat of the ends of justice caused by inaccuracy in recording police station entries in English by policemen and sergeants, who are proficient neither in the vernacular nor in English, this Council is of opinion that entries made at police stations should be recorded in the language in which they are originally stated.”

For an example of the system in action we need go no further than a passage, also quoted by Samaraweera, from Leonard Woolf’s *Village in the Jungle*:

“They did not understand what exactly was happening. This was “a case” and they were “the accused”, that was all they knew. The judge looked at them and frowned; this increased their fear and confusion. The judge said something to the interpreter, who asked them their names in an angry threatening voice. Silindu had forgotten what his *ge* name was; the interpreter became still more angry at this, and Silindu still more sullen and confused. From time to time the judge said a few sharp words in English to the interpreter: Silindu was not quite certain whether he was or was not speaking to them, or whether, when the interpreter spoke to them in Sinhalese, the words were really his own, or whether he was interpreting what the judge had said.”

The role of language in law as an instrument for distorting, muting or suppressing altogether the voice of the subaltern is as



old as 'the Law', other than the 'customary', in most societies<sup>19</sup>. What is true of the practice of 'the law' is applicable to academic inquiry and to the dissemination of its results: "if the law was intelligible to the people, and if the legal system were accessible to the majority of the population, the role of the lawyer would become, to a great extent, redundant." (Samaraweera, op cit.)<sup>20</sup>

At this point I shall refer, briefly, to the work of two well known products of our Departments of English. One of them, of an earlier vintage, is generally regarded as one of our leading intellectuals, the other is an academic, whose dominant concern is with 'subaltern voices', an example of whose work, in his role as 'interpreter', I shall examine, somewhat lightly.

I outline here the particular use to which they have put the language of domination in their role as interpreters. I do not examine the 'whys' of their endeavors although that would be relevant to a reading of their 'text', as the current nomenclature for all phenomena, one that tends to facilitate mis-representations, goes; they are self evident. Suffice it to say that they have been engaged, more or less 'professionally', in representing to the world the dominant minorities as the oppressed.

These 'texts' are by Regi Siriwardena and Arjuna Parakrama, - persons who have been through departments of English not only as students but as teachers. Regi Siriwardena, who studied under E.F.C. Ludowyk,<sup>21</sup> has been candid enough to call his story, "*The Lost Lenore, a tale*".

Arjuna Parakrama,<sup>22</sup> more ambitiously, has given his who-done-it (who-done-what?) - the impressive title: "*The Case of the Missing Author: Seeing Through Transparency in a Woman's Text*". It was presented at or to, am not sure which, a closed-door conference on 'Subaltern Studies' at which the select gathering included Spivak, the major interpreter of the "subaltern". The paper by Parakrama, who had studied under Spivak for some time, might read as "and thereby hangs a tale", as indeed it does, though it is not quite the tale he seeks to present.<sup>23</sup>



I have chosen these documents for comment because they are exercises in interpretation; they interpret the 'native' to readers or listeners who either have little or no knowledge at first hand of the matters so interpreted or who have been made ready to swallow whole the interpretation given. The interpretation is mediated through the English language and, more specifically, the accretions of the dominant buzzwords to which, in turn, the minds of such interpreters tend to adhere.

One of the central themes of *The Lost Lenore* is "hybridity".

"But did the Sinhalese also hold hybridity in low esteem?" is the query made, and, "Oh absolutely!" is the response.

Siriwardena wavers between employing the term in its extended sense, and in its more limited meaning. He goes into the physiognomy of the Sinhalese, although a human mating with another human does not produce a "hybrid" for the reason that all human beings belong in a single species. As a long-term associate of Neelan Tiruchelvam's International Centre for Ethnic Studies, Siriwardena should have been familiar with K.N.Jayatilleka's monograph on "Buddhism and Race". But this, clearly, is not a matter of knowing, but of pursuing a 'line' of what, for want of another polite word to cover the case, I will say, 'argument': here it has to do with denigrating, in some obscure way, the Sinhalese or the Sinhalese.

Siriwardena refers to '*Mestisos*', '*Mixties*', '*Topazes*', and goes on, "But Topazes is very interesting because the Sinhalese have a variation on it which means very much the same thing - '*thuppahi*'." The matter is spelt out by the statement that '*thuppahi*' is a "Sinhalese racist term".

'*Thuppahi*' is a derogatory term, widely used, mostly by native language speakers when they confront the wielders of the '*kaduwa*', (sword, in this usage denoting a knowledge of English) and all that goes with it, in the Weberian sense as well ('subalterns' in Europe had no right to carry arms). '*Thuppahi*' is derived from a Tamil term for 'interpreter' and was applied, by extension, to the



original interpreters for the British, - the Burghers. The other terms quoted by Siriwardena, as well as references to '*Mickos*' (mechanics) and to '*Melders and Welders*' and so on, were coined by those who regarded themselves as 'superior' Burghers and adopted by Sinhalese and Tamils who sought to bask, as far as they were permitted, given their pigmentation and so on, in the imperial sun.

Siriwardena then turns to 'cuisine' as proof of 'hybridity'. He refers to the origins of 'hoppers', (*kattā*) 'sambol' and aubergines, a la Jaffna, (typically, a 'white curry' that does not go with hoppers) - an unusual menu, no doubt, but then he's not thinking of the food. That meal is "followed by '*watalappan*' or good old Sinhala buffalo curd with 'treacle from the *kithul* palm" - (why not '*kithul pāni*'?). 'Cuisine' has little to do with the situation in the tale, although the sated do suffer a fixation about food, as to quantities, textures, flavors, nutritional values etc., of a character different to the interest in food that the hungry carry with them.

Speaking of 'Serendipity', Siriwardena refers to its origins in the story of the three Princes of Serendib, but desists from going into the origins of 'Serendib' - (a corruption of *Sinhala Dvīpa*).

Arjuna Parakrama hangs his tale on the '*Anganagunadapana*' a poem by N. Catherine Silva Hamine published in 1894 at the Vidyaratnakara Press, Welitota; Parakrama reports it as "'Welitara' (near Galle, then the literary heart of the Sinhalese)." He offers no evidence of the primacy of Galle as a centre of Sinhalese literary activity at the time, but before the audience to which the paper was presented, such details were perhaps considered not worth a thought.

The problems of the interpreter, then, begin at the beginning. The audience at that Conference consisted of a few academics from India and a little over double that number of Sri Lankan or ex-Sri Lankan academics and propagandists for 'Tamil Eelam'. Most of the papers were on the latter subject, and at least one of them had



its title changed overnight to cover its overt intent by clothing it in “academese”<sup>24</sup>. Entry was strictly by invitation, an exception being made in my case through the intervention of Arjuna Parakrama. This Fifth Subaltern Studies Conference was held in a small seminar room at the back of the Sri Lanka Foundation Institute (SLFI) building (which also has a large auditorium). I inquired from the star invitee, Gayatri Spivak, whether the “subalterns” are discussed under such conditions in India. Her response was, naturally, in the negative. Not many of the papers presented were made available to the participants (there were around thirty) at the conference. Michael Roberts, who has made a career of producing convoluted interpretations of our history, obtained a few for me.

I mention these details by way of suggesting the ambience in which these interpreters find themselves most comfortable. There are other details, of course, such as the demeanor of the participants, the full-throated delivery of inanities, the ‘coffee-break’ comments, less polite / pretentious than ‘interventions’ / ‘quick comments’, talk of the next conference and so on, that I would rather leave to Yasmine Gooneratne to record (when she’s in better form than in that bit of ‘The Pleasures of Conquest’.)

The thesis that Parakrama presents in his paper is that the *Anganagunadapana* is “in many ways a self-consciously ‘feminist’ text. It explicitly rejects dominant notions of female sexuality, and lays bare male hypocrisy”, - so it does, but then he goes on, to declare rather than to advance the proposition, that this was done “using the privileged male preserve of religious discourse to undercut its very foundation”.

Parakrama demonstrates that to be so to his evident satisfaction, but it is clear that he had failed to brief himself on the matter. He becomes quite stern, even breathlessly so, when he comes to what might be taken to be the salacious bits in the poem, as also when he declares that little is known of its author.

“The author emphasizes”, says Parakrama, “that though women have been disparaged and punished as sexually promiscuous and untrustworthy since ancient times, it is man who is depraved



and disgusting according to the very sources upon which society places such a premium, the sacred canon.” For the guidance of the uninitiated in his target audience who may have been wondering what this “sacred canon” was, Parakrama goes on, “The invocation of the authority of the *pārājikā* or Failures / Defeats of Buddhist monks is hardly innocent in this context. Catherine Silva must surely have been aware that in bringing the sexual peccadilloes and perverse practices of the monks as proof of male perfidy, she is holding Buddhism itself to ridicule and contempt.” - There it is, the substance of his “reading” or interpretation of this poem.

As the *Vinayapiṭaka* has it, sex relates to *kāma* (sensual desire), *punabbhava* (re-becoming or biological reproduction) and (therefore) to *dukkha* (sorrow). It seeks to set out rules of monastic discipline for groups of “homeless dwellers”, a brotherhood (sic) that was part of a larger secular society on which the bhikkhu depended for food, clothing and shelter. The *Vinayapiṭaka* embodies both the instructions and injunctions relating to the behaviour of members of both sexes, monks and nuns, not only in regard to sex but also in regard to propriety in many of the areas of monastic behaviour. These were intended to strengthen the monks against themselves and their human weaknesses.<sup>25</sup> The Buddha’s own teaching on monachism was regarded as being more than somewhat peculiar, if not ‘subversive’, at the time, since he “discouraged solitary asceticism, severe austerities and irrevocable vows, and enjoined moral restraint in celibate fraternities, conformity to rules of discipline, upright conduct and confession to each other”<sup>26</sup>.

Western views, which are part of the scholastic underpinning of such interpreters as Parakrama, of the matter, seem to have been dominated by the theme of the ‘spirit’ and the ‘flesh’. Weber<sup>27</sup> surmised that there was an ‘extraordinarily intimate’ relationship of religion and sexuality, whether conscious or unconscious, direct or indirect, while Meyer<sup>28</sup> had concluded that “burning sexuality and stark renunciation of the world and the flesh” were a “twin pair”. However that might be, the erotic sculptures at Sanchi, Bharhut, Mahaballipuram, and of bestiality at Khajurao are known



well enough.<sup>29</sup> (I might remark, *en passant*, that coprolalia, the desire for lewd speech, has reached a new low in ‘telephone sex’, - an art form the practise of which Yasmine Gooneratne includes among ‘The Pleasures of Conquest’).

Parakrama’s struggles with the identity of “Catherine Silva Hamine” are even more entertaining. Occasionally he introduces a ‘de’ into her surname – but interpreters are given to taking license: “Catherine (de) Silva appears to have been completely effaced even from localized oral history, not to mention public record.” As for the ‘public record’, his researches have turned up “no birth, death or marriage certificate” (a curious sequence, that) for Catherine (de) Silva. Nevertheless, he surmises that the lady was unmarried: “The spinster (?) schoolteacher - *iskole hāmine* - was treated with special respect by the community and her idiosyncrasies were by and large indulged.”

Come the next sentence in his thesis, that supposition, - and others - have become ‘fact’: “Her lack of privilege, her position outside the mainstream of society and the absence of strong social / family bonds must have provided the base for her daring yet outrageous intervention, but these were probably the same features that ensured that she would not survive the aftermath of it.” What that “aftermath” was Parakrama does not say, but it takes our interpreter to a punch-line:

“She had neither wealth nor political power” [and, he tells his select audience, “that sort of thing cannot be hidden”], “to sustain her in a time of crisis, no influence to ensure perpetuity and so on. Hers had to be, in hindsight, a one-shot deal, and that too negotiated along a labyrinth of gendered / classed / casted power-relations.”

Parakrama declares that, “incidentally,” “*even today* the overwhelming majority of literary and cultural critics don’t want to have anything to do with *Anganagunadapana* because of its daring sexual commentary!” He says later that “the Sinhala literary critical establishment” (which evidently consists of unnamed ‘academics and scholars’ even whose number is not given), had been “confronted with the text”. (Interpreters can say it as they



wish for maximum effect on their chosen audience.)

He has also consulted some monks, he says, and adds “In fact, the specific content of Catherine Silva’s text which would *even today* be considered fundamentally inimical and derogatory of the Buddha Sangha [sic] is not known by these monks”, and goes on “The monks appear very keen to obtain a copy of this work..”. Why he did not give them a copy he does not say. (He was unable to give me one either).

Parakrama reports that a senior monk “said that Catherine Silva was reputed to have known English well since there were references in her work to the *Bible* and other English texts that had not been translated”. Since it is of some significance here, it might be noted that Parakrama does not mention that the only ‘English text’, other than the *Bible*, referred to in *Anganagunadapana* is the *Decameron*. One wonders anyway how the senior monk could have made such a statement when neither he nor those who conferred that ‘reputation’ on Catherine Silva had seen a copy of the poem.

All this is quite intriguing when we consider that, by Parakrama’s account, “The text is a poorly-printed slim volume of poetry, comprising 62 four-line verses type-set on ten pages. The only known copy of this book is in the British Museum Library, in which typographical errors abound and where some sections are hardly legible.”

What a find! What committed research! A former Government Archivist informed me that it was the practice to send a clean copy to the British Museum.

Parakrama, however, also refers to the Government Gazette ‘Catalogue of Books’ to which he had been directed by H A I Goonetilleke, and he had looked up ‘the British Museum and Colombo Museum Collections’ (for the book to which *Anganagunadapana* was claimed to be a retort), but drawn a blank, as they say. Even more odd. Going via the same route, I found a copy of *Anganagunadapana*, in mint condition, in the Colombo Museum collection. Since the poem and Arjuna Parakrama’s



interpretations are difficult to come by, I have lodged copies in the Peradeniya University Library where they may be consulted.

It must be said for him that Parakrama has his nose to the ground and it does seem to lead him wherever he thinks or has been encouraged to believe the particular scents, however false, should lead. I said that the problems of the 'interpreter' begin at the beginning. In the present case they seem to go further back. The initial translation of the poem had evidently been done by Dr. Lakshmi de Silva, to whom Parakrama credits "N Catherine Silva Hamine: Poet and Polemicist" 'unpublished manuscript'. Lakshmi de Silva herself had returned the text and related papers to Kumari Jayawardena whose own contribution to this 'project' Parakrama acknowledges in handsome terms:

'The fact that I have derived much of this' [i.e. the social history of the poet] "from Professor Kumari Jayawardena<sup>30</sup> enhances my credibility, though the over-simplifications remain my own. Her help and guidance is gratefully acknowledged here. In fact, she was the inspiration and facilitator for the whole project, though the final outcome may not reflect this adequately". That's rather a low shot. If Kumari Jayawardena was the provider of 'the social history of the poet' as set out by Parakrama, she should have given up her 'professorship'.

Those micro-level interpreters may be left there, their principal function being to undermine sovereign states in the name of "ethnicity", a notion around which a number of prosperous industries, including the 'refugee' industry and 'the international community' have grown<sup>31</sup>. It has been decided, ironically, but wholly as was to be expected, by the 'globalisers', that 'ethnicity' should be projected as being more important than 'class' or 'gender' as the basis of conflict within societies, notions that are supported by them with self serving intent.

Those who wish to observe, in some detail, how the subaltern voice is edited out, might look at a paper I presented and how it was 'edited' / translated for publication.<sup>32</sup> The paper<sup>33</sup> was presented at a Conference of the Associations of Development



Institutes from all continents, barring North America, which evidently has no more miles to travel on the development path. The President of the host association, - the European -, edited the book: and he edited out my argument, emasculated my response to the garbage that was being emptied on the conference table in authoritative voices. It was as if what the subaltern may say can be determined, the boundaries set, by such 'intellectual workers'.

This particular problem has been described also by Ignazio Silone in his introduction to *Fontamara* in which he concludes his introduction to the novel with the words, "Let every man, then, have the right to tell his tale in his own words"<sup>34</sup>. The dominant 'forces', that are actually composed of 'people', however, deny the existence of such a 'right', as, for instance, spokesmen/women for the USA declare that people whom they continue to despoil have no 'right to food'. Or, as Arundathie Roy puts it, by simply stating that they have no 'Locusts Stand I' (*locus standi*).<sup>35</sup> The claim so asserted by Silone and the response to it is one that has a long history.

For example, Walt Whitman, writing of the need to recognize its antecedents, and to consciously build a 'composite American identity', observed that "We tacitly abandon ourselves to the notion that our United States have been fashioned from the British Islands only ...(ignoring) that Spanish character, grander in religiousness and loyalty, or for patriotism, courage, decorum, gravity and honor ... will supply some of the most needed parts."<sup>36</sup> He goes on, "There will not be found any more cruelty, tyranny, superstition & co., in the resumé of past Spanish history than in the corresponding resume of Anglo-Norman history. Nay, I think there will not be found so much." On American 'ethnology'. Whitman remarks, "As to our aboriginal or Indian population ... I know it seems agreed that they must gradually dwindle as time rolls on, and in a few generations more leave only a reminiscence, a blank. .. As America, from its far-back sources and current supplies, - develops, adapts, entwines, faithfully



identifies its own - are we to see it cheerfully accepting and using all the contributions of foreign lands from the whole outside globe - and then rejecting the only ones distinctively its own - the autochthonous ones?"

That was Whitman writing in 1883. How has America tended to go? It's gotten worse. Far from recognizing its non-Anglo-Norman antecedents, Americans are being forcibly absorbed into an 'English only' monoculture. Besides it being pressed into Official Language policy, a Court held that a Spanish-speaking mother was guilty of child abuse because she spoke in Spanish with her child.

As for recognizing the contributions of her aboriginal peoples, an official history prescribed by a Federal government agency, the Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps, for high-school students put the matter thus:

"Fierce and ruthless Indians" were "controlled on reservations" and "land that was promised to the Indians and set aside for them became open travel land for white settlers and prospectors. Fortunately for the Army, the government policy of pushing the Indians further West, then wiping them out was carried out successfully".<sup>37</sup>

Both these examples are quite recent, and were perpetrated in the Year of Our Lord Nineteen Ninety-Five.

As for the child who was to be denied access to Spanish, its 'mother-tongue', I shall refer to an anecdote related by Ivan Illich. It was about a Spanish grammarian, who solicited Queen Isabella's support for having his presumable all-consistent 'grammar' adopted throughout her empire, around the time that Christoval Colon (Columbus) came to her for support for his exploration of a Pacific route, (which turned out quite bloody), to 'the Indies'. She had turned them both down, but had later changed her mind about funding Colon's 'field research'. Columbus had already passed the Azores *en route* to the Indies when Isabella turned down the grammarian once more: she had told him, "I must be able to speak



with my peoples in their own tongue”<sup>38</sup>. And how does it go further south among the communities dominated by the Spanish speakers? Not well.

The moral of such stories is being underlined in yet another dimension today, in ‘Spanish America’ - (“Where have all the natives gone? Into graveyards everyone”?) - as also elsewhere, in the manner in which the struggle of the Zapatistas in Mexico to recover freedom for the indigenous peoples has focussed on language and its role in maintaining the subaltern status especially of their women. In his account of The Zapatista Women’s Uprising, ‘Subcomandante Insurgente Marcos’ reports the response of a mixed audience to Susana, a Totzil who had been deputed to consult groups of women and seek their thoughts on the ‘Laws of Women’<sup>39</sup>.

“When she presented them (in Spanish), one Tetzal delegate commented: ‘The good thing is that my woman doesn’t understand Spanish!’ A Totzil who was an infantry major and an official, was on his back immediately: ‘You’re screwed anyway because we are going to translate it into all dialects.’ The companero lowered his gaze. The women delegates were singing, the young men were scratching their heads. Prudently, I declared a recess.”

The task of education then covers several inter-related territories of domination and it requires a lot of footwork to draw the strands together towards effective collective action.

An example of how interpreters work and project their interpretations to the world may be seen in the following: it also shows up how even interpretations of subaltern voices are being ‘literally’ capitalized. This is a sample of the routes through which the subaltern speech is presented to their oppressors:

“*Shadows of Tender Fury. The Letters and Communiques of Subcomandante Marcos and the Zapatista Army of National Liberation*”. Translation © by Frank Bardacke, Leslie Lopez, and the Watsonville, California Human Rights Committee. Introduction © by John Ross. Afterword © by Frank Bardacke. Monthly Review



Press ©. New York, 1995. The illustrations are by a Mexican artist, Jose Guadalupe Posada (1852-1913) whose 'Works' had been published in Germany in 1976; a selection of Posada's 'Popular Mexican Prints' had been published in the USA by Dover in 1972. Whether any of the income from these books ever reached those whose subaltern voices have been thus presented I do not know.

The problems faced by the translators of these 'Communiques' would make a 'case-study' in themselves. 'A Note from the Translators', is coyly titled 'The Zapatista in Their Own Write'. John Ross's account of the history of the EZLN, 'Miracles, Coyunturas, Communiques' makes it clear that 'Miracles' tend to shield, rather than to advance, for the subalterns, their 'hope' within the range of accents they are permitted to use.

## Conclusion

Over time, perceptions change inside everyone as we begin to see both the promise and the limitations that flow from being human. The hardest task perhaps is the business of acquiring self-knowledge and all that goes with it. That is a task formidable in itself. How much more formidable then would be the task that faces the interpreters who know not the language of the phenomena they seek to interpret into the language of the rewards attending acclaim from fellow 'intellectual workers'?

## References

- 1 Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak. 'Teaching for the times' in *Imagineries of Cultural Pluralism*.
- 2 Based on my E F C Ludowyk Memorial Lecture, University of Peradeniya, 1996.
- 3 In a recent review of 'God, Gulliver and Genocide: Barbarism and the European Imagination 1492-1945' by Claude Rawson, Terry Eagleton underlines what was a major theme in my dissertation on Communal Politics in Sri Lanka, Murdoch, 1988. He observes, "Nothing is more indigenously American these days than 'otherness'"



... it is a piece of parochialism rooted in the intractable ethnic problems of the US. These homegrown concerns are then projected onto the rest of the globe rather like a cultural version of nuclear missile bases, so that post-colonial others find themselves obediently adopting the agenda of a largely American bred cult of otherness. Critics in, say, Sligo or Sri Lanka are to be found busily at work on the 'other' ... - the program peddled for its own private reasons, as it were, by the nation which sets the academic pace in these affairs. When American critics come to write about" (other nations) "what tends to catch their eye are questions of margins and minorities which loom large on the intellectual menu of their own culture, rather than, say, educational policy or religious architecture, which are less glamorous concerns in their own backyard." London Review of Books, Vol 23, No 16, 23 August 2001,

- 4 "An intellectual is thus in essence a social critic, a person whose concern is to identify, to analyse, and in this way to help overcome the obstacles barring the way to the attainment of a better, more humane, and more rational human order. As such he becomes the conscience of society and the spokesman of such progressive forces as it contains in any given period of its history. And as such he is inevitably considered a 'troublemaker' and a 'nuisance' by the ruling class seeking to preserve the *status quo* as well as by the intellectual workers in its service who accuse him of being 'Utopian' or 'metaphysical' at best, 'subversive' or 'seditious' at worst". Paul Baran, *The Commitment of the Intellectual*, 1961.
- 5 T.Burrow, Boden Professor of Sanskrit, Oxford, "Ancient and Modern Languages". In 'A Cultural History of India', ed. A. L. Basham. Oxford. 1975. P.166. See also Michael J Shapiro and Harold F Schiffman, 'Language and Society in Southeast Asia'. Motilal Barnadas. Delhi. 1981. P. 213.
- 6 This was true of all European invaders, not only the English (with whom the notion of *divide et impera* is associated in histories in the English language), long before the efforts made by 'Caucasians' in the USA to enforce disprivilege on select minority groups, such as those of Chinese, 'Asiatic' or African origin or the Spanish speaking, opened a 'window of opportunity for 'intellectual workers' starved out of conscience by systems of instruction and reward. Salman Rushdie commented on this a decade and a half ago in *The Listener*: 'The New Empire within Britain'.



- 7 Vide Eagleton, op cit.
- 8 See 'Max Havelaar', an account of Dutch depredations in 'the Dutch East Indies'.
- 9 Katha Publishers, London, 1990.
- 10 For example, Ludowyk's *Those Long Afternoons* is the account of an idyll of a "Galle Burgher" and we see in '*Running in the Family*', '*Relative Merits*' and '*The Jam Fruit Tree*', subaltern voices all engaged in giving voice to histories that the professional peddlers of social history have 'missed'.
- 11 *The Spivak Reader*, ed. Donna Landry & Gerald MacLean, Routledge, London, 1996, p.287 ff.
- 12 *The Story of Ceylon*. Faber. London. 1962.
- 13 Parakrama, op cit documents for the most part subaltern statements, usually given under duress, as recorded by colonial administrators and planters who felt threatened by those events. In *When Memory Dies* A Sivanandan records oral histories of the early days of the labour movement in Colombo.
- 14 *Honouring Ludowyk*, ed. Ashley Halpe & Percy Colin-Thome, 1984.
- 15 'Marginal Comments'. 1945.
- 16 "The Colonial Experience in Sri Lanka." In *Law, language, and Development*, ed. by Lakshman M. Marasinghe and William E Conklin (1985)
- 17 Vide A.R.B.Amerasinghe, *The Legal Heritage of Sri Lanka*, Colombo. 2001.
- 18 'Language & Administration", *Sri Lanka Journal of Development Administration*, Colombo, 1984.
- 19 Evidence of how customary law operated in Sri Lanka can be found in Hugh Neville's collection of Sinhala Verse. Colombo, Govt. Press
- 20 In 1989, when I revived a proposal to register title to land, even the Attorney General and the Legal Draftsman were reluctant to carry out the necessary tasks.
- 21 I followed him as Visiting Lecturer in English at Vidyalankara University in 1964.



- 22 Recently appointed Chair of English at the University of Peradeniya.
- 23 The title itself merits some 'deconstruction' but I shall let that pass.
- 24 The author of that paper was entrusted with the task of 'editing the proceedings' of this conference for the press.
- 25 Jotiya Dhirasekera. *Buddhist Monastic Discipline*, 1982, quoted by L P N Perera. *Sexual mores of ancient India as reflected in the Vinayapitaka of the Pali Canon*. Ph.D. thesis. Peradeniya. 1973
- 26 Jotiya Dhirasekera, *Buddhist Monastic Discipline* (1982)
- 27 Max Weber, *The Religion of India*, 1968.
- 28 J.J. Meyer, *Sexual Life in Ancient India*, 1953.
- 29 Carl Jung relates an 'interpretation', as to the uninitiated, of the *lingam* by a Hindu priest in his *Memories and Dreams*. Jung also records in it his view of the Buddha and Christ.
- 30 Kumari Jayawardena's book *Ethnic & Class Conflict in Sri Lanka* has a sub-title in small print: 'Some aspects of Sinhala Buddhist consciousness over the past 100 years'. In the processes of being referenced and quoted, the small print disappears. There is, in that book of 144 pages, one sentence on the 'Tamil Consciousness', and that refers to Arumuga Navalar of over 100 years ago. Jayawardena focuses on the most negative aspects of the alleged "Sinhala Consciousness'.
- 31 See also Eagleton op cit.
- 32 This is indicative of how effective the subaltern's 'right to speech' is.
- 33 For this and following remarks, see my "Challenges for the Social Sciences Facing New Problematiques," an edited version of which appears in *The Role of the State in Development Processes* ed. Claude Auroi, Frank Cass,. 1992. I have lodged it as well as the version published in Europe in the Peradeniya library
- 34 London. Methuen. 1934. Indeed the entire book is an account of how the voices of the subaltern are suppressed. Silone was writing of the dialect of the Fontamarise = foreign to Italian.



- 35 *The God of Small Things*, 1998.
- 36 Quotations from Lincoln and Whitman, *The Faber Book of America*, 1992.
- 37 Catherine Lutz & Lesley Bartlett, *Making Soldiers in the Public Schools*. 1995
- 38 Ivan Illich, at a conference of the Society for International Development. Colombo. 1979. He also proposed that the next 'Development Decade', i.e., the 1980s, be devoted to a resistance to 'development'.
- 39 *Shadows of Tender Fury*



# අපේ පැරණි කෙම් ක්‍රම

පාරම්පරික සම්මානලාභී  
වෛද්‍යවාරිය මහින්ද ගුණරත්න

'කෙම්' යනුවෙන් හැඳින්වෙන්නේ යම් කිසි ගුප්ත බලයක් ඇති ක්‍රියාවකට ය. එය පූජා ක්‍රමයකට ද සමාන වෙයි. මෙහි ඇති විශේෂ ලක්ෂණය නම් සෑම දෙයක් ම කළ යුත්තේ කථා නොකරමින් විම යි. ඇතැම් විට රහසක් හැටියට කෙනකුට නො කියා නො පෙනෙන අයුරින් එසේ කරන්නේ එහි බලය හෙවත් ගුණය අඩු වන බවට විශ්වාසයක් ඇති වන හෙයිනි. බදාදා සහ සෙනසුරාදා දිනවල දී කෙම් කිරීමෙන් වැඩි ප්‍රතිඵල ලැබෙන බවට පිළිගැනීමක් තිබේ.

කෙම් ක්‍රම භාවිතයට පැමිණියේ කවර කාලයක සිට දැයි කිව නොහැකි ය. අප ගේ ආදිවාසීන් අතර පවා කෙම් ක්‍රම තිබුණු බවට සාධක බොහෝ ඇත. සමහර කෙම් ක්‍රම හා මන්ත්‍ර ගුරුකම් අතර සම්බන්ධතාවක් පවතී. සිතෙහි ඒකාග්‍රතාව මත හෙවත් චිත්ත බලය සහිත ව ඉටු කරන කෙම් ක්‍රමවලට බලය වැඩි ය. මේ අනුව බලන කල්හි, කෙම් කරන විට කථා නොකිරීම, පිහිය සහ කැත්ත යන ආයුධ ඊට අනුව මිස භාවිතයට නොගැනීම, පෙරවරු කාලය වැඩි වශයෙන් යොදා ගැනීම, උතුරු දෙස බලා මුල්, පට්ටා (පොතු) ආදී ද්‍රව්‍ය ගැනීම ඉතා ම වැදගත් වේ.

කෙම් කරන්නා විසින් අනුගමනය කළ යුතු පිළිවෙත් කීපයකි. විශ්වාසය, බලාපොරොත්තුව, අධිෂ්ඨානය, ජේවීම හෙවත් එයට සුදානම් වීම, සිත කය වචනය යන තුන් දොර පාලනය කර ගැනීම, බාහිර පිරිසිදුකම ඇති කර ගැනීම සහ සංවරගිලි ව ක්‍රියා කිරීම අවශ්‍ය යි. රෝග සුවයට, සාමාන්‍ය අවස්ථාවලට, ගොවිතැන් ආරක්ෂා කිරීමට අස්වැන්න වැඩි කර ගැනීම, වගී කර්මවලට, ආත්ම ආරක්ෂාවට, සර්ප විෂ ශරීරගත වීමෙන් වැළැක්වීමට කෙම් ක්‍රම යොදා ගැනේ.

## I. සර්ප විෂට

- 1) දෂ්ට කළ වහා ම දඹරැහිල්ල කටේ දමා ඇහිල්ලේ තැවරුණු කෙළවලින් දෂ්ට මුඛය වටේට රවුමක් ඇඳීම



- 2) තමා ඇඳ සිටින ඇඳුමේ රෙදි පටියක් පහළට ඉරා, මිදෙල්ල පට්ටයක් උඩ සිට පහතට ඉරා, ඒ දෙක එකට එකතු කර, දණ්ට කළ ස්ථානයට මඳක් ඉහළින් වෙළීම
- 3) දණ්ට කළ වහා ම ඒ ස්ථානයට මුත්‍රා කිරීම
- 4) රාත්‍රී කාලයේ දී ගමනක් යන විට දෙපයට මුත්‍රා කරගෙන යෑම.

**2. කක්කල් කැස්සට**

- 1) බාඳුරා කොළ වතුර බීමට දෙන්න
- 2) තණ පිට්ටැනිවල බැඳී ඇති මකුළු දැල් මත රැඳී තිබෙන පිනි එකතු කර බීමට දෙන්න
- 3) රෝගියා ගේ මාමා කෙනකු පාන්දර ම නිවසට පැමිණ (මුචින් නො බැන) ඉළපත ගෙන රෝගියා ගේ හිස සිට පාදාන්තය දක්වා තුන් වරක් දොස් නිවාරණය කර, ඉළපත වීසි කරන්න.
- 4) කැහිපිත්තන් වැල් පාන්දරින් ම කඩා, කොටා, මිරිකා, මිදෙන්න තබා, කැබිලි කර, හකුරු සමග රෝගියාට බීමට දෙන්න
- 5) කපුටන් නෑ වතුර බීමට දෙන්න
- 6) හවස පිරිසිදු තණ පිට්ටැනියක පිරිසිදු සුදු රෙදි කැල්ලක් එලා, එය උදේ පාන්දර ම ගෙන මිරිකා ඒ වතුර රෝගියාට බීමට දෙන්න

**3. සුදුසු කාලයට වැඩිවිය පත් නොවීමට**

කිරි ගසක් ළඟට ගොස්, ඒ ගසට 'පොඩි කිල්ලක් යැ'යි තුන්වරක් කියා, ආයුධයකින් ගසට කොටා, කිරි වැටීමට සලස්වන්න.

**4. ගබ්සා වීම වැළැක්වීමට**

ගැබ් ගත් බව දැනගත් හැටියේ සැමියාට කියා දින හතක් යාමට පෙර පිහියක් සාදා ගෙනැවිත් පුවක් කොළයෙන් කොපුවක් සාදා බිරිඳ ගේ කටහඬ අල්ලා පිහිය කොපුවට දමා ආරක්ෂිත තැනක තබන්න. විලිරුදාව හැදුණු විට ඒ පිහිය ඒ කොපුවෙන් ගලවන්න.



**5. පිරිමි දරුවකු පිළිසිදුවා ගැනීමට**

නුග දල්ලක් පිටි අතින් කඩා, පොඬිකර, මිරිකා, ඉස්ම ගෙන, දකුණු නාස් පුඩුවට දමන්න. පසු ව දෙදෙනා එකතු වන්න.

**6. ගහණු දරුවකු පිළිසිදුවා ගැනීමට**

නුග දල්ලක් පිටි අතින් කඩා, පොඬිකර, මිරිකා, ඉස්ම ගෙන, වම් නාස් පුඩුවට දමන්න. පසු ව දෙ දෙනා එකතු වන්න.

**7. දරුවන් ලබා ගැනීමට**

සිකුරාදා දිනවල කපුරු කෙල් පත්තු කරන්න.

**8. කිහිල්ලේ ගෙඩියට**

- 1) බටහිර දෙසට ගිය දෙහි අත්තකින් ගෙඩියක් කඩාගෙන, මැදින් විද, නුලක් දමා, කිහිල්ලේ බදින්න.
- 2) පොල් මුලක් ගෙන, දවා, ඒ අළු ලුණු දියෙන් අනා, දින පහක් ගාන්න.
- 3) ගම්මිරිස් ඇට හතක් පින්තේ තබා, මුත්‍රාවලින් අඹරා, ගාන්නග
- 4) අලුයම නැහිට කෙනකු මුණ නො ගැසී කුඹුරට ගොස්, බස්නාහිර බලා ගෙන මඩ ටිකක් රැහෙන ගෙඩියේ ගාන්න.
- 5) ඉද්ද ගහක් ළඟට ගොස්, බටහිර පැත්ත බලා කොළයක් කඩාගෙන, එය කොටා ගෙඩියේ බදින්න.
- 6) පොල් මදයක් ගෙන එයට ලුණු කැට කීපයක් දමා, වසා තබා, පසු දින අලුයම එය ගෙන ගෙඩියේ ගාන්න.
- 7) ඉර උදා වීමට පෙර ඉරමුසු වැලක් ළඟට ගොස්, බටහිර දෙස බලා, එය ගලවා, දිය පාරක බැඳ තබා, පසු දා අලුයම ගොස්, බටහිර දෙස බලා, ඒ වැලෙන් 108 වරක් ගෙඩිය පහතට පිස දමන්න.

**9. ගසින් වැටුණු විට**

මුලින් ම ඒ තැනට ගිය අය රෝගියා ගේ ඇඟට උඩින් පනින්න.



**10. උකුණන් හැති කිරීමට**

- 1) බැවිල සහ වලහසාල් ගව මුත්‍රාවලින් අඹරා ගාන්න.
- 2) මුරුංගා පොතු අඹරා ගාන්න.

**11. ළමයින් ආරක්‍ෂා කර ගැනීමට**

යකඩ කුරක් ගෙන ලිපේ අළු යට ගසා ගෙයින් පිට යන්න.

**12. ළමයින් අඬනවාට**

- 1) එළබටු මුල් උදුරා, උතුරු දිසාව බලා, ළමයා ගේ ඉනේ බඳින්න.
- 2) කළුදුරු තන කිරෙන් ගල ගා තිලක තබන්න.

**13. ඇස්වහ - කටවහට**

කථා නො කර, මුහුණ පිසදා ගැනීම.

**14. කුරුලෑ හැති වීමට**

දිනපතා ආහාර අනුභව කොට, වරක් අත සෝදා, තුන් වරක් පිසදමන්න.

**15. දරු ප්‍රසූතිය පහසු කරවා ගැනීමට**

එළ කටරොඩු මුලක් ගෙන ඉඹින්නට දීම.

**16. උඳුගොව්වන් කෑම වැළැක්වීමට**

කුකුළා වසුරු දැමූ විට ම ගෙන, මී පැණියෙන් අනා ගාන්න.

**17. අණ්ඩවාතයට**

බදාදා හෝ සෙනසුරාදා දිනයක කපුටා අඬන්නට පෙර රත්තිටුල් මුලක් උදුරා, ඉදිමුම වමේ නම්, දකුණු අතේ මාපටහිල්ලේ බඳින්න. ඉදිමුම දකුණේ නම්, වම් අතේ මාපටහිල්ලේ බඳින්න.

**18. ඉක්කාවට**

- 1) දිව දික් කරන විට එළියට එන කොටස අල්ලාගෙන ඉදීම
- 2) පාද දෙකේ මාපටහිලි දෙක පාගා ගෙන සිටීම



- 3) මුහුණට හොරෙන් ඇල් දිය ඉසීම
- 4) පුදුමයට පත් කිරීම
- 5) හය ගැන්වීම
- 6) පිරිසිදු වතුර රැගෙන හත් පාරකට බීම
- 7) "ඉක්කයි මායි ගාලු ගියා - ඉක්ක දාලා මං ආවා" යන්න හත් වරක් කීම.

**19. දත් කැක්කුමට**

- 1) කොහොඹ ගසකින් පොත්තක් පිටි අතින් බස්නාහිර පැත්තෙන් ගලවා එයට මුත්‍රා කර, කොටා, ඉස්ම ගෙන, දතට තියන්න.
- 2) පීදුණේ නැති දෙහි ගසක් ළඟට ගොස්, බස්නාහිර පැත්තේ අත්තකින් කොළ මිටක් කඩාගෙන, දත් පණුවා කන පැත්තේ කම්මුලේ ගාන්න.
- 3) කැලෑ රත්මල් පොකුරක් කඩාගෙන දත පණුවා කන පැත්ත තුන් වරක් පිස දමා රෝගියා ගේ කෙස් ගසකින් ඒ මල් පොකුර බඳින්න.

**20. කටු අඳීමට**

- 1) ඉදුණු එළබටු ගෙඩියක් කඩාගෙන අල්ලේ තබා පොඩ්කර රහසින් බඳින්න.
- 2) කයිජ්ජු, වහතැල්ල කොළ, අමුකහ, කලාඳුරු අල සම ව ගෙන, දියලුණු දමා කොටා, මලවා ඔතන්න.

**21. ගවයා ආරක්‍ෂා කර ගැනීමට**

ගන අඳුරු රැයක, රත් කරන ලද ත්‍රිශූලයක් ගෙන රහසින් ගොස් ගවයා ගේ පිටේ තියන්න. වන සතුන් ගෙන් අනතුරක් නො වේ.

**22. නිදහ බල්ලාට**

කම්මැළි සුනඛයා රාත්‍රියට හොඳට නිදා ගනී නම් රහසින් ගොස් කෝටුවකින් තද පාරක් ගසන්න.

**23. ගවයන් බෝ වීමට**

අලුයම් කපා ගත් කුදුරු අත්තක් ගව ගාල මැද සිටවන්න.



**24. වල් හරකා ගෙන් බේරීමට**

වල් හරක් ඉන්න කැලයට ඇතුළු වන විට බෝවු කොළයක් කඩා ඉනේ සහවා ගෙන යන්න. අනතුරු වැළකේ.

**25. ගවයා ගේ තුවාලයට**

ගවයා ගේ තුවාලයේ පණුවෝ සිටිත් නම්, පොල්පිති පුළුස්සා ගත් අළු තුවාලයට දමන්න.

**26. කරවිල තිත්ත නැති කිරීමට**

කරවිල, ව්‍යංජනයට කපන විට, කතා නො කර කපන්න. කරවිල බැඳීමේ දී, පළමු ව ස්වල්පයක් ඉවතට විසි කරන්න.

**27. රතුලුනු සැර නැති කිරීමට**

රතුලුනු ලියන විට පළමු ව ගත් ගෙඩිය කතා නො කර මන්න තුඩේ ගසන්න. ඇස් දැවිල්ල නො සෑදේ.

**28. ඇගේ මතු වන ඉන්නන් නැති කිරීමට**

කපුටන් නෑ වතුර එම ස්ථානයේ ගෑම.

**29. නොබසින ඉදිමුමට**

කළු කුකුළකු ගේ වසුරු මී පැණියෙන් අනා වේල් කීපයක් ගෑම.

**30. බෝවෙන ලෙඩට**

- 1) ගුරුන්ද නොහොත් බුකුන්ද ලී කැබලිලක් වතුර කළයට දමන්න. නැති නම්, අතේ බඳින්න
- 2) උදේ පාන්දර බිං කරල්හැබ මිටක් ගලවා කොටා යුෂ ගෙන කැඳ පිස බීමට දෙන්න.

ඉහත කෙම් ක්‍රම පුරාණ කාලයේ පැරණි වෙදවරුන් විසින් භාවිත කරන ලද නමුත්, වර්තමානයේ මේ ක්‍රම භාවිතා නොවෙයි. එයට හේතු වී ඇත්තේ ඒ ගැන හරි වැටහීමක් නොමැති බව ය.



# PAṬṬIPOLA BŪ ÄLA<sup>1</sup> - AN EXCEPTIONAL DESIGN OF ANCIENT SINHALA HYDRAULIC ENGINEERING

by

**Sudath Gunasekara**

## **Introduction**

The story of ancient Sri Lankan hydraulic technology is centred round three things namely, the tank (väva), bisokoṭuva and the irrigation canal. It is also considered as a phenomenon mainly confined to the Dry Zone. The construction of gigantic reservoirs like the Parakrama Samudra, the Minneriya Tank and the Kalā Väva, the invention of the bisokoṭuva, the construction of irrigation marvels like the Yoda Äla, and the Minipe Äla with a gradient of six inches to a mile, and the high degree of integration of the entire irrigation network in the Island have gone down in world history as unique achievements of hydraulic engineering. Authentic writings of world authorities on early hydraulic civilisations like Henry Parker, Sir Emerson Tennent, Joseph Needham, R.L. Brohier and Arthur C. Clerk have already firmly established this conclusion.

This account is about an underground diversion canal (bū äla) constructed on the high hills in the central mountains of Sri Lanka probably around 1350 CE to divert the west bound waters of Dambagastaläva Oya (the main tributary of Agra Oya, a branch of Kotmale Oya) to the Umā Oya Basin lying on the eastern side of the Central Ridge. According to William Hall, the engineer who discovered this tunnel in 1857, this subterranean canal has been constructed 12 metres below the surface level. Its diameter was 3.48 metres. The measured length of the tunnel in 1857 was 221 metres. An 11 kilo metre long irrigation canal constructed along the eastern acclivity of the Toṭupola Ridge, tapping the waters of



six other affluents of the same Oya, has conducted the west bound waters for centuries to be emptied in to the Umā Oya through this tunnel.

The purpose of this article is to draw the attention of hydraulic and structural engineers and other interested parties to this hitherto unexplored mediaeval hydraulic engineering feat. It is expected that this will be an eye opener for an in depth study of this unique diversion canal and furthermore it would open new vistas in further research and inquiry into Sri Lanka's ancient hydraulic heritage.

### **The Bū Āla**

The Pattipola bū āla is a subterranean trans-basin diversion irrigation canal to divert the Dambagastalāva Oya waters on the western slopes to the Umā Oya Basin on the eastern side through a tunnel dug under a section of the Island's highest NW-SE water divide on the Central Hills. This tunnel is located 150 metres to the south of the present Paṭṭipola railway station. Brohier writing on the irrigation works of Upper Ūva makes the following observation on this extraordinary work. "The most interesting account of one of these assets of Upper Ūva embodying a degree of engineering skill, which affords a faint clue to the industry and intelligence flourishing in the Eastern Hemisphere when the West was in a state of barbarism, has been afforded by Mr. William Hall of the Public Works Department. This achievement was represented by an artificial water course, dropped as it were, into a district against the rules of nature, and which apparently at one time irrigated fields ten to twelve miles away in the valley of "Sunny Ūva"<sup>2</sup>

It is extremely interesting to note how such a long tunnel at such depth had been carried out at a time when modern technology of tunnel construction was unknown even in the West. According to Hall, five shafts had been sunk at regular intervals and the tunnel had been dug from one to the other. "Curious to record, Hall says, though this tunnel had probably been in existence for two or three centuries if not many more, it had satisfactorily functioned although not lined or cased with any masonry or other sheathing "



The ancient work was brought to the notice of the then Government Agent Ūva Province, Bailey, in 1857. When Bailey heard of this, he clambered up the steep hillside endeavouring to trace it to its source. He found the water trickling through a tunnel excavated in quartz-gravel; he crawled through this passage over debris and rank vegetation till he emerged from the opposite side of a dividing ridge. Bailey followed the channel in the further watershed and traced it for one and half km to a stream flowing down from Toṭupola in the direction of the Kotmale valley. Subsequently, William Hall traced the channel 9.6 km further to catch the waters of five large affluents of the Dambagastalāva Oya whose natural course lay past Lindula to the basin of Kotmale.

Such an undertaking, built at the cost of immense labour<sup>3</sup> during a period long before spirit levels and levelling staves simplified the science of tracing a channel as we know it today were unknown, is also a very certain indication of the presence of a large population and an advanced irrigation technology in the neighbourhood. Unfortunately the original tunnel has been destroyed at the time of the construction of the railway line and today it is replaced with a simple culvert measuring only 0.91 (h) x 0.6 (w) m to enable the water to pass through.

### **The origin and the history of the tunnel**

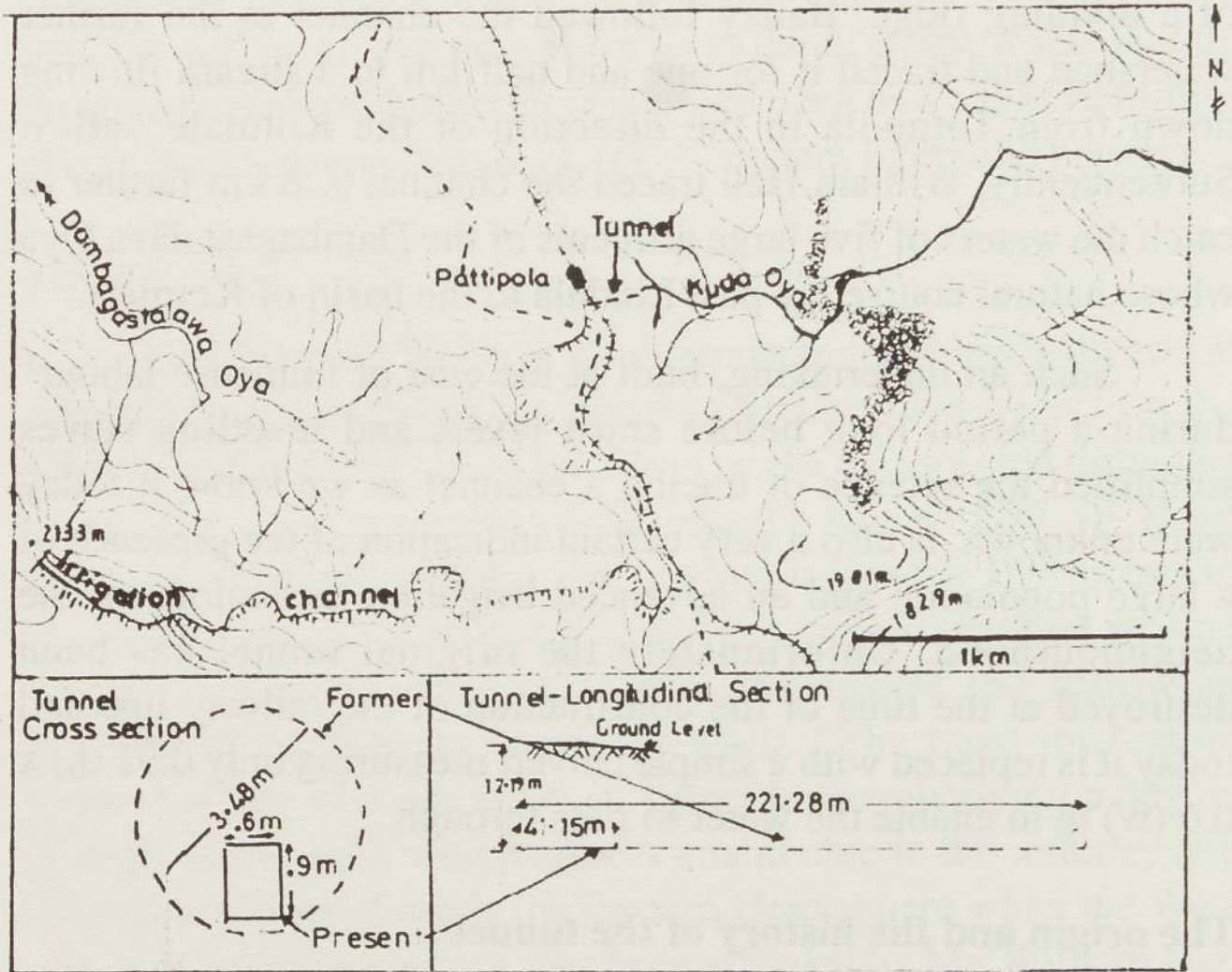
The origin and history of this tunnel still remains a mystery. The tunnel as William Hall noted in 1857 is a remarkable feat of engineering by the early Sinhala engineers constructed 12 metres below the surface level. This tunnel emptied its water to the Kuḍā Oya, a right bank tributary of Ambewela Oya, a major tributary of Ūmā Oya on the eastern slopes.

The number of perennial streams tapped by the Toṭupola - Bū āla canal and the diameter of the tunnel provide a clue to the volume of water that must have passed through this subterranean canal in those days. This tunnel was in a state of thorough neglect and disrepair when William Hall of the Public Works Department discovered it in 1857. According to William Hall this tunnel must



have been in existence for two or three centuries by then, if not many more (Brohier, 1935:33). This assumption puts its construction to the pre-1550 period.

LOCATION OF BŪ-ĀLA & CROSS SECTIONS OF ORIGINAL BŪ-ĀLA & THE PRESENT "CULVERT"



The reference made in Rājāvaliya (p.98) to King Rājasinghe I (1581-1593) taking tunnel builders from Ūva to construct a tunnel to attack the Portuguese Fort in Colombo also suggest the presence of this technology in this region. There is a tradition in Upper Ūva, which says that Kuruviṭa Rāla, also called Kuruviṭa Bandāra, a Dissāva of Ūva (1613-1619) effected renovations to this tunnel that was filled with debris at that time. This puts its construction to a pre-1619 period.

No archaeological evidence has been found to establish the date of its construction. The destruction of the tunnel at the time of the construction of the railway line also rules out any archaeological



evidence being found. Therefore only guesswork and inferences made based on scanty literary and local folklore evidence could take us closer to an approximate date. First of all we have to write off its possible construction to a period between 1500 and 1613 as that was a time of political instability due to the invasion of the Island by Portuguese in 1505. This takes us to a pre-1500 period.

Probably the thirteenth century upward migration to Upper Ūva from the Dry Zone lowlands, which aggravated the need for more paddy fields and more water would have accelerated the need for new sources of water and finally took these early irrigators to the Dambagastalāwa Oya up on the high hills. The Mānāmuna settlements (676-711 C.E.) in the mid-Ūmā Oya region, evidence of other early settlements in middle and upper parts of the basin like Nugatalāwa, Uḍubādana, Bibiligamuwa and Wagune (1371m) and the presence of early irrigation works at higher elevation like Kuḍā Oya Äla (1493m), Paṭṭipola Deniya Äla (1889m) and Kande Äla (1889m) and the presence of ancient foot paths crisscrossing these high plains particularly the one going west to Sripāda and the other going to the south through Ohiya gap suggest the presence of at least sporadic early settlements in this region. The early men who traveled on these footpaths would have been the first explorers of these water resources. The construction of the Divurumwela temple in Nugatalāwa by King Aggabodhi 1V is attributed to the period 626-641 C.E.. (Theripehe Somananda, 1986). All this evidence suggest the presence of fairly developed agrarian settlements in this area where large tracts of paddy fields which required additional augmentation were there even by the late Anuradhapura period.

Taking these evidence together with Hall's conclusion that it could be more than three hundred years old by 1857 and also the probable long time that would have been taken to conceive the idea, locate the sites, design the work and finally to carry out the project, I assign the construction of this irrigation feat at least to a period between 1300 and 1350. But such a conclusion definitely needs further research on this subject.



I inspected this tunnel on the 7th April 2003. One has to descend about forty feet to the canal bed before one gets to the tunnel intake. The present intake appears to be a recent construction out of dressed stones and it measures 0.91(h) x 0.6(w) m. As I observed the interior with the help of a flash torch the same construction appears to continue to the other end. The western section of the trench, probably the first part of the ancient Bū Äla is 51.8 m long at present. The canal bed and the sides are also rendered with concrete work.

On the northern side the outlet cannot be clearly seen, as it is very difficult to reach this point. The drop on the eastern side at the point of the outlet is more than double the height at the intake on the western side. The trench on this side appears to be a deep and a long gully. The total length of the original Bū Äla is also no more there today. At construction, it would have been definitely more than 221 m as noted by Hall in 1857. The length of the present tunnel (culvert) measures only 41 m.

Available evidence shows that the original 3.48 m tunnel had been replaced with a narrow culvert for the safety of the railway tract. What a wanton destruction of a nations ancient heritage, which would have provided invaluable evidence for posterity on our early hydraulic engineering skills. Had they at least preserved the original tunnel it would have provided a fine piece of evidence on the ancient hydraulic engineering and subterranean irrigation technology in Sri Lanka.

### **The Totupola Bū –Äla canal**

The canal that brings water to this tunnel from the western slopes is 11 km long. It has been constructed over extremely difficult terrain to divert the waters of five tributaries of Dambagastalawa Oya to the Ūmā Oya basin on the eastern side through this tunnel. The source of this canal lies between the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> km on the Nuwara Eliya - World's End road. The elevation at the site of the anicut is approximately 2133 m above sea level. It drops by about 304 m from its source to the tunnel intake site within a distance of



2.4 km (as the crow flies). Girdling the northern ledge of Totupola and then the western slope of the central watershed it takes the shape of a horseshoe.

The anicut lies to the right of the first bend close to the 20<sup>th</sup> km on the Nuwara Eliya-World's End road. and the canal crosses the road at a point just below the next bend. A ten-minute walk along the canal to the right takes one to the site of the ancient anicut on the head stream of Dambagastalawa Oya. This was renovated around 1981.

“The canal starts at a point north of Rajasinha Gama<sup>3</sup> (probably named after Rajasinha 1) and conducts the water from five affluents that drain the northern slopes of Totupola Kanda ridge to the canal” according to Brohier (1935). This is the highest point at which a canal has been constructed in the hill country.

This new source of water has enabled a large extent of additional land on either side of Kudā Oya to be brought under cultivation. The LB canal, which serves mainly the Landewela, Bibilegama, and the RB canal starting north of Galkanda and extending up to Agampodigama in the north are all fed by this new supply. With its source in the Horton's Plain exposed to both South West and North East monsoons the canal would have guaranteed a perennial supply not only to the Ūmā Oya Basin but also to the entire down stream area that was fed by Ūmā Oya-Bathmedilla Äla. Bū-Äla indicate that the ancient Sinhalas had constructed tunnels to divert Mahaweli waters long before the Polgolla-Ukuwela diversion tunnel.

A closer examination of the early irrigation canals in the Ūmā Oya Basin shows that the Ūmā Oya basin had the most intensive and the best-developed network of irrigation works in the hill country. (The other important river basins are Kotmale, Gampola, Dumbara and Uḍa and Pātha Hewāhāṭa). Ūmā Oya basin also had more than ten overland trans-basin diversion canals in the region. Ūmā Oya-Batmädilla Äla was the most important among them.



Bū Äla could be described as an exceptional achievement in the field of hydraulic engineering by the early Sinhala irrigation engineers. This work finds no parallel anywhere else in the Island during the ancient or mediaeval periods. Should we treat this as another marvelous achievement of the ancient traditions of our irrigators of the 5<sup>th</sup> century who moved up the rivers in search of extra water for the vast expanses of newly found agricultural settlements in the dry zone lowlands? Or is it a direct result of the attempt to consolidate the major Ūmā Oya civilization that was established in the post-thirteenth century by those who migrated upward following the fall of the Rajarata Civilization? Whatever it may be, one may surmise that the technology behind Bū Äla is a masterpiece of ancient Sinhala hydraulic engineering.

## Conclusion

The Ūmā Oya Basin provides clear evidence of early development of novel aspects of irrigation technology outside the dry zone lowlands. The prosperity generated by this agrarian society is manifest in the innumerable settlements and places of religious worship one can see all over this region. This massive irrigation network of Upper Ūva had once made this region the granary of the Kandyan Kingdom. Both Gunaratna (1979) and Ameer (1978) in their studies have confirmed this statement. Political instability that was set in after 1505 with the advent of the Portuguese badly affected these irrigation works. They were in a ruinous condition even at the close of the first forty years of British occupation. Bailey the Assistant Government Agent of Badulla in 1855 was the first to draw attention to these works. Commenting on his contributions Brohier says, "It redounds to the credit of this indefatigable pioneer that this network of ancient canals, led through a difficult country by a race long since passed away, full of industry and intelligence is once again brought in to use to cultivate the plains below" (Brohier, 1935). Some of these ancient works were renovated after 1855.



Thus the Ūmā Oya Basin was the birthplace of a unique hydraulic and agricultural technology (Sloping Agricultural Land Technology-SALT, as it is known today) and a watershed management system. An extremely intricate and hanging network of long canals and narrow terraced paddy fields dominated it. A combination of small village tanks and *Äla* system based on a new technology that was not known to the peasants in the Dry Zone lowlands emerged on these hills. Probably the Ūmā Oya experience has set the pace for similar development in the rest of the hill country. These achievements have made them extraordinary “irrigators cum watershed managers of medieval Sri Lanka. The Ūmā Oya system also offers one of the best examples of an ‘integrated hill country cascade system of hydraulic technology’ suitable for any country in the world with similar characteristics.

### References & Notes

1. The only examples of tunnel building noted in early history are likely the subterranean canal constructed by King Vasabha to conduct water to the bathing tank at Anuradhapura (MV 35:38) and the tunnel where Kuveni is supposed to have imprisoned Vijaya’s retinue of seven hundred (MV 7:15). But they were very much smaller in scale, and therefore cannot be compared with this giant work. However, it is also important to note that construction of subterranean canals has been in practice even in countries such as Afghanistan and Persia during very early times (see below). The other example in Sri Lanka is the tunneling associated with gem mining. But it is executed for a different purpose.

#### A Look at Afghanistan’s tunnels and caves

1. Afghanistan’s mountains are filled with thousands of natural caves, mostly created by water coursing over limestone. In ancient times, farmers in eastern and southern Afghanistan built a network of underground irrigation trenches called a karez. The deepest trench, high on a hill, intersected with the water table underground. Water travelled down through tunnels to farm fields on lower desert plains. Villagers also hid inside the tunnels during invasions.(www. azstarnet.com)



2. Discover the oasis city of Turpan and its ingenious 2,000 year old subterranean irrigation system that still supplies the city with water from the surrounding mountains. [http://smithsonianstudytours. si.edu/ss](http://smithsonianstudytours.si.edu/ss)
3. A different type of ancient hydraulic engineering was developed in Armenia (Eastern Turkey) and Persia (Iran) from the seventh to fifth century B.C. Underground canals, called Qantas, were dug to intercept groundwater aquifers and to carry the water from the source areas to the cities. The average length of quanta was about 26 m and in some places it was as deep as 40 ft. Such ancient water supply systems, some of which still exist, were truly remarkable. Source: [http:// www.ce.utexas.edu/slu/solarir.page 2.html](http://www.ce.utexas.edu/slu/solarir.page.2.html).
2. Brohier, R.L. (1975) *Food and People of Ceylon*
3. Bailey, John. (1857) *Administration Report of the Government Agent Uva, Badulla District.*
4. *Rājāvaliya* (1959) Watuwatte Pemanada Bhikkhu (Second Edition)
5. Dhammananda Thero, Nāulle (1966), *Uva Itihāsaya*
6. Somananda Thero, Theripeha (1986) *Sinhala Malakavi Sangrahaya*
7. Amir Al. (1978) Rice and Irrigation in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century in Sri Lanka, *The Ceylon Historical Journal*, Vol. 25. No 1 & 74
8. Gunaratna, Newton. (1979) 'Agrarian Relations in the Kandyan Side' *Social Science Review*, No 1 Sept. 1979.
9. Baker, Sir Samuel (1885) *Eight Years in Ceylon*



# KALUTARA

By

**R.C. de S. Manukulasooriya**

Among the many current place names of the island which date back to many centuries of the past the name of this sea-board town of KALUTARA stands out significantly as one of the more interesting of them.

According to the Census Report of 1945 the Western Province was established by Proclamation dated 1<sup>st</sup> January 1889 with a total area of 1,431  $\frac{1}{4}$  sq. miles. The province was divided into two districts, Colombo and Kalutara. Of them Kalutara was divided into five minor administrative divisions designated Panadura Totamune and Kalutara Totamune on the sea-board area on the west, while the landward area was in three minor administrative areas named Raigam Korale and Pasdun Korale East and West.

The principal town of Kalutara Totamune was Kalutara at the northern end of the division around the river Kalu Ganga which bifurcates it into two minor administrative units under two separate village headmen named Kalutara North and Kalutara South, which were traditionally called Desastra Kalutara and Velapura Kalutara respectively.

According to the Census of 1814<sup>1</sup> Kalutara consisted of 3 *Korales*, 10 Pattus and 368 villages with a total population of 53,994 people of whom 28,662 were Protestants, 6,950 were Roman Catholics, 6,304 were Mohammedans and 12,018 Buddhists.

It was constantly cooled by sea breezes and was salubrious and a favourite resort for invalids from Colombo. There were about 200 tiled houses. There were a great number of Yātra Dhonies belonging to this part which traded with Madras and other places on the coast of Coromandal, South India. The Wesleyan missionaries



fixed upon the place as a station in 1817 and subsequently built a handsome chapel and school house.

According to the Report of L.J.B. Turner in 1923<sup>2</sup> the area called Kalutara Totamune Mudliyar's Division had the following figures:

	Division No.	Population
Kalutara Local Board		13,596
Waskadu Badda VH Divisions	707-713	10,567
Kalutara Badda Village Headmen's (VH) Division	714-732	17,709
Paiyagala & Maggona Badda VH Divisions	733-747	19,355
Beruwala Badda VH Divisions, inclusive of Sanitary Board town	748-758	11,948
Alutgam Badda & Malewana Badda VH Divisions	759-775	14,454

The earliest reference to Kalutara in the Chronicles show that it was a part of the principality of Rohana. It is recorded in the Cūlavamsa<sup>3</sup> that when Lanka was overrun by the Coḷas, Vikrampaṇḍu, who was sojourning in the Du!u country, having had tidings of the events in Lanka betook himself to the province of Rohana and dwelling at Kālatittha, carried on the government for one year.

However, he was slain in battle by a 'powerful prince known as Jagatīpāla, a Sovereign's son, who had come from the town of Ayojjha and ruled as a mighty man in Rohana for four years.' He too was slain by the Coḷas. Then King Parakrama, son of the Paṇḍu King, reigned for two years and the Coḷas slew him also. Thus at least for a period of one year Kalutara became the seat of the government of Rohana.

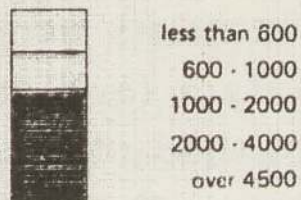
The only other reference in the Cūlavamsa to this region is many years later, when during the reign of King Parakramabāhu II (1236-1271) the King's chief Minister Devapatirāja built at the south



DENSITY OF POPULATION IN KALUTARA DISTRICT : 1981  
BY A.G.A. DIVISIONS AND URBAN AREAS



SEA



- District Boundary
- A.G.A. Div. Boundary
- Urban Areas

\*Town Councils are not included in Urban Areas



of the river Kālanadī on behalf of the king a bridge eighty six cubits long.<sup>4</sup>: “Then after building at Kudalīsenagāma a bridge of a hundred staves and over the river Sālaggāma one of forty staves and over the Sālapādapa swamp one of a hundred fifty cubits.... celebrated once more a great festival of alms giving.”<sup>4</sup>

Another act of Minister Devapatiraja<sup>5</sup> was that “he had laid out from Bhīmatittha vihara as far as the landing place (of the Kālanadī) on a space a yojana broad, a great garden of cocopalms, called after Parakramabāhu, beautifully shady and rich in fruit.”

From these references it is evident that Kalutara was an ancient port, a fact which became well established during the period of the early foreign visitors to the island, namely the Portuguese and the Dutch.

It would be interesting to examine the actual derivation of the word Kalutara from the earlier words Kālatittha and Kālanadī or Kanhanadī. According to an article in Jnānadarśaya Vol. ix (pp. 13-14), 1908, the suffix තර in කළුතර is derived from Sanskrit and the Sinhala word තර is synonymous with the word කොට. Hence the words Kalutara and Kalutota are commonly used. There is no doubt that the name is derived from the fact that it is a place located at the mouth of the Kaluganga which was used as a port.

In the ancient Tri Sinhala divisions of Rohana, Māya and Pihiti, Kaluganga formed the boundary between the principalities of Ruhuna and Māya. Thus Deśāstra Kalutara or Kalutara North formed the area north of the river on the basis of its location while the area south of the river was called Kalutara South or Velāpura Kalutara. It is surmised that since Deśāstra is situated at the extremity of the principality of Māyaraṭa its name may have been derived from the word desāntara (දේශාන්තර) . Similarly since the Colians had established a town on the coast in the southern area it was called Velāpura (වේලාපුර) meaning වැල්ලේපුර .

A more acceptable explanation may be, since it is derived from the fact that the southern region, Ruhuna, being associated



with Lord Skanda (Kataragama) it was called Velāpura, while the northern area being sacred to Vibhīsana, who was worshiped at Kelaniya, being an *asura* and inimical to the gods, was named Desāntara or *Devsaturu* enemy of the gods.

The earliest recorded evidence of any literary references to this place is a partly worn out inscription called the Palunugala inscription<sup>6</sup> in late Brahmi lettering at a place called Diyagama, about 3 miles away from the present town. This inscription which is in the Kaluganga mentions a *toṭa* and a number of paddy fields and a ferry from which one may conclude that the area was inhabited and cultivated during fifth century CE

Rev. S.G. Perera writing on the history of Kalutara<sup>7</sup> at paragraph 9 refers to the fact that the meaning usually given to Velāpura being the city of the lancer, lancer being Skanda, on the basis of an explanation given by Ponnambalam Arunachalam about the term *pura*, was applied in ancient times to royal residences, e.g. Anuradhapura, but refuses to accept the explanation as entirely correct. It is, however, established that at least for a short period of one year, 1047 CE, Kalutara was the seat of the government of King Veeraparakrama Paṇḍu. Therefore the explanation cannot be regarded as entirely invalid.

It was, however, not to remain a royal city for long as the sovereignty of Rohana ceased soon after when Kotte became the seat of the government of the sea-port towns under the King of Kotte. These ports were chiefly Panadura, Kalutara, Maggona, Beruwala and Alutgama, which are in modern Kalutara District and they became the most valuable territory on account of the extensive foreign trade carried out through them.

It was the richness of this trade that caught the eyes of Mayadunne resulting in frequent clashes between him and the Portuguese who were encouraged by King Bhuvanekabāhu to attack Mayadunne.

The main items of trade involved in this clash were the principal products of the area, namely cinnamon and arecanut.



Besides these there was much trade with ships and sampans calling regularly with cloth and merchandise and the customs duties levied at the ports formed a considerable part of the king's income. The Portuguese who were permitted to settle down in the area also caused much damage by cutting trees, building ships and houses. In addition in 1544 a batch of Fransiscan friars who were permitted to enter the port areas also added more to the trouble.

According to de Queyroz the best arecas came from Kalutara and southwards as far as Tangalle. The other commodity involved chiefly in their trade was cinnamon for which Kalutara was the first *paravenu* given by the Portuguese.

“Chalias came in a bagalow (paynel) of Moors which came into Chilas. We took our origin from Chale and the port took from it the name we have today. We came seven, one went away and we remain six. We remained on the island in the court of the King. The first *paravenu* given to us was Calture and then we spread along the coast, as is seen today. When our descendants had increased the kings levied from us our dues, two *fanams* from each household, and as our duty was to weave cloth, we paid one *tupetia* a year. These who had service lands and villages, paid their dues like the other natives. The first time we made cinnamon in the island was in the time of Raju, King of Ceytavaca (Sītāwaka) and as what was made was small, we were very well paid.”

Tha Chalias had to spend six months of the year in peeling cinnamon though they made a monopoly of making mattocks, coconuts, vinegar and poultry. But theirs was a hard lot as they had often to sustain themselves on herbs from the forest or by stealing on the roads.

Among the literary sources where reference has been made to Kalutara are the Sandesa Kavyas which were written between the years 1385 to 1465 in the following order: Mayura Sandēsaya (1385-1391). Tisara Sandēsaya (1409-1440), Parevi Sandēsaya (1430-1440), Kokila Sandēsaya (1440-1446), Sālalihini Sandēsaya (1450), Girā Sandēsaya (1457-1465) and Haṅsa Sandēsaya (1457-1465).



Of these Mayura Sandēsaya which had been composed about late 14<sup>th</sup> century (1385-1391), when Vīra Alakeswara was ousted from his Vice Royalty at Raigama, refers to the bird being asked to fly past Bolgoda and beyond Kalutara. In v. 75 the author makes a direct reference to Velāpura Kalutara: වෙලාපුරෙන් කළුකොට්තෙතරව ගොසින. From there the bird is asked in the next verse (v.76) to go to Beruwala where prosperous merchants live in large trading establishments.

In the Parevi Sandēsaya, written between 1430 and 1440, the bird is asked to go through Kalutara and on its way visit a Vihara on the bank of the river (v.61), but the poet does not mention the name of the Vihara. In v. 99 of Kokila Sandēsaya, written between 1440 and 1446, the bird is asked to fly over Kaluganga in the lines,

සබා පහන් කළුගහ ලෙළරළ	පතර
නොබා සෙමින් එතරව පලයන්	මිතුර

It is significant that the author makes no reference to a Vihara in this locality where he crossed the river. There is, however, in the Kokila Sandesaya a reference to a Vihara named Gangātilaka Viharaya in Kalamulla, a village situated a few miles south of the river:

දැක සකි ලොල්ල නොකරන් සිට කලමුල්ල(v.96)

In the following verse, 97, the name of the Vihara is recorded as ගංගාතිලක. Contrary to this statement the general belief prevalent today among the residents of the area is that Gangatilaka Vihara was located at the top of the elevated ground at the mouth of the river. This belief, however, is not based on any substantial evidence as the Portuguese had built their first fortress on this location and there is no record that the Portuguese had built their fort by destroying a temple or erected on a site where there was a Vihara.

In the Kokila Sandēsaya reference is made to a Vihara at Paiyagala where Tamil poets remain:

වසියා කරණ නන් - දෙමළ කිව්බර රඳනා



The fact that Tamil poets are frequent, as referred to, is connected no doubt with the Ganesha God at whose Kovila constant worship is carried out in the customary manner accompanied by music and burning of incense. The manner in which this worship is conducted is dealt with by the poet and the bird is asked to proceed after seeing.

කඵවැල් කපුරු දුම්නුදු සිරිති රන් වැ            ○  
 සුවිපුල් මිහිඟු සක්සන් නදිති හැම වි            ○  
 මනකල් මෙලෙස පවතින පුද නිසි ලෙස            ○  
 පැහැදුල් ගනිඳු කෝවිල දැක යන් නොසි            ○

It may also be relevant to note that in the by-gone days Ganadevi was a well known deity in rural Ceylon. When a child is introduced to his first letters the text most frequently used was Gandevi Sälla. The location of another Ganadevi Kovila at Wella Madama (v. 28) and further on at (v 165), towards the end of the Tisara Sandesaya show that Ganadevi worship had been very frequent in the coastal region.

Another local divinity of similar standing frequently referred to in these Sandēsa Kāvya was goddess Kāli to whose temple the King had assigned the entire income from particular fields and gardens to be given to Kāli temple in the form of a heap. This donation is recorded in an inscription in Tamil which had been found in the premises of the District Judge, Kalutara very close to the well-known Bo-tree as reported in Epigraphia Zeylanica, Vol. VI, ii at pages 83-84.

The worship of Kāli has been well established in Ceylon through its temple Munneśwaram and may have been fairly widespread in the Kalutara region. In the Parevi Sandēsayā (v 68) reference is made to a Kāli kovila at Bentota as a place of rest for the bird.

Mr. Velupillai who has edited the inscription referred above thinks that the mediaeval corporation known as the “Five Hundred” operating in South India and Ceylon under the name Ticaiyayiraṭṭu annuruvar the ‘Five Hundred of thousand directions or annuruvar.



‘The Five Hundred’ in short, might have operated in Kalutara also and the Kali temple might have been built by them.

Dr. C.de S. Kulatilaka writing to the Kalā Sangārawa of July 1968 (pp. 27-30) has referred to the practice of worshipping Kāli Devi, in certain instances connected to the worship of devas. He has stated that the practice is of Dravidian origin. He has also pointed out that in Kerala the dance tradition called “Kolam Tulal” has been designed to worship Goddess Kāli where the dancers wear masks on their faces. This practice has been associated with their agricultural practices and the intention has been to obtain bountiful harvests. Dr. Kulatilaka further states that Buddhagosha has narrated in the story in his Dhammapadaṭṭa Kathā that it is a direct reference to the Kāli Mātā episode.

He has also pointed out that in the ballad Kiriammā Kavi quoted by Hugh Nevill (Sinhala Kavi – Vol. P.257) the reference to “Sapta Kāli”, whose worship was conducted at Munneswaran since 1880, is similar to the practice of Seven Queens figuring in the Raṭa Yakuma practiced in Sri Lanka.

To get back to the account of Beruwala in the Sandesa kāvyas it was noted that apart from the merchantile establishments in the place several sandesas have referred to the rough and violent nature of certain sections of the people living in Beruwala. The Gira Sandesaya refers to their violent nature in the following stanza (v. 100):

මත්වන අබින් කන්සා කා රළු	පරළු
අත්තන කුසුම් රත්මල් කන ලා	ලකුළු
ගත්වන මුගුරු ලෙළවා ඇද ඇද	රවුළු
සිත්මෙන බමන බඹුරන් රහ බල	යහළු

In the Parevi Sandesaya (v.71) they are described as follows:

අරා අතය පැණ අවුරා මුගුරු	ගෙල
බොරා මතය නන් දෙඩුමෙන් කල	විකල
පුරා මෑතය අගවන මොළ බබුරු	කැල
පරා පතය බල පෙර මග	බේරුවල



In this verse they are referred to as බබුරු (Barbarians).

According to Capt. Juan Rabeiro, Caliture was a very small fortress built on the hill at the mouth of the river of the same name.

The description given by E. Reimers in his edition of Constantine's de Sa's Maps and Plans of Ceylon (1929) is as follows:

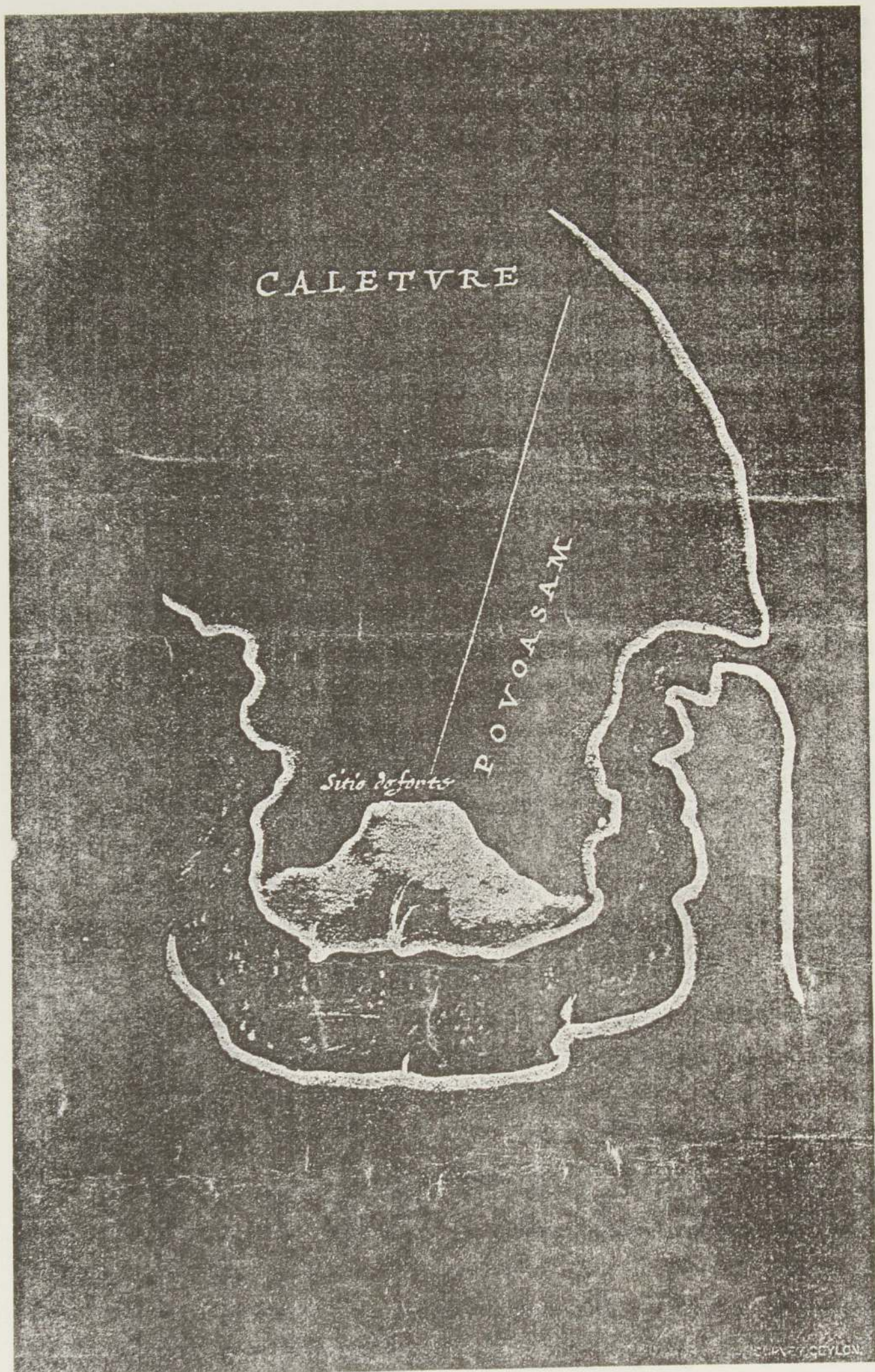
“Calature is situated 4 leagues from Alicao (Alutgama) and has no bar suitable for any but small vessels, for it has hardly 7 palms of water. It is situated on a height in a strong position as can be seen in the plan. It consists of a well-made wall and has two bulwarks mounted with 1 piece of artillery and 2 falcons, with all their appurtenances, and a well. It has no soldiers for garrison and there dwell in its villages not more than 10 Portuguese casados.

It has a jurisdiction of 6 leagues. The affairs of the Christians are administered by the Fransiscans. The Fort was built by the General Jorge d' Albuquerque (1620-1622).”

Rebeiro has given the following description of the fortifications in Kalutara. “The garrison of the fort consisted of twelve companies of four hundred and seventy men; for the new Captain-General had strengthened it with a hundred of the men he had brought with him and five cannon of eight pounds. The enemy pressed it hard with their *batteries* without much effect owing to the strength of the walls which they themselves had built of the clay which they had dug out of the moat and consequently its defences and garrison were such as to make it capable of sustaining a prolonged siege.”<sup>8</sup>

In 1521 after the Vijayabā Kollaya the empire of Kotte was divided and the sea ports which formed a large part of the king's revenue automatically became the most valuable territory. Of these Kalutara, Beruwala and Alutgama were in Kalutara Totamune. Mayadunne attempted to acquire Kalutara Totamune from Kotte. In order to foil this attempt King Bhuvanekabāhu sought the assistance of the Portuguese permitting them to settle down in the





From Constantine De Sa's Maps and Plans of Ceylon - (1624-1628)



ports and help him defy Mayadunne. These Portuguese adventurers proved to be more a hindrance than a help to the people. Their import of the Fransiscan friars about the year 1544 appears to have been the main reason as they erected churches and attempted at conversions.

The assassination of Bhuvanekabāhu in 1551 was the beginning of further trouble between the Portuguese, Vidiya Bandara and Mayadunne, within the Kalutara area so that the Portuguese were compelled to abandon Kalutara which thus fell into the hands of Mayadunne. Thus after a period of about 30 years of constant fighting between the Portuguese, Vidiya Bandara and Mayadunne and with the death of Rajasingha I in 1591 these ports again became a part of Kotte and were administered by the Portuguese.

During this period the Portuguese enforced the existing system of land tenure and *rājakāriya*. According to this system every holder of land had to perform a definite service to the state or pay a share of the produce as tax. All taxes, such as *toṭa badda*, *ānga badda*, *dekum* and other customary dues were levied according to custom as registered in the Tombu. This revenue from the villages was the right to service to Mudaliyars and Arachchis in lieu of salary, the Portuguese Captains and officials as *batta*, and to churches as their endowment. They had to pay a quit rent of twelve percent of the revenue.

The *Toṭa Badu* of Kalutara was collected by an officer called the *Tanadar* or Captain of the Port. The Portuguese residing in the town were chiefly traders in arecanuts of which the district abounded. There was a church and a school and a resident priest and about thirty Portuguese *casados*.

As regards Kalutara itself many changes were seen chiefly after its fall into the hands of the Dutch. Apart from the work of improving the fort a road was constructed connecting Kalutara to Colombo” along which eight men could march abreast taking with them their guns. “ With their improvements the fort became well fortified with a strong wall circumvallating the base of the hill, a



moat and ditches. In course of time by the early 18<sup>th</sup> century Kalutara was converted into a compact residential fort complete with a drawbridge. Within the shelter of this fort lived many a Burgher Koopman with his family following their own social customs alongside the people of the town.

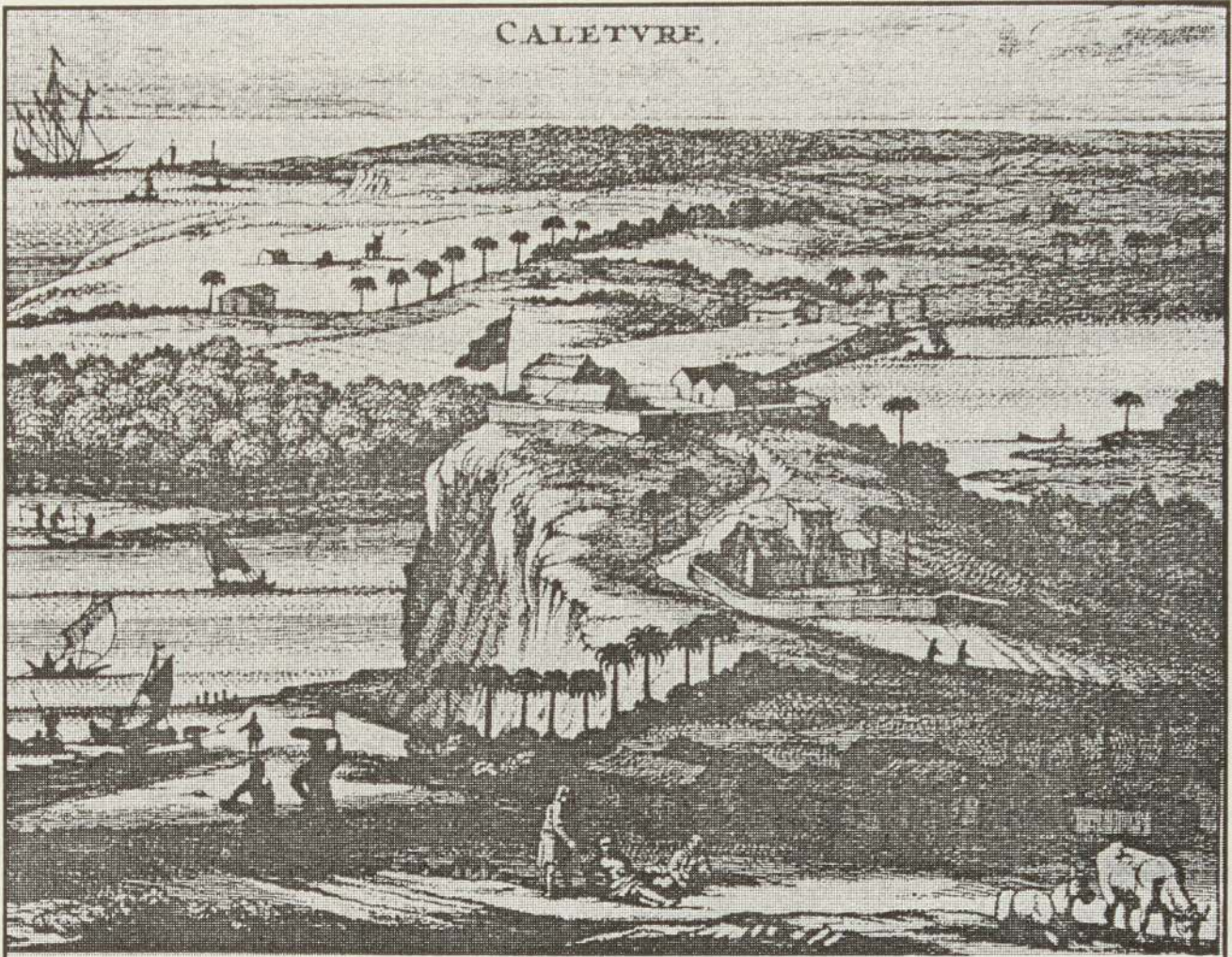
The Dutch maintained control of Kalutara till February 1796 when the fort was conceded to the British under General Stuart.

In the Memoirs of the Dutch Governors who administered Kalutara for the next two decades considerable information regarding the fortunes of Kalutara can be gathered. In the Memoir of Governor Van Goens Jr. it is stated that "Calitura" was under the command of Lieut Dissawe who was also the Superintendent of Cinnamon and Chief of the Company of 130 men. In the memoir of Governor Van Rhee written in 1967 the "Fortress of Calituro eight leagues south of Colombo .....was under the command of Lieut Tobias van Austel" and was reached by a ferry service over the Kaluganga.

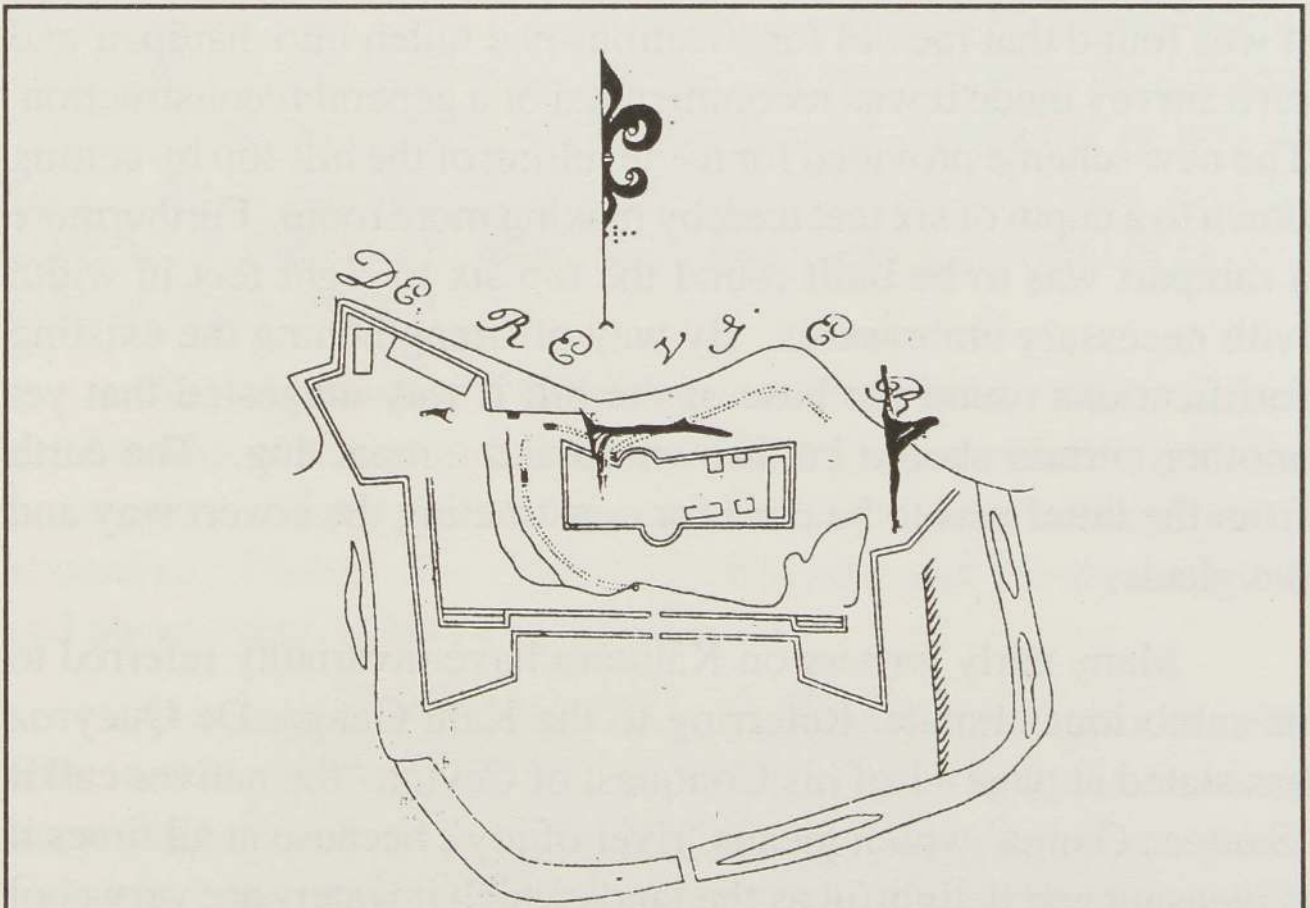
During the period of the Governor Dr. Issac Augustus Rumpf it was found that the old fortifications had fallen into disrepair and on a survey made it was recommended of a general reconstruction. The new scheme provided for the levelling of the hill-top by cutting down to a depth of six feet thereby making more room. Furthermore a rampart was to be built round the top six to eight feet in width with necessary embrasures. By way of strengthening the existing fortifications round the base of the hill it was suggested that yet another curtain should be thrown up and a moat dug. The earth from the latter was to be used for constructing the covert way and the glacis.

Many early writers on Kalutara have invariably referred to its salubrious climate. Referring to the Kalu Ganga, De Queyroz has stated at page 41 of his *Conquest of Ceylon* "the natives call it 'Santosa Ganga' which means 'river of joy', because at all times it is pleasant and delightful as the lands which it waters are very cool and are shaded by grooves of trees." It was a health resort during Dutch times even up to British times before the development of



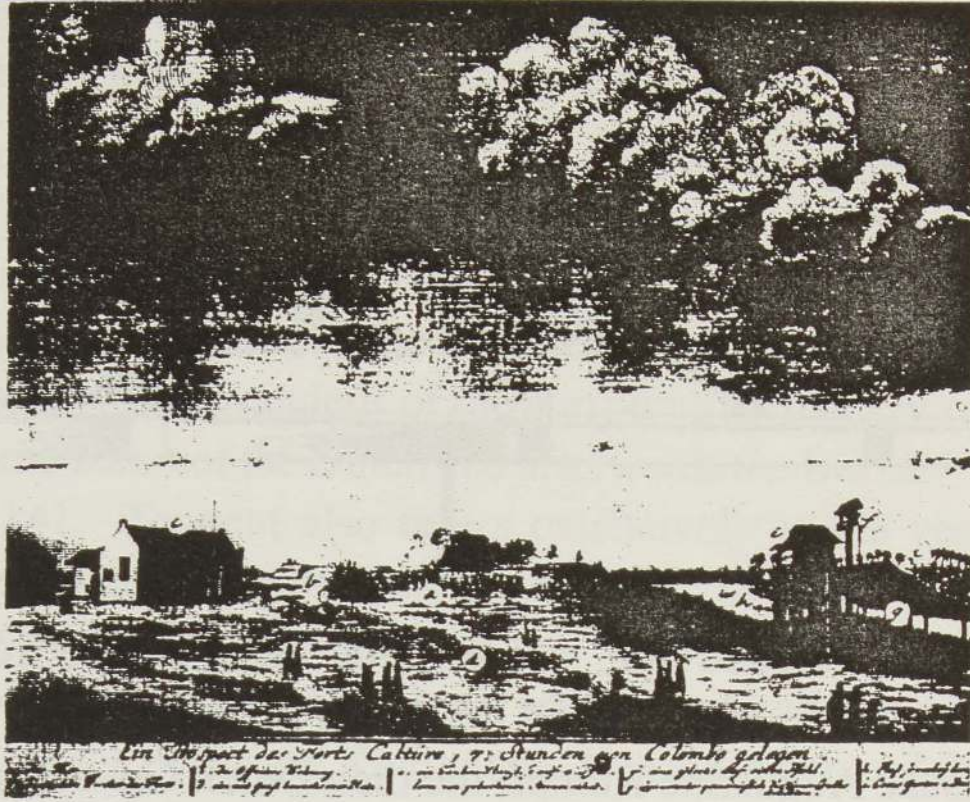


The Town of Kalutara - Philippas Baldeus



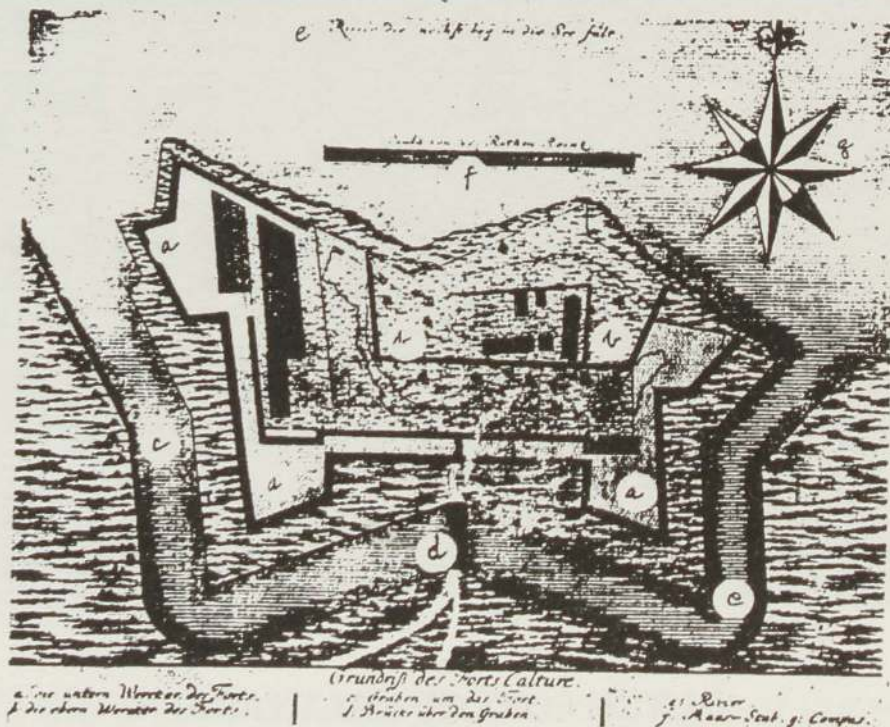
A ground plan of Kalutara Fort after it was reconditioned in 1717 - Isaac Rumpf





59 A View of the Fort of Culture, 7 miles from Colombo. - J. W. Heydt, 1744

- a. THE GATEWAY.
- b. THE LOWER WORKS OF THE FORT.
- c. THE OFFICER'S LODGING.
- d. AN OPEN SPACE GROWN WITH GRASS.
- e. A DOVE-COTE, RESTING ON PILLARS OF BRICK.
- f. A BELL ON A POLE.
- g. SHED UNDER WHICH THE CARPENTERS WORK.
- h. THE RIVER WHICH FLOWS PAST.
- i. COCONUT-GARDEN AND THICKETS.

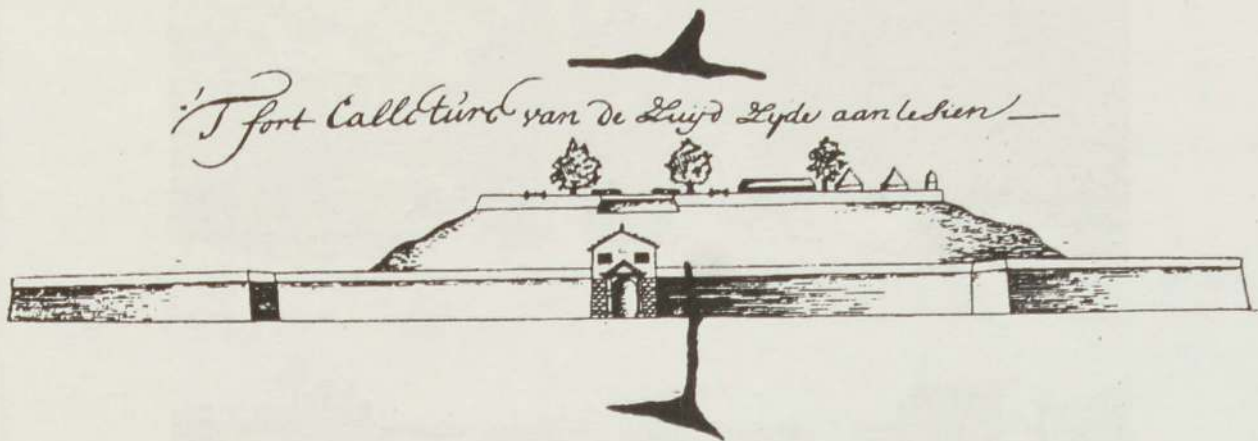


60 Ground-plan of the Fort of Culture. J. W. Heydt, 1744

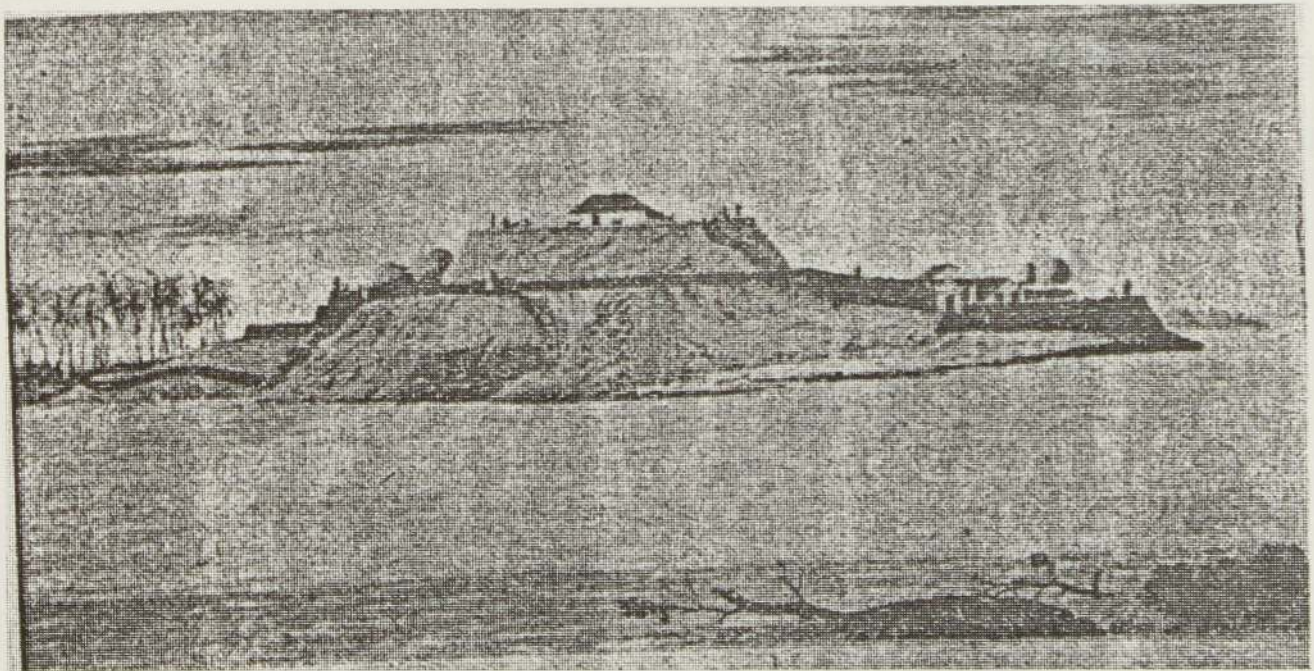
- a. THE LOWER WORKS OF THE FORT.
- b. THE UPPER WORKS OF THE FORT.
- c. DITCH AROUND THE FORT.
- d. BRIDGE OVER THE DITCH.
- e. RIVER.
- f. SCALE.
- g. COMPASS-POINTS



## THE KALUTARA FORT



This is what it looked like, facing south - Reproduced from a Survey Plan of 1717, and described in the diary of Dr. Isaac Augustine Rumpf, the then Dutch Governor



DUTCH FORT OF KALUTARA-  
From a water colour painting by Steiger (18th Century)



Nuwara Eliya which was patronized as a sanatorium by the hard drinking nabobs and military officers of the day.

Similar sentiments have been expressed by other writers in later years, Emerson Tennent has said "Caltura has always been regarded as one of the sanatoria of Ceylon, and as it faces the sea breeze from the south-west, the freshness of its position, combines with the beauty and grandeur of the surrounding scenery rendered it the favorite resort of the Dutch and afterwards the British." Ceylon Vol. ii, p.141. Tennent also refers extensively to the vegetation surrounding Kalu Ganga which brings down by boat the rice and areca nuts from the hinterland to the coast. John Davy whose 'Account of the Interior of Ceylon', which appeared about 30 years earlier referred to the river Kaluganga. He said it derived the name "from the sombre hue of its water, occasioned by the shade of its luxuriantly weeded banks, and is little inferior in magnitude and utility to the Kelani Ganga, which in many respects it resembles. (p.43). James Cordiner in his 'Description of Ceylon' (1807) has referred to the small fortification upon the mount commanding the banks of a beautiful river. He has also referred to a large house about a quarter mile where the Commadant was housed, and a neat village adjacent to it. The climate was described as cool and the situation as pleasant.

Practically all these writers have referred also to the distillation of arrack, an industry which is continued up to today.

Several contributors to the Silver Jubilee Souvenir (1923-1948) of the Urban Council of Kalutara Town have described in considerable detail the situation of the Town with special reference to the Fort which had become the residence of the Assistant Government Agent, as well as the remains of the original fort. The attached pictures indicate these as described by them.

One of the most outstanding developments of the town is the establishment of the Train Service, which took place in two stages, first to Kalutara North on 1.2.1879 and to the South on 19.11.1879 after the erection of the iron bridge across the river. This bridge was originally adopted for both road and rail traffic. This



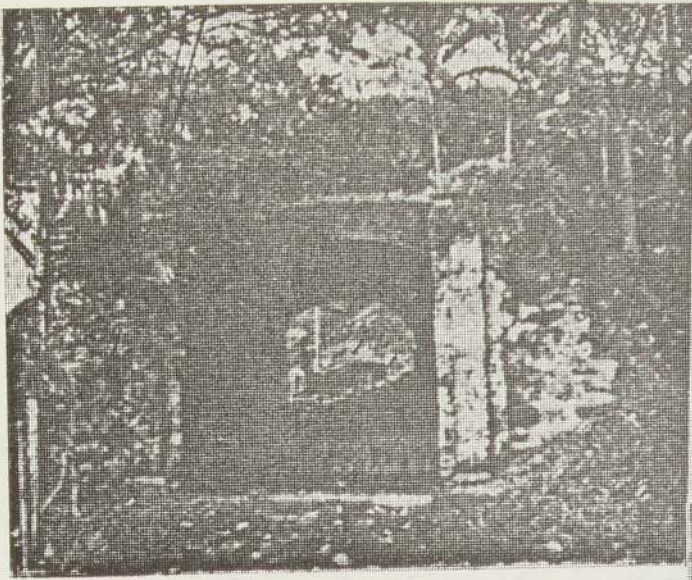


Photo by Dias & Co.

Entrance to the Fort as it stands today

Photo by Dias & Co.

Palunu-Gala

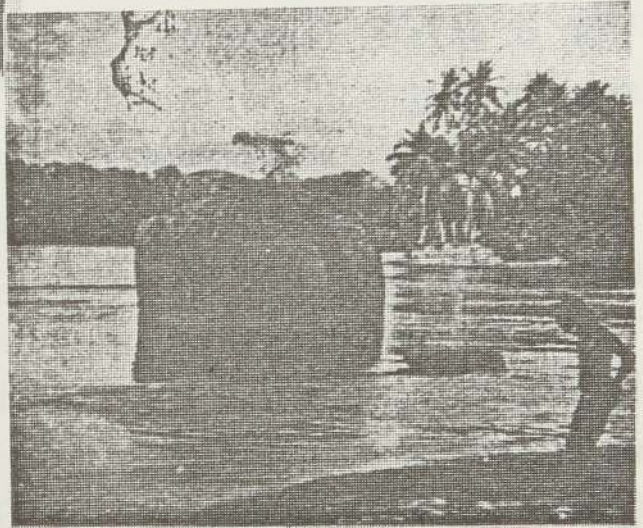


Photo by Dias & Co.  
Weavers at work at the  
Basket Hall

Photo by Dias & Co.

Packing Indipalmware  
for export





development evoked considerable enthusiasm among the residents and one of them, one M.C.P. Perera gave a vivid description in a poem entitled Kalutara Lakara from which the following three verses are quoted:

සත් පුරෙත්	පැමිණ
විස්කම් මැතිදු	විසිණ
මැවූ එව්	නිතිණ
යකඩ පාලම මෙපුර	දිසෙණ
තෙමිස් ගඟ	සරසා
දිලි පාලමට	සකසා
මෙ කළු ගඟ	සරසා
දිලේ පාලම පිණන	මනසා
මෙලක තැන තැන	මය
ඇතත් පාලම කදි	මය
එවූ සැමට	මය
අනඟි සව් ඇති මෙ පාලම	මය

Another important development which has been of much interest was the establishment of the Kalutara Basket Society where local girls were trained in weaving basket ware such as hats, bags, coin purses, boxes for packing tea and flower baskets out of locally grown *Indikoḷa* (ඉදිකොල) (*Pheonix zeylanica*). This was a pursuit developed under the guidance of the local Assistant Government Agent, Mr. C.V. Brayne assisted by his wife and some local ladies. This industry expanded rapidly and Kalutara hats and other products became an important export commodity finding a ready market in many foreign countries. The Kalutara Basket Society is a voluntary organization of the local gentry which expanded their activities rapidly taking within their scope the development of additional cottage industries such as handloom weaving of cloth, sericulture and toy-making from paper pulp. Several of these activities were conducted in a building named the Basket Hall put up with the assistance of a liberal government grant as well as contributions from local benefactors.

Meanwhile another significant change has taken place in more recent times where the original fortress has been completely



wiped out and today one sees a large well built Buddhist vihara in its place. What remains of the past is an age-old bo-tree on the same hillock where the fort was erected and the canal besides it and the ancient river which continues to flow impervious to all changes which have taken place besides it.

### References

- <sup>1</sup> E.B. Denham, 1914
- <sup>2</sup> L.J.B. Turner – *Village and Town Statistics*, 1923
- <sup>3</sup> *Cūlavamsa* (CV) 12; 56 13-16; v v
- <sup>4</sup> CV. 86 41-42. In the footnote it is stated that the length of the bridge is 129 feet while the width of the river is considerably wider
- <sup>5</sup> CV. 86vv 44-46.
- <sup>6</sup> S.Muller, *Ancient Inscriptions of Ceylon*
- <sup>7</sup> Kalutara Urban Council- Silver Jubilee Souvenir, 1923-1948
- <sup>8</sup> Captain Jono Ribeiro, *The Historical Tragedy of the Island of Ceilao*, Translated by P. E. Peires, Forth Edition. Lake House, Colombo, p. 185.



# BHIKKHU SANGHA: THE OLDEST SURVIVING ORGANISATION IN THE WORLD

by  
Olcott Gunasekera

Two thousand five hundred and ninety four years is a long period in human history.<sup>1</sup> The first to enter the Bhikkhu Sangha was Kondañña, one of the *pañca vaggiya* bhikkhus, who after listening to the very first discourse of the Buddha, the *Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta*, asked permission from Him to go forth under the Buddha and to receive the full admission.<sup>2</sup> With the utterance of the words 'Come, O Bhikkhu and live the higher life for the termination of suffering' by the Buddha, Kondañña gained full admission.<sup>3</sup> In this manner the Bhikkhu Sangha<sup>4</sup> came into being and before long there were 60 members.<sup>5</sup> The present Sangha in Sri Lanka and other Theravada countries of Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Thailand claim their lineage from the Sangha of the Buddha's time.<sup>6</sup> Similarly the Sangha of other countries where Buddhism has spread trace their lineage to the time of the Buddha.

The Bhikkhu Sangha, therefore, is undoubtedly the oldest organisation in the world, which claims an unbroken historical tradition. When compared to modern organisations this is unique, for hardly do organisations last a hundred years.<sup>7</sup> In this paper an attempt has been made to examine this phenomenon and elicit the unique features of the organisational design<sup>8</sup> of the Bhikkhu Sangha.

## 2. Scope of the Paper

Sukumar Dutt, in his *Early Buddhist Monachism*,<sup>9</sup> has inferred that the organisational design of the Sangha was based on the republican type of government, with which the Buddha was familiar.



‘The political constitution of many tribes in the area that first came under the influence of Buddhism and from where in early times Buddhist bhikkhus were largely recruited was of the republican type. In these small tribal republics, the authority vested in monarchy in a personal ruler was exercised by an assembly, oligarchic or democratic. The people were quite familiar and conversant with free institutions like voting, committee, popular tribunals, and collective legislation. Many of them were *transplanted*<sup>10</sup> in the Buddhist Sangha, when after the decease of the founder, the need arose for a constitution for the Sangha.<sup>11</sup> Were several of these republican institutions taken over by the Sangha? K.P.Jayaswal’s conjecture that “the Buddhist Brotherhood, the Sangha, was copied out from the political Sangha, the republic, in its constitution, is by no means an improbable one.”<sup>12</sup>

The paper examines the correctness or otherwise of this hypothesis in the light of modern management concepts regarding organisational design. It also examines the structural models that were prevailing during the time of the Buddha, the special features discernible in the organisational design of the Bhikkhu Sangha, and finally the uniqueness of the organisational design that has made the Bhikkhu Sangha the oldest surviving institution. It is not a historical survey, or an attempt to examine, in contrast, the organisation of the Sangha in the different countries as at present and the variations from the original organisational structure.

### **3. Organisational Design – Theoretical Considerations**

An organisation should directly relate to the task. When tasks become complex, the organisational form too becomes complex. A comparison of the organisational form of a wayside retail store, for example, and that of a multinational trading organisation will make this clear. The organisational form of the multi-national is not only inapplicable but also will bring early demise of the organisation, if applied to a wayside retail store.



Similarly, the multinational cannot function within the organisational form of a wayside retail store.

It could be that the task is the same, like the selling of goods and services. But the magnitudes of the operation, the spatial consideration, the types of goods and services that have been planned, have a bearing on the organisational design. The organisational form for the handling of a highly perishable commodity, like milk, will be different to that for the handling of weapons of war, although in principle, both come under the category of 'selling of goods'.

The task may have typical differences as well. Hence, political, social, economic and religious organisations differ widely in organisational design. The task may also have qualitative differences: more exacting the task, the more complex the organisational design becomes.

The technology or the methodology used to accomplish a task is another important aspect that affects organisational design. Say, the task is the production of bread. The technology may vary from a simple home operation to a most modern bakery using sophisticated technology and using computer programming. The organisational design would vary accordingly.

When it comes to a religious task like human liberation, the methodology advocated has a bearing on the organisational form. A regimented organisational design, for example, cannot suite a methodology where liberation is through a process of self-discipline and mental culture.

Another factor that influences organisational design is the people or the individuals for whom the organisation is. The organisational design should cater for the individual as well as the collective needs of the people involved in accomplishing the task, using accepted technology.

None of the aforementioned variables are static or are unique. Hence, they impinge on each other and influence each other. With the passage of time and the changes in the environment,



whether political, social, economic or religious, certain tasks become irrelevant. Certain new tasks emerge. Furthermore, there is always the danger of obsolescence affecting the technology as well as the organisational structure. Hence, all the variables that affect an organisation function within an environment, which too is changing.

The inferences that one can draw from the above discussion are as follows.

- Any organisational design has to be unique, because it is contingent upon variables, which are special or unique to an organisation.
- The tasks of political, social, economic and religious organisations are different; in which case 'transplanting' an organisational design of one type to another is courting failure *ab initio*.
- Different tasks could get activated in a single environment, which could result in certain similarities in design.
- People with common historical and cultural background may be a common denominator, though there could be a divergence in tasks.
- An appropriate organisational form is one that takes into consideration the interplay of people, task, environment, and technology/methodology in order that the task is accomplished optimally.
- As the organisation has to accomplish a task within a changing environment, the ideal organisational form should be future oriented in order to meet new demands and situations. This entails a clear vision of the future or, in other words, on the future expectations.

#### **4. Some Structural Models during the time of the Buddha**

There has been a gradual evolution of institutions, political, social, economic and religious, from the Vedic period. By the time



of the Buddha, i.e., the 6th century BC, certain important trends were noticeable.

### Political Institutions

The monarchy had become the most prominent political institution. The “Aryans” (Indo-European language speakers) had migrated from outside India, first to the Indus valley and later to the Gangetic plane. They had to fight their way against the local inhabitants who have been referred as the *dasyūs*. This made Indra, the War Lord, the most important among Vedic gods. The warring conditions also had other institutional consequences. The Ksatriyas, or the warring class, became the domineering class, because weaponry became more efficacious than the chanting of mantras in protecting the land from invading forces and for victory. The *Rāmāyana* and the *Mahābhārata* epitomize some of these changes; and even the *Bhagavat Gīta* resolves the intransigence of Arjuna, in favour of war, because it is the duty of a Ksatriya to engage in battle for the protection of *dharma*.

The institution of kingship was gaining both importance and power. The later Vedic period, the period of the *Brāhmanas*, has reference to special rituals for the installation of the rulers. The *rājasūya*<sup>13</sup> for the inauguration of a king, the *vājapēya* for consecrating a king, and the *sarvamēdha*<sup>14</sup> a sacrifice for universal rule, were some of the important sacrificial rituals. The *asvamēdha*<sup>15</sup> was also a special ritual for universal monarchy.

Sovereignty was vested in a person after a special consecrating ceremony, after which all authority and power vested in him. ‘*To thee this State is given; thou art the director and regulator, thou art steadfast and bearer (of this State).*’<sup>16</sup>

Commenting on this Jayaswal<sup>17</sup> writes, “*To thee this State is given*” is the most sacred text uttered at a Hindu coronation. It bore a mighty solemn consequence as the vesting of sovereignty in one man. The terse comment of the author of the *Brāhmanas* is immensely important in the history of the institution of Hindu kingship.<sup>18</sup> We find more and more power getting concentrated in



the monarchy. A concept of universal monarch - *chakravarti* had by this time emerged.

Buddhist texts corroborate the evidence of the Vedic literature. There is reference to the *sōḷasa-mahā-janapada* or '16 states'<sup>19</sup> and by the time of the Buddha, power was getting concentrated in the hands of the rulers of Kāsi-Kosala, Magadha, Avanti and Vatsa. There is also reference to the intention of the king of Magadha to annex the land of the Licchavis.<sup>20</sup>

Special treatises like the Kautilya's *Artha Sāstra* on the art of statecraft, the *Manusmṛti* -the Laws of Manu, and the *gṛhya-sūtras* encompass every aspect of the life of the community. Although many of these were compiled in the post Buddha period, these were based on earlier material.

From the simple *samiti* and the *sabhā* with a non-hereditary head, the state as an institution has grown into a complex model, which was pyramidal in organisational design. All authority and power was vested in the Rājā or monarch. 'The king was no longer merely a leader of a primitive tribe, but occupied a position of pre-eminence which was deliberately distinguished in all possible ways from the rest of the people.'<sup>21</sup>

Two most respected institutions in the Vedic period, the *samiti* and the *sabhā*, where the principle of plurality in governance was accepted, were getting eroded, although they yet formed an essential feature of government. Among the 16 states were the States of the Vajjis and Mallas that had a popular or democratic form of governance. The Sākyas, the Kōliyas, and the Kālāmas too may be considered under this category. In contrast to the monarchical model of absolute sovereignty vested in the ruler, power was shared. Hence it is referred as the 'republican model.'<sup>22</sup>

Jayaswal considers the republican model as a subsequent development.<sup>23</sup> This is very doubtful, because both the Buddhist and Vedic texts refer to a non-monarchical system that was co-existent or even prior to the development of the institution of monarchy.<sup>24</sup> The Buddha was more explicit regarding the



contractual obligation of the monarchy. Therefore, it is more logical to take the system of governance among the Sāakyas and the Mallas as a continuation of the *samiti* and *sabhā* tradition. Rhys Davids, on the other hand, has observed that Videha was earlier a monarchy and later changed into a confederacy of republics.<sup>25</sup>

In Kautilya's *Artha Śāstra* and the *Mahābhārata* there is a reference to 'gaṇa' which are at times called 'sangha'. This led Jayaswal to call the republics the 'political sangha' as opposed to the 'religious sangha' of the Buddha and of Jaina Mahavira.<sup>26</sup> Megasthenes, the Greek ambassador of Seleucus Nicator at the court of Candragupta Maurya (4th century BC) too makes reference to the 'gaṇa' or republic type. From the latter one may conclude that this form of political organisation continued in India for some time more.

The Jaina sutta, *Ayaramga Suttam*<sup>27</sup> has reference to six types of states, namely, non-ruler states (*arājam*), gaṇa-ruler states (*gaṇarājam*), *yuvarāja*-ruler states (*yuvarājam*), two ruler states (*dorajjam*), *vairājya* or kingless states (*vērajjam*), and states ruled by hostile parties (*viruddha rājam*).<sup>28</sup> Kautilya's *Artha-Sastra* has references to *rājaśabdōpajīvin sangha* and the *śāstropajīvin sangha*, the former 'observed the practice of assuming the title of *rāja*', and the latter 'observed the practice of arms or military art'.<sup>29</sup>

The Sākyas and the Licchavīs were examples of the *rājaśabdōpajīvin sangha*. The Licchavīs and the Mallas are referred also as aristocratic democracies, and the *kula* or family was taken to be the 'basis of political right and power.'<sup>30</sup>

The *gaṇa* was homogeneous in character and the rulers were elected. Members of the *gaṇa*, both young and old, assembled and took decisions collectively either by consensus or by ballot.<sup>31</sup> Meetings were held at the Assembly Hall (*santhāghāra sālā*).

## Economic Organisations

The period of the Buddha saw an increase of economic activity. This was related to the rise of kingdom states like Kōsala



and Magadha, which provided greater economic opportunities and much political stability. There are references to merchants travelling great distances in convoys of carts with merchandise. Some even went across the seas.

These developments led to the emergence of a rich merchant class from among the *Vaiśyas* who had the designation *setṭhi*. Reference is there to *nagara-setṭhi* and *grāma-setṭhi*. The *maha-setṭhi* translated by Rhys Davids as the High Treasurer, was the highest position.<sup>32</sup>

An organisational model that had appeared during the time of the Buddha as the guild also referred as '*sēṇiyo*' (*srēṇi*) or *pūga*. The differences between the two are not very clear.<sup>33</sup> Katyāyana defines *pūga* as the '*samūha* of merchants and others'.<sup>34</sup> Details are not available regarding the functioning of these guilds. Reference is there to *jetṭhaka* or *parumakha* of such guilds who are described 'as quite important persons who are wealthy and are favourites at the court'.<sup>35</sup> Disputes between one guild and another were within the jurisdiction of the *Mahāsetṭhi*, whilst the guilds themselves are said to have powers of arbitration between the members of the guild and their wives.<sup>36</sup>

## Religious Organisations

In the religious sphere, the most important development was the *sramana* movement. The common term that was used by the Buddha to refer to the religious leaders at the time was '*samanabrāhmaṇa*'.

Among the Brahmanas there was hardly any organisational structure. There was a social structure based on the social stratification into the four main *varṇa* groups of *brāhmaṇa*, *kśatriya*, *vaiśya*, and *sūdra*. This four-fold stratification is traced to the *Puruśa sukta* of the *Ṛg Veda*.<sup>37</sup> Each of these castes had a duty and in the Creation itself the brahmanas, emanating from the mouth of the Maha Brahman, were given the highest social position. Life was organised under the *āśrama* system of *brahmacariya*, *grhastha*, *vānaprastha*, and *sanyāsin*. The stage of *sanyāsin*, or the last *āśrama*



*dharma*, was considered as the brahmanical answer to the trend towards complete world renunciation that was very much in vogue at the time of the Buddha.

The *sramana* movement was, in a way, a reaction to the stifling grip the brahmanas exercised on society. Due to the socio-economic changes visible at the time, the *Vaiśyas*, with whom wealth was accumulating, had become the dominant class. Hence, the social reality was that there were persons of the higher castes working under the *Vaiśyas*. There was much dissatisfaction in the stratified social structure and the Vedic lore, and many were renouncing the world in search of truth, and a way of liberation. A large number became wandering ascetics or *parivrājakas*.

The Buddha, who was walking on foot from Gayā to Isipatana to preach the newly gained method of liberation, met Upaka, the ājivaka. The question Upaka raised was typical of the time. ‘Your faculties are serene. Friend! The colour of your skin is clear and bright. Under whom have you gone forth? Who is your teacher? Whose law do you confess?’<sup>38</sup>

The Buddhist *suttas* make special reference to six contemporary teachers of the Buddha. Except in the case of the Jainas, where a Jaina sangha is mentioned, the organisational design in the case of the others was very simple. There was the teacher ‘*sathā*’ who was at the head and he had his pupils. In fact, of the *parivrājakas*, the thesis has been put forward that the structure of the *parivrājaka* institution can only be understood as an ‘anti-structure’.<sup>39</sup>

The foregoing shows that except as regards the political institutions, the organisational designs in the case of economic and religious institutions were very rudimentary. Among the political institutions there was the monarchical and republican structural designs.



## 5. Organisational design of the Bhikkhu Sangha and its Special Features

Was there a preconceived organisational design for the Bhikkhu Sangha? If we accept Sukumar Dutt's contention of 'transplanting' an already existing design, the answer would be 'yes'. But was this so?

By the time of the *parinirvāna* of the Buddha, the mighty Magadhan kingdom was absorbing the republican states of the Sākyas, the Kōliyas, the Mallas and the Licchavīs. It is very unlikely that a failing organisational design would be 'transplanted' to a newly created organisation. This does not preclude the likelihood of any beneficial features been incorporated in the organisational design of the Bhikkhu Sangha, if appropriate.

When Vessakāra, the Chief Minister of King Ajātasatthu, reported of the king's intention to attack the Vajjīs, the Buddha turned to Ven. Ananda and asked whether the Vajjīs were yet following the welfare conditions, which had been referred as the *aparihāniya dhamma*. When Ven. Ananda replied in the positive, the Buddha said that as long as the Vajjis follow the *aparihāniya dhamma*<sup>40</sup>, which the Buddha himself had taught on a previous occasion, their welfare was assured.

Immediately afterwards,<sup>41</sup> the Buddha requested Ven. Ananda to congregate the monks and he enunciated a set of seven conditions for the welfare of the Sangha.<sup>42</sup> It is difficult to contend from this, as Jayaswal has done,<sup>43</sup> that the Buddha copied the political *sangha* model in designing the Bhikkhu Sangha. He has also conveniently forgotten the statement of the Buddha that, in fact, it was the Buddha himself who has taught the *Vajjis* the *aparihāniya dhamma*.<sup>44</sup>

The argument of Jayaswal, to say the least, is very naïve. He says "The Buddha was born in a republican people. He had *sangha* neighbours around him, and he grew up amongst them. He called the community which he founded 'Bhikkhu Sangha' or the 'Republic of Bhikkhus'. He, following his contemporary teachers,



adopted the name as well as the constitution of the political *sangha* in founding his religious *sangha*; and this was a reason why his religion and monastic organisation lasted so long.”<sup>45</sup>

If we concede to Jayaswal, then the type of republican model most likely to have been adopted by the Buddha was the *arāja* or ‘no-ruler’ type referred in the Jaina sutra.<sup>46</sup> Regarding this type, Jayaswal had commented: ‘Of course, a state founded on such a basis, to be practical, must have been exceedingly small.’<sup>47</sup> To keep the numbers small was never an objective of the Buddha. On the other hand, he wanted the dispensation to spread far and wide.

When the theoretical considerations of an organisational design was discussed it was mentioned that a proper organisational design has to reckon with several variables. These were the task, technology or methodology, the people, and the environment. If the Buddha ever ‘transplanted’ or ‘copied’ a political model, to achieve his objective, which was non-political and religious, his organisational design would undoubtedly be doomed because of its inappropriateness. The organisational design has to suite the particular task of an organisation.

The Buddha had repeatedly mentioned that there was only one goal or task for a monk, i.e. ‘the release from *dukkha* and the attainment of *Nibbāna*.’<sup>48</sup> The Buddha, however, was no liberator. He only showed the way.<sup>49</sup> The path of liberation has to be trod each one by oneself.<sup>50</sup> This path of liberation has to be trod each one by oneself. This path, which is the Noble Eightfold Path, is one of self-discipline and self-culture. A person treading the path has to discipline (*sikkhā*) oneself in *adhi-sīla*, *adhi citta* and *adhi paññā*,<sup>51</sup> synonymous with restraint (*saṃvara*), concentration (*samādhi*) and wisdom (*paññā*).<sup>52</sup> A person diligently following this path will find liberation with the elimination of craving, hatred and delusion (*tanhakkhaya*, *dosakkhaya*, *mohakkhaya*). It is a gradual transformation of the human personality from the state of a wordling (*puthujjana*) to one of learner (*sēkha*) and finally to an adept or arhant (*asēkha*). An Arhant is fully liberated and is



accomplished in virtue (*sīla*) concentration (*samādhi*) wisdom (*paññā*), liberation (*vimutti*) and knowledge and sight of liberation (*vimutti ñānadassana*).<sup>53</sup>

The organisational design should be such that it should allow the individual's inner growth, without being stifled. The organisational structure should be supportive of the accomplishment of this task, which is psychological in character.

The Buddha viewed his own role as a guide or teacher. The existing religious model was a teacher-pupil relationship, where the teacher maintained superiority and kept his esoteric doctrine to the inner circle students only. The whole of the *Upanishads* grew from such a relationship. Everything was not taught, and a part of the knowledge was kept back as *gurumutṭhi*. The pupils were to be kept beholden to the teacher.

The Buddha's position among the Sangha was radically different. He did not want any dependence on him as a teacher.<sup>54</sup> He did not keep anything as *acariyamutṭhi*.<sup>55</sup> He did not have specially favoured pupils.<sup>56</sup> He was open and preached the doctrine to everyone without favour. He wanted everyone to be islands unto themselves and take refuge in the Dhamma and no one else.<sup>57</sup>

The Buddha was fully conscious of the task of a bhikkhu and the technology / methodology for fulfilling the task and hence in the organisational design he had eschewed even for himself the position of organisational head. One of the special features we see, therefore, in the organisation of the Bhikkhu Sangha was that it was **non-person centred**. A contrast in the organisational design is that of the Catholic Church, where the Popes continue to be the head of the Church in virtual succession.

The question of a leader or a successor, in fact, came up when the Buddha was living. Devadatta had suggested to the Buddha that as he (the Buddha) was 'old, worn, stricken in years and is at the close of life', the Buddha should hand over the Order of monks to him.<sup>58</sup> The Buddha refused and this was made an occasion for the Sangha to carry out a 'Formal Act of Pronouncement' (*pakāsanīya kamma*) against Devadatta.<sup>59</sup>



The question was again raised at the time of the *parinibbāna* of the Buddha. “It may be Ananda, that in some of you the thought may arise, ‘The word of the Master is ended, we have no teacher any more!’ But it is not thus, Ananda, that you should regard it. The Teaching (*Dhamma*) and the Rule of Discipline (*Vinaya*), which I have set forth and laid down for you all, let them after my demise, be the teacher to you.”<sup>60</sup>

The decision of the Buddha to place the Dhamma and the Vinaya, as the teacher or guide in the organisational design is in full accord with the Buddha’s philosophy. It was not a last minute decision. The Buddha, immediately after his Enlightenment, had decided to live under the Dhamma he discovered<sup>61</sup> and to treat the Dhamma as the teacher.<sup>62</sup> Hence we could say that the organisational design of the Sangha was task-centred, rather than person-centred.

Sukumar Dutt agrees with the view of Oldenberg that during the time of the Buddha, the organisational design was monarchical, and after his *parinirvāna* it was changed into the republican type. “The transition of the Sangha, after the death of the first *Satthā*, ‘from a monarchical to a republican type’ as Oldenberg felicitously puts, is paralleled, so far as our knowledge goes, in the evolution of no other contemporary sect.”<sup>63</sup>

It is true that the Buddha led the Sangha but he never exercised authority similar to that of a monarch. The manner the Buddha resolved the first ever schism in the Sangha, which made him retire to the Parileyya forest in solitude,<sup>64</sup> is not the style of management of a person of authority such as a monarch. Authority means power, which involves power to adjudicate and to inflict punishment. Hence, the statements of Oldenberg and Dutt are untenable. It is a naïve assumption.

Jayaswal too has been misled. The Buddha, who was said to have copied the republican model, seemed to have provided the philosophical basis for ‘non-national, territorial’ expansionist monarchism. He writes, ‘The ground for this (i.e. the non-national and territorial monarchy) has been prepared philosophically. The Buddha, though born republican, was ambitious to found a one-



state empire of his religion.’<sup>65</sup> May be, Jayaswal saw the urgency of the Buddha to accomplish the task that he set before himself after his Enlightenment,<sup>66</sup> i.e. of establishing the fourfold *sāsana* of *bhikkhu*, *bhikkhunī*, *upāsaka* and *upāsikā*, accomplished in six ways, as beating the drums to create a mighty empire!

The Buddha went in search of a way out of the world’s unsatisfactoriness, not for his own sake. After his Enlightenment, his main concern was to make known his Dhamma to the largest number, for their weal and happiness.<sup>67</sup> He wanted his disciples to take his message far and wide. (*Caratha bhikkhave cārikaṃ bahujanahitāya bahujanasukhāya lokānukampāya atthāya hitāya sukhāya devamanussānaṃ.*) To the first 60 Arhants he requested ‘Let not two go on the same path. (*Mā ēkena dve agamittha*)’<sup>68</sup>

There are two approaches in devolving authority. The first is a centralised approach with a hierarchical or pyramidal organisational design. The second is a decentralised approach with authority decentralised. The Buddha, in keeping with his liberation philosophy, chose the decentralised approach. This was a natural development from the non-person task centred organisational approach.

Decentralisation was a deliberate decision of the Buddha. Initially, entry into the Order was done by the Buddha himself using the ‘Come O Bhikkhu formula. This ordination is called the *Ehi bhikkhu upasampadā*, which means the Acceptance by saying ‘Come O bhikkhu.’<sup>69</sup> This was a privilege enjoyed only by a Buddha.

The Buddha says, “Bhikkhus, when I was alone on retreat this thought arose in my mind. ‘Bhikkhus are now bringing in from various quarters and from various countries men who want the Going Forth and Admission, so that these should be given to them by me. This is troublesome for both the bhikkhus and those who want the Going forth and Admission. *Why should I not now authorise bhikkhus to give Going Forth and the admission there in whatever quarter (nānādēsa), in whatever country (nānājanapada) they happen to be? This in fact I allow you to do*’.<sup>70</sup> The procedure



of Going Forth was changed to 'Acceptance by Going Forth for refuge in the Triple Gem' (*Anujānami bhikkhavē imēhi tīni saraṇagamēhi upasampādentī*).<sup>71</sup>

When the Bhikkhu Sangha was getting more institutionalised, this system of the Going Forth was also changed by the Buddha. The responsibility was given to the Sangha and the privilege that was given to a *sāvaka* under the *tisaraṇogamanūpasampadā* was withdrawn. Full entry into the community was made a *vinayakamma* and by a resolution of the Sangha at a *upasampadā* function. (*ñatticatutthakamma upasampadā*)

The spirit of decentralisation, the Buddha carried to its logical conclusion. With large numbers entering the Order, there was a laxity, which was not seen during the first twenty years.<sup>72</sup> Hence the Buddha withdrew the privilege given to the individual monks to accept the Going Forth, and placed it on the community of monks or *bhikkhu sangha* that was constituted properly for the respective *vinaya kamma*.<sup>73</sup>

As a further precaution, the Buddha instituted an important position of preceptor (*upajjhāya*) besides that of teacher (*ācariya*) 'under whose responsibility the Sangha confers seniority of status on the novice'.<sup>74</sup> The circumstance for the creation of the position of preceptor is an indication of the particular role the preceptor has to play as a close associate and counsellor. The relationship between preceptor (*upajjhāya*) and novice (*saddhivihārika*) is of mutual benefit and an important nexus in the organisational design.<sup>75</sup>

One of the cardinal doctrines of Buddhism is impermanence (*aniccatā*). This was not taken as a basic principle in the Buddha's organisational design for the Bhikkhu Sangha. On the other hand, the Buddha was very keen that the Dhamma or the *brahmacariya* lasts for a long time (*addhanīyaṃ*) and lasting long (*ciratthitikaṃ*).<sup>76</sup> However, this is not for its own sake, but for the sake of (*tadassa*) the welfare and happiness of many, as mentioned by the Buddha.



The organisational design of the Bhikkhu Sangha, which may be inferred from the above discussion, may be summarised as follows.

- 1) The organisational design had a natural growth and had evolved over the years, always keeping in focus the task, i.e. liberation from *samsāra*, and the technology or methodology, i.e. the *ariyo atthangiko maggo* that the Buddha discovered.
- 2) It is non-person centred and without an organisational head having authoritative power to control and punish.
- 3) It is non-pyramidal or non-hierarchical, having no line of command.
- 4) The design is task-centred, and the Buddha emphasised this by placing the *Dhamma* and the *Vinaya*, the Teaching and the Rules of Conduct, as the guide (*satthā*) after his demise (*mama accayēna*).
- 5) It is a flat structural design and fully decentralised, which allowed (a) each community of monks to perform all *vinaya* acts, if properly constituted; and (b) the territorial spread of the teaching for the good of the many, as intended by the Buddha.

It is inconceivable, in management terms, for an organisation, which was leaderless and decentralised to last for long. The republics of the Buddha's time, which according to Jayaswal and Dutt, gave the blueprint to the Buddha for his organisational design,<sup>77</sup> could not withstand the socio-political pressures of the subsequent periods and had to succumb. The fate of the Bhikkhu Sangha, one might have surmised, could have been the same. However, the Bhikkhu Sangha exists even today, after 2548 years of the demise of the Buddha. Were there any institutional devices in the organisational design to have made this possible? This aspect will be dealt with in the next section.



## 6. Cohesiveness of the Bhikkhu Sangha in the Organisational Design

The organisational design of the Sangha had the characteristic of a 'non-structure' when compared with a traditional organisational design. Some of the features of a traditional organisational design<sup>78</sup> are unity of command, span of control, scalar principle,<sup>79</sup> departmentalisation &c. Most of these features are not discernible in the organisational design of the Sangha. This is mainly due to the differences in the organisational philosophy, which is based on the task to be achieved.

In the Sangha, there is a common organisational goal that is supportive of the individual goal. The individual goal is liberation from *saṃsāra* achieved by practising the Dhamma (*dhammaṃ care*) and the common organisational goal is to create the necessary environment for achieving the individual goal.

When the Buddha placed the *Dhamma* and the *Vinaya* as the teacher or guide of the *Sangha* after his demise, he laid a common, unchangeable parameter for the entire *Sangha* for all times. The first Buddhist Council held three months after the demise (*parinibbāna*) of the Buddha, not only brought together the *Dhamma*, which the Buddha taught (*mayā dhammo desito*) but also made a decision that the *Vinaya* rules already promulgated by the Buddha (*mayā vinayo paññatto*) should be observed without any deletion.<sup>80</sup>

It is observed that there is no conflict between the organisational design and the individual goal. One of the causes for the failure of an organisation is a conflict between the two goals. The Buddha saw to it that there was no such conflict in his organisational design. This factor contributed immensely to the cohesiveness of the Bhikkhu Sangha.

Going Forth and Admission to the *sangha* is for a single purpose, which is the goal of Buddhism, itself. When asking for admission to the Order the request is to grant Admission 'in order to destroy all *dukkha* and in order to realize *Nibbāna* (*sabba dukkha*



*nissaranāya nibbāna saccikiriyāya*). This single-purposeness of the *Sangha* is a major factor for its cohesiveness. One may say that it runs as a golden thread that binds everyone together in spite of the non-personal and decentralised features of the organisational design.

One of the most important devices imposed by the Buddha for the cohesiveness of the *Sangha* is the regular recitation of the *Pātimokkha*.<sup>81</sup> In the *Mahāvagga Pāli*, the events leading to the recitation of the *Pātimokkha* on the day of the *upōsatha* is given.<sup>82</sup> It had happened in three stages. First, the monks were allowed to assemble on the fourteenth, fifteenth and eighth days of the half-month. Then the Buddha allowed the monks assembled together on the fourteenth, fifteenth and eighth days of the half-month to discuss the Dhamma. At the third stage the Buddha allowed the monks to recite the *Pātimokkha*.

“Now monks, as I was meditating in seclusion a reasoning arose in my mind thus: ‘What now if I should allow those rules of training, laid down by me for monks, (to form) a recital of *Pātimokkha* for them? It would be a formal act of observance for them.’ I allow you, O monks to recite the *Pātimokkha*.”<sup>83</sup>

From the organisational point of view, the regular recitation of the *Pātimokkha* was of great significance. One could even say that it was a single most important factor for maintaining the cohesiveness of the *Sangha*. At the *Pātimokkha* recitation, which later had become ritualistic, the bhikkhus living in a locality as a single community, came together twice a month. The boundaries ‘for the same communion, for one observance’ (*samānasamvāsa ekūpōsatha*) are given in detail.<sup>84</sup> If boundaries are not given the conditions for the same communion, for one observance are also mentioned in the *Mahāvagga Pāli*. There is, in fact, one whole section called the *Uposathakkhandā* giving all details from different aspects for the regular observance of the *Pātimokkha* recitation.

Attendance at these fortnightly meetings is obligatory for all the monks. The Buddha took the opportunity of the doubt in the mind of Mahā Kappina Thera as to whether he should go to the



observance or not, to stress the importance of regular attendance.<sup>85</sup> The only exception is when a bhikkhu is extremely ill. If he is not in danger, even a sick person should be carried physically in a chair for the observance. The Buddha stressed the importance of attending because he was keen to maintain the cohesiveness of the *Sangha*.

The occasion of the recitation of the *pātimokkha* (*pātimokkha uddēsa*) was taken by the bhikkhus to purify themselves if they have transgressed any of the *vinaya* rules, except of course the four *pārājikā* rules. The onus is on the individual to report the transgression. It is a self-disciplining process. It also brings a sense of humility. The latter is of great psychological import in the endeavours to accomplish the task of the bhikkhu life. This is another instance of the organisational support a bhikkhu gets for leading the noble life (*ariyo brahmacariyo*).

The recitation of the *pātimokkha* was never intended to be a haphazard or a casual act. There was a solemnity and a dignity to be maintained, which necessitated certain prior activities as regards the preparation of the place where the *pātimokkha* is to be recited, and the individual. They are referred as *pubba kicca* and *pubba karaṇa*, that which ought to be done and to be prepared earlier.

The first of the seven welfare conditions (*aparihāniya dhamma*) of the Vajjīs was the holding of frequent meetings (*abhinhaṃ sannipātā sannipāta bahulā*). At these meetings they meet in concord, rise in concord and carry through the work in concord (*samaggā sannipatanti samaggā vuṭṭhanti samaggā vajjikaranīyani karonti*).<sup>86</sup> The Buddha always stressed the unity of the Sangha. Creating schisms (*sangha bhēda*) is included among the five heinous offences (*pañcānantariya kamma*), causing rebirth in a place of misery in the very next existence. Concord among the Sangha, on the other hand, is pleasant and agreeable. (*sukhā sanghassa sāmaggī*)<sup>87</sup> and the discipline of the united is also pleasant and agreeable (*samaggānaṃ tapo sukho*).<sup>88</sup> These two welfare conditions of the Vajjīs are among the *aparihāniya dhamma* enunciated by the Buddha for the welfare of the Sangha.<sup>89</sup>



The Buddha in the organisational design for the Sangha institutionalised the need for frequent meeting or assembly in concord, by the *pātimokkha uddesa*. Commentarial explanation of the first welfare condition of the Vajjis was that the Vajjis should always be ready to meet and discuss as frequently as necessary according to needs. For the Sangha, such frequent meetings could become a hindrance in achieving the main objective of liberation. Hence, formal meetings were restricted to the *upōsatha* days, and attendance was made compulsory. Moreover, all the *Vinaya* acts were conducted in a manner that emphasised concord (*samagga*) among the Bhikkhu Sangha. All procedural matters in the *bhikkhu vinaya* stressed this factor.

## 7. Conclusions

The contention of Jayaswal, followed by Sukumar Dutt and others, that the organisational design of the Bhikkhu Sangha was based on the *political sangha* and the republican model is untenable. The argumentation is also very naive. He bases his description of the republican model on the organisational designs of the Bhikkhu Sangha as garnered from the Buddhist texts and contends that it is a copy of the republican model! Rather than proving his hypothesis, he takes his hypothesis as a basic assumption and develops his theory on that basis.

Again the contention that the Buddha had favoured the republican model to the monarchical model is untenable. The Buddha, for instance, has proposed the ideal monarchy through the *cakkavatti* concept.<sup>90</sup> He also had been critical of the Vajjis,<sup>91</sup> whilst also appreciating certain practices, which had been recorded as the Vajji welfare conditions.

It is quite evident that the Buddha neither copied nor transplanted the republican model; but had instituted an organisational design, which was equal to the expected task. This we have discussed in the preceding sections.

In the organisational design of the Sangha there were several innovative features. Placing the *Dhamma* and the *Vinaya*



as the 'Organisational Head' is unique in organisational design. In contrast to any organisational design, where the organisational head is a person the Buddha made the *Dhamma* and the *Vinaya* the organisational head. The Buddha seemed also keen to preserve the *Dhamma* and the *Vinaya* in the manner it was taught and promulgated by him for a long time (*ciratthitikaṃ*). By placing the *Dhamma* and the *Vinaya* as the organisational head, the Buddha accomplished this in a masterly manner. Furthermore, this helped the rapid spread of the *Dhamma* without any organisational strain. The Sangha became self-propelled rather than being directed. It also made the 'organisational head' to be omnipresent not only to guide the bhikkhu community even in the remotest area but also to assist in accomplishing the task or objective, which is the cessation of suffering (*dukkha nirodha*).

Regular recitation of the *Pātimokkha* (*pātimokkha uddēsa*) i.e. the 220 rules of conduct, by all the monks residing within a stated boundary (*sīma*) fixed according to the *Vinaya* rules was also an innovative feature. It was a constant reminder to the bhikkhus of their task. It gave an opportunity for monks in a locality to meet regularly and get them recharged for an earnest endeavour after getting 'purified' on account of any transgression. The *Pātimokkha* 'bonded' the members of the bhikkhu sangha into a single community. The recitation of the *pātimokkha* was not mere accidental or a copying, but was a deliberate decision of the Buddha.

In this paper, I have examined the factors that made the Bhikkhu Sangha, the oldest surviving institution in the world. The very existence of the Bhikkhu Sangha, after 2594 years, bears witness to the soundness of the organisational design. The Buddha had clarity of objectives and a single purpose in designing the organisational structure of the Sangha. The individual objective of a member of the bhikkhu community was not subservient to the organisation's objective; but was supportive of the individual objective. This is not a guarantee, however, that the Bhikkhu Sangha will survive for another 2500 years. In any organisation, decadence could set in. In tracing the history of Buddhism in Sri Lanka, there were occasions when even five *upasampadā* (higher ordained)



bhikkhus were not to be found. On such occasions, the Bhikkhu Sangha, as a community with lay support, took important decisions for its survival.

### References and Notes

- <sup>1</sup> The calculation is based on the Sri Lankan tradition in which the Buddha *Parinirvāna* is taken as 544 BC. The first members of the Bhikkhu Sangha were the *pañca vaggiya bhikkhus*, who accepted Gotama the Buddha as their Teacher two months after His enlightenment, which happened in 589 BC i.e. 2594 years ago.
- <sup>2</sup> The Book of the Discipline, Vol. IV (*Mahavagga Pali*), Pali text society (PTS) p.18f; Buddha Jayanti Tipitaka Series (BJTS) Vol. 3. p. 26.
- <sup>3</sup> *ibid.* p. 19
- <sup>4</sup> Hitherto, will be referred to as 'the Sangha'.
- <sup>5</sup> *ibid.* p. 28; BJTS p. 42; With the Buddha there were 61 Arhants at the end of three months.
- <sup>6</sup> The Sri Lankan Sangha claim their lineage from Ven. Upali, who redacted the Vinaya at the first Buddhist Council, held three months after the *parinirvāna* of the Buddha.
- <sup>7</sup> A survey conducted in the USA of business organisations showed that less than 5% of the Companies that were existing in 1990 were surviving in 1975.
- <sup>8</sup> Organisational design is taken to mean structural form of the organisation.
- <sup>9</sup> First Indian Edition (revised), 1960
- <sup>10</sup> *italics mine*
- <sup>11</sup> The view that the constitution of the *Sangha* was formulated after the decease of the founder is groundless. There is adequate evidence from the *Suttas* that the organisational design of the *Sangha* was well constituted before the *parinirvāna* of the Buddha. There is, for example, a reference to the recitation of the *Pātimokkha*, the rules of discipline of the *Sangha*, every fortnight (*anvaḍḍhamāsam*), in the *Anguttara Nikāya*. (AI.p.230; BJTS Vol. 18, p. 408)



- <sup>12</sup> Sukumar Dutt, *op.cit* p. 119f
- <sup>13</sup> *Satapatha Brāhmana* V.1.1.12. 'To the king doubtless belongs the rājasūya, for by offering the rājasūya he becomes king'
- <sup>14</sup> *Taitirīya Brāhmana*
- <sup>15</sup> *Satapatha Brāhmana* XIII.7.1
- <sup>16</sup> *Satapatha Brāhmana* V.2.1.25; White *Yajurveda* IX.22
- <sup>17</sup> Jayaswal K.P. *Hindu Polity*, p.207, 1978 ed., Bangalore
- <sup>18</sup> *ibid*
- <sup>19</sup> *Anguttara* 1.213; 4.252, 256, 260; *Vinaya texts* 2.146
- <sup>20</sup> *Dīgha Nikāya, Mahā Parinibbāna Sutta* BJTS Vol8., p.118
- <sup>21</sup> Majumdar R.C, *Vedic Age*, 3rd impression, 1950, p.332ff
- <sup>22</sup> Jayaswal, *op.cit.*, p.21 et al
- <sup>23</sup> *ibid.* p.21f
- <sup>24</sup> *Aggañña Sutta*, *Digha Nikaya, Sutta* 27
- <sup>25</sup> Rhys Davids T.W., *Buddhist India*, First edition, 1950, p.18
- <sup>26</sup> Jayaswal, *op.cit.*, p.40
- <sup>27</sup> ed. by Jacobi, 1.3.1.10
- <sup>28</sup> See also Jayaswal, *op.cit.*, p.40
- <sup>29</sup> Translation of Jayaswal in his *Hindu Polity*, p.31
- <sup>30</sup> *kulānam hi samūhastu - gaṇaḥ samparikarthitaḥ*, *Katyāyana, Vīramitrōdaya*. p.426 (quoted by Jayaswal, *op.cit.*, p.98)
- <sup>31</sup> See *Ambhaṭṭha Sutta*, *Digha* 1.113
- <sup>32</sup> Rhys Davids, *op.cit.* p.60
- <sup>33</sup> Jayaswal, *op.cit.*, p.243
- <sup>34</sup> *Samūha vānijādīnaṃ pūgaḥ saparikiccitaḥ*, cited by Chandesvara, *Vivāda R.*, p.669
- <sup>35</sup> Rhys Davids, *op.cit.* p.60
- <sup>36</sup> *ibid.*
- <sup>37</sup> *Rg.Veda*, *Mandala X*



- 38 Vinaya, *Mahāvagga Pali, Khandaka 1*
- 39 Olivette, Patrick, *The Origin and the Early Development of Buddhist Monachism*, p.3, M.D.Gunasena & Co., Sri Lanka, 1974. N.B. On the other hand, the episodes as regards Ālāra Kālāma and Uddaka Rāmaputta, where the Buddha was requested by these teachers to lead pupils along with them show that there was some formal structure.
- 40 *Vajjīnaṃ satta aparihāniya dhamma*, Anguttara Nikaya, *Sutta Nipāta* (BJTS. Vol.21, p.306-312); *Mahā Parinibbāna Sutta* (BJTS. Vol.8, p.118f)
- 41 In the *Anguttara Nikāya* account, no such connection is shown, though sequentially the *Bhikkhu Aparihāniya Sutta* follows the other.
- 42 The Buddha uses the future tense, in enumerating the welfare conditions for the *bhikkhu sangha*, meaning that this was what he expected of them.
- 43 Jayaswal, *op.cit.* p.40f, p.86
- 44 *Ekamidham brāhmaṇa samayam Vēsāliyam viharāmi sarandadi cetiye. Tatrāham Vajjīnaṃ ime satta aparihaniye dhamme desesi. Mahā Parinibbāna Sutta, op.cit.*
- 45 Jayaswal, *op.cit.* p.40
- 46 *supra* note 27
- 47 Jayaswal, *op.cit.*, p.165
- 48 Dhirasekera, Jotiya, *Buddhist Monastic Discipline*, Ministry of Higher Education Research Publication Series, Sri Lanka, 1982, p.33
- 49 *Tummehi kiccaṃ ātappam - akkhātāro tathāgatā*, Dhammapada v.276
- 50 See for example *Dhammapada* v.165 (*Atta Vagga*)
- 51 *Anguttara* 3.2.4.5., BJTS, Vol.18, p.408
- 52 *Nettipakarana*, 126
- 53 *Anguttara* 3.2.1.7., BJTS, Vol.8, p.290
- 54 ‘*Tathāgatassa kho Ananda na evaṃ hoti:ahaṃ bhikkhusanghaṃ pariharissāmi’ti vā, mamuddesiko bhikkhusangho’ti vā*’. *Mahāparinibbāna Sutta, op.cit*, BJTS Vol.8 p.158
- 55 ‘*natthānanda tathāgatassa dhammesu ācariyamuttḥhi*’. *ibid.* (*na natthānanda PTS*)



- <sup>56</sup> *Desito Ananda, mayā dhammo anantaram abāhiraṃ karitvā. ibid.*
- <sup>57</sup> *Tasmātihānanda attadīpā viharatha attasaraṇā anaññasaraṇā, dhammadīpā dhammasaraṇā anaññasaraṇā. ibid.*
- <sup>58</sup> Book of Discipline Vol5, p.264 (*Cullavagga VII.3.1*)
- <sup>59</sup> *ibid*
- <sup>60</sup> *Na kho panetam Ananda evaṃ daṭṭhabbhaṃ. Yo kho Ananda mayā dhammo ca vinayo ca desito paññatto so vo mamaccayena satthā'ti. Mahāparinibbāna Sutta, op.cit, (BJTS Vol.8, p.242)*
- <sup>61</sup> *'Bhagavāpi bhante etarahi araham sammāsambuddho dhammaṃ y'eva sakkatvā garukatvā upanissaya viharatī'ti'. Anguttara 4.1.3. (BJTS Vol.18, p.44)*
- <sup>62</sup> It may be noted that the *Vinaya* is not mentioned. The *Vinaya* rules were promulgated somewhat later, after the 20th *Vassa*. Hence this statement has to be placed in the early period of the Buddha according to internal evidence.
- <sup>63</sup> Dutt, Sukumar, *op.cit.* p.120 ( See also footnote 12, p.116)
- <sup>64</sup> *Vinaya, Mahāvagga, Kosambikkhandaka 10 (BJTS Vol.4, p.878)*
- <sup>65</sup> Jayaswal, *op.cit.*, p.229
- <sup>66</sup> When Māra wanted the Buddha to reach *parinirvāna* after his Enlightenment, the Buddha replied that he has yet another task to accomplish. Māra later returned to remind the Buddha of this promise. *Mahāparinibbāna Sutta, op.cit. (BJTS Vol.8. p.162)*
- <sup>67</sup> *Vinaya, Mahāvagga, Mahākhandaka (BJTS Vol.3, p.42)*
- <sup>68</sup> *ibid.*
- <sup>69</sup> *'Ehi Bhikkhu, svākkhāto dhammo carē brahmacariyaṃ sammā dukkhassa antakiriyāya'*
- <sup>70</sup> *Vinaya, Mahāvagga, Mahākhandaka (BJTS Vol.3, p.44) italics for emphasis.*
- <sup>71</sup> *ibid.*
- <sup>72</sup> See *Gopaka Moggallāna Sutta, Majjhima Nikāya*
- <sup>73</sup> *Mahavāgga ix.4.1. (BJTS Vol.4, p.772, paras. 68-73)*
- <sup>74</sup> Dhirasekera, *op.cit.*



- <sup>75</sup> See *Vinaya, Mahāvagga, upajjhāyavatta saddhiviharikavatta* and also Dhirasekera, *op.cit.* pp.131-136
- <sup>76</sup> *Mahāparinibbāna Sutta, op.cit.* (BJTS Vol.8. p.186)
- <sup>77</sup> This has been refuted earlier.
- <sup>78</sup> Massi, Joseph L., *Essentials of Management*, pp. 66-71, Prentice Hall of India Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, 1973, 2nd edition
- <sup>79</sup> The scalar principle states 'that authority and responsibility should flow on a clear, unbroken line from the highest executive to the lowest'. *ibid.* p.69
- <sup>80</sup> Decision of the First Council as regard the lesser and minor rules (*khuddānukhuddakāni sikkhāpadāni*), *Cullavagga*
- <sup>81</sup> Dutt, S., *op.cit.*, p.73. *Pātimokkha* is translated as 'the bond' or the external token of union of the Bhikkhu Sangha
- <sup>82</sup> Book of Discipline Part IV, *Mahavagga Pāli* II, p.130f
- <sup>83</sup> *Anujānāmi bhikkhave pātimokkhaṃ uddesitaṃ*. I do not agree with Mrs. I.B.Horner's translation, 'I allow you, O monks, to recite a patimokkha', implying that there are several *pātimokkhas*. This section is preceded by what forms the *pātimokkha*.
- <sup>84</sup> Book of Discipline, Vol. II.12.1 - II.13.2, p.142-146 (BJTS Vol.3, p.264-269)
- <sup>85</sup> *ibid.*, p.136f
- <sup>86</sup> *Aparihāniya dhammā, Anguttara Nikāya; Sattaka Nipāta, Vassakara Sutta* (BJTS Vol.21, p.308-310); *Mahāparinibbāna Sutta, op.cit.*
- <sup>87</sup> *Dhammapada, Sukha Vagga*
- <sup>88</sup> *ibid.*
- <sup>89</sup> *Aparihāniya dhamma, op.cit.* There are six sets of 7 welfare conditions for the *sangha*. The first three welfare conditions of the Vajjis are mentioned almost verbatim for the *sangha*.
- <sup>90</sup> *Cakkavattisīhanāda Sutta, Digha Nikāya, Sutta 26*
- <sup>91</sup> *Samyutta Nikāya*



# THE LIFE STYLE OF EARLY INHABITANTS OF SRI LANKA\*

by  
T. W. Wikramanayake

The earliest settlers in Lanka would have been the descendants of *Homo erectus* who moved out of Africa more than 2 million years ago. They would have been replaced by *Homo sapiens* who also moved south from peninsula India.

It is generally agreed that humans originated from African apes and spread throughout the world. Between 5 and 9 million years ago, a population of African apes broke up into several populations, of which one proceeded to evolve into the modern gorillas, a second to the two modern chimpanzees and the third into humans. The gorilla line split off slightly before the split between the chimpanzee and human lines (Ref. 1: p.36).

Fossils found in Africa and Java indicate that the evolutionary lines leading to us, humans, had achieved a substantially erect posture around 4 million years ago, then began to increase in body size and in relative brain size around 2.3 million years ago (1:36). These proto-humans are generally known as *Australopethicus africanus*, *Homo habilis*, and *Homo erectus*, who apparently evolved into each other in that sequence. *Homo erectus* was more than an ape but still much less than a modern human, close to us in body size with a brain barely half the size of ours.

The stage from Great Apes to *Homo erectus* took about 5 million years and was confined to Africa. The first human ancestor to spread beyond Africa was *Homo erectus* as is attested by fossils found in Java, conventionally known as Java man (may actually

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\* The paper attempts to answer the question: who were the early inhabitants of Sri Lanka, and to summarize what is known of their diet and other aspects of their life style, such as occupation and habitat.



have belonged to a Java woman) which date from 1.8 million years ago. About one half of a million years ago human fossils had diverged from older *Homo erectus* skeletons, having enlarged, round and less angular skulls. *Homo erectus* had evolved into *Homo sapiens*, who still differed from us in skeletal details, had brains significantly smaller than ours, and were grossly different from us in their artefacts and behaviour (1). The difference in habits was the use of fire.

Until about 150,000 yrs ago there were diverse groups of hominids, in Africa and West Asia *Homo sapiens*, in Asia *Homo erectus* and in Europe *Homo neanderthalensis*. However, by about 30,000 years ago the taxonomic diversity had vanished. Man everywhere had evolved into the anatomically and behaviourally modern form. This "Great Leap forward" is thought to have taken place 150,000 to 100,000 years ago in East Africa, from where they spread to other parts of the world, replacing the earlier settlers, without mixing with archaic forms (1:41; 2,3). This "Out of Africa Hypothesis" is opposed by the "Multi-regional Hypothesis" which contends that, after *Homo erectus* dispersed throughout the world, populations slowly evolved into regional variants (sometimes called races) that are to be seen today (2). According to this hypothesis, the emergence of *Homo sapiens* was not restricted to any one area, but is a phenomenon that occurred throughout the entire geographic range reached by *Homo erectus*.

The multi-regional hypothesis received support from Australian scientists after the discovery of the Mungo Man at Lake Mungo in New South Wales, in 1979(3). Their conclusions are contested by other scientists in Europe who hold that "there is no evidence here that the ancestry of these Australian fossils goes back to a million or two million years, which is the multi-regional prediction"(3).

Recent studies on mitochondrial DNA (mt DNA) give strong support to the "recent African" theory. By determining the substitution rate of the mitochondrial genomic sequences, it is possible to build a chronology of events in the evolution and



migration of human species (4). All sequences coalesce into the “the mitochondrial Eve”, about 171,500 years ago (4), which fits remarkably well with that proposed in the “Recent African origin” hypothesis. If the multi-regional hypothesis for human evolution is accepted, one would expect a much older date, as it would represent the common ancestor, *Homo erectus* rather than *Homo sapiens* (4,5). The earliest hominids who settled in India would have been *Homo erectus*. Evidence from mt DNA haplotypes indicate that India could have served as a corridor for dispersal of modern humans to South East Asia and Australia. The hypothesis is that a small number of females entered India during the initial phase of peopling of India. The nucleotide sequence data of a hypervariable segment of the mitochondrial genome indicate that the ancestors of present Austro-Asiatic tribal populations may have been the most ancient inhabitants of India. Based on Y chromosome data, it has been possible to “trace the footprints of human movements” from west and central Asia into India (6).

### The Out-of Asia Hypothesis

The earliest fossil evidence for the origin of Anatomically Modern *Homo Sapiens* (AMHS) in the “Out of Africa” replacement model comes from sites in South Africa, about 100,000 to 90,000 BP (Before the Present, present being 1950 CE). Evidence for a multi regional origin of AMHS is suggested by evidence from Jabel Qafzeh in Israel. “But the Asian region remains an intriguing and often overlooked alternative to either scenario, and recent years have seen an increase of supporting evidence for the ‘Out of Asia’ model, to explain modern human origins” (7:11).

Hominids were certainly present in mainland Southeast Asia, with evidence for their presence in Thailand dating 800-600,000 years ago. Five *Homo-erectus* specimens from Vietnam date to 500,000 BP. *Homo erectus* from Java may be 1.8 to 1.6 million years ago, and evidence indicates that *Homo erectus* may have coexisted with archaic *Homo sapiens* in the Sunda region (7:12). Skeletal remains recovered from Flores Island, Java and



from Sichuan, China suggest hominid presence in Asia as early as 1.9 to 0.9 million years ago. Available biological data for South Asians indicate a complex but basically homogeneous genetic pattern. Past studies suggested that the high genetic diversity seen in modern African populations was due to great antiquity. But recent research has stimulated several thought-provoking hypotheses. Y-chromosome DNA data suggests that an Asian migration back to Africa may account for the African genetic diversity. The African genetic diversity may be an artifact of remnant population size rather than antiquity of AMHS origin (7: 190)

Because about 85% of the genetic composition of South Asia is indigenous, Diane Hawkey (7) considered the region to be an excellent area for study of micro evolutionary processes, dental morphological traits being taken as a reliable starting point. Dental traits are a particularly useful resource for interpretation of South Asian biohistory because of their inherent qualities, including a significant genetic component, evolutionarily conservative to change, little or no sexual dimorphism, and low susceptibility to environmental influence. Moreover, dental features provide enough qualitative data to enhance the sample size, due to bilateral occurrence of teeth and lack of age-related morphological changes (7: 1).

The dental data do not indicate substantial gene flow from external populations into South Asia from the late Pleistocene/ early Holocene to modern times. When the intra-group homogeneity of South Asians is compared to the inter-group world heterogeneity, gene drift rather than gene flow appears to have been the main micro evolutionary process operative within India and Sri Lanka (7: 183). Because South Asians are dentally similar to one another, data from the three earliest South Asian samples (India H/G, Sri Lanka H/G, Northwest F/H)\* have been pooled and a South Asian dental pattern (*Indodont*) characterized. This research has also suggested the existence of an early dental pattern shared by both South and Southeast Asians. The minimum divergence of this Early

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\* H/G = Hunting/Gathering, F/H= Farming/Herding



Indo-Sundadont pattern from the rest of the Early World lends support to an “Out of Asia” model for the origin of modern humans (7:190).

During the late Pleistocene period, Early Indo-Sundadont populations may have separated into two divisions (7:123). One branch (Sundadont) could have spread to the west, into northeast Africa (Nubia), and north to Baikal, eventually evolving into a Sinodont pattern. The second branch population (Indodont) migrated to the west and northwest, into the Near- Mid East, Eurasia and eventually North Europe. This scenario may explain why the mt DNA results for modern Sri Lankan Vāddās suggest they cluster between Europeans and North-Asians. Y- chromosome DNA data also indicates the same European-North Asian relationship with Central Asians. The close affinity of Sri Lanka H/G with recent Melanesians, and to lesser degree with modern Australian aborigines, suggest that the Indodont (or Early Indo-Sundadont) pattern may be ancestral to the population of the Sahul region. Similarities between Early Southeast Asian and Australian stone artifacts have also been noted. Craniometric data also suggest a strong link between Australasians and South Asians. But the Australians have been isolated. Although dug-out canoes from Southern Timor could have easily reached Australia, the reverse is not true, because of ocean currents. Once established in Australia the founders would not have been able to return to their original land. This geographic relation (and resultant effect of gene drift) may explain why, although Australians are dentally more similar to Sri Lankan / Southeast Asians than to any other Early World population, some differences in dental characteristics do occur (7: 191).

Although biological findings suggest the possibility of a South China – Sunda shelf or Australasian regional source for completely modern humans, the extent and direction of population movements are unknown.



## South Asian Prehistoric

There is evidence (in the form of artifacts, simple cores and flakes) that early hominids have lived in the Himalayan foothills around 2 million years ago (8:751). The earliest established dates for hominids in peninsular India are *ca.* 600,000 years BP. It is likely that evidence will be unearthed to indicate an age comparable to that of the Himalayan foothills (9) because there does not appear to be any physical barriers to prevent humans from being in Southern India at about the same period as in the Himalayas.

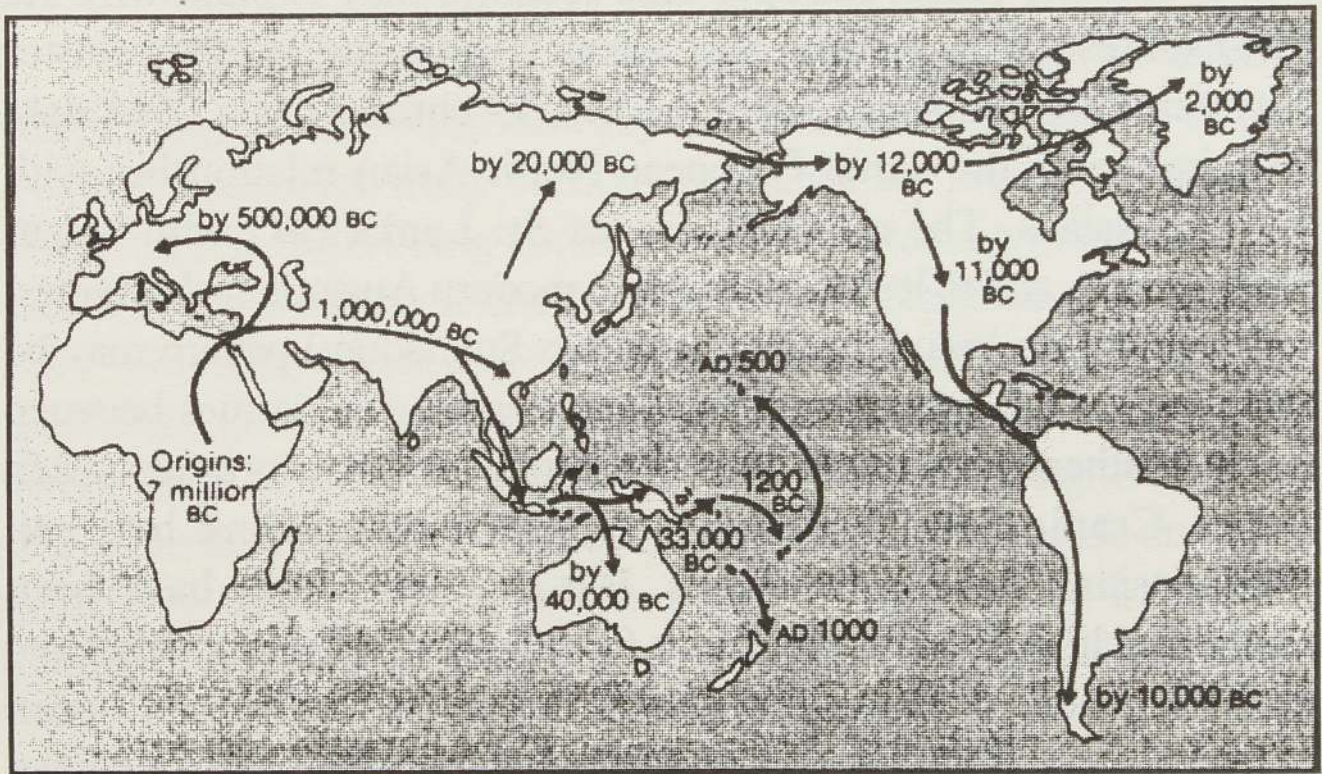


Fig 1. The spread of humans around the world.

Source: Reference 1, p. 37

It is certain there were prehistoric settlements in Lanka in the Paleolithic times (> 300,000 ? – 40,000 BP). Excavations in coastal deposits near Bundala, Patirājawela yielded (8: 118,686) a small-flake stone industry dated 125,000 to 75,000 BP, while Bundala, Wellegangoda had similar material from *ca.* 80,000 BP. There were geometric microliths of lunates, triangles and trapezoids on quartz and also on chert which are assignable to *ca.* 26,000 BP. Nothing else left by these humans has survived. We do not know what they looked like. They were probably early *Homo sapiens*. The size of their settlements is not known. Surface indications are



ca. 50 sq. metres or less per site (9). They must have been foragers. Judging from what is known of the densities of their food supplies, Deraniyagala thinks that it is very likely that a couple of nuclear families formed a group, except perhaps in the northern and eastern coasts with their rich resources of marine foods (8:444).

The topics of diet (foods that are eaten) and nutrition (the way these foods are used by the body) are central to the understanding of the evolutionary journey of humankind. The very fact that hominids had acquired a bipedal manner of walking by 4 to 8 million years ago is almost certainly related to how they acquired food (10:13).

The gem-bearing gravels of the Ratnapura District (the Ratnapura beds) have yielded remains of an upper Pleistocene fauna, notably a hippopotamus with 6 incisor teeth (*Hexaprotodon palaeindicus*) dated in India to ca. 125,000, and a lion. A species of rhinoceros, which has been dated to ca. 80,000 BP; the other forms comprise *Elephas maximus*, *Hexaprotodon sinhaleyus*, considered to be almost identical with *H. palaeindicus*, *Rhinoceros kagavena*, *Bibos*, *Corvus unicolor unicolor*, identical with the living sambhur of Sri Lanka, and *Axis axis ceylonensis*, identical with the living spotted deer of Sri Lanka. There were also artifacts comprising large choppers and flakes of quartz and chert, which have been described as the "Ratnapura Industry" (8:53-61).

From about 37,000 BP the prehistoric record is much more complete. "Evidence has emerged from a series of cave excavations in the lowland wet zone. The dating is based on radio-carbon assays on charcoal, checked independently against thermoluminescence dating in the case of Beli-lena. More than 50 such dates from various contexts at these sites make the chronological framework secure" (8:695-701).

1. **Fa-Hien Cave**, in Yaṭagampitiya, near Bulathsinhala, in Kalutara District, first examined by S.U. Deraniyagala and excavated by W H Wijayapala (Director of the Archaeological Survey Department) in 1986 and 1988, is probably the largest cave in the country, dated 37,000-5,400 BP. Human osseous and dental remains



were found at the lowest level, *ca.* 37,000 BP, having one of the earliest collections of AMHS (anatomically modern *Homo sapiens*) known to science, equal in antiquity to the earliest human bone, found in France, dated 37,000 BP. Six burials recovered were secondary burials of children and infants. At a higher level (4750±60 BP) two skeletons were coated with red ochre, a practice not seen elsewhere in Sri Lanka, apart from a frontal bone found in Ravanālla Cave. Both faunal and floral remains are well preserved and are likely to shed light on the environment between 37,000 and 25,000 BP (8:695).

**2. Baṭadomba–Lena Cave**, near Kuruwita, in the Ratnapura District, dated *ca.* 31,000-12,000 BP. First explored by PEP Deraniyagala in 1937-41 (11) who discovered several fragments of bone. It was later extensively excavated by SU Deraniyagala in 1981. At all levels were found geometric microliths, making this Asia's earliest reliably dated site with such implements. Also found, in association, were small points of bone and antler, along with shell beads.

Baṭadomba- Lena yielded some of the earliest evidence (*ca.*31,000 BP) of modern *Homo sapiens sapiens* in S.Asia (8:468). Seven adults and one child were recovered from a level which has a charcoal deposit dated *ca.* 18,000 BP (8:134,696,697). One individual located in an earlier level is dated 31,000 BP. Six individuals had information for permanent tooth features.

Preliminary results of studies on faunal remains indicate a large quantity of molluscan remains (*Acavus* and *Paludomus*), large cats akin to lions and tigers, giant squirrels, porcupines and monkeys. The occurrence of arboreal gastropods, *Acavus phoenix* and *Acavus prosperus*, indicates that the climate was not significantly cooler or drier from *ca.* 28,500-12,000 BP (8:697).

**3. Beli-Lena, Kitulgala in Kegalle District** , dated > 30,000 – 3,500 BP. The site consists of 3 caves, the largest of which was excavated under the direction of WH Wijayapala and SU Deraniyagala during 1978/79, 1983 and 1987, and has yielded an



enormous quantity of food remains, both faunal and floral (8: 315,318). At lower levels, the occurrence of stone tools corroborate the evidence from Baṭadomba Lena, that geometric microliths in Sri Lanka can be of an antiquity in excess of 30,000 BP(8:700). To date, 26 individuals have been examined (7:234).

Very large concentrations of molluscan shells belonging to *Paludomus* spp., *Acavus roseolabiatus* and *A. prosperus*, have been found, indicating that molluscs constituted an important source of protein for prehistoric man. A very large quantity of *Paludomas* and *Acavus* are needed to obtain 250g of meat, and the shell remains are very large (8:315).

Several hearths were excavated at Beli-lena, Kitulgala, (ca. 13,000 BP) ranging from ½ to 1 m in diameter, which suggests they would not have serviced a group of people much larger than a nuclear family. They appear to have been used for preparing food, baking of breadfruit and roasting and/or drying of meat (8:317). Each hearth would have served a nuclear family. Among the Veddas and others it is the practice for each family to prepare its own food and to share the meal with the local group, and pre-historic man would probably have done the same (8:455). What little storage of meat, fish and fruit there was would have been after smoking or sun-drying, and perhaps conserving it with honey.

*Acavus* species are restricted in their distribution to the Wet Zone. The evidence is that the Dry Zone never had a rainfall configuration akin to the wet zone during the late quaternary, so that climate changes are unlikely to account for the presence of *Acavus* in the Dry Zone (8: 142,455). Introduction to the Dry Zone would have been through trade.

A single- course rubble wall was exposed in the stratum dated ca. 13,000 BP. It may have served as footing for a shelter built of plant material. However, no post-holes were found (8:317).

A shell of the marine gastropod *Potamides cingulatus* found in Beli-lena, assigned an age of >18,000 BP, indicates the availability of rock salt from evaporates on the coast > 80km away (8:317).



Rock salt traded today have been found to have inclusions of this mollusc. Prehistoric man in every part of the island during this period and afterwards would have obtained their salt requirement from trade with settlements on the coast (8:455). Seeds of the wild banana *Musa paradisiaca* (S. *ati-kehel*) and the nut shells of *Canarium* (S. *kekuna*) were among the plant remains found in a carbonized form.

A charred granular substance found in concentrated deposits at levels >25,000 to <10,500 BP were first identified as finger millet (*Eleusine corocana*). They were later proved to be burnt remains of the prickly epicarp of fruit belonging to the wild breadfruit *Artocarpus nobilis*, endemic to Lanka. “ The particles represent the waste portion, or external skin or rind of the fleshy fruit, which internal fleshy part would be the part eaten”(8:316). Among the carbonized remains are remains of *Canarium zeylanicum*. The wild breadfruit (S. *gan-del* or *wal-del* ) is a very large tree; the seeds and aril are eaten boiled or fried. Prehistoric man at Beli-lena appears to have baked the fruits under hot ashes and eaten the aril and seeds. This is the first indication of plant exploitation during the Mesolithic period in the Indian sub-continent (8:316).

Seeds of the wild banana *Musa paradisiaca* (S. *äti-kehel*), *canarium* nuts supplemented by wild dioscorea yams would have formed a major portion of the diet. Numerous nut shells of *Elaeocarpus subvillosus* (S. *gal veralu*) occur among the food remains. They are presently eaten by the forest villagers of the remote Sinharaja forest(8: 317).

The faunal remains are being analyzed. Preliminary results indicate a large component of small mammals, notably giant squirrel, porcupine, flying squirrel and small rodents, supplemented by pig and sambhur.

**4. Alu-lena Attanagoda**, a cave near Kegalle, dated *ca.* 10,500 BP, has yielded geometric microliths. Food remains are being analysed. Several specimens of *Acavus* shells have been found.



5. **Bellan-bändi Pälässa**, a Mesolithic open-air campsite near Embilipitiya, Ratnapura excavated over several seasons by PEP Deraniyagala in the late 1950s and 1960s (12). Burnt quartz, found in direct association with Mesolithic human skeletons, indicates a date ca 6500±700 BP (7:234). More than 15 individuals were recovered from a midden deposit.

The ethnographic data on settlements indicate that the minimum size of the hunter-gatherer bands in Sri Lanka would have been 15-25 individuals, with the maximum being about 50 (8:351).

### **Aligala Prehistoric Site (23)**

Data from prehistoric sites studied in the wet zone have been corroborated by excavations in the Dry Zone. One such site is Aligala, situated among the rock boulders that stand towards the eastern side of the base of the Sigiriya inselberg. It is conical in shape, rises 15 to 20 m, and the rock shelter has floor space 4 x 5 m (13).

90% of all the finds were waste flakes, and stone and bone implements, both geometric and ungeometric microliths. Bone points used as borers, were twice or three times the length of the quartz tools. Pitted hammer stones formed part of the "tool kit". There was a considerable number of quartz and chert flakes and leaf-shaped knives which would have been used as cutting instruments.

Shells of identifiable molluscs were found, all of which live in damp environments; only two of them are now found in the area, and that during the rainy season. Were they carried here from the adjoining Matale area where they abound?

Faunal bones of *Axis axis ceylonesis*, wild boar (*Sus scropa cristatus*), purple-faced leaf monkey (*Presbytis sinex*) and grey langur (*Presbytis entulus*), which form formidable game for primitively armed men to track. There were also small game: porcupine (*Hystix indica*), flying fox (*Teropus teropus giganticus*),



black necked hare (*Lepus nigricolis sinhala*) and iguana (*Varanus bengalensis*). Most of these bones had been subjected to pounding, burning, cutting and scraping. Marrow must have been considered a delicacy, as most large bones had been smashed.

Among floral remains were charred dikkekuna (*Cenarium*) seeds, a plant found in the Wet Zone, the seeds being probably imported.

Red ochre, mica and flat stones show evidence of grinding. Red ochre must have had significance in their lives, either for burials and/or for personal adornment. It must have been of considerable importance in their beliefs and life styles.

The lower levels have been dated 3516-3270 BC and upper levels 2562-2144 BC. They are in line with the established view of Lankan prehistory that Mesolithic man occupied this region in the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium BC.

### **Balangoda Man**

Lanka's Mesolithic humans (popularly termed Balangoda Man) are best known from the remains from Fa-Hien Lena (*ca.* 37,000 BP) from Bellan-bändi Pälässa, from Beli-lena, Kitulgala (*ca.* 13,000 BP) and from Baṭadomba lēna (*ca.* 18,000 BP). Remnants of at least 30 individuals have been retrieved from the latter two sites, one of which is a mandible, dated *ca.* 31,000 BP (8:467). The physical traits of Balangoda Man have been summarized as follows: "The overall characters are described by the convenient blanket-term of "Australoid Vaddid". The Australoid traits are considered to be represented in varying degrees. The estimated stature is *ca.* 174 cm for males and *ca.* 166 cm for females (considerably greater than the 160 cm for males and 150 cm for females in the present day population of Sri Lanka). The vertebrae are thought to be disproportionately short for stature, the axis vertebrae in particular. The skull has a variable cranial capacity and its bones tend to be thick. It is dolicocephalic with a low vault and a markedly receding forehead. The occipital curvature at the



rear is pronounced. The cheek-bones are thick and wide. The brow ridges are heavy at times, and the post-orbital constriction is marked. The nasal bones are concave dorsally and depressed at the root. In some adult males the distance from the lower margin of the nasal aperture to the base of the upper incisors is conspicuously great. The canine fossa is ill-defined and alveolar prognathism is evident, in most males. The palate is large. The lower jaw is very robust and tends to possess a pointed chin. The teeth are usually large, especially the molars, although the incisors tend to be small. The pelvis is small. The limb bones are robust.” (8:467,468)

These humans from 18,000 BP (Batadomba-lena) and 13,000 BP (Beli-lena, Kitulgala) are said to display traits that are very similar to those from 6,500 BP (Bellan-bändi Pälässa), despite the considerable difference in time, suggesting *ca.* 10,000 years of morphological continuity and phylogenetic link. According to SU Deraniyagala, the available evidence generates the hypothesis that pre-historic man in Lanka, represented at Batadomba-lena, Belilena, Kitulgala and Bellan-bändi Pälässa, constitutes a reference point as regards the morphology of *Homo sapiens sapiens* in South Asia, from *ca.* 31,000 to 6,500 BP. The Väddās of more recent times are considered to be directly linked to the Balangoda Man. The Balangoda Man, like the Mungo Man of New South Wales, Australia, may represent a mixing of *Homo erectus* with more modern types that moved through northern India to south-east Asia and Australia, and to Southern India and Lanka.

The term Balangoda Man is a useful working concept when referring to the island's late quaternary humans. Balangoda Man appears to have settled in every nook and corner of Sri Lanka, ranging from the damp and cold high plains such as Maha-Eliya (Horton Plains) (8:320) to the arid lowlands of Mannar and Vilpattu, to the steamy equatorial rainforests of Sabaragamuwa. The camps were small, rarely exceeding 50 sq.m. in area, suggesting occupation by not more than a couple of nuclear families, at the most (9).



## Relationship of Balangoda Man to Deccan Prehistoric Man

Archaeological evidence, suggests that Sri Lanka H/G may have had a similar biohistory to those in the mainland. While there appears to be a continuum in the Sri Lankan lithic assemblages from 31,000 to 5,500 BP, there are also similarities between Sri Lankan Mesolithic culture and Indian assemblages at sites in Tinnevely District, South India (7:83). Palk Strait separating Sri Lanka from South India (a distance of about 50m) is at present less than 10m at the deepest (8:167) and considerable stretches of approximately 40 km wide are within wading depth. The fluctuations of global climate would have created land bridges between the two countries. Such connections are said to have been created during at least 80% of the time within the last 70,000 y. The sea level is known to have dropped by about 100m during the last glaciation at about 20,000 BP. The last separation from India is believed to have occurred at about 7,000 BP (8:469,484). It is possible that early human migrations to the island may have occurred prior to the last inter-glacial period, leading to complex patterns of miscegenation between groups (8:464). While the earliest lithic evidence for human occupation could have been 125,000 BP (8:118,686), the earliest skeletal evidence for AMHS begins in the Sri Lankan cave deposits dated as early as 37,000 BP. Throughout the late Pleistocene and Holocene, South India and Sri Lanka possessed a humid, tropical climate, as evidenced by both faunal (*Acavus*, birds, reptiles, cervids and bovids) and floral (wild breadfruit) remains in cave deposits as well as in present times. Due to the close proximity and ease of access, the population biohistory may actually reflect a significant gene flow rather than genetic drift due to isolation. The culture remains unchanged due to a stable environment. Stability of environment could act as an incentive for remaining in the island and also for continued migration to the Island.

The dental evidence does not indicate complete isolation from the mainland. Similarities in dental patterns of Sri Lankan H/G and the southern Deccan populations argue for gene flow between the



two regions. Dental similarities may also be due to common ancestry. Stability of the archaic dental pattern seen in the southern regions supports a shared ancestral hypothesis rather than similarities due to gene flow between Sri Lanka and the Deccan (7).

### **Life style of Hunter – Gatherers**

Ever since the ancestors of modern humans diverged from the ancestors of the living apes, around 4 million years ago, all humans on Earth fed themselves exclusively by hunting wild animals and gathering wild plants and fruit and honey. They were omnivores. It is only within the last 11,000 years that some people turned to what is termed Food Production, viz, domesticating wild animals and plants and eating the resulting livestock and crops.

Archaeological and taphonomic evidence from about 1.5 million years ago indicate that the meat component of the diet was very likely acquired by scavenging on animal carcasses killed by other animals, rather than by deliberate hunting. Cut marks produced by stone tools and tooth marks of carnivores appears on skeletal remains, the carnivore's tooth marks being followed by hominid produced cut marks. By about 50,000 years ago there is evidence for specialized hunting strategy when larger species of animals were successfully hunted (1:40).

Diets of Hunter- Gatherers (or Foragers) would have varied greatly with latitude and season. Based on what is known about meat and plant consumption by living hunter-gatherers, it is likely that plant foods contributed substantially to the diet of early hominids. With the exception of the Eskimo, all-meat diets are extremely rare today and this almost certainly was the case in antiquity (13).

The Life-style of typical hunter-gatherers, relying on the analyses of the nutritive properties of wild game and uncultivated vegetable foods, evaluation of archeological remains as well as on studies on subsistence of present-day foragers (14), have been described already (15). The greatest difference between the foragers' life style and that of modern humans is the amount of physical



activity indulged in. Hunting and gathering is hard work, especially for the female. Some women would have walked about 6 km each day while carrying a child and 7 to 10 kg of gathered plant food.

The total amount of carbohydrate eaten by a forager would have been as high as the intake of the present – day North American (14). However, the bulk of the carbohydrate would have been derived from roots, fruit and vegetables. The little grain eaten would have been in the form of whole grain or lightly pounded grain. Sugar was consumed in the form of wild honey and fruit. The diet would have also provided a high content of vitamins and minerals and a large quantity of non-nutritive phyto-chemicals. About 30% of the total energy intake would have been from protein (2.5 to 3.5g protein per kg body weight).

According to Deraniyagala (8:412) the energy requirement of hunter-gatherers has been estimated to be within the range 2000-3000 kcals per day, the mean requirement being given as 2140 kcals per day. The average energy requirement of a sedentary adult in present day Sri Lanka is about 2100 kcals per day. As Balangoda Man was much taller and far more active than modern Sri Lankans, 2140 kcal per day would have been inadequate. Deraniyagala discusses the resource potential presently available in the Island (8:372-381). The lowland Dry Zone has an overall carrying capacity (in faunal and floral carrying capacities and honey yields) up to four times as high in the Wet Zone, water being a limiting factor. Much of the food now available in the wild would have been available to prehistoric man.

## Food Production

Food production developed at different times in different parts of the globe. In some, food production arose independently of other areas. Five such areas are West Asia (also known as the Near East or the Fertile Crescent), China, Meso–America (central and southern Mexico and adjacent areas of central America), the Andes of South America and the eastern United States (1). To this list has to be added Horton Plains in South Asia (16).



What happened was not a discovery of food production nor an invention. Not having seen farming, the first people who adopted farming could not have been making a conscious choice or consciously striving towards a farming goal. They had no way of knowing what farming would be like. Food production evolved as a key product of decisions made without awareness of their consequences (1:100).

Between 15,000 and 10,000 BP was a period marked by the beginning of an essentially modern pattern of climate, vegetation and fauna. The climate had been very cold at 15,000 BP and became progressively warmer thereafter. Megafauna such as the mammoth had disappeared, all of which would have provided an impetus to humans to develop new means of food acquisition. The most important change was the shift from diets based exclusively on food collection to those based on varying degrees of food production. The transition involved the acquisition of intimate knowledge of the cycles of plants and animals, so as to control such cycles and thereby ensure the availability of nutrition.

There could have been several contributing factors to foster such an evolution:

1. A decline in availability of wild foods made the hunter-gatherers' lifestyle less rewarding as resources, especially animal resources, became less abundant or disappeared.
2. An increase in availability of domesticable wild plants would have made steps towards plant domesticating more rewarding, e.g., climatic changes in the Fertile Crescent (so called because of the crescent-like shape of its uplands, extending from modern Turkey towards Iran and Iraq and southward, including Syria, Jordan and Palestine) greatly expanded the area of habitats with wild cereals, of which huge amounts could be harvested in a short time.
3. There was the development of technologies for collecting, processing and storing of wild foods, technologies on which food production would eventually depend.

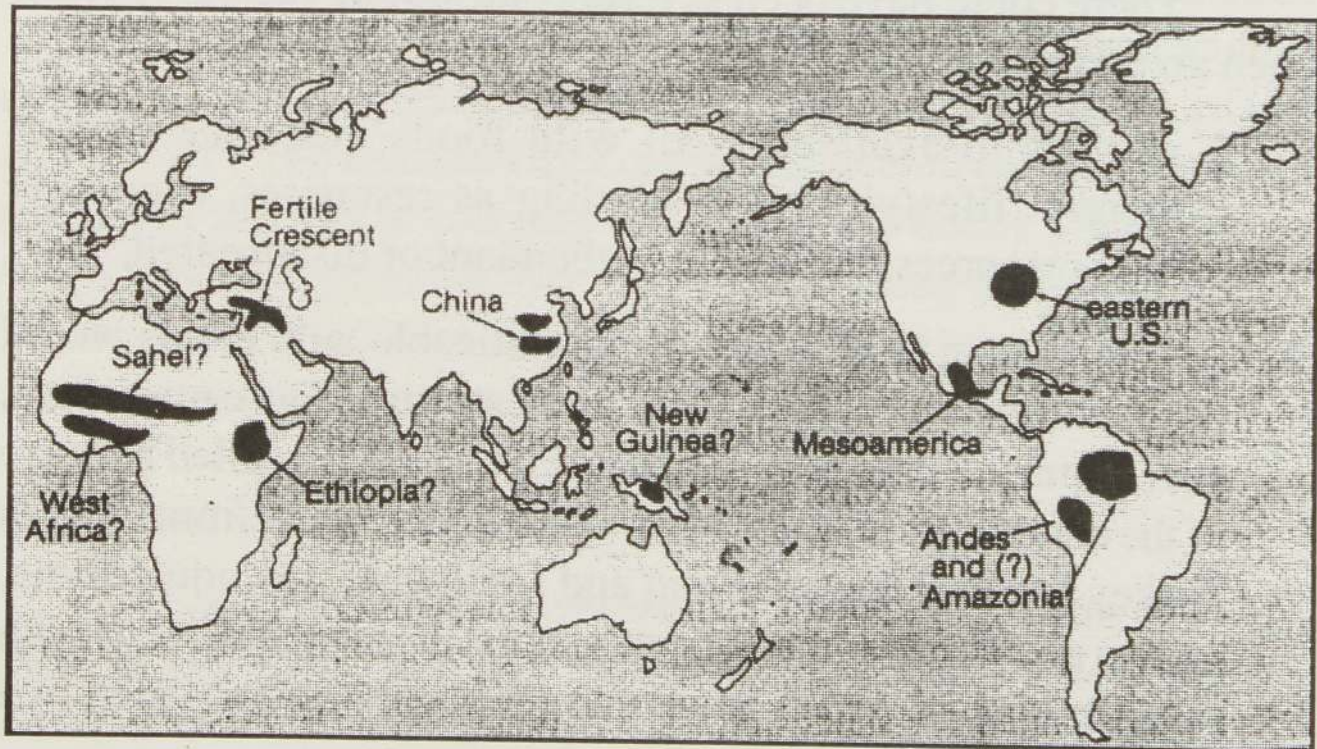


4. The rise in human population with the rise in food production. The adoption of food production catalyses itself, going faster and faster once it get started.

The transition to food production in the Fertile Crescent began around 10,000 BP(1:112). Decisive boundaries were set up between hunter gatherers and food producers. The dense populations among producers enabled them to displace or kill hunter gatherers. In other areas hunter gatherers who adopted food production would have outbred the others.

As a result, in most areas of the globe suitable for food production, hunter gatherers met one of two fates : Displacement by neighbouring food producers, or survival only by adopting food production themselves.

Many studies of skeletal remains conclude that the levels of health, as indicated by nutrition, declined with the change from the hunter-gatherer way of life to the later period of developed agriculture. Skeletal remains of children and infants showed an increase in dietary stress during the agricultural transition (10:42).



*Fig.2* Centres of origin of food production. A question mark indicates some uncertainty whether the rise of food production at the centre was really uninfluenced by the spread of food production from other centres, or what the earliest crops were (1:99). In view of Premathilake's findings (15), Sri Lanka will have to be included as one centre of origin.



In Indonesia, tropical South-East Asia, most of the subequatorial Africa and probably in parts of Europe, the hunter gatherers were replaced by farmers in the prehistoric era. Those few people who remained hunter gatherers into the 20<sup>th</sup> century escaped replacement by food producers because they were confined to areas unfit for food production. Even they will be seduced by the attractions of civilization, settled down under pressure from bureaucrats, or succumb to germs.

One advantage of the Fertile Crescent is that it lies within a zone of so-called Mediterranean climate (1:138), characterized by mild wet winters and long hot dry summers. This climate selects plant species that are able to survive the long dry season and to resume growth rapidly upon the return of the rains. Many Fertile Crescent plants have adapted in a way that renders them useful to humans: they are annuals, drying up and dying in the dry season.

Another advantage was that the wild ancestors of many of the plants were already abundant and highly productive, occurring in large stands whose value must have been obvious to hunter-gatherers. A third advantage is that the flora of the Fertile Crescent included a high percentage of hermaphrodite "selfers", plants that usually pollinate themselves but are occasionally cross-pollinated (1:137). Such flora aided early farmers. A high percentage of the wild flora had a reproductive biology convenient to humans.

Occasional cross-pollination generated new varieties from which to select. Of the first 8 significant crops to have been domesticated in the Fertile Crescent, all were selfers. Of 3 selfer cereals, einkorn wheat, emmer wheat and bread wheat, and barley, wheat had a high protein content, 8 to 14 %. In contrast, in the most important cereal crops of East Asia and of the new world, viz., rice and maize, a lower protein content or a poorer quality of protein posed significant nutritional problems.

Zones of similar Mediterranean climates occur in California, Chile, South Western Australia and South Africa. The Zone in Eurasia, especially its Fertile Crescent, had at least 5 advantages over the rest. It has by far the largest Zone of Mediterranean climate,



with high diversity of wild plants and animal species; it experiences the greatest climatic variation from season to season and year to year, a variation which favoured the evolution of especially high percentage of annual plants; it provides a wide range of altitudes and topographies within a short distance; it had a wealth in ancestors, not only of valuable crops but also of domesticated big mammals. The goat, sheep, pig and cow were domesticated early in the Fertile Crescent and remain today as four of the world's five most important domesticated mammals (Table 1 below).

The eight 'founder crops' launched by the Fertile Crescent were the emmer wheat, einkorn wheat and barley, the pulses - lentil, pea, chickpea and bitter vetch, and the fibre crop, flax. Early peoples of the Fertile Crescent thus had a potent and balanced biological package for intensive food production, four domestic animals, and flax as a source of fibre and oil (linseed oil: flax seed have about 40% oil) . Thousands of years after the beginnings of animal domestication and food production, the animals also began to be used for milk, wool, ploughing and transport. Thus, crops and animals of the first farmers in the Fertile Crescent came to meet humanities needs: carbohydrate, protein, fat, clothing, traction and transport (1:142). According to Premathilake there was incipient domestication of oats and barley in 17,000 BP in Horton Plains, Sri Lanka and full domestication by 10,000 BP(16).

Table 1. Examples of Species Domestication in each area

Area	Domesticated Plants	Domesticated Animals	Earliest attested dates for domestication
Independent origins of domestication			
1. Southwest Asia	wheat, pea olive	sheep goat	> 13,000 BP
2. China	rice millet	pig silkworm	> 14,000 BP



3. Mesoamerica	corn, beans squash	turkey	by 5,500 BP
4. Andes and Amazonia	potato manioc	llama guinea pig	by 5,500 BP
5. Eastern United States	sunflower goosefoot	none	4,500 BP
6. Sahel	sorghum African rice	guinea fowl	by 7,000 BP
7. Tropical West Africa	African yams oil palm	none	by 5,000 BP
8. Ethiopia	coffee teff	none	?
9. New Guinea	sugar cane banana	none	9,000 BP

Local domestication following arrival of founder crops

10. Western Europe	poppy oat	none	8,000-5,500 BP
11. Indus Valley	sesame egg plant	humped cattle	9,000 BP
12. Egypt	sycamore fig, chufa	donkey cat	8000 BP

Source : Reference 1, p.100.

The Food Production package soon became superior to the hunter-gatherer package. In the Fertile Crescent the transition from hunter-gatherer to agriculture and herding took place within 7000 years and, by 6000 BP some societies were almost completely dependent on crops and domestic animals.



The main spreads of food production were:

- i. From the Fertile Crescent to Europe, Egypt and North Africa, Ethiopia, Central Asia and Indus Valley.
- ii. From Sahel and West Africa to East and South Africa.
- iii. From China to tropical South-East Asia, the Philippines, Indonesia, Korea and Japan.
- iv. From Meso-America to North America.

The ease of this spread varied greatly around the world. The east-west axis of Eurasia, with localities at the same latitude, share exactly the same day length and seasonal variations. They also share similar diseases, regimes of temperature and rainfall, habitats and biomass. Tropical rainforest is confined to within 10° latitude of the equator, and Mediterranean scrub habitats lie between 30° and 40° latitude. Germination, growth and disease resistance of plants are adapted to features of climate such as day length, temperature and rainfall. The growing season, months with temperature and day length suitable for plant growth, is shorter at high latitudes and longest towards the equator. Animals are also adapted to latitude-related features of the climate.

Thus, Eurasia's east- west axis allowed Fertile Crescent crops to quickly launch agriculture over a band of temperature latitudes from Ireland to the Indus Valley, and to enrich the agriculture that arose independantly in eastern Asia. Eurasian crops that were first domesticated far from the Fertile Crescent but at the same latitude were able to diffuse back to the Fertile Crescent. The faster spread of Eurasian agriculture compared with that of native American and sub-Saharan African agriculture, played a role in the more rapid diffusion of Eurasian writing, metallurgy, technology and empires. (1:185)

### **South Asia**

One area where local domestication appears to have been subsequent to the arrival of founder crops from the Fertile Crescent is the Indus Valley region of the Indian subcontinent. There, the



earliest farming communities, in the 7<sup>th</sup> millennium BC, utilized wheat, barley, sorghum, millet, finger millet and other crops previously domesticated in the Fertile Crescent, evidently spread through Persia. Indigenous species of India such as humped cattle and sesame appeared later. There is some evidence of herding in Rajasthan by 9000 BP, of rice cultivation and pottery manufacture in U.P. in India by 7000 BP and perhaps cereal management/ farming in the Nilgiri Hills of S. India by 10,000 B.P (16: paper 4).

Skeletal remains of a canid from Bellan-bändi Pälässa (12), *ca.* 6500  $\pm$  700 BP, and from Nilgala cave raise the possibility that Mesolithic man, at least in the later phases kept domestic dogs for driving game. Identification of the canids as domestic dogs, as opposed to jackals or red dogs, has to be established. The *Mahavamsa* (17:55) mentions a domestic dog at *ca.* 500BC. However, the similarities between the indigenous domestic breed of Lanka ( Sinhala hound), the Kadar dog, the Tengger dog of Java, the “singing dogs” of New Guinea (18,19) and the dingo of Australia highlight the fact that they could have been derived from a common domestic stock which diffused with prehistoric man (8:345).

### The Balangoda Culture

PEP Deraniyagala defined a “Balangoda Culture” in sites explored by him (20,21,22). Most of the open-air sites thought to have been the habitat of Balangoda Man have little or no evidence on the foods consumed. This may be due to the environment of many of these sites not being conducive to preserving organic remains. The unique site at Bellan-bändi Pälässa has had its fauna preserved by limestone bedrock and, as such, provides a clue to the Mesolithic subsistence practices at about 6500 BP(8). The range of animals exploited is very wide with extant evidence indicating a strong component of monkeys in particular and also porcupines. There is a marked dearth of evidence of cervids such as spotted deer, although deer would have formed a significant dietary component. In the Nilgala cave there is a preponderance of remains of spotted deer and sambhur, along with other miscellaneous



vertebrates. Vādda hunting practices support the view that spotted deer and sambhur would have met most of the meat requirements (8).

There are several varieties of birds (notably spur- and jungle fowl), snakes (python and rat-snakes), hard and soft-shelled terrapins, fish (ranging from tiny barbs to the large mashier), fresh water crustaceans and large quantities of arboreal and aquatic molluscs. The data indicate that there has been no change in subsistence strategy from at least 30,000 BP onwards. The general impression is one of a broad spectrum, non-specialised exploitation (8:451,452), with direct analogues of the Sinhalese living in the remoter villages of Sinharaja rain forest today, who do not hesitate to eat most animals (8:393).

The tool kit of Balangoda Man is distinguished by the occurrence of geometric microliths, which are small (< 4 cm long) flakes of quartz and rarely chert, fashioned in stylised lunate, triangular and trapezoid forms (8:266-70,688-94). Apart from stone tools, artifacts of bone and antler are quite prolific from 31,000 BP onwards, notably small bone points. Beads of shells have been discovered. The occurrence of marine shells at sites such as Baṭadomba- lēna points to an extensive network of contacts between the coast and the hinterland. Evidence from Beli-lēna indicates that salt was being brought in from the coast at a date earlier than 30,000 BP (8:326).

No stone-age art has been discovered (8:328). There is also little evidence of ritual. The norms for Balangoda Man was to bury the dead, irrespective of age and sex, as secondary burials within the camp floors, having selected bones for this purpose. At Ravana-ālla cave and Fa Hien – lēna, red ochre had been ceremoniously smeared on the bones (8:349). Both these practices were noted in studies on the Andaman Islanders, but not on studies of the Vāddās (8). The Mungo Man, discovered in 1974 at Lake Mungo, NSW, Australia, who lived about 30,000 years ago (8:468) had also been covered in red ochre during a burial ritual (3). Red ochre application has been noted in Mesolithic India and also in



Iran and elsewhere. Burial in a flexed position was probably to minimize the size of graves and the effort required to dig them. Such burial is of considerable antiquity, and have been seen among Neanderthals in Europe (8:349).

### **Transition from Pre-historic to Proto-historic in Lanka**

The term protohistory denotes the period which succeeds Stone Age and precedes the appearance of writing. Palynological (pollen) and other evidence from Horton Plains indicate herding and incipient management of barley and oats by 17,500 BP onwards, and herding and farming of barley and oats by 10,000 BP(16).

This coincides with a semi-humid event (17,600 to 16,000 BP) suggesting favourable climatic conditions influencing plant management systems (23). From 17,600 BP onwards, cereal management was periodic in character during the glacial. Relatively cool and dry conditions followed, supporting the emergence of plant management systems.

The stone age sites on Horton Plains probably represent seasonal camps when man moved up the hills during periods of drought, to fire forests and drive game. Firing also would have stimulated herbaceous growth and facilitated the collection of roots and tubers (16). The use of fire also initiated the transformation of forest cover to scrub and savannah and grass lands, even before the advent of slash and burn agriculture. Several of the basic requirements for the origin of the domestication process were available in the Horton Plains: a mild, dry climate, burning of forest, presence of humans with a shifting mode, wild progenitors of potentially domesticable *Hordeum* sp. and *Avena* sp. plants, rolling plains, head waters of streams, forested hills, grassy vegetation (16:paper 4). Horton Plains is said to host one of the most valuable physical archives registering the last 25,000 years of environmental history. The results of Premathilake's study indicate that incipient management of cereal plants and slash-and-burn techniques prevailed between 17,500-13,000 BP, a management that was indigenous and associated with grazing. Evidence of systematic



cultivation, in the form of oat and barley pollen, are found from about 13,000 BP. This is the earliest evidence for farming activities noted in the world. Subsequent to this period, cereal cultivation was associated with an increase in humidity. With a later increase in aridity, use of land for agriculture decreased from about 6000 to 3600 BP, when the area seems to have been almost deserted. After this semi-arid phase, agricultural activity was again initiated, having a limited extension by about 2900 BP. During the next 900 years cultivation ceased, allowing the upper montane rain forest to dominate (16: paper4). Premathilake's evidence suggests that incipient plant domestication started in Lanka at about the same time as, if not earlier than, in the Fertile Crescent.

The Dorovaka-lena shelter is said to have yielded a geometric microlithic industry in association with what appears to be a cereal (finger millet) and crude red pottery (8:734) by 7300 BP and Black and Red ware by 5100 BP. At Mantai geometric microliths dated about 3800 BP have been found, associated with a few pieces of slag, which would indicate a knowledge of copper-working, a manufacture in southern India by 4000 BP. Mantai provides evidence of the expansion of settlement coinciding with the rise of east-west trade in the 8<sup>th</sup> century CE (8:732).

The term "Proto-historic" is applied when one half of the nutrient (energy) intake is derived from food production (8:470). These sites have therefore been assigned to the pre-historic period. But they do represent the transition from pre-historic to proto-history in Lanka. The transition was of a considerable duration, about 13,000 years. It is probable that, from 17000 BP to about 3000 BP, different subsistence strategies were being employed contemporaneously, which would have ranged from one based 100% on hunting and gathering, to those of a certain degree of herding/farming, with hunting and gathering being still predominant (8,9). Early Sri Lankan populations apparently found a Mesolithic lifestyle sufficient for life on the island as there is little or no evidence for either a Neolithic or a Chalcolithic transition from the Mesolithic to the Iron Age (9:16, 23).



The excavations in the citadel of Anuradhapura by SU Deraniyagala and his team in 1969 and 1984-1988 (8:715) indicate an abrupt transition in technology and in the subsistence economy in a relatively short period of time, when a solely hunting and gathering mode of subsistence was rapidly superseded by a fully-fledged farming economy, with the advent of the proto-historic Iron Age. Anuradhapura appears to have been a proto-historic and historical capital of Lanka for about 2000 years.

The excavations in the citadel of Anuradhapura have been described according to levels, the lowermost stratum, stratum 1 and the uppermost, stratum 4.

Stratum IIIb, IVa and IVb belong to the Early Historic Period, and Stratum IIIa to the Proto-Historic.

Paddy husks were used to temper daub and clay roof tiles in Stratum III or Gedige IIIa . The rice very likely belonged to a cultivated variety, since it had already been domesticated in the Harappan of Kathiawar at *ca.* 2000-1700 BC, and elsewhere in the Indus-Ganges area and among protohistoric Iron Age people in peninsular India. Paddy was also discovered in association with Megalithic burials of Lanka. Three of Job's Tears, *Coix lachryma-jobi*, *S. kirindi*, ( an edible cereal which grows in paddy fields, naturalized in Lanka) were found in Stratum IVa and two in Stratum IVb. The soft shelled terrapins in Stratum IIIa and IVb suggest the existence of slow moving bodies of water near Anradhapura, pointing to artificial irrigation systems.

The faunal remains from Gedige have been analyzed by PEP Deraniyagala (8:358) as follows:

- IIIa *Melanochelys* and *Lissemys* (terrapins), *Axis* and *Rusa* (deer), *Bubalus* (buffalo), *Bos* (neat- cattle), *Equus* (horse), *Sus* (pig, weight *ca.* 7 kg)
- IIIb *Melanochelys* and *Lissemys* (terrapins), birds, *Axis* and *Rusa* (deer), *Moschiola* (mouse-deer), *Sus* (pig, weight *ca.* 5 kg)



- IVa *Melanochelys* and *Lissemys* (terrapins), *Varanus bengalensis* (land monitor lizard), *Axis* and *Rusa* (deer), *Moschiola*, *Acanthion* (porcupine), *Sus* (pig, weight ca. 9kg)
- IVb *Melanochelys* and *Lissemys*, *Axis* and *Rusa*, *Bubalus*, *Bos*, *Sus* (weight ca. 2.5kg).

The majority of bones appear to represent food remains, since several specimens have marks inflicted with metal knives, and ash and charcoal deposits were found in association, particularly in Stratum IVa. The food was probably cooked in water or oil, as the bones do not reveal traces of direct exposure to fire (8:355).

The frequency of occurrence of bones in Strata IIIa and IVb indicate a scarcity of dogs in the Gedige sector, because, had dogs existed, osseous remains would have been chewed up (8:358). Whether *Bos*, *Bubalus* and *Sus* had been domesticated is not known. A high incidence of cervid remains indicates that hunting was an important part of the life style. Among bird bones in Gedige IIIb were domestic chicken, probably akin to the extinct *Ruhunu Kikiliya* which was noted for its egg laying capacity and was similar to the modern Sinhala *game* varieties (8:350, 360).

What has been revealed by the Gedige excavations could well have been the situation in metropolitan regions like Anuradhapura and Tissamaharama. It is very probable that the subsistence strategy during the same period in the more peripheral regions would have been more dependent on hunting and gathering, while many others were entirely so.

Signs of rapid development at about the same period have been uncovered at other sites in Lanka as well as in South India.

### **Ibbankatuva**

Another proto-historic site excavated is at Ibbankatuva, 3km from Dambulla (24). Several sporadic excavations have been carried at this megalithic burial site (24). There have been two settlement phases, the earliest in the proto-historic period with Early Historic cultural phase overlying it. There appears to have been



continuous habitation through several centuries, the earliest being between 436 and 226 BC (Lower Early Historic) and the latest 347-534 CE and 311-483CE. During the proto-historic period the inhabitants appear to have produced Black-and-Red Ware as well as Red Ware pottery, both wheel-made and hand-made, of a high standard. Some graffiti symbols were found on the potsherds, one similar to a symbol found in Pomparippu.

Iron slag remains are thought to be from copper production at the site (25). Two spearheads and knife blades were found, also some copper, silver and gold objects (24). Several types of beads mainly carnelian and terra cotta of various colours and shapes were also unearthed. The people seemed to have paid much attention to personal adornment. There were a considerable number of bones of cattle and wild animals, saddle querns and rubbing stones. Pieces of pottery kilns and heaps of Black and Red Ware and Red Ware pottery indicate that pottery was made at the site. There is no evidence of glassware.

The Early Historic levels are low in Black and Red Ware. There were squat, short-necked storage vessels, round-necked tray bowls, several spouts and lids. More than 90 % of the shreds were of Red Ware vessels. Resin coated buff ware (Persian Wine jars) indicate links with foreign trade.

Graphite coated, silver coloured pottery and fine Gray Ware show them to have been an elite group. Glass artifacts, glass ornaments (beads and bangles) support this contention. Metal production was high, as shown by the slag at the bottom of a furnace.

Their houses were fairly strong, of granite, stone and clay, walls being 30 to 40 cm thick. There were grinding stones. Terra cotta discs 3-4 cm in diameter and two terracotta dice indicate an indoor game. The evidence is that it was a habitation site of an elite group in a semi-urban setting.

**Kandarodai** is the site of a large (about 25ha) mound in the Jaffna peninsula, about 3 km to the west of Chunakkam. It was first investigated by Paul E. Pieris (1925) who excavated several



Buddhist antiquities at this location (26). There is evidence this site constitutes one of the four most important Early Historic settlements in Sri Lanka. In 1970 excavations were carried out by Begley and Bronson of the University of Pennsylvania. Radiocarbon dating have been set out with tentative periodisation. Although the sequential nature of the radiocarbon dating at Kandarodai needs to be viewed with caution, yet the date range could be accepted (8:730).

The range is from 500 to 400 BC for the earliest dates and 100 to 0 BC. A fragment of Rouletted Ware with a Prakrit inscription was found at the upper level. It probably belongs to the Mid-Early Historic period, correlating with Gedige Stratum IVa.

Early Historic horizons at *Kanchipuram* in *Tamilnadu* and in *Andra Pradesh* have also been dated from about 400 BC.

### **The Sacred Cow Concept**

It is noteworthy that *Bos* was eaten by people of Gedige IIIa and IVb periods, although the consumption of beef was considered base due to the sacred cow concept of Hindu India.

Early domestication of common cattle occurred in the Fertile Crescent, in Hungary and in Afghanistan, and in India around 10,000 BP. The only clear evidence of religious associations of cattle during this period derive from an Anatolian site (about 6750-5650 BC) where an archeologist found rich indications of a fertility cult in which the bull was associated with a male god (27). In later Mediterranean and Near Eastern countries, the bull, the symbol of masculine virility, continued to be associated primarily with male deities, either as a companion or manifestation of the deity. The cow was associated with female deities, mother goddesses who were prominent in cult efforts to assure continued well-being of man and his domestic animals and plants. Related fertility cults, in which bovines were prominent, spread eastwards towards India.

In India there are suggestions, both from the Indus Valley civilization (c. 2500-1700 BC) and from certain other cultures that preceded it, that bulls were identified with various male deities,



cows with various female deities. Despite this, cattle were sacrificed and eaten freely. Though there were objections, even during those times, to slaughtering certain cattle, the cow was not sacred, even for members of the Brahmin caste. It was close to the beginning of the Christian Era that the doctrine of the special sanctity of the cow was first recorded. Gradually after that time the doctrine became firmly established. The Brahmins not only abandoned cow slaughter and beef eating, but also became leading protagonists of the view that society in general abandon the practice. There could also have been an economic reason for the ban on cattle slaughter. As the human population increased the cattle population would have diminished, leading to a shortage of milk, an essential item in the diet. For modern Hindus, as well as the Sikhs and Jains, the cow is a sacred, gentle, innocent and beautiful animal to be cared for and protected even after its useful days are over.

On the other hand all religions of India, including Buddhism, hold that the killing of all animals is a violation of the concept of *ahimsa* and religious duty. All strict Hindus, Jains and Buddhists do not eat flesh of animal, bird or fish.

These concepts would have reached Anuradhapura with the arrival of Mahinda Thero. The consumption of beef was considered base, and yet the occupants of Gedige, though of relatively high social order as shown by the artifacts found, did not observe the custom of avoiding beef (8:350). Remains of *Bos indicus*, some possessing knife marks, have also been found within a Megalithic culture context in India. Therefore beef was eaten by those within the main social framework around 800 BC till 100 CE, in peninsular India and in Lanka. It is probable that the taboo on beef was imposed on Lanka during the Middle and late Historic periods, when there was a marked Hindu influence on Sinhala culture.

### **Proto and Early Historic Periods**

The findings in Gedige excavations and elsewhere in the island have enabled Deraniyagala to periodise Sri Lanka's Proto-



and Early Historic episodes. Much of the following has been condensed from 8: 709-714

**Period I - Mesolithic** Data from caves and from Māntoṭa indicate a period about 28,000 to 1000 BC

**Period II - Mesolithic / Iron Age transition** None of the areas excavated have provided data on this. The transition from stone tool technology to the iron age appears to have been a rapid process, leaving hardly any evidence for the transition.

**Period III - Early Iron Age (or Proto-historic Iron Age) ca. 900-600 BC.** This period is characterized by the appearance of iron technology, the horse, domestic cattle, paddy cultivation, and pottery (a Sri Lankan variant of protohistoric Iron Age Black and Red ware (BRW). No stone tools have been found, indicating complete replacement of stone technology by that of iron, by ca. 900 BC.

The earliest known protohistoric settlement at Anuradhapura exceeded 10 ha in extent by 800 BC, which is a considerable size for an Early Iron Age settlement.

By ca. 700-600 BC the settlement at Anuradhapura had extended over an area of at least 50 ha, which could be called a town. There was probably a concomitant increase in centralization of authority, making the city a capital of the island. Anuradhapura had several obvious advantages:

- i) Its location was equidistant from the seaports in the north west and the north east,
- ii) It was within reach of the mineral-rich zones of the hinterland and also of Seruwila which had copper and iron deposits.
- iii) It was surrounded by irrigable and fertile Reddish Brown Earths which could be worked by iron tools.
- iv) It had deep forests right up to the coast, making it defensible against invaders.



The location could have been deliberately selected for the capital. During this proto-historic Iron Age at about 800-600 BC the settlement at Anuradhapura was a city of considerable extent.

The peoples of South Asia Iron/Early Historic share more dental similarities with other South Asian groups than with non-South Asians. There is little evidence to support an external origin for South Asian Iron/Megalithic populations. Yet, differences occur between Iron/Early Historic groups, supporting the hypothesis, based on craniometric data, of a morphologically heterogeneous population (7:195).

Iron technology is unlikely to have evolved within Lanka. It is probable that it was imported from the mainland, along with the horse. Iron technology was well established in India by 1000 BC. Stone tools have been found in association with Iron Age burials at Pomparippu, which are being interpreted as being in secondary contexts (8:709). Were the authors of Early Iron Age in Sri Lanka the same as those in Southern India? Kennedy's comparative work on skeletal material indicates a pronounced difference between the physical traits of Balangoda Man on the one hand and Early Iron Age Man on the other (8:736), signifying a major intrusion of new blood after the date of skeletal remains of Bellan-bandi Palassa (*ca.* 4500 BC). The dental patterns of Sri Lanka Iron Age people are more similar to recent Sri Lankan Sinhalese than to Sri Lankan H/G, Tamil or Vadda. Therefore Hawkey suggests that migrants, probably from the Bay of Bengal region, arrived at Pomparippu bringing an established system of agriculture and iron technology (7:195).

**Period IV - Basal Early Historic, *ca.* 600-500 BC.** Evidence from Anuradhapura excavations indicate that writing in the Brahmi script was extant during this phase. That Brahmi script probably occurred during this period in India is suggested, notably from the Arikamedu and Kodumanal excavations. The occurrence of a well-defined category of bone points, at times with a protective cap to its delicately rounded working tip, in India, dated *ca.* 1000-600 BC could indicate the use of writing points in India. The presence of



such “styli” is supportive of a *ca.* 600-500 BC antiquity for early Brahmi script in Anuradhapura. There are also two types of ceramics, a rim type on necked vessels, and a low- lustre, medium – fine paste, medium- light grey ware, which, along with the Brahmi script, point to an extraneous cultural impulse reaching Sri Lanka at about this time (8:711).

**Period V - Lower Early Historic, *ca.* 500-250 BC.** Prominent during this period is a profusion of rim type ceramics and the appearance of a roof-tile type with its characteristic form and porous body (8:711).

The extent of the city during this period was more than 50ha. Small quantities of Northern Black Polished Ware (NBPW) appears during this period, indicating contact with the Gangetic valley.

The earliest levels at Kandarodai are assignable to the lower Early Historic period. Radiocarbon dates and the presence of rim type ceramics confirm this .

Excavations at Tissamahārāma and Mātoṭa have failed to reveal anything pre-dating the Mid-Early Historic. Future excavations might produce evidence of the Lower- Early Historic period.

South India excavations have radiocarbon dates that fall within the range of period V at Anuradhapura, e.g., Kanchipuram at *ca.* 610-390 BC and Dharnikota at 610-390 BC.

**Period VI - Mid–Early Historic: *ca.* 250 BC- 100 CE.** The citadel of Anuradhapura by then covered an extent of *ca.* 100 ha or more. It would thus have represented one of the five largest cities of its time in South Asia (8:712). The Mid-Early Historic Arikamedu was a fraction of this size. Although this period is well documented in the chronicles with close interaction with the Asokan Empire, archeologically, the little that is known is from Anuradhapura.

Diagnostic of this period are RLW, Brahmi script on pottery, seals and stone, coinage (e.g. punch- marked and “elephant and swastika” types), lakshmi plaques, a proliferation of beads, glass,



gaming dice, and the use of burnt brick as building material, replacing compressed mud, and wattle- and –daub in the preceding periods.

The full blown Early Historic (i.e., Mid-Early Historic period) of *ca.* 250 BC- 100 CE conforms with the orthodox view of Mauryan influence, deriving from the North, registering in Southern India and Lanka. During this period there is evidence of contact with West Asia and the Mediterranean, as indicated by the occurrence of Hellenistic-derived ceramics. Numerous finds of Roman coins of this period confirms this contact with the West (8:714).

It is suspected that a major factor behind this contact would have been the manufacture and export of high quality iron from Lanka and perhaps from southern India as well. The widespread occurrence of metal-working slag in every sondage that has been excavated in Anuradhapura, from the basal protohistoric levels upwards into the Upper Early Historic, corroborates this proposition. The protohistoric Iron Age in Lanka and South India appears to have been manifested by an extensive and sophisticated network of settlements linked by trade in manufactured iron with West Asia and beyond (8:714).

**Period VII - Upper Early Historic :** *ca.* 100-300 CE. During this period burnt brick achieved prominence as the prime building material, at least in the citadel of Anuradhapura. Red Polished Ware (RPW) and its variants appear in this period. Coins are numerous: “tree and swastika,” Indo-Roman and Roman types. Black and Red Ware (BRW) was used up to the upper Early Historic at *ca.* 300 CE and its disappearance coincides with the end of the Mahavaṃsa dynastic succession in Sri Lanka (8:713).

**Period VIII - Middle Historic:** *ca.* 300-1250 CE, up to the end of the Polonnaruwa period. This period witnesses the commencement of the final devolution of the Dry Zone civilization of Lanka. Brick is replaced by ashlar, possibly indicating increased affluence. This is clearly evident at Mātoṭa which seems to have expanded during this period, with a profusion of West Asian ceramics (8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>



centuries CE), supplemented by Chinese wares from 9<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> centuries (8:713).

During the period, along with the onset of the brisk East West trade, several new settlements came up in various parts of the Dry Zone, notably in the eastern sector. There seems to have been settlement networks covering the whole of the fertile Reddish Brown Earth regions, moving the remaining hunter-gatherers into the infertile parts of the Wet and Dry Zones (notably Sabaragamuwa and Bintenne) (8:914).

### **The Early Iron Age**

The purposeful exploitation of mineral resources in Sri Lanka, according to Seneviratne (28), commenced from the pre-3<sup>rd</sup> century BC period. The momentum of transition from pre-historic to proto-historic iron-using culture would have depended on the demand due to their functional value geared to domestic/household requirements or for a range of other economic activity, on access to resources and on the availability of suitable technology capable of exploiting the mineral resources and manufacturing the finished product.

### **Raw material**

There is sufficient evidence to indicate that Early Iron Age metal workers derived raw material in the form of haematite ( $\text{Fe}_2\text{O}_3$ ) and limonite ( $\text{Fe}_2\text{O}_3 \cdot n\text{H}_2\text{O}$ ) with relative ease and to a lesser extent from magnetite ( $\text{Fe}_3\text{O}_4$ ) (28).

Soil in regions in the North-West, North-Central and in the Jaffna peninsula contain ferruginous gravel below the red/brown earth formation and the reddening of the earth is probably due to availability of oxidizing conditions for the formation of red haematite (28). In soils from certain localities in Puttalam, Mannar and Jaffna the clayey fraction of the brown earth contains limonite while haematite is dominant in the red earth. In Mantai, Kandarodai and several ancient sites in the Jaffna peninsula traces of ancient



iron-smelting have been found (28). Iron is also available as nodular iron stones, mainly in the dry zone, especially in Puttalam, Kurunegala, Galgamuwa which also have a relatively high concentration of Proto - and Early Historic sites. Large deposits of magnetite can be found in Tambakanda, Panirenduwa and at Seruwila. Due to certain technological difficulties in extracting iron from these deposits, it is unlikely that magnetite was extensively worked during the Proto-Historic period (28.)

The early smelters would have used gravel and nodular iron stones as the raw material. Later, as the demand for metal products increased, both locally, in the cities, and from the west through Mantai, other sources had to be tapped, and the metallic deposits (mainly iron and copper) at Seruwila was the obvious source for resident communities of north Sri Lanka. The antiquity of human activity in this region extends to the Early Iron Age, as indicated by scattered Black and Red ware embedded in the soil and Early Brahmi inscriptions found at Seruwila. During the reign of Kavantissa in the South there are said to have been two *nagaras* (cities) and at least 12 *gama* (village) settlements in addition to *keta* (fields) and *vāpi* (reservoirs) located in the vicinity of the Seruwila *stūpa* (29). Seruwila was easily accessible by land, river and sea routes. The primary ore at Seruwila was magnetite and sulphides, mainly copper. The iron smith appears to have deliberately selected this copper-magnetite ore. Metallic copper with a high iron content and nickel inclusions is known to be corrosion resistant. Spectrographic analysis of a copper object (ornament) unearthed at stratum 3A at the Citadel of Anuradhapura indicated the same metallic composition as samples from Seruwila (29). The iron pyrites in slag heaps at Seruwila or Anuradhapura excavations or Ibbankatuva does not necessarily point to iron smelting but to copper extraction. Iron streaks give additional strength to copper implements. Scattered remains of magnetite mineral found in large pieces may have been “chipped-off”, thus separating it from the copper ore.



## Kilns

Little is known of the type of furnace used for metal extraction. In Gedige Stratum 6 (Middle Historic) a brick built furnace was exposed, which was probably used for copper smelting. Kaolin had been used as binding material for the brick. Kaolin (a pure form of hydrated silicate) has a high melting point (about 1770 °C) village furnaces may have been lighter and cruder, similar to the ones in Balangoda described by Coomaraswamy (30).

Whether steel was manufactured is uncertain, some implements unearthed from proto-historic Anuradhapura may have been made of steel. Without such implements of iron and steel it would have been very difficult to fashion drip ledgers on caves of hard granite. It is possible that the smelter- craftsmen were able to achieve high temperatures through efficient methods of production techniques. The iron tools unearthed by Parker at Akurugoda (Tissamahārāma) could be categorized as better manufactured implements of steel belonging to the Early Historic period (28). Terracotta crucibles unearthed recently during the Abhayagiri excavations at Anuradhapura, show vitrified outer surfaces (31), indicating the high temperature the crucibles were subjected to. The occurrence of well-fired Black and Red Ware in the Early Historic period may also indicate that improved methods of using furnaces prevailed during this period (28).

## Fuel

There are four types of fuel that could have been used. Charcoal, wood, dung and paddy husk.

Pre-industrial smelters used charcoal as fuel (30: 191). The use of charcoal results in the reduction of the sulphur content of iron. The scrub jungle in the North-West and in the Jaffna peninsula were convenient sources of firewood for Early Iron Age man. The cashew tree, *Anacardium occidentale* found in both wet and dry zones, is an excellent type of wood fuel as it gives out uniform heat (28). With the expansion of agricultural activity during the Early



Historic period, paddy husk could have provided an additional source of fuel. In the proto-historic period paddy husk was used as a tempering daub at Anuradhapura. Although direct evidence for the use of dung as a primary source of fuel in Sri Lanka is lacking, there is sufficient evidence from the Deccan that it was used as a fuel by Neolithic and Megalithic folk (28).

As the demand for finished mineral products by the elite in the cities and for export to the West increased, there was a growing demand for raw material in the Early Historic period, specially for mineral resources. This resulted in a movement into the central hill country, which could provide minerals, as well as firewood. There were major gem yielding repositories, rock bearing a mixture of copper pyrites, sulphur and tellurium and mica, as well as spices in the montane region. They had to be transported to the kilns in the littoral (e.g. Mantai) and to the city in carts (17:28,35)

### **The Vijayan Legend**

According to the Mahavamsa (16:54), Vijaya and about 700 followers reached Lanka about 483 BC, which corresponds to period V, the lower Early Historic. Kuveni showed him rice and other things from ships wrecked on the coast. Vijaya's men prepared rice and curry, which she ate and was pleased by it. Kuveni, being a hunter-gatherer, had not cooked or eaten rice before, unlike the immigrants whose people had been herdsman and agriculturists for centuries.

Vijaya married Kuveni and lived with her for at least 10 years. His followers would also have cohabited with indigenous women. Later Vijaya's men sent messengers with valuable gifts such as gems and pearls to Madhura in South India (now Madurai in Tamil Nadu (32:774); the capital of the Pandus is to be distinguished from northern Madhura, the famous city of Uttar Pradesh) seeking a daughter of the king of the Pandus as a consort for Vijaya. The princess from Madhura came with about 100 other maidens, along with elephants, horses and charriots, and craftsmen and a thousand families of the eighteen guilds, a sizable group of



immigrants from South India (17.59). This also points to the advanced state of development of this area of South India.

Panduvāsudeva, who according to the Mahavamsa was a nephew of Vijaya, a kshatriya, a member of the “warrior caste”, and a son of the daughter of the king of the Maddas, in present day Punjab, arrived in 444 BC. He is said to have landed at Gokanna (Trincomalee). Gokanna was a natural gateway to the island from the eastern coast of peninsular India. Panduvāsudeva could well have represented migrants from north-eastern India. If from north-western India he should have reached the west coast of Lanka.

Therefore, the people who settled down in the north-central area of Lanka were diverse in their origin, including migrants from north western and north eastern India, South India and the indigenous descendants of Balangoda Man (with ancestors in the Deccan?) who decided to abandon hunting and gathering in favour of cultivating and herding.

However, the transition from Stone Age to Iron Age had started well before the date given for Vijaya’s arrival. Iron tools had replaced stone tools and rice was being cultivated well before 600BC, by which time the settlement at Anuradhapura had reached the size of a small town, exceeding 50 ha in extent. One possibility is that the author of the Mahavamsa, in his anxiety to make the arrival of Vijaya coincide with the passing away of the Buddha, got his dates wrong. Some doubts regarding dates has been expressed by Geiger (17:xxi). It is also possible that the introduction of iron tools and cultivation of rice occurred due to trading connections. The Indo-Aryan influence had reached the plains of the Indus and the Ganges and some areas of the Deccan Plateau south of the Vindhya mountain range. Trading centres developed along the coast and trading connections flourished along the river beds as well as the coastal areas. The pearls found in the shallow seas of the gulf of Mannar and precious stones found washed down the river beds in central Lanka would have attracted merchants from early times. However, it is unlikely that traders would have settled down inland, in large numbers. It seems more likely that



Vijaya represents a large scale immigration, which first occurred about 500 years before the date given in the Chronicle.

On the other hand Vijaya and his followers could represent a second large-scale migration from India. An earlier group introduced iron technology and agriculture ca. 3200-2800 BP. It is possible that relict populations continued to employ stone tools during this proto-historic period. It is hypothesised that the products of iron technology became available to Stone Age H/G through barter and that their superior efficiency led to the rapid suppression of the Stone Age technology, leaving few vestiges of the process for archaeological record (8:694).

Writing in Brahmi script was extant in the Early Historic Period, ca. 600-500 BC. Two ceramic traits were found at this level for the first time, though in very small numbers: rim type necked vessels and low-lustre, medium-fine paste, medium-light grey ware. It is hypothesised that the coeval occurrence of Brahmi script and the two ceramic traits, is linked in some manner to an extraneous natural impulse which reached Sri Lanka during this period. Could this be Vijaya and his followers? Inscriptions found on pieces of pottery, viz... *liya Anuradha* and .....*taya kule* probably represent Prakrit (8:711). If Anuradha represents Vijaya's clan name, Anuradha must have given his name to the city that already existed on the banks of the Kadamba river (now Malwatu oya).

There appears to have been conflicts between the two groups of immigrants, from the North-West and North-East of India (33:26). Pandukabhaya's career probably echoes a struggle for power between colonists from eastern India and the earlier arrivals from the west, in which the former prevailed (33:31). But the two factions thereafter appear to have forgotten their differences and merged into one people. It is possible that Pandukabhaya mobilized on his side the indigenous elements of the population. He stands out as the first monarch to cooperate with the aboriginal people of the island. "He sat with Cittarāja on equal seats at festivals"(32:551) It underscores his conciliatory attitude towards the hunter-gatherers and its symbolic demonstration in public.



Many of the descendants of Balangoda Man would have adopted herding and farming and absorbed as much of the superior culture of the new settlers as they could. The colonists from India would also have persuaded the indigenous population to take to farming, as it is unlikely that immigrants were in sufficient numbers to clear forests and convert the land to fields. The labour for opening up land must have been from the former hunter-gatherers of Lanka (33:95), the newcomers contributing their knowledge of new methods of agriculture. Paṇḍukābhaya's uncle was supervising the reaping of a field when his daughter, Pāli brought rice for her father and the reapers, in a wagon. The descendants of Paṇḍuvasudeva had already settled down to farming. They had also constructed a vehicle that could be drawn by animals. It was on the basis of an agricultural economy that society was organized and political institutions established.

### Establishing Villages

The immigrants spread throughout the North Central area, founding homesteads and villages. It is estimated that the earliest among such settlements would have been villages with an area of less than 3ha and that these could have been as old as *ca.*1200 BC, thus conforming with the earliest Iron Age horizons of Southern India (8:709). Vijaya's followers settled down in the villages of Anurādhapura, Upatissagāma, Ujjeni, Uruvela and Vijita-nagara (17:58) and Paṇḍuvasudeva's brothers-in-law founded Rāmagoṇa, Uruvela, Vijitagāma, Dīghāyu and Rohaṇa (17:65). A few persons, more or less connected by ties of relationship, would have started a colony, one of them being considered the leader (34). He would, together with his family after him, maintain their pre-eminence in the new group. Next would be the family of the man who was especially learned in, or became charged with the care of religious matters, precepts and ceremonies, in other words, and was the repository of the law of the small community. (Brahmanism was prevalent in the days of Paṇḍukābhaya and continued till the reign of Devānampiya Tissa). Soon others would have been allowed to cultivate land, and to have a place in the settlement on terms



prescribed by the leading family, performing work on the land of the leader, and other conditions of subordination. Many of these would have been from the indigenous population. Each village had its boundaries and the entire space within these boundaries belonged to the whole village. Each family had ownership of the homestead and garden around it. In this way much of the land of the village that was needed for agriculture was shared by the leading families. The grazing ground, the waste and the jungle was common to all the villagers. The cultivation of the family plot would have been effected by members of the family. The leading family and the "learned" family would later have cultivated less and less, the actual cultivation being done by employees who had to give a defined share of the produce to the owner.

In this way, from early times there would have been a gradation of respectability and employment within the village itself, with two privileged heads, the secular and the religious or clerical. Eventually, the recognized founder's family and the priest's family would have attained advantages in the allotment of cultivable land, both in regard to situation and quantity, and become the owners of the largest herds and cultivations, with the least expenditure of manual labour. With the arrival of Buddhism, the "priest's family" became non-existent. Yet a significant area of cultivable land would have become the property of the village temple. Thus, the owner of land and cattle became respectable and was considered a "gentleman", to be distinguished from manual labourers in the field.

Next to this community were the others who had been given the right to cultivate village lands and were essentially agricultural in occupation. Next came the relative strangers to the village, artisans and petty traders, followed by the servile class: the hewers of wood, drawers of water, washermen, scavengers and the like. The business of allotment of land, the order of cultivation, the maintenance of the water supply, the keeping of fences and all other affairs of common interest to the community, would have been arranged by heads of families entitled to a share of the village land, assembled as a village committee, with the head of the leading family as chairman.



## Industry

To their agricultural committees would have been added those engaged in industry, especially industry in metal and precious and semi-precious stones. An important development during the Early Historic period was the emergence of a group of settlements that functioned as centres for receiving or collecting and accumulating raw material or finished products, to other centres of consumption in the agricultural plains or to the port towns on the littoral, for export (25). The upper Kalā Oya region gradually evolved as an important production- distribution zone, by the Early Historic period (25).

A early Brahmi inscription mentions the term *Kōlagāma* for a habitation in this region (35: No. 873). The term *Kōlagāma* would literally mean “the village of the metalsmith” (25).

Along with better organized units of production, trade and commerce came *dhaniyas* (bankers or creditors). Early Brahmi inscriptions from the upper Kalā Oya region record the existence of at least twelve *Bata* individuals. the *Bata/Barata* groups were a mercantile community from South India who conducted commercial activity in the Early Historic period. Some of them gradually integrated themselves socially with the commercial and agrarian elite of the island (25). This group were involved in long distance luxury trade, carrying commodities such as conch shell bangles, gems, horses, spices and salt. With the increase of such trade, regulation of resource movement also developed. For instance a Brahmi inscription from Kandalama mentions *bojhaka parumaka* which literary means “the chieftain who enjoys the ford” or one who had control over a ferry-crossing which would have facilitated human and resource movements (25). Such chieftains would have controlled lucrative exchange routes as well as exploitation of resources in their areas.

A pre-Christian era donative record at Galgamuva mentions a *manikāra* (35: No.1033). Paronavitana translates *manikāra* as “lapidary”. The *manikāra* of the Early Historic period was a specialist who worked on all varieties of stone (36). A Brahmi



inscription at Demeda Oya near Nalanda, 1<sup>st</sup> century BC/CE, indicates that the lapidaries arrived at this site to obtain slabs of stone. This area is located near the gem yielding Elahara area. At Madumāna, not too far from Demeda Oya, books of mica can be obtained without much effort on the surface of river banks. The main occurrence of mica in the island is in the montane region which is also a source of other minerals. When in search of mineral stones Early Historic man seems to have discovered sources of mica. With the increasing demand for iron and other minerals more supplies of mica would have reached the production and distribution centres in the North. Mica, being light, offered no impediment to transportation. The specific use of mica during the Early Iron Age is not known. As in India, its use could have ranged from ornamentation, building, pottery, pigment and for medicinal purposes. Well-powdered and purified mica may have been used for ornamentation. Chalcolithic cultures of West Asia used haematite (red ochre), galena and malachite for rouge and eye shadow (36). Could the ladies of Anuradhapura have used powdered mica for eyeshadow, in 100 BC ?

## Cultivation

Two methods of rice cultivation were used:

1. On patches of cleared jungle, depending on seasonal rainfall; and
2. Cultivation that did not depend altogether on the uncertainties of seasonal rainfall (33:97).

Reservoirs were constructed for storing rainfall, both for irrigation and for drinking. Rice was also grown on unirrigated fields. The edible oil was sesame. Sugar was obtained from sugar cane and molasses. Cattle breeding provided milk, curd and ghee. Clothing was from cotton grown locally. Hilly regions were used for spices such as turmeric, ginger and pepper. Fishing villages were established on the coast. Fishing was also done from inland waters. Hunters supplied meat to the villages and towns, and honey



was used as a food and for medicine. Meat and honey would also have been bartered for other requisites by groups that continued a hunter/ gatherer lifestyle.

## Irrigation

Colonists settled in places where water was readily available. The first tank to be constructed, according to the Mahavaṃsa, was at Anuradhapura in the 6<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> century BC. In the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC the Uparāja supervised the construction of a small tank. The Royal family thus exercised direct supervision. *Tissavāpi* was constructed in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC by Devānampiya Tissa. In 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC a small tank was donated to the Sangha, and during the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC, canals were constructed to direct waters from the Mahaweli Ganga to tanks. By the end of the first century BC village tanks were firmly established.

During this time, two methods of irrigation were practised:

1. Small, permanent stone dams across streams, and temporary dams of timber and clay, to direct water to channels, which conveyed water to irrigation areas.
2. Village tanks directly irrigating fields. After irrigation the water would be led into another tank, at a lower level than the lands irrigated by the first tank. In this way there would be a cascade of small tanks, as one proceeds from a high elevation to a lower (33:48).

Many of these tanks were privately owned. Those belonging to a village would be administrated by the village committee.

Panḍukābhaya (394–307 BC) laid out the City of Anuradhapura, with four villages outside the four gates, and the *Abhaya tank*. There were special quarters for Yōnas (foreign traders who were not permitted to dwell in the city) and a village to house 500 caṇḍāla men (city scavengers), 200 caṇḍāla sewage cleaners, 150 removers of corpses and 150 caṇḍāla cemetery keepers. Social classes had been defined. The caṇḍālas, who were of the lowest class, were also debarred from dwelling in the city (32:550).



Devānampiya Tissa (247-207 BC) sent his nephew Mahāriṭṭha, who was his Chief Minister, his chaplain, a minister and his treasurer, along with priceless treasures and a multitude of retainers to his friend, Asoka the Righteous, at Patalīputta in North-East India. These emissaries were received cordially by the Emperor, given lodging for five months and “excessively cared for”. They returned with equally precious treasures and 600 wagon loads of mountain rice. Asoka also informed the king that he had taken refuge in the teachings of the Buddha and exhorted Tissa to do likewise (32:554). Tissa made no attempt to learn about Buddhism until the arrival of Mahinda Thera. He was satisfied that the Emperor, who had subjugated nearly whole of India had no intention of doing the same with Lanka.

### **The Vāddās**

A comparison of the physical traits of Balangoda Man, as represented in the Bellan-bāndi Pālāssa sites, with traits among living populations of Sri Lanka led to the conclusion that “the Vāddās of Ceylon most closely resemble the Balangodese in their physical anthropology”. The Vāddās are thought to be the phylogenetic descendants of the Balangoda Man (8:468). It has also been pointed out that the fragmentary nature of the Balangodese skeletal remains limits their significance in a pure metrical comparative analysis with larger and more complete osteological specimens of the other living populations.

As pointed out above there are indications of a phylogenetic link between them and the Bellan-bāndi pālāssa remains, a morphological continuity for about 10,000 years. There is also evidence that there was an admixture among several groups of differing genetic derivation. Throughout prehistory there could have been several occasions when the gene pool of the Lanka H/G was added to by immigrants from the mainland. Such communication is made easy by the shallow nature of Palk Strait (8:469). It seems reasonable to think of the Vāddās as representing the hunter-gatherer population of Lanka who did not settle down to herding



and cultivating. They would have lived in the jungles surrounding the settlements, and obtained their requirements (e.g. iron for axes and arrowheads) from the settlers in exchange for meat and honey. As the areas cleared for cultivation extended, the Vāddās would eventually have had to restrict their habitat to areas that could not be cultivated, e.g. the Vādiraṭa and the Wannī in north and east of Sri Lanka. In historical times, miscegenation has taken place between Vādda, Sinhala and Tamil gene pools, which largely explains the virtual disappearance of the Vāddās as a biological and ethnic entity, according to Stoudt (37), who studied several measurements of the head and face and the rest of the body, of Sinhalas, Tamils and Vāddās. The number of Vāddās studied was, however, much smaller than of the Sinhalas and Tamils. The dental data lends to support to the hypothesis that the Vāddās are the modern-day descendants of the Sri Lankan H/G. However, dental similarities between the Vādda and Indian H/G samples, along with affinities between Vādda and both the Sinhalas and the Tamils suggest that the modern Vāddās are heavily admixed with other populations in the Island (7:195).

The relationship between the Vāddās and the technologically advanced Sinhalas has been one of symbiosis. Vāddās have always been accorded a high social status equivalent to the cultivator class and their chiefs were accepted members of the Sinhala court throughout the historical period.

Certain Vādda clans have become satellites, life guard officers, sons-in-law and finally ancestors of influential aristocratic families at the courts of the Sinhala kings, without even breaking off the intimate relations with their Vādda cousins, outside in the jungles (8:428)

Another group of hunter-gatherers that existed till recent times are the Vānniyās. They lived between the Sinhala and Tamil populations in north – eastern region of Lanka. They spoke Tamil, and were hunter-gatherers with the same subsistence strategy as the Vāddās. In view of this they were referred to as Vedan (Tamil for Vādda) by the Tamils. There were about 18 hamlets with less



than 25 individuals per settlement, between the North- Central and Northern Provinces of Sri Lanka .This figure gives a population density equivalent to or less than that of the Vāddās in Bintenne (0.4/km<sup>2</sup>) (8:342).

With the disruption of the rice irrigation system in the north, subsistence pressures forced this group of Sinhallas to adopt a hunter-gatherer's mode of life akin to that of the Vāddās, from whom they are ethnically distinct (8:429). On the other hand, they could have been a group of the original hunter-gatherers of Lanka who preferred to remain as such, in that part of the island. As did the Vāddās, they bartered with neighbouring Sinhallas, notably with antler and elephant ivory (8:392).

The life-style of these remnants of the hunter-gatherers of ancient Lanka has been described by several authors during the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. They need not be rehearsed here. These accounts are ably summarized by Deraniyagala in Volume 2 of "The Prehistory of Sri Lanka".

### Acknowledgements

I am greatly indebted to the two volumes on "the Pre-history of Sri Lanka" by S.U. Deraniyagala for having stimulated an interest in the life-style of Sri Lankans in the pre-Vijayan era. I have borrowed freely from these volumes, from J. Diamond's book and from Sudarshana Seneviratne's publications on the Early Iron Age. I thank Dr. Premathilake for the loan of his thesis.

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**AWARD OF THE SOCIETY'S MEDAL FOR THE  
YEAR 2001 TO**

**Mr. Richard Clarence de Silva Manukulasooriya**

*(Citation made by Mr. T. B. Weerakone, a past Council  
Member of the RASSL 30<sup>th</sup> March 2002)*

Mr. President, Mr. Manukulasooriya, Members of the Council, Members of the Royal Asiatic Society of Sri Lanka and distinguished invitees, I have been entrusted with the pleasant task of presenting Mr. Manukulasooriya for the award of the Society's Medal for the year 2001.

The practice to honour a distinguished member of the Royal Asiatic Society of Sri Lanka with a Medal dates back to the year 1946 when Lady Hilda Obeysekera Pieris of Pasyala made an endowment for such an award in honour of her father, the late Sir S.C. Obeysekera, who for many years was a member of the Society as well as a Vice President.

In making this endowment she had stated "My desire is that after paying the necessary initial expenses the balance should be invested and with the interest employed in providing a Medal, and this should be awarded from time to time at your Council's discretion, to such member as in its opinion has made a contribution towards the furtherance of the Society's aims which merit recognition." This is the one and only award made by the Society to any of its members.

The objectives of the Society as stated at its inaugural meeting in 1845, which remain unaltered to the present day are:

"to institute and promote inquiries into the History, Religion, Languages, Literature, Arts and Sciences and Social Conditions of the present and former



peoples of the island of Sri Lanka and connected cultures.”

The then Council of the Society having accepted the offer made by Lady Pieris made its presentation in the year 1953 to Sir Paul E. Pieris for the year 1946 and to Dr. S. Paranavitana for the year 1950. Since then 11 others have been awarded this medal with the last recipient being Dr. K.T.W. Sumanasuriya, a distinguished orientalist who had made substantial contributions towards the furtherance of the Society's aims. This year's recipient Mr. Richard Clarence de Silva Manukulasooriya, has been a member of the Society since 1960 and a member of the Council since 1982.

Born in 1919 at Ambalangoda he had his early education at Dharmasoka College Ambalangoda and subsequently at Mahinda College, Galle. Having entered the University College, Colombo in 1939 he obtained a Bachelor's degree in Arts in 1942 from the University of London. After his graduation he was able to obtain a place in the All-island Competitive Examination for the recruitment of Divisional Revenue Officers held in 1943. His first appointment was as a Probationary D.R.O. attached to the Kalutara Kachcheri with effect from 9.8.1943.

On the retirement of the Mudaliyar, Kalutara Totamune, on 9<sup>th</sup> February 1945 he was appointed to succeed him. Since then over a period of over 22 years he served as a Divisional Revenue Officer in Talpe Pattu, Morawak Korale and Siyane Korale, East and West till July 1965. On first July 1965 he was released from the Sri Lanka Administrative Service to which he had been absorbed in 1963, in order to accept the post of President, Labour Tribunals. His first appointment in his new post was at Nuwara Eliya where he had to set up a new Tribunal, a task he was able to execute with his experience as an able administrator. After four years he was transferred back to Colombo where he remained till his retirement on reaching the age of 60 years. He was recalled for service under the government scheme of re-employment of retired personnel and



served for another four years before finally relinquishing service. During the period of his permanent service as a President, Labour Tribunals, he was appointed by the Hon. Prime Minister as a member of the Judicial Service Advisory Board on 22.05.1976, a post which he held till 25.07.1977 when with a change of government the Board was reconstituted as the Judicial Services Commission.

Mr. Manukulasooriya has been an active member of the Society for a period of over 40 years. Since his appointment to the Council, he held the positions of Hony. Editor of the Society's Journal from 1984 to 1988, and Hony. Librarian from 1988 to 1990, and Vice President from 1990 to 1994. In 1995 he was elected to the post of Hony. Treasurer. In 1996 he was unanimously elected President of the Society and continued to function in that capacity till 1998. During the period of Council member, he was actively involved in most of the activities of the Society, such as member of the Library Committee, the Publications Committee and the Finance Committee and also functioned as the Convenor of the Toponymy Committee, an ad-hoc Committee that was established in 1995.

In October 1981 when the Institute of Traditional Studies was established with the intention of preserving the traditional Ola Leaf Manuscripts of the country from being surreptitiously spirited away by foreign collectors, he was appointed as its Hony. Secretary. In this capacity he was able to assist the organisation in the collection of old manuscripts and secure their preservation. He also edited the journal of the organisation to which he also has contributed a substantial article entitled "Ola Leaf Manuscripts of Sri Lanka", which appeared in Vol. 1 part 1, in 1988. A further contribution made by him for the National Institute of Traditional Studies (NITS) was a study of Traditional Technologies of Sri Lanka on an assignment entrusted to the Institute in 1984 by the Secretary, Ministry of Cultural Affairs under the sponsorship of the UNESCO Regional Office, Bangkok.



Mr. Manukulasooriya's literary activities started as far back as 1967 when he was co-author with late M. D. Raghavan, a former Ethnologist of the Colombo Museum, of a work entitled "*Sinhala Nätum*" (Sinhala Dances) published by M.D. Gunasena & Co., Ltd. He had also a research paper on "Transport in Sri Lanka in Ancient and Mediaeval Times" published by the Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Sri Lanka (Vol. XXIV, New Series), 1978/79. His account of Artisan with the traditional verses describing his art and craft was published in 1989 by Visvakarma, the organ of the Craft Council of Sri Lanka. His article entitled "*Nāgas in Buddhist Art and Legend*" was published in 1969 in Gunasena's Vesak Annual. His latest contribution is the issue of the quarterly Newsletter of the Society, which he initiated.

In 1986, Mr. Manukulasooriya helped set up the Asian Regional Office of the Geneva based international non-profit development organisation IRED Development Innovations and Networks in Colombo. From 1986 to 1994 he conducted a number of research projects for IRED, while functioning as an advisor to its regional director and later to its deputy secretary-general on the management of the regional office as well as of the network of partner organisations that extended into 14 South, South-East and East Asian countries. The research studies conducted by him for IRED included the following:

- A Study of the Supply Conditions in some Sri Lankan Handicraft Industries, p 245, International Labour Organisation (ILO), 1987
- A Study of the Upgrading of Technology for Rural Industries in Sri Lanka -A Review of Experience, p 73, International Labour Organisation (ILO), 1987
- A Five Year Master Plan for Handicrafts Development in Sri Lanka, Vol. 1-5 p 936, Ministry of Rural Industrial Development Government of Sri Lanka, 1988



- Coconut Cultivation and Utilisation - The Sri Lankan Experience, p 141, Asian NGO Coalition, Manila, Philippines, 1988
- A Study of the Use of Ayurvedic Home Remedies in Sri Lanka, p 17, Appropriate Technology International, Washington, 1989
- A Market Study on the Potential Demand for Instant Herbal Beverages in Sri Lanka, p 27, Appropriate Technology International, Washington, 1989

In 1989, Mr. Manukulasooriya was one of a group of colleagues that founded the People's Rural Development Association (PRDA), a national non-profit development organisation working largely with women's community organisations in the Gampaha and Puttalam districts. From 1994 he has been functioning as the Honorary Secretary to PRDA's Governing Council.

In 1996, Mr. Manukulasuriya was one of a group of colleagues that founded the Asian Regional Social Change Organisation called INASIA - Initiative in Education and Research for Development in Asia. He has functioned from its inception as the Honorary Secretary to the Governing Council of this non-profit organisation that has its general secretariat in Colombo and works in 12 Asian countries.

Apart from these he had made many contributions on the country's historical, cultural and aesthetic matters which had been published from time to time in the literary columns of the newspapers of Sri Lanka.

Mr. President, the contributions made by Mr. Manukulasooriya in the several fields of social and cultural activities during the period of over forty years in association with the Royal Asiatic Society of Sri Lanka and other non-governmental organisations furthering such pursuits, the several



literary and historical publications made by him from time to time, and the eminent position he has held in the administrative service renders him eminently suited to receive the coveted Medal of the Society.

I have therefore in recognition of these laudable achievements, the honour and the pleasure to present Mr. R. C. de S. Manukulasooriya for the award of the Medal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Sri Lanka, for the year 2001.



Book Review

**MALDIVIAN DICTIONARY**

**Christopher Reynolds**

*Routledge Curzon, London and New York, 2003*

The publication of a new 'Maldivian Dictionary' is a joyous event particularly for those that are engaged in Indo-Aryan linguistic studies. And when it is the out-come of the wisdom and expertise of C.H.B. Reynolds who is no stranger to Sri Lanka and Sinhala on the one hand and to the rarified field of Maldivian studies on the other, the event is to be welcomed with exceptional interest.

Maldivian, *Divehi* or *Divehi Bas*, is the language of the descendents of several bands of immigrants mainly from Sri Lanka who left no signs of their departure anywhere in their erst-while homeland, and even of arrival in their new island home that may satisfy the curiosity of hide-bound archaeologists or researchers into the migration of peoples. The almost contemporary Vikings did so in a far-off 'Vinland' (which was 'discovered' by Columbus around half a millennium later !), and their arrival there is beyond controversy. These few tough men and women left their fertile Tambapaṇṇi or Sīhaladīpa for reasons and in manner so far not known conclusively for a distant environment which was relatively inhospitable (quite unlike the 'Vinland' !). It was likely by a series of migrations spread over the years – nay centuries, which, no doubt, were attended with immense difficulties and hardships. Nevertheless those adventurers built up a cohesive social organization which grew into a kingdom with the passing of time and, during our own day, into a modern democracy.

The lasting cultural institution that these hardy men took along with them and which stands today as even the most formidable stamp or their identity is their language. As may be expected, it was the Sinhala of the times which has lasted in continuity up to



the present day having under-gone a process of independent evolution. There are also a few examples of their twelfth century script which stands testimony to their contemporary linguistic usage in a strong way- the characters displaying an immense degree of affinity with those of Sinhala of the proximate times.

However, their conversion to Islam during the latter half of the twelfth century disrupted the continuity of these relationships with the land of their ancestors. It made way for that independent linguistic evolution which was significantly marked by the expansion of the vocabulary with additions from the languages of the neighbouring lands with whom they came in contact a-new. The old matrix, nevertheless, remained, and it was mainly on that old structural basis that the new linguistic layers came to be deposited.

Here lies the particular interest that Divehi holds for the students of language – particularly the Sinhala-Divehi inter-face, with the Maldives being the only out-post of the prevalence of Sinhala beyond the shores of Sri Lanka.

Though the speakers of Divehi, i.e., 100% of the citizenry numbering about a quarter million, remained largely ‘closed’ to foreign contact until 1972, they had maintained a lively interest in their language right through. Their present syllabary is their third with the first - the old ‘Sinhala’ one (*evele akuru*, - ‘the letters of those times’) being abandoned after the Islamisation, and the substitute (*dives akuru*) lasting till about 1583 CE. The commencement of new writing may be placed at about the 18<sup>th</sup> century, and subsequent works in poetics and grammar are on record.

The first of few ‘Vocabularies’ (*bas fot*, Sin. *bas pot*, ‘language books’) by local and foreign authors came to be written about fifty years ago, when linguists of the present day (of whom the present author, Reynolds, holds a position of eminence) began to make unprecedented learned contributions. Four years ago, a local scholar, H.A. Maniku, produced his Divehi - English Etymological Glossary which I referred to as a ‘very significant contribution to the furtherance of Maldivian studies’ and as ‘an



inspiring resource that would satisfy the requirements of future lexicographers' (RASSL. Journal, NS. XLV, 2000).

Reynolds, however, had commenced his own laborious task three decades ago (1971), and had been in Male (the Maldivian capital) by then (i.e., 2000) for four months. i.e., before the country was declared open to tourism. He has had a chance of obtaining some assistance from Manikku's work only in and after 2001, by which time, presumably, his own Dictionary was completed and ready for the press.

The learned author's main text is preceded by an 'Introduction' of six pages containing brief notes on Vocabularies (Arab-Mald., Mald-Mald, and Mald.-Eng.) published during the period gone by, the problems that attend the transliteration of Maldivian (in Roman), the nature of the script, Maldivian morphology and the sources made use of by his own self.

The 'problems', specially those faced by one engaged in the compilation of a Dictionary, however, are not limited to transliteration, and the author ventures to mention a few more:

- the 'alphabetical' arrangement does not conform to the western order or to that of the Indo-Aryan languages of the neighbouring lands. (Incidentally Maniku follows the order of the English alphabet and Reynolds, the Indian.)
- the order of letters even of the generally accepted system happens to be variable
- the system of diacritics accepted by Indo-Aryan scholars which has been conveniently used for over the last century is not adhered to
- the use of the half-nasal remains variable
- the sibilants are not discernible in pronunciation

Of these, the most pervasive is the non-adherence to the convenient system of transliteration and the adoption by Maldivian



scholars around thirty years ago of one that is rather cumbersome, as has been pointed out by the present writer himself two years ago (*ibid.* 197-98).

The present excellent work by Reynolds should have provided a good opportunity to have this inconvenience resolved for good, thus paving the way for contemporary and future (European language-user) scholars engaged in the fields of Maldivian antiquarian research to come in line.

He, on the contrary, uses a plurality of ways of transliteration: the sub-script dot to indicate the retroflex (cerebral or *murdhaja*) consonants (*ḥ*, *ḍ* etc.), the flung-dash or tilde (~) over the *n* to denote the palatal nasal (*ñ*) the háček (ˇ) over the *n* to denote the half nasal (*ṅ*), and follows the Maldivian system else-where. To transliterate the Sanskrit, Pali, Sinhala and other 'native' terms he uses the well tried-out diacritical system. Thus, he uses three systems in one and the same work !

Whereas Maniku in his 'Vocabulary' has brought together around 2,000 headwords, Reynolds' 'Dictionary' contains 5,130 (i.e., over two and half times that number), each transliterated in Roman followed by the *Tána* (right-to-left) renderings, and arranged according to the order of the Indian alphabet: the vowels starting with *a* coming first followed by the consonants commencing with *ka*. Grammatical details in appropriate abbreviated forms follow each head-word. The gloss comes next and the etymological details where possible follow, the languages cited numbering ten.

It is in the compilation of the gloss that the learned author displays his masterly grasp of his subject, specially the modern Divehi language. Of course, a majority of head-words demands a few words or even a line or two as a definition, and even in such instances which are numerous, he exemplifies each meaning with an example from native usage. But he does not stop short in that manner in examples which possess a diversity of meanings as nominal and verbal forms, adjectives etc. Even modern vulgar, honorific and obsolete forms are indicated, botanical terms supplied and simple details such as the absence of pigs (*ūru*) in the Maldives



are noted, and numerous examples from current usage and their meanings find a place. Examples of such exhaustive glosses are numerous with those for *alanii*, *e*, *ek*, *jahanii*, *fen*, *lanii*, *mas*, etc. outstanding.

One is somewhat constrained to remark at this juncture that the pains-taking efforts of the learned author would have been more appreciated if the Divehi words and expressions culled from various sources were rendered in italics which exercise, though necessarily arduous, would have made them stand out differently from the semantical portions in Roman, causing thus a better visual impact on the readers.

Although the learned author says that his work would be 'primarily of use to Westerners who wish to study the Maldivian language' (vii), it may not be held strictly so. Indeed, the work marks a positive advance in English-Maldivian lexicography, both in extent and in depth, and is a boon to all researchers in the field of Indo-Aryan linguistics.

It is somewhat fashionable, however, for writers on the Divehi language to refer to it as belonging to the Indo-Iranian family though it is 'closely related' to Sinhala. Whereas this latter connection remains uncontested with a variety of writers ranging from the sailor Pyrard (17<sup>th</sup> century) to researchers such as Geiger and Bell, and finally to lexicographers Manniku and Reynolds of the present day corroborating, none has so far adduced any testimony in support of the former point of view, although it is popularly so held. It is likely that it originated in the tourist literature that proliferated during the early 'seventies of the last century, i.e., just over three decades ago.<sup>1</sup>

There is no doubt that modern Divehi contains a considerable array of Iranian (Persian) words which are not different from the Urdu parallels of the neighbouring Pakistan. [Reynolds himself refers to a 'large number of Urdu or Persian loan-words' (ix) in Divehi.] But the same cannot be said of Old Divehi - i.e., the language evident at the period of the conversion of the Islanders to Islam in and after 1153 CE. even when the language showed signs of



maturity. This condition is well exemplified by the Loamáfánuş composed soon after when the relatively more important morphological and grammatical features which are seen to be akin to those of the Sinhala of the times came to be evident.<sup>2</sup>

It is, hence, more reasonable to hold that Iranian and other lexical influences began to be felt during the times subsequent to the compilation of the Loamáfánuş.

It has, however to be admitted that there is the possibility of arriving at a different conclusion consequent on future research (if ever) on the Arabic-Iraninan-Urdu influence on Divehi.

There is no doubt that expanding religious and mercantile activities brought in influences from the lands around the Arabian Sea accounting for the number of Persian (i.e., Iranian which presumably includes the Arabic too), Hindi and Tamil words in Divehi mentioned above, It has also to be accepted that these linguistic layers came to be deposited over the relatively deep matrix in which the Loamáfánuş were compiled (like English over many languages of the region including Sinhala and Divehi, during the modern times).

A new dimension also has come to be evident as regards the 'Iranian factor'. Parsia or Bohra merchants with their roots in Persia (Iran) were a long-standing business community in Bombay, and during the nineteenth century several of their families settled down in Colombo too on having founded a flourishing import-export business.

Coming in contact with Maldivian shipping agencies here they found it convenient to establish themselves in Male where they founded a 'Bohra bazaar'. Their business expanded and they grew to be an influential entity in contemporary social life. They also managed to make their presence felt in local political affairs as well around a hundred years ago<sup>3</sup>. It is doubtless that this hold on local activities, for a short time though, made way for some of their words and expressions to find a place in the local language. It may also be mentioned that evidence of Maldivian- Iranian contacts



of an era anterior to the advent of these merchants has not come to light so far in any substantial quantity, thus providing an interesting field for future research.

Reynold's 'Dictionary' appears to throw some light (inadvertently though) *vis-à-vis* this linguistic situation by his worthy exercise to indicate the derivative source of a considerable number of head-words. Of the 5,160 of them, nearly 1,100 are indicated as etymologically related to Sinhala. Rare instances where such affinity remains un-indicated (by the abbreviation 'S') may also be identified: *atolu* (62): *abu* (124), *asvāru* (224), *assari bas* (226), *assavanī* (227), *āḍattoḍā* (270), *kudi* (1005), *tutiyā* (1838), *dāra* (2030), etc. There is no reason to doubt that these are derivatives (*tadbhava* forms) of the Sinhala *atola* (atoll), *āba* (wedge), *asaru* (horseman), *āsiri bas* (words of praise or benediction), *asayi* (asks), *ādatōḍa* (the plant *Āḍhatōḍa vasica*), *kudu* (small), *tutu* (slag) and *dāra* (edge), respectively.

It is also possible to note from the text that head-words that lend themselves to a multiplicity of idiomatic and grammatical variations ('disparate contexts', as referred to by the learned author) resulting in extensive glosses running from half a page to one-and-half pages (as mentioned earlier) possess derivative affinities with Sinhala forms suggestive of their enduring presence in the Divehi language. *Aranī* (158), *alanī* (249), *kam* (785), *kolu* (1206), *naganī* (2249), *fen* (2861), *mas* (3493) and *lanī* (4023) are a few such forms derived from the Sinhala verbal and nominal roots *ara* (to ascend), *ela* (to lay), *kam* (action), *kela* (end), *naga* ('to ascend'), *pān* (water), *mas* (meat) and *la* (to lay or place).

More numerous are such head-words with some-what shorter glosses.

On the contrary, the Urdu-Persian head-words amounting to some-what over 700 are defined and explained in a few words or a line or two, and many of them refer to articles, concepts etc. of relatively recent origin (see specially pages 355 to 373).

Not even 20 words are identified as purely Arabic-if that number may testify to the 'strong Arabic influence', admitting of



course the phonetic change of the *p* to *f* evident in Divehi as an example of that influence. Words with a Hindi affinity amount to over 250, and Tamil, to around 60.<sup>4</sup>

The learned author, Reynolds, has to be congratulated for placing in our eager hands a long-awaited work, well accomplished, entailing several years of devoted and painstaking intellectual toil. It is a significant addition to universal lexicography, and its contents to be particularly useful to scholars engaged in Indo-Aryan linguistics.

**V. Vitharana**

### References

1. Divehi, a language which belongs to the Indo-Iranian group of languages' which shows 'a strong Arabic influence': 'Information' brochure No.1 published by the Department of Information and Broadcasting, Male, Aug. 1992. This is likely a re-iteration of an opinion expressed in a similar publication pertaining to an earlier date. The prevalence of 'Urdu or Persian loan-words' may suggest an 'Arabic influence'. Nevertheless, I am personally unaware of any attempt to prove that Divehi is an Indo-Iranian language.
2. See 'Sri Lankan-Maldivian Cultural Affinities' – V. Vitharana, Academy of Sri Lankan Culture, Polgasovita, 1997, 14-95.
3. See 'Maldivian History' – Lars Vilgon, Stockholm, 1996, Vol. I, 23-200, Vol. VI, 4.146-55, 158-72, 182-95.
4. The attention of the reader may be drawn to an attempt by a learned sociologist (Maloney, author of 'People of the Maldivian Islands', Madras, 1978) to promote the idea of a 'Tamil sub-stratum', 'Dravidian sub-stratum' and 'Tamil-Malayalam sub-stratum' on which Divehi, as he fervently thought originated and evolved: see Vitharana, 1997. Appendix II. Also see JRASSL, XLIII, 1998. 25-29 & XLV, 2002. 151-77



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## MONTHLY LECTURE SERIES 2001/2002

### 2001

30 <sup>th</sup> April	Prof. Mendis Rohanadeera	Crocodile Charm Inscription of 15th Century from the Ginganga at Baddegama.
28 <sup>th</sup> May	Mr. D G A Perera	Place names associated with the Vijaya legend in the Jaffna penin- sula.
25 <sup>th</sup> June	Mr. G W Jayantha Aravinda	Some characteristics of Sinhala folk music.
30 <sup>th</sup> July	Dr. Vernon L B Mendis	Statesmanship and Diplomacy of Sri Lankan Rulers.
27 <sup>th</sup> August	Mr. Das Miriyagalla	First General Election under the Soulbury Constitution
24 <sup>th</sup> September	Dr. H N S Karunatilake	Discriminatory Acts against the Buddha Sasana by the British after the commitments in the Kandyan Convention of 1815.
29 <sup>th</sup> October	Mr. Frederick Medis	Evidence of Roman accounting and calculating systems on the Southern coastline of Sri Lanka in the first century B C.
26 <sup>th</sup> November	Prof. P V Premaratne	Dialectical Variations of Sinhala.
18 <sup>th</sup> December	Dr. Susantha Goonetilake	Searching for the Sinhala Buddhist Savage: the Case of Bruce Kapferer.

### 2002

29 <sup>th</sup> January	Dr. S. P. F. Senaratne	The RAS and Orientalism: Expression of a wider Problem
25 <sup>th</sup> February	Messrs. H Situge and	Distinctive identification of the Freak chank shell - Valampuri.



ADDITIONAL ELECTRIC POWER SUPPLIES

2001	31st April	Mr. G. S. A. Prasad	...
2001	29th May	Mr. G. S. A. Prasad	...
2001	25th June	Mr. G. S. A. Prasad	...
2001	20th July	Mr. G. S. A. Prasad	...
2001	15th August	Mr. G. S. A. Prasad	...
2001	10th September	Mr. G. S. A. Prasad	...
2001	5th October	Mr. G. S. A. Prasad	...
2001	30th October	Mr. G. S. A. Prasad	...
2001	25th November	Mr. G. S. A. Prasad	...
2001	20th December	Mr. G. S. A. Prasad	...
2002	15th January	Mr. G. S. A. Prasad	...
2002	10th February	Mr. G. S. A. Prasad	...



**ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY OF SRI LANKA**  
**Minutes of the 156<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting (158<sup>th</sup> Year)**

1. **Date, Time and Venue:** 29 March 2003 at 2.00 p.m. at the Gamini Dissanayake Auditorium, Mahaweli Centre, Ananda Coomaraswamy Mawatha, Colombo 07.
2. **Present:** Dr. S G Samarasinghe (President), Mr. Das Miriyagalla, Mr. R Wijedasa (Jt. Secretaries), Prof. M B Ariyapala, Dr. K T W Sumanasuriya, Mr. R C de S Manukulasooriya, Dr. H N S Karunatilake, Mr. A D N Fernando, Mr. Nimal Sarathchandra, Kalasuri Wilfred M Gunasekara, Mrs. Ishvari Corea, Mr. M G Samaraweera, Mr. Frederick Medis, Mr. L K Karunaratne, Mr. D P W Karunatilake, Dr. K Arunasiri, Mr. H L W Dissanayake, Dr. G S B Senanayake, Mr. H S Coperahewa, Mr. P Nagasinghe, Mr. R G G O Gunasekera, Mr. K P Yasapala, Prof. Rohini Parनाविताना, Ms. Nirosha Parनाविताना, Mr. Methsiri Cooray, Mr. D G P Seneviratne, Prof. Kapila Abhyawansa, Mr. L Sugunadasa, Dr. A Adikari, Prof. R P T Jayawardena, Prof. Kusuma Karunaratne, Rev. Fr. X N F Kurukulasuriya, Dr. K D Parनाविताना, Mr. Hemantha Situge, Mr. Asiff Hussein, Mr. S J Munasinghe, Mr. B L Perera, Mr. G D Abeyratne, Prof. Vini Vitharana, Mrs. Kamalika S Pieris, Mr. N R M Daluwatta, Dr. Susantha Goonetilake, Mrs. Ramani C W Perera, Dr. W M K Wijetunga, Mr. Desmond Fernando, Dr. Lochana Gunaratne, Mrs. A Wijrdeman Broese van Groenou, Prof. Nimal de Silva, Mr. L H R P Deraniyagala, Ven. Pundit Gammeddegoda Punnasara Thero, Dr. A D Soysa, Dr. L A D A Tissa Kumara, Mr. T B Weerakone, Mrs. C B Weerasinghe, Dr. C G Uragoda, Mr. K. P. Wimaladharmā, Dr. Kingsley Wickremasuriya, Mr. Sam Wijesinhe, Dr. Ratna Wijetunga, Mr. R A Wijewansa, Prof. T W Wikremanayake, Mr. C R Withanachchi, Mr. W G Weerawardene, Mr. C Wellappili, Prof. Mrs. D M Wickremasinghe, Mrs. Uda Hettige, Mr. B A Hulangamuwa, Dr. Mrs. L S Dewaraja, Mrs. P B Edirisinghe, Mr. Anton Fernando, Dr. Hema Goonetilake, Prof. Geri Jayasekera, Mr. R G. Kudaliyange, Mr. A Lagamuwa, Mr. P Manamperi, Prof. Mrs. T G I Munasinghe, Mr. S W. Nanayakkara, Mr. J P



Obeyssekera, Mr. U. Pathrirana, Dr. A S W Tammitta Delgoda, Mr. D L U P S Siriwardene.

3. **Calling of the Meeting to Order:** The Meeting was called to order by the President with 74 members present.
4. **Notice of the Annual General Meeting:** The President called on the Hony. Jt. Secretary to read the Notice Convening the Meeting and it was duly read.
5. **Welcome Address:** The President welcoming the members present at the AGM said the main activities handled by the Society were covered in the Annual Report (AR) which had been printed and circulated. However, he wished to make some comments. The monthly lecture series was conducted as usual throughout the year and they were thought provoking and well researched. The discussions after the lectures were profitable. As regards the library 8000 volumes have been properly catalogued and data updated. Special thanks are due to the Hony. Librarian for her efforts in volunteering to employ a specialist at the cost of Rs. 8000/- per month from her own funds for three months to complete the task in time. The Publications Committee chaired by Dr. K D Paranavitana and with the editorship of Mr. D G P Seneviratne was able to release the *J/RASSL XLVI*. The *Aṭṭhakathā* Translations Committee was rejuvenated and five *aṭṭakathās*, namely i. *Kankhāvitaranī*, ii. *Dhammapadaṭṭhakathā*, iii. *Therigāthā*, iv. *Visuddhimagga* and v. *Anguttara Nikāya* were translated and published. A project proposal has been prepared to accelerate translations of 50 volumes of *Aṭṭhakathā*. The Toponymy Committee chaired by Mr. Frederick Medis continued its useful work. So did the Committee on the History of the Written Word under the chairmanship of Dr. Mrs. Malini Dias. An effort has to be made to find a sponsor for the proposed Exhibition. One of the Past Presidents, Mr. R C de S Manukulasooriya published a research work on *Ämbäkke Devālaya*. Action has been initiated by the Council on a proposal made by Dr. Lorna Dewaraja to commemorate the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the re-establishment of Buddhist Higher Ordination and Thai - Sri Lanka Historical Relations by a sub-committee chaired by Dr. K D Paranavitana. He also thanked all office bearers, the Council and the staff of



the Secretariat for their support. He stressed the need of being more research oriented in pursuing the objectives of the Society.

6. **Condolences:** The Hony. Jt. Secretary announced the deaths of the following members as per information received at the RASSL Secretariat. (1) Mr. H.M. Gunasekera; (2) Mrs. A.L. Tammita; (3) Mr. K.D.W. Ratnayake; (4) Mr. Palitha Weeraman; (5) Mr. W.B. Marcus Fernando; (6) Dr. Mrs. Martha E Pricket Fernando; (7) Mr. Sydney C Perera; (8) Mr. I M G A Iriyagolla; (9) Mr. E.M.C Amunugama; (10) Mr. Eardley Gunawardene. The house observed two minutes silence in honour of the deceased members.
7. **Excuses:** Rev. Robert Luckhart, Mr. D.S.D.P.R. Senanayake, Pundit William Alwis, Mr. Ananda Chittambalam, Lt. Com. S Devendra, Mr. Jayantha Aravinda, Prof. A.S. Kulasuriya and Mr. H.W. Dissanayake.
8. **Confirmation of the Minutes of the AGM of the 157<sup>th</sup> Year:** The Minutes of the AGM of the 157<sup>th</sup> year were confirmed proposed by Mr. Desmond Fernando and seconded by Mr. Sam Wijesinha.
9. **Business Arising from the Minutes**

Mr. A D N Fernando stated that page 4, item 7, Library Committee completed the stock taking but errors still exist and the valuation of books has not been done.

On item 15 Mr. A D N Fernando stated that there is a problem with the constitution without the Board of Trustees. The land has been gifted to the RASSL at the time of President Premadasa and the order to that effect was issued at the time of President J. R. Jayewardene. If the land belongs to the Society the buildings in that land automatically belong to the Society which is a fact accepted in law.

Page 34 item 08. Annual Report, Dr. H N S Karunatilake stated that he made a complaint to the President inquiring why he was not invited for any Council Meetings and questioned what constitution is in practice now. In the Administration Report his name is listed under Past Presidents whereas in the *Newsletter* vol. 2 no. 4 it has been left out.



The President replied that the matter was taken up at a couple of Council Meetings and he had tabled a Council Paper on this matter seeking clarification or interpretation as to who is a Past President. As the President he could not take a decision alone, a committee was appointed to look into the matter. This was recorded in the Council Minutes of May 28, 2002 in which it was decided to follow the provisions of the 1998 Constitution and section 4.1 of the Act of Incorporation and to invite both Dr. Karunatilake and Mr. G P S H de Silva to the Council Meetings as Past Presidents.

Prof. M B Ariyapala said that this issue of Past Presidents came up after Prof. T Nadaraja resigned and a committee was appointed to decide whether he belongs to the category of Past Presidents. The decision was that, as he did not serve the full term he cannot be considered as a Past President. Prof. Ariyapala sought legal opinion on this matter and the opinion he received was that those who resigned half way cannot be considered as Past Presidents.

Dr. Susantha Goonetilake inquired whether the follow-up action with regard to item 16 has been taken, i.e. quarterly General Meetings. The President said that the Council requested Mr. A P S Galapatha who had drawn attention to the matter to draw up items for discussion; Mr. Galapatha took the view that it was the responsibility of the Council to do that.

**8. Annual Report of the Council for 2002:**

The Annual Report of the Council for 2002 (158<sup>th</sup> Year) was accepted.

**9. Audited Statement of Accounts for 2002:**

Mr. Methsiri Cooray wished to have a clarification on telephone expenses recorded in the Audited Statement (Rs. 64,684.78) whether it contains private calls. Mr. Desmond Fernando said that the details of telephone calls could be obtained from Sri Lanka Telecom. Mr. Denis N Fernando said that a register of telephone calls with details should be maintained. Hon. Treasurer assured that he would obtain particulars of the phone calls made and take preventive measures to control it in the future.



Subject to above, the Audited Statement of Accounts was adopted proposed by Mr. Desmond Fernando and seconded by Mr. A D N Fernando.

#### 10. **Amendment to the RASSL Act**

Prof. M B Ariyapala explained at length the history of amendments to the current RASSL Constitution. He pointed out that the President and the Council has challenged the supremacy of the Society. The Council has not carried out the directives of the SGM held on 24<sup>th</sup> October, 1998 at which a new constitution was unanimously adopted. It was suggested that para 4.1 of the Act of Incorporation should be amended. We did nothing about it for the last five years. First Mr. G P S H de Silva tried to do it but resigned prematurely. Then Dr. H N S Karunatilake succeeded him for the rest of his tenure. Later Dr. S G Samarasinghe as the President appointed a committee. They prepared a new constitution which was totally rejected at a General Meeting. The other suggestion was to amend the Act in keeping with the 1998 constitution. That was also lost. He proposed that a committee be appointed to amend the Act. A committee was appointed and he was asked to go ahead with the matter. As per the committee decision he had contacted a parliamentarian who wanted a draft amendment in English, Sinhala and Tamil. The draft was prepared and translated and there were no Council meeting held in between and therefore he had to give it to the parliamentary committee. The final copy was received by him to advertise in the newspapers which he did and paid the bill on behalf of the Society. A question was raised as to why the notice was not produced to the Council for approval. There were three clauses that were to be added to it. The notices were signed by Mr. Jayantha Jayaweera (MP). The Council took serious action against me. Council stopped the payment. The Vice President said that Prof. M B Ariyapala himself had directly communicated with the parliamentarian. The Hony. Treasurer promised to pay but the money was not given. We have delayed this matter by 5 years. The Constitution says that half yearly meetings should be held. The Council has no powers to ignore the Constitution.



Mrs. Kamalika Pieris as an observation said that an amendment is necessary to get rid of the Past Presidents and to have the immediate Past President in or to have a President Elect years in order to complete the unfinished business of the previous Council.

## 11. **Publications**

Mr. Gamini Seneviratne said that Prof. Ariyapala and Mr. A DN Fernando had raised pertinent issues regarding the manner in which the Council had functioned in the last two years.. It had not carried out the decisions of the AGM or even its own decisions. The manner in which the proceedings of the Council were conducted as well as the manner in which they were recorded has been very unsatisfactory. He pointed out that in a learned society matters must be discussed in an open and disciplined manner and the reasons for decisions taken by the Council set out clearly. The proceedings of the Publications Committee, of which he was the convenor ex-officio as the Hony Editor of the Society, had been similarly marred. Some of its members, including its Chairman, had taken objection to its proceedings being recorded accurately, and resorted to taking decisions by a show of hands. That was patently a travesty of how academic matters should be conducted. That Committee had, quite illegally, converted itself into some kind of 'editorial board'. The vanity behind that action could be seen in the title page and the page overleaf in which the names of the members of the Committee are prominently displayed – a first in any learned journal. Book reviews requested of two leading Sri Lankan academics, Prof. Merlin Pieris and Prof. Gananath Obeyesekere, which they had sent in, had not been carried on the ground that the books so referred to them had been published more than two years earlier. Mr. Seneviratne said that he had pointed out that the credibility of the RASSL was in question. The quality of some of the articles in the Journal was clearly not up to standard; but included on 'a show of hands'! The image of the Society is affected by the quality of the Journal and by how articles, notes, book reviews come to be selected.

Mr. Seneviratne reported these goings on to Council and requested that the PC be reconstituted. The Council referred the matter to Mr. Sam Wijesinha for report, but failed to provide Mr. Wijesinha with the secretarial support he required.



## 12. Resolutions:

- 1) **Resolution 1 - Library:** Proposed by Lt. Com. S Devendra and seconded by Mr. Ishvari Corea.

“It is hereby resolved that the Library of the Royal Asiatic Society of Sri Lanka will be a Reference Library from this day onwards and that no books will be lent out to any one under any circumstances. Nothing in the Constitution or Rules of the Society shall be construed as negating this Resolution in any way.”

Mrs. Ishvari Corea moved the resolution on behalf of Lt. Com. S Devendra. Mr. R C de S Manukulasooriya said that this resolution is *ultra vires* to the provisions of the RASSL Constitution as the resolution should be presented by the proposer himself and the seconder has no powers to present it. The President ruled out the objection and allowed Mrs. Corea to proceed with the presentation of the resolution.

Mrs. Corea gave several reasons for the need of safeguarding the Society's great asset, the library, by adopting this resolution. She further said, “For several years members have been complaining that books were getting lost. There was no way of checking whether this was true. For this, it was necessary to compare the books held against the books shown in the Accession Register. This year the job was completed. There are 8000 books in stock and 362 missing. The unfortunate part is that not a single book has been removed from the Accession Register for the last 50 odd years. Therefore these 362 books may have been lost anywhere between 1950 and this year. We were able to locate only seven books against names of borrowers. Some time ago a large number of members were deprived of membership for non-return of books. Even then, unreturned books continued to be shown in the Accession Registers as stock. My position is that the RASSL is not administratively a strong organization, with no tradition of taking over and handing over duties. The books and records have not been carefully



looked after. During the last two years, lending was stopped to carry out stocktaking. As for periodicals, there is no list even to compare with. There were no catalogue cards as well. This month we completed that job also. There are 10,770 journals and periodicals all catalogued. This work has been done with great care and it has been recommended that a proper handing over of stocks and records be completed by the outgoing Hony. Librarian and ensure continuity by her successor.”

Accordingly, this resolution is being moved to keep the library stocks safe from a few people for the benefit of the membership of today and future.

Mr. A D N Fernando said that some 10 years ago he reported that books have been lost. As regards to journals if one is lost the whole series is of no use. He fully agreed with the resolution. Mr. Desmond Fernando also expressed that no lending is possible and to make all books categorized as reference books.

The President pointed out if we pass this resolution we will have to amend the Act of Incorporation and the RASSL Constitution as well. Therefore he wished to put the resolution to the house for a decision and suggested making it reference and lending both. This was agreed to and requested the next Library Committee to categorize accordingly and stick to the rules of the Constitution.

The resolution was not carried.

- 2) **Resolution 2 - Office Bearers:** Proposed by Prof. M B Ariyapala and seconded by Mr. S J Munasinghe

I wish to submit the following amendment to the RASSL Constitution as article 26-clause (B). “All other office bearers should have been members of the Society at least for three years from the date of enrolment or two years as members of the Council.” The Resolution was adopted.

- 3) **Resolution 3** proposed by Dr. H N S Karunatilake and seconded by Prof. M B Ariyapala was taken up for discussion.



“The Executive Council of the Royal Asiatic Society shall not make any Rules, Regulations and take decisions that are contrary to the provisions in the Constitution of the Society.”  
The Resolution was adopted.

- 4) **Resolution 4** proposed by Mr. A P S Galapata and seconded by Mr. W G Weerawardane lapsed in the absence of the proposer.

### 13. Election of President

The President announced that two nominations, viz., Dr. H N S Karunatilake and Dr. K D Paranavitana, for the post of President have been accepted and an election has to be conducted. He invited Mrs. Ishvari Corea and Rev. Fr. X N Kurukulasuriya to conduct the election. The members present at the auditorium were registered and checked at the entrance, therefore a head count was taken. Seventy seven (77) members were present. The polling was conducted and after the count, Rev. Fr. Kurukulasuriya handed over the results to the President Dr. S G Samarasinghe. The result was announced as follows:

Dr. K D Paranavitana	51
Dr. H N S Karunatilake	21
Spoiled votes	02
Total voted	74

The President declared that Dr. K D Paranavitana has been elected president of the RASSL for the next term of two years.

### 14. President Elect Takes the Chair

The Elected President took the Chair and thanked the members for the confidence placed on him. He said that he is fully aware that the task ahead is difficult and will try his best to contribute to achieve the objectives of the Society to the best of his ability. He conducted the meeting here onwards.

### 15. Election of Office Bearers

#### 1) Vice Presidents (Two Posts)

The President announced that there are two posts of Vice President. Rev. Fr. X N F Kurukulasuriya has been nominated



to one post and the other is vacant. He called for nominations from the house for the vacant post and the following nominations were received.

- (1) Mr. Frederick Medis: Proposed by Prof. Kusuma Karunaratne Seconded by Mr. R Wijedasa
- (2) Prof. Vini Vitharana: Proposed by Dr. G S B Senanayaka Seconded by Dr. K Arunasiri

Having referred to the relevant clauses in the RASSL Constitution for the post of Vice President it was found that both nominations are in order. A vote was taken by show of hands having Rev. Fr. X N F Kurukulasuriya as the referee. The result was as follows:

Prof. Vini Vitharana	38
Mr. Frederick Medis	07

The President declared that Prof. Vini Vitharana was elected Vice President.

## 2) Hony. Jt. Secretaries (Two Posts)

The name of Mr. Hemantha Situge has been nominated to one post and the other was vacant. The President called nominations from the house for the vacant post. Accordingly the following names were proposed.

- (1) Mr. Methsiri Cooray: Proposed by Mr. N R M Daluwatta Seconded by Mr. Desmond Fernando

At this stage of the meeting Mr. Hemantha Situge withdrew his nomination. The name of Dr. G S B Senanayaka was proposed by Mr. Situge and seconded by Mr. Asiff Hussein. Dr. G S B Senanayake also withdrew. The President called for further nominations.

- (2) Mr. Gamini Seneviratne: Proposed by Mr. B L Perera Seconded by Mr. A D N Fernando

The President declared that Mr. Methsiri Cooray and Mr. Gamini Seneviratne were elected Jt. Secretaries.



**3) Hony. Treasurer (One Post)**

The President declared that in the absence of any other nominations Dr. K Arunasiri was elected to the post of Hony. Treasurer proposed by Dr. S G Samarasinghe and seconded by Prof. Rohini Parnavitana.

**4) Hony. Editor (One Post)**

The President declared that in the absence of any other nomination Mr. Asiff Hussein was elected to the post of Hony. Editor proposed by Mr. R C de S Manukulasooriya and seconded by Dr. K D Parnavitana.

**5) Hony. Librarian (One Post)**

The President declared that in the absence of any other nomination Prof. T W Wikramakayake was elected to the post of Hony. Librarian proposed by Mr. Desmond Fernando and seconded by Mr. A D N Fernando.

**16. Election of Council Members (14)**

Mssrs. Jayantha Aravinda, A.P.S. Galapatha and Ashley de Vos were absent and therefore their nominations were deemed to have lapsed. Mr. Methsiri Cooray has been elected to the post of Hony. Jt. Secretary. Accordingly, four new nominations were called from the house. The President declared that the following were elected as the members of the Council.

**A. Category - Over three years (12)**

Mrs. Kamalika S Pieris; Mr. N R M Daluwatta; Dr. Susantha Goonatilleka;

Prof. R P Tissa Jayewardena; Prof. Kapila Abeywansa; Kalasuri Wilfred M Gunasekara

Mrs. Ramani C W D Perera; Dr. H N S Karunatilake; Mr. M G Samaraweera;

Dr. W M K Wijetunga; Mr. Desmond Fernando; Dr. G S B Senanayaka

**B. Category - below three years (2)**

Dr. Lochana Gunaratne; Mr. N Y Yasapala



**17. Election of Auditors**

Messrs. Wickramasinghe Dayananda & Co., Chartered Accountants were elected auditors, being proposed by Mr. Desmond Fernando and seconded by Mr. Methsiri Cooray.

**18. Vote of thanks**

Mr. Frederick Medis proposed the vote of thanks.

Methsiri Cooray  
D G P Seneviratne  
**Hony. Jt. Secretaries**

12.01.2003



## ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY OF SRI LANKA

The **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING** of the 157th year of the Royal Asiatic Society of Sri Lanka, will be held on Saturday 30 March, 2002 at 3.00 p.m. at the Auditorium of the Mahaweli Centre, 96, Ananda Coomaraswamy Mawatha, Colombo 07.

### AGENDA

1. Notice of the Meeting
2. Welcome address by the President of the RASSL
3. Condolences
4. Excuses
5. Confirmation of the Minutes of the AGM of the 156th year
6. Business arising out of the Minutes
7. Annual Report of the Council - 2001/2002
8. Audited Statement of Accounts - 2001
9. Award of the Medal to Mr. R. C. de S. Manukulasooriya and citation
10. Proposed new Constitution
11. Resolutions
12. Vote of Thanks
13. Tea

**Das Miriyagalla**

**R. Wijedasa**

Hony. Jt. Secretaries

18.02.2002



**ANNUAL REPORT OF THE COUNCIL  
2001/2002  
157th YEAR**

**RESUMÉ**

1. **Period:** The report on activities presented here, covers the period April, 2001 - March, 2002. The audited financial statement covers the calendar year 2001.
2. **Council Meetings:** During the period under review 10 Ordinary Meetings and 01 Special Meeting were held.
3. **Public Lectures:** 10 public lectures were held, under the Monthly Lecture Series programme.
4. **Membership:** 08 new members were enrolled. Vide Finance and Administration Committee Report.
5. **Journal:** Volume Number XLIV was printed and published. Vide Publications Committee Report
6. **Newsletter:** Volume 1, Nos. 1 and 2 were published and posted to all members.

**MEETINGS AND MEMBERSHIP**

**Council Meetings**

Ten Council Meetings and One Special Council Meeting were held during the period. Attendance of members is shown below.

<b>Office Bearers</b>		<b>Present</b>
Dr. S. G. Samarasinghe	(President)	11
Dr. K. D. Paranavitana	(Vice President)	8
Lt. Com. S. Devendra	(Vice President)	10
Mr. R. Wijedasa	(Hony. Jt. Secretary)	10
Mr. Das Miriyagalla	(Hony. Jt. Secretary)	11
Dr. K. Arunasiri	(Hony. Treasurer)	11
Mr. D. G. P. Seneviratne	(Hony. Editor)	10
Mrs. Ishvari Corea	(Hony. Librarian)	6



**Past Presidents**

Prof. M B. Ariyapala	3
Dr. C. G. Uragoda	9
Dr. K. T. W. Sumanasuriya	10
Mr. A. Denis N Fernando	8
Mr. R. C. de S. Manukulasooriya	10

**Council Members**

Dr. G. S. B. Senanayake	10
Prof. Mendis Rohanadeera	1
Prof. Kusuma E. Karunaratne	10
Mr. Sam S. Wijesinha	8
Kalasuri Wilfred M. Gunasekera	6
Mr. Ashley de Vos	6
Mr. Desmond Fernando P. C.	2
Mr. Methsiri Cooray	5
Mr. Frederick Medis	11
Mr. M. Asiff Hussein	10
Mr. Hemantha Situge	11
Mrs. Kamalika S. Pieris	8
Mr. A. P. S. Galapata	11

**Membership**

During the period under review two Resident Ordinary Members and Eight Resident Life Members were enrolled.

**Condolences**

It is with deep regret that we report the death of the following members of the Society during the period under review.

1. Mr. Siripala Tilakesena (L/396)
2. Mr. Percy Colin Thome (L/335)
3. Mr. H. A. Maniku (L/197)

**(A) New Members****Ordinary / Resident**

- 334 Dr. H. S. Sri Nissanka, MA., Ph.D  
335 Mr. K. P. Yasapala, BA



**Life/Resident**

- 614 Ms.A.Fernando
- 615 Mr.R.S.Karunaratne, BA (Spl.)
- 616 Dr. M.L.Marasinghe, Ph.D, LLD.
- 618 Prof. W. I. Siriweera, Ph.D (London)
- 619 Mr. K. A. D. P. P. Nanayakkara, LLB (Ceylon)
- 620 Dr. R.Vigneswaram, LLB (Ceylon), B. D. S. (Hons) Ceylon,  
F. D S K. C. S. (Eng)
- 621 Mr. M. Herath, Attorney-at-Law
- 622 Mr. L. A. Wikramasinghe Attorney-at-Law

**(B) Conversion, Ordinary to Life**

- 617 Mr. Walter Ladduwahetty

As at February, 2002, the Society had 511 members on roll, consisting of the Patron, 02 Honorary Members, 428 Resident Life Members, 66 Resident Ordinary Members and 14 Institutional Members.

## **THE REPORT OF THE HONY. TREASURER FOR THE YEAR 2001**

The audited statement of Income and Expenditure and the balance as at 31st December 2001 are forwarded for the information of the membership of RASSL.

**Income**

The income of RASSL remained almost the same as in the previous year. As we all are aware, RASSL depends solely on the Annual Government Grant, which is Rs. 600.000/- at present. Treasurer wishes to thank the Hon. Minister of Cultural Affairs and the Government for the Annual Grant.

**Expenditure**

The salary bill is the biggest item on the expenditure side.

For further details please refer the audited statement of Income and Expenditure.

As the Income being static and the expenditure continuously increasing, the Society had to exercise a severe control of its expenditure.



A request for an enhanced grant has already been made to the Government

Treasurer wishes to thank Mr. B. E. Wijesuriya, Administrative Secretary, Mr. Samson Gunasekera who acted during the leave of Mr. B. E. Wijesuriya and the staff for their co-operation during the year.

Dr. K. Arunasiri  
Hony. Treasurer  
12.02.2002

### REPORT OF THE LIBRARY COMMITTEE 2001/2002

The Library Committee comprised the following members and 09 meetings were held during the period under review.

	<b>Attendance</b>
Lt Com. S. Devendra (Chairman)	8
Mrs. Ishvari Corea (Hony. Librarian/Convener)	8
Prof. Kusuma E. Karunaratne	5
Mr. Frederick Medis (From October)	2
Mr. Ashley de Vos	2
Mr. M. A. Hussein	9
Prof. Mendis Rohanadeera	Nil

The utilization of the library facilities of the RASSL during the year was as follows:

Number of visits by members and others to the library	428
Number of books received as donations	40
Number of periodicals received as donations	96
Number of books purchased	18
Number of books repaired by the binder	347

As stated in last year's report of the Library Committee stocktaking was commenced on 28 April 2000. This has proved to be a laborious task as each book was physically checked. Another difficulty confronted was the absence of a regular Assistant Librarian. During the last two years three Assistant Librarians worked in the Library. At present there is no Assistant Librarian and without regular staff the stocktaking was hindered.



The Library too continued to function normally, with Miss S. T. Weeraratne covering up the work in the Library in addition to her own duties. Although the stocktaking was commenced as far back as 2000 the actual number of hours that the staff devoted to this exercise was 444. However, it is hoped that this work could be finalized in as short a time as possible to everybody's satisfaction.

Mr. Chandralal Siriwardena who was appointed in place of Miss R. K. M. T. Indrani on 8th October 2000, left the service on 29th May 2001. Mrs. Priyanka Gunaratne was then appointed on 30th May 2001. However, she too left on 13th December 2001. At present the Library is functioning without an Assistant Librarian.

The Hony. Librarian wishes to place on record the ready assistance given by Miss. S. T. Weeraratne at all times and for the deep interest she has taken in the day to day running of the Library as well as shouldering the major part of the stocktaking. The Hony. Librarian wishes to thank the Chairman and members of the Library Committee for their co-operation.

She also wishes to thank the President and members of the Council for their assistance during the year under review. She also wishes to thank Mr. B. E. Wijesuriya and the two former Assistant Librarians, Mr. Chandralal Siriwardena, Mrs. Priyanka Guneratne and the other members of the staff.

Ishvari Corea  
Hony. Librarian  
29.01.2002

## REPORT OF THE PUBLICATION COMMITTEE

Ten meetings of the Publication Committee were held during the period May 2001 to January 2002.

	<b>Attendance</b>
Dr. K. D. Paranavitana (Chairman)	8
Mr. D. G. P. Seneviratne (Hony. Editor)	9
Dr. C. G. Uragoda	6
Dr. G. S. B. Senanayake	9
Mr. Hemantha Situge	8
Mr. A. P. S. Galapata	9
Mr. R. C. de S. Manukulasooriya	5



- (a) The composition of the Committee and the attendance of members is shown above. Mr. Ashley de Vos, who was originally on the Committee, gave up his place and Mr. Hemantha Situge's request to take his place was later approved by the Council.
- (b) Eight articles and six book reviews were scheduled for publication in Volume XLV. Three articles awaiting review were put aside for consideration for the next issue of the Journal.
- (c) Mr. G. P. S. H de Silve agreed to compile an Index, together with descriptive annotations, of Journal articles for the period 1990 to 2000.
- (d) A quarterly Newsletter edited by Mr. R. C. de S. Manukulasooriya was commenced to apprise the members of events in the Society.
- (e) A price list of RASSL publications available for sale was sent to the NL & DS, the Public Library, Colombo, and to all the University and special libraries.

D. G. P. Seneviratne  
Hony. Editor  
23. 01. 2002

## FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE

### Meetings

The Finance and Administration Committee held ten meetings during the period April 2001 to February 2002. The following were the members and their attendance at the meetings were as follows :-

	<b>Attendance</b>
Dr. S. G. Samarasinghe (President)	7
Dr. K Arunasiri (Treasurer)	9
Kalasuri Wilfred M. Gunasekera	5
Mr. Sam S. Wijesinha	3
Mr. Methsiri Cooray	Nil
Mr Desmond Fernando P. C.	2
Mr. Das Miriyagalla ( Jt. Secretary)	10



## Enrolments

The following were enrolled as new members during the year.

Mr Anton Fernando	Life	2001-05-28
Mr R S Karunaratna	Life	2001-06-25
Dr. M L Marasingha	Life	2001-06-25
Prof. W I Siriweera	Life	2001-08-27
Mr. K A D P D Nanayakkara	Life	2001-11-26
Dr. R Vigneswaran	Life	2001-09-24
Mr. Melwin Herath	Life	2001-12-24
Mr. L A Wickramasinghe	Life	2001-12-24
Dr. H. S. Sri Nissanka	Ordinary	2001-06-25
Mr. K. P. Yasapala	Ordinary	2001-07-30

## Administrative Secretary's leave

Mr. B.E. Wijesuriya, the Administrative Secretary, went on leave during the period September - November 2001. Mr. Samson Gunasekera acted in the post.

## Staff Changes

Mr. A. M. C. Siriwardana who was the Asst Librarian left the services on 31st May 2001. Mrs. Priyanka Gunaratne was recruited as Assistant Librarian on 29th May 2001. But she too left the service on 13th December 2001. Miss. S. T. Weeraratne, the Stenographer acted for Assistant Librarian.

## Accounts and Audit

A physical verification of assets has been conducted. The assets have also been provided with depreciation based on generally accepted rates. The auditors Messrs. Wickramasinha, Dayananda & Co. have issued their audit report accordingly.

Das Miriyagalla  
Hony. Jt. Secretary  
2002.02.16.



## SUB-COMMITTEE ON THE TRANSLATION OF PALI COMMENTARIES INTO SINHALA (TPCS)

The Sub-Committee comprised the following members:

- Prof. M. B. Ariyapala (Chairman)
- Dr. S. G. Samarasinghe (Secretary)
- Dr. K. D. Paranavitana (Treasurer)
- Prof. N. A. Jayawickrema
- Dr. K. T. W. Sumanasuriya
- Prof. Y. Karunadasa
- Dr. G. S. B. Senanayake
- Dr. Abeyratna Adikari
- Prof. Kapila Abhayawansa.

The translations of the following commentaries were completed and published.

1. *Kankhāvitaraṇī* by Dr. Kapila Abhayawansa
2. *Dhammapadaṭṭhakathā* by Ven. Welamitiyawe Sri Dhammarakkhita
3. *Therigātha* by Dr. G. S. B. Senanayake
4. *Visuddhimagga* Pt I by Dr. Hemachandra Dissanayake

The Launching ceremony of the first three books was held on 26th August 2000 with the participation of the most Venerable Mahanayaka Theras of the Three Nikayas. This translation project of the RASSL was highly appreciated by the Venerable Mahanayaka Theras as a very significant effort making a milestone in the attempt taken by Sri Lankans for the promotion of Buddhism. They also expressed the view that it can be compared only to the Buddhajayanthi Tripitaka Translation launched by the Buddhasasana Ministry of the Government of Sri Lanka.

These comments by the most Venerable Mahanayaka Theras themselves very clearly bring out the magnitude as well as the value of this undertaking. Therefore there is no need to over emphasize the fact that this translation project should not only be proceeded without interruption but also should be accelerated, for which the assistance of the Ministry of Buddha Sasana is sought.



The TPCS gratefully acknowledges the receipt of Rs. 814,500.00 upto now from the Ministry of Buddha Sasana for this project.

Dr. S. G. Samarasinghe  
Secretary - TPCS  
19. 02. 2002

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Society gratefully acknowledges with thanks Her Excellency Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga, the Patron of the Society for the continued support for the Society's activities.

The Council extends its sincere thanks and appreciation for the invaluable support given by Hon. Minister of Cultural and Religious Affairs, Mr. Monty Gopallawa and the Hon. Deputy Minister of Cultural Affairs Mr. T. B. Ekanayake.

The Council wishes to record its thanks to all Office Bearers and members of the Council for their commitment and support in their endeavours to achieve the objectives of the Society.

The Council wishes to record its thanks to Mahaweli Authority for the facilities and assistance given in the use of the Auditorium.

The Council also extends its thanks to Mr. Mahendra Senanayake and the staff of the Sridevi Printers and Mr. S. Devendra and the staff of the Ananda Press for the untiring efforts made in printing and bringing forth neat and tidy issues of this Annual Report and the Journal.

The Society wishes to thank Mr. B. H. Wijesuriya, Administrative Secretary, Miss. S. T. Weeraratne, Stenographer, Mr. R. M. Weerakone, Binder, Mr. Thusitha M. Geekiyanage and Mr. Chaminda Wijesiri, members of the minor staff.

Das Miriyagalla  
R. Wijedasa  
12.02.2002



## A New Constitution for the RASSL

At the last AGM of the Society 2000/2001 held on 31st March 2001 a number of members expressed the need to have a definitive version of the Society's Constitution.

In consequence of this request, the President of the Society at its first Council meeting held on Monday 30 April 2001, agreeing to its need as a priority issue appointed a Sub-Committee of 7 members from the Council to study the Constitution in existence and taking into account the various amendments proposed by the Council members and the general membership of the Society, requested the Sub Committee to submit a draft of the Constitution to the Council for its consideration.

The members of the Sub-Committee were

1. Lt. Com. S. Devendra (Chairman)
2. R. Wijedasa (Secretary)
3. Mr. Sam S Wijesinha
4. A. Dennis N. Fernando
5. Dr. C. G. Uragoda
6. D. G. P. Seneviratne
7. Dr. K. D. Paranavitana

The Sub Committee invited the members of the Society to submit any proposals if they wished to do so. In consequence several valuable proposals were presented.

The Committee met several times and a draft Constitution was prepared.

This draft was presented to a special session of the Council on 22 October 2001 and it was accepted with several amendments.

I wish to place on record our sincere thanks to Lt. Com. S. Devendra (Chairman) and other members of the Committee for their valued contributions in the formulation of this draft.

It is now placed before the General Assembly of the Society for its acceptance.

R. Wijedasa  
Secretary to Committee



## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING - RESOLUTIONS

### Resolution No. 1

Hony. Jt. Secretaries

Reference your circular dated 9.2.2002, calling for resolutions to be placed before the Annual General Meeting, I wish to move the under-mentioned resolution:

“That in view of the long period during which the lending of books from the society in terms of article 55 of the Constitution has been stopped, very early action be taken to re-open the lending section of the Library as early as possible.”

This resolution may be placed for discussion at the forthcoming Annual General Meeting scheduled for 30th March 2002.

Thank you.

R. C. de S. Manukulasooriya

19.2.2002

262, B 8, Hokandara Road,  
Talawatugoda.

### Resolution No. 2

Hony. Joint Secretary

RASSL

I wish to move the following resolution at the AGM. It may be taken up as an amendment to the Constitution now in force. Clause 36(a) to be amended to read as:- The Society shall meet at least every four months viz. AGM in March, July and in November.

The need for the General body to meet more regularly has arisen from the infrequency of communication between the membership and the Council. Only one way postal communication is in place.

At the AGM of 2001 an important resolution was moved but it failed. Agreeing fully with the objectives of that resolution where the opening sentence was.

“The RASSL is stagnant. It is our view that urgent reforms are necessary to remedy the present impasse”. I move this resolution today envisaging the following advantages if it is adopted.



- (A) All members will get encouraged to participate in the activities of the Society. Now, members meet only once a year though the Constitution requires a general meeting every six months.
- (B) The members would supply a wider spectrum of new thinking towards the work of the Society as against the views of 25 odd Council members.
- (C) The members would have a window to see the work of the Society at closer quarters and help it whenever necessary instead of a brief two hour session once a year.
- (D) The General Meeting will be an expanded Research Body with wider knowledge and experience, providing grass root level nourishment instead of a Research Council awaiting ideas in writing with the usual laws delays and postal delays

**Proposer A P S Galapata**  
**Secunder K P Yasapala**  
21. 2. 2002



**ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY OF SRI LANKA**  
**BALANCE SHEET AS AT DECEMBER 31, 2001**

	Schedule	2001 Rs.	2000 Rs.
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>			
Stocks of Books	01	937,765.00	720,170.00
Accounts Receivable	02	12,689.22	16,776.00
Cash & Bank Balances	03	66,588.73	76,430.00
		1,017,042.95	813,376
<b>LESS: CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>			
Accounts Payable	04	250,449.92	17,593.00
Net Current Assets/(Liabilities)		766,593.03	795,783.00
Property, Plant & Equipment	05	1,051,977.18	1,168,863.00
Library Book	06	542,677.06	537,162.00
Investments	07	2,145,835.88	1,914,025.00
		4,507,083.15	4,415,834.00
<b>REPRESENTED BY</b>			
Accumulated Fund	08	3,734,042.54	3,667,016.00
Specific Fund	09	773,040.61	748,818.00
		4,507,083.15	4,415,834.00

We certify that to the best of our knowledge and belief the above Balance Sheet contain a true account of assets and liabilities of Royal Asiatic Society of Sri Lanka.

Dr. S. G. Samarasinighe  
*President*

Dr. K. Arunasiri  
*Treasurer*

We have examined the above Balance Sheet as at December 31, 2001 and the annexed financial statements and have obtained all the information and explanations that were required by us. In our opinion the above Balance Sheet and Income & Expenditure Account exhibit a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Society as at December 31, 2001

**Wickramasinghe Dayananda & Co.**  
*Chartered Accountants*



**ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY OF SRI LANKA**  
**INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT**  
**YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2001**

INCOME	Schedule	2001 Rs.	2000 Rs.
Government Grant		600,000.00	600,000.00
Donations & Other Grants	10	-	46,500.00
		<u>600,000.00</u>	<u>646,500.00</u>
<b>MEMBERS SUBSCRIPTION</b>			
Life Membership Fees		18,000.00	20,000.00
Subscription -Current Year		10,750.00	12,571.00
-Prior Years		1,450.00	1,300.00
-In Advance		250.00	1,650.00
Entrance Fees		800.00	866.00
Non-Resident Membership Fees		-	-
		<u>31,250.00</u>	<u>36,388.00</u>
<b>OTHER INCOME</b>			
Sale of Journals		74,831.41	55,176.00
Photocopy Income		4,292.00	3,669.00
Sundry Income		5,990.50	1,655.00
Interest Income	11	168,418.51	215,436.00
Fines for delay to return Books		-	1,202.00
Nett Income from - <i>Kankāvitarani</i>		706.80	215.00
- <i>Dhammapadaṭṭhakathā</i>		3,266.52	1,149.00
- <i>Therīgāthā</i>		2,695.60	1,011.00
		<u>260,201.34</u>	<u>279,13.00</u>
Total Income		891,451.34	962,400.00
Less-Expenses		<u>(819,623.81)</u>	<u>(703,907.00)</u>
Excess of Income Over Expenditure		71,827.53	258,493.00
Less: Taxation for the year		(4,801.00)	(9,071.00)
		<u>67,026.53</u>	<u>249,422.00</u>
Balance C/F to Accumulated Fund		<u>67,026.53</u>	<u>249,422.00</u>



**ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY OF SRI LANKA**  
**FINANCIAL NOTES**  
**YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2001**

**1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES**

(a) **Basis of Accounting**

These financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles applied on a basis consistent with that of the preceding year.

(b) **Stock of Books**

These are stocked at cost. We have not verified stock of books as at Balance Sheet date.

(c) **Property, Plant & Equipment**

Property, Plant & Equipment are shown in the financial statements at cost, less accumulated depreciation to the date of Balance Sheet.

The provision for depreciation is calculated on straight line method at the beginning of the financial year at 10%

(d) **Gratuity**

No Provision has been made in the financial statements, liabilities under the Gratuities Act No. 12 of 1983.

(e) **Taxation**

Provision for taxation is based on the interest income on the basis that the Association is an approved charity.

**2. STOCK OF BOOKS**

<i>Kankavitharani</i> (948, Books)	250,127.84	250,913.00
<i>Dhammapadatthakatha</i> (971 Books)	307,472.57	308,723.00
<i>Therigatha</i> (989 Books)	162,569.64	-
	720,170.05	559,636.00
	720,170.05	559,636.00

**3. INTEREST INCOME**

Interest income shown in the accounts on receipts basis.



**ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY OF SRI LANKA**  
**RECEIPT & PAYMENT ACCOUNT**  
**YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2001**

<b>RECEIPTS</b>	Rs.
Government Grant	600,000.00
Donation & Other Grant	-
	<u>600,000.00</u>
<b>Received from Members</b>	
Life Membership Fees	18,000.00
Current Year Subscription	10,750.00
Entrance Fees	800.00
Arrears & Advance of Subscriptions	1,700.00
	<u>31,250.00</u>
<b>Other Receipts</b>	
Interest Received	168,418.51
Sale of Journals	74,831.41
Sale of Atthakathā books	13,820.00
Photocopy Income	4,292.00
Encashment of Investment-Savings Accounts	179,700.00
Sundry income	5,990.50
Income tax refund	4,542.00
	<u>451,594.42</u>
<b>Total Receipts</b>	<u><u>1,082,844.42</u></u>
<b>Less Payments</b>	
Purchase of Library Books	5,515.00
Acquiring of Fixed Assets	-
Investment - Sampath Bank Savings Account	182,839.91
- N.S.B. Fixed Deposit	204,447.57
	<u>392,802.48</u>



**ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY OF SRI LANKA**  
**RECEIPT & PAYMENT ACCOUNT**  
**YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2001**

<b>Other Payments</b>		<b>Rs.</b>
Salaries & Overtime	Sch 12	395,836.49
Tea Expenses		25,329.75
Stationery & Postage		40,571.40
Printing Expenses -A. G. M. Report		14,943.85
- Letter Head & Post Card		2,918.92
- Journals		35,640.00
Audit Fees		-
Sundry Expenses	Sch 13	29,009.65
Telephone		34,208.57
Income Tax Paid		5,256.03
Bank Charges		798.00
Repairs & Maintenance		53,287.50
Advertisement		17,678.00
Travelling		554.00
Service Charges - Photo Copier		30,899.83
Cleaning Expenses		9,850.00
Enrolment Fees Refund		3,100.00
		<u>699,881.99</u>
<b>Total Expenses</b>		<b>1,092,684.47</b>
Nett decrease in cash and cash equivalents		<u>(9,840.95)</u>
Cash & Bank Balance 01 st January 2001		<u>76,429.68</u>
Cash & Bank Balance 31st December 2001		<u><u>66,588.75</u></u>



**ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY OF SRI LANKA**  
**YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2001**

<b>SCHEDULE : 01</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2000</b>
<b>Stock of Books</b>	<b>Rs.</b>	<b>Rs.</b>
<i>Kankavitharani</i> (948 Books)	248,034.72	250,128.00
<i>Dhammapadatthakatha</i> (971 Books)	303,719.09	307,473.00
<i>Therigatha</i> (989 Books)	161,265.24	162,570.00
<i>Visuddimargaya</i> (1000 Books)	224,745.95	-
	937,765.00	720,170
	937,765.00	720,170

**SCHEDULE : 02**

<b>Accounts Receivable</b>	<b>Rs.</b>	<b>Rs.</b>
Income Tax Overpaid	8,679.47	12,766.00
Mrs. D. Kottegoda - Flowers of Sri Lanka	4,009.75	4,010.00
	12,689.22	16,776.00
	12,689.22	16,776.00

**SCHEDULE : 03****Cash & Bank Balance**

Cash in hand	8,950.97	9,181.00
Cash at Bank - Sampath Bank		
A/c No. 000160001259	57,637.76	67,249.00
	805,299.11	758,393.00
	805,299.11	758,393.00

**SCHEDULE : 04****Accounts Payable**

Telephone Charges	5,602.97	4,655.00
Audit Fees	16,876.00	8,438.00
Salary Payable	3,225.00	4,500.00
Siedles (Pvt.) Limited	224,745.95	-
	250,449.92	17,593.00
	250,449.92	17,593.00



**ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY OF SRI LANKA**  
**YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2001**

<b>SCHEDULE: 05</b>	<b>Balance at</b>	<b>Additions</b>	<b>Balance at</b>
<b>Property, Plant &amp;</b>	<b>01.01.2001</b>	<b>(Disposals)</b>	<b>31.12.2001</b>
<b>Equipment Cost</b>	<b>Rs.</b>	<b>Rs.</b>	<b>Rs.</b>
Typewriters	16,355.00	-	16,355.00
Pedestal Fan	5,900.00	-	5,900.00
Filing Cabinet	8,663.00	-	8,663.00
Gestetner Machine	37,500.00	-	37,500.00
Furniture & Fittings	236,986.00	-	236,986.00
Society Name-board	13,589.00	-	13,589.00
Vaccum Cleaner & Polisher	56,739.00	-	56,739.00
Electric Kettle & Boiler	1,460.00	-	1,460.00
Wall Clock	600.00	-	600.00
Cannon Photo Copier	149,000.00	-	149,000.00
Steel Cupboard	35,480.00	-	35,480.00
Glass Fronted Book Alm.	28,168.75	-	28,168.75
Hoover Polisher	4,600.0	-	4,600.00
Telephone	17,549.00	-	17,549.00
Sundry Assets	2,863.00	-	2,863.00
Partitioning of Library	85,810.00	-	85,810.00
Typewriters (Electronic)	26,552.50	-	26,552.50
Hand Press Machine	800.00	-	800.00
Almirah	19,800.00	-	19,800.00
Water Filter	1,800.00	-	1,800.00
Computer & Printer	237,829.63	-	237,829.63
Fax Machine	19,950.00	-	19,950.00
Paper Cutter	7,000.00	-	7,000.00
Microphone Sets	140,993.88	-	140,993.88
Bicycle	4,100.00	-	4,100.00
Book Trolley	8,775.00	-	8,775.00
	<b>1,168,863.76</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,168,863.76</b>



**ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY OF SRI LANKA**  
**YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2001**

<b>SCHEDULE: 05</b> <b>Property, Plant &amp;</b> <b>Equipment Cost</b>	<b>Balance at Depreciation</b>		<b>Balance at</b>
	<b>01.01.2001</b>	<b>For the year</b>	<b>31.12.2001</b>
	<b>Rs.</b>	<b>Rs.</b>	<b>Rs.</b>
Typewriters	16,355.00	1,635.50	14,719.50
Pedestal Fan	5,900.00	590.00	5,310.00
Filing Cabinet	8,663.00	866.30	7,796.70
Gestetner Machine	37,500.00	3,750.00	33,750.00
Furniture & Fittings	236,986.00	23,698.60	213,287.40
Society Name-board	13,589.00	1,358.90	12,230.10
Vaccum Cleaner & Polisher	56,739.00	5,673.90	51,065.10
Electric Kettle & Boiler	1,460.00	146.00	1,314.00
Wall Clock	600.00	60.00	540.00
Cannon Photo Copier	149,000.00	14,900.00	134,100.00
Steel Cupboard	35,480.00	3,548.00	31,932.00
Glass Fronted Book Alm.	28,168.75	2,816.87	25,351.87
Hoover Polisher	4,600.0	460.00	4,140.00
Telephone	17,549.00	1,754.90	15,794.10
Sundry Assets	2,863.00	286.30	2,576.70
Partitioning of Library	85,810.00	8,581.00	77,229.00
Typewriters (Electronic)	26,552.50	2,655.25	23,897.25
Hand Press Machine	800.00	80.00	720.00
Almirah	19,800.00	1,980.00	17,820.00
Water Filter	1,800.00	180.00	1,620.00
Computer & Printer	237,829.63	23,782.96	214,046.46
Fax Machine	19,950.00	1,995.00	17,955.00
Paper Cutter	7,000.00	700.00	6,300.00
Microphone Sets	140,993.88	14,099.30	126,894.50
Bicycle	4,100.00	410.00	3,690.00
Book Trolley	8,775.00	877.50	7,897.50
	<b>1,168,863.76</b>	<b>116,886.28</b>	<b>1,051,977.18</b>



**ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY OF SRI LANKA**  
**YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2001**

<b>SCHEDULE : 06</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2000</b>
<b>Library Books</b>	<b>Rs.</b>	<b>Rs</b>
Balance at 01. 01. 2001	537,162.06	525,196.00
Additions during the year	5,515.00	11,966.00
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Balance as at 31. 12. 2001	<u>542,677.06</u>	<u>537,162.00</u>

**SCHEDULE: 07****Investments****Funded Investment Savings Account**

N.S.B - 1-0002-01-61233	88,047.16	80,236.00
N.S.B -1-0002-01-61217	126,122.55	114,933.00
N.S.B -1-0002-01-54601	58,870.90	53,649.00
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	<u>273,040.61</u>	<u>248,818.00</u>

**Other Investments - Sampath Bank**

Savings A/c No. 60004813	76,345.63	69,263.00
Savings A/c No. 60002683	1,092,001.72	916,244.00

**Fixed Deposits**

N.S.B. - A/c No. 2000199277	204,447.57	-
N.S.B. - A/c No. 500014807015	-	179,700.00
Arpico Finance Company Ltd.	250,000.00	250,000.00
State Mortgage & Investment Bank	250,000.00	250,000.00
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	<u>1,872,794.92</u>	<u>1,665,207.00</u>
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	<u>2,145,835.53</u>	<u>1,914,025.00</u>

**SCHEDULE : 08****Accumulated Fund**

Balance at 1. 1. 2000	3,667,016.01	3,417,594.00
Add: Excess of income over Expenditure during the year	67,026.53	246,422.00
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	<u>3,734,042.54</u>	<u>3,667,016.00</u>



**ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY OF SRI LANKA**  
**YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 1998**  
**(SCHEDULES)**

<b>SCHEDULE : 09</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2000</b>
<b>Specific Funds - Investment</b>	<b>Rs.</b>	<b>Rs.</b>
<i>Chalmers Oriental Text Fund</i>		
Balance at 01.01.2001	80,236.37	74,021.00
Add: Interest during the year	7,810.79	6,215.00
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Balance as at 31. 12. 2001	88,047.16	80,236.00
	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>
<i>Chinese Records Translation Fund</i>		
Balance at 01.01.2001	114,932.59	106,030.00
Add-Interest during the year	11,189.96	8,903.00
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	126,122.55	114,933.00
	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>
<i>Society Medal Fund</i>		
Balance at 01.01.2001	53,649.07	49,494.00
Add-Interest during the year	5,221.83	4,155.00
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Balance as at 31.12.2001	58,870.90	53,649.00
	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>
Atthakathā Fund	500,000.00	500,000.00
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	773,040.61	748,818.00
	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>
<b>SCHEDULE : 10</b>		
<b>Donations &amp; other Grants</b>		
Donation -M/s. Aitken Spence Co. Ltd.	-	7,500.00
National Library Service Board	-	39,000.00
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	-	46,500.00
	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>
<b>SCHEDULE : 11</b>		
<b>Interest Income on Fixed Deposit</b>		
Fixed Deposit - N. S. B.	23,810.25	20,666.00
- S M & I B	28,750.00	27,500.00
- Arpico Finance	-	70,000.00
Sampath Bank - S/A No. 100160002683	108,776.17	78,522.00
Sampath Bank - S/A No. 100160004813	7,082.09	18,749.00
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	168,418.51	215,436.00
	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>



**ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY OF SRI LANKA**  
**YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2001**

**SCHEDULE : 12**

<b>Salaries &amp; Allowances</b>	<b>Rs.</b>
Mr. B. E. Wijesooriya	63,400.00
Mr. A. M. S. Siriwardena	21,750.00
Miss S. Weeraratne	56,600.00
Mr. R. M. Weerakoon	56,100.00
Mr. T. M. Geekiyanage	42,300.00
Mr. C. Wijesiri	36,225.00
Miss. P. Gunaratne	39,650.00
Mr. S. Gunasekara	21,300.00
Overtime	57,236.49
	<hr/>
	<u>394,561.49</u>

**SCHEDULE : 13**

<b>Sundry Expenses</b>	<b>Rs.</b>
Stamp & Other Stationery Equipment	518.00
Cleaning Material Purchases	1,339.00
Bicycle Repair	440.00
Cassettes Purchases	1,720.00
Chemifex ink	1,546.00
Printer ink	2,065.00
Book Binding	807.50
Toners	8,239.00
Kettle Repair	1,195.65
C F L Bulbs (14)	5,390.00
Metal Book Ends	3,087.50
Kitchen Utencils Purchases	324.00
Other Expenses	2,338.00
	<hr/>
	<u>29,009.65</u>











## **Abstracts of Minutes of Council Meetings: 2001/2002 157th Year**

### **157. 01 - 30 April 2001**

Present: Dr. S. G. Samarasinghe (President) and 21 Council members;  
Excuses - 1; Absent - 2

A Vote of Condolence was passed on the death of Mr. R. D. C. de Silva (L/539) before commencement of the day's proceedings.

The Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 26/03/01 were adopted on a motion proposed by Mr. Sam S. Wijesinha and seconded by Dr. G. S. B. Senanayake.

1. **President's Greetings:** The President while warmly greeting the members of the Council thanked them for giving him an opportunity to serve as President of this august body. He solicited their co-operation to achieve the objectives of the Society.
2. **Introduction of Members:** This being the first meeting of the newly elected Council, the President requested the members to introduce themselves to the group and this was followed by an introduction by the members.
3. **Point of Order: Privilege of Past Presidents as Members of the Council**  
On a point of order Mr. A. Denis N. Fernando stated that on the basis of the present Constitution which is in operation, the election of some of the members of the Council is not in order. He queried as to why Mr. G. P. S. H. de Silva and Dr. H. N. S. Karunatilake were not invited for this meeting.

In reply the President explained that the present Council has been elected by the last Annual General Meeting based on the present Constitution. He stated that Dr. H. N. S. Karunatilake and Mr. G. P. S. H. de Silva were not invited because of a decision that has been taken by the Council previously that if a President has not completed his full term of office, he is not entitled to be in the Council as a past President.



He also noted that there are other issues in the Constitution, which need to be studied and amended. Hence he suggested that a Sub-Committee of members of the Council be appointed to study the Constitution and make recommendations taking into consideration, the various amendments proposed by the Council members and general membership and submit a draft Constitution to the Council for its consideration.

After a lengthy discussion the following members were appointed to the Constitution Committee and were requested to submit a draft within three months. Prof. M. B. Ariyapala, Dr. C. G. Uragoda, Mr. Sam S. Wijèsinha, Lt. Com. S. Devendra, Mr. D. G. P. Seneviratne, Mr. A. Denis N. Fernando, Dr. K. D. Paranavitana

4. **Standing Committees** (Council Paper No. 1): The following members were appointed to the Standing Committees

**A. Finance and Administration Committee:** Dr. S. G. Samarasinghe (President/Chairman), Mr. R. Wijedasa (Hony. Jt. Secretary/Convenor), Dr. K. Arunasiri (Hony. Treasurer), Prof. M. B. Ariyapala, Mr. Methsiri Cooray, Mr. Desmond Fernando (PC), Mr. K/s Wilfred M. Gunasekera, Mr. Sam S. Wijesinha

**B. Library Committee:** Lt. Com. S. Devendra (Vice President/Chairman) Mrs. Ishvari Corea (Hony. Librarian/ Convenor), Mr. Ashley de Vos, Mr. Asiff Hussein, Prof. Mrs. Kusuma Karunaratne, Mrs. Kamalika S. Pieris

**C. Publications Committee:** Dr. K. D. Paranavitana (Vice President/Chairman), Mr. D.G.P. Seneviratne (Hony. Editor / Convenor) Mr. Ashley de Vos, Mr. A. P. S. Galapata, Mr. R. C. de S. Manukulasooriya, Dr. G. S. B. Senanayake, Dr. C. G. Uragoda, Mr. H. V. Situge.

5. **Ad-hoc Committees:** It was reported that four Committees were functioning in terms of section 57 of the Constitution, namely, (i) *Aṭṭhakathā Committee*; (ii) Committee on Exhibition on the Sinhala Script; (iii) History of Sri Lanka Committee; and (iv) Toponymy Committee.

6. **Election of office bearers to fill existing vacancies in the Council** (Council Paper No. 2)

1) *Hony. Jt. Secretary:* Mr. Das Miriyagalle was elected to fill the vacancy created by the resignation of Wg. Cdr. Rajah M.



Wickremesinhe, who was elected as one of the Hony. Jt. Secretaries at the Annual General Meeting.

- 2) *Hony. Librarian*: Mrs. Ishvari Corea was elected for the vacant post of Hony. Librarian
- 3) Prof. N. A. Jayawickrema was elected as a Council Member to fill the resultant vacancy due to the election of Mr. Das Miriyagalla as Hony. Jt. Secretary

**7. Member participation in Research** (Council Paper No. 3): The President presented Council Paper No. 3 aimed at getting the participation of the general membership in the academic and research activities of the Society. Accordingly the Council approved the following:

- 1) Invite the membership to submit research ideas and proposals for the consideration of the Council.
- 2) Establish an Ad-hoc Committee for Research with at least three members of the Council and four members from the General membership to process such proposals.
- 3) In the event of the Council being able to prepare substantive proposals, to solicit financial assistance from the Government, Non-Government and other Agencies, which will have to be identified.

It was also agreed that the Publications Committee would take initial action on this proposal.

**8. History of Sri Lanka Project** (Council paper No. 4): The President presented the paper and after explaining the contents posed the question whether the RASSL should proceed with the project of writing the History of Sri Lanka. Mr. Sam S. Wijesinha said that at a previous Council meeting it has been decided to abandon the project. Lt. Com. S. Devendra said that in addition to the paucity of funds for this project, RASSL has no expertise of their own to undertake such a task. It too has to seek assistance from other sources. Prof. Mendis Rohanadeera informed the Council of a project undertaken by the National Education Commission. Mr. D. G. P. Seneviratne spoke at length about the need to pursue the project. The Council voted for the abandonment of the project.



- 9. Launching of publication “Concise Etymological Vocabulary of Dhivehi Language” by Mr. Hassan Ahmed Maniku:** The Council agreed for the RASSL to launch the above book on condition that the RASSL does not take responsibility for the contents of the publication and that Prof. J. B. Dissanayake be invited to deliver the keynote address. The date to be determined in consultation with the Publications Committee.
- 10. Administration Matters:**
- 1) The Bill for Rs. 165,000/= for cost of printing of the *Aṭṭhakathā* submitted by Prof. M. B. Ariyapala was approved.
  - 2) The Council approved the request of Prof. M. B. Ariyapala for two copies of the publication ‘The Crest Gem of Poetry’.
- 11.** The launching of the book entitled *Lion and the Sword* by Mr. Asiff Hussein was approved.
- 12. Lecture Series:** The President presented the topics and names of lecturers of the Lecture series and it was referred to the Publications Committee to decide on the dates of the lectures.

### 157. 02 - 28 May 2001

Present: Dr. S. G. Samarasinghe (President) and 19 Council Members;  
Excuses: 2; Absent: 5

The Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 30/04/01 were adopted on a motion proposed by Dr. K. D. Paravitana and seconded by Dr. K. Arunasiri.

- 1. Privilege of Past Presidents as Members of the Council:** The question was raised again by Mr. A. Denis N. Fernando, Mr. Frederick Medis and Dr. C. G. Uragoda as a matter arising from the earlier Council Minute. As regard the constitutional privilege of Past Presidents being entitled to be members of the Council, the President tabled an earlier Council decision taken on 12.05.1987. It was agreed that the Constitution Sub-committee examines the matter in detail.
- 2. Lecture Series:** Mr. A. Denis Fernando wanted to know the basis on which the Society selects the lecturers for the monthly lectures. The President informed that all members of the Society are informed by letter and according to their replies and the topics the Publications Committee proposes the Annual Lecture Programme to the Council for approval.



3. Mr. Das Miriyagalla was appointed Jt. Secretary/Convenor of the Finance and Administration Committee ex-officio in place of Mr. R. Wijedasa.
4. **Stocktaking of Library Books:** Lt. Com. S. Devendra informed the Council that they have listed nearly three-fourth of the books in the Library. He also mentioned that physical stocktaking was too slow and there was a need to have volunteers to assist in speeding up the work.
5. **Review of Books donated to the Society:** Lt. Cdr. S. Devendra stated that it would be useful to review such books as selected by the Publications Committee from those that had been donated to the Society. These may be published in the RASSLSL Journal after obtaining the approval by the Council.
6. **Launching of Books:** On a query by the President as to guidelines regarding the launching of books, the Council noted that there was a need to formulate a basis for launching of books, which are sponsored by the Society. The Publications Committee was requested to draw up a procedure for this purpose. As a clarification, Dr. K. D. Paravitana, who is the author of the book "Land for Money" which is to be launched stated that it is only the Mahaweli Centre Auditorium, which is needed and not sponsorship by RASSLSL.
7. **Toponymy Committee:** Mr. Frederick Medis said that the work though slow is proceeding in a scientific manner. In order to strengthen the Committee there is a need to co-opt other members.
8. **Enrolments:** The Council approved the following enrolment to the RASSLSL membership.  
Resident Life: 1) Mr. Anton Fernando (L/614)
9. **Administrative Matters:**
  - 1) Acting arrangements for the Administrative Secretary who will be on long leave (four months) have to be provided by selecting a person through paper advertisement or through Council members.
  - 2) The Council approved the appointment of Mrs. P. Gunaratne as Assistant Librarian. She should make arrangements to take over from the present Assistant Librarian before he leaves.



- 3) The Council requested the Administrative Secretary Mr. B. E. Wijesuriya to compile a list of all files of the Society. It was agreed that the files be numbered according to the Standing Committees. For example the files of the Finance and Administration Committee would be FA/1. The filing system should be submitted through a Council paper to the next meeting.
- 4) The Minutes and the Council papers relating to each meeting should be sent to the Council members in time for each meeting.

### 157. 03 - 25 June 2001

Present: Dr. S. G. Samarasinghe (President) and 17 Council Members;  
Excuses: 3; Absent: 6;

The Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 28/05/01 were adopted on a motion proposed by

Dr. K. T. W. Sumanasuriya and seconded by Lt. Cdr. S. Devendra, subject to 3 corrections.

1. **Stocktaking of Library Books:** The following have consented to serve as volunteers and help in the stocktaking of the Library books: Lt. Cdr. S. Devendra, Mr. A. P. S. Galapata, and Mr. Asiff Hussein.
2. **Lecture Series:** The full list has not been finalised and would be submitted to the next meeting. The Publications Committee should decide on the lectures that would be published in the RASSLSL Journal.
3. **RASSL Newsletter:** A proposal made to the Council by Mr. R. C. de S. Manukulasooriya was accepted and the Council decided to issue a four-page newsletter quarterly. The cost estimate will be submitted to the next Council meeting.
4. **Toponymy Committee:** The following agreed to serve in the Committee: Mr. Frederick Medis, Dr. K. D. Paranavitana, Rev. Fr. Dr. X. N. Kurukulasuriya, Dr. K. T. W. Sumanasuriya, Kalasuri Wilfred M Gunasekera, Prof. Mendis Rohanadheera
5. **Revision of the RASSL Constitution:** LT. CDR. S. Devendra reported the progress. The Committee was appointed on 30 April 2001. Since then it had met three times on 27/05, 10/6 & 24/6. Two terms of reference were adopted, namely, (1) to check on the validity of the present constitution, which was raised at the AGM; (2) to draft



a new Constitution for the consideration of the Council. All members have been written to asking for suggestions.

Regarding (1) it was reported that there is reason for doubt concerning both the position of Mr. Denis N. Fernando and the documents in the Society's file. Therefore, it was decided not to pursue this line of inquiry but to concentrate in drafting a new Constitution. Regarding (2) a draft has been tabled before the Committee and discussion will commence at the next meeting. The question of changing the wording of the Act was raised and it was decided to not go beyond the Act. However, if the Council so decides amending the Act could be undertaken as a separate task after the present assignment was completed.

Mr. Denis N Fernando, Mr. D.G.P. Seneviratne, and Mrs. Kamalika Peiris made their observations and the Council decided that the Constitution Committee should discuss and agree on procedures relating to the drafting of the new Constitution before proceeding further.

## 6. **Administrative Matters**

- 1) The F&A Committee will examine the three applications received for the Post of Actg. Administrative Secretary (to act for Mr. B. E. Wijesuriya) and recommend a suitable person.
- 2) List of files has to be finalised before the next Council meeting.
- 3) The procedure relating to the award of RASSLSL medals will be circularised among the Council members.
- 4) The Assistant Librarian was asked to submit a report on the workshop attended on Purna: Windows.

7. **AGM Minutes:** The minutes of the last Annual General Meeting were tabled. Lt. Cdr. S. Devendra submitted certain amendments. Time till 15 July was given to members to submit any other amendments

8. **Enrolments:** The Council approved the following enrolment to the RASSLSL membership.

Resident Life: (1) Mr. R. S. Karunaratne (L/615); (2) Dr. M. L. Marasinghe (L/616)

Ordinary Member: (1) Dr. H. S. S. Nissanka (O/334)



**157.04 - 30 July 2001**

Present: Dr. S. G. Samarasinghe (President) and 19 Council Members;  
Excuses: 3; Absent: 5;

The Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 25/06/01 were adopted on a motion proposed by

Dr. K. T. W. Sumanasuriya and seconded by Lt. Cdr. S. Devendra, subject to one correction.

1. **History of Sri Lanka Project:** Mr. D.G.P. Seneviratne will go through the document tabled by Mrs. Kamalika Peiris at the previous meeting and submit his own comments about the project.
2. **Stocktaking of Library Books:** A list of books, which were beyond repair, was submitted. It was reported that the Accession Register did not show the losses and hence was not accurate. The Library Committee requested that an independent person be appointed to ascertain and examine books, which may need to be disposed of. The Council appreciated the work done so far by the committee in completing an important part of the stocktaking. It was noted that the stocktaking of the journals has yet to be completed.
3. **Use of Library:** It was agreed that only members and those with specific approval of the President should be allowed the use of the library.
4. **Purchases for the Library:** The Council approved the purchase of 10 pairs of bookends for Rs 3087.50. The Treasurer informed the Council that the total allocation for purchase of books for the year was Rs.50 000.00.
5. The report submitted by the Asst Librarian on the workshop on Purna: Windows was tabled. It was decided to obtain further details.
6. **Lecture Series:** The list of monthly lectures scheduled for the rest of the year 2001 / 2002 was tabled.
7. **Publication of Journal:** The Council requested the Publication Committee to expedite the publication of the Journal for the year 2000, which has got delayed.
8. **RASSL Newsletter:** The Council noted that the synopsis of each lecture would be included in the newsletter. Prior to publishing quotations should be obtained.



## 9. Financial and Administrative Matters:

- 1) The increase of salary of the stenographer to Rs.5000.00 per month on the scale 4000-200x10-6000 was approved.
- 2) The Council approved placing Rs.200,000.00 on a Fixed Deposit.
- 3) All Standing Committees were requested to hold their monthly meetings in the first week of each month.
- 4) On the recommendation of the F&A Committee the Council approved the appointment of Mr. Samson Gunasekera to act for the Administrative Secretary during his absence.
- 5) The request made for the Binder to be sent for a seminar was approved as recommended.

**10. Appointments to Standing Committees:** Mr. Frederick Medis and Prof. Mendis Rohanadheera were appointed to serve in the Library Committee.

**11. Toponymy Committee:** It was reported that seven members are working on each of the areas related to place names and progress has been made in this regard. The possibility of including change of place names in the Terms of Reference was considered. But a decision was not taken.

**12. Enrolments:** The Council approved the following enrolment to the RASSL membership.

Ordinary Member: (1) Mr K P Yasapala (O/335)

**13. Request of Library of Congress:** It was decided to send the publications at the normal selling price.

**14. AGM Minutes:** It was reported that the minutes of the last Annual General Meeting have been finalised

### 157. 05 - 27 August 2001

Present: Dr. S. G. Samarasinghe (President) and 19 Council Members

Excuses: 2; Absent: 5.

The Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 30/07/01 were adopted on a motion proposed by

Mr. R. C. de S. Manuḷasooriya and seconded by Mr. Sam S. Wijesinha



1. **Stocktaking of Library Books:** Lt. Cdr. S. Devendra recommended that an independent person be appointed to examine and ascertain old damaged books, which should be kept in a separate cupboard. It was agreed that a separate record be kept of such books.
2. **Publication of Journal:** Hony. Editor Mr. D. G. P. Seneviratne informed the Council that four articles out of which three were publishable have been received and three more are expected. The Council stressed that the Journal of the Society should be issued before 31<sup>st</sup> December 2001.
3. **RASSL Newsletter:** The cost estimate will be submitted to the next Council meeting.
4. **Revision of the RASSL Constitution:** Lt. Cdr. S. Devendra, the Chairman of the Committee handed the final draft of the revised Constitution to the President and also tabled a report. The Council decided to hold a special meeting of the Council on 22.10.2001 to discuss the revisions to the Constitution.
5. **History of Sri Lanka Project:** Mr. D. G. P. Seneviratne recommended the re-starting of the history project. But the Council endorsed the earlier decision that the project should not be handled by the Society.
6. **Formation of Research Committee:** On a proposal made by the President, the Council unanimously decided to appoint a Research Committee, as an ad hoc Committee, comprising of the following members:-Dr. S. G. Samarasinghe, Mr. Laxman de Mel, Mr. A. Denis N. Fernando, Dr. G. S. B. Senanayake, Mr. Ashley de Vos, Prof. Mendis Rohanadheera
7. **Finance and Administration Matters**
  - 1) Mr. Samson Gunasekera will be assuming duties as Acting Administrative Secretary from September 1st 2001. He will act for Mr. B. E. Wijesuriya who will be on leave for three months.
  - 2) A progress report has been requested by the Ministry of Buddha Sasana regarding the work on the *Atthakathā* translation, prior to release of funds.
8. **Enrolments:** The Council approved the following enrolment to the RASSL membership.  
Resident Life: (1) Dr. W. I. Siriweera (L/618)



9. **RASSL Medal:** Three applications have been received. It was decided that detailed bio-data and applications should be sent to all members of the Council, along with the names of the earlier recipients to enable the Council members to decide on a nominee. It was decided to select the nominee by secret ballot at the next Council meeting.

### 157. 06 - 24 September 2001

Present: Dr. S. G. Samarasinghe(President) and 20 Council Members  
Excuses: 3; Absent: 3;

A Vote of Condolence was passed on the death of Mr. Siripala Thilakasena (L/396) before commencement of the day's proceedings.

The Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 27/08/01 were adopted on a motion proposed by Mr. R. C. de S. Manukulasooriya and seconded by Dr. K. Arunasiri, with one amendment.

Prof. M. B. Ariyapala left the meeting under protest when he came to know that the voting for the selection of a person for the award of the RASSL medal that was scheduled for that day, will not take place.

1. **Committee on Exhibition of Written Script:** The report dated 2001-09-10 by Dr. (Mrs.) Malini Dias, Chairperson of the Committee on Exhibition of Written Script was considered by the Council and it was agreed that suitable sponsors be found to meet expenses to be incurred as stated therein. Names of possible sponsors such as Vijitha Yapa, Sarasawi Book Depot, Godage Brothers, American Institute of Sri Lankan Studies were to be considered. The Title of the Exhibition to be made more appropriate e.g. "Written Word - Exhibition".
2. **RASSL Medal:** As some of the Council members had not received the relevant supporting papers, the voting for the final selection was postponed for the next meeting. It was stated that there are inaccuracies in some of the statements made in the supporting papers. However, the Council decided by a majority vote that the detailed verification of such information was not feasible. It was agreed that a Committee be appointed to review criteria for the awarding of the RASSL Medal in the future.
3. **Journal:** Hony. Editor Mr. D.G.P. Seneviratne informed there are sufficient articles for the publication of even two issues. Hence, there will be no delay in the issue of the Journal.



4. **RASSL Newsletter:** The Council was informed that the RASSL newsletter was ready for publication and approved Rs.4000/- for printing and Rs.1000/- for postage.
5. **Book Reviews:** The Council decided that books that were reviewed be returned to the library, unless additional copies were received. The Society could make a request for two copies when books are donated of which one may be given to the reviewer.
6. **AGM Minutes:** It was decided to consider it at the next Council meeting.
7. **Fukuoka Asian Cultural Prizes:** The letter sent by organisers of Fukuoka Asian Cultural Prizes was tabled. It was decided that nominations be considered for submission.
8. **Miscellaneous:**
  - 1) The Council agreed to pursue the offer made by Mrs. Edith M. Fernando to assist improvements to the library.
  - 2) At the request of Lt. Cdr. S. Devendra the Council appointed Mr. Sam S. Wijesinha and Mr. Hemantha Situge to conduct an inquiry into certain alleged false statements made about him by two members.
  - 3) The Council decided that a congratulatory message be sent to Mrs. Deloraine Brohier on her election as the first woman president of the Dutch Burgher Union.
  - 4) Lt. Cdr. S. Devendra referred to article 40 (c) of the Constitution according to which office bearers could meet and prepare the agenda prior to the Council meeting.
9. **Enrolments:** The Council approved the following enrolment to the RASSLSL membership.

Resident Life: (1) Dr. R. Wigneshwaran (L/620)

The Council rejected the application made by Mr. G.R.A.N.B.J. Hemmanthagama because the qualifications were inadequate. It was further decided that the criteria for enrolment be more specifically laid down.



**157. 07 - 29 October 2001**

Present: Dr. S. G. Samarasinghe (President) and 23 Council members;  
Excuses: 1; Absent: 2;

The Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 24/09/01 were adopted on a motion proposed by Mr. H. Situge and seconded by Dr. G. S. B. Senanayake.

1. **Written Script Exhibition:** It was decided to request the Exhibition Committee to provide more names of prospective sponsors.
2. **Offer of Mrs. Edith M. Fernando:** Lt. Com. S. Devendra said that the funds could be used either for Air Conditioning the Library or for the recruitment of a Professional Librarian. The Library Committee was requested to prepare a detailed budget on this matter to be submitted to Mrs. Edith M. Fernando
3. **Allegations against Lt. Com. S. Devendra:** The allegations were inquired into by Mr. Sam S. Wijesinha and Mr. H. Situge and the findings were (1) the allegations made by the two members were not proved; and (2) Dr. H. N. S. Karunatilake's wording in his submission to the Constitution Committee had gone beyond what should have been stated and had been made in bad taste. It was decided to distribute the report among Council Members.
4. **Minutes of the AGM:** It was approved with two amendments.
5. **RASSL Newsletter:** Mr. R. C. de S. Manukulasooriya was congratulated for bringing forth the Society's Newsletter and was thanked for his excellent work.
6. **Toponymy Committee:** Mr. Frederick Medis said that the Committee had agreed to work according to a plan covering *Kadayim Pota*, and *Sandeśa Kāvya*s and names in an around Colombo and Sabaragamuwa.
7. **Aṭṭhakathā Translations:** The President of the RASSL and the Secretary to the Aṭṭhakathā Committee had met the Secretary to the Buddha Sasana Ministry on invitation and they were requested to forward a full report of the expenses incurred for printing and the additional amounts due. It was decided further that reference be made in the cover page to the Buddha Sasana Fund in acknowledgement of the funds provided for translating and printing the Aṭṭhakathās.



8. **Aṭṭhakathā Committee:** The Council was informed that Dr. A. Adhikari would replace Prof. Y. Karunadasa in the Committee.
9. **Administration Matters:** It was decided that instead of sending several notices to members, a single schedule of meetings for any month be prepared and posted.
10. **RASSL Medal:** Regarding the nomination of Kalasuri Wilfred M. Gunasekera for the RASSL medal there was an objection by Mr. A. Denis N. Fernando and it was over ruled by the Council. Mr. Sam S. Wijesinha, assisted by Mr. Asiff Hussein, conducted the selection process for the medal by secret ballot. The results were as follows: Mr. R. C. de S. Manukulasooriya - 11 votes; Rev. Fr. Dr. V. Perniola - 07; Kalasuri Wilfred M. Gunasekera - 06; Total number of votes cast - 24. Accordingly Mr. R. C. de S. Manukulasooriya was selected for the RASSL Medal.
11. **Enrolments:** The Council approved the following enrolment to the RASSL membership.  
  
Resident Life: (1) Mr. S. W. Hettige; (2) Mr. K.A.D.P. Padmasiri Nanayakkara, (L/619)

### 157. 08 - 26 November 2001

Present: Dr. S. G. Samarasinghe (President) and 16 Council members;  
Excuses: 7; Absent: 3

A Vote of Condolence was passed on the death of Mr. Percy Colin Thome (L/335) before commencement of the day's proceedings.

The Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 29/10/01 were adopted on a motion proposed by

Dr. K. Arunasiri and seconded by Dr. G. S. B. Senanayake.

1. **Notification of Meetings of Standing Committee and Ad Hoc Committees:** The Council was of the view that advance notifications need not be made because they were held always on a pre-arranged basis every month. The possibility of changing the day of the meeting of the Standing Committees to the first Tuesday was also considered.
2. **RASSL Journal:** The President requested the Hony. Editor Mr. Seneviratne to give a list of articles, which were ready for publication in the RASSL journal. Since no details were available it was agreed



- that a complete report on the position relating to the RASSL journal be presented for the next meeting. Further, it was decided to call for quotations for printing the RASSL journal.
3. **Written Script Exhibition:** The Council agreed that a suitable sponsor/sponsors out of the names submitted be found and a write up be prepared.
  4. **Atthakathā Translations:** The Council noted that there was a delay in settling the bill of Rs. 224,745.95 to Sridevi printers for printing of the Visuddhimagga translation as the necessary funds have not been remitted from the Buddhasasana Fund.
  5. **Research Committee:** The first meeting has been held on 7.11.2001. It was decided to invite Rev. Fr. Kurukulasuriya as a member. The possibility of linking with other Royal Asiatic Societies in the Asian Region has to be pursued.
  6. **Galle Library:** The possibility of taking over the Galle Library, which contained many historical documents, was considered but no decision was taken.
  7. **Administration Matters:** The Council decided to call for applications from suitably qualified persons for the post of Asst. Librarian that had fallen vacant due to the resignation of the present incumbent Ms. Priyanka Gunaratne.
  8. **Enrolment:** Application of Mr. G. R. A. N. B. J. Hemmathagama: The Council decided that the applicant be requested to send copies of certificates showing his qualifications since the statements made by him regarding his qualifications were not clear.

### 157. 09 - 24 December 2001

Present: Dr. S. G. Samarasinghe(President) and 16 Council members;  
Excuses: 3; Absent: 6;

A Vote of Condolence was passed on the death of Mr. H. A. Maniku (L/197) before commencement of the day's proceedings.

The Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 26/11/01 were adopted on a motion proposed by Dr. K. D. Paranavitana and seconded by Dr. G. S. B. Senanayake.

1. **Council Vacancies:** President informed that since Prof. N. A. Jayawickrema has not been attending the Council meetings his place



in the Council has to be filled. Mr. Casie Chetty's name was proposed by Mr. R. C. de S. Manukulasooriya and seconded by Mr. Frederick Medis and the Council accepted. It was decided to write to Mr. Casie Chetty informing him of the decision.

2. **Galle Library:** The Council noted that it was not feasible to take over the Galle Library, even though it contained many historical documents.
3. **Written Word Exhibition:** A detailed report on the Exhibition on Written Word, including the estimated expenses that was submitted by the Chairperson of the Committee Dr. Mrs. Malini Dias was tabled. The Council approved it for the purpose of communicating with prospective sponsors.
4. **Atthakathā Translations:** It was decided that a delegation consisting of the President, Jt. Secretary and Mr. Sam S. Wijesinha should meet the Buddhasasana Ministry officials to obtain funds from the Buddhasasana Fund for settling the outstanding bill for printing the *Visuddhimagga* translation.
5. **Report of the Hony. Editor on the Status of the Journal:** The report of the Hony. Editor, Mr. D. G. P. Seneviratne on RASSL Journal Volume XLV was tabled. The Hony. Editor stated the position relating to each article and book review. Certain clarifications were also made orally by him. The Council noted that out of 11 articles only 3 were ready for printing. Also out of 8 book reviews only 3 were ready. It was also noted that the Publications Committee had not approved any of the articles or reviews. Dr. C. G. Uragoda who is a member of the Committee said that since no items for publication were ready for any of the meetings, he couldn't take any responsibility for the journal. Mr. R. C. de S. Manukulasooriya also expressed his dissatisfaction about the poor progress. Mrs. Kamalika S. Pieris, Mr. Frederick Medis and Lt. Com. S. Devendra expressed views on the seriousness of the situation and how best the Council could resolve the problem relating to the journal.

The President proposed that a Special Sub-Committee consisting of Dr. K. D. Paranavitana, Mr. R. C. de S. Manukulasooriya, Mr. A. P. S. Galapata, and Mr. Hemantha Situge be appointed to finalise the work on the journal by the due date. The Council accepted the proposal.



Regarding the views expressed on the expected delays in publication of the journal, the Hony. Editor said that it was a matter for the Publications Committee at which the necessary action would be taken.

## 6. Administration Matters:

- 1) Post of Assistant Librarian: In this regard, Lt. Com. S. Devendra said that the Committee had interviewed a very experienced and a qualified candidate who needed a higher salary. He said that there is a need to get a competent librarian at a higher salary. However, the President said that proper procedure has to be followed by interviewing all available candidates. Some members also stated that increasing the salary of one officer could cause general dissatisfaction among the staff. All salary scales need to be reviewed. The possibility of getting donor support also has to be considered.

Mrs. Kamalika S. Peiris agreed to draft the List of Duties and Responsibilities of the Assistant Librarian.

- 2) Printing of RASSL Journal: The Council approved the quotation of Rs. 53,847.50 (pro rata per page Rs. 310.00) submitted by M/s Sridevi Printers (Pvt) Ltd for printing of the journal of the Society.
7. **Enrolments:** The Council approved the following enrolment to the RASSLSL membership.

Resident Life: (1) Mr. Melwin Herath (L/621) (2) Mr. L. A. Wickramasinghe (L/622);

## 157. 10 - 29 January 2002

Present: Dr. S. G. Samarasinghe (President) and 20 Council members;  
Excuses: 1; Absent: 5

The Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 24/12/01 were adopted on a motion proposed by Mr. R. C. de S. Manukulasooriya and seconded by Dr. K. D. Paranavitana, with two additions.

### 1. Council Vacancies:

- 1) Mr. Methsiri Cooray said that procedure followed in electing Mr. N. Y. Casie Chetty to the Council was incorrect and that there should be uniformity in such procedures.



- 2) The Council decided that the names of members who were absent for three consecutive meetings without getting excused should be tabled at the next meeting.
2. **Public lecture series:** The Council decided that the Publications Committee should examine the dates of the lecture programme carefully, taking into consideration public holidays. The annual lecture programme should be sent to all the members of the Society in time.
3. **Consultant Librarian:** Hony. Librarian, Mrs. Ishvari Corea offered to pay the extra sum needed for a Consultant Librarian for three months. The Council agreed to accept with thanks the offer. It was also decided to write to Mrs. Edith Fernando as per the contents of the report seeking her assistance.
4. **Library:** The Council decided to close the Library until a proper Librarian assumed duties. It was noted that the interview for the selection was fixed for 5.2.2002.
5. **RASSL Journal:** Hony. Editor Mr. D. G. P. Seneviratne informed the Council that some of the articles have not been amended in the way the referees wanted. He said that once the necessary amendments are incorporated they would be published. At this stage, the President requested the Special Committee appointed by the Council to ascertain the following and report, viz., (1) articles received; (2) articles sent for reviewing; (3) articles returned by referees after reviewing; (4) articles amended after review; and (5) articles selected for printing.
6. **RASSL Premises:** The Council paper 'Regulation of the Legal Position of the RASSL premises' was taken up and a sub-committee comprising Dr. S. G. Samarasinghe (President), Prof. M. B. Ariyapala, Dr. C. G. Uragoda, Dr. K. T. W. Sumanasuriya, Mr. Desmond Fernando and Mr. R. Wijedasa (Jt. Secretary) was appointed to examine the position and act on behalf of RASSL in communicating with the Ministry.
7. **Administration Matters:**
  - 1) The following payments were approved. (1) Rs. 16,731.00 and Rs. 6617.60 for repairs to the photocopier by M/S Metopolitan Ltd and the maintenance contract; (2) Rs. 2600.00 for repairs to toilets; and (3) Rs. 7832.00 for supplying and fitting the lights.
  - 2) The request by Mr. B. E. Wijesuriya to set off his no-pay leave against medical leave entitlement for the previous periods was not approved.



- 3) An acting allowance of Rs. 2000.00 per month was approved for Miss S. T. Weeraratne.
8. AGM Minutes: Mr. A. Denis N. Fernando tabled his letter dated 23<sup>rd</sup> December regarding the minutes of the AGM. He also informed that he has resigned from the Research Committee.

### 157. 11 - 25 February 2002

Present: Dr. S. G. Samarasinghe(President) 21 Council members; , Excuses: 2; Absent - 4

The Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 29/01/02 were adopted on a motion proposed by

Mr. Sam S. Wijesinha and seconded by Mr. Hemantha Situge, subject to four corrections.

1. **RASSL Premises:** Mr. A. Denis N. Fernando informed the Council that Mr. Ashley de Vos has stated the legal position of the RASSL in his letter dated 2002-02-09. The Trustees should handle this matter. The President requested the Board of Trustees to submit a report to the Council after a study of the relevant documents. The request made by the Mahaweli Centre for settlement of expenses was also referred to the Trustees.
2. **Post of Assistant Librarian:** After an interview Ms. K. K. I. Prasadini Prematillaka was selected for appointment at the salary point Rs. 4500/= per mensem on the approved scale. The Council will decide whether to review her salary after three months of service.
3. **RASSL Journal:** The Council noted that the problems relating to the Journal have been resolved and it will be issued on the due date. It was decided to consider having the article under "Notes and Queries" written by Prof. Vini Vitharana as a separate one after amending the title and reducing the number of pages, if necessary.
4. **AGM Minutes:** The minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 31 March 2001 were tabled and approved.
5. **158th AGM:** Annual Accounts and Annual Report for 2001/2002 were approved. The Notice of AGM was also approved. The Resolution proposed by Mr. R. C. de S. Manukulasuriya was accepted for consideration.



## 6. Administration Matters:

- 1) The Council approved the encashment of unutilised leave by the staff.
- 2) Regarding the letter from the binder, it was decided that a review of salaries of all staff members should be taken together.

7. **Guidelines for enrolment of new members:** It was decided to await the approval of the new constitution before finalising guidelines for enrolment of new members.

8. **Enrolments:** The Council approved the following enrolment to the RASSL membership.

Resident Life: (1) Dr. Mrs. Malini Dias (L/626); (2) Ms. S. Wickramasinha Gunasekera (L/627)

Ordinary Member: Mr. D. A. Premakumara de Silva(O/336); (2) Dr. Sarath Amunugama (O/337)

9. **Conversions to Life Membership:** The following conversions from Ordinary to Life Member were approved: (1) Mr. H. M. Gunasekera (L/623); (2) Dr. Mrs. Wimala de Silva (L/624); (3) Mrs. M. G. Jinadasa (L/625)



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Each contribution should be accompanied by a statement that the subject matter has not been published already and will not be submitted elsewhere without the consent of the Publication's Committee.

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